Beyond Denominationalism?: Community and Culture in American Religion*

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Working from the theoretical model and historical analysis provided in *Into Denominationalism: The Anglican Metamorphosis,* this essay addresses the socio-cultural significance of denominationalism in America, the apparent decline of denominational religiosity in contemporary society, and the rise of "nondenominational" churches. T. H. Breen's concept of "persistent localism" is introduced to suggest a common Anglo-American cultural heritage for the social function of denominations. With the shift from a rural home-farm productive-consumptive society to an urban bureau-technical one, the traditional denominations, as religious organizations in conformity with their socio-cultural environment, developed into large supralocal non-profit corporations. In so doing, they failed to recognize the importance of localism in maintaining voluntary organizations. As our system is currently engaged in a centralization-decentralization push-pull process, the non-coercive nature of religious pluralism prohibits the traditional denominations from exercising controls of any significance to retain or increase their membership. The new nondenominational churches, then, are emerging as the functional and typological equivalents of the traditional denominations.

Central to the processes of change in Anglicanism, from the structurally rigid post-Reformation Church of England to one of the most liberal denominations in the United States, was its relation to and reflection of the socio-cultural system that gave it genesis. It is no doubt correct to say, as Powicke (1941: 1) does, that "the one definite thing which can be said about the Reformation in England is that it was an act of the State." But from the viewpoint of a fully developed comparative-historical differential analysis, it is much more significant to recognize that this act of state gave structure to a world-view based in English insularity legitimately described as "national character." The Church of England at its inception and in the Elizabethan period — perhaps its finest hour — was "pure" religion as Durkheim would define it: Society writ large. The Church of England's political quality, then, is not to be separated from the socio-cultural *Geist* that it embodied. Indeed, as the Stuart debacle clearly demonstrates, as soon as the Church of England became a political instrument in the narrow sense — "out of character," so to speak — it was rejected and doomed. Like the monarchy, it failed to embody the *tradition* of the realm that is essential to the maintenance of patrimonial domination. That the church and monarchy should go down together is merely evidence of their institutional interdependence and should not be construed to suggest a disingeuousness in the Anglican system.

Anglicanism in both seed and flower was, thus, not a formal theological system but a liturgical reflection of a world-view. It was grounded upon popular consent and a sense of nationhood — in Archbishop Cranmer's words in the preface to the first *Book of Common Prayer,* the Church of England's evolving but consistent standard for self-definition, "Now from henceforth, all the realm shall have but one use." In this respect Anglicanism differs radically from all other Reformation churches and from Rome. Anglican theology was entirely a "reconstructed logic," developed as an afterthought during a time when the hierarchy and the state were themselves being rejected by both church and nation. It was specifically when Anglicanism was *not* church-like (in terms of the monopolism-pluralism-acceptance-rejection model [in Swatos, 1979]) that it developed a normative system of belief to rationalize its position *vis-a-vis* its enemies: "What can we say then? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8: 31). For those who believed that "God is an Englishman," the doctrine of his nature (i.e., dogmatic theology) had to be carefully articulated once Englishmen had lopped off the head of the Supreme Head of His Church.

The restoration of Anglicanism was directly contingent upon a theological redefinition that abstracted church membership from nationality (see Bosher, 1951). The Church of England became symbolic of the monarchy, while the monarchy became impotent as a power to be reckoned with in day-to-day British life. Commons and commoners came more and more to be the genuine powers of England, and economic philosophy — generally termed, with no little significance today, "moral philosophy" — rather than religiosity held the key to national security. Faith in and concern about progress superceded questions of eternal salvation, and wealth was a sign of God's favor upon England's "honest industry" rather than its hierarchy (see Goudzwaard, 1979). The state of the English Church of the eighteenth century, no more nor less than its predecessors, was tied to civil society, which was itself likely to be speaking at once out of both sides of its mouth.

The extent to which Anglicanism was forged out of socio-cultural environment in turn underlies the nature of the transition to denominationalism after American independence. It was Bishop William White of Pennsylvania — a theologically inferior figure — who grasped the common sense of the Anglican ethos with singular acumen (see Temple, 1946). He turned to nothing other than the American Constitutional fathers for a model of organizational structure. Normative Anglican theology had no place in White's thinking. He was far too Elizabethan in his expediency to worry about Stuart accretions. Only at the insistance of Bishop Seabury of Connecticut and some of the English bishops were some theological elements offensive to dominant American deist sentiments (but irrelevant to structure *per se*) retained in the first American Prayer Book. Indeed, White himself had earlier proposed a presbyterian-based system of government, should English orders have been unavailable. As it was, the American Episcopal system turned out to be far closer to that advanced by right-wing Puritans in the seventeenth-century than to that of the Church of England itself. This is particularly interesting when juxtaposed with the observation that from the viewpoint of church polity the Constitution is essentially presbyterian in nature. Thus the underlying spirit of the English reformation — that the church reflect national character — was rekindled in American denominationalism at White's hands. It is not

necessary to argue that White acted with an absolutely clear and fully self-reflective consciousness in doing this, nor on the other hand, that what he did was purely accidental. The point, rather, is that White had imbibed the essential survival mechanism of the Anglican ethos and shaped it to fit a particular time and place. White, more than either his northern or southern brothers, had the freedom in which to do this kind of creative activity. He faced neither the risk of a declining establishment nor the continuing threat associated with minority persecution.

Anglicanism thus entered into denominationalism not because of theological specifics — as was the case, for example, with most of the churches out of the English Independent tradition — but more than anything else precisely due to the lack of theological specifics. Methodism, *the* great American denomination, is but deviant Anglicanism, and, like its loose mother, is also theologically malleable.[1] Methodism, rather than its parent body, succeeded in the United States primarily because it threw off the class-based structure of Anglicanism — most particularly, a formally educated clergy. Though it can only be speculative, everything known about White would strongly suggest that had he obtained the audience with Wesley that he once sought while in England, a rapprochement between the fledgling organizations might well have been effected. Whether America's Bishop Asbury would have abided by any such concordat is, of course, quite another matter.

What is important to note in any case, however, is that in the United States Methodism may be termed denomination-like, comparatively speaking, from its initial organization. From this it may be concluded that some religious groups become denomination-like because of inherent theological tendencies, whereas others do so from a lack of a firm position one way or the other. It is not particularly germane to pursue this point here except to note that denominationalism, while always involving the acceptance of the central values of a pluralistic socio-cultural system, may arise from multiple sources, and these may in turn explain differences between denomination-like groups cross-culturally. Quakerism, for example, is far less likely to become church-like, if given the opportunity, than Anglicanism, though in many parts of the United States both Episcopal and Quaker congregations are denominational.

THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE
OF DENOMINATIONALISM

Winthrop Hudson, Sidney Mead, and Andrew Greeley, to name but a few, have all pointed to the fundamental position of denominationalism in shaping American society and culture. Indeed, it was part of this same awareness that led H. Richard Niebuhr to write his classic *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929) which, regardless of

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1. This rather complete theological malleability is characteristic of all other denominations of American origin — the Disciples of Christ, for example. Compare, say, Methodists to Missouri Synod Lutherans. One may be tempted to trace this to a common Puritan heritage, as Monk (1966) does at least for Methodism. On the other hand, one might also speak of a common Anglo-Celtic heritage that would contribute as much to malleability in one tradition as another; thus Collinson (1967: 467) comments, "That our modern conception of Anglicanism commonly excludes puritanism is . . . a distortion of a part of our religious history. . . ." Of course, all religious organizations are theologically malleable to some extent, but from a comparative viewpoint, the differences in degrees of malleability seem far to outweigh this truism.

what criticism we may make of it now, brought church-sect theory into the consciousness of most American students of religious organization.

Currently, however, traditional denominational religiosity is declining — and across a broad spectrum of the population. By this I do not mean simply that membership in mainline denominations is declining; rather and more significantly, a whole religious world-view and action-orientation appears to be slowly disintegrating. But, while the denomination as a type has been delineated theoretically and described empirically, we know little about denominationalism as a socio-cultural form of life. Yet the decline of denominations — once mistakenly identified as a decline of religion *per se* in America, and for some myopically perceived as the death of God — seems to mark a significant shift in Western civilization and its culture. Max Weber's revelation of the ironies attached to the rise of Protestantism versus its ultimate effects should make us cautious of being too quick to predict the resolution of the changes now so evident. But at least we can indicate how denominationalism fit into the previous socio-cultural world-ordering and why it no longer seems to do so.

Immanuel Wallerstein's discussion of the rise of the capitalist order (1974) asserts that one of the necessary conditions for the development of the modern world-system was the breakdown of empires and the formation of nation-states. If we look at the second half of the "long" sixteenth century, we see clearly the emergence, in the core countries of capitalism, of national churches. Unlike the national churches of Eastern Orthodoxy, however, the state religions of the new Europe emphasized their *distinctions* of faith rather than their commonalities. Monolithic Catholicism was replaced by pluralistic — dare we say henotheistic? — Protestantism. The result was a very gradual but clearly visible relativizing of all religious claims. Lord Macaulay, for example, notes that in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods the English ambassadors in Holland went with royal approbation "to that very worship which Elizabeth and James persecuted at home" (1967: II 60). It was the Laudian attempt to stem this tide — Laud at once having tremendous historical foresight, but too little sense to recognize his own inabilities to stop the processes he so clearly saw and deeply feared — that was a major factor in the ultimate collapse of Charles I. Capitalistic commerce needed to be freed from an imperialistic papacy commanding transnational loyalty. This political-economic reality created a setting fostering cultural distinctiveness, and religion was the strongest cultural system available at the time for promulgating the New Way.[2] Indeed, whereas it was religion that more than any other system perpetuated a sense of empire, it more than any other had to be "reformed" if the New Way were to survive.

Following the only example they had, the new state religions were initially highly church-like (thus the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*). Commercial intercourse, however, made exclusivism less and less possible. As time passed, religion itself became in turn less and less important to the daily round. Whereas medieval Romanism structured the day-to-day lives — the commonsense world — of its adherents, the post-Reformation world (which was, of course, also the post-Renaissance world) was one in which the everyday was increasingly separated from the

2. This is not to say that religion had to be or must always be the system for this kind of change. In contemporary society, for example, one might look to education as a pivotal institution for sociocultural change — witness revolutionary "reeducation" projects.

transcendent. The medieval world did not create its cathedrals, for example, because God was so far off, but because He was nigh. The post-Reformation world, by contrast, had a God so far off that it made no sense to give Him much of a place in the tangible environment — thus the denouement of church architecture. Civil ("secular") buildings — banks, government houses, businesses, and the like — instead absorbed the creative genius of Protestant artisans. That these were indeed largely halls of commerce, rather than halls of art, clearly indicates that the Renaissance, important though it was, was not in itself adequate to usher in the new world order. Religious reformation was a prior condition for the flowering of the modern world system. The theological distinctives, then, that initially formed the rationalization for state religions became lost in a more vague, but no less real, national spirit or character. Thus, even after immigration to the United States, the largely ethnic nature of most of the Reformation churches — e.g., *Swedish* Lutheran, *Dutch* Reformed — perpetuated division in spite of theological similarities.[3] Put differently and perhaps somewhat simplistically, *doctrine didn't matter.* The church was no longer the repository of universal Truth but the expression of a locally-defined Way of Life. As this process worked itself out, denominationalism came to replace the older and more facile church-sect dichotomy, and made religion-in-practice far closer to the Durkheimian ideal than might appear on the surface.

Denominationalism, then, is more than simply a type of ecclesiastical polity; like the church, it too has a civil component. To be more specific, all denominations (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or whatever) are denominations of an overarching civil religion having a clearly statist or nationalistic element. This is the organizational manifestation of the theses of such works as Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* and Bellah's "Civil Religion in America," and it is lost if denominations are viewed merely theologically as visible manifestations of a "true" invisible church.[4] Denominationalism involves being a particular kind of *American* or *Canadian,* for example, as much as it does being a particular kind of Christian or Jew (for the reverse correlation see Hammond & McCutchan, 1980). By the same token, full participation in civil society anticipates membership in some denomination — just as was the case in the earlier marriage of church and state. Denomination membership symbolizes commitment to society's highest values, one of which — by the very nature of the historical antecedents of the Enlightenment — is doctrinal pluralism. Jefferson's commonsense moral philosophy, though its tenability may today be questioned, insured that this pluralism would not verge over into (and ultimately cause havoc as) moral pluralism. In short, one could believe whatever one pleased about God, because Man had a common innate moral sense that would keep society on an even keel (see Wills, 1978). American society on this model could accommodate the village atheist but not a religious counterculture.

3. This is more than a linguistic problem. English "non-separating" Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians also had a difficult time coming together in the United States, and Neville (1973) argues rather persuasively that the Presbyterian Church U.S. (i.e., southern Presbyterians) remains largely an ethnic group based on a Scottish-descent core.

4. Those who take abstract theological claims at face value out of sociocultural context will, of course, dissent from this analysis. This is much more a "realm of discourse" problem than one of accuracy.

The denominational pattern developed most fully and "purely" in the First New Nation (see Lipset, 1967). Although the first European immigrants certainly brought ideational baggage from their home cultures, their oceanic separation from their homelands and the strange openness of the new world (both geographically and culturally) gave rise to a world-view and concomitant structural forms that quickly and ironically fulfilled and diverged from homeland cultural tendencies. A good example of this may be found in Samuel Seabury's critique of the early Congregationalists who, he said (in Smylie, 1971: 127), had come:

> . . . to America to enjoy greater liberty of conscience than they could obtain in England. They had certainly set their hearts on it . . . , for they no sooner obtained in America that liberty of conscience which they sought than they endeavoured to monopolize it all to themselves; and with their good will would not suffer a neighbor to have an atom of it.

Neither as a system of doctrine nor as a system of action was Puritanism inherently tolerant. Rather, given the theological and ecclesiological assumptions of Puritanism, it leaned at one and the same time in conflicting directions — toward monopolism *and* toward pluralism, as well as toward acceptance *and* toward rejection. Now one direction, then another, would emerge and become legitimate, depending to a large extent on the political and socioeconomic circumstances. Thus religious belief and action "work together" with the sociocultural system in developing a legitimation system as a result of a mutual interdependency. In American society — from at least the latter part of the eighteenth century — the cultural system provided the necessary stimulus for Puritanism to take a pluralistic denominational form rather than a monopolistic one (as sect or church).

It is a mistake, then, to develop a denomination "type" built upon the intra-organizational criterion of pluralistic legitimacy. Doing so ignores the specifics of historical sociocultural context and the malleability of religious traditions across a variety of such contexts. It is thus more appropriate to say that denominations are the structural-functional forms that dominant religious traditions assume in a pluralistic culture. Put these same traditions in a different sociocultural setting, and one would expect many of them to present themselves differently. This is not to say that everything in religion is culturally relative — indeed, quite to the contrary — but it is to say that *some* things are culturally relative in all religions. Like most aspects of the sociocultural landscape, religion is at one and the same time both independent and dependent variable, and its interaction with culture needs to be perceived from a dialectical standpoint, accommodating both feedback loops and countervailing tendencies.

The cultural significance of *denominationalism,* then, is that it *provided a structural-functional form for organizing communal relationships relating to the transcendent realm in a pluralistic socio-cultural system that itself had a specific civilizational history.*

PERSISTENT LOCALISM

In an essay by this title, T. H. Breen (1975) argues that Colonial religion has an English cultural heritage that champions local autonomy and gives wide latitude to

local citizenry in decision-making. Breen documents this claim by reference to developments in Reformation England and argues that one of the underlying weaknesses of the Laudian plan was its seeking centralization in the face of localistic tradition. The "separate" New England congregation was thus a consistent development out of a British (and Anglican) cultural heritage. Although Breen writes with specific reference to New England, what we know about the South (allowing for its differences in ecology) would permit us to generalize and say that localism was a consistent and persistent cultural trait in Anglo-American religious practice, with roots well beyond the Tudor period and the reconstitution of the English Church (see Macfarlane, 1979).

With this in mind, it appears that a critical error of much contemporary thinking about denominationalism is a focus upon the trans-local or national aspects of the organization. If we are to understand denominationalism in America, nothing could. lead us further astray. Indeed, nothing could lead us further from the essential nature of corporate American piety. The essence of denominational religiosity is localism. Denominations fit people into the local community, while providing reference to the larger society. They provide *place* in the socio-cultural milieu, in such a way that the transient and the eternal are harmonized into a meaningful whole in the consciousness of the participant. Thus denominations have served to mediate *both God and Country* in a given locale and so structure within its limits the lives of people whose rootlessness was often painfully obvious. To align with one denomination or another in a community gave one a heritage — practically a family — whose boundaries transcended time and place (see Warner, 1961). It is for this reason that the ecumenism of denominational merger is doomed to failure as a vehicle for creating an American "super church." What it will create is, at most, another denomination. What it represents, as Bryan Wilson astutely observed well over a decade ago, is the inability of denominational religiosity to offer a meaningful relationship to the transcendent for many people in the contemporary world.

How has this come to be so? The latter half of the nineteenth century dealt a well-known devastating blow to traditional Protestant piety. A bifurcation then took place. One response was fundamentalism; the other, liberalism. The latter was far more consistent with the denomination's sociocultural character: that is, it allied the religious organization with the dominant culture. To this end denomination after denomination sought to implement the principles of the new "progressive" scientific world-view that dominated the culture. Efficiency was one such principle, and the organizational manifestation of this was bureaucracy. Thus the denominations developed national staffs, headquarters, programs, and so forth, far beyond the reach of local constituents. With the shift from a rural home-farm productive-consumptive society to an urban bureau-technical one, the traditional denominations, as religious organizations in conformity with their socio-cultural environment, developed into large trans-local non-profit corporations.[5] Because denominations are culturally accepting,

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5. Several critics of church-sect typologizing have recognized this very point and attempted to incorporate it into new schemes more suited to complex organizations (e.g., Benson and Dorsett, 1971; Scalf *et al.*, 1973; Snook, 1974). Although I think they are largely mistaken in their understanding of the function of church-sect and thus abandon a straw man, nevertheless their observation about the value of approaching denominations as corporations is well taken. Again, there are many bases upon which the analysis of religious organization can take place, and we need not throw out one to adopt another.

such moves appeared consistent and could be easily justified.

To a considerable extent, this approach remains intact at the present time and reflects one important characteristic of modern society — complex organization. But it fails to recognize the importance of localism in maintaining voluntary organizations. As our system is engaged in a centralization-decentralization push-pull process, the non-coercive nature of religious pluralism prohibits the traditional denominations from exercising controls of any significance over their members. While the state continues to enlarge despite all pretentions to the contrary, denominational religiosity is in a tail-spin. This historical analysis has clear affinities with Roof's quite differently structured work on local versus cosmopolitan orientation and its place in understanding traditional religion in contemporary society (1976).

THE NEW NON-DENOMINATIONS

In spite of the difficulties of the traditional denominations, religiosity — even organized religion — is by no means in its death thralls. But the lively expressions of the Judeo-Christian tradition in contemporary America are charismatic or evangelical or both. Although these forms do find expression within mainline denominational structures, most significant to us is the development of "independent" churches in profusion, attracting large numbers of adherents.[6] On the surface, these "non-denominational" churches seem to stand apart from the dominant traditions — indeed, to a certain extent this is a part of their "pitch," a strategy itself hardly unheard of in American denominational history. The temptation is to label them "sects" and, then, to argue the weakness of church-sect typologizing for not providing an adequate basis for understanding the nature of these groups.[7] The problem here is a lack of clear theoretical premises for addressing the question.

From the viewpoint of the monopolism-pluralism-acceptance-rejection model, on the other hand, the non-denominational churches are basically denomination-like structures — verging, perhaps, into and out of the established-sect type from place to place. For the most part these groups *do* accept the dominant local culture of which they are a part. The fact that many are becoming increasingly involved in political issues that transcend narrow cases of personal morality, for example, is indication of compliance with and support of even the larger socio-cultural system in terms of its central values. Likewise, while most uphold high standards for their membership (often viewed as a sect-like characteristic), they are not impressed on members in an exclusionary fashion. The values they uphold, furthermore, are *not* inconsistent with those of the dominant culture. Repentance and forgiveness are as much a part of the

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6. Many churches that refer to themselves as "independent," of course, are hardly so. They do, however, almost always have more local autonomy built into their structure than traditional denominations. It is of some significance that the English theological tradition that provided the rationale for denominationalism termed itself "Independent," and that the American colonials chose to issue a Declaration of *Independence* (rather than, say, freedom, sovereignty, nationhood, etc. [see Wills, 1978]).

7. This is the problem with the essay on sectarianism by Knudsen *et al.* (1978). It has something of a "hidden agenda" on sectarianism that causes the authors to make a preemptory judgment about the groups they are studying rather than applying ideal types and then making a comparative assessment.

growing evangelical congregation as they are the Catholic Church. When exclusiveness does occur, it is consistent with the values of the dominant culture. This is not sectarianism. It is basic denominationalism in a new guise.

The key is persistent localism. More than anything else the "new" churches emphasize local control and autonomy from an invading corporate structure. Here they introduce no new values but rather reaffirm a continuing part of the Anglo-Celtic American religious heritage. Being an Episcopalian, for example, came less and less to mean having a particular place in the local community and more and more to mean affiliation with a remote bureaucracy. Disenchantment invaded the sacred community itself.[8] The independent church — and there are not only independent Baptist churches, but also independent Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Catholic churches[9] — at once affirms individuality and community in a way fully supportive of historic American pluralism. Traditional denominationalism — particularly in its conciliar forms — represents an increasingly monopolistic ordering of the sociocultural system. This is no more consistent with basic American values than an imperial presidency. The difference between the two lies in the voluntary nature of American religion. We can, after all, take our marbles and go home: "To your tents, O Israel!"[10]

On the one hand, then, the traditional denominations are in trouble. On the other hand, the denominational principle is not. The cultural significance of denominationalism — persistent localism tucked under the canopy of a benign civil religion — has not noticeably disappeared. Supralocal conventions, assemblies, and above all perhaps, publishing houses continue to function much in the way that denominational structures did in the last century. Whether the traditional denominations — most of which are less than two hundred years old as denomination-types — will grasp the significance of what is happening around them, and if so, how they will handle it, is beyond the scope of this essay. How well the new "denominations" will fare in a socio-cultural milieu pushing and pulling between center and periphery is likewise a prediction that is difficult to make. Like all choices offered before, so the emerging order now also has manifold possibilities to which the new churches can address themselves in ways that only a twenty-fifth century Weber may see clearly.

What can be said now, however, is that locality is central to American religiosity. In the relatively fixed world of the mid-nineteenth century, the denominations served to fit people into their communities and gave organization to the differences among them. In the highly mobile world of the latter years of this century, the restraints

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8. I am using "disenchantment" in Weber's technical sense (*Entzauberung*) to suggest that in many respects local churches were "robbed of gods" by denominational bureaucratization.

9. What this means in most cases is a *form of worship* similar to Methodism, Presbyterianism, Episcopalianism, or Romanism. This is consistent with the findings of Mueller (1971) in another context.

10. This is the title of Henry Walker's tract that for all intents and purposes heralded the start of the Puritan rebellion against Charles I (see Sirluck, 1956). The biblical phrase (see I Kings 12: 16) signifies that the tribes of Israel form a confederation based upon consent and are not obligated to remain under the rule of Judah when the leadership abandons the principles upon which the confederation has traditionally been based. Whereas Christianity regards itself as the new Israel and denominational affiliation is consensual, the separation into local units is consistent with earlier patterns.

imposed by affiliation with yet another bureaucracy seem to be rather unappealing to many people[11] — and fine points of doctrine, as I have earlier argued, were never the essential elements of denominational success. The churches experiencing growth are those giving people a sense of place — individual meaning and purpose in a physical and spiritual community.[12] These groups also give the appearance — even if the leadership has, in fact, moved in from elsewhere — of having grown from the locality of interest rather than being superimposed upon it. Ralf Dahrendorft (1959) has argued that this quality is the strength of pluralism and, to wit, of the American system.

Thus, the new "non-denominations" represent an attempt to preserve the religio-cultural heritage of America even as they diverge from the traditional bearers of that heritage. They stand, for better or worse, in opposition to the tide of centralization and superimposition that would ultimately result in the destruction of the basic fabric of the "nation with the soul of a church." If these groups are capable of achieving this relatively monumental turnabout, then the denominational society will have proved an enduring structure for organizing cultural pluralism. Specific denominations may come and go, but the framework remains intact. On the other hand, it may be that these new groups represent nothing more than a furtive grasping at straws, with little more significance than the largely deflated pan-denominational merger movement. Much undoubtedly will depend upon aspects of a *world*-system far beyond the reach of any congregation in any community here or abroad. The persistence of religion on a global scale, however, coupled with a sense of the limitations and challenges imposed upon us by our environment, leave open the possibility for socio-cultural renewal in which both religion and community may have a place.

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11. According to Hillery (1978), furthermore, formal organizations stand at variance from certain basic values widely proclaimed by religion of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

12. See, for example, McGaw (1979, 1980), Hoge and Roozen (1979), and Hadaway (1980) for current empirical work in this area.

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