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SACRALIZATION, SECULARIZATION
AND
PERSONALITY

SACRALIZATION, SECULARIZATION, AND PERSONALITY

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Abstract

The point of departure for the thesis is the relative lack of systematic, descriptive, empirically-based generalizations in the four major traditional schools of psychology of religion, stemming from the work of Freud, Jung, James, and Adorno and the postwar social/personality psychologists. It is argued that all of these suffer from severe limitations of conceptual scope and data base, consequently falling short of developing a taxonomic, typological, and explanatory psychology of religion.

It is suggested that sociological conceptions of religion have tended to be more comprehensive and to possess greater explanatory power than psychological theories, and that theory from the former discipline might be fruitfully applied to empirical data from the latter. Mol's theory of religion as "sacralization of identity" is chosen, and its psychological contents are made explicit and subjected to verification through a search of empirical studies from the present decade relating religious variables to attitudes, behavior, personality constructs and psychological health.

The main findings are that religious individuals and non-religious individuals may be characterized by

a basic structural difference in personality organization, with more religious individuals typically exhibiting an internalization of the "collective ideal", and less religious individuals possessing a personality which is organized toward greater autonomy.

The social dynamics of sacralization and secularization, it is concluded, correspond to the two basic personality types epitomized by the principles of "integration through adjustment" and "self-actualization through autonomy", each of which represents a viable mode of adjustment.

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Table of Contents:

<u>Chapter 1: Toward a Psychology of Religion-</u>	p.1
<u>Chapter 2: A Sociological Perspective-</u>	p.9
<u>Chapter 3: Religion and Prejudice-</u>	p.23
<u>Chapter 4: Direct Measures-</u>	p.34
<u>Chapter 5: In Search of the Religious Personality-</u>	p.52
<u>Chapter 6: Religion and Criteria of Psychological Health-</u>	p.67
<u>Chapter 7: Conclusions-</u>	p.77
<u>Bibliography-</u>	p.85

Chapter 1: Toward a Psychology of Religion

One would not go too far wrong by saying that a psychology of religion, using the word "psychology" in the same sense as it is used by other academically respectable psychological subdisciplines, simply does not exist.

The above statement is made neither to shock nor to set the stage for some particular set of cherished hypotheses advanced by this author, but rather to draw attention to the rather wide gap presently lying between psychology of religion and other areas of psychological inquiry, such as personality theory, learning, child development, etc. The inadequacy of psychology of religion is not only deplorable, considering the antiquity of this area of interest, but is totally unnecessary in the context of what is known today.

The religious fact is a multifarious aspect of human life which is intricately woven into the fabric of every aspect of man's existence. We have religion as an individual quest, as a collective institution, as a conservative force in society, as an instrument of social change, as emotion, as intellectual activity, as a means of personality integration, and as the content of a psychotic's delusional system. There is, in sum, virtually

no aspect of human activity which is without some relation to religion, and it might be said that the range of religious activity and feeling is coextensive with the class of categories of human life itself.

Such an appreciation of the scope of their subject matter seems to be lacking among the psychologists of religion. In this regard, four of the most important traditions in the psychology of religion are raised, those of Freud, Jung, James and Adorno, whose work appears seminal and who may be taken to represent the major elements of contemporary work in this area, comprising psychoanalytic, mythologically-oriented phenomenological, existentially-oriented phenomenological, and empirically-based social-psychological approaches.

Perhaps the most conspicuous of psychologists of religion, Freud is perhaps among the least useful, where the task of developing a comprehensive psychology of religion is concerned. It is undoubtedly Freud, a reductionist who rivals Skinner in his ruthless explanations of human behaviour, whom we can thank for the odious connotations evoked by "psychology of religion" in our nonpsychologically oriented colleagues, and a brief examination of the good doctor's views on religion will prove instructive.

Freud's essential argument draws on an equation he makes between the primitive mind, the neurotic mind, and the religious, the common denominator of all three being the

subordination of the rationality of the conscious ego to the wish-fulfilling primary process of the id. As Freud argues in Civilization and Its Discontents (1961), mankind must renounce his innate sexual and destructive aims in order to live in a harmonious social fashion, and the renounced aims are often transformed into religious feelings: "Perhaps St. Francis of Assisi went furthest in exploiting (genital) love for the benefit of an inner feeling of happiness"¹; he suggests.

Similarly, Freud argues throughout his writings on religion that religious feelings and beliefs represent "inhibited aims", either of an aggressive or of a sexual nature, as in his analysis of the sacrament of the Eucharist in his book Totem and Taboo²:

"In the Christian myth man's original sin is undoubtedly an offense against God the Father, and if Christ redeems mankind from the weight of original sin by sacrificing his own life, he forces us to the conclusion that this sin was murder... the crime which must be expiated can only have been the murder of the father...the old totem feast is revived again in the form of communion in which the band of brothers now eats the flesh and blood of the son and no longer that of the father..."

Of religion in general, this comment by Freud is typical of his writings:³ "(Religion) regards reality as the

1. Freud, 1961, pp. 49

2. Freud, 1938, pp. 925

3. Freud, 1961, op.cit., pp.28

sole enemy and as the source of all suffering...so that one must break off all relations with it if one is to be in any way happy... The religions of mankind must be classed among the mass delusions of this (paranoid) kind".

In essence, Freud's analysis of religion is unsatisfactory for our purposes because it reduces religion to the level of pathology and savagery, failing to account for the existence of any human growth or creativity within the context of the religious. Furthermore, it fails to distinguish different classes of religious belief and practice.

Freud simply cannot account for the differences between the religions of different societies of individuals, or the changes that time or intervening causes may bring about on such beliefs and practices. In terms of contributing to a comprehensive socio-psychological understanding of religion, Freud's reductionistic speculation renders the subject matter hopelessly indistinct. In this, it is not ultimately constructive, and herein is its crucial limitation.

Modern psychology has not rejected Freud out-of-hand, and neither should we. It may well be that Freud's analysis of religion as neurotic wish-fulfillment has validity for a more limited range of religious phenomena than that which Freud had in mind, and psychoanalysis may yet prove to be of great value in understanding religious neuroses and delusions. To reduce all religious experience to these, on the other hand, is patently absurd.

A second important psychological model of religion which deserves consideration is that of Jung and his school. Jung, as a former disciple of Freud's, makes the connection between religion and madness; however, the evaluative connotations are reversed. Madness and religion are, to Jung, means by which the unconscious is revealed to us, and the unconscious itself is connected with the sacred, (cf. his essay, "The Transcendent Function", (1971)).

Whatever the intrinsic validity of Jung's mythologically-oriented understanding of religion, its crucial limitation is in a single-minded focus on mythology, mysticism and individual experience. If Freud looks at religion and sees nothing but neuroses, then Jung may be said to see nothing but inspired visions. Jung displays a complete disregard throughout his writings for the social aspects of religion, and his relentless insistence on interpreting all individual religious experiences in mythological and mystical terms renders his work naive and idiosyncratic. His potential value, if any would be in a phenomenological understanding of personal growth and its symbols; to an empirically-based, descriptive psychology, Jung offers little.

A third major luminary in the psychology of religion is that giant of psychology, William James, whose approach is described perfectly by the title of his book, "The Varieties of Religious Experience". James' approach to

his subject matter was much more taxonomic than Freud's or Jung's, dealing with the interaction of the religious variable with different character types, discussing how the religious experience differed in different temperaments. In this enterprise, James delineated potentially useful categories such as "healthy-minded" vs "unhealthy-minded" religion, "once-born" vs "twice-born" religiosity, and illuminated these concepts with a variety of case histories.

James, however, suffers from much the same failings as does Jung. While Jung took a sort of divinely-inspired schizophrenia for his principal datum, anticipating R.D. Laing by a half century, James relies upon more conventional experiences of conversion, and the biographies of "religious virtuosi". Like Jung, however, James exhibits a strong bias toward the mystical and the experiential, having little to say about religion in the everyday lives of ordinary individuals. Like Jung, James seems to have been quite oblivious to the fact that religion exists other than as a private experience, nor did he have anything to say about religion as a regulative device for societies or individuals. For James, one is either preoccupied with religion, or completely apart from it, while in truth, most people are probably between those two poles.

Finally, we come to Adorno, (Adorno et al., 1950), whose study entitled The Authoritarian Personality is a classic work in the social-psychological study of religion.

The formidable body of knowledge accumulated by Adorno and his successors is in a sense the continuation of the Jamesian enterprise of collecting and classifying data concerning religion and character. The methods used by these social psychologists are thoroughgoingly empirical, and their use of broad population samples gives their work a credibility not affordable to the psychiatric, case-history based speculations of Freud, Jung, James, and others.

Unfortunately, the mere collection of data does not in itself bring about understanding; a theoretical understanding also requires some kind of theoretical model of the phenomena under observation. In general, there has been a lack of such theoretical content in the work of the social psychologists, who have tended to direct their research on personality and religion in the direction of theories of rigidity and fascism. As we shall see in later chapters, this orientation fails to account for a considerable body of data concerning religion and personality.

In sum, there exists a lack of a unifying perspective in the context of which religion can be understood as the widespread human phenomenon which it is. What is needed is a view of religion which can account for the religiosity of the ordinary man, in his equally ordinary situation, a psychological perspective paralleling the sociological perspectives which, since the turn of the present century, have given us a broad overview of religion in a variety of

societies and situations. Happily, many data have been collected, and these data could be put to good use given the existence of a theoretical frame of reference of sufficient scope, for, although the psychology of religion has almost invariably gone in search of the idiosyncratic, the pathological, the exceptional and the grotesque, it has consistently stumbled upon the normal, the commonplace, and the healthy.

Chapter 2: A Sociological Perspective

In the previous chapter, it was observed that theories of religion by sociologists have tended to provide more comprehensive and theoretically integrated views of religion than have psychological theories. Such sociologists as Durkheim, Weber and Bellah have all provided theoretical overviews of religion which describe a broad spectrum of religious phenomena, explaining aspects of individual and collective religious behaviour, interactions of religion and culture, symbolic and functional significance of myth and ritual, and so forth.

The weakness of psychology in this area, it would appear, is not primarily attributable to any lack of intelligence on the part of psychologists of religion, nor is it due to any inherent and insuperable limitations of psychological methodology. Rather, it is the result of the essentially social nature of religion as a human phenomenon. As Fallding (1972, pp.8) so aptly puts it, "Man's whole life is spiritual simply because his situation is social and cultural".

Sociological theories of religion since Durkheim share certain basic areas of agreement, to the general effect that religion provides a cohesive force by means of making sacred the central principles of a culture, thus

fulfilling the dual function of ensuring social cohesion and of providing a secure framework in which the individual may live his life with the assurance of a certain degree of predictability from his family and institutional milieu.

Such sociological theories, of course, are also psychological to their very core, as the following passage (Fallding, 1968, pp.14-15) illustrates:

"It has not been customary to view sacralization as the full flowering of the process of institutionalization, yet this is how it should...be regarded. Institutionalization is essentially a two-sided process of keeping up a valued practice and building it into a whole. The practice is cut down to size even as steps are taken to perpetuate it, and it is thus legitimated. The religious quest is simply this same operation in its most inclusive reach. A people's postulation of a supernatural is an action of exactly the same kind as their pursuit of a political union or an integrated family. The supernatural they postulate is simply the wholeness in their total involvement with life, just as government is the wholeness in their political life and family unity the wholeness in their domestic life...That men repeatedly push through to the supernatural in their pursuit of meaning, and take it for their only guarantor of meaning, is simply a fact for sociology to receive...If there be any who do not concern themselves with the supernatural explicitly yet devote their lives to values, it comes to the same thing so far as "wholeing" is concerned. For values are ends men seek for their own sake, and anything set above the mundane in

that way envelops it in a unitary meaning. Dogma or no, there is a beginning of religion in values. Conversely, the worship of holiness is not strictly distinct from the passion for wholeness in value commitment".

Such a sociologist's definition of religion is as much psychological as it is sociological; religion is seen as an activity called "wholeing", a human striving for a subjective state of completeness, and this striving, a psychological notion itself, is seen as being at the root of religious activity. Fallding describes three characteristics of belief systems which define religion (1974, pp.27); these are transcendence, comprehensiveness, and dogmatic closure. Given Fallding's definition, the distinction between the psychological and sociological explanations of religion would become meaningless, at least on a theoretical level. Empirically, on the other hand, such a theory opens up the possibility of testing various implicit and explicit hypotheses embedded in the model. Such an endeavour could result in the development of a model of religion which, while theoretically unified, has empirical feet planted firmly on the twin data bases of psychology and sociology. Chemistry deals with aggregates of atoms, while physics deals with the atom and its components, and yet the frontiers of the two disciplines are largely indistinguishable. A similar integration of social scientific approaches to the study of religion should present few

serious difficulties.

A theory perhaps richer still in psychological content is Hans Mol's (1976) analysis of religion as "sacralization of identity". This theory incorporates a number of unique features which lead to testable psychological hypotheses, and these are interesting from both scientific and ideological perspectives.

In going beyond the notion of religion as meaning-seeking to that of sacralizing identities, Mol is not merely substituting an equivalent phrase, nor is he stating quite what Fallding does. While Fallding posits religion as the product of human striving for wholeness, Mol puts it on a biological and anthropological basis as the result of evolution and as having phylogenetic analogs in other species:

"What do I mean when I say that religion is the sacralization of identity? Let us take identity first. There is impressive evidence that for a large number of animals in general and for the primates in particular the place they occupy is of fundamental importance...Ethologists sometimes define this identity in terms of specific territories which the animal will defend with decreasing fury the further away from the center the threat occurs. At other times they define it in terms of the place the animal occupies in specific rank orders of the species. This place too is defended with ardour and passion...From chickens to treeshrews, baboons, gorillas and man there is a consistent

status ranking within each species, but the gestures to maintain the rank gradually evolve from overt threats to subtle cues and from physical attacks to deference... When one turns to the way "identity" is used in relation to human beings, it seems that the element of ardour remains, but that the locations of identity greatly multiply".

- (Mol, 1976, pp.1-2)

According to Mol, identity may be embodied in any of a huge variety of lifestyles, value systems and pursuits, but the principal foci of identity where religion has been concerned are the individual himself, the family and the group, as well as the society as a whole.

This identity, according to Mol, is not merely the social-psychological notion of self-concept as the sum of roles and expectations of behaviour, but rather involves the individual also having a stake in defending the social context in which those roles are carried out. Inasmuch as this may involve a contradiction of individual aspirations, a compromising of individual desires in the interests of the social unit, the individual and group foci of identity are by nature somewhat at odds, and exist in a dialectical relationship with one another:

"The stability and continuity of the social order have repeatedly been undermined by the "id" forces of the individual, around which personal identity could naturally crystallize itself. And the other way round: personal identity and the flowering of individual creativity and independence have often been grievously inhibited by monolithic social

forces. The point is not that there is no reciprocity between personal and social identity. On the contrary: religious organizations have often survived precisely because of their significance in the interaction between, and interdependence of, society and individuals. However, for a full picture neither their failures nor their successes in resolving these conflicts should be overlooked. If they are, and a predominantly social psychological view prevails, man will appear too exclusively as a manipulator of roles and a manager of impressions rather than the rebel brought to heel by a society which insists that he is good instead of only appearing to be that way".

-(Mol, 1976, pp.76)

According to Mol, sacralization of identity, which necessarily involves the assertion of a degree of authority by the collective focus at the expense of the individual one, is a perennial social process which counteracts the excessive erosion of groups and their values, and the excessive emphasis on individual identity with its concomitant normlessness and anomie. This, according to Mol, is at least true of traditionally religious modes of sacralization, and he puts it in the following evolutionary perspective:

"Sacralization to me is the process by means of which on the level of symbol systems certain patterns acquire the same taken-for-granted, stable, eternal quality which on the level of instinctive behaviour was acquired by the consolidation and stabilization of new genetic materials Sacral-

ization then is a sort of brake applied to unchecked infinite adaptations in symbol systems for which there is increasingly less evolutionary necessity and which become increasingly more dysfunctional for the emotional security of personality and the integration of tribe or community. To say the same in an over-simplified way: Sacralization is to the dysfunctional potential of symbol systems what antibodies are to the dysfunctional, cancerous possibilities in physical systems. Sacralization produces immunity against persuasion similarly to the biological immunization process".
 (Mol, 1976, pp.6)

Mol sees mankind as forever playing out this dialectic with rationality, normlessness and anxiety on its one pole, and irrationalism, authoritarian rigidification and stagnation at the other extreme, represented by the two opposed forces of secularization and sacralization. The present age, Mol believes, is one in which the secularizing, differentiating forces predominate, and in which alienation is prevalent and endemic to Western society. The source of the problem, in Mol's view, is in the overextension of rational individualism and its corresponding weakening of group cohesion and sacralization ties:

"The self-perpetuating forces of change appear to be stronger than the countervailing forces of consolidation. To blame other (social) integrating forces for the frustration of the individual is rather myopic and naive. A sacralized individualism may actually contribute to the incapacity of a society to reinforce norms and values or to provide a stable system of meaning. The problems of

social integration are as severe as those of personal integration. Both are equally beleaguered by the disrupting forces of change and marginality... The major reason why the militant British Humanists, the Huxleys, Bertrand Russell and his followers, Fromm and many other American psychoanalysts never had much of a mass following is that they grossly overestimated the solidity of rational individualism as a basis for identity and that ironically they defined alienation in terms of the very religious and social forces from which, in final resort, the therapeutic processes had to spring".

-(Mol, 1976, pp.43)

In the above sentences, Mol has not only provided a diagnosis of contemporary man's condition, but has made certain distinct empirical generalizations; namely, that rationalism and humanism are a less adequate base for identity than conventional religiosity, and that the former are dysfunctional to social cohesion, while the latter is presumably ameliorative.

This rather conservative viewpoint calls into question four sacred articles of faith of liberal social science; that individual self-actualization and the free expression of sexuality are generally desirable, that dogmatism and cognitive rigidity are to be avoided, that social views of an authoritarian nature are dangerous to society, and that prejudice against members of other groups is harmful. It is, in fact, this perspective which sets Mol most clearly apart from other sociologists such as Fallding and Bellah,

and which makes his model so interesting for us.

Regarding the first of these questions, that of self-actualization and sexuality, Mol criticizes philosophers and psychologists who preach individual self-actualization as naive, insofar as they are indifferent to society's need for cohesion. Individual integrity, in Mol's view, cannot long survive where values are privatized at the expense of a social meaning system, and where individualism runs amok:

"The critics of self-orientation in modern society seem to feel in their bones that a person's sense of security or authenticity depends on the continuity of values such as honesty, reciprocity, trust, capacity for give and take, commitment to specific forms of social order and justice, reliability, and social responsibility. All these values and the beliefs that undergird them, must be socially reinforced, they seem to say. A stable or even sacralized system of social values and beliefs are thought to be necessary for the long-run maintenance of personal integrity, however much in the short run the individual can take refuge in his own buttressed world".... -ibid., pp.209

Mol is thus saying that excessive individualism is not only dysfunctional to social cohesion, but that it is ultimately threatening to personal integration, insofar as man is a social being whose psychological health depends to a large degree on sharing with his fellows a relationship of trust and mutual understanding. Mol is also

doubtful of the ability of individualistic man to maintain a high moral standard of behaviour:

"The scholarly critics appear to have the average citizen on their side. In an inarticulated way the latter seems to feel the personal danger of living in a society where trust is openly accepted to be a facade for the power hungry and where the appearance of honesty is more useful than being intrinsically honest. The argument of usefulness is never a very strong one with the man in the street. The cleavage between individual and social need cannot be naively abridged by the rational argument that one should surrender ego-enhancing and id-expressing satisfactions for the sake of the social good. This is particularly so when advancing the social good carries with it only feeble social rewards. The man in the street is vaguely aware that in the past the norms of goodness, honesty, reliability etc. were implemented not because their social necessity could be demonstrated, but because they could be drilled into the recalcitrant through lifelong socialization processes, reinforced by sacred forces which would compensate on the infallible level of omniscience and omnipotence for what a fallible society...could only feebly strengthen".

-ibid, pp.210

Dogmatism, authoritarianism and prejudice are regarded by Mol as essentially responses of consolidation and definition of identity boundaries. Closed-mindedness has a personal and social value which liberal social scientists have largely tended, perhaps for ideological reasons, to

overlook:

"As we have assumed that the need for identity boundaries is both universal and closely linked with the essence and function of religion, are we therefore implying that religion fosters and reinforces prejudice?... The answer is yes, provided prejudice is taken in its literal meaning of pre-judgement: Judging our environment (and events and groups within it) in anticipation and from a certain vantage point. Using this wide definition one is actually led to stress the inevitability, universality and even necessity of prejudice. Our Western and even more, our scientific cultures frown on this usage, but even so, let us see what happens when we think about prejudice, or closed-mindedness as a function rather than a dysfunction. Prejudice can be an important method of protecting and strengthening a group. It inhibits the possible influence one group can have on another. It spontaneously conserves a particular social order and its distinctions. It makes up for the insecurity of open-mindedness. It maximizes cohesion and minimizes amorphousness"

-ibid.,pp.111

The foregoing examination of Mol's perspective has raised a number of psychological hypotheses which we will soon be able to apply. Essentially, Mol has delineated two poles, representing the effects of secularization, and the emphasis on the individual identity boundary, and those of sacralization, taken in the sense of religion as customarily defined in the modern West, involving the sacralization of the group identity boundary and the extra-individual deri-

vation of norms. This leads us to expect the existence of personality characteristics, attitudes and behavioural tendencies on the parts of religious and non-religious individuals consistent with the patterns discerned sociologically. More secularized individuals, one would expect, would be more rationalistic and more individualistic, and less dogmatic than more religious individuals. Such people would presumably exhibit greater tolerance and open-mindedness and to excel their more religious counterparts in novel problem-solving situations, while founding their identities in abstract and diffuse loci. Such individuals, on the other hand, might be more erratic in their behaviour and less consistent in their moral standards. If Mol is right about the relative efficacy of individualism and group-boundary sacralization vis à vis personal integration, then these individuals may be expected to show signs of greater anxiety and poorer social adjustment.

More conventionally religious individuals, on the other hand, may be expected to be more concrete in their styles of thinking, more prone to stereotyping and prejudice, more conventionalistic in their moral standards of behaviour, and to have more positive attitudes regarding authority. Such individuals would be less self-actualizing than the liberal type, but might enjoy the benefits of greater social and personal integration and consequent emotional security. On the dysfunctional side, their con-

ventionalism might lead them at times to fail to generalize their moral standards from one situation to another, leading to a legalistic and situation-bound ethic which focuses on literalistic interpretations of moral rules. One other negative consequence we might expect would be a rigidity in the face of novel situations resulting in a relative inability to cope with novel and challenging situations, particularly when such situations contained some inherent threat to the identity system.

It was noted in the previous chapter that the current empirical literature in psychology, while desperately lacking in theoretical integration of the sort that we have been discussing here, is replete with experimental studies comparing religiosity to a variety of psychological variables. This literature, fortunately, provides many empirical tests, both direct and indirect, of the view of religion we have been discussing here. This being the case, a review of this literature should serve to provide confirmation or disconfirmation of Mol's theory, and should the former occur, then both sociology and psychology will be so much the better for it; a sociological theory of religion will have been given a strong empirical basis in psychology, while a large body of psychological data will be subsumed within a unifying explanatory framework of theory. Further testable hypotheses may also be expected to emerge from the

exercise.

The following chapter begins this enterprise, which consists of material of an empirical nature culled from the journal literature abstracted in Psychological Abstracts during the present decade.

Chapter 3: Religion and Prejudice

It is fitting indeed that we begin to verify the identity theory through examination of the literature in the field of prejudice research, for not only is this where the postwar psychology of religion began (cf. Adorno et al, 1950; Rokeach, 1960; Allport, 1954, etc), but it also leads into considerations of the finer points of religion and personality which may hold valuable insights for our enquiry.

In the previous chapter, inference was made from the identity theory to the effect that people who were more religious in the conventional sense, typically operationalized as church attendance or scores on paper-and-pencil belief scales, would exhibit greater prejudice than more liberally minded individuals. We quoted Mol as saying that prejudice constitutes merely the "pre-judging" of the environment; it represents a valid strategy for minimizing the threat of "amorphousness". This is similar to what Adorno, et al (1950) characterize as "intolerance of ambiguity", which is one of the principal dimensions of the Authoritarian Personality, although Mol and Adorno presumably differ in the value judgements applied to this trait.

According to Mol, this process of boundary-reinforcement known as prejudice can be mapped onto that cog-

nitive dimension commonly referred to as abstractness-concreteness, and relies on the tangibility of the group identity boundary to maximize the latter:

"The difference between the open-minded and closed-minded person from our point of view is that the latter seems to be in greater need of "discernable"; close-at-hand, more concrete boundaries, whereas the former finds his security in larger, culturally more diffuse, less concrete delineations. The latter are just as real, but hardly obvious, less controversial, and much more taken-for-granted".

-(Mol, 1976, pp.112)

Again, in the same chapter on prejudice, he writes:

"The extrinsic person is more likely to defend and sacralize a personal or group identity. The intrinsic person is more likely to defend and contribute to the sacralization of a larger social identity and see the self in a more cosmic perspective. The boundary conflicts, about which the researchers in this area are actually talking, correspondingly differ from the extrinsic to the intrinsic person. The former stresses specific intra-societal divisions, the latter more general, extra-societal ones. Culture-bound as most researchers of necessity are, the intra-societal divisions are stressed because they increase rather than decrease tension. The intrinsic person, on the other hand, relativizes these divisions from the perspective of his larger vision and thereby mitigates them. These internal divisions draw the attention because they sharpen internal boundaries at the expense of social integr-

ation. They are therefore more discernable..."
-ibid, pp.114

If Mol is correct in identifying prejudice as a process of sharpening and concretizing boundaries, then both conventional, "extrinsic/dogmatic/authoritarian" religiosity and ethnic prejudice exist as products of a common factor, namely the perception of a threat from "amorphousness", ambiguity of the identity framework, or whatever. On the other hand, we may not necessarily expect prejudice, in the sense of ethnocentrism, to be directly associated with religiosity, insofar as, as Mol notes, the world religions tend to promote various ethical notions stressing the universal brotherhood of man. One would rather expect the rigidification of the identity boundary to occur at some locus of identity which is most threatened, and which is also of particular importance, i.e., to the identity framework as a whole.

One recent study (Jamieson, 1970) represents a rather direct test of the notion of religion as boundary consolidation. In this study, the author asked two groups of subjects, teachers' college students from a Catholic Club and from a fundamentalist Evangelical Union to learn a set of twelve statements. These twelve statements were divided into four categories: plausible, pro-Catholic; plausible, anti-Catholic; implausible pro-Catholic; and implausible, anti-Catholic. It was hypothesised that sub-

jects would learn plausible statements in favor of an attitude and implausible statements opposing them more readily than they would learn implausible-favoring or plausible-opposing statements, and that recall of statements would also reflect such a biasing tendency.

The results of this study were only partly in confirmation of these predictions. Catholic subjects did recall plausible pro-Catholic statements and implausible anti-Catholic statements better than they did plausible anti-Catholic statements or implausible pro-Catholic statements, but no particular bias emerged in the performance of the Protestant subjects. The authors merely conclude that the study suggests that the notion of selective learning and recall, while not clearly refuted, is more complex than has been previously supposed.

From our vantage point, an obvious explanation suggests itself. The significance of the pro- and anti-Catholic statements within the individual framework of identity is greater for the Catholic subjects, who define their identity in terms of their Catholicism, than it is for the Protestant subjects, however anti-Catholic their views may be. Identity theory thus explains this result in terms of Mol's cardinal notion of the maintenance of the framework of identity; one's biases become more pronounced the more one approaches the sanctum sanctorum of the identity space or territory.

In the previous chapter, Mol is quoted as defining prejudice as a process of pre-judgement of the environment, or, in more psychological terms, of having a clear set of criteria whereby incoming information may be sorted and evaluated, thus minimizing randomness or ambiguity in the stimulus field. If this process occurs at the level of group identity, ethnocentric prejudice may be expected to result, and we would expect a difference between prejudiced and non-prejudiced individuals in their respective tendencies to sort strangers into the categories us and them. The existence of such differences has in fact been recently observed (Dorfman, Keeve and Saslow, 1971).

The authors used a signal detection analysis as a method of partialing out response bias from sensitivity (cf. Swets and Tanner, 1961), and asked subjects who were both high and low in anti-Semitism to view slides of faces which were each projected for a short period. Subjects' task was to tell whether each face was Jewish or non-Jewish. They found that high-prejudiced subjects were slightly better than low-prejudiced subjects at distinguishing Jewish from non-Jewish faces. More significantly, they found that the high-prejudiced subjects, although they did not tend to rate faces as "Jewish" more often than did the low-prejudiced subjects, did display considerably more confidence in the judgements they made.

These results lend confirmation to Mol's notion of

prejudice as "pigeon-holing" of information. The fact that the high-prejudiced subjects also showed more confidence in their judgements is also consistent with the view that the psychological dynamics of prejudice derive from a striving for closure, which may be maximized by convincing oneself of the unerring accuracy of one's discriminating abilities.

If prejudice and religiosity both represent processes in which group identities are consolidated, it follows that there will be some association between the two, although the balance of evidence suggests a correlational rather than a causal connection. The postwar period has seen a great deal of research on the relationship between religiosity and prejudice, most notable being the contributions of Allport (1962) and Glock and Stark (1966).

The latter report a positive relationship between religious bigotry and anti-Semitism (Glock and Stark, 1966, pp.137-138), although this relationship seems to be modulated by such intervening variables as ritual involvement. The authors argue that Christianity does in fact cause anti-Semitism, maintaining prejudice against Jews through the historical belief in Jewish responsibility for the crucifixion of Christ.

Allport (1966) hypothesized the existence of "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" religious believers, with

the intrinsic types being more privately religious, less dogmatic and less self-serving in their religiosity, and the extrinsic type being more regular in church attendance and higher in prejudice. This dichotomy, we noted earlier, is characterized by Mol as being a difference of identity style, with the extrinsic type favoring the more concrete, tangible locus of identity as opposed to the abstract, diffuse identity structure of the intrinsic.

A number of problems have arisen, however, with the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy (cf. Hunt and King, 1971), which appears to lack the unidimensionality of a fundamental, root trait. The above cited article is but one of a number which have concluded that the I-E scale does not in fact represent a continuum; Hunt and King conclude that E is a selfishness and instrumental approach to religion which is not necessarily associated with any particular belief style, while I has simply not been properly operationalized.

The tendency of research in this area in the last few years has been to disconfirm any notion of a simple association of religiosity with prejudice. Hoge and Carroll (1973), using a large-scale questionnaire study of church members in both Northern and Southern states of the U.S., found that religiosity was almost a zero-order predictor of religious and racial prejudice. The most important determinants of prejudice were in fact, in order

of strength of association, status concern, dogmatism and anomie. The authors of this study conclude that "the main determinants of prejudice are not religious beliefs so much as personality rigidity and personal need for unchanging cognitive and social structures".

This finding is certainly consistent with what the identity theory would lead us to expect. Prejudice seems to arise as a response to a threat against the framework of identity, rather than as a simple consequence of a type of religious belief. Yet because status insecurity and anomie are also sufficient conditions for extrinsic religiosity, we may expect there to be a frequent coincidence of that type of religiosity and prejudice. Factor analytical studies such as the above, however, serve to show that this statistical association is due to a third cause, so that when all other variables are controlled for, we can see that the relationship is not Glock and Stark's causal one.

Another study using a large-scale questionnaire technique was performed by Middleton (1973), whose conclusions are similar to those of the previous study, and who found that religious libertarianism and dogmatism had almost no covariance with anti-Black and anti-Semitic prejudice. The important factors in prejudice were again anomie and authoritarianism, as well as socio-economic status.

The image of the prejudiced individual begins thus to emerge as one of an insecure person whose identity is weak from a social-psychological standpoint, possibly due to status or role deficiencies. Other studies tend to support this view.

Wilson and Shutte (1973) found a relationship between political conservatism, religiosity and racism in white South Africans. All of these variables appeared to result from a central factor, which the authors described as "fear of uncertainty". Clearly, the attitude of a white South African will reflect the need to preserve European or Afrikaaner identity through its religious, political and racial institutions, and one would therefore expect the observed results. The fact that the entire culture or framework of identity is under threat should result in a conservatism which behaves more unidimensionally than does American conservatism, as the involvement of all aspects of the culture in the maintenance of cohesion is acutely felt.

Other studies suggest that prejudice tends to characterize individuals whose identities have major weaknesses on the personal level. Cheson, Stricker and Fry (1970) found extraordinarily high correlations between general and anti-Semitic prejudice and the Byrne Repression-Sensitization Scale, which is a measure of an individual's tendency to accept or reject the awareness of his reactions.

and feelings. The strength of the correlations obtained approaches the intercorrelation of alternate forms of a single scale measuring one variable; thus, prejudice and repression, as originally suggested in The Authoritarian Personality (Adorno et al, 1950), are very closely associated. We note, on the other hand, that the Repression-Sensitization variable is statistically independent of religiosity (Swindell and L'Abate, 1970), which suggests again that the roots of prejudice are social-psychological in their nature.

Bagley, Boshier and Nias (1974) investigated relationships between various dimensions of conservatism in Dutch, English and New Zealand subjects, and found two statistically independent dimensions of conservatism, one which loaded on religiosity, and the other, which loaded on racist-punitive attitudes. This latter dimension, we would suppose, is that factor which actually causes prejudice.

In addition to authoritarianism, low self-esteem has been implicated in the picture of prejudice, (Rule and Hewitt, 1970); (Chabassol, 1970).

Findings discussed in this chapter thus seem to present a reasonably consistent picture of the relationship between religiosity and prejudice. While prejudice is often found with religiosity, the relationship appears to be correlational rather than causal, and may be a result of

an association which both have with dogmatism. The prejudiced individual seems to be using prejudice as a defense against uncertainty, and the locus of this uncertainty may occur at the group level, typically when a culture or group is threatened as a whole, or it may reflect more individual status concerns. Prejudice appears as a mechanism of identity maintenance, but one which is relatively independent of religious belief, the two being associated only when religion itself emphasizes the sacralization of a particular, usually threatened group boundary.

An important difference between religion and prejudice is that the latter appears to result from deprivation, whereas the former, as we shall see in later chapters, need not. Prejudice can usually be shown to be a response to a certain threat to an identity framework; religion is an identity framework, or at least a representation of it. We are thus led to the conclusion that prejudice is fundamentally peripheral to the psychological study of religion, representing only a special case of boundary-maintenance. It certainly does not, as liberal social psychologists once seemed to think, epitomize the religious personality.

Chapter 4: Direct Measures

It should by now be apparent that the search for evidence to verify the identity theory must rely to a large extent on indirect measures and circumstantial evidence, since the studies in the psychological literature are largely not formulated in terms which Mol employs. It would thus be impossible for us to interrogate the psychological literature, demanding whether religion "sacralizes identities". Our method instead is to examine the psychological data to see if they are consistent with what Mol's theory would lead us to expect. If the atomic particles of secularization and sacralization exist as Mol describes them, then they will leave traces in the cloud chamber of personality, allowing us to infer their existence as real entities in much the same way as modern science accepts the existence of its own invisible world.

This chapter, however, contains the closest approach that this thesis makes to a direct measurement of Mol's variables.

The study of prejudice, which we examined in the preceding chapter, leads to the study of personality. The essential connection is from the level of the attitude to that of the trait, a concept which subsumes the attitude. An attitude is typically defined as a hypothetical pre-

following way:

"...both...are predispositions to respond; both ...may initiate or guide behaviour; and both are the joint outcome of genetic factors and learning. Nevertheless, there remain certain distinctions between the two concepts. First, the attitude is linked to a specific object or class of objects while the trait is not. Thus, the generality of the trait is almost always greater than that of the attitude; in fact, as the number of objects increases to which the attitude refers, it comes to resemble a trait more and more. "

-(Hall and Lindzey, 1957, pp.41)

Thus the study of the attitude leads to that of the personality trait, and the connection between personality, which may be seen as an organization of attitudes into traits, and sociological theory, which is, along with individual variables, a major determinant of attitudes, becomes apparent.

Attitudes and traits constitute in fact the main indirect method available to us of verifying the social forces and variables which Mol proposes, and, conversely, the identity theory constitutes the means by which broad patterns of attitudes and traits may be explained. Before actually attempting this exercise, however, encumbered as we shall be with the threefold conceptual baggage of sociological theory, attitude theory, and personality theory, a brief foray, applying more direct methods, would be in order. This is made possible by the existence of a small

expression, all the more so when the social forces which were supposed to channel the instinct, were ineffective. Here more than anywhere else do we have good evidence that the relation between personal, group and social identity is not only one of harmonious interdependence and mutual reinforcement (as seems to be the sacred assumption in much anthropological, psychological and sociological literature) but also one of competition. The maximization of one also tends to minimize or atrophy the other".

-(Mol, 1976, pp.199)

"...the more amorphous the social order and the less effective social control, the more likely man's self-realization may crystallize around his sexual impulses. Logically, this leads us to speculate that the more religions are concerned with sacralizing social or group identity, the more they will advocate sexual restraint. On the other hand the more they stress personal identity, the more they will stress the sacredness of sexual fulfillment".

-ibid, pp.200

While Mol identifies individualistic sexuality with secularizing forces, he does not hold the view that sexuality is necessarily inimical to social cohesion; he notes the important symbolic integrating function it plays in many primitive societies, and makes clear the distinction between the social consequences of regulated and unregulated sexuality:

"Other reasons why one should not downgrade harmonious interaction between the sacralization of self (and often sexual fulfillment) and sacralization of social identity (and often sexual restraint) are the

many positive codes as well as negative taboos operating in most societies. Regulation does not mean prohibition. This combination of positive codes and negative taboos in particular societies is usually a very good indication as to where the sensitive division is drawn".

-ibid, pp.201

For Mol, what is at stake in the matter of sexuality is thus less the sexuality itself than the focus of identity embodied and affirmed by that sexuality, be it the sacralization of the self, or of the group, or of the society at large. Mol also notes that sexuality can have a unifying and strengthening effect upon group boundaries by the mere abstention from it, citing the ecclesiastical personnel of the Catholic Church and various utopian groups as examples. What seems to be of paramount importance to Mol is that sexuality represents a complex of very strong motivation in the human psyche which, if not integrated into a larger frame of reference and socially legitimated, tends to run amuck within the social identity framework.

Since Christianity has traditionally downgraded the pursuit of individual sexual pleasure, notably in the writings of Saints Paul and Augustine, one might infer that Christianity sees something inimical to itself in the individual pursuit of this type of pleasure.

It is this latter hypothesis, that of a basic opposition between religious and sexual commitment, that Mol

puts forth in a recent review of literature on sexual and religious variables (Mol, 1970a). Mol cites data from a survey of Australian college students showing that church-going unmarried students were considerably more likely to be virgins than were non-church-going single students. Mol also quotes findings from a survey of his own (Mol, 1970b), showing an inverse relationship between permissive sexual attitudes and degree of religious belief.

Explaining these observations in terms of his notion of conflict of commitments, Mol writes:

"Maslow (1964) saw "peak experiences", whether religious, aesthetic, ideological, for example, as meaning-bestowing and thus contributing to the integration of the personality. Maslow thought of peak-experience in sex as providing a sense of the numinous, or awe-inspiring, as well as a religious experience. Apart from the fact that the concept of commitment as an explanatory device has the advantages of constancy and comprehensiveness, both commitment and peak-experiences obviously have much in common. However, the competition between them should be stressed more. Using Maslow's frame of reference, one could postulate that the inevitable institutionalization of the processes of these peak-experiences, in order to guarantee their survival, will sharpen the boundaries of the various areas in which they occur. The perceived competition between these boundary-maintaining areas may explain why Puritans and Pietists highlighted the religious, and

simultaneously downgraded sexual and artistic experiences. On a lower level of generality, where we are concerned with the concrete social structuring of these experiences, the actual institutional foci tend to be mutually exclusive". (italics mine)
-(Mol, 1970a, pp.112)

In the conclusion of his article, Mol also suggests another hypothesis concerning the conflict between religion and sexuality. According to this latter hypothesis, the "mutual exclusion" between religion and sexual commitment is not due merely to the problem of channeling strong individual motives into socially acceptable patterns, but also reflects deeper psychological variables, relating to what he suggests may be "that which makes for greater wholeness or better personality integration". In order to control for the "foci of identity" variable, Mol suggests that "... research is necessary to delineate commitment operationally and to discover whether religion and sexuality are competitive once the level of commitment to each has been established in particular instances".

This latter hypothesis is thus suggesting that sexuality, even where it is successfully institutionalized, may be attenuated in the presence of a more highly developed religious faculty, whereas the former hypothesis merely asserts that sexuality is threatening to religiosity insofar as the former tends to sharpen individual boundaries of identity to the detriment of those larger boundaries which

religion seeks to reinforce.

Another Australian questionnaire study, similar in design to Mol's, investigates these two hypotheses. In this study (Martin and Westbrook, 1970), four types of measure were used; sexual attitudes, sexual behaviour as reported, religious attitudes, and reported church attendance. As Mol found, attitudes toward sex were more consistent with religious belief than was actual sex behaviour; a higher standard of conduct was held by the believers than was actually attained. On the other hand, while pre-marital virginity and post-marital fidelity were higher among religious respondents, sexual activity was higher among non-virgin religious singles, and among frequent church-going married individuals. The last of these findings, if true, tends to support the first Mol hypothesis insofar as those for whom sex is most completely legitimated, through their participation in religious institutions, may feel most free to enjoy it. Although a number of other possible explanations exist for this finding, what is most clear is that it is more consistent with the first than with the second hypothesis, which predicts an attenuation of sexual activity with increasing religious commitment.

The observation that premarital sexual activity is more frequent among believing non-virgins is anomalous, and may represent any of a number of possible intervening variables, and may be the result of an acquiescent type of person-

ality which simply cannot say "no" either to items on an attitude inventory or to sexual desires. At any rate, this type of study, involving as it does behavioural and attitudinal measures of two underlying variables being examined, shows the difficulty sometimes encountered in drawing conclusions from the combination of one type of measure with another.

A survey reported in the magazine Psychology Today, in contrast, finds data supporting the more psychological of Mol's two hypotheses. Athanasiou, Shaver and Tavris (1970), using a battery of attitudinal and behavioural self-report measures, found that conservatively religious respondents tended not only to display the expected attitude structure, disapproving of homosexuals, liberal abortion laws, sex education and distribution of birth-control and sex-education information, but also reflected these attitudes in their behaviour. They report that very religious respondents were less likely to have engaged in oral-genital stimulation, to have engaged in premarital or extramarital intercourse, to have had homosexual experiences, to have swapped mates, to have tried or thought about anal intercourse, or to have exposed themselves to pornographic materials. Most significantly, such subjects reported lower frequencies of intercourse, even when married. Highly religious females also reported less frequent orgasms than

did less religious women.

Other studies confirm the main findings of the above survey. Edwards (1973) and Sutker, Sutker and Kilpatrick (1970) find similar relationships between sexual conduct and religious attitudes and behaviour, while Ruppel (1970), in a dimensional analysis, finds the intellectual, ideological and experiential dimensions of religiosity most important in predicting sexual conduct. Wallace and Wehmer (1972) confirm the finding that religious conservatives view erotic materials less frequently and evaluate them more negatively than do religious liberals, while Paige (1973) adds evidence to the hypothesis that conservatively religious individuals reject sexuality, in having found that traditionally religious women experience more distress during menstruation than do more liberal women.

Although the weight of the evidence seems to support the more psychological hypothesis, that the conflict between religion and sexuality has intrapersonal causes as well as social ones, several lines of explanation remain possible. One might argue that a strong religious commitment either robs sexuality of its source of motivation, or results in an organization of personality which contains less room or less need for the pursuit of the sexual "peak experience".

A more compelling hypothesis, however would seem to be that of a generalization of inhibition to sexual
~~behaviour having its origin in the restrictive sexual~~

codes communicated to the highly religious individual throughout childhood and prior to marriage, presumably resulting in a subsequent inability to fully enjoy sexual activity, even within a socially legitimated situation. This would better explain a number of the observations cited. For example, if personality were merely organized around a religious rather than a sexual identity focus, there would be no reason for such an individual to react with anything so strong as "disgust" or other aversion to pornographic or other erotic stimuli. One would rather expect the reaction to be one of indifference, or lack of affect; disgust is more compatible with a pattern of repression, maintained by aversive conditioning. Similarly, the experience of menstrual distress among more highly religious women fits the classical Freudian model of neurosis resulting from repression.

Such a hypothesized generalization of inhibition from childhood into married life would also be supported by the social environment of the highly religious individual. The conservatively religious newlywed is not suddenly encouraged to begin enjoying sex for its own intrinsic joys, nor does he find himself in an environment in which sex is freely discussed. On the contrary, he now finds sex has been legitimated only with respect to its procreative purpose, and must develop his sexuality with an equally inexperienced and inhibited partner. Such circum-

stances could only reinforce that pattern of sexual inhibitions acquired in earlier life.

If the inhibition hypothesis is correct, then a final test of the two Mol hypotheses within our culture would be very difficult to perform. Clearly, the "operant level", to use Skinner's term, of sexuality is lower among the conservatively religious, as Mol's psychological hypothesis would predict. However, this observation is also consistent with the purely sociological hypothesis of conflict of identity foci, insofar as generalization of inhibition may be said to occur. An inhibition arising from a social taboo, itself of social origin, could produce a psychological incompatibility between religiosity and sexuality through the mechanism of learning. Circumstantial evidence concerning the correlates of repression, (that is the strength of the aversion to sexuality among the conservatively religious, and their tendency to hold punitive attitudes toward those not sharing their sexual mores), lends credence to the inhibition hypothesis. Mol recognizes this difficulty when he writes:

"...the argument should be qualified. Perhaps neither religion nor sex may serve as commitment-requiring, unifying foci...There may be cultures, or sub-cultures, where sex is casual and not the intimate self-giving act of fulfilling both ego and partner as the West tends to emphasize. For instance, in the American Negro culture pre-marital permissiveness is only slightly lower amongst church-

goers..."
-(Mol, 1970a; pp.113)

Although, given a culture-bound situation in which it is impossible to decide between intra- and extra- individual origins for the Judaeo-Christian incompatibility of sexuality and faith, we cannot decide finally between Mol's two hypotheses, we can perhaps resolve the ambiguity by allowing a mingling of the two. Presumably, the religious traditions perceived the existence of a conflict between religion and sexuality as a result of a degree of psychological insight and perspicacity on the part of their originators, in which case a social taboo is in itself based on the perception of a psychological fact. Thus the intra- and extra-personal aspects of this issue are, for our culture, inextricably bound up in one another. If a taboo of the kind we have been discussing, whether based on valid or invalid psychological intuitions, exists, then the expression of individual sexuality becomes an antisocial act, thus reinforcing the reason for the taboo. The two hypotheses, in sum, may only be separated to the degree that one believes in the existence of a human nature apart from and prior to culture.

Besides sexuality, an aspect of behaviour that has been measured is that of helping-behaviour, which is after all another important aspect of morality, and one which might be expected to show the effects of religious belief.

Two studies on religion and helping-behaviour are presented here, and both of them lend confirmation to Mol's hypothesis that the distinction between the religious conservative and the religious liberal is one of identity boundaries.

The first of these studies (Forbes, TeVault, and Gromoll, 1971), used the lost-letter technique, in which subjects are given the opportunity to return a "lost" letter, as an empirical measure of tendency toward helping others. Letters were dropped in the doorways and parking lots of various liberal and conservative churches in a medium-sized midwestern American city. Approximately 40% of all letters were returned, and there were no statistically significant differences between the return rates of different denominations. Some of the letters, however, were dropped bearing insufficient postage. Significantly more of these letters were returned postage due by conservative Protestants than by Catholics or liberals, the latter two being indistinguishable in this regard. The authors interpret their findings in the following manner:

"These findings suggest that members of conservative churches are as willing to help strangers as are members of liberal and Catholic churches; yet they are less willing to spend six cents to do so. This result might reflect either lower incomes or greater frugality among members of conservative churches. However, these hypotheses are unlikely since Glock and Stark (1968) reported that conservative church members have incomes that are

equal to those of Catholic church members and only slightly lower than those of liberal church members. In addition, they reported that contributions of conservative church members were much higher than contributions of liberal or Catholic church members... The most parsimonious explanation of the present findings is that members of conservative churches are far less willing than their liberal or Catholic counterparts to make even trivial economic sacrifices for strangers. This interpretation is consistent with Stark and Glock's (reported by Stark, 1970) finding that conservative church members are less philanthropic than members of liberal churches..."

-(Forbes, TeVault and Gromoll, pp.948)

The finding that church contributions of conservative Protestants are higher than those of liberals, while their philanthropic inclinations toward strangers are lower, underscores neatly Mol's notion of identity boundary differences between the two styles. Mol would say that the liberal has a diffuse identity boundary encompassing to a degree all of humanity, while the conservative identifies with his congregation and church. Indeed, this would seem to be the only satisfactory explanation of these apparently anomalous findings.

Finally, we note a social psychological experiment (Darley and Batson, 1973) involving the use of an actor who appeared to have collapsed drunk on the sidewalk. Subjects were Princeton seminarians, and the dependent variable was whether each would stop and render aid to the man, and

if so, of what kind. No difference in "Good Samaritanism" was observed between liberal and conservative students, insofar as helping was concerned, but theologically conservative students tended to follow a more concrete pattern of action in helping the man, while liberals exhibited a more "tentative" pattern of behaviour, tending to direct more questions toward him, asking what was wrong with him, and so forth. Conservatives tended to dispense a cup of coffee and a sermon.

This latter study supports the notion of a more concrete style on the part of the theological conservative, consistent with his tendency to minimize uncertainty. It also tends to support the notion that, concomitant with the sacralization of the group identity boundary, there is a tendency to see individual acts in moral or theological rather than in psychological terms*.

To briefly review this chapter: Beginning with a methodological discussion concerning the matters being

*The existence of just such a tendency has been demonstrated by Toronto psychologist Blair Shaw (1970), using a Beliefs About Behaviour Inventory, which measures the relative extent to which a person uses each of three conceptual modes of behaviour: theological, illness and psychological. S's of high religiosity were consistently lower in use of a psychological model to conceptualize behaviour, while less religious S's were lower in their use of theological conceptualizations and higher in use of psychological ones.

measured in attitude theory and personality, and their relationship to sociological theory and psychological data, we argued that indirect methods of inference from one level to another constitute the means by which sociological theory may be applied to psychological data, providing verification for the former and explanation for the latter. Two major areas of research which do not employ or rely upon theoretical constructs, sexuality and helping-behaviour, were examined, and a pattern of evidence consistent with a number of Mol's major hypotheses concerning the existence and loci of identity, and the relationships between them, emerged. In the next chapter, we shall enter the more treacherous domain of personality theory, with its hypothetical constructs and inferential methods.

Chapter 5: In Search of the Religious Personality

As we have noted at several points in this thesis, the principal lines of theoretical interest in the area of religion and personality are based upon and derive from the domain of attitude measurement, the classic point of departure being the problems of fascism and prejudice. By means of the concept of the personality trait, authors in this field attempt to explain the organization of attitudes within individuals, attributing the observed patterns to underlying causes which may be measured as consistent tendencies or traits. This type of definition of the trait, derived in the preceding chapter from Roger Brown, may be taken as representative of social psychologists' use of the concept, and contains the important feature that the organization of personality represents the outcome of an interaction of psychological, biological and social forces.

Based as it has been on research on the subjects of prejudice and fascism, this literature has tended overwhelmingly to adopt a paradigm in which personalities are dichotomously classified into what may be characterized roughly as liberal and conservative types. An outgrowth of this research has been the generation of a body of studies investigating the correlations between religious belief and

traits of this kind. Variables investigated have included such well-known bipolar dimensions as authoritarianism-liberalism, open-closed mindedness, intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity, and internal-external locus of control.

The relevance of these studies to the task of applying Mol's identity theory of religion is, due to certain underlying similarities between these theories and his, greater than might appear on first inspection. As we noted in Chapter 2, Mol's interpretation of these dichotomous classifications of personality is essentially that the "conservative" type strives for "discernable, close-at-hand identity boundaries". The similarity between this notion and those of the social-psychologists is that the latter, while tending to interpret the conservative personality as rigid and dysfunctional, also tend to rely on concepts such as intolerance of ambiguity (Adorno et al, 1950) or a striving for consistency within a hierarchically organized system of beliefs (Rokeach, 1960), which, while differing in their evaluative connotations, amount in practice to much the same thing. Both Mol and these psychologists share the view that the conservative personality structure represents a means of dealing with a stimulus field which would otherwise seem hostile, threatening and unpredictable.

Of course, Mol and authors such as Adorno would also disagree on the origins of the concretizing tendencies we are discussing; the latter would see these in a some-

what psychoanalytical context, while the former would offer explanations in terms of a dialectic between the opposing forces of secularization and sacralization. This apparent divergence of explanations, however, represents a false dichotomy. Character deficiencies may well result indirectly from social forces, mediated by such vicissitudes as marginality, resulting in personal insecurities, and their aetiology is in any case irrelevant to the fact of their existence and the question of their possible amelioration through the concretization/sacralization strategy.

Our purpose in examining this literature on religion and "personality conservatism" is thus to seek verification for Mol's picture of the conventionally religious person as one who is engaging in defensive, adaptive behaviour through shoring up and making firm the boundaries of identity. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a consideration of studies relevant to this question, and these are discussed according to the particular personality constructs being investigated.

1) Dogmatism

Much research on religion and social-personality variables has employed Rokeach's (1960) D-Scale measure of dogmatism. Results of studies of this kind have been on the whole unambiguous, although they are largely subject to the criticism that in comparing the D-Scale to paper-and-pencil measures of religiosity, they may be measuring the

the same thing.

A study by Di Giuseppe (1971) is representative of findings in this field. Undergraduate students were selected at random and administered the D-Scale, and a scale measuring strength of religious convictions. A correlation of .89 was obtained at the .01 level of probability between these two variables. A similar study is reported by Swindell and L'Abate (1970), in which university students again were used as subjects. Significant positive correlations are reported between two measures of religious belief, the Religious Attitudes Inventory, the Fundamentalist Attitude Inventory, and D-Scale.

These results are again confirmed by a New Zealand study of Baptist ministers and deaconesses, (Stewart and Webster, 1970), while several studies report that differences in dogmatism are also distributed over denominations according to the degree of conservatism of the denomination (Kilpatrick, Sutker and Sutker, 1970 ; Glass, 1971a&b). Raschke (1973) administered both the D-Scale and the Spilka Religious Viewpoints Scale, a measure designed to distinguish between "committed" and "consensual" belief styles. A positive correlation between dogmatism and "consensual" belief style was significant at the .001 level, as one might expect from the other results discussed here.

The data thus seem to establish unequivocally a relationship between dogmatism and religious conservatism.

Interpreting this fact, however, is not as easy as establishing it. A small number of studies investigating the relationship between religious conservatism, dogmatism and other variables may prove helpful; a somewhat more detailed discussion of these follows.

As we have explained in earlier chapters, Mol's view of religious conservatism is one of a response of consolidation, and of an 'antidote to anomie'. The individual who commits himself to religious conservatism is a product of the social forces of secularization and sacralization, and his psychological makeup must perforce reflect these forces, or show the traces of their existence. We are in fact looking for the existence of a personality characterized predominantly by the sacralization mechanism, and of its counterpart, one characterized by the secularization mechanism.

One recent study (Photiadis and Schweiker, 1970) represents a rather direct test of the variables we have been discussing; the authors report the result of a survey of some 662 businessmen in various-sized American communities. The questionnaire was an omnibus-type, measuring attitudes toward joining authoritarian organizations and sectarian churches. Anomie was positively related to joining sectarian churches, but negatively related to joining authoritarian organizations. Feelings of powerlessness and author-

itarianism were also related to both forms of behaviour, suggesting that both religious sectarianism and quasi-political action may represent modes of adapting to a rapidly changing or disorganized society. The behaviour of the anomie variable, on the other hand, suggests that the religious response may be more in terms of a felt lack of norms, while the political response may, as we found to be the case with prejudice in Chapter 2, reflect a greater predominance of status concerns.

A number of relevant variables were investigated simultaneously in a study of Texas seminary students (Oswald, 1971), which used three instruments; the D-Scale, the Inventory of Theological Beliefs, and the Omnibus Personality Inventory. The following findings, all significant at the .05 level, are of more than passing interest:

1. Conservatives, Moderates and Liberals were all well below average in need for independence from authority, with Conservatives scoring significantly lower in this regard.
2. Liberals were more likely to use the scientific method in their thinking and showed greater confidence in science.
3. Liberals were more inclined toward reflective thinking and showed interest in a wider range of ideas than did Conservatives and Moderates.

4. Conservatives and Moderates disliked ambiguous situations. Liberals were more likely to believe that there is more than one right answer to most problems.

5. All groups were lower than average in the tendency to freely express natural impulses and to seek gratification in overt actions or in conscious thought. Liberals were slightly less inhibited than Conservatives and Moderates.

6. All groups were well above average in adjustment, admitting to few feelings of rebellion and aggression. Adjustment was positively correlated with conservatism of religious views.

7. Liberals were more anxious than Conservatives and Moderates, and tended to have a poorer opinion of themselves. Anxiety was positively correlated with liberalism.

8. Dogmatism was highest in Conservatives, followed by Moderates, then by Liberals.

The results of this study seem to provide a view of a number of the social variables discussed by Mol as they occur in the personalities of individuals. The findings (1) and (6), that religious conservatism is positively correlated with positive attitudes toward authority, are consistent with Mol's interpretation of religious conservatism as a shift in the identity boundary to the larger social

framework, and findings (2) and (3), that liberals are more inclined toward a scientific viewpoint and toward greater reflective thinking illustrates how the personalities affected by secularization reflect the cultural characteristics of that mechanism, namely the secularizing forces of scientific rationalism and objectivity. Result (4), that liberals possess a more pluralistic attitude toward truth and a greater tolerance of ambiguity, also lends support to Mol's notion that the liberal-conservative dichotomy involves an underlying abstractness-concreteness dimension, a fact also confirmed by Russell and Sandilands (1973)*. Finding (5), that religious conservatism is positively related to the inhibition of personal impulses, is consistent with what the chapter on sexuality revealed, and with what we might expect given the conflicts between group and individual loci of identity. Interpretations of findings (6) and (7) are rather more difficult to make, however. Both degree of adjustment and anxiety among liberals and conservatives may be affected by the fact that subjects are students for the ministry in a conservative American state. One is

*The authors compared scores on the Schroder Paragraph Completion Test and Tuckman Interpersonal Topical Inventory, with various demographic data, using college undergraduates, and report negative correlations between cognitive complexity and a number of measures of religiosity and church affiliation.

unable to decide whether conservatives are better adjusted and less anxious due to the intrinsic effects of their religious conservatism, or due to the benefits of greater conformity to their milieu. However, Glass (1970) found the same relationship in ordinary college undergrads, observing that more dogmatically religious students were less anxious than their more open-minded counterparts.

On the basis of this evidence let us hazard the tentative conclusion that the psychological strategy underlying religious conservatism is in fact responsible for the observed differences in anxiety, setting aside for the next chapter a more thorough consideration of the question of religion and personality integration.

The results of the Oswald study thus provide a rather complete picture of the way in which our metaphoric cloud chamber of personality shows the traces of Kol's hypothetical forces and dynamics, and confirms the psychological reality of these notions.

2) Boundaries and Perceived Locus of Control

A construct which is currently enjoying something of a vogue in the social/personality field is Rotter's (1966) "Perceived Locus of Control", also called internal/external control of reinforcement. This variable is defined as the "perception of positive and/or negative events as being related/unrelated to one's own behaviours."

(Mischel, 1971), and hence under or beyond one's personal control. Its relevance for our purposes here is in what relation it may bear to Mol's variable of individual/group identity-boundary sacralization, but before this question may be entertained, the following digression becomes necessary.

Despite the research interest which it generated, Allport's Intrinsic/Extrinsic dichotomy has proven unsatisfactory; Hunt and King (1971), Hood (1970), and Hoge (1972) have all reported various problems in validating this dichotomous dimension, reporting that it does not perform unidimensionally, and probably measures several factors, such as selfishness, and an instrumental approach to religion. Its value, on the other hand, has been in the other relationships which have been revealed as a result of studies using the instrument, in particular the following two: One by Kahoe (1974) compared the Allport I-E measure to the Adorno F-scale, Rokeach D-Scale, Rotter Internal-External scale, and a measure of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation (cf. Berlyne, 1960). Intrinsic religiosity was related to intrinsic motivation and to internal locus of control, while extrinsic religiosity was related to authoritarianism, dogmatism, extrinsic motivation and external locus of control. Another study (Strickland and Shaffer, 1971) also finds a relationship between extrinsic religiosity and external locus of control, although a relation-

ship between these two variables and authoritarianism was not confirmed.

Although factorial analysis would be required to verify any speculation of this nature, it is tempting to proceed with the hypothesis that locus of control is the major personality factor mediating the relationship between religiosity and character. Such a relationship might be regarded as the psychological evidence of Mol's hypothesized sacralization of group as opposed to individual identity boundaries, resulting in a personality structure in which external control of reinforcement predominates.

The case for identifying religious conservatism with externality of reinforcement is strong in circumstantial evidence, but lacking in any direct observation; peculiarly, much of what is known comes from investigations of hypnotic susceptibility. Hood (1973) reports positive correlations between hypnotic susceptibility, and reported religious experience, as do Gibbons and de Jarnette (1973). The latter (1972) also report hypnotic susceptibility being correlated with being either a Roman Catholic or a "saved" Protestant, and with perceiving one's mother as having been religious. The missing link may be a study by Scheidt (1973) which shows a strong relationship between tendency to believe in the supernatural and externality of locus of control.

If we may take the additional liberty of speculating that external locus of control is related to hypnotic susceptibility, then the picture is complete: the religious personality is one which is oriented toward a source of reinforcement which is outside the ego, and which involves an individual identity boundary which is incomplete, opening outward, toward the collective ideal. While more evidence directly investigating relationships between locus of control and belief style would be extremely desirable from this standpoint, it would seem appropriate anyway to entertain the hypothesis that the more concrete style of religious belief reflects the sacralization of group as opposed to individual identity boundaries in the rather palpable way of producing a personality structure in which external control of reinforcement predominates.

This hypothesis finds further support in two miscellaneous studies, one of which has already been cited (Shaw, 1970). Shaw found that more religious subjects tended to conceptualize behaviour in theological, rather than in psychological terms, which is consistent with the notion of their seeing individual identity in terms of a larger scheme of reference and of judging behaviour according to a system of norms the origin of which is external rather than internal, and which judges acts according to their consistency with a collective good as opposed to the individualistic desiderata typically associated with the value-systems underlying

psychotherapeutic frames of reference.

Finally, we note a study relating locus of control to clarity of self-concept (Organ, 1973). A semantic differential (cf. Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum, 1957), was administered to several hundred industrial workers and college students, the measure being designed to measure clarity of self-concept. Results reported showed a positive and significant correlation between internality of control and clarity of self-concept, a result which is pleasantly consistent with the identity-boundary notion. Clarity of self-concept, it appears, is related to the relative emphasis on individual rather than external sources of reinforcement and, we might speculate, to internal rather than external boundary primacy.

The studies discussed in this chapter with reference to dogmatism, locus of control and related variables seem to point to a consistent pattern which can be made coherent utilizing the identity-boundary concept. The basic dynamic of religious sacralization as it occurs within personalities seems to involve a "shoring-up" of the world-view as an antidote to anomie; this occurs at the expense of requiring a degree of simplification of the world as perceived, and particularly of ambiguity in the sphere of norms. In this process, the collective identity boundary becomes internalized, through the introjection of the religious belief-system, and to the degree that this occurs, the autonomous integrity of the personality is subordinated to the demands of the

undigested, exogenous introject.

Such a mechanism is alluded to by Freud (1962), in The Ego and the Id, in explaining the origin of the 'ego ideal', or 'super-ego', and consists of the replacement of an object cathexis by an identification:

"When it happens that a person has to give up a sexual object, there quite often ensues an alteration of his ego which can only be described as a setting up of the object inside the ego, as it occurs in melancholia; the exact nature of this substitution is as yet unknown to us. It may be that by this introjection, which is a kind of regression to the mechanism of the oral phase, the ego makes it easier for the object to be given up or renders that process possible."

-(Freud, 1962, pp.19)

Of course, Freud is referring to a somewhat different situation, inasmuch as he is explaining a reaction to a frustrated object-choice in an erotic context. We nevertheless suggest the existence of an analogous mechanism in the religious personality, in which the object-choice is the sense of worth of the individual. If the individual is not socialized to believe that he is good and worthy in and of himself, he does not develop what Rogers (1951) calls "unconditional positive self-regard". Such goodness, on the other hand, is perceived as lying in the collective ideal, and this latter image is therefore introjected through the identification process. The collective ideal becomes

the source of all goodness and worth felt by the individual, and he is at the same time constantly reminded that he, qua ego, is not the equal of the collective ideal, and hence not deserving of equal worth; hence the sense of sin which is so important in religious motivation in the West, counterposing a 'stick' to the 'carrot' of salvation, which stands for complete absorption of the ego by the ego-ideal.

The religious personality, in sum, is characterized by its dependence on the introject of the collective ideal. Such an adjustment will have certain predictable effects on various dimensions of psychological health, and may be expected to entail a certain pattern of 'costs' and 'benefits', the nature of which comprises the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Religion and Criteria of Psychological Health

In the preceeding chapter, we developed a tentative model of the personality dynamics characterizing the conservatively religious individual. Using as a point of departure the notion of religious conservatism as the reinforcement of group identity boundaries, and the consequent deemphasis upon the personal identity boundary, we found evidence that the personality structure of the religious individual displays many of the characteristics of external reinforcement, and it was suggested that this occurs through a process of identification and introjection of a collective ideal which is perceived as the source of all goodness and worth. As certain studies already cited would indicate, this adaptation possesses certain anxiety-reducing properties. On the other hand, we may expect, since there exists a degree of conflict between individual and collective identity boundaries, to find certain effects which might be described as the price one pays for relinquishing one's moral autonomy.

Studies on religious belief tend to confirm the existence of such a "trade-off". In general, studies relating religiosity to mental health find results which are determined by the nature of the instruments used to measure this latter variable. Apparent contradictions

between findings may be adequately resolved through the analysis of these normative criteria, and although many of these studies are methodologically dubious, a rather consistent picture, confirming and ramifying our previous speculations, will emerge.

The anxiety-reducing properties of religiosity are well-documented. Glass (1970) administered a questionnaire and self-report instrument to 495 college undergrads, and found that those high in reported religious belief reported fewer symptoms of anxiety than those less religiously oriented. Wilson (1972) investigated the effect of religious conversion on the behavior of 63 subjects who had never had psychiatric treatment and who felt themselves to have been positively changed by religious salvation. These subjects indeed reported numerous examples of positive changes in their behaviour and affect as a result of their experiences of conversion. Both of these studies, however, suffer from a lack of systematic controls. In the former case, the exclusive use of a self-report measure of anxiety may render the results liable to a greater tendency on the part of more religious subjects to deny or banish from consciousness the awareness of such symptoms. The latter study, like many others in this area of research, is not only subject to this criticism, but also to the charge that subjects have been selected on the basis of having been "saved" through conversion, thus begging the question. We

have no way of knowing how many people have failed to benefit from religious conversion, nor how many of Wilson's subjects would have spontaneously improved in the absence of the conversion experience, or in the presence of some other psychological catalyst. In fact, this poorly-conceived study succeeds in demonstrating merely that some people attribute what they claim to be positive changes in their lives to religious conversion, a fact which hardly merits documentation in a scholarly journal.

A study of Roman Catholic high school students (Dunn, 1970), while congenial to our hypotheses, is also subject to methodological criticism. This study was "an attempt to research the validity of the principle that religion is the most comprehensive and integrative of all value orientations, and therefore, the most effective basis for the development of the mature personality". The author used the Barrett Test in Ideals, an 80-item self-report instrument, as a measure of religiosity, and the California Psychological Inventory to measure a number of personality traits. The author reports that highly religious subjects as measured on the former instrument were higher in CPI measures of responsibility, socialization, self-control, and achievement via conformance. While these results are clearly in accordance with our expectations, there exists of course the possibility of a social desirability factor being at work. Such a factor might in fact be expected to exist,

since religious conviction plus the personality traits associated with maturity and adjustment would presumably be regarded by separate school students as the most "desirable" traits to emulate and exhibit.

Mayo, Puryear and Richek (1969) tested 166 college students at a small denominational institution in the U.S. southwest, comparing religiosity measures to MMPI scores, the latter instrument being one which is equipped with a Lie Scale factor to filter out faulty self-reporting. In the comparisons between religious and nonreligious males, religious males were found to be significantly less depressed, less schizophrenic, and less psychopathically deviant than nonreligious males. While these relationships were also found to be the case with female students, less religious females outscored their less secularized counterparts on the Ego Strength scale, a measure of 'adequacy' in day-to-day functioning, freedom from psychosomatic ailments, etc. This latter finding is not surprising when one considers the background of sex-role stereotyping to which these particular women have been exposed; in any case, even these less 'adequate', religious females were less depressed, less schizophrenic, and better adjusted.

This study may be called into question, however, on the basis of its selection of subjects from a denominational university. Once again, we encounter the problem that

if religiosity is a desirable trait in a given environment, then those exhibiting such religiosity may be expected to reap the psychological rewards of greater integration. Thus one would expect Marxist orthodoxy to be associated with psychological health in a sample of students at any Soviet institution, while Christians might appear more neurotic.

One presumably important function of religion is its promise of personal immortality; this should be particularly the case with Christianity, with its very explicit eschatological content. A number of investigators have studied the relationship between Christian belief and the fear of death, and results have tended to confirm the efficacy of this system of belief in allaying such fears.

In the period of journal literature being sampled in this thesis, the present decade, five such studies appear in Psychological Abstracts. Of these, two fail to find any significant correlations between religiosity and death-anxiety measures. Templer and Dowson (1970) investigated the relationship between a scale measuring death anxiety and a number of other variables of religious affiliation, belief and general anxiety, using the ubiquitous college student as subject. Failing to find any significant relationship between these variables, the authors suggest a limited importance of religion in the lives of their undergraduate subjects. Berman and Hays (1973) report similar results;

interestingly enough, they were also unable to find any relationship between external control and death anxiety or between externality and belief in afterlife.

Positive results are reported in three other studies. Lester (1970) compared the death anxiety levels of Protestant college students of varying degrees of religiosity, finding that more religious subjects had less fear of their own death, but greater fear of the deaths of others. Religiosity was found to have a greater effect on fear of death than denominational affiliation.

Burrows (1971) proceeded from the hypothesis that it is not religiosity per se but comfort with one's religious beliefs that determines fear of death and attitude toward death. The author predicted that fear of death would be greater in subjects who showed less comfort with their religious beliefs, as measured on a self-report of the author's own construction. In addition to the usual paper-and-pencil measures of death anxiety, subjects' reactions to slides of corpses were observed and judged by a panel of judges, thus providing a direct measure of death anxiety free from the difficulties associated with self-reports. Subjects were also rated according to religious orthodoxy, thus providing a total of four subject classifications; Orthodox-Comfort, Orthodox-Noncomfort, Nonorthodox-Comfort, and Nonorthodox-Noncomfort. This experimental design thus provided for a direct comparison of the relative importance

of orthodoxy and belief comfort in determining death-anxiety.

The author reports the following results from her college-student sample: (1) Subjects in each of the four groups originally differentiated on the basis of their religiosity, orthodoxy and comfort showed measurable differences with respect to fear of death, attitudes toward death, church attendance, belief in afterlife and religious attitudes; (2) Subjects in both low comfort groups showed greater fear of death than the two high comfort groups; (3) Exposure to slides depicting corpses increased death anxiety among all subject groups.

These results indicate that a combination of orthodoxy and comfort with that orthodoxy provide the greatest protection from death anxiety, as might be expected. Presumably, the psychological correlates of comfort with religious belief would be a thorough assimilation of the religious point of view, which would, as we hypothesize, have an anxiety-reducing effect.

Finally, Shearer (1973) reports a study in which subjects were drawn at random from the Pasadena, Cal. population according to religious affiliations reported in census surveys. These subjects were then classified simply as Christian or non-Christian, according to how they had described themselves, and were asked to complete paper-and-pencil measures of death anxiety, as well as the Allport and

Ross I-E scale. Shearer reports that Christians, i.e. those who had identified themselves as such to census takers, were as a whole lower in death anxiety than non-Christians. Shearer also found that death anxiety decreases with increasing orthodoxy, and is lower among intrinsic believers.

The balance of evidence thus suggests that comfort with the fact of death is maximized both by religious orthodoxy and by commitment or sincerity in one's orthodoxy. Other evidence, while often rather tenuous, points to other psychological benefits of the religious attitude, particularly in terms of providing greater social adjustment, reduction of anxiety and fewer symptoms of psychopathology. These, then, are the apparent benefits of religiosity as demonstrated in the recent empirical literature.

If, in fact, the benefits of religion result from our hypothesized introjection of the collective ideal and renunciation of ego autonomy, then this fact should be reflected in measurable 'costs' of religious orthodoxy. Some of these were mentioned in Chapter 4 of this thesis; in particular, we noted a general reduction of sexual fulfillment among the very orthodox.

What evidence we have about the price paid for orthodoxy comes, like evidence about its rewards, from studies purporting to determine the relationship between orthodoxy and psychological health. These studies differ,

however, from those we have hitherto examined in that they used different measures of psychological health, thus arriving at different conclusions.

Graff and Ladd (1971) compared data on Personal Orientation Inventory scores of male college students to scores on a religious beliefs inventory. Less religious subjects were found to be more self-accepting, more spontaneous, more inner-directed, less dependent, and more accepting of their own aggressive tendencies than their more religious counterparts. "Self-actualization and religiosity seemed to be inversely related to each other", conclude the authors, and we would be inclined to agree with them, at least where self-actualization is defined in terms of autonomy.

Breed and Fagan (1972) compared a measure of religious dogmatism to "peak experiences" among college students by having the students write reports on their peak experiences, and having judges rate the "validity" of the reported experiences on a 10-point scale. As might be expected, the authors report negative correlations between the religiosity measure and "valid" peak experiences.*

*It is hardly surprising that the religiously orthodox believer is less prone to peak experiences, when the peak experience as defined by Maslow (1968) is so strongly defined by the sense of exaltation of self in mystical, rapturous union with the world (cf. Maslow, 1968, Ch.6 for a full description of the peak experience). In addition to this sense of exaltation, the peak experience is characterized by a quality of ineffability

Finally, we note a study of 348 American Catholic priests (Kupst, 1972), using POI scores plus a number of improvised measures involving scales constructed using judges' ratings plus statistical validation techniques. Kupst reports that conservatives, as measured according to her techniques, were more other-directed, inflexible, and intolerant of diversity in moral values. Conservatives also showed a much lower tendency to leave the priesthood, which suggests that they are better integrated into the institution in which they are functioning.

The evidence from these studies seems unequivocally to point to a deficiency of self-actualization among the more conservatively religious, and conforms admirably to the model we are advancing. Where health is defined in terms of adjustment, as it is, for example, on the MMPI, religious conservatives come out ahead; where autonomous self-actualization is the criterion, as on the POI, the opposite occurs. The general picture of religiosity as a reduction of autonomy is supported, and both the benefits conferred by it, and the price it extracts, are those we would expect from such an orientation.

which would run contrary to the concrete-mindedness characteristic of the very orthodox.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

This thesis began with a critique of four fundamental approaches in the psychology of religion, as propagated by those who we suggest are the four most seminal figures in this field; Freud, Jung, James and Adorno. What was said in criticism of each stands in essence for all their heirs, and it is suggested that virtually all current thinking in the psychology of religion may be traced to one or a combination of these. What was argued was the case for going beyond all of these, rejecting them for their particularism, their narrow scope on religious phenomena, and their unrepresentative data base.

Pointing out the superiority of certain sociological theories of religion both with respect to comprehensive description and to explanatory power, we selected the identity theory of Hans Mol and proceeded to examine the empirical psychological literature available to determine whether the psychological implications of this psychology-laden sociological theory could be so verified. The end product, one would hope, would be a psychological definition of religion analogous to that of "sacralization of identity", and a bridge between the psychological and sociological terrains across which the free exchange of theories, concepts and data might take effect. We have in fact seen that

sociological theories are amenable to verification from psychological data, and that psychological facts may be made more significant through organizing them into a pattern derived from sociological theory. Hypotheses may thus be formulated by sociologists and psychologists alike, and their investigation becomes possible on either level.

Our application of Mol's theory focussed on a meagre few of its many interesting features. What we did was to proceed from his definitions of the dialectic of sacralization and secularization, and his descriptions of their mechanisms and effects. Among the hypotheses derived from his theory and verified are the following:

- (1) That sacralization in the traditional Judaeo-Christian mold is congenial to the social integration of the individual (and thus, consequently, of the group).
- (2) That such integration occurs somewhat at the expense of individual self-actualization, sexually and otherwise.
- (3) That, in our culture, such sacralization involves the assigning of primacy to a collective ideal or identity boundary.
- (4) That the cognitive correlates of such sacralization involve a process of simplification and concretization

of the world as perceived, and in particular, of norms and standards of conduct.

Throughout the previous four chapters, we have found ample evidence to support these formulations. Now we must ask how psychology has been enriched by this exercise.

The model of religiosity that has emerged through our search of the empirical data base would indicate that the personality structure of the orthodoxly religious individual is organized around something akin to a Freudian introject of the collective ideal, or group identity boundary. This would appear to occur on a continuum from those most orthodoxly religious to atheists, whose systems of norms appear to be most autonomously held. While many secularists argue that religious beliefs are relatively peripheral to psychological makeup and behaviour, we reject any notion of religion as epiphenomenal. While Mol observes that the belief systems of atheists also involve certain mechanisms of sacralization and are the foci of commitment, we would argue that the essential personality differences between "sacralized" and "secularized" people, resulting from the organization of personality toward "self-actualization through autonomy" as opposed to "integration through adjustment" represent a fundamental dichotomy.

It remains problematical, however, to separate the observed dichotomy from its cultural background. The

question has arisen, for example, of whether the existence of a supernatural component to the sacralizing belief system is essential to it. One might conceivably be able to study the psychological correlates of Marxism and Christianity in a Communist country, in order to see whether Christianity or conformity was the real anxiety-reducer. Such a study, even could it be performed, would however entail all the difficulties associated with cross-cultural comparisons and would require many assumptions to the effect that measures and subjects were equivalent. It would certainly be interesting to gather data on Christians of high orthodoxy who are deprived of a like-minded reference group, whether in a different culture or in our own. On the other hand, if the dynamics of orthodoxy exist as we propose them to, then the very notion of the believer without a milieu is an impossibility, or at best a freakish exception. If the believer has introjected a collective ideal, then he must somewhere have been exposed to this ideal, and he has in all probability been raised religiously.

Although the personality dynamics of religiosity remain vague and tentative, the view of religion as adaptive seems justified. As such, it differs in a number of important respects from authoritarianism and measures of cognitive rigidity, which have been linked to psychopathology (cf. Rokeach, 1966). While it does in some respect resemble Rotter's "external locus of control", which has also been

shown to reduce stress and feelings of helplessness (Houston, 1972), it seems not to correlate at all with the POI Self-Actualization scale (Wall, 1970), which we found in the previous chapter to be virtually orthogonal with religious orthodoxy.

Similarly, the rigidity hypothesis is weakened by the negative correlations between rigidity and perceived competence found by Masterton (1971), which contradicts our many studies finding positive correlations between MMPI Ego-Strength and orthodoxy. Indeed, studies we have cited showed both religiosity and religious authoritarianism to be conducive to mental health, unlike other forms of authoritarianism.

Deprivation as an explanation of religion is in a sense implicit in the very notion of religion as an individual adaptation. A deprivation-theorist, faced with the data we have culled here, might respond that the absence of psychopathology among the religious was due to the efficacy of this adaptation, while still maintaining that the religiosity itself represented a response to some antecedent deprivation. The notion of religiosity as a personal adaptation, however, is for two reasons completely unsatisfactory.

The first of these reasons is that, while religion may be said to be 'adaptive' in the sense of conducing to personality integration, it is difficult to point to any specific act of adaptation on the part of the religious

believer who was either raised in his faith or who was slowly converted in the absence of any particular life-crisis. Secondly, it is such individuals who manifest the lowest anxiety-levels; those who converted suddenly show much greater general levels of anxiety (Spellman, Baskett and Byrne, 1971). Those who use religion to adapt for personal reasons, or as a means to a personal end (which we saw was the basis of extrinsic religiosity) appear to derive the least benefit from it, and religiously-oriented psychotics have in fact been shown to be more extrinsic than religious normals (VanderPlate, 1973). It thus appears that genuine religiosity is least frequent among those for whom deprivation and adaptation would best serve as an explanation.

What is most anomalous about our findings is that religiosity, while sharing certain characteristics with pathological personality traits, is itself completely independent from psychopathology, and in many respects, inimical to it. One is led to speculate that this is in fact attributable to the fact that religiosity, while it does involve a weakening of the ego boundary, occurs in the absence of social deviance, tending by its very nature to enhance the social integration of most believers. Thus the believer, while psychologically 'deficient', is more prone to positive social experiences and is destined to reap the benefits of conformity. Again, the impossibility

of separating the individual from his culture makes it difficult to reach a definite conclusion in this regard.

What does emerge most clearly from this analysis is the inevitability with which the patriarchs of the psychology of religion fell short of comprehensively or objectively describing their object of study. Beginning from purely psychological viewpoints, and working only in terms of intra-individual dynamics, or only with the most rudimentary sociological awareness, they were inevitably doomed to focus on the exceptional and the idiosyncratic.

Most significantly, the patriarchs all overlooked the fact that most religious people do not 'become that way'; they simply 'are that way'. Religious individuals occur for the most part because of their upbringing, which in turn reflects a myriad of sociological factors. They function in their own, generally excellent way. Non-religious people, similarly, result from what sociologists call secularizing forces in society, and although they may have found their own way to skepticism or liberalism, the social conditions antecedent to their defection are of inestimable significance. Non-religious people are both more anxious and better adapted to change and innovation.

An empirically-based descriptive psychology of religion would thus take as its basic data the palpable

existence of Sacralized Man, characterized by the principle of integration via adjustment, and of his counterpart, Secularized Man, characterized by self-actualization through autonomy. Each represents a fundamental tendency within society, and each constitutes a valid and viable way of existence, or mode of adjustment. Although, at various times in the history of a culture, one or the other will predominate, both Sacralized Man and Secularized Man, like the social forces giving rise to their existence, have an important role to play for mankind.

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