ASSOCIATION FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION

The 2021 Annual Proceedings of the ASSR

Edited by:
Jon K. Loessin
Wharton County Junior College

2021 Virtual Conference
April 24, 2021

The Association for the Scientific Study of Religion

Presents

The Year 2021
Annual Proceedings of the ASSR

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President's Note

Welcome once again to the *Proceedings* of Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (ASSR). It is again both an honor and privilege to serve as ASSR President and as editor for *The Year 2021 Proceedings of the ASSR*. Year after year, the *Proceedings* are another fine collection of papers and presentations from both our perennial authors and presenters as well as a host of new academic talents who bring with them new styles and topics. In addition to our professional academic papers, the ASSR also includes student papers in the *Proceedings* as submitted and presented at the annual meeting, and in addition to the Frank P. Forwood Award for Excellence in Presented Research for professional papers, two student awards are now available—the Harry Hale Prize for Graduate and Undergraduate Research.

The quality of these *Proceedings* attests not only to the fine work that has been accomplished by the efforts of many who participate and promote our meetings through research, writing, attending our sessions, and sponsorship through both donations and the purchase of this collection. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helps to make the ASSR what is has been, what it is, and what it hopes to become. Joining the ASSR only costs $20.00 yearly (or a one-time $100 lifetime membership) and your support and participation in our yearly sessions and helping to make them successful by writing and presenting papers, chairing sessions, contributing to the *Proceedings,* and attending the presentations of others. It is important for our future that every member of the ASSR not only encourages new membership at every opportunity but solicits scholars throughout the colleges, universities, and organizations at which you reside to become involved in our group through chairing sessions, writing and submitting papers, or serving as an officer.

I hope all of you have a good year and the ASSR will be looking forward to your participation in the ASSR in 2021-2022. Be sure to visit us online at: www.assronline.org, complete with online publications of papers from past meetings (see the **Archives** on the site). Hopefully you will share this site with colleagues and students alike. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Jon K. Loessin, 2020-2021 ASSR President/Editor

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Agreeing to Agree within the Hurricanes of Life: With Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Spirituality in Mind

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Abstract

The current paper is an attempt to constructively explore racial challenges within the context of Hurricane Katrina research and the U.S. response to the devastating death of George Floyd in 2020. The author shares a personally "spiritual" experience of profound grief and revelation on the day George Floyd was buried in Pearland, Texas. Anecdotal experience and empirical data are discussed within a racial-conciliatory framework developed by de la Peña and colleagues (2010) which focused on the importance of acknowledging agreement amongst races while not discounting existing disagreement. The role of socioeconomic status as well as other contributing factors are highlighted within the backdrop of differing opinions and racial challenges. Practical suggestions to help allay racial tension and promote unity are considered.

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On June 9, 2020, my two sons and I knelt on our knees on the street gravel in front of Houston Memorial Gardens in Pearland, Texas, for forty-six seconds - the same amount of time a Minneapolis police kept his knee on the neck of George Floyd before his ultimate death a couple of weeks before. Just prior to starting my watch, one of my sons asked why we were kneeling. I told them both that we going to honor George Floyd who was going to be buried there later that day and we were going to remain silent, on our knees for forty-six seconds, while thinking about how he tragically lost his life. My sons (age fourteen and nine at the time) learned a great lesson that day that began when they saw their daddy weep like they had never seen him do before. The tears were a culmination of a challenging year for the United States and around the world. "Dad, why are you crying so much, did you know George Floyd?" I told them that although I never met him, I would never forget him, and asked them to never forget him as well.

That day in Pearland, Texas, was an unforgettable day to say the least. Countless people lined the streets with heartfelt sorrow and racial tension very apparent. The stress was exacerbated by the peak of Covid-19 and the wake of political protests and riots that were prevalent across the United States, not to mention the impending presidential election that contributed to so much divisiveness. A great challenge that had become prevailing in the minds of Americans across the country was systemic racism, and my goal for that day was to teach my sons about this topic of concern.

I approached two African American gentleman (JW and EK), who were leaning up against an old truck, and asked them if they wouldn't mind having a conversation with my boys about systemic racism and the racial challenges going on

in the United States. Both men seemed a bit surprised about what I was hoping to accomplish but were each eager to offer their perspective and offered compelling stories of poverty, hard times, and discrimination. My sons, who appear way more Caucasian than their last name would indicate, were a bit nervous and uncomfortable, but listened with sincere respect and appreciation for the men's willingness to share personal information with complete strangers. It was a very spiritual experience as JW passionately began to explain that classifying people by race was "an act of the devil" and how his skin was not "actually black" and my sons' skin was not "actually white." He emphasized that we all bleed the same color and made reference that we were all God's children. We nodded with sincere agreement.

After carefully listening to both men for some time, I asked if I could offer an analogy that I used to teach my sons about systemic racism. I told them to be honest and to tell me if it was an effective approach or not. I used a modified baseball analogy that I had heard used by two well-known pastors (one Black and one White) in a conversation a few days after George Floyd's death (note: the names of pastors will remain anonymous). The African American pastor had emphasized that in the U.S., White people "start off on first base" on the road to success, while Black people start off at home plate. I modified the analogy by adding socioeconomic status (SES) to the visual. I said that my boys were starting off on second base, because not only did they have white skin, but they also both had college funds established. I emphasized that it would take a lot of hard work for my boys to get to third base and ultimately home, but their road to success was certainly doable, particularly because they got to start off on second base. I then stated that poor White and wealthy African American children both start off on first base on the road to success, but that African American children of low SES start off at home plate. I emphasized that because of systemic racism, getting to first base for the African American children of low SES would be the hardest base to get to out of all the bases and racial statuses considered.

As nervous as I was expressing my thoughts to the two men, I was at the same time determined to get feedback from them. They were both very receptive to the baseball analogy and JW even had watery eyes with appreciative sentiments for me in return. In fact, he emphatically expressed to my boys that they listen to me in "all things" because I not only had my boys' best interests in mind, but also because I had a heart for change (which I truly appreciated). As we continued to talk to each other cordially, some people walking by stopped to listen, and even videoed us with their cell phones, as if it was something unusual for complete strangers with different skin colors to communicate with so much agreement in their dialogue. Although the two men's initials were used in this paper for the sake of anonymity, it should be duly noted that both of my sons still remember JW's and EK's full names, and I hope they never forget them.

> "We gotta start makin' changes,
> Learn to see me as a brother instead of two distant strangers."
> -Tupac Shakur, Changes

In the United States, we have a great opportunity to constructively address racial issues and much needed change. However, I am convinced that those who want to constructively engage in racial dialogue should use a conciliatory approach when discussing the historical challenges between Black and White Americans, because I am convinced that the two races are currently way more in agreement than disagreement, even concerning historic events such as the heart-breaking death of George Floyd. Although this is a bold statement, please give me the rest of this paper to defend the above argument as racial tension is certainly a vulnerable area in dire need of conciliatory efforts. For starters, and forgive me for my frankness, but I can honestly say that I do not know one White person that that was not utterly appalled at the way George Floyd lost his life. Blacks and Whites are in agreement - the way he lost his life was an atrocity to say the least. The loss of George Floyd's life will not be in vain. In my opinion, it brought to the forefront an issue that has been going on in the U.S. for way too long and change is now inevitable.

I must emphasize that the complexities and opinions associated with police brutality towards African Americans go far beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, the George Floyd case is still too fresh of a wound for me to write about with complete objectivity. Instead, for the rest of this paper, I will highlight some past research that became prevalent in my mind in the days that followed Mr. Floyd's burial. In my opinion, we must start with objective agreement. We missed an opportunity to get in agreement almost 16 years ago when Hurricane Katrina came around - we cannot afford to miss the opportunity again. Let us take a step back and see what many people missed, before taking two steps forward. With so much biased news in the airways today, we need to look at objective research if we are truly interested in the facts that pertain to the hurricanes of life.

A step back: Conciliatory lessons from Hurricane Katrina.

In August of 2005, the levees of New Orleans were extremely vulnerable as one of the biggest storms to ever hit the U.S. made landfall. The storm surge of Hurricane Katrina filled the city with so much water that the levees eventually broke and flooded most of New Orleans, leaving countless people homeless and many stranded on their rooftops needing to be saved by rescue teams. The Superdome and New Orleans Convention Center both served as emergency shelters for many days and housed thousands of people who had lost everything. Unfortunately, the conditions at both places became inhumane, and government response times with food, water, and sanitary supplies were extremely slow. The primary demographic of those in dire need was African Americans of low socio-economic status. When a famous African American rapper stated that the president of the United States at the time did "not care about black people," a flood of racial innuendos filled the headlines. The glorious jazz music of the great city of New Orleans was replaced with screams of anger and heartache that permeated the entire country.

I must confess, at the time, I thought to myself that if the President's rich White family was at any of the New Orleans' shelters, a helicopter would have been there to rescue them within a day for sure. However, as a psychology instructor, I

was quickly reminded of my own potential cognitive errors (see Kahneman, 2013) and decided I should consider the complexity of the situation more thoroughly (i.e., while being mindful of the fundamental attribution error in particular, see Ross, 1977). Nevertheless, at the time, I started to get extremely frustrated with the U.S. government's slow rescue times. My emotional impatience culminated one day in early September, 2005, while watching news coverage at the Astrodome, a place where Katrina victims who had lost everything were eventually being bused. The city of Houston did its part to take care of its Louisiana neighbor by opening its doors to those in desperate need. However, the U.S. government aid was slow, and I watched countless numbers of poor African Americans walk off the buses, without even a bottle of water waiting for them. I was living in Pearland, Texas, at the time, just a few miles from where George Floyd was ultimately buried. My wife and I had enough – we decided to take water to the victims ourselves!

When my wife and I walked into that local grocery store, we witnessed so many people of different races and socioeconomic backgrounds who were motivated to do the same thing – get water to the Astrodome! I will never forget that day, so many everyday people were motivated to help and were very focused in their intention of buying truckloads of water for those in need. Everyday people were not going to sit back and wait for the U.S. government to provide, everyday people were determined to do the job themselves. There was a positive feeling of community-camaraderie that is not usually present during the day-to-day routine of grocery pick-up, but it is certainly one that needs to be emphasized. We see moments like this, time and time again, when the storms of vulnerability strike. Whether hurricanes, tornados, massive tsunamis, or global pandemics, humans are at their best when they sacrifice for others. Fortunately, there is no law that says only governments can help during challenging times. Unfortunately, however, even when humans of different skin colors do help each other, news outlets do not seem as motivated to cover the stories, at least not as much as they do when we fight.

When the frustrating times of Hurricane Katrina passed, my colleagues and I (from the University of Houston – Downtown) discovered some interesting things about human perception following apparent injustices, influenced not only by the media, but also academic publications. Our research was greatly influenced by a frequently cited study titled "Huge Racial Divide Over Katrina and Its Consequences" conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2005). This study highlighted differences in perception between Black and White Americans concerning the slow government response times alluded to earlier. The main finding reported was that 66% of Black Americans compared to just 17% of White Americans believed that government response times would have been faster had the predominant population of the New Orleans' shelters been White. Although these differences were indeed statistically significant, after a careful analysis of all the highlighted questions in the study, we concluded that Black and White Americans were way more in agreement concerning the events of Hurricane Katrina than in disagreement (de la Peña, Bachmann, Istre, Cohen, & Klarman, 2010).

In our study, using margin of agreement/disagreement measurements, we first looked at the primary question assessed by the Pew research (2005) study previously mentioned, concerning the 66% (Black participants) versus 17% (White

participants) disparity (i.e., that the government would have responded faster to Whites). Not obvious from these differences is the agreement (i.e., 17% of Black and White participants) with this first response. Moreover, not emphasized was the 27% of Blacks that believed the government would have responded with the same urgency (or lack thereof, in this case) had the predominant race been White. Although 77% of White participants had this opinion, a match could be made with the 27% of Blacks and with 27% of the Whites (out of the 77%). Considering the 17% in agreement mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph, and the 27% mentioned here, you now have 44% (27 + 17) of the Blacks and Whites in agreement. Furthermore, 6% of Whites answered "uncertain" to the question compared to 7% of Black participants (i.e., 6% in agreement, 6 of the 7). By adding the 6% to the 44%, 50% of the total Black and Whites could be considered in "agreement," with 50% in "disagreement" (as cited in de la Peña et al., 2010).

It is important to emphasize that the primary question analyzed above was the only one of the ten highlighted questions in that particular study in which there was much disagreement (i.e., 50%). However, after careful analysis of the rest of the highlighted questions of their study, the two races were way more in agreement, but the authors chose to magnify the differences, particularly with the title of the study (i.e., "Huge Racial Divide Over Katrina and its Consequences). Differences need to be underscored, absolutely they do, but agreement is also important and needs to be highlighted with equal fervor.

One more study focusing on one more survey question will be considered, in order to underscore the important point emphasized above. In a follow-up study on Hurricane Katrina, based in part by on selected statistics from a Gallup/CNN/USA Today poll conducted in 2005, White, Philpot, Wylie, and McGowen (2007) reported that "76% of Blacks reported being angry, whereas only 60% of Whites indicated anger" (pg. 529, as cited in de la Peña et al., 2010). Using margin of agreement/disagreement methods my colleagues and I found that Blacks and Whites were actually 84% in agreement with this survey question. In order to understand this calculation, imagine briefly if the 60% of "angry Whites" were matched-up with the 60% of "angry Blacks" (i.e., the 60% of 76%). If these 60% of total participants were put in the same room, they would all be "angry" together. Although being angry is usually not considered a positive, at least they could be considered "in agreement" with their anger. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that 24% of Black participants were not angry (i.e., 100%-76%), and could be "matched-up" with 24% of White participants that were also not angry (of the 40%, i.e., 100%-60%). These Black and White participants would also be in agreement, but in this case, in their lack of anger. When you add the 60% of "angry-agreeing" Black and White participants to the 24% of "not-angry-agreeing" Black and White participants, the total is 84% of the Black and White participants in agreement, with only 16% left in disagreement. With margin of agreement/disagreement methodology, the reader is able to get a clearer understanding of how much agreement and disagreement actually exists.

In our study (de la Peña et al., 2010), we included methodology that highlighted SES in addition to race and we framed the results with both agreement and disagreement in mind. First, we asked participants the same question

concerning the slow government response times in New Orleans; however, we changed up the wording a bit. We asked participants to rank order the following group in terms of whether or not the U.S. government would have responded faster had the predominant group at the New Orleans' shelters been: 1) Rich Blacks, 2) Poor Blacks, 3) Rich Whites, and 4) Poor Whites. We argued that including a socioeconomic component changes the potential imagery conjured up by the hypothetical scenario. For example, when you think of rich Black people, famous individuals such as Oprah Winfrey and Michael Jordan might come to mind. Similarly, but with a different result, when asked to imagine rich Whites, people such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffett could be viable options. Briefly ponder this question: Would leaders in the U.S. government have allowed any of these four people just mentioned to stay at the rescue shelters for very long if they knew they were suffering? You get the point, socioeconomic status probably matters as much as race does, but often gets overlooked.

Results of the study demonstrated that both Black and White participants agreed that rich White people would have been responded to the fastest and poor Blacks the slowest. This is an important finding that deserves emphasis - participants were in agreement regarding the first and last position! Interestingly, African-American participants ranked the Poor White group as second, whereas White participants ranked the Rich Black group second, suggesting that Whites weighted socioeconomic status more, while Black participants considered race more. Additionally, a much greater percentage of White participants (30%) thought there would not have been any differences amongst groups compared to only 3% of African-American participants. So certainly, statistical differences did exist between the two races which deserves attention. However, notwithstanding these differences, there was much more agreement amongst participants, which often gets overlooked in studies that highlight differences in perception.

Pursuant to the last statement, consider briefly what drives academia as well as the media. In academia, publications in refereed journals are contingent upon statistically significant differences. You can be relatively certain that refereed journals would not exist without statistically significant data. However, what gets lost in translation, particularly when the media gets ahold of academic findings, are effect sizes, which have to do with the size of statistically significant differences (see Cohen, 1988). We had plenty of statistically significant differences between the two races in our study, if we did not, the study probably would never have been published. However, the effect sizes were very small and we choose to highlight the small differences within the greater agreement, which is rare when investigating issues pertaining to race. If we would have gone to any news outlets regarding our statistically significant differences, the press would have likely highlighted the differences, without the important "agreement" data.

In addition to the "agreement" argument, which has been the primary crux of this paper, there are other factors that deserve attention as well. For example, according to Adams, O'Brien, and Nelson (2006), when a White person is asked questions about systemic racism, many will unknowingly interpret intentionality as part of the question, whereas those from oppressed groups are more likely to be "vigilant" about historical/systemic implications (as cited in de la Peña, 2010). It

follows that differences in opinion should be expected between races to some degree, particularly concerning those with different historical backgrounds and experiences with discrimination (Adams et al., 2006; de la Peña, 2010). However, these differences in perception should be highlighted within existing agreement, particularly when addressing racial issues, lest promoting a false polarization of beliefs. As Robinson, Keltner, Ward, and Ross (1995) demonstrated with their study that investigated conflict associated with controversial issues, such as race and political affiliation, humans do indeed disagree about a lot of things, but when a false polarization of beliefs exists, people often believe that "other" people think in more extreme ways than they actually do.

Concluding Remarks

Yes, disagreement with racial challenges should be duly addressed and highlighted, particularly when potential systemic racism may exist. If disagreement is not emphasized, systemic racism could go on perpetually. However, because Blacks and Whites often experience much agreement that often gets overlooked, racial conciliatory efforts must be considered. Moreover, as JW emphasized to my sons on the day George Floyd was buried, we must regularly remind ourselves that we all bleed the same color. As painful as recent historic events have been, I am convinced that the "real gap" between Black and White Americans is not as big as it is often portrayed on TV, social media, and even academic publications. We have made progress and will continue to do so, particularly when advocating conciliatory approaches such as the margin of agreement/disagreement methodology set forth in the de la Peña et al. (2010) study and discussed within this paper. If you investigate the data associated with racial relations with due diligence, you will find much agreement. Academically speaking, we must get better at the way we investigate and frame data. Regarding how we perceive each other, and with Tupac Shakur's sentiments in mind, "we gotta start makin' changes."

Biographical Note

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A Contemporary Research Study on the Spiritual Gifts and Work of Certified Mediums and Ordained Ministers in the Religion of Modern Spiritualism

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Abstract

This research study focussed on Spiritualist Mediums and Ordained Ministers' mediumship, spiritual gifts, and ministry. Using a detailed questionnaire, a core group of Spiritualist mediums and ministers willing to be subjects were initially contacted and then they, in turn, were asked to introduce the study to other Spiritualist mediums and ministers. The entire study was anonymous in order to ascertain the most authentic and honest responses from the subjects. There were 138 respondents who participated in this study. Regarding personal demographics, a section of the study analyzed the subjects' backgrounds (i.e. sex, age, years as a medium or minister, etc.). The main part of the study used a qualitative format to inquire into specific aspects of the minister's mediumship. Primarily, the study focused on the ministers' awareness of mediumistic gifts, initial experience with mediumship, and the use of tools in their mediumship work. This ethno-religious study of Spiritualist mediums and ministers mirrors two previous studies conducted by this researcher, and the results are compared throughout, offering, in general, more insight and understanding into how Spiritualist mediums and ministers have transformed or diversified over the past twenty years of my active research on this topic.

Introduction

Spiritualism first became a movement when two young sisters, Kate and Maggie Fox, decided to try to make contact with an incarnate spirit that had been plaguing them every night in their home for some time. Of course, spirit communication has been around since time immemorial and even during the time the Fox sisters first made their contact with the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered in their home years before they moved there, spirit hauntings were not unknown. So, spirit communication was not an entirely new concept for the people during that time.

However, the fact that the young sisters made contact that was responsive, does set it aside from other forms of spirit communication. So, on March 31, 1848, the young sisters decided to "talk" to this spirit that kept making rapping noises all around them, keeping them awake at night. To their surprise the entity responded to their verbal commands with raps. After alerting their parents, alarmed, confused and shocked, Mr. and Mrs. Fox called in neighbors as witnesses to see what was

happening. The rappings continued and the group made a laborious code, asking the entity to rap for each letter of the alphabet. They were able to ascertain that the entity haunting them was named Charles B. Rosna, who was a peddler, who had been murdered in the home some years before the Fox Family had moved into the farmhouse.

This simple spirit contact put into motion a religious movement the likes the world had never witnessed before. Before long, people clamored to meet the young sisters, some wanting messages from departed loved ones, others who wanted nothing more than to kill them as witches.

The sudden interest in spirit communication exploded and the sisters became a verifiable phenomenon, thrusting them into the spotlight that quickly included having benefactors who were part of the powerful and influential elite society of New York City.

The Spiritualist movement gradually came into being, as interest in spirit communication began to take shape across the country. In its most early incarnation, mediumship was being carried out by anyone who said they had the gift and hung a sign outside their home. This perplexed many true believers as the condition was ripe to have fraudsters claiming to be mediums intermingling with authentic mediums. Eventually, it was decided that the movement needed to have some sort of consistent and organized association to monitor and vet authentic mediums from those just pretending.

As the movement gradually transitioned into a religion, many common facets of Christianity and Christian church services served as models for the rapidly growing Spiritualist church. One huge departure, however, from the typical Protestant church service was the offering of messages by a Spiritualist minister or medium as part of the regular worship service.

Not all Spiritualist mediums are ministers, but as a rule, all Spiritualist ministers are indeed mediums. A common prerequisite today in becoming an ordained Spiritualist minister within the majority of associations and seminary programs (in the United States) that actively ordain ministers within the religion of Modern Spiritualism is the requirement to demonstrate an ability to communicate with the so-called dead. In other words, to be developed mediumistically to the point of being able to relay information in the form of messages involving “spirit communication” from loved ones who have passed over from the living here on the earth plane. (Leonard, 2015)

> Spiritualism teaches that, those who have passed on are not in an unconscious state of being. The Spirit is very much conscious and well. No longer is that Spirit hampered by the

> burdensome physical body. No longer is there the tormenting physical pain, the anguished mind. The Spirit is free at last. Free, and yet, with its "will" to do the many things the physical did not allow, or the element of time or weather, that now in the Spirit World can be accomplished. Indeed, it is a proven fact that Spirit is very much alive and active; even more so in the Spirit World than when on the Earth Plane. (Sher, pp.2-3)

There are several key components that aspiring mediums and Spiritualist ministers must try to incorporate in their work. 1) a natural ability or propensity to connect with Spirit and/or one's personal spirit guides; 2) the opportunity to develop one's own mediumship under the direction of a certified development teacher or mentor; 3) the appropriate amount of time and effort an aspiring medium or minister needs or is willing to devote to developing his/her own mediumship, with ample opportunities to practice giving messages. (Leonard 2015)

The Research Study

This particular study was conducted on Spiritualist ministers and mediums who are actively working in these roles throughout the world. One condition to be a subject in this study was that the person had to be ordained or certified by an actual Spiritualist church or association. The majority of the subjects were initially selected through referral, meaning that once I was able to contact a core group of ministers and mediums through my own personal contacts after years of research in this area, these people then referred their contacts to the on-line questionnaire with my prescribed criterion in place. This type of research sampling is referred to as "snowball sampling."

> In Snowball sampling researchers identify a small number of individuals who have characteristics in which they are interested. These people are then used as informants to identify, or put researchers in touch with, others who qualify for inclusion and these, in turn, identify yet others—hence the term snowball sampling. This method is useful for sampling a population where access is difficult, maybe because it is a sensitive topic or where communication networks are underdeveloped. The task for the researcher is to establish who are the critical or key informants with whom initial contact must be made. (Cohen, *et al*, 104)

A decision was made early on to utilize a variety of social media accounts to make contact with potential subjects who are subscribed to those lists. Although the primary instrument (an online questionnaire) utilized a combination of a Likert scale (e.g. "please mark accordingly—strongly disagree, somewhat agree, somewhat

disagree, strongly disagree") and/or a checklist scale (e.g. "please check the items that pertain to you."), several sections of the questionnaire were "qualitative" in that they allowed the respondents to answer open-ended questions freely, which generated much data and information which required collating and interpreting.

Statistics of the Participants

This particular study had 138 subjects (N=138), which was more than a previous study I conducted back in 2015 which had only 54 respondents (N=54), and an even older study I conducted back in 2002 that had 46 subjects (N=46). In 2002, 82% of the respondents were female, and 18% were male.[1] The 2015 study garnered a ratio of 70% female and 30% male, and this current study resulting in nearly the exact same ratio of females and males at 70.29% female and 29.71 % male. Since my first study, back in 2002, Spiritualist males who are mediums and ministers have had a marked increase within the religion, but women still far outnumber men by leaps and bounds.

Historically, this has always been the case in Spiritualism. Women have consistently outnumbered men by a large margin, primarily because it was the only religion at its inception that offered women equal footing with men, offering them an active voice in the leadership of associations and churches, at a time when women were largely expected to do domestic-based work in the home, like cooking, cleaning, raising children, or maybe sewing for others or offering music lessons. Spiritualism offered women an opportunity to have a vocation—a career—in which they could develop a profession that was separate from their dependence upon any male figure in their household, whether that is a father, brother, husband, or son. (Leonard, 2005)

> Perhaps the most startling discovery was the extent to which Spiritualism and the inception of women's rights were intertwined. At a time when women had no power to achieve equal rights, they relied on the "other powers" provided by Spiritualism to sustain their efforts. Through the mouths of trance speakers came words of wisdom from long-dead seers, and from the spirits came the courage to go forward. (Goldsmith, xiii-xiv)

It can be deduced from the data that Spiritualist women still find great comfort and freedom in the religion and still enjoy leadership roles, and an equality of the sexes

[1]It is interesting to note that a research study done by Loessin (2004) on the call to ministry of Christian ministers, the percentage of male participants was roughly 84% with females coming in at only 16%—nearly the opposite of the female-to-male ration in this study of Spiritualist ministers.

still denied many other women who follow more mainstream religions. Spiritualism boasts one of the highest percentages of female ministers in organized religion. This is due in part to the fact that historically, as well as today, Spiritualism offers women not only a voice, but an opportunity to be heard and to serve equally with men. In most Spiritualist organizations and churches, women are undeniably the leaders of the religion. Also, Spiritualism historically and to the present day, has been on the cutting edge of social issues of the times. Spiritualists fought for the abolition of slavery, and campaigned for the right for women to vote in the suffrage movement, and today are on the forefront, fighting for the rights of LGBTQ people.

Today, nearly all Christian denominations in the United States have gradually and progressively become more accepting of LGBTQ people according to a 2015 study by the *Pew Research Center,* but generally speaking Spiritualism has always been much more progressive regarding social issues than mainstream Christianity. This historical precedence of Spiritualism to be progressive with social issues of the times, has allowed the religion to foster tolerance and the acceptance of marginal members of society, whether they be racially-based, gender-based, economic-based, or socially-based.

A new question included in this latest study dealt with the ministers' and mediums' relationship status and sexual orientation. An overwhelming percentage (75.346%) of the respondents identified as being "straight." The selection of "gay or lesbian" came in at 15.94% and bisexual respondents at 2.90%. There was one transgendered respondent, and two respondents who selected "celibate". Five people preferred not answer this question.

Over 50% of the respondents indicated that they were married (50.72%), with 9.42% indicating that they were widowed. Less than 20%, (18.12%) selected "divorced" and 3.62% were "separated" at the time of the study. 6.52% were in a domestic partnership or civil union, which can be essentially regarded as being a form of "marriage." Just over 5% (5.07%) indicated they were single, but cohabiting with another person, 6.52% of the respondents identified as being single, or never married.

Regarding age, 63 respondents or 45.65% were between the ages of 55-64. The 2015 study found 39% of the respondents to have been in this age category, and the 2002 study revealed that the majority of subjects had an average age between 60-69. This is encouraging in that the earlier studies showed Spiritualism to be a rapidly aging religion with more older people than younger. This new research indicates that the age of ministers and mediums is a bit lower which means that younger people are increasingly becoming interested in and pursuing ordination more actively. However, of the subjects that participated in the survey, 24.64% were between the ages of 65-74, and 17.39% between the ages of 45-54. So, still today, the overwhelming majority of Spiritualist ministers and mediums tend to be

on the older side. Only 11 participants out of 138 categorized themselves as being in the 44 and younger category, with only 3 of these being aged 34 or younger. So, while there is some movement toward a slightly younger average age of ministers and mediums in Spiritualism, it still leans to the older side of the spectrum, which is a worrisome trend for maintaining the religion for the future. More young people are needed to become certified mediums and ordained ministers to keep the religion solvent.

Regarding the ethnicity of the respondents, an overwhelming percentage (94.93%) identified as white. Only 1.45% identified as black or African-American, and 2.17% identified as native American or Alaskan Native. 1.45% selected Asian as their ethnicity. This lack of diversity in ethnicity is troubling, considering the historical fact that Spiritualists were always on the cutting edge of social issues, like Abolition and the Suffrage movement. Spiritualist organizations and churches need to do more outreach programs to welcome a more diverse variation of ethnic minorities, and certainly more effort must be made to encourage people of color and other races to pursue studies in mediumship and ultimately toward ordination.

Regarding the geographic areas where the subjects hailed from, overwhelmingly North America was represented by 86.96% of the respondents. This is not surprising, considering that North America, primarily the United States, has the most active churches and associations anywhere in the world. Since the religion of Spiritualism was founded and propagated in the United States, it is logical that the majority of worldwide adherents and active mediums and ministers in the religion are located in America.

Nearly 11% of the subjects indicated they were European, with .72% from Asia, .72% from Australia, and .72% from South America. These statistics likely do not offer a sound scientific overview of the religion worldwide, due to the fact that I used “snowball sampling” that relied upon a core group of initial subjects which were largely from the United States, hence skewing the data toward this bias. It is well-known that Great Britain has a large number of Spiritualist churches and organizations, and although I tried to include people from all parts of the world, it very well could be the case that active mediums and ministers in these countries were not approached to participate in this study. A future study would do well to make a concerted effort to include as many people from all nationalities and countries as possible to get a better understanding of the actual condition of the religion’s numbers of mediums and ministers in other geographical locations outside the United States.

When asked what country the subjects felt was their primary residence and where they did most of their mediumship, as expected, the United States and Canada were in the majority, with a sprinkling from other places, including, Great Britain, Italy, France, Australia and even Malaysia.

Regarding education, only 2.21% of the respondents indicated they had achieved a level of academic education that was less than a high school diploma. Over 50% of the respondents indicated they had either a bachelor's degree (24.26%) and/or a graduate degree (27.21%). There were 13.24% that selected an Associate Degree, and 24.26% indicated they had taken college level classes but did not achieve a terminal degree. Just over 10% indicated they had a high school diploma only. This is all in addition to their certification and studies toward classes they needed to take to be ordained or to be certified as a medium.

In general, looking at the statistics regarding education, it can be deduced that Spiritualist mediums and ministers are well-educated with a variety of different educational paths. Spiritualist mediums and ministers, unlike their peers in mainstream Christianity, often have professional careers separate from their Spiritualist mediumship and ministry. The majority of full-time Christian-denomination ministers are full-time clergy, being paid by the churches they serve. Often is the case with Spiritualist clergy, they must have a "day" job in addition to their ministry as few Spiritualist churches can afford to have a full-time minister that is paid a weekly or monthly salary large enough to live on. So, this explains partly why Spiritualist ministers and mediums tend to have higher levels of education apart from their seminary studies because their education likely coincides with their outside profession that is separate from their Spiritualist mediumship work and ministry.

The subjects in this study had 43.38% indicating they had full-time employment outside of their mediumship and ministry work, with 13.97% indicating they were employed part-time. Being unemployed or unemployed and looking actively for work was 9.56% of the respondents. The percentage of retirees was quite high at 29.41%, which means that they have likely retired from their professional careers, but continue to do mediumship and minister-related work as needed. 3.68% of the subjects indicated they were disabled.

When asked before becoming a Spiritualist medium or ordained minister, what was their religious background? Only 19.69% of the subjects were lifelong Spiritualists, meaning they were raised in the religion and had practiced it since childhood. On the contrary, 80.31% selected "other" for their religious affiliation. In the 2002 study, only 8% were lifelong Spiritualists, so in the nearly 20 years since the first study was done, the percentage of lifelong Spiritualists has more than doubled.

Other than Spiritualism, a wide range of religious traditions were indicated, with Catholicism being the most prevalent among all the subjects. This mirrors the research study from 2002:

> One possible reason for the interest in Spiritualism of traditionally raised Catholics, and those who converted to

> Catholicism as adults before becoming Spiritualists, has to do with the ritual involved in the ceremonial aspects of the two religions. A Catholic mass has a very ritualistic liturgy; Spiritualism and mediumship are also comprised of a lot of ritual in the form of chanting and singing to raise the vibration, concentrated meditation or mantra recitation similar to those who practice saying "The Rosary," the use of incense during the services, prayer, and the spiritual cleansing of the space where the service takes place.
>
> In addition, Catholicism advocates spirt communication with anointed saints which is similar to Spiritualism's belief in spirit communication—the difference being that Catholics only speak to anointed saints who have been designated by the Church as being holy, and Spiritualists will talk to any benevolent spirit that wishes to make contact. (Leonard, 2005)

The religious traditions and denominations that people indicated were wide and varied including Baptist, Anglican, Methodist, Lutheran, Jewish, Episcopal, Mormonism, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, Gnostic, Christian Science, Evangelical Christianity, Theosophy, Wiccan, Agnostic, Rosicrucianism, Atheism, Metaphysics/New Age, Yogic, Unitarianism, Buddhism as some examples.

The respondents indicated that they indeed were church going people while growing up, with 66.92% indicating they attended church either weekly (60%) or monthly (6.92%).

When asked what first prompted them to pursue Spiritualism as a religion, the respondents had a plethora of reasons for choosing Spiritualism (See Appendix A). Sometimes the death of a loved one or friend led them to Spiritualism, or a personal illness or tragedy that made them question their existence to seek something bigger spiritually. While others always felt they had some sort of mediumship or psychic gift, but did not know how to develop it until they were introduced to or found Spiritualism. Others were introduced to the religion through a friend or family member, while others just happened upon a church service or a Spiritualist camp that led them to seek out more information about it.

The responses were also interesting in that a goodly number of the subjects in this study specifically mentioned the "Principles" of Spiritualism as being the deciding factor. Each Spiritualist association has its own set, but the basic tenets of the Principles are largely the same. These are the "Declaration of Principles" for the *Indiana Association of Spiritualists* (IAOS) at Camp Chesterfield:

1. We believe in Infinite Intelligence.
2. We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence.
3. We affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith constitute true religion.
4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.
5. We affirm that communication with the so-called dead is a fact, scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism.
6. We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them."
7. We affirm the moral responsibility of the individual, and that we make our own happiness or unhappiness as we obey or disobey nature's physical and spiritual laws.
8. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul here or hereafter.
9. We affirm that the precepts of prophecy and healing contained in the Bible and all sacred writings of the world are Divine attributes proven through mediumship.

Historically, Spiritualism has not been an evangelistic or missionary religion that actively tried to to spread the religion to others, relying primarily upon word of mouth and having active members introduce likeminded people to churches and camps. It has always been a firm belief that people will come to the religion who need to and when they need to, and will follow it for as long as they need to, with no pressure to join or conform to it. In fact, Spiritualism teaches the truths of all religious traditions and the majority of Spiritualists have some sort of infinity with another religion that they are able to practice side-by-side with their Spiritualist beliefs. So it is not uncommon for someone to identify as a Christian-Spiritualist, or a Buddhist-Spiritualist, etc. Since Spiritualism accepts the truths from all religious traditions that seek enlightenment through love and light, it is not contradictory for Spiritualists to follow and subscribe to another religious tradition in tandem with Spiritualism. The results of this study further prove this hypothesis because the subjects had indicated following many different religions before settling upon Spiritualism.

Seemingly, people moved around to different types of religions before settling down with Spiritualism. In the 2002 study, I coined the phrase "religion hopping" to describe the respondents who were not raised in Spiritualism, but found it later, as adults. The overwhelming majority of respondents in both studies

indicated they did a fair amount of experimenting with different religious traditions before deciding to be Spiritualists.

When asked, “How many years have you been a Spiritualist?”, the category of “31 years and over” received the highest percentage at 33.85%. The second highest was a tie: 14.62% indicated they had been a practicing Spiritualist for 6-10 years, and another 14.62% of the respondents selected 11-15 years. The smallest amount was 3.08% which was 1-5 years. It can be assumed, then, from this grouping that these adherents basically found Spiritualism and almost immediately began developing their mediumship and ordination classes as most programs take 3-4 years to complete to become a certified medium and an ordained minister. In fact, when asked “From the time you began developing your mediumship formally until you received certification as a medium, how many years did this take?” the overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated 5 years or longer. The categories of 16-20 years and 26-30 years each received 10.77% and 10.00% respectively. The category of 21-25 years received 8.46%, with 4.62% of the respondents choosing “other.”

Mediumship-Related Data

The majority of the respondents indicated they realized their gift of mediumship before the age of 17 (48.11%). The second largest group indicated they realized their gifts between the ages of 40-49 (13.21%). And 11.32% indicated they were between the ages of 50-59. Of these, many indicated they felt intuitive or experienced some sort of paranormal activity, but didn’t pursue their gifts until later in life. The age that they formally were certified as a medium was later in life—31% were between the ages of 40-49, and 24% were between the ages of 50-59. So, this data shows that people pursue formal certification in mediumship later in life, which corresponds with earlier studies, making Spiritualism a somewhat “graying religion” in that people are more mature when they seek out certification or ordination.

When asked who was the most influential person used by Infinite Spirit/God in prompting them to pursue mediumship development, 29.81% indicated a Spiritualist medium, and 18.27% indicated a Spiritualist development teacher. A pastor or minister was indicated by 15.38% of the subjects, and 13.46% indicated a family member, with 9.62% indicating a friend. It is likely that the people had an opportunity to get a reading from a medium and this prompted in them an interest to pursue their own mediumship gifts, since nearly 30% indicated they were first prompted by a medium.

When asked what their first experience with mediumship was, the respondents offered some very interesting and thoughtful answers.

Subject 10

“Premonitions and dreams, being comforted by guardian angels and saints, and using the power of prayer in difficult times.”

Subject 25

“I was giving a psychic/Tarot reading to a client and suddenly began choking and coughing. After several minutes of great physical distress, it finally occurred to me to ask my client if there was anyone in spirit who had had problems in the throat. She said that her father had died of throat cancer, and the symptoms immediately stopped. From that moment on I have always looked to see who was present from the spirit world in every reading.”

Subject 37

“Early one day, my mother (also a Spiritualist medium) and I were about to drive to our friend's house to counsel her. Her husband —also our friend—had just passed 3 days earlier. As soon as we got into the vehicle, he communicated with us through the electronic door locks. It was AMAZING!! Plus, he provided us with a lot of information to help his wife.”

Subject 43

“I knew at the age of 4 that my great grandmother was going to die soon. I announced it during dinner. Two weeks later she had a massive stroke and died.”

Subject 46

“As a child 3-4 yrs old, I would see my grandfather whom I had never met. I then questioned my grandmother about who I saw in the hallway. There was much he had to say to her, I just repeated what he said or showed me.”

Subject 48

“I was aware of a non physical man living in my grandmother’s house at a very early age. I was not permitted to talk about him. Many years later I learned it was her father who had taken his own life.”

Subject 53

“At an Intro to Mediumship class, and getting literally pushed by Spirit up to the front of the room, and being told to read the room. I started talking, not knowing

what I was saying and gave readings to the people in the room. They said later I was hitting at approximately 85% accuracy."

Subject 61

"At the age of four-years-old I knew a family friend (who appeared healthy) was going to transition within a week because her deceased mother was standing next to her and told me so."

Subject 73

"While meditating, my maternal grandmother came to me and explained what life was like for her on the other side of the veil."

Subject 91

"My first personal experience, one in which I was given evidence of the continuation of life after the change we call death, came at my first church service with a church in Syracuse."

Subject 95

"I had a cousin who was in [the process of transition] and I was able to speak with him and understand part of the process he was going through... (Scary when you are not yet developed mediumistically, but a blessing when you have a better understanding of Spirit and mediumship)."

When asked what was their most fantastic or memorable experience as a medium, the subjects offered some very interesting stories.

Subject 3

"There are so many; probably when I was reading for a severely handicapped child and family; the child could not talk. I brought in one of his friends [in spirit] who had recently passed away; I was told to tell the living child I was reading for, about the zoo—sitting by the elephants and eating ice cream and candy dots.... The alive child began to smile and move his head, and he said "yes." His Mom began to cry and said that the zoo was one of their favorite places and that is what they last did together—what I had described.... "

Subject 36

"I was going to counsel my ex-husband because his wonderful mother had passed on 3 days earlier (3 days seems to be the "rule" for me) but before I left, she visited me (and my fiancé —a non-believer until that day!). She wasn't

"visible" but we smelled her perfume[2] (we don't use fragrance in our home due to his allergies), saw an indent she made in the couch, and she held my hand - I FELT her hand & it was EXACTLY the way it had felt before she passed. My fiancé felt chilled but I felt very warm!"

Subject 39

"Standing at Inspiration Stump[3] for the first time and being able to deliver a message to a young woman who needed encouragement in her career decisions. Bringing through an important member of her family that confirmed her decisions. It is at this point that this was my most memorable experience because I trusted Spirit completely and was able to deliver a message that was needed."

Subject 46

"Providing a message that was delivered to the police which helped prove the innocence of two falsely imprisoned people. It also helped identify two serial killers who had been practicing their crimes for more than two decades in Buffalo, NY. I have written a book about it. *There's DNA to Prove It: Message from Beyond*. 2015."

Subject 51

"My church was contacted to go check out a supposedly haunted house where the owners were seeing things and being bothered. About 6 of us went there and after looking all around (it was an old mansion in the former "millionaires row" in Erie, PA, West 6th St) we finally went to a room where we could sit in a circle and see what we could get. It was there I went into trance for the first time ever and channeled some man who explained his story and told who killed him in the basement of the house by strangling and why. The homeowners had some of their friends come, too, so there was around 15+ people crammed into that room and at a certain point they could all smell a foul odor from where the man (spirit) said he was standing. We all did our best to send him to the light, and the smell then dissipated after that."

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[2] This is an example of clairgustance—psychic smelling or tasting.

[3]Inspiration Stump is at Lily Dale, New York, the largest Spiritualist Camp in the world. They have what is like an "open mic" sort of event where mediums can give messages to those in attendance. The medium does not have to be a Lily Dale resident-medium to work at Inspiration Stump.

Subject 83

“I have brought through soldiers killed in Iraq for their grieving families with lots of evidence. I think this has been the most fulfilling for me as a medium, and it's been a great healing experience for these families. I also was able to connect with a teenager who had taken his own life after being bullied for his sexual orientation. He gave lots of evidence and it really gave comfort to his family.”

Subject 85

“Giving messages in the Lily Dale Auditorium in front of a lot of folks. I brought in "Jim" to a person near the front row who couldn't recall any Jim and looked puzzled. I then described him...no recognition..I offered more details, still shaking his head no. Meanwhile I am thinking I am looking foolish in front of all these folks and they may think I am “fishing," yet I persisted on with the common name. Finally, I got the impression he was a friend of the family who often came over to play cards with their mother. All in unison almost that entire row (who must have been all family and relatives) said: "Oh, THAT Jim!" and the audience gasped in amazement, as I wiped nervous sweat off my brow.”

Personal Routine

Mediums often have a personal routine that they use to connect with Spirit and to get ready to do this type of work. The majority of the respondents indicated that they usually go into meditation before working with Spirit, or simply pray and center themselves. Subject 13 offered this: “I pray first for the best to connect for the greatest good, then I invite my guides, teachers, and spirits to come in. After feeling connected I begin by praying with the person using their own intention.” Similarly, Subject 23 offered this: “Meditation, prayer, protection, and calling in God, angels, spirit guides, animal totems, and ascended masters.” Subject 29’s routine is as follows: “I ask my guides to open me up to the insights and communication from Spirit, to remove from my head all my own concerns and assumptions, and to be free of any troubles or concerns.” Subject 54 offered this: “As an analog, I smell the air, look for signs, and taste the information as it floats about. Sometimes, these coalesce into a coherent gestalt understanding that is useful as a message. To put it a better way, I don't really know.”

Subject 88

“I meditate at the start of each day. Before readings, I talk to Spirit and ask for the highest and best messages possible to come through for the client. I invite in the client's spirit people and explain to them how to get my attention.”

Subject 90

"I open with a prayer, read "ad lib" for 10-15 minutes asking only if they understand or for verification. Once the links are well established and recognized, and we know we have a good connection, the client is then free to ask questions or to direct the reading from there to the areas they are interested in knowing about."

Subject 95

"First, I light candles and surround myself with light and love, I then go into prayer for others, then prayer for the clients coming, lastly prayer for myself. Then I sit in silence with my guides,[4] all together for 1-2 hours prior to my spiritual work."

Mediumship Tools

When asked what sorts of tools they may use to assist them in their mediumship work, a variety of answers were offered. Some used regular playing cards to focus their energy, others a tarot deck, some used astrology or numerology to connect to the person's energy they are reading for, others maintained they just dive right in and connect to the energy to give messages. Some associations and churches frown upon any use of outside tools and expect those training to become a medium by just using their gift of clairvoyance, clairsentience, clairaudience, or clairgustance[5] to connect with the spirit to relay the message. In fact, a large number of mediums and ministers indicated they didn't use any tools to connect with energy other than their own mediumship.

Subject 10 offered the following:

"I use the Bible[6] to start the reading and provide scripture verses for the person to take with them to read, usually a 7-day set of Bible verses to read over the

[4] Spiritualists believe that people have a band of guides that attend to them as "Heavenly helpers." The inner band consists of five guides including a doctor/teacher, master, chemist, protector (usually a Native American guide), and a joy guide. The joy guide often presents him/herself to the medium as a child. (Leonard, 319-321)

[5] Clairvoyance = clear seeing; clairsentience = clear feeling; clairaudience = clear hearing; and clairgustance = clear smelling or clear tasting.

[6] Many Spiritualist mediums use the Holy Bible in their work, and many are very comfortable reading scripture to prepare themselves. A very popular reading from the Bible for Spiritualist mediums is I Corinthians 12: 8-11: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; To another prophecy; To another discerning of spirits; To another *divers* kinds of tongues; To another the

next week. I have also used a pendulum which shows how Spirit energy moves through my physical body so they can see the movement of that object as it interacts with my own energy. Because it is onyx and quite a heavy pendulum, it makes an impression on the person receiving the reading. (In fact, this pendulum picked me by swinging toward me while on a "T" display rack at the store, The Sacred Circle in Alexandria, VA.) I do not question, I just accept what God has me use for validation and confirmation of Spiritual Truth."

Subject 3 was very forthright in her opinion about using tools: "No, I say a prayer prior to my reading and also when closing. I am a Spiritualist who is also a medium. Somebody who has to use props, as such, is not a true medium. They may be psychic, but not a medium."

The majority of the subjects indicated that they did some sort of ritual before giving readings, usually clearing the space of any negative energy through burning sage, or raising the vibration of the space with sound, and nearly everyone indicated they said some sort of prayer to set the space with the client before giving a reading.

Conclusion

This study had obvious limitations, one of which was the sampling of the subjects which needed to be larger. Having 138 respondents was very good, but a more diverse sampling of mediums and ministers from more countries and ethnic backgrounds would have made the results more enriching.

In addition, one medium called me out regarding my own potential bias. Subject 17, offered this observation:

"It seems that you think that people study or sit in circles so they can achieve certification. There are many of us who sit in circle with the sole intention of being one with spirit. To me, certification is in no way any indication of excellence in mediumship. I've seen many certified mediums who shouldn't even be working and others who aren't certified but who excel nonetheless. I love being a minister with my church and a registered Lily Dale medium (which required a very extensive testing process). But I pursued both because of my love of spirit and the community that I want to support."

It is true that I focussed on "certified mediums" and "ordained ministers" because I needed to have some sort of baseline criteria to measure and interpret the data. I am aware that there are very renowned mediums who have

interpretation of tongues; But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (*Holy Bible*, King James Version)

not had formal training, but for this particular study, I felt I needed to focus solely on those who had some sort of formal training and guidance.

Being a Spiritualist medium and/or ordained minister requires a certain level of dedication and not mere dabbling. Hence why I was so strict about the research criteria, only allowing certified mediums and ordained ministers to participate in this study. I found that those who did participate in this study were very sincere and genuinely dedicated to being a good medium and an effective minister. I was especially impressed with the detail in which the respondents answered the questions, offering wonderful responses for both the quantitative and qualitative questions that were rich in scope and depth.

At the end of the questionnaire, I had a "General Comments" section where the mediums and ministers could write anything they wanted. This turned out to be a treasure trove of true feelings and concerns about mediumship, Spiritualism, and their work. Here is a sampling of some of their answers:

Subject 24

"Spiritualism has marginalized itself by failing to remain relevant. That, even as it is the most useful way toward spiritual maturity. Most paranormalists are spiritualists by inclination but have not discovered any reason to involve themselves with an institution that looks a lot like an obsolete church ran by old people. You are doing the right thing by asking and trying to digest the current environment for spiritualist leaders. That is, if they will ever see your report. I say that because there is a huge disconnect between academia and spiritualist leaders."

Subject 26

"I will say I am somewhat satisfied. Being a pastor is consuming, or can be consuming, so there are times when pastors feel the need to just be a part of the congregation—just to get our spiritual tanks refilled. I often take off to other churches and it's nice if no one knows me and I can just be.

Subject 29

"I've always appreciated the fact that Spiritualism has insisted on education for its mediums, healers, and ministers. So many are calling themselves mediums now with little or no education or practice. It shows, and it makes me uncomfortable and hesitant to talk about my own work."

Subject 30

"I am dissatisfied with the options I have down here in "the Bible Belt." Spiritualism is a wonderful, natural, and highly misunderstood religion. If people, in general, were more open- minded, I believe many more would be Spiritualists. I hope that the post-Mayan era ushers in a more loving, trusting, and sharing energy."

Subject 31

"I see Spiritualism growing since orthodox religions are losing their people due to dogma. Rules and judgment do not work with the masses. Freedom to be is what we are about, and the public likes that. The negative and judgmental aspects of Christianity keeps harming their churches and driving people to Spiritualism."[7]

Subject 38

"I have worked hard to combine my Spiritualist ministry with my Chaplaincy. I don't feel that my Spiritualist church really appreciates the idea of true Pastoral care. They feel that all healing can be done through spiritual communication. I don't agree."

This ethno-religious study of Spiritualist mediums and ministers does offer new research into mediumship, and when compared to my earlier studies, adds to the existing research already done, which at times contradicts and other times reinforces previous data points on the topic. In the end, it is hoped that this additional study on Spiritualist mediums and ministers offers new insights and data regarding the religion of Spiritualism and the development of mediumship. As evidenced in this paper, for Spiritualist mediums and ministers, their work is not a game or some form of entertainment, but instead a very serious calling that allows them to use their gifts to assist, comfort, and help others. For the majority, it is a way of life and they dedicate themselves to offering evidentiary messages to those seeking comfort and consolation to know that their loved ones are around and are all right. A future comparative study including a larger number of subjects from different countries and ethnic backgrounds where Spiritualism is practiced would offer even more insight into the religion, as a

[7]Spiritualism is not an evangelical or missionary religion, instead believing that people who are meant to find Spiritualism do so in "divine order." Perhaps this is why Spiritualism has not fared as well as its two cousins, Mormonism and Christian Science. All three are American-made and were eventually exported outside of the United States—only Spiritualism was not propagated via missionary and evangelical work. Also, Spiritualism did not have a cult-like personality to lead it like Joseph Smith (Mormonism) or Mary Baker-Eddy (Christian Science). (Leonard 2009)

whole, and the ministers and mediums who practice mediumship around the world.

The candidness and honesty of the respondents' answers was refreshing and very much appreciated by this researcher. The rich details of the subjects' mediumship development and seminary studies offered unprecedented insight into the current situation regarding their work, training, mediumship development, and ministries. In the end, it is hoped that this study offers new insight and research data not previously found in other studies on this topic.

Biographical Note

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Appendix A:

What first prompted you to pursue Spiritualism as a religion?

A Research Study of Spiritualist Mediums and Ordained Ministers
1 My parents were Spiritualists.
2 Encompasses all religions. 3 The beliefs seemed more reasonable; no dogma. 4 Communication with the other side.
5 I always went to churches looking for something that fit my thoughts and feelings.
6 My Mother.
7 It best matched my personal beliefs, willingness by members of church to accept you without attacking your beliefs.
8 My mentor was a Spiritualist Minister.
9 The precepts of Spiritualism fit my personal experiences and beliefs.
10 Having a Reading by a Spiritualist Medium/Minister.
11 I had many of the key principles as part of my belief system before encountering spiritualism. I consider these principles as my core beliefs. My prior experience is now honed down to Love god, love yourself, love your neighbor.
12 Interest in the after life and Spirit communication; a desire to develop my own mediumship. 13 The ability to heal and practice mediumship. 14 Visited Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association, felt like I had come home, fell in love with the principles and the work.
15 It explained my experiences.
16 My realization that I had always been aware of my past lives.

17 Have always been Spiritualist. 18 Spiritual experience.
19 It fit with what had been happening to to me my whole life that other religions could not explain.
20 Seeing auras, seeing spirit, and seeing geometric patterns around everything. 21 Wife. 22 A need to find something which included all. Looking for an umbrella under which all could fit.
23 Death of a younger sister.
24 My partner's crossing and a visit to Chesterfield.
25 I needed to stop denying my mediumship. 26 DEATH OF SOMEONE I LOVED VERY MUCH.
27 Attended a service and received an amazing message.
28 As a psychic reader, it was introduced to me as a young adult.
29 Girlfriend/ wife.
30 Philosophy and proof of continuity of life. 31 I found Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp; evidential. 32 Pursuant of Mediumship development.
33 To learn how to set parameters when working with spirit.
34 Reading books by Arthur Conan Doyle and Andrew Jackson Davis.
35 A circle at a friend's place. 36 Searching from early childhood; disagreed with my father, the minister 37 Research

38 Spirit. 39 Spiritualist principles.
40 A friend.
41 Knowledge within the family.
42 Meditation Class.
43 Searching for my purpose. 44 Mediumship.
45 An inexplicable experience which was witnessed by others, and then a few more, thus I began reading and studying.
46 Mediumship.
47 Openness and a feeling of being true. 48 A friend.
49 The discovery of my Mediumship skills.
50 Suicide of my youngest nephew.
51 Understanding I was an Empath and Medium. When I was 10 years old my mother took me to a Spiritualist Church. 52 Near-Death Experience, Spiritual experiences. 53 Wanted to learn the tools that I've been given from heaven.
54 Grew up in Lily Dale.
55 To understand what I saw, felt & heard.
56 Introduction to NLP [Neuro Linguistic Programming], then energy healing, then understanding there is no such thing as death, energy cannot die. A trip to LilyDale confirmed what my thoughts were following spiritually.
57 Visiting Lily Dale, where I discovered my own abilities as a medium (ie, mediumship screwed up my atheism!)

58 It made more sense to me than traditional religions I experienced through friends and other family members. 59 Mediumship as a small child, gave readings.
60 The "regular" religions didn't make sense to me. I met a Spiritualist, and something clicked. 61 Reading/studying then development classes. 62 Visiting Lily Dale, NY with my Aunt at the age of 12. 63 Exposure to Spiritualism by way of friends as a teen in the 1970's, got readings and stayed interested. Embraced it as a full time religion in 2004.
64 Experiencing psychic phenomena. 65 My wife Lisa wanted to look into it ... one thing led to another and before I knew it, I was ordained. 66 A spiritual awakening from my grandma in spirit.
67 Low time in life.
68 People of like minds.
69 Prior religion (Catholicism) no longer satisfied my deep desire to learn and grow. 70 Odd things happening that I couldn't explain.
71 Belief in "ghosts". Visits from my deceased brother in dreams. Felt that there should be a religion out there that supported that belief.
72 It gave a "language" to experiences I was having and I found teachers and mentors who could steer my growth in those experiences.
73 Academic interest.

74 I was brought to Golden Gate Spiritualist Church and to Rev. Florence Becker by a close friend. 75 Being able to connect/give evidential messages from the Spirit World.

76 I started working with a woman whose best friend was a Spiritualist; then started dating a man whose brother's girlfriend was a Spiritualist.
77 Mediumship abilities.
78 The need to find more satisfying answers than I found in any other church.
79 Wife ... Like-minded people.
80 Mediumship development classes.
81 MET A SPIRITUALIST MINISTER.
82 Spirit contact when I was 5 years old.
83 When I discovered that it was a science, philosophy, and religion and taught Natural Law.
84 Received a reading and invited to church by a Spiritualist medium.
85 Direct experiences.
86 From early childhood, I was able to communicate with spirits, guides, and angels; I did not know until my early 20's that the religion of Spiritualism existed.
87 When I was 21 I experienced extremely profound physical Spiritualist phenomena. I didn't know what spiritualism was or know anyone who had similar experiences until I was over 30.
88 I went to a Spiritualist convention (SFF) and was won over.
89 I saw that classes were offered; until then, I did not know that there was a religion call Spiritualism.
90 Searching for peace.
91 Couldn't find a religion that I liked.
92 Interest in a trained Spiritualist minister who was a family member and I saw spirit people, too.
93 The death of my sister.

	94 I was interested in the subject matter. Not sure where I was first exposed to the ideas of Spiritualism. Met and studied with Spiritualist ministers beginning at age 17.	
	95 Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp activities in FL	
	96 Meeting a Spiritual healer. 97 It is my calling. 98 I knew I have a gift. 99 To get satisfying answers for me, and to help me figure out what was going on around me spiritually. To know how to use my natural abilities.	
	100 My Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother were Mediums. 101 I thought the United Church did not seem real, seemed like the Bible was largely fairy tales. Was always a medium and searched for something else. 102 Was a medium, looking for a place to fit in.	
	103 A stroke.	
	104 My daughter saw Spirit, so we attended a Mediumship Circle.	
	105 My mother. 106 Communication with those who have passed. 107 Death of two of my best friends.	
	108 Born into it.	
	109 Began studying mediumship and became interested in religion.	
	110 discovering my mediumship gifts.	
	111 It made the most sense of the assortment of beliefs I was exposed to. 112 Long story, but I grew up 9 miles from Lily Dale and had my first reading as a teen and thought it was a neat trick that I wanted to learn.	
	113 I went to Lily Dale with a group of friends and became acquainted with Spiritualism. When I left Lily Dale, I found a local Spiritualist church.	

	114 Seeing spirit at age 3; and supernormal experience at 11; and clairvoyance in my 20s. 115 As an early child began seeing spirit.	
	116 Reincarnation.	
	117 Curiosity and my remembrance of 6 past lives (I had this knowledge since childhood, but did not know what to do with it!) 118 Visited Cassadaga in Florida. 119 The Principles.	
	120 Friends who were members of a local temple.	
	121 I believe there was more than what meets the eye. Spiritualism has many of the same beliefs that I have always held as truth, even during the times I was searching, by going to different religious churches and groups. 122 The beliefs.	
	123 It is the religion I grew up in, and it made more sense than any other. Also I've been a medium all my life. 124 Knowing I had the gift to see & hear from Spirit & my Mother also pursuing Spiritualism. 125 Family interest.	

"Hans Ehrenberg and Prophetic Resistance to National Socialist Erastianism"

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Introduction

The matter of "Erastianism" in this title likely will suggest a presumption or misconception about state attempts to control religion and the considerable differences between the England of Henry VIII and Germany during the Third Reich. Yet the machinations of the National Socialist regime not only to impose the compliance of the churches with the new order but to suppress and punish any who would not fit into their prescriptions can hardly be more chilling than the depredations of King Henry in his English Reformation, which amounted more to an absolutist revolution than to an extension of the continental Reformation. The forces that provoked the German *Kirchenkampf,* the church struggle of the 1930s, including the attempts to organize a comprehensive Protestant *Reichschurch,* compare easily to the merciless legal and military enforcement of obedience to the Royal Supremacy over the Church of England during the 1530s.[1]

As to Hans Ehrenberg, I propose to discuss a figure who is little known in North America, but much better remembered, memorialized, and studied in his native Germany.[2] As a historical figure who personally embodied a prophetic response to the adulteration of moral and spiritual life of Germany during the 1930s and 1940s, he is well worth knowing. Phillip Hans Ehrenberg (1883-1958) was a German Lutheran pastor, one of many pastors born Jews whose identity as "non-Aryans" disqualified them from society, service, and, eventually, citizenship during the Third Reich. As the pastor-theologian of the working-class *Pauluskirche* in Bochum in the Ruhr district,[3] he and others led against the *Glaubensbewegung Deutsche Christen* (Faith Movement of German Christians). He also resisted the National Socialist government's attempts to unify the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche* or German Protestant Church, that is, the Lutheran, Reformed, and union Churches, into an imperial church, the *Reichskirche.* In 1933 Ehrenberg published *Seventy-two Guiding Principles on the Jewish-Christian Question,* defending the vital relationship between Judaism and Christianity and the place of the Jews in German church life. Also, in 1933, he led in writing the Bochum Pentecost Confession, the first of many statements that identified and shaped the *Bekennende Kirche* or German Confessing Church by 1934.

Hans Ehrenberg was born to Gabrielle Emilie Ehrenberg (1859-1941, née Fischel) and Maximilian Otto Ehrenberg (1849-1928) and raised in Hamburg. His mother, born and raised in Prague, came from a liberal Jewish family; her father

was a manufacturer. His father was a banker, and the family heritage included ancestors who were schoolmasters; a great-grandfather, Samuel Meyer (1773-1853) had added the Ehrenberg surname to his own based on a decree of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia.[4] S. M. Ehrenberg thus initiated a renamed lineage based in a modern bureaucratic requirement established during the period of Jewish emancipation. Growing up in "a liberal, enlightened family atmosphere," Hans received a traditional intellectual education of the German middle class at the Humanist Wilhelms-Gymnasien in Hamburg. The curriculum included language education in Greek and Latin, the required languages of instruction in further classical studies. Ehrenberg received a foundation in German history and literature, especially classic German poetry, plus ancient and modern philosophy. Mathematics and the natural sciences were his favorites. Throughout his schooling he took classes on Christianity. Clearly, his acculturation as a German gained sinews through early religious indoctrination; in maturity he would be found too doctrinally orthodox to be any less than fully in the tradition of Martin Luther. In 1909 he received baptism into the Lutheran Church. He later admitted that his education and training in Christianity then and for several years was inferior and that he even then had not learned to pray as he should.[5]

Like others in the extended family, Ehrenberg prepared to be a university professor, from 1902 beginning as a law student at Göttingen, where his uncle, Victor Ehrenberg taught jurisprudence. He broadened his focus at Berlin, hearing lectures from Otto Gierke, Gustav Schmoller, Georg Simmel, and Heinrich Woelflin, on society and politics, and sociology. He studied thereafter at Heidelberg under Eberhard Gotthein in economics, Georg Jellinek in law, and Wilhelm Windelband in the history of philosophy, before returning to Berlin where he chose to focus on political economy, studying the interrelationship of economics, technology, and social economy with the psychological situation of industrial labor. His extraordinary doctoral dissertation under Lujo Brentano at Munich entitled "Technology of the Iron Works and the German Ironworker" involved the earliest instance of modern sociological fieldwork in a specific industrial environment, at the Hörder Bergwerks- und Hütten-Verein, a mining and metal works foundry in Dortmund. He focused on the past and present development of technology and labor, ultimately settling on the problem of wage-theory in modern technological industrial development. "In the end there stands a sociology of industry and labor as a study of wage-theory," writes Brakelmann, "that could belong to the pioneering achievements of empirical sociology in this century." Knowing this background experience, one may understand that Ehrenberg brought understanding and empathy not only to workers in general, but personally and most remarkably in the congregation of industrial workers that he later served as pastor. He received his degree *summa cum laude* as Doctor of Public Economy on June 12, 1906. [6]

Soon after completing his studies at Munich, as a matter of patriotic duty Ehrenberg served a voluntary year of military service with the Kassel Field

Artillery Regiment No. 11, plus several months in 1908 and 1909, achieving Staff Sergeant rank. After that, not finished with study, he moved on to Heidelberg where he consolidated his interests by exploring the latest philosophical developments in Neo-Kantianism and Hegelian Idealism, and engaging in long conversations with his cousin, Franz Rosenzweig, who at the time was completing his own doctorate with a massive study, *Hegel und der Staat,* in 1909. At Heidelberg Ehrenberg completed his *Habilitationsschrift* to qualify as a university lecturer. He was to be a Privatdozent and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Heidelberg from 1910 to 1925, though with a wartime interlude from 1914 to 1918. In 1913 he married Else Zimmermann, a schoolteacher.

Volunteering for service in the First World War, Ehrenberg was inducted by its second day. He served early on as second-in-command in transport and supply for the field artillery Regiment No. 1, beginning with the Battle of Lotharingen in August 1914. In November he was promoted to Lieutenant of Militia and remained at that rank throughout the war. Not wanting to remain behind lines, he volunteered for duty on the front lines; as a company leader and battalion adjutant from March 1915 to January 1916, he experienced modern trench warfare first-hand. His experience as a front-line combat veteran was his most formative wartime experience; for outstanding service, he was twice decorated: with the Iron Cross Second Class and the Baden Merit Cross Lion Rampant Second Class. Yet then, a nervous breakdown disqualified him for further service on the front after his recovery. He next served as a Battery Officer in the Reserve Field Artillery Regiment No. 28, taking part in the Battle of the Somme in 1916, ending up again, though, for five or so months in a military hospital and convalescent center. After that he was not allowed to return to the front, but instead was assigned briefly to a reserve artillery regiment and afterward tasked in 1917 as an Inspections Officer for the Field Artillery School at Jüterborg until his discharge in November 1918.[7]

Ehrenberg's wartime experiences were a set of realities guaranteed to reset his ways of contemplating fundamental matters. Of course, he shared with the other early-war veterans the disillusion about war because of what it had become: a highly technologized, mechanized, and merciless engine of death to body and spirit. Consequently, his written analyses of the war reflected his authentic experiences and observations; he would no longer communicate in abstractions but as a real man among real men who grappled with and had endured the most troubling realities. These realities made abstractions and theorizing impracticable. Like others of his surviving comrades, he had seen death aplenty with his own eyes, though he tended not to write about and interpret his experiences until later.

Toward His Turning-Point

In the period before the war, Ehrenberg distinguished himself as a researcher and lecturer in philosophy from antiquity, the classical period, and

forward, and who was seeking to articulate a new philosophical breakthrough. His development as an academic philosopher showed in several remarkable books. *Die Parteiung der Philosophie, Studien wider Hegel und die Kantianer (The Cleavage of Philosophy: Studies Opposing Hegel and the Kantians,* 1910*)* signified the eclipsing of all varieties of Idealism.[8] It was more than that, though. His treatise revealed the implications of a greater change in Ehrenberg's life and thought and his pivoting toward more emphasis on faith and theology. Only he could achieve that transformation that he referred to as his response to "the primacy of belief over thought," and that showed him during the period between 1910 and 1920 that he would have no peace by continuing in his scholarship and living as he had until then. He marked 1914 as the year when he first learned about the "theology of stress", the "theology of trauma or crisis" that reflects an early identification of what we know as in "post-traumatic stress disorder". The unmistakable parallel between his own war trauma and that of his entire nation was more than a suggestion and became for him a mandate for personal change. He confidently determined that he would regard his primary service to be pastoral, active in the world, and taking a fresh approach—a regenerative mission—to build a more positive future for Protestantism and his country. He would be "orthodox" and "ecumenical" while serving in a capacity that honored his background experiences and made the most of them in a "new life".[9]

In the same period, Ehrenberg's "brochure", *Die Geschichte des Menschen unserer Zeit (The Story of Humanity in Our Time,* 1911*)*, surveyed the systems and philosophers leading to and beginning the current transition from systematic philosophy to existential philosophy. As a statement at the beginning of that transition from 1910 to 1914, the brochure was the breakthrough publication Ehrenberg had hoped to complete. In a newspaper review of April 12, 1912, Dr. Felix Borchardt praised Ehrenberg's accomplishment, remarking that in challenging the Nietzschean attitude he had clarified the nature of the present age for his contemporaries. "It is bold to discern the meaning of the history of the present," Borchardt declared, "yet bolder to interpret the future." Clearly Ehrenberg had struck against the Idealist self-sufficiency and self-gratification of the "superior man" ("Overman" as contrasted with the natural man) wherein his own mind, closed to onlookers, contains a world of his own making.[10]

His wedding and marriage to Else Zimmermann in 1913 had also sharpened his settled sense of meaning and purpose. His biographical chapter-letter to Else reviews the question of his changing from philosophy to theology: "If it is no more than a question of philosophy, pure and simple, then the answer is, little enough. But if it is one of vocation, of one's whole reaction to life, of the salvation of one's soul, then it concerns nobody (with the exception of oneself) more than one's wife."[11]

Another significant and continuing influence came from his longtime relationship with his cousin Franz Rosenzweig and from another associate, through Rosenzweig, Eugen Rosenstock(-Hussey). As "speech thinkers" or

practitioners of “the new thinking”, they developed a unique philosophy emphasizing dialogue as a formative instrument in all human relationships and accomplishments. They belonged to a wider “Patmos Kreis”—the Patmos Circle of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, who spoke, wrote, and published in the journal *Die Kreatur* and elsewhere on the aspects and applications of Speech-Thinking to all spheres if life and society. Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig and Rosenstock all had philosophical backgrounds, and their discussions often centered on readings from Russian religious philosophers and their controversies with Bolshevists. The wider Patmos Circle sparked Protestant-Catholic conversation and participation in the ecumenical movement, on the church, and about workers’ concerns, especially in industry and manufacture. In fact, the Patmos Circle was a rich fund of ideas generated during their purposeful dialogues; these extended encounters also bore fruit in their lecturing, writing, and publishing.[12]

The comprehensive effects of the influences that changed Ehrenberg came into the open in his writings, those already mentioned, and others. His *Heimkehr des Ketzers* (Return of the Heretic, 1919) gave witness to his engagement in new ways of thinking and to a new life.[13]

Ehrenberg’s own long-term demonstration and application of speech-thinking practices accompanied his shift from academic philosophical pursuits to theological studies and preparation for a career as a pastor. His life history of study in Christianity, philosophy, and basic theology, and his baptism as a Protestant testified to the nature and depth of his scholarship. His wartime experiences added urgency and realism to his new experiences as a continuing member of faculty at the University of Heidelberg, Germany’s second oldest university. During the period from 1911 to1914, Ehrenberg drafted his book *Tragödie und Kreuz* from his lectures. World War I meant that its publication in two volumes was delayed until 1920. The book punctuated the end of his break from philosophy and his start in a life as a pastor and theologian. He was at the time involved in local church organizations and service, which helped to heal the deepest traumas of the recent war.[14]

At Heidelberg, Ehrenberg’s colleagues included some of the most influential thinkers and teachers of the early twentieth century, but surprisingly they were less a part of his personal and professional life than one might expect. Among them were Wilhelm Windelband, with whom he had studied previously, who “let me know indirectly through an uncle who was a professor of law that he was inclined to have me as one of his lecturers.”[15] Ernst Troeltsch, a theologian, taught in the philosophy faculty. Ehrenberg shared swimming outings and long conversations with him and others at Ehrenberg’s bachelor’s cottage on the slope above the Neckar River.[16] Of course, he could not stand with Troeltsch’s Idealist philosophy.

By 1925 he was serving as a parish minister, having left his academic career in philosophy behind, though not his comprehension of the value and insights of philosophical discovery, which certainly sharpened his theological wit. He understood how philosophical and ideological positions affected life and service, especially when such positions exerted such strong shaping influences on theology. Along with his war experiences and observations of society and politics, philosophical discipline discouraged vague thinking and sub-Christian theologizing. He confirmed himself to the orthodox, Lutheran Protestant tradition of Martin Luther and the other "Doctors" of Protestantism. He also regarded his pivot to theology as a demonstration of the Church's perennial fight against philosophical Idealism: "What I began to experience in the years from 1910 onwards led in a straight line to the fight against Hitler. It was during those years that my life and nature began to change. I was beginning to mature."[17]

Later, during his exile in England, Ehrenberg reflected on his pastoral service and relationship to the Bochum Pauluskirche congregation. Ehrenberg wrote about his commitment to them. Against pressures to conform to external demands, he had emphasized teaching and preaching the truths that prepared them to respond wisely to "heretical superimpositions" such as the "belief in a second revelation through Adolf Hitler." Culture alone could not sustain a vibrant Christian life; however, education corrected what was lacking and prepared minds and spirits for resistance to National Socialist pressures from the start. Recalling the course of his life before 1925, he reminded his congregation that the professor who had first come to them in 1925 had been changed into "just the man whom the Lord had appointed to the Church and commissioned to be its pastor. Thus my life led through many stages directly to you." [18]

This paper touches on the most important features of Ehrenberg's struggle as a Protestant under fire for his Jewish heritage and his defense of religious teachings and principles. The focus here is on Ehrenberg's well-considered responses to heretical threats against Christian theological orthodoxy, to pressures on the German Protestant Church to conform to dogmas of the "New Order", and to the distortions and denial concerning the Jewish heritage of Christianity.

Blaise Pascal as Mentor to Hans Ehrenberg

Ehrenberg's academic accomplishments before the Great War included his significant career as a philosopher. The war helped him to sort out the ambiguities and contradictions he discerned between philosophy and the Christian faith he had embraced at twenty-six but was yet to own fully in his thinking, scholarly practice, and personal faith. His turn from philosophy to theology and church ministry left him, though, better able to discern a faithful and realistic reflection on philosophy.

A pivotal influence, about whom he published a book after the Second World War, was Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), who gave Ehrenberg unusual insights and encouragement about the proper relationship between philosophical thought and Christian belief.[19] Pascal was his schoolmaster. Specifically, as the product of an analytical and mathematical mind attuned to belief, Pascal's *Pensées* clarified trinitarian matters in a way that Ehrenberg applied to the theological, Christological, and ecclesiastical questions of his day. He saw Pascal as a model of solid faith, a "singular man of the Church" who as a Roman Catholic distinctively witnessed, embodied, and confirmed the Church in its authority, traditions, and institutions. Ehrenberg defended Pascal, arguing that he had been inaccurately and wrongly subjected to interpretations that bowed to modern theology and incompatible philosophies, and because of this his faith and life had been misunderstood.[20]

Ehrenberg observed that Pascal had mounted a methodical rather than rational defense of the faith, best exemplified in key statements in the *Pensées.* These statements focused upon Jesus Christ as Mediator between Man and God. Only through him could one know or have communion with God (Fragment 547); Jesus' Passion focused on his suffering and torment at the hands of men and his subjection to the scorn of God (Fragment 553); and, Deism and atheism derive from erroneous views of God (556). Pascal affirmed the provision of God in Christ notwithstanding the unworthiness of human beings. Jesus Christ showed people their own nothingness, distress and corruption while making wholeness possible. Also, neither God the Father nor Jesus Christ the Son could be neglected or excluded; to have one is to have the other—one must know this. And to deny Christ the Son is at the least to lapse into Deism, while to deny the Father is to approach atheism. Pascal's approach clarified how the historical Christian orthodox, trinitarian witness stood up against the new instances of Deism that challenged the Christian doctrines and confessions. Pascal had condemned that matter as a functional theological deviation among the Jesuits of his day, and Ehrenberg consistently opposed its influence in the church struggles between the Confessing Church and the Faith Movement of German Christians.[21]

There was as well an ecumenical principle in Pascal's example. Modern theology had become isolated enough from the Church and reality that it confounded any understanding of the Incarnation. The real presence of the Holy Spirit required to build the Church and the Kingdom of God on earth was not taught among the people of the Church. The world views of modern theology and philosophy did not countenance a biblical frame for the creative and transformative activity of God in his own world.[22] Alternatively, Ehrenberg judged that the "New Theology" (certainly with some direct influence from Franz Rosenzweig) described the *Verwirklichung* or demonstration of the truth about human beings. That truth must be confirmed in three dimensions, one of which must be material, and in that dimension pastoral theology, "the crown of all theological work," must supersede theoretical and practical theology. It is not

surprising, then, that in his social-ethical teaching and writing during this period, Ehrenberg emphasized that the church must love its enemies, that God loves his enemies, and that the believers love their enemies, for "the formation of the spiritual nation is quite the same as the formation of the Church."[23]

That insight about pastoral theology prompted Ehrenberg to assert that Pascal offered inoculation against actualizations of Deism across time. In the 1930s such Deism marked the Nazis' adulation of the "Führer Principle" and the comprehensive or totalitarian nationalist state—both of which were attainable independently of a sovereign Creator God. He recognized the strong presence and form of Deism in the Faith Movement of the German Christians and in Nazism itself.[24] In his autobiography, addressing the Gestapo, Ehrenberg identified Hitler as a purveyor, "a High Priest" of an "extraordinary" magic, palpably "demonic, satanic", whose effect was such that "whoever makes your [the Gestapo's] acquaintance begins actually to believe in evil spirits, even though for centuries people have ridiculed them." Ehrenberg accuses the Gestapo, the Nazis, of believing Hitler is God, though surely, they would deny the claim. Yet he asks, "But what is Hitler, if he is not God? Do you think it would be possible to replace him? And if not, what is he? for every ordinary person is replaceable." And Ehrenberg continues,

> "Even you would not have at your disposal the right term for it. Therefore *we* must tell you what Hitler is in his own eyes and yours. He is for *you* the prophet of God, the man who knows and fulfils the word of God, unique and infallible; the ambassador of God for this age, the tool which the God of History makes use of in this stage of world-history. That is what Hitler considers himself to be. Think it over."[25]

Ehrenberg related his experience of observing a large photograph in a Munich bookshop of Hitler speaking to followers in a "beer-cellar"; the photograph was captioned, "In the beginning was the Word," an obvious identification of "der Führer" with the Christ announced in John 1:1. He asks, "Well, do you therefore compare Hitler with Christ? Don't you say: 'Until now it has been Christ: from now on it will be Hitler. Christianity has had its opportunity for two thousand years, and has failed; now let Hitler have a chance: he'll make better use of it!'"? Indeed, such statements did appear frequently in Nazi periodicals. Ehrenberg explained how in the mid-thirties he struggled as a pastor to protect his congregation from the flood of religious speeches that came out of the German Christian movement on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the "pseudo-religious ideas" that came from Hitler, Rosenberg,[26] and the *Schwarze Corps* magazine. He declared to his congregation that they should watch out for the division of Germany into "three great religious camps: the evangelical, the catholic, and the 'God-believing', the latter that he compared with the oriental religion of Islam."[27]

The Christian Social People's Service

Ehrenberg's wartime experiences and identity as a Jewish Christian affected his philosophical investigations, his theological work, and his social involvement. German religion was complicated. Germans considered themselves normally and traditionally to be Christians, and more so because their Protestant churches were official bodies within the wider body politic.[28] Protestantism included the German Evangelical Church Confederation—Lutherans, Reformed (Calvinist) and various united church bodies. Hitler and the National Socialists gave initial but later salutary support to the union of Protestant church bodies in Germany under the Faith Movement of German Christians.

In 1919 Ehrenberg was involved in a Christian Socialist movement, the Baden People's Church Association, and served in successive years as an editor and managing editor for its semi-monthly publication *Christliches Volk,* one of the earliest newspapers in the "Religious Socialism" movement. A decade later, still involved, and still writing, he joined a movement that had begun in December 1929 in Berlin. The *Christlich-sozialen Volksdienst* (the Christian Social People's Service, "CSVD") was intended to heal the disunity among Protestants and to challenge heresy among the German Christians. They wanted to form a unified evangelical movement from among the front organizations of the parties in the Reichstag.[29]

Ehrenberg's evolving views on the matter appeared in his proposal of May 1930 in the CSVD newspaper, *Volksdienst.* In his essay, "Volk und Kanzel" (People and Pulpit), he promoted the role of the pulpit in expressing the "prophetic office of the Church," the first of the Church's three ministerial offices that made the Revealed Church possible. Global Protestantism, when not liberalized, he thought, drew its force from the Holy Spirit, in accord with the Nicene Creed and the preaching of the Apostles and the prophets, where the Spirit speaks pastorally and prophetically. Ehrenberg therefore insisted that the foundations of the CSVD made it eminently prudent and right if not indispensable.[30] The unified movement he envisioned would have to result from the direct action of the Spirit of God, in a way that the Word of God could be spoken to everyone. The CSVD revealed firm conviction and expressed the stance of the prophetic ministry of God in the world. The Lord of the Church had placed all things under his feet. "Under this sign his national servant people should stride forward**."**[31]

Ernst Brakelmann analyzes Ehrenberg's published comments entitled, "The Condition of Protestantism," where he asserted, "We are creatures, we are anthropological, we are cosmic, we are bound together in the order of creation—we cannot remain Christians without these—when we see our common situation." Christian faith and teaching and the worship of God as sovereign

Creator made it possible to accept the redemptive work of Christ. An obdurate barrier remained, however, as German Protestantism at that critical moment vacillated over "the Question of the Church," to "the neglect of the struggle concerning the existence of the worshiping community." Brakelmann observes that "Germany could not summon itself to a new encounter with Christ but followed the call of a *Führer*." There was no renewed "Christian People" under the Cross of Christ; instead, Germany "marched as the *Volksgenossenschaft or "*corps of national comrades" under the swastika of the new pagan gods." These marching columns of a totalitarian Germany meant catastrophe for the third way Ehrenberg and others had proposed; they confirmed the brutal denial of other paths.[32]

The Faith Movement of German Christians

According to Doris Bergen, the German Christian movement began from three converging impulses. The first came from the renewal campaign begun in the late twenties by two Thuringian pastors, Nazis who emphasized German nationalism and *das Volk* in their "German Christian" churches. The second, led by Wilhelm Kube, assembled "politicians, pastors, and lay people" in Berlin to "capture the energies of Germany's Protestant churches for the National Socialist cause." These two groups cooperated while numerous Protestant associations joined with the German Christians, and all of them continued to belong to the established Protestant church.[33]

One reason for Ehrenberg's response lay in the much-repeated assertions of the German Christians that Germany had entered a *Zeitenwende,* an epochal changing of the times, a turning point in history, which accompanied or mandated the embrace of new orthodoxies within the National Socialist state. For example, on April 5, 1933, the imperial assembly of the German Christians announced a resolution, a pledge, for every member:

> *God has created me as a German. German nationality is the gift of God. God wants me to fight for my German nationality. Service in battle is in no case a violation of the Christian conscience, it is instead obedience to God. The believer has in relation to only one nation the right of revolution in order to dispatch the forces of darkness; he also has this right in relation to a Church governing body that has not unreservedly acknowledged the national exaltation. For a German the Church is the communion of believers who are pledged to the battle for a Christian Germany. The goal of the Faith Movement of "German Christians" is an evangelical German Imperial Church. The nation under Adolf Hitler is calling after the Church, the Church has to hear the call.*[34]

National Socialist Influence in the Ruhr

The National Socialists defended confessional liberty for those who claimed it so long as "they do not jeopardize the state's existence or conflict with the manners and moral sentiments of the German race," a restriction that many Protestants supported. The Nazis sponsored a "positive Christianity" free of any particular confession and received surprisingly good response. At least as persuasive was the assertion that the Party "combats the Jewish materialistic spirit at home and abroad and is convinced that a permanent recovery of our people can only be achieved from within on the basis of the common good before individual good."[35] Victoria Barnett includes a background description of the foundations and rise of Antisemitism that came even before the modern Antisemites such as Treitschke and Marr. For my purposes, here, I recognize how her analysis amplifies the understanding that the whole Nazi project could be thoroughly entangled with familiar expressions of national pride and patriotism, and, even more alarmingly so, with Christianity. Patriotism was a nationalism of race and religion, so she writes,

> "For most Christians, traditional interpretations of scripture seemed to justify their hatred and distrust of Jews. Nazi antisemitism merely introduced an ethno-nationalist, racialized component that built on the foundation of these earlier religiously based prejudices, but as the above discussion indicates, the racialization of anti-Jewish prejudice and the "otherization" of Jews predated Nazi ideology. It would strongly shape the responses within the German churches to the persecution of the Jews in Nazi Germany." [36]

A persuasive example involves the connections between National Socialist ideology, the church, and the profusion of church and community social organizations. The youth organizations included most prominently the *Christliche Pfadfinderschaft* (Christian Pathfinders—"Boy Scouts"—though membership began at eighteen), as part of the Protestant youth work efforts that related both to the Reich Church and the Confessing Church. Before 1933, the Christian Pathfinders (CP) belonged to the Imperial Protestant Young Men's Association. Distinctly Christian and practicing "faithful manliness", the CP avoided political involvement on biblical and theological principle though its members were expected to bring faith and principle to bear on their public responsibilities. Beginning in February 1930, however, an alternate, programmatic emphasis on political involvement as actuating faith became dominant. Now, the CP was urged to shift its attention to building "a form of the state in which Christianity and nationalism can be in organic union with each other." The CP must stride forward in new directions. In 1932 and afterward, there were numerous meetings across the empire; mass speeches and seminars on practical leadership were employed to prepare the young men for a socio-political order that would overcome the errors of contemporary society. The new appeal agreed with the right-wing political parties, and whether, for example, the National Socialists or the German

Nationalists came into power, in the near future the young men would be prepared to lead. Other reform organizations such as the CSVD had influenced the CP before the shift in emphasis. With the National Socialist takeover, however, all former influential groups and their members were either converted to the purposes of the new order or pushed aside.[37]

Protestant Majority, National Socialism, and National Rebirth.

The alarming and pervasive conviction of perhaps a majority of Protestant Christians that National Socialism meant a divinely directed national renewal of Germany was consistent with more than a recent line of belief and thought. Rather, it was consistent with a nineteenth-century cultural and religious synthesis having much to do with Otto von Bismarck, Heinrich von Treitschke, and the parallel movement of Antisemitism. The identification of Protestant Christianity with the German nation resonated with the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) and the conception that all elements of German society existed ultimately to serve as well as to share in the life of the national state. National Socialism realized a tendency already in the notions, Romantic or otherwise, that prevailed in the German states early in the nineteenth century.

The German Evangelical (Protestant) Church and Prussian Union Church (Lutheran and Reformed bodies in Prussia) drew support for their ministers and church operations from state tax allotments. Members of the smaller “free churches” funded their denominations.[38] These all served counterpoint to German Christian pastors who had deviated from orthodoxy, such as Pastor Klose who spoke at a regional rally about the new national “soldierly Christianity”. In the German Christian churches, the believers sang hymns, even at Christmas, that emphasized the relationship between struggle, even war, and Christian freedom, service and sacrifice. One must be ready to offer oneself up for the sake of God and country. What so alarmed the pastors and congregations who resisted was the use of traditional evangelical language, the old terms and expressions, along with music, imagery and pageantry that suggested the triumphal strains of a strangely familiar but still nationalist religion. Even to invoke the expression “Christian Freedom” instantly recollected a watchword from Martin Luther, “the Freedom of the Christian Man”, which in the instance surely diverged sharply from Luther’s meaning and intention. The German national religious festival on the 450th anniversary of Martin Luther’s birthday in 1933 honored Luther as “the Soldier of the Lord,” and elevated prayers and expectations that “the German people would again be a Godly people.” A unified newspaper report provided details from the day. That memorial Sunday was a national day for songs, prayers, sermons from Reich bishop Müller and many others, churches filled to overflowing, marching with placards, mass audiences, and great hopes for the full renewal of Germany in the spirit of Martin Luther, “a true prophet for the whole world.” At the great sport plaza in Bochum, after thousands of voices had sung “A Mighty Fortress is our God,” Pastor Dr. Siebold directed the gaze of the people to Führer Adolf Hitler whom “God has sent to us.” Hitler was to lead

by the will of God in "the battle for the German soul and the new face of the German people in the Third Reich—and the Church of the Reformation stands consciously in the most forward line of battle."[39]

As already mentioned, the efforts of the Christian socialist movements drew on the genuine impulse to unite Evangelical faith to consolidate the purpose and mission of the Church and to overcome the malaise of postwar German society. It is remarkable, however, how swiftly the National Socialists transmogrified that impetus once took power in 1933. Any outsider who read or listened superficially might have asked why there should be so much concern, for much of the language was similar to that used beforehand. It is true that any and all influence of the traditional, orthodox state churches could be turned to serve National Socialist purposes with only small and seemingly superficial changes. But for Ehrenberg as a German Lutheran pastor of Jewish heritage, the change was beyond momentous in its Antisemitic emphases and heretical features.

Confronting and Resisting the German Christians.

Pastor Hans Ehrenberg lived and served in Bochum where the Evangelical Churches resisted the Nazis as much as anywhere, and perhaps more, beginning with the change in power under Hitler in 1933. At the same time, Bochum was as strongly the scene of the early, if not the first, major gathering of the "SA Jesu Christi"—the *Sturmabteilung* or Storm Detachment of Jesus Christ—essentially the *Deutsche Christen* most actively on display in German Christian military uniforms as the National Socialist Church. Numerous National Socialist rallies and frequent visits of high-ranking officials of the Third Reich, including Adolf Hitler, revealed that Bochum and the Ruhr were regarded not only as a vital mining and industrial region but as a bastion of working- and middle-class, nationalist-minded supporters. The German Christians founded their movement at Bochum on August 23, 1932, one month after Hitler's visit there.[40]

On May 26, 1932, the Deutsche Christen Glaubensbewegung (Faith Movement of German Christians) published their guidelines at a meeting in the Bochum Club House. These were neither confessional nor to replace the confession of the Protestant church, they were declarations of life in the New Order of the Church. They aspired to unify the twenty-nine national church bodies to be one *Reichschurch.* The German Christians would not be a church-political party but a group applying themselves in every Protestant German way in a new Imperial Church.

The appeal of the German Christians can be seen clearly in the results of the national church elections of May 1933 when they emerged with a strong majority against other church groups. They had mounted an open challenge in campaign flyers, accusing the *Evangelische Kirche* in these points—of being a church that:

- responded to the new era with an old (outmoded) spirit,
- myopically battled against the new state,
- remained a "pastor's church" emptied of people;
- as a dying church was suitable only to destroy marriage and family;
- pretended to fight against godlessness but lacked soldiers—the living people of the church—and therefore they must lose the battle;
- will not hear the call of God to be truly unified for the People and the Fatherland—misunderstanding the Lutheran Confessions and misinterpreting the God-willed foundations of Nation and Race;
- sabotaged and sought to frustrate the New Order in church matters and led a desperate struggle to assure leadership of the church;
- pretended to fight for the things of God while treating them as their own possessions;
- preserved the ideas of the Protestant National Service and unreliable *(Schwankender)* national pastors, because they still have not comprehended the times, while believing that Germany still will recover once again as they thought best; and,
- allowed pastors to feign battle for the gospel and conscience while caring only about their own power.[41]

Clearly, Ehrenberg's responses emphasized a powerful departure from the contrasting movement already underway that strove to discipline the Lutheran state church and other bodies to the purposes and doctrines of National Socialism. The paradox is that many conservative Protestants supported the German Christians, while many who assented to the Confessing Church movement also supported National Socialist objectives in spirit and action. Beyond that, the CSVD itself was only one of many minor movements or associations that never bound themselves together into a larger movement. While these tended also to remain within the established church, the Confessing Church movement as well as the German Christians also never formally left the established church. Plainly, the confusion of vision and purposes meant that there could be no full resistance to National Socialist domination and suppression of religious dissent.

In a lucid narrative, Doris Bergen has remarked that the inherent predisposition of Protestants to a conservatism that highly valued the identification of Germans and their faith with the land and nation of Germany was an unmovable anchor for society and institutions. The National Socialists and the German Christians conveyed cultural values and spoke a language that struck deeply at the traditions and identities of German Protestants. They belonged most fundamentally to German society and its enduring social frames even if their movements became extreme and heretical. Furthermore, the general Protestant excitement about the restoration of Germany under the National Socialists could not be got around and remained a big factor in their support of the new regime. Even people and congregations that might have committed to the CSVD might, and did, go instead with the German Christians because there

were ample parallels and similarities at the core of both, and all, groups. It is hard to fathom the actual confusion among all parties concerned during the welter of events that brought about a surge in new commitments in short order during 1932-1934. The great change incorporated the unmovable foundation of Protestant German culture as expressly Christian and proudly German. Writes Bergen, "Christianity permeated Nazi society." To undergird the point, even Martin Niemöller, a leading organizer of the *Bekennende Kirche* and a signer of the earlier Bochum Pentecost Confession, had supported the German Christians early on; he admired the National Socialists but soon changed his mind about them. As might be expected, many church members remained either quietly neutral toward or approving of the Nazis.[42]

The rise of Hitler sparked many people's decisions about personal faith and political commitments as they responded to the crisis of the Church. They must decide not about church, yes or no, but about which church authority to follow. Brakelmann asserts that the Churches were far from supine and helpless against the German Christian faith movement; many resisted fiercely, though not all. That is why Ehrenberg wrote as he did about Martin Niemöller that his arrest and incarceration was not tantamount to the silencing of the Confessing Church as intended. Instead, the political prisoner, Pastor Niemöller, was no mere symbol of the struggle of the persecuted Church after 1937 to the world, but a "living person, . . . his suffering is the strengthening of all serious Christians in Germany." His living presence bore witness to true faith and discipleship. His stolid testimony rebuked the triumphal state power that coerced the confessing bodies while assembling a National Socialist instrument of civil religion and nationalist worship. Never mind that to most people outside Germany Niemöller was a mythological figure, said Ehrenberg: for the "praying community of German Christians," despite being muzzled and muted, Niemöller represented "*the* public witness of the church at this present time." [43]

In his autobiography, Ehrenberg adamantly declared that neutrality would not work for Christians in Germany. Citing comments from "an English clergyman" that "he would have been unable to take part in the German Church struggle had he lived in Germany," Ehrenberg noted his humility and acknowledgement of weakness. In others who said similar things, though, he detected a quickness to yield to their own fears about acting unchristianly, but he found in them "a softening of essential Christianity so grave as almost to amount to degeneration." Speaking of Germany and of England, Ehrenberg wrote, "In Germany we ignored the neutrals, simply ignored them without any discussion, as we never did the 'German Christians.'" In Germany one's neutrality was understandable but inexcusable; the similar stance in England was impossible to understand. During his exile in England, Ehrenberg exclaimed, "I have therefore taken up my task only for the sake of those who are willing to listen and capable of listening earnestly." He spoke his conviction to teach and affirm while being engaged in what he called "the struggle for Christian virility."[44]

Ehrenberg related a story about an elder suburban pastor in Bochum who had sought to avoid controversy in his congregation by not involving them or himself with the Confessing Church, a decision which only stoked controversy and division as the German Christian faction grew stronger. Sometime after the pastor had announced his retirement, he returned from vacation to discover that the German Christians in his congregation planned to replace him the following Sunday with a German Christian minister. In response he made sure the parish newsletter announced him as the preacher that same Sunday. Duly informed and therefore expecting a showdown, the "loyal congregation" arrived early to fill the church while the pastor arrived early to the pulpit. By doing this they preempted the young "heretic", outmaneuvering him and the later-arriving German Christians. Left with standing room only, they also attempted and failed to disrupt the musical worship by threatening the organist, who yielded but was replaced instantly. Ehrenberg wrote that "the heretical pastor and his people lost their courage, and left the church for one of the rooms in the church house; but they had lost the contest, and the old pastor was able to go into his well-earned retirement, while a young Confessional pastor was appointed his successor." [45]

The incident itself in isolation would seem exceptional and inconsequential, and perhaps most of the time the contest between the German Christians and the state Protestants in an individual congregation was no more complicated than that. Ehrenberg's purpose in recounting the story, however, was to remind his own Bochum congregation about the significance of a struggle that was multiplied many times across Germany during the period. That "almost forgotten story" emphatically showed "the unity of that fighting company composed of pastor and congregation; a story which takes us back to the best years of the struggle: those years in which it had not lost its novelty and freshness." To his congregants, his friends, he exclaimed that they had showed themselves "disciples of one Lord, whom the children of this world do not know. Therefore, the years of our common struggle remain for you, as for myself, the high-water mark of our experience of life together." Ehrenberg's *Pauluskirche* community in Bochum was like so many others that had faced down attempts to replace orthodox teaching, worship and service with the cheap imitation of state-ordered ecclesiology, doctrine and ideology. Where congregations had failed to distinguish and to decide for orthodoxy, there would be further reckoning after the National Socialist regime had been defeated and it was time to recover and rebuild.[46]

The Bochum Pentecost Confession

In this context, Ehrenberg as a Lutheran pastor and the Reformed pastor Albert Schmidt were friends who collaborated to resist and speak out against the impression of insuperable power the German Christians presented. Ehrenberg first convened a small group, five in number, to work out "the first Confession of the German Church to emerge from our conflict with the forces of the new Germany."[47] Among these was Edmund Schlink, then a pastor in Bochum, who

later reminisced about the group of younger pastors who met in his house to develop the "Confession of Westphalian Pastors" in early 1933. Ehrenberg belonged to this group, which soon met at his house to affirm, develop, and plan a Pentecost statement of the Confession and prepare a print flyer for distribution. The Reformed Church pastor Ludwig Steil represented and led the new working group that produced the "Pfingstbekenntnis" (Pentecost Confession) of June 4,1933. Six pastors from Bochum and a hundred from the Ruhr District, Bethel and other areas signed the confession; at least forty-five were from Bochum and the adjoining districts alone. Among the larger group was a Westphalian, a pastor in Berlin Dahlem, Martin Niemöller.[48]

The theological working group of young pastors from Bochum, Gelsenkirchen, Dortmund and Herne—all industrial districts—developed the Bochum Confession, independently of other districts. During the next year, other groups, most prominently from Berlin and Barmen, followed suit in their own, distinctive ways. The "Wort und Bekenntnis westfälisher Pastoren zur Stunde der Kirche und des Volkes" was published at Pentecost 1933. The confession's foreword reviewed events in the brief time since the National Socialist takeover and asserted that, given the political force of the national authoritarian state, "the Church, her agencies, preachers, and laity could not act as if nothing had happened." Theological statements and confessions were not exempt from political implications, especially when the National Socialist state appropriated such language for their own purposes.[49]

The Confession appeared in four Articles: I: Concerning Human Lordship and Original Sin; II: Concerning Ordinances and Commands; III: Concerning the Position of the Church; and, IV: Concerning False Teaching and Blasphemy.

Article I began with the theological assertion that mankind historically, though created, repeatedly had transgressed the role of God in the Creation, making themselves lords of the earth and all others, thus manifesting the original sin. As that original sin was a persistent, unchangeable limitation for everyone, the signers declared their Confession as a means of protection from "impudence and despair" even as they acknowledged their own sins. Article II affirmed the necessary, gracious provision of God in the ordinances and commands that gave sinners necessary protection from their sin. "Blood, nation, strength of life, and health" revealed God as Lord over Creation even in a fallen world, and whose law and commands grant power but protect against rebellion and abuse of it. Every ordinance—actually the Church with it—shouts out, "Holy!" [50]

Article III asserts the role of the Protestant Church in speaking the Word of God through the ordinances. The Church as the Body of Christ and free from the conventional exercise of power nonetheless must speak through the Holy Spirit, called and authorized to render a decision in response to the violation of boundaries between the Church and the ordinances of power, family, the people, and the government. The Church, then, never can handle the creation-

conformity of racial Germanism ("des Volkstums") and the desire to divinize the state. The Article emphasizes the servant-church and biblical evangelism, the power of the sacraments and the life of the community in love, which also must serve by both self-examination and examination of the society in light of the cross of Christ.[51]

Article IV (1) rejects the enthusiasts' doctrines of People or Nation and race ("Volk" and "Rasse"), for all are under the curse, and refutes any church declarations outside of the gospel; (2) rejects any reduction of the Bible to a set of moral viewpoints, for it is the revelation of human sin and salvation in both its testaments; (3) rejects any reduction of the teachings about the redemption of Christ; (4) condemns the timidity of the church to present the Work of Christ instructively—to make present and eternity the same means forfeit to the state and inner death to church communities and their members; (5) rejects as Liberalism any changing and mixing of the work of the church with that of the state; (6) rejects as Liberal making the mission to the Jews and that to the heathen as equivalent, for the sake of Israel in salvation history; condemns all church schisms that would exclude Jewish Christians from the heathen Christian church; condemns the Liberal-Idealist errors of the state rooted in Fichte, Hegel, and Marx—and demands that the state bounds itself according to Luther's instructions on government; and, (7) states, "In submission under the teaching office and the shepherding office of the Church, we strive after no special action, rather an invigoration and broadening of the developing Confessional Front (the three committees: Altona Pastors, the Youth Reformation Movement, the Young Lutheran Working Group). [52]

Ehrenberg emphasized that the statements in Article IV were "the first condemnations of Nazi doctrines (note that what we condemned were doctrines, not deeds). Thereupon we were obliged to vindicate the true teaching which we had to oppose to the false doctrines of the German Christians." [53]

The "Jewish-Christian Question"

Hans Ehrenberg was the only "fully non-Aryan" pastor in the Westphalian diocese of his church, and his congregation knew this. Some quietly opposed him and the "true church" and probably were grateful when Ehrenberg's replacement was sent under Nazi urging. In 1933 Ehrenberg had read the opposition to understand that the future in Germany for him and his family looked unpromising. He even inquired with friends in Switzerland whether some suitable position would be possible, and there was none. He was not alone in the period, for many Jews and Jewish Christians such as he had been leaving if they could. One might well say of others, as with Ehrenberg, that the National Socialist overthrow of German government assured the potential full force of the Aryan Paragraph and of the exclusion of anyone of Jewish heritage, never mind their German citizenship and patriotic service in war, their exemplary embodiment of German culture, education, and the professions. Brakelmann said well that the

Jew Ehrenberg, though tightly intertwined in the German past, [was] reshaped with the German present, so much so that "he no longer saw a future for himself and his children in the 'new Germany'."[54]

With the great turn ("die Wende") from the Weimar Republic to the Third Reich in 1933, what should have been at promising and exciting pastoral year yet for Ehrenberg turned out otherwise. It was not to be. Brakelmann sums up the depth and implications of the Nazi takeover for Ehrenberg: "His existence as a Jewish Christian decisively symbolized no more only a religious problem, but instead was to become in matters of government and law a double provocation to those who totalized their political power and made themselves lords over life and death."[55]

The "72 Leitsätze"

In September 1933, Pastor Martin Niemöller began and led the Pastor's Emergency League *(Pfarrernotbund)* as an urgent response to the newly enacted "Aryan Paragraph/Clause," or "Aryan Laws" that had wide legal and institutional application against Jews. The new Reich Church constitution included the Aryan Clause excluding Jewish Christians from church ministry. Yet a majority of pastors would not accept such an obvious violation of the confession of the church. Martin Niemöller and Dietrich Bonhoeffer sent a letter of protest to the Reich bishop Müller. Some 2,000 pastors formed the Confessing Church movement in 1934, also giving assent to the Barmen Declaration that the Swiss theologian Karl Barth had authored. Many pastors hesitated at the Barmen statements that opposed the Aryan Laws, but by and large they signed.[56]

Hans Ehrenberg's "72 Leitsätze" had bolstered the determination of Protestant pastors to oppose the new law concerning the Jews. He argued in his biography that Niemöller had begun the Pastor's Emergency League for that reason, but also for liberty of faith and the gospel, which were under unprecedented attack. The German clergy who committed to the German Christians were always a minority (between 5 and 10 per cent of pastors), but comparatively numerous and influential in certain regions of Germany. Niemöller would lead the "fight for the Gospel and its freedom!" Ehrenberg repeatedly reaffirmed his stand against the German Christians, taking encouragement from Niemöller's reliability and resolve.[57]

During the 1920s and in the early 1930s, no problem raised greater theological response from Ehrenberg than the debate on the relationship of Jews to the German Church, and, ultimately, to the confusion of that relationship that the policies of the Third Reich intensified. Günter Brakelmann has provided a helpful and thorough, though relatively compact, analysis of Ehrenberg's *72 Leitsätze zur judenchristlichen Frage* (72 Leading Principles concerning the Jewish-Christian Question). Ehrenberg considered the ideologies of the Left and

the Right, Marxism and Fascism, to be primary contemporary threats as they were important intellectual legacies of the Enlightenment, of Liberalism, and of Idealism. He argued forcefully against the new dogmatic interpretations of the German Christian Faith Movement about the Church in a revolutionary new era. He repudiated the new orthodoxies that tied the life of faith to racial blood identity, rooted belief in the material earth, the land, and exalted the new or reborn nation as the manifestation of deity. In the "Leading Principles" he addressed the origins of modern intellectual orthodoxies and their implications. The leading concern was the rise of "modern Nationalism" that divinized the State, essentially updating the "Spirit of 1789"—in Marxism, yes, but also in National Socialism. [105] Secularist developments were the great error of the middle-class and proletarian age, and they perverted not only the relationship between the Church and the state but sought to render desacralize what was revealed in the Scriptures, in the People of Israel, and in Church history and traditions.[58]

For present purposes the *Leitsätze* can be characterized in a few cardinal points. "Israel among the nations" (Theses 6-13) refers to the peculiar presence of Israel athwart the nations of the earth, not as a nation to be confused with others, but as the chosen people of God. Christ's advent and the millennia of the Church do not dismiss Israel. Israel by right must worship and be able to live under the nations, but with continual ambiguity, being oppressed with Antisemitism and seduced with Philosemitism, and being always subject to Christian debates on the Old Covenant and New Covenant. Projecting the dilemma of life among the gentiles to Germany of the Third Reich, Ehrenberg clearly saw that the true tendency of the National Socialists would be to exclude the Jews decisively, even in the Church; in the nationalist orthodoxy, despite their conversion and baptism, Jews were and could be nothing more; any Jew, though a "baptized, confessed believer in Christ," was disqualified.[59]

Theses 14-22 address the Jewish-Christian problem and the contrast between Antisemites for whom the Jews are a calamity and the Christian faith that acknowledges, "All salvation comes from the Jews." It is the heart of the problem for the Church. In God's purposes Christ Jesus, the Son of God, was crucified (No. 14). The anger of the Jews and the nations burns toward the non-negotiable, unrestricted unity of Jew and heathen in Christ Jesus, spiritually and bodily as between man and wife in the body of Christ (No. 15). Christ for the heathen and Christ for the Jew are identical. That the Jew who believes in Jesus as the Messiah of God embodies and fulfills the entire biblical history of redemption is a grievance to the impenitent Jew, the nations, and the national churches (Theses 18-20).[60]

The problem had been made most visible in the Aryan Paragraph prohibiting Jews from official employment in the Church. By extension it was the exclusion of Jewish Christians from their home and role of witness in the Church that served to demote the Church to the status of a nationalist sect. Ehrenberg

wrote, “The existence of the Jewish Christians embodies personally from the time of the first Church the salvation history in the national Church” (Thesis 18). Because this status defined the Jewish Christian as well as the Church, it prohibited the program of liberal “philosemitische” assimilation as well as the “blood-fanatical Antisemitic” separation of Israel from the nations.[61]

Ehrenberg’s “72 Leading Principles” continue logically and biblically to a central focus in Theses 58 and 59, which, according to Brakelmann, originated in Ehrenberg’s writing from 1920 in *Return of the Heretic* (*Heimkehr des Ketzers)* and about which he consistently afterward admonished the Church. The two theses read:

> (58) “The critical decision in the Jewish-Christian Question rings out for a Church with tribal (nationalist) inclinations: between the Church as a racial clique (without Jewish-Christians) or the true Church (gentile and Jewish-Christian, both of them the children of Abraham).”
>
> (59) “The Church of the German Reformation stands or falls in 1933 with the temptation to exclude the Jewish Christians from itself, all or in part. The Jewish-Christian Question is becoming the last phase of the Church struggle over its essence and core.”

Brakelmann emphasized Ehrenberg’s admonition that the temptation to create a solely Heathen or Gentile Church *(Heidenkirche),* that is, to eradicate the joint-identity of the Gentile and Jewish-Christian Churches as known in the history of redemption and the genuinely historical Church, was to break the continuity of the early Church with the contemporary Church. Moreover, any continuity with the history of Israel would be dismissed as well: “Christians would no longer be the Children of Abraham, but rather only “fellow Germans” as National Socialists defined them. The effect was to damage the understanding and exercise of a proper regard for and worship of the God of Israel. Further, the relationship of Germans to Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Savior and model, was stripped of its full meaning and associations, threatening to make of Jesus just another “fellow German”. Brakelmann writes, “A Germanized Jesus-ology supplanted Christology.” All other considerations relate to these central statements.[62]

Brakelmann writes that the Jewish-Christian question, and “the Church and Israel as a confessional matter relating to the question of the truth of the Church,” dominated Ehrenberg’s sense of personal purpose, his mission. Yet his was a minority position and known by few others, especially because other political questions of state and church dominated attention. The fact that he and any others—actually there were few—resisted at all, and that they resisted where they could, that is, the battleground of the Church, ultimately meant that the

totalitarian state was prevailing in the battles over the general Jewish Question and the Jewish-Christian Question as well.

Pastor Ehrenberg, His Family, and His Congregation

Günter Brakelmann recounts what Ehrenberg recognized when the totalitarian impulse demanded that the Church be aligned to the position of the National Socialist government on the Jewish Question. It was so with the "Aryan Paragraph" within a new law in 1933 to re-establish the Civil Service, ordering that the churches remove "non-Aryan" ministers from their positions. The process was associated with the anti-Jewish boycott of April 1, 1933, and government actions to remove Jews from their places in the national economy then and later. Jewish retailers, professionals such as physicians and lawyers, and eventually others were removed systematically, in stages. National anti-Jewish legislation sparked similar laws in the provinces and cities with the Nazification of leadership, continuing the expulsion of Jews from professions, the trades, and the fine arts. The plan of *Judenpolitik* also was meant to force Jews out of Germany. Because the Jews were so broadly and strategically involved in the system of educational, cultural, and professional institutions, the effect of the dismissals from 1933 until 1938 was shattering and numbing for the Jewish professional and middle classes. The effect was no less so for the working classes, including the working poor. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 defined "non-Aryans"; among these laws, the Reich Citizenship Law denied citizenship to full Jews and half-Jews, no matter their generations-long existing citizenship. New laws and directives stripped jobs and professional positions. Even World War I combat veterans and senior professionals, including retirees on pension found their earned state benefits revoked. In the next year, Hitler was referring to Jews as a "criminal race."[63]

As a "Non-Aryan" Lutheran parish minister in the employ of the state, Ehrenberg felt the pressure to resign that would not relent during the thirties, and he endured a rising flow of false and discouraging accusations against him. Responding in late spring of 1933 to accusations of association with the Soviets, Ehrenberg wrote to the Church Consistory that the National Socialist movement had for some time sought to drive him from his pastoral position by any means. The organization of church authority affecting Ehrenberg was part of the national government's structure: He served within the "Evangelische" (Protestant) Church of the Old Prussian Union. As a servant of the Church he begged the Consistory to understand "that the battle against me as a German Protestant pastor 'out of Israel' has led to a war to the knife . . .." He acknowledged that the Consistory ultimately could not protect him from, or prepare him to endure, the intense suffering involved as long as he stayed. For Ehrenberg, though, it was not about a man but about the gospel that he was compelled to proclaim—because of his role as the spiritual overshepherd at St. Paul's, the Consistory should concur with him. He reminded them that the Lord Christ had brought him to this time, had strengthened him to overcome any personal weaknesses, and that his resolve

would be impossible unless he believed that the assaults against him had a symbolic meaning for the preservation of the essence of the gospel and the Church. He prayed for strength and intercession, that God would preserve the Church from falling away and keep him from weakness and lack of courage.[64]

During his exile and separated from his congregation, Ehrenberg was obviously encouraged by the degree to which they had been able to live out the heart of the Barmen Confession and thus to fulfill again the meaning of the traditional Reformation confessions. He contrasted them with the German Christians whose claims of orthodoxy rang hollow: "these pseudo-conformists (who imagine that they represent the true teaching of the Church) betray their heretical position on such days as Whit Sunday, the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." The topic brought to mind the experiences of a family from his congregation:

> "I have in mind a man in our own district whose four children I was allowed to confirm, a railwayman and a most loyal Christian. One day he said to me: 'I went for the Whitsun service to the church of our neighboring German Christian pastor' (there was one in one of the suburban parishes whose sermons were almost indistinguishable from those of a Confessional pastor) 'and I was able to see for myself how far he departed from the true Gospel.'"[65]

Of course, the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 eventually had tightened the space for Jews already caught between their commitments as Germans and the National Socialist thrust to diminish or eliminate their presence. Ehrenberg's situation and experience were no different, even as a Lutheran pastor, though his position and the support of his congregation provided more shelter than most Jewish Christians received. Notably, his congregation initially refused to let him resign in the summer of 1937 at a time when he and they were under intense Nazi and general popular pressure. His St. Paul parish congregation knew his position with the Gestapo; he warned them of what things might occur and how they must respond, having prepared them through teaching, sermons and prayer, and through the sustained "Confessional" classes that focused on the Augsburg Confession.[66]

For Ehrenberg the Confessional classes were genuine fellowship—*Gemeinschaft* or community—and the elements of information and instruction made them so: ". . . we came to realize that instruction itself already contains the seeds of fellowship, of true community." The "fellowship crystallized in our responsibility for waging war and in prayer on behalf of the struggle." The classes trained the members "to see the value of the Church's witness." Their preparation meant that when heresies rose with the German Christians, the *Pauluskirche* fellowship of believers knew how to detect their falsehoods. Their "second revelations" in particular rang false: "a second revelation through Adolf Hitler" to supersede biblical teachings; "a second sanctification through the blood

community of the Nordic peoples" to improve upon the "Community of Saints"; and "a second salvation through heroic achievements in addition to salvation through the Blood of the Lamb." Ehrenberg compared the heresy of the German Christian Movement with the Roman Church's defiling of the gospel by "extraneous infiltrations", which the Church of the Reformation repudiated.[67]

During the thirties, the stresses on the Ehrenberg family had increased within a pervasive and continuing sense of oppression and tension. One family friend worried how the marriage and the family would hold up for the duration. Writing to Bishop Bell in January 1937, Agnes Waldstein judged the situation for the family and for Ehrenberg's ministry a "total crisis". A recent exile in London herself, Waldstein exchanged letters with Bishop Bell, telling her personal experiences with and observations of the family. The Nuremberg Laws certainly had intruded into their household; Pastor Ehrenberg, whom the authorities identified as a Jew, could not legally employ women of German citizenship or similar "Blood" stock under forty-five years of age as household help. Else as a pastor's wife was herself disposed toward intellectual matters and service in the church, even "now and then playing the organ" for services. The "frightful" character of this matter may have had to do with her identification as an "Aryan" woman, also younger than forty-five. Though the correspondence does not mention it, almost surely there was an unspoken concern that Nazi authorities may not have hesitated to invoke the explicit Section 3 prohibition against marriage between Jews and non-Jews—the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor. They had done just that to many married couples. That their many years of marriage might be disregarded and the law, as it often was, applied retroactively, was horrifying.[68]

Another émigrée wrote in April 1937 that Ehrenberg's health was compromised and that local pressure on him and his church was such that it had not been possible for him to baptize the members of his most recent confirmation class. Though the Ehrenberg children were still too young, fifteen and twelve, to comprehend the family's circumstances, Else Ehrenberg fully apprehended her husband's oppressive spiritual struggle and shared in it through every phase. She discerned his abiding inner strength and unshakeable commitment to his calling and destiny even as the authorities and circumstances showed he must retire from his position as pastor of the Pauluskirche. That retirement took effect on July 1, 1937. The St. Paul community was so staunch in their orthodoxy that in 1938 the regime replaced Ehrenberg with another Confessional pastor so as to avoid further trouble from Pauluskirche Bochum.[69]

Sachsenhausen, Release, and Exile

From the early 1920s, then, until 1938, Ehrenberg's parish ministry led all other pursuits while he taught and wrote on practical theological matters. Pastor Ehrenberg's opposition to the theological and congregational developments of the German Christians, and his outspokenness on the Jewish-Christian Question

had drawn enough sustained attention to prompt the church authorities to force his retirement. His refusal to toe the doctrinal line of the German Christians, plus his competent preaching and teaching with his own congregation—he was and always had been also a sought-after speaker and preacher in the Bochum region—assured that the opposition against him became hardened. In spite of all else that would be worthy of respect since 1914, Ehrenberg experienced the plight of other German citizens of Jewish heritage. His identity as a Jew to race-minded Germans, plain and simple, and his reputation and loyalties over time were also more than enough to provoke the invasion and vandalism of his home by members of the Nazi Storm Detachment *(Sturmabteilung)* on the "Night of Broken Glass" or *Kristallnacht*, November 9-10, 1938. Then, along with hundreds of other Jews from Bochum, even as an Evangelical Lutheran pastor, he was interned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp until his release in late March of 1939.[70]

During his time at Sachsenhausen, Ehrenberg had to rely on the universal church, for the "visible church" had been confiscated, and on the prayers of his wife and colleagues and congregation at Bochum. His release resulted from the persistent efforts of his wife, Else, who went repeatedly to Berlin to plead for him, and perhaps from the testimonies and pleas from a delegation of men from his congregation, industrial workers all, who pressed for his liberation. And then, with additional influence through a web of contacts on his behalf, he was released from Sachsenhausen and went immediately into exile in England. He later wrote, "To be separated from one part of myself without even saying farewell, after a married life of nearly thirty years: this was something which, in spite of all the devoted kindness which was shown to me, my strength, already weakened by my months in the concentration camp, could not endure". Wife, son and daughter joined him in exile not long after, however, and by 1940 they were in a cottage in northern Shropshire County, England, with support from the congregation of the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Birkenhead. This was his home base; from there he concentrated on his ecumenical work of speaking preaching and writing, hoping to influence British Christians to understand the "Christian Dispersion" in conjunction with the "Nazi world revolution". [71]

Biographical Note

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[1] Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England,* 5th rev. ed. Combined volumes, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 311; Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 415. Ironically, the scholar Thomas Liebler (Latin name "Erastus") whose arguments have been interpreted as supporting the dominance of civil power over the church and

its ministers, taught medicine (1558-ca.1580) at the University of Heidelberg where Hans P. Ehrenberg taught philosophy from 1910 to 1925. The last three of Liebler's "Seventy-five Theses" (published posthumously in 1589) address civil or lay authority, but against the backdrop of his peculiar distinction between the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and with contemporary influence from controversies over communion and excommunication. See: "Erastus and Erastianism" at https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05514a.htm .

[2] The Hans Ehrenberg Society honors Ehrenberg, his work, publications, and legacy, and coordinates the Hans Ehrenberg Lectures in connection with the Evangelical Theology Faculty, Ruhr University, Bochum. Awarded in wintertime every two years to commemorate his life and work, the Hans Ehrenberg Prize is given to a distinguished personality (or in one case to the organization, Action Reconciliation Service for Peace) that has "genuinely represented and recollected the Protestant profile in public debate, in genuine socio-political conversations, in interdisciplinary scholarship and in the sphere of ecclesiastical concerns." The prize is given by the Protestant Church in Bochum and the Westphalian Landeskirche. The Hans Ehrenberg "Nachwuchspreis" is awarded biennially to an "up-and-coming" scholar for contributions to Jewish-Christian dialogue. See: https://hansehrenberg.info/

[3] Located in contemporary North Rhine-Westphalia.

[4] Victor Karady, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era: A Socio-Historical Outline*. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 233. Online at http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=rue&AuthType=sso&db=e000xna&AN=103208&site=eds-live

[5] Brakelmann, Günter. *Ein Judenchristliches Schicksal in Deutschland,* vol. 1, *Leben, Denken und Wirken* (Waltrop, Germany: Verlag Hartmut Spenner, 1997), 11-13; Hans P. Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* trans. Geraint V. Jones (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1943), 112-113; Hans Ehrenberg, *Autobiographie eines deutschen Pfarrers: mit Selbstzeugnissen und einer Dokumentation seiner Amtsentlassung;* edited and contributions by Günter Brakelmann (Waltrop and Breklum, Germany: Hartmut Spenner Verlag and Breklumer Druckerei, 1999), 108-110.

[6] *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 1, 11-13, 17-19; Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik, "Der Philosoph Hans Ehrenberg und sein Abschied von der Philosophie," in Traugott Jähnichen and Andreas Losch, eds., *Hans Ehrenberg als Grenzgänger zwischen Philosophie und Theologie,* (Kamen, Germany: Harmut Spenner, 2017) 1-2. The Hörder-Verein continues in operation today in Westfalenpark Dortmund.

[7] Schmied-Kowarzik, „Der Philosophe Hans Ehrenberg," 4-5; Günter Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum 1933: Zustimmung und Widerstand* (Norderstedt, Germany: Verlag Books on Demand, 2013), 75; *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. I, 49-50.

[8] *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. I, 32. In his book, Ehrenberg emphasized its focus on "the primacy of theology," and the book itself as "the funeral oration of idealism". See *Autobiography of a German Pastor*, 112; *Autobiographie,* 108-109.

[9] Ehrenberg, "Lebenslauf zum 1. Examen 1923," in *Autobiographie,* 157-8.

[10] Felix Borchardt, *Beiblatt des Berliner Tageblatts,* April 22, 1912; quoted in *Judenchristliches Schicksal* vol. I, 32-5.

[11] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 112; *Autobiographie,* 109.

[12] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 75; on the productivity of the Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig, and Rosenstock-Huessy triad (plus another cousin, Rudolph Ehrenberg and other member of the Patmos Circle), see Heinz-Jürgen Görtz, "Heimkehr und Umkehr": Franz Rosenzweigs und Hans Ehrenbergs Wege in ein „neues Denken," in Jähnichen and Losch, eds., *Hans Ehrenberg als Grenzgänger,* 43-81.

[13] *Brakelmann, Judenschristliches Schicksal,* vol. 1, 102ff;

[14] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 100, n.1. On "Heimkehr", see Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* 102-3.

[15] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 100. The uncle, Victor Ehrenberg (1852-1929), was a professor of law at Göttingen, Rostock, and Leipzig.

[16] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 103; *Autobiographie,* 99-100.

[17] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 102; *Autobiographie,* 97-99.

[18] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 61-3. *Autobiographie,* 63-5.

[19] Hans Ehrenberg, *In Der Schule Pascals* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1954).

[20] Ehrenberg, *In der Schule Pascals,* 150-1.

[21] Ehrenberg, *In der Schule Pascals,* 31-3; Traugott Jähnichen, "Blaise Pascal als theologischer Lehrer der Gegenwart—Hans Ehrenbergs Interpretation der *Pensees*", in Jähnichen and Losch, eds., *Hans Ehrenberg als Grenzgänger,* 163-166.

[22] Jähnichen and Losch,"Hans Ehrenberg als theologischer Lehrer," 166-7.

[23] Ehrenberg, *In der Schule Pascals,* 152-3. On the spiritual nation, church, and the love of enemies, in Ehrenberg's booklet of March 1928, a supplemental afterword: "Zur Einordnung in das Zeitalter" (To Classify the Age), *Judenchristliches Schicksal in Deutschland* vol. 1, 225-7.

[24] Jähnichen and Losch, "Hans Ehrenberg als theologischer Lehrer," 167-8.

[25] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 22-3.

[26] Alfred E. Rosenberg (1893-1946) was the leading ideological theorist of Nazism, headed the National Socialist government office of foreign affairs, published *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* in 1930, and had many other critical assignments in the Third Reich. For present purposes, his advocacy of "positive Christianity", one of Aryanism-Germanism blended with a religion acceptable to the Nazis, entailed his repudiation of orthodox, historical Christianity, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic. Instrumental as a leader in perpetrating the "Final Solution" in eastern Europe, he was sentenced and hanged at Nuremberg. See: Alfred Rosenberg: Biography | The Holocaust Encyclopedia (ushmm.org)

[27] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 23-4. The *Schwarze Corps* was the weekly newspaper of the black-shirted *Schutzstaffel* (SS) that early on was the "Defense/Protection Guard" for Adolf Hitler.

[28] A perennial and contemporary difficulty of State-sanctioned religion lies with matters of funding and taxation but also with the unanticipated consequences of any state legal or statutory action that, despite the approval of, nay, the active litigation of religious advocates, desacralizes what should explicitly be regarded as holy. Specifying the point: William D. Blake, "Pyrrhic Victories: How the Secularization Doctrine Undermines the Sanctity of Religion," *Journal of Church and State* 55:1, 1-22. Doi:10.1093/jcs/csr111.

[29] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* 92-3, 241.

[30] Note his article of 1942 that placed responsibility on the pastors for resistance against heretical developments in Germany: Hans Ehrenberg, "The Confessional Pastor and his Struggle," *The Churchman* 56:1 (1942), 300-313.

[31] The Dutch Christian Socialist movement served as a model. This is a possible reference either to a broad collection of minor and temporary parties, or possibly to the formation in 1926 of Christian Democratic Union party that under influence of Barthian theology supported a more biblically consistent cooperation of society and government. In the same place, Ehrenberg expressed his reverence for Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt, a founder of Christian socialism in Germany and Switzerland and an influence on Karl Barth. Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 1, 245-6.

[32] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal*, vol. 1, 246-7

[33] Bergen, 5; citing also Kurt Meier, *Die Deutschen Christen: Das Bild einer Bewegung im Kirchenkampf des Dritten Reiches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 1-16; Arnold Dannenmann, *Kirche im Dritten Reich* (no publ., n.d.), 10, 48; Walter Grundmann,"Ein klarendes Wort der Landesleitung der *Deutschen Christen in Sachsen* and unsere Kameraden!," in *Deutsche Christen in Sachsen—Aufklärungsblatt No. 3* (Dresden, June 10, 1936), 1-3. The young Thuringian pastors were Siegfried Leffler and Julius Leutheuser. Kube, Gauleiter of Brandenburg, chaired the National Socialist members' group in the Prussian Landtag.

[34] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 108-9; Gűnter Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum 1933: Zustimmung und Widerstand* (Bochum, Deutschland: Evangelischer Kirchenkreis Bochum / BoD Norderstedt, 2013), 50.

[35] Victoria J. Barnett, "German Protestantism and the Challenges of National Socialism," *American Baptist Quarterly* 37:4 (Winter 2018), 390, citing the quote from the Nazi party platform, Article 24; also, Barnett, *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest against Hitler* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 32.

[36] Barnett,"German Protestantism," 393.

[37] Günter Brakelmann, *Kreuz und Hakenkreuz: Christliche Pfadfinderschaft und Nationalsozialismus in den Jahren 1933/1934* (Kamen, Germany: Verlag Harmut Spenner, 2013), 10-16, 19f, 21, 25f.

[38] Barnett, "German Protestantism," 389.

[39] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 9-10, 37-41.

[40] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 10-11.

[41] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 72-3.

[42] Bergen observes that the German Christians were ubiquitous, numbering about 600,000 members, and wielded far more influence than the numbers suggest, though their influence was not evenly distributed. As to the confusion among Germans, the very name "Deutsche Christen" was a line in the sand that must be crossed or risk being considered both un-Christian and unpatriotic—Hitler is said to have suggested the name. Doris Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 3-13. On tacit acceptance, neutrality, or approval of the new Nazi order, see: Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 45.

[43] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 39-40; *Autobiographie*, 40-44.

[44] In the autobiography's German translation, "virility" is "Mannestugend"—"manly virtue". The comment evokes Luther's *Freedom of the Christian Man:* "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to every one." Concerning Christian Liberty, by Martin Luther (gutenberg.org) [44]. But Ehrenberg intended to encourage the reconstruction of true Christian manhood after the image and example of Jesus Christ. To anyone among "the Christian Dispersion", he urged a "manly Christian attitude towards the war and [that they] see in it something more than a necessary evil; I do not mean that we shall regard it like the Teutonic militarists as a hardening discipline, but we shall see it as a task. A task? Yes, a task." It was a task consistent with the mission of the Church. By extension, the "Christian Man" was a model contrary to Aryan conceptions of fulfilled humanity, that is, a militaristic or Nietzschean manliness enacted in domination over inferior men and all women. Such themes for men and women were strenuously emphasized in National Socialist dogma and in the ideology and models of the German Christians. Ehrenberg, *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 16-17; *Autobiographie,* 23; on the "manly Christian attitude," 142-43; *Autobiographie,* 137-38. Doris Bergen describes the obsession over manly and womanly virtues and the use and general misuse of stereotypes toward women among the German Christians and the Nazis. Bergen, *Twisted Cross,* 119-141.

[45] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 70-2; *Autobiographie,* 72-3.

[46] *Autobiography of a German Pastor,* 71-2; *Autobiographie,* 72-3.

[47] *Autobiography of a German Pastor*, 42-3; *Autobiographie,* 46-7.

[48] Ehrenberg devoted a chapter in his autobiography to Niemöller who was a high-profile fellow prisoner in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp—they never met in the camp. The six principal Bochum pastors besides Ehrenberg were Hans Fischer, Alfred Hartmann, Rudolf Hardt, August and Walter Krämer, and Albert Schmidt. Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 77. On the originating group for the Bochum Confession, see *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2 118-120. On Sachsenhausen and Niemõller, see: *Autobiography of a German Pastor*, 38-52; *Autobiographie,* 42-55. Niemöller himself was incarcerated at Moabit in Berlin, Sachsenhausen, and Dachau, for seven years overall, mostly in solitary confinement. During the Church Struggle, Niemöller was compelled to reconsider his antisemitic prejudices in order not to discount the efficacy of Christian baptism. Bergen, *Twisted Cross,* 35, citing Hans Buchheim, ed., "Ein NS-Funktionär zum Niemöller Prozess," in *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte,* no. 1 (January 1956): 307-15.

[49] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 118-121.

[50] "Wort und Bekenntnis westfälischer Pastoren zur Stunde der Kirche und des Volkes," at http://www.seeber-recklinghausen.de/archiv/Pfingstbekenntnis.pdf ; Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 120ff.

[51] "Wort und Bekenntnis westfälischer Pastoren"

[52] "Wort und Bekenntnis westfälischer Pastoren"

[53] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 42; *Autobiographie,* 46-7.

[54] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 67; *Autobiographie,* 69. Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 110-11.

[55] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 101. Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 75-6. On the matter of general Antisemitism and the complicated effects of the Aryan laws, see Avraham Barkai, "Exclusion and Persecution: 1933-1938" in Michael A. Meyer, ed., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, Vol. 4, *Renewal and Destruction: 1918-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.), 251-7, this reference, 255.

[56] Friedrich Strickert, "The Pastors' Emergency League and Authority," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 2:3 (June 1975), 159-66.

[57] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 44-50; *Autobiographie,* 47-52; on Barmen and Barth, see Barnett, "German Protestantism," 394-96; Strickert, "The Pastors' Emergency League and Authority," 159-66.

[58] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 104-5.

[59] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 106-10.

[60] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 111, 139.

[61] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 119.

[62] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 117; and Bergen, *Twisted Cross,* 35.

[63] Avraham Barkai, "Exclusion and Persecution: 1933-1938" (199, 202-5, 211, 214-215), and Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Jewish Life Under National Socialism" (284-5), in Michael A. Meyer, ed., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, Vol. 4, *Renewal and Destruction: 1918-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

[64] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 108.

[65] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 62-4; *Autobiographie,* 64-6.

[66] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 66-7; *Autobiographie,* 68-9.

[67] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 60-2; *Autobiographie,* 62-3.

[68] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 378-81.

[69] Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 382-83.

[70] Brakelmann, *Evangelische Kirche in Bochum,* 117-18; details on Sachsenhausen, in Brakelmann, *Judenchristliches Schicksal,* vol. 2, 420-41.

[71] Ehrenberg, *Autobiography,* 114, 116-117, 140-2; *Autobiographie,* 111-14, 135-37.

The Multigenerational Crisis of Meaning: A Few Thoughts on a Weakened and Undervalued Essential Social Process

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"…as for myself, I would not be willing to live merely for the sake of my "defense mechanisms," nor would I be ready to die for my "reaction formations." Man, however, is able to live and even to die for the sake of his ideals and values" (Frankl, 1963:154-155).

Introduction

This paper will focus on the changing nature of the social construction of meaning, a neglected structural process in modern society, and an especially important part of the primary socialization of children, adolescents, and young adults. The socialization process whereby individuals learn the way of life of their society includes the critically important cultural process of the internalization of meaning. A breakdown and decline in this essential process of meaning-making socialization, coupled with the widespread availability of multiple metanarratives via the Internet, social media, and the mass media makes the contemporary social construction of meaning for modern generations highly complex, especially for adolescents and young adults. Meaning-making, however, is a social process that continues across the life cycle into old age, as individuals alter their ideas and perceptions of what is meaningful and purposeful over their lifetime. Interestingly, discussions of the "crisis" of both adolescence and middle adulthood often centers on a need to redefine core meaning and life goals in each age group to ensure future achievement (Lachman, Teshale, and Agrigoroaei, 2015). In this paper, the ideas of Viktor Frankl will serve as a conceptual framework to explore this crisis of meaning-making in American culture. A few observations on a path forward to reframe the social process of meaning construction will be highlighted. These observations and remarks on the internalization of meaning are intended to encourage other scholars and writers to shed new light on the revitalization of meaning-making as an essential social process.

In 1946, a World War II concentration camp survivor, originally from Austria, Viktor Frankl, M.D., Ph.D., who was trained in both Psychiatry and Philosophy, published his first book, *A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp* in German. In 1959, a new edition was published in English, entitled *From Death-Camp to Existentialism (Man's Search for Meaning)*. Later editions of the book were further retitled as *Man's Search for Meaning* beginning in 1963. In 1991, in a survey by the Library of Congress, readers were asked to name books that had made a significant impact on their lives. The survey results indicated that *Man's Search for Meaning* was named to a list of the ten most influential books published in America (Library of Congress, 1991). In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl focused on a description of what he considered to be the three major social and psychological

problems in modern society: aggression, addiction, and depression. He collectively referred to these three conditions as the mass neurotic triad (Frankl, 1963). Significantly, the primary influence on each condition was the absence of an intentional focus on a well-developed sense of meaning within the individual. Frankl asserted that individuals who live their lives without an intentional focus on personal meaning were at risk for developing difficulties associated with daily living, potentially creating an existential vacuum. The mass neurotic triad thus reflected a social world that was missing a bedrock element essential to the nature of daily human existence, the opportunity to develop and refine an internalized sense of personal meaning – and act in accordance with it (Frankl, 1963; Pattakos and Dundon, 2017).

To Frankl, then, if an individual failed to see his life experiences through a framework of purpose and meaning, this personal reality could lead to major social and psychological problems. Alleviating these conditions was not possible unless the purposelessness underlying them was fully acknowledged. This innovative conceptual approach led to the development of logotherapy, a counseling model still in current use across a number of professional fields, including Counseling, Clinical Psychology, and Marriage and Family Therapy. Alex Pattakos, co-founder of the Global Meaning Institute, author, and *Psychology Today* columnist, made the following observation about the resilience and contemporary application of Frankl's ideas to the changing social landscape:

> If Viktor Frankl were alive today (he passed on in September 1997), the persistence of the mass neurotic triad in the 21st Century suggests…that we are facing a "crisis of meaning" that will not go away on its own, nor will it disappear solely through the pursuit of power (i.e., a correlate of aggression) or the pursuit of pleasure (i.e., a correlate of addiction). But where there is a crisis, there is also opportunity. Hence, a crisis of meaning is also a call for meaning — in our personal lives, in our work, and even in our public policies. In the midst of the personal and collective suffering that surrounds us, and as we confront this critical and pivotal time in world history, there is still hope for a better, more meaning-full future for all (Pattakos, 2011:1).

Selected Social Forces That Have Contributed to a Cultural Crisis of Meaning

"Meaning-making" designates the process sociologists refer to as the social construction of reality through which individuals attach interpretive meaning to situations, events, objects, or discourses. In one sense, all social interaction involves meaning-making, according to Symbolic Interactionist Theory, a major theoretical framework in Sociology. Symbolic interactionists, for example, point out that the fact that in any form of social interaction, including a learning-focused environment, people are actively engaged in a mental process of making sense of the situation – the frame, objects, relationships – while tapping both their stock of knowledge of prior similar situations and drawing on other available cultural resources. Meaning-making also involves constructing self-identities and gauging situational emotional responses of individuals. In addition, when individuals encounter stressful and traumatic events, the processes of meaning-making and the specific meanings that

individuals may internalize in response to stress may be dramatically altered (Lamont, 2000). In response to stressful circumstances, meaning-making may be take a back seat to adapting and coping responses to current events and life experiences.

Over the past couple of years, much has been written in the popular press about the breakdown of the cultural process of meaning production. Beginning in March 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic created a state of national anomie as established social patterns were suddenly and dramatically altered, including but not limited to working from home, remote learning, and the severe limiting of face-to face interaction with those outside of one's household . Scholar Yuval Levin, however, noted in his book, *A Time to Build: From Family and Community to Congress and the Campus, How Recommitting to Our Institutions Can Revive the American Dream* (2020), noted that the decline of national shared meanings, including an ethos of the common good, has involved a long-term decline since the 1960's. The Pandemic simply accelerated this longstanding social trend. An observation by John Dewey is especially relevant to this discussion: "Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication" (Dewey 1916:5). The social structure of transmission and communication of meaning are foundational social processes in a civil society, and hold the potential to transcend contemporary politics, even in the current social climate of the "politicization of everything." As Frankl's ideas suggest, the social construction of personal meaning should be viewed as both an essential and intentional social process.

Other social changes have also impacted meaning-making processes. Technological changes in communications such as cell phones, computers (especially small mobile devices), and Internet access have accelerated an emphasis on individualism - while also creating new economic, entrepreneurial, and educational opportunities (Pattakos and Dundon, 2017). In terms of religious beliefs and practices, only 47% of Americans self-identified as associated with a local faith community (Nueman, 2021). The secularization of religion, however, may manifest itself in different ways in the U.S. cultural context (as compared to other countries). For example, a large segment of the U.S, population who consider themselves secular also identity as "spiritual but not religious" – a social pattern with implications for meaning-making processes. The growth of implicit religion as a form of quasi-religion or invisible religion (Luckmann, 1967) may be seen as a growing cultural alternative form of meaning-making. The concept of implicit religion applies to social phenomena that appear to include major elements of religion, such as charismatic leaders (a "priesthood"), a community of committed followers, and sacred places/objects, but is essentially secular in nature (Sanders, 2019) . Examples include sports, entertainment culture, and social movement-based ideologies (e.g., human rights). The growing prevalence of consumer religion as a hybrid of consumer culture and traditional religious elements, perhaps more common in megachurches, also impacts meaning-making (Watson and Scalen, 2008; Lofton, 2017).

In addition, the limited and problematic nature of intergenerational contact between members of older and younger generations is perhaps the most

undervalued factor in internalizing meaning and purpose. Frequent social interaction with one's age peers – to the exclusion of other age groups – is the dominant pattern in American (especially with younger generations). The author has coined the term, "generationalism" to refer to this social pattern and its associated stereotyping of one's generational outgroups. The social pattern of voluntary separation of generations had led to age-based conflicts in the workplace and misunderstanding of different values and priorities. In particular, a number of historical and social developments associated with modernization have altered American culture in significant ways and radically influenced interaction between older and younger generations .These multiple developments cannot be fully discussed here, but a few shifts will be briefly noted. Industrialization and urbanization accelerated the separation of the workplace from the home setting and the untethering of young adults from family-focused enterprises to greater individual freedom to pursue employment away from home. An ethos of individualism has further undergirded this societal development. A classic theory in the field of Gerontology, Modernization Theory (Cowgill and Holmes, 1972), focused on alterations in social structure due to industrialization and modernization as the primary causes of the declining relational power and influence in modern society, and increased isolation from other age groups. In addition, the economic well-being of young adults was no longer directly connected to relationships with middle-aged and older family members. As societies modernized, the status of elders decreased, and they were increasingly likely to experience some level of social exclusion. It is noteworthy that prior to industrialization, family patterns and associated social norms created commonalities and social bonds between the younger and older generations. With industrialization, the nuclear family replaced the extended family pattern, and perceived responsibility of the care of frail elders shifted dramatically. In an individualistic, achievement-focused capitalistic society, however social bonds with older family members are irrevocably altered, and social interaction, emotional support and caregiving as often defined merely as a discretionary, voluntary obligation by younger family members. Social support of elders (by young or middle-aged adults) may take place over the short-term, depending on one's "busy" schedule, but are more commonly outsourced to aging support programs (e.g., telephone reassurance, friendly visitor programs, etc.). Frail elders may be encouraged by well-meaning family members to give up their homes and move to supportive housing settings, such as assisted living facilities. These social transformations, then, radically altered norms of direct kinship care of older adults (by younger family members) in response to geographic mobility associated with occupational achievement. In addition, as societies modernize, older adults are less likely to be seen as a source of wisdom and guidance for the younger generation, but rather as both a nonproductive economic and societal burden, due to the growth of social programs such as Medicare and Social Security. Most significantly, older adults are not seen as a valued source of wisdom and guidance for children, adolescents, and younger adults, limiting opportunities for meaning-making through

intergenerational contact. Collectively, these developments have impacted social patterns in fundamental ways that alter the internalization of personal meaning for all age groups, though the impact on adolescents and young adults is most concerning over the long-term.

Frankl's Comprehensive Framework of Personal Meaning and Meaning-making

While Frankl is most associated with the development of logotherapy as a form of psychotherapy, Frankl also offered unique insights as to the impact of meaning in addressing universal problems in society. In *Man's Search for Meaning* (1963), Frankl observed that individuals in the concentration camps (where he was also held) often responded with unusual levels of resiliency in the face of severe conditions if they had something to live for, such as reuniting with loved ones, a devout religious faith, or some personal goal requiring completion (in the future). Individuals who were focused on meaningful ideas and future actions often seemed able to survive the severe atrocities of concentration camp daily life when others appeared to lose hope and died. On a personal level, Frankl's observed that his commitment to finishing his book on logotherapy motivated him to survive. A focus on transcendent values and significance, then, helped individuals look beyond one's current situation and personal history, and construct a "life view" incorporating a broader perspective beyond themselves. In turn, Frankl proposed a model of meaning-making based on this perspective: "Logotherapy's concept of man is based on three pillars, the freedom of the will, the will to meaning, and the meaning of life "(Frankl, 1988:16). These three elements of Frankl's model on meaning-making will be described.

The first pillar, the freedom of the will, highlights the social reality that have limited control on the social conditions impacting their life. Frankl focused, however, on the volitional nature of one's personal life experiences. In a general sense, individuals construe, understand, or make sense of life events, relationships, and the self on an ongoing basis. Through this process, individuals subjectively interpret these life conditions – perceiving and responding toward them based on an intentionally constructed framework developed by the individual. In daily life, Frankl highlighted the freedom of individuals to respond to one's personal circumstances as an independent human agent, constructing a unique sense of subjective meaning as a source of inner direction. This perspective also encourages a sense of personal responsibility for the formation of personal attitudes and actions in response to one's current life conditions (Frankl, 1963).

The second pillar, the will to meaning, is founded on the essence of existence, which always involves self-transcendence. For Frankl, the will to meaning, or the desire to find and create meaning in one's life, is the primary source of motivation in a person's life. In his model, Frankl suggested that deep personal reflection may need to be done to intentionally direct an individual to the point whereby meanings in his life become more refined and, and once that benchmark has been reached, an individual must also be reoriented toward a focus on the future. Frankl posited that the will to meaning involved a quest for "personalized

truth" whereby individuals see their potential impact in the sphere of influence they have access to as an individual (Frankl, 1963).

Finally, the third pillar is based on three parts: the creative, the experiential, and the attitudinal (Frankl, 1963; Frankl, 1984). These three elements focus on meaning-making through interpersonal relationships and a generalized sense of connectedness to others. Creative values center on opportunities to orchestrate some significant outcome, or successfully accomplish an activity perceived as significant by the individual. Experiential values involve encountering something of value (e.g., a new experience), or interacting with someone in an intentional manner (e.g., meeting a need of another person). Attitudinal values, on the other hand, involves personal discovery by the attitude she/he takes toward some form of suffering or loss that is perceived as unavoidable (Frankl, 1984).

In summary, Frankl delineates these three pillars of meaning-making as a part of the lived experience of daily life. The quest for meaning of life becomes a transformative pilgrimage. Experiences leading to despair can be challenged by fulfillment, and attitudinal values can allow both a sense of personal failure and personal success to be viewed through a transformative lens. "Lack of success does not imply lack of meaning" (Frankl, 1963: 123). Alternatively, "human life can be fulfilled not only in creating and enjoying, but also in suffering" (Frankl, 1963:122). A personally constructed creative alternative way of thinking about some form of suffering holds the potential to produce a new matrix of meaning, since the nature of human suffering is often that it cannot be escaped (despite an individual's best efforts). Attitudinal values provide a creative capacity to approach suffering (broadly defined) if higher ideals and values can become the prism for personal reflection. Thus, discerning essential meanings may enable one to transcend highly stressful life experiences involving pain, suffering, and death. In Frankl's model of meaning-making, finding logos (meaning) within suffering can allow a sense of purposeful transcendence, and create new forms of meaning that serve as a foundation for future life experiences (Wong, 2014).

Conclusions and Implications

There is a need for a restructuring and a revitalized focus on meaning-making in American culture. Voluntary associations, service organizations, faith-based non-profits, and local faith communities hold the potential to contribute to meaning-making in local communities. Frankl's meaning-making framework, while primarily focused on the individual level, can serve to refocus the socialization process more intentionally on the conveyance of meaning, especially for those entering (or about to enter) adulthood. Meaning-making is fundamentally a microsociological process, most often taking place in terms of social interaction with family members and significant others. There are, however, culture-making opportunities that may be designed to revive or restructure meaning-making opportunities at the local community level. An emphasis on a community service ethic focused on addressing identified community needs – coupled with structured volunteer service opportunities to serve the needs of others – is a potentially rich source of meaning-making for individuals.

The concept of a nonpartisan civil society social movement whereby community residents address a social need (in this case, meaning-making) might have some relevance to meaning-making processes via community forums, etc. Social entrepreneurship – innovatively meeting a community need with limited resources – is an important and highly valued form of community action in many parts of the world. The free community library movement in local communities is an example of this type of grass-roots movement. In addition, two other initiatives have great potential to reform the culture to emphasize meaning-making. A potential major benefit of structured community-based volunteer programs would be increased intergenerational contact. Volunteer programs, for example, whereby high school or college students visit older community residents to gather oral histories for an English or History class can have transformative effects on younger (and older) participants. The author has spent over 30 years developing service-learning experiences for college students (enrolled in Sociology classes) that echo a high-level social impact on community participants and college students by creating reflection opportunities for consideration of various aspects personal meaning, purpose, and life goals.

Finally, service and volunteer opportunities focused on serving the common good in local communities, focused on address identified community needs can be important shapers of meaning. Whether such an initiative is led by faith-based groups or non-profits like the United Way, the primary focus should be serving community needs in relationship with others. Civic engagement though community service allows young adults, adolescents, and other community members to be exposed to a service ethic and to think about the needs of individuals other than themselves. It can also expose younger participants to a sense of agency, an awareness that their service activities can directly impact the lives of others in a positive way. An emphasis on a service ethic also spotlights the need for innovation and social entrepreneurship to improve local communities lead by creative, caring community leaders.

It is the wish of the author that this exploratory discussion of meaning-making might spur others to explore new strategies for a renewal of American culture through improving the general process of conveying meaning to the “younger generation.” The words of Viktor Frankl are a reminder of the value of a renewed cultural focus on meaning and purpose and strengthening meaning-making as a long-lasting common good: ”…we have shown that the meaning of life always changes, but that it never ceases to be…we can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: (1) by creating a work or doing a deed; (2) by experiencing something or encountering someone; and (3) by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering” (Frankl, 2006:133-134).

Biographical Note

J.B. Watson Jr., Ph.D. served as Coordinator of the Gerontology Program at Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas from 1991 to 2019. He

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"Rev." Donald Trump and the Christian Right – A Secular Transformation of the Great Awakening Heritage

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Abstract

Over the past five years, the curious relationship between Donald Trump and many conservative evangelicals has been at the intersection of US religion and politics. Explanations for this curious linkage include:

- John Fea's accent on the historical fear of evangelicals of the other.
- Ben Howe's claim that evangelicals have chosen power over values.
- Whitehead and Perry's articulation of a U.S. Christian nationalism.
- Kristin Kobes Du Mez's feminist critique of U.S. Christian masculinity.
- Timothy Carney's connection between social collapse and Trumpism.

This paper argues that each of these arguments capture important parts of the Trump-evangelical nexus, but not the complete picture. Fea's historical approach needs to be complemented by Whitehead and Perry's quantitative approach and vice-versa. By synthesizing these arguments and well as others, this paper shows how Donald Trump and his evangelical partners have fostered a civil religion that secularizes the Great Awakening heritage. This is particularly evident in Trump's rhetorical style, public policies, and the character of his campaign rallies.

Paper

Since the 1970s, faith-based organizations, especially of the evangelical persuasion, have become politically mobilized in reaction to what they have seen as the moral relativism that emerged from the major shifts in cultural norms in the 1960s. First as the Moral Majority and later as the Christian Coalition, these political advocates have had a major impact on U.S. politics, not just at the national level, but especially at the state and local level.

Nevertheless, the embrace of Donald Trump by the Christian Right is quite striking. President Trump is not the first person who comes to mind in terms of being a paragon of moral virtue. He has never been known to be a regular church goer and his alleged sexual encounters with women would hardly qualify him as a Christian exemplar. Furthermore, in Christian terms, he has never been one to ask for forgiveness for his sins nor is he the humblest person in terms of personality. Yet, he has managed to gain a lot of support from evangelical leaders and voters. Indeed, in 2016, Trump received 81% of the evangelical vote in the general election. This support actually exceeded that George W. Bush, John McCain, and Mitt Romney received in previous presidential elections (Fea 2018, 5-6). In turn, in the 2020 fall election, Trump gained the support 75-80% of white evangelical Christian voters as well as 57% of white Catholics (Schor 2020b).

A growing number of journalistic and academic studies have explored this curious marriage between Donald Trump and the Christian Right. Ben Howe (2019) argues that in supporting Trump, evangelicals have chosen power over values. Katherine Stewart contends this pursuit of power is actually a political ideology that

can be traced to Rousas John Rushdoony's works on pursuing Christian Reconstructionism, "a theocratic movement seeking to infuse our society at all levels with a biblical worldview" (2019, 103). Andrew Whitehead and Samuel Perry (2020) suggest that this nexus is rooted in a white Christian nationalism that is distinct from religious commitment. Kristin Kobes Du Mez (2020) argues in turn that this nationalism is steeped in patriarchal thinking and projection of the traditional work v. home roles for men and women. Sarah Posner (2020) connects white Christian nationalism to the growing impact of the alt-right. Robert Jones (2020) contends there is a long legacy of white supremacy in US Christianity, although the connection to Trump's racist rhetoric is implicit rather than explicit in this study. John Fea (2018) maintains that the Christian Right's embrace of Trump is connected to the longstanding history of evangelical fear of "the other." Finally, Timothy Carney (2019) connects Trump's success at galvanizing conservative voters to communities whose economic opportunities and social intermediate institutions have collapsed and whose residents consequently feel "left behind."

The "marriage" between Trump and the Christian Right also reflects James Davison Hunter's culture wars thesis: that the liberal-conservative divide politically reflects a liberal-conservative divide in theology and philosophy. The liberal side is more open-ended and pluralistic in its conceptualization of the relationship of God to the world and tends to stress in political terms the pursuit of social justice. The conservative side, conversely, sees God in rigid, steadfast certain terms; it stresses the importance of cultivating personal virtue and politically what it sees as fundamentally evil threats, such as communism or relativists moralities (Hunter 1991). These competing spiritual imaginations increasingly have divided church communities (Radcliffe 2005). Trump's appeal to the Christian Right is clearly on the conservative side of this divide.

Although these studies are all extremely valuable, they either reduce the support given by the Christian Right to Trump to the different facets of the US culture wars since World War II or in Fea's case, primarily focus on the historical antecedents within US evangelicalism. To understand the nexus between Trump and the evangelicals, one has to first integrate the historical and contemporary analyses. More than just an ideological or cultural political movement, the politics of the Christian Right is the latest chapter in a long history of how the evangelical revival tradition has articulated ideas that has led to the marginalization and persecution of "others." Second, one needs to grasp that not only has Trump tapped into this heritage, but that his political engagement of his supporters has secularized both the affect and effect of the Great Awakenings in U.S. history so as to foster a divisive civil religion.

My methodology, pure and simple**,** is the interpretation of texts. My contribution is to integrate the contemporary focus of some of these scholars with the historical analysis of other scholars. I also draw from my own experience as a lay Christian liturgist to suggest how the format, ambiance, and effects of the Great Awakening revivals have been recast by Trump into political theatre. In turn, I am using the term "Christian Right" as an umbrella term for conservative traditions within U.S. Christianity. Although I will primarily be focusing on evangelicals, at times I will also make reference to the Puritans, fundamentalists, and even conservative

Catholics as being part of this larger Christian Right umbrella, both in history and present-day.

I will present my argument in four sections. The first section will review the extensive entanglements between Trump and the Christian Right. The second section will review the studies that contend this nexus has to understood primarily in political ideological, not theological, terms. The third section will challenge this rendering by showing the theological concepts and historical antecedents that inform the Christian Right's engagement of politics. The final section will explore how indeed the growing secularism of U.S. society has provided a backdrop by which Trump, especially in his campaign rallies, has secularized the Great Awakening heritage.

The Christian Right's Embrace of Donald Trump

Several evangelical leaders have sung Donald Trump's praises. Robert Jeffress, of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, supported Trump on the basis, drawing from Augustine and Martin Luther, that we needed a strong government to restrain evil (Fea 2018, 124-29). The Independent Network Charismatics supported Trump on the basis that a leader was needed who would lead the U.S. back to prosperity and extend "the dominion of Jesus Christ over all the earth" (Fea 2018, 133). Paula White, one of the leading preachers of the prosperity gospel – "faith, wealth, health, and victory" – has been an integral member of Trump's entourage and actually claimed the president has had "a born-again experience" (Fea 2018, 136).

In political terms, this curious marriage between Trump and the evangelical community lies in a legacy of liberal laws and federal court decisions over the past six decades that, from the Christian Right standpoint, have eroded the Christian ideals that supposedly have informed U.S. political life since its founding. Court cases like *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) removing state led prayer in public schools and *Roe v. Wade* (1973) providing for state sanctioning of abortion, at least in the first trimester of pregnancy, in the eyes of evangelicals, have encouraged a growing moral laxity and relativism in U.S. society (Fea 2018, 56).

In the 1990s, the inability of conservative Congressional members to remove President Bill Clinton from public office on the basis of his sexual misdeeds with a White House intern signified to evangelicals to what extent U.S. politics and society seemed to be heading, so-to-speak, "to hell in a handbasket." By 2016, Hillary Clinton, both in terms of being emblematic of the post 1960s non-traditional woman, and whose advocacy of big government socio-economic policies that supposedly would further erode a Christian America, was in evangelical terms, "the enemy to be defeated" (Fea 2016, 71).

Previous Republican presidents such as Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush claimed to have the Christian Right political concerns at heart, but did very little in actual policies to realize them. In the past, evangelical leaders such as Billy Graham, Cal Thomas, and James Dobson had been brought into White House circles only to realize that they were just being used by Republican presidents to get the evangelical vote. David Kwo, in fact, shares that evangelical leaders, when out of sight, were even disparaged as "'goofy'" by key advisors in the

Bush White House (Fea 2018, 145-52). In turn, liberal secular society often has had a disparaging view of the evangelical world.

As much as two decades earlier, many in the Christian Right made a scathing critique of Bill Clinton's character, especially given the Monica Lewinsky sexual tryst; as a result, evangelical leaders became fed up with Washington politics and social/political correctness. Consequently, they were willing to abandon their scruples regarding character to turn, in the words of Robert Jeffress, to "the meanest son-of-a-you-know-what I can find" to push their political agenda (Du Mez 2020, 14; Wehner 2019, 84).

And indeed, Trump delivered on many Christian Right issues. He made extensive appointments of conservative justices to the federal judiciary, including three U.S. Supreme Court justices (Fea 2018 138). He encouraged conservative state legislatures to pass anti-abortion legislation that does not just make it more difficult to get an abortion, but seeks to challenge *Roe* by regulating abortion earlier and earlier in pregnancies. In addition, he moved the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

In turn, on church-state entanglements, Trump supported freedom of religious expression, as evidenced in his opposition to the Johnson amendment which curtails formal institutional church involvement in politics (Fea 2018, 142-43). On the other hand, he blithely ignored actions raising possible violations of the establishment clause. More to the point, the Trump administration was very generous in providing federal bailout loans to churches so as to protect church jobs. Paula White's church, City of Destiny received between $150,000 and $350,000 and Robert Jeffress's church, First Baptist Dallas received between $2 million and $5 million in paycheck payments. Overall, the Associated Press reported that the Trump administration gave somewhere between $17.3 and $42.3 million in terms of bailout loans (Schor 2020a). Clearly, President Trump provided tangible support to the Christian Right and conversely this community has become entangled in the political pursuit of power politics. As Howe (2019) insists, evangelical leaders have opted for power in ways inconsistent with Christian morality and ethics.

Explaining Christian Nationalism – Patriarchalism, Policy Issues, Political Idolatry

What explains this push for political power by the Christian Right, beyond just the lust for power in and of itself? The tendency in the prevailing explanations is to claim a political or social explanation rather than one taken from theology or spirituality. Kristin Kobes De Mez argues that "evangelicalism must be seen as a cultural and political movement rather than as a community defined chiefly by its theology [or the Bible]" (2020, 298). Susan Posner claims the Christian Right's "real driving force, though, was not religion but grievances over school desegregation, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, affirmative action and more" (2020, xvi-xviii). Katherine Stewart contends Christian nationalism is "not a religious creed," but a political ideology and movement principally seeking power (2019, 3). Andrew Whitehead and Perry claim that the Christian Right projects a Christian nationalism is that is neither at root Christian nor religious (2020, 20).

Each of these claims merit further examination. Du Mez shows how over the past century, the Christian Right has focused on cultivating masculinity. Her review of key figures is a "who's who" of key evangelical, political, and entertainment figures who over the past century promote or are used to promote this end: John Wayne, Billy Graham, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Oliver North, the Promise Keepers, and Marc Driscoll among others. Her interpretive lens dwells upon how this focus on Christian masculinity to sustain the strong American West hero, of which John Wayne is the exemplar, projects "patriarchy and submission, sex and power" in public and family life (Du Mez 2020, 94).

Whereas Du Mez dwells on the mythos of the American West, Sarah Posner looks to Eastern Europe for her portrayal of the Christian Right. Posner does an excellent job of illustrating how the Christian Right and the alt-right come to weave in and out of each other. Her most noteworthy claim is that in terms of foreign affairs, that the Trump administration, with the support of the Christian Right, has embraced strongmen like Putin in Russia and Orban in Hungary. The justification is that these strongmen are reinforcing traditional Christianity as a bulwark against the relativism of secular humanism which dominates Western Europe and the United States (Posner 188-218). This turn to the East also suggests that Donald Trump's blind eye toward Eastern Europe is not just due to a personal scandal or financial entanglements with Russia. It also suggests why the Christian Right's support of Israel is not just to save the Holy Land, but that semi-authoritarian leaders like Netanyahu, as well as conservative religious parties, are allies to rescue Western civilization from secular mores.

Stewart provides an exhaustive account of how Christian Right leaders have become interlocked with political and economic elites seeking, through political mobilization, cultural socialization, and domination of the country's judiciaries, to replace pluralistic democracy with a conservative hierarchical social order. The normative basis of this movement she traces back to Southern religious thinking justifying the institution of slavery. This focus on sustaining "the South's segregationist 'way of life'" (Stewart 124) in turn has been recast, she argues, in the contemporary era by Rushdoony's articulation of a Christian Reconstructionism "rooted in hierarchy" (112).

Whitehead and Perry go the furthest in showing how a Christian nationalism informs the support of the Christian Right for Trump. This perspective, they suggest, seeks to establish their vision of a Christian nation in the political and social spheres. This outlook, they contend, more than "just repackaged ethnocentrism, racial resentment, or authoritarianism" (Whitehead 2020, 20), is "a collection of myths, traditions, symbols, narratives, and values systems" that integrate "Christianity with American civic life" (10). This integration entails white male supremacy in the political order and a traditional family structure. Their quantitative study suggests Christian nationalism as opposed to religious commitment of practices is connected to support of white supremacy politics. Essentially, Christian nationalism is a religious variation on what the nationalist literature would term an ethnocultural nationalism (Heywood 2017, 174-76).

Based upon these studies and others, I submit there are at least ten key components to this Christian nationalism. First, the Christian Right stresses that leaders need to be strong warriors. Precisely because previous presidents,

especially Republican ones, insufficiently delivered on the Christian Right's political agenda, evangelical leaders like Donald Jeffress threw their support to the irreverent strongman, Trump. Indeed, leaders of the Christian Right have characterized President Trump either as Cyrus, the secular leader who allowed the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem, or as the new Nehemiah, who actually rebuilt Jerusalem after the Jewish exile in Persia (Fea 2018, 123 & 131-32). Although Trump may be of dubious character, he is supposedly was a "vessel" through which the Lord was working his will (Howe 2019, 41).

Second, Christian nationalism promotes reinforcing traditional gender roles. Men are supposedly the protectors and women are supposed to be pure and submissive to men – again, the virile masculinity stressed by Du Mez. Men are the breadwinners and women are the stewards of hearth and home. This binary is quite vividly advocated not just by men but by Phyllis Schlafly and "traditional" women, especially members of Eagle Forum, a conservative political interest group which she founded and chaired, who mobilized to torpedo ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s. As Du Mez stresses, and ironically so, given Du Mez' feminine interpretive scheme, Schlafly unites "white Christians around a rigid and deeply conservative vision of family and nation" (Du Mez 2020, 73). Specifically, she forged an effective coalition between Catholic, evangelical, and Mormon women, most of whom were in "the white middle and working classes" (Du Mez 73). In seeking the perpetuation of traditional gender roles in the public and family spheres, they raised "a larger moral and existential threat to women, and the nation." Not only did Schlafly's advocacy consolidate the worldview of the Christian Right, she and her ERA feminist adversaries had a lot to do with the Democrat and Republican parties realigning into genuinely liberal and conservative parties.

Third, Christian nationalism embraces the populist patriotism of the white working class thar rises in response to the political protests of the 1960s and early 1970s, especially over Vietnam (Du Mez 2020, 51-62). This patriotism becomes even more volatile as the United States shifts from being industrial to being high tech. The decline of well-paid manufacturing jobs leads to a decline in the middle-class standard of living that white workers had access to in mid-century America. A candidate who comes along and says he is going to restore those jobs and make their lives great again is very seductive. As this so-called silent majority becomes a minority in the 21st century, except in small towns and rural areas (Whitehead 2020, 37), it is ripe for militant grievances and actions.

Fourth, Christian nationalism, thus, puts for the notion of a mythical U.S. past that we need to reconstruct. It is questionable that this idyllic past ever existed, but to the degree that it did, it represented a world in which White Anglo Saxon Protestant culture predominated. Rushdoony's propagation of the debatable notion that the U.S. was founded as a Christian nation leads to the contemporary fight "to redeem America from its commitment to godless humanism" (Stewart 2019, 113). In addition, even the United States Conference of Bishops joins this chorus when it has called for "[restoring] America's lost godliness" (Whitehead 2020, 77).

Fifth, Christian nationalism argues that there are evils that have to be combatted to sustain the Christian way of life. During the 1950s and 60s, on the foreign front, communism was seen as antithetical to the Christian way of life. In the

twenty-first century, radical Islam is seen as the evil to be vanquished. Obviously, Trump was able to take advantage of this sentiment with his so-called Muslim ban. On the domestic front, in the 1950s through the 1970s, desegregation of schools was to be resisted insofar as it supposedly threatened the American way of life. This justified the creation of private Christian schools that remain overwhelmingly attended by whites. Today, LGBTQ rights is an anathema to threat to the Christian Right. Divorce is also problematic, even though some of the evangelical leaders have been divorced (Whitehead 2020, 143).

Sixth, Christian nationalists argue for the exclusion of others that threaten white supremacy. After all, in this nationalist view, real Americans are native-born whites (Whitehead 2020, 91). Consequently, in this "us v. them" binary, among the excluded are nonwhites, homosexuals, Muslims, Jews, seculars, and other non-Christians. Curiously enough, Christian nationalists see themselves as the ones who are the victims in a highly liberal secular society, not groups that have suffered subjugation and discrimination such as African Americans. In turn, opposition to affirmative action by Christian nationalists feeds off this sentiment (Whitehead 2020; Gorski 2021).

Seventh, Christian nationalism is devoted to supporting religious, social, and political institutions that "defend cultural preferences, preserve their political influence and maintain the 'proper' social order. In policy terms, Christian nationalist are strong supporters of the military, the death penalty, and gun rights (Whitehead 2020, 77-83; Gorski 2021). In symbolic terms, they wrap themselves in the American flag. Barack Obama's 2008 remark regarding people who "cling to guns or religion or [show] antipathy to people who aren't like them," (Obama Angers, 2008), only reinforced the sentiment that a traditional moral and civil order had to be defended by the assault from liberal, secular culture. Hence, why again why one needs a strong warrior to stand up for traditional beliefs.

Eighth, building on this warrior motif, as aforementioned, the Christian Right, in terms of foreign affairs, is very attracted to foreign authoritarian-like leaders like Putin or Orban who rigorously sustain a traditional political culture. Giving Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilization" a new twist (Huntington 1996), the fight within Western civilization, according to Christian nationalism, is between traditionalist Christian culture and secular relativist moralities.

Ninth, given the global migrations begat by international unrest and the global economy, Christian nationalists stand staunchly opposed to non-white immigration. Donald Trump, especially through his border wall rhetoric and immigration policies, was very effective at playing to the racist fears of those who see white privilege being eroded by non-white hoards "invading" the country. At best, non-whites have a place as long as they assimilate to Christian nationalist values and viewpoints (Huntington 2004).

Tenth, and in sum, Christian nationalism stands in opposition to a pluralist, secular liberal democracy full of multiple religions, moralities, and viewpoints. Instead, the Christian right stands steadfast behind a clearly nativist defined set of values that "create, support, and maintain symbolic and social boundaries that exclude non-Christians from full inclusion into American civil life" (Whitehead 2020, 161). In sum, Christian nationalism is projected through white American cultural values.

The Historical Spiritual Lifeworld of the Christian Right

The suggestions made by the preceding scholars that the support of evangelicals for Donald Trump is not to be understood from the standpoint of theology or spirituality, but rather in the context of patriarchalism, public policy conflicts, and cultural ideology has a great deal of merit. However, their arguments downplay, and in some cases overlook, that almost from its inception in U.S. history, evangelical religion had both a populist fervor and a commitment to fostering and sustaining a clear vision of community life, steeped in genuinely religious narratives.

I contend the Christian Right's political mobilization is the descendent of what Philip Gorski argues is religious nationalism, going all the way back to the Puritans. Religious nationalists, according the Gorksi, "fuse religion and politics, to make citizenship in the one the mark of citizenship in the other, to purge all those who lack the mark, and to expand the borders of the kingdom as much as possible, by violent means if necessary" (2017, 17). Indeed, Whitehead and Perry acknowledge their study's articulation of Christian nationalism is indebted to Gorski's framework. (Whitehead 2020, 13-14).

Gorski contends religious nationalists draw their vision from the Jewish religious texts and the Christian Bible; these documents are not just window dressing for an underlying conservative ideology or patriarchalism. He adds two other components. First, religious nationalists push a conquest narrative. This narrative emphasizes blood sacrifices that go back to the animal sacrifices in Leviticus. But this leads to, according to Gorski, that "religion, people, land, and polity are cemented together with dried blood in form of blood sacrificed to God" (2017, 21).

The other narrative, especially taken from Revelation is an apocalyptic struggle between good and evil: Christ returns to smite Satan and establishes a harmonious thousand-year reign (Gorski 2017, 22). Well, this narrative plays very well into the contemporary evangelical insistence of standing up to and vanquishing the perpetrators of evil. One does not have to go looking for purely political sources that inform the "good us v. evil them" mentality. The Christian Right is drawing from longstanding narratives in the U.S. Christian tradition.

The legacy of the Puritans in this regard is both positive and negative. On the positive side, the Puritans emphasized that morally we have to be concerned about a common good. However, as Gorski points out, on the negative side, the Puritans articulated conquest and apocalyptic narratives. First, the Puritans saw the New World as a promised land, but saw the Indians as Canaanites who were to be removed (Gorski 2021). As much as evangelicals might claim the Puritans were a vanguard for religious liberty, they constructed exclusionary communities who persecuted nonconformists and witches (Fea 2018, 76-84). Second, as articulated by Cotton Mather, was the conviction that the New World "would be the central battlefield in the final struggle between good and evil" (Gorski 2021). Third, in their quest to "redeem the nations of the world," the Puritans set in motion the notion of American exceptionalism that will become in the 19th century, Manifest Destiny (Hogue 2018, 84-85). A fear of the "other," thus, is very much inscribed in these "pure" undertakings that will ultimately inform the politics of the Christian Right. This "us v.

them" moral binary was very much at work in the Capital insurrection on 6 January 2021.

In turn, the Great Awakenings of the 18th and 19th centuries are pivotal in branding evangelicalism in both style and substance. On an institutional level, the initial Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s challenged the more formal hierarchical ecclesiastical structures of the Anglican among other traditions. Hence there is a very democratic spirit in the Great Awakening that both challenged "established religions" and put forth religious freedom, that in turn would lead to the fight for political independence in the American Revolution (Corbett 1999, 46). These revivals also placed great stress upon holiness as a voluntary realization and thus, conversion was a choice made by an individual. This movement emphasized the spirituality of the common person against that of the elite – a sense of individual agency essential for a democratic polity (Weaver 2009, 113-14; Corbett 1999, 46). This above-mentioned conversion also was a highly emotional experience through which a person achieved a new birth and ultimately chose Christ as their personal savior.

In turn, the frontier dynamic of the Great Awakenings, especially in the second one in the 1820s and 1830s, manifested a populist critique of ecclesiastical elites. In many respects, this critique anticipates the contemporary red state – blue state divide. Finally, the millennial aspect of the Great Awakenings meant that one was called to realize the kingdom of God. One was called to not just seek conversions, but bring about "a better social order" (Corbett 1997, 46). As Randall Balmer points out, evangelicals took from the Puritans an emphasis on piety, from Scots-Irish Presbyterianism an emphasis on doctrine, and from European pietists the demonstration of a warm-hearted faith. Living by the authoritative Bible, being born again, and evangelizing the Christian message became staples of evangelical Christianity (Balmer 2020, 79).

Over the next two and half centuries, this fusion of piety, doctrinal purity, and social engagement led to both progressive and conservative social movements. On the positive side, the evangelical concern for community life established crusades for "public education, prison reform, advocacy for the poor, and the rights of women" (Balmer 2020, 80). Charles Finney, a key figure in the Second Great Awakening, saw social responsibility as a "necessary corollary of faith" (Balmer 2020, 80). He was very leery of the impact of capitalism.

In turn, the evangelical heritage was deeply involved in the abolitionist movement and then at the turn of the twentieth century, was ingrained in the push for Prohibition. The latter involvement was not only because of the evil of drink but because of the abuse that women and children endured at the hands of their inebriated husbands/fathers. Without a doubt, the evangelical zeal for social reform influenced the social ministry of Jane Addams at Hull House. In turn, the Social Gospel Movement of Addams's period was influenced by evangelical thinking in addition to liberal Protestantism. Evangelicals, especially in the nineteenth century "took special notice of those on the margins of society – women, slaves, the victims of war and abuse, prisoners, the poor – those Jesus called 'the least of these'" (Balmer 2020, 83).

On the other hand, there are very negative examples of this evangelical fusion of piety, doctrine, and zealous social reform. The fear of a misbegotten

America, has had a long history in the history of U.S. evangelism. The First Great Awakening targeted both Catholics and Jews as embodiments of evil. Specifically, Jonathan Edwards, one of the leading preachers of the revival, projected the collapse of Islam and Christianity (Kidd 2010, 47). In turn, moving forward to the U.S. founding, evangelicals characterized the deist ideas of Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine as perpetrating "godlessness" and "'infidelity'" that was deluging our land" (Fea 2018, 96-97).

In the 19th century, the Second Great Awakening, renewed evangelical fervor through camp meetings as the settlers spread westward across the United States. At the same time, evangelical rhetoric vilified the growing number of Irish and German Catholic immigrants. As John Fea points out, Lyman Beecher's "Plea for the West" captures both dimensions of this Awakening. On the one hand, Beecher opposed slavery and also called for the expansion of women's roles in public life. On the other hand, when articulating the intelligence, moral principles, and patriotism necessary to sustain the U.S. political compact, he referred to "immigrants 'wielded by sinister design'" – a thinly veiled riposte against the Roman Catholic Church (Fea 2018, 88). In turn, the Know-Nothing movement in the 1840s and 1850s became a secular version of the evangelical oppositions to Catholic immigrants and propagated the notion of the United States being a Protestant nation (Fea 2018, 91-92).

In terms of race, Southern evangelicals found it easy to justify slavery and the South's social order based on the Bible (Stewart 2019. 105-11). Even Finney supported segregation and race-based prejudice (Jones 2020, 81). Indeed, post-Civil War evangelical culture was integral to the reestablishment of White supremacy across the South – the so-called "lost cause." A racist civil religion emerged. Statues rose to confederate heroes such as Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Jefferson Davis. Catechisms were distributed on slavery. The Confederate Battle Flag became a symbol of a civil religion steeped in religious nationalism. The Ku Klux Klan, both in its inception circa 1870 and its reconstitution in the 1920s has always seen itself as a Christian organization. The Klan's virulent opposition to Blacks, Catholics, Jews, and non-Christian immigrants is grounded in the evangelical notion of sustaining a Christian nation against the infidel (Fea 2018, 107-08).

In turn, the rise or fundamentalist preachers in 1920s, who railed against modernist interpretation of scripture as propagating heresy and skepticism defended the Klan's campaign against "African Americans, Catholics, Jews, and immigrants" (Fea 2018, 108). They also strongly opposed the presidential candidacy of the Catholic Al Smith in the 1920s, reigniting the anti-Catholic sentiment of the Know Nothing movement decades earlier. Fea points out the Texas fundamentalist, J. Frank Norris, "connected Smith's campaign to satanic forces" (Fea 2018, 107).

No doubt, the issues of doctrinal purity and piety in evangelical action led the fundamentalists to be active in the Prohibition movement on basis of being opposed to sinful activities. However, this moral zeal, on the intellectual level, let them to create an alternative higher education system opposed to the lure of secularism, especially found in modernist theological criticism and the teaching of evolution: "Bible colleges and other fundamentalist education institutions shielded the faithful from secular temptations that had the potential to undermine their faith" (Fea 2018, 110). Picking up on the religious nationalist stress apocalyptic struggle,

fundamentalist preachers sought "to scare the hell out of their followers with conspiracy theories about Catholics, communists, modernists, and … isms of all kind" (Fea 2018, 111).

Finally, although perhaps not directly attributable to evangelicalism and fundamentalism, there are other political acts in U.S. history that fit into the narratives on pursuing the promised land and engaging in armed struggle against those who are evil. Andrew Jackson removed the Cherokee in the southeastern United States in the Veil of Tears march. The American First Committee in the 1940s, which came out of Yale University, manifested "racism and anti-Semitism" (Fea 2018, 171). The Eisenhower Administration in the 1950s conducted Operation Wetback which deported countless Mexicans, who a decade earlier during World War II, were given jobs in factories and fields to replace Americans serving in the armed forces. In turn, Richard Nixon in 1968 picked up on George Wallace's segregationist rhetoric by pledging to institute law and order to quell urban riots committed largely by African Americans. Finally, Ronald Reagan enticed white working-class voters with his appeal to pursuing the Puritan's "city on the hill" and his resistance to the rising tide of identity politics movements. All of these examples play into the fear conjured by the evangelical and fundamentalist triad of piety, doctrinal purity, and crusading zeal. When Donald Trump vilified Latin American and Muslim immigrants, he was tapping into a deep vein of fear and xenophobia in the U.S. religious nationalist tradition.

As accented in the previous section, the Christian Right has suggested that Donald Trump, despite his personal drawbacks, had been hailed by God to rebuild the U.S. infrastructure and to protect the United States from its enemies in desperate times. Indeed, much of President Trump's rhetoric, both before and after his 2016 election, "trumpeted" an American national identity that was supposedly under threat from leftist enemies within and immigrants and aliens without (Fea 2018, 40-41).

Ultimately, rendering the impact of the Christian Right on U.S. politics since World War II as simply due to patriarchalism, reactions to progressive public polices, political ideology, or as a form of cultural nationalism is incomplete. Without a doubt, patriarchy, nativist sentiments, and reactions to progressive identity politics are very much part of the support the Christian Right has given Donald Trump, his questionable moral life notwithstanding. Still, beneath these explanations remains the key religious nationalist narratives of the pursuit of the promised land through conquest and the apocalyptic rendering of the bloody struggle between good and evil that goes all the way back to the spiritual norms propagated by the Puritans and in the evangelical Great Awakenings. Grasping this history provides normative depth to the more contemporary studies by Du Mez, Posner, Stewart, and Whitehead and Perry, among others and conversely, these more contemporary studies reveal the challenges Christian nationalism, in its pursuit of power politics, poses to U.S. democracy.

The Secularized Great Awakening

As much as theological narratives and historical precedents do inform the Christian Right's support for Donald Trump, there are at least two dimensions in

which Trump has secularized this heritage. First, his "lost America" narrative, a recasting of the Southern "lost cause," has played very well among those people who feel that the country has left them behind. In the 2016 Republican primaries, as Timothy Carney points out, Trump did well in conservative counties where the local economies and civil societies had collapsed. Beyond just people losing their livelihoods, the intermediate associations that had given people in these regions a sense of place and acceptance – what Robert Putnam terms the pursuit of social capital - had consequently disappeared. Many of these people were no longer even going to church. Instead, their political outlooks became shaped by conservative talk radio, television outlets, and internet sites. By contrast, where local economies and civil societies were thriving, such as Chevy Chase, Maryland, voters in the Republican primaries opted for John Kasich or Marco Rubio, not Trump (Carney 2019, 1-14). Of course, even in these prosperous counties, come the 2016 general election, many of these same voters shifted their support to Trump.

Whether justified or not, in places where the economic and civil society had collapsed, people saw themselves as victims and were receptive to rhetoric about the supposed internal and external "others" who were destructive of what they saw as the American way of life – a mantra that I have shown goes back at least to the First Great Awakening, if not the Puritans. Hence, these potential voters were drawn to someone who claimed that they would make America great again. Trump quite effectively has spun this contorted nostalgia to his advantage: "a masquerade of history…that is concerned with the past, but in a self-absorbed way, free of any concern with facts" (Snyder 2017, 121). He has been a master at manipulating people's fears, angers, and resentments (Du Mez 2020, 249; Escobar 2020, 106). Ironically, people who had fallen way from church life due to the decline of local community institutions have found religion again, but this time in a civil religion that is well steeped in religious nationalism.

This twenty-first century articulation of "going to church" brings me to my second point. Finney, in the Second Great Awakening, when he turned from being a lawyer to being an evangelist, was moved by and learned from the organizing techniques of politicians (Weaver 2009, 140). Trump, on the other hand, has reversed the process. Instead of political techniques influencing religious evangelization, Trump took the dynamics of televangelists, pioneered by Billy Graham and others in the 20th century, and employed them effectively for political theatre: "his rallies were more like tent revivals, his speeches like a televangelist's promise of miraculous success than considered policy prescription" (Posner 2020, 14). Moreover, the aura, much manufactured, of Trump's financial success – his private jet and his properties such as Mar-a- Lago – resembles the lifestyle of those preachers pushing the prosperity gospel. His connection with Paula White is not mere coincidence. The personal reinforcement Trump has given to people at his rallies has a parallel to the hope prosperity gospel preachers give to their following (Posner 2020,12-16).

Whether by design or not, a Trump rally is a secularized version of evangelical camp meetings from the Great Awakening heritage both in style and content. When disaffected people, as least in their own eyes, attend a Trump rally, they are essentially going to a surrogate church. His evangelization is directed at the common person, especially of white background, who has felt left behind and

disparaged in the 21st century. The raucous and fervent character of many of his rallies provide a highly-charged emotional experience for the participants. He provides a congregational space where they feel they have a home and can recommit themselves – a conversion of sorts – to an America in which white dominance and social conservatism reemerge. The rallies provide a secularized spirituality of the heart rather than a theological spirituality of the head.

In content, just as past great awakenings sought to galvanize spiritual renewals by railing against church elites, Trump has used his "pulpit" to rail against the liberal political socio-economic elites that comprise the mainstream media and their identity politics agendas. These "sermons" resonate among those who either alienated by or have been subjected to political correctness. As previously illustrated, through U.S. history, those of the religious nationalist persuasion see themselves fighting a holy war against infidels who supposedly threaten the moral order – be it indigenous tribes, Catholics during the Know Nothing period, or African-Americans during slavery, segregation, and post-segregation. When Trump has vilified Mexican and Muslim immigrants or criticized Black Lives Matter protestors, but not right-wing militias such as the Proud Boys, he has played very much into this tradition that disparages the racial, ethnic, or religious others that supposedly threaten the nation's well-being. Seen against this backdrop, the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on 6 January 2021 immediately following a Trump rally was a secular crusade animated by the symbols and themes of religious nationalism, including the Confederate Battle Flag.

Unfortunately, Trump, enabled by Christian Right leaders, has promoted a strident civil religion that plays upon the fears of his followers, rejects religious and cultural diversity, and promotes a white nationalism, if not supremacy. Unabashedly, he has mined the politics of fear that has always been in the history of the religious nationalism so as to propagate an us v. them politics that is ultimately divisive and certainly in tension with a Christian sense of charity.

Ultimately in this bargain, the Christian right has settled for "the things of this world, rather than the things of Christ" (Howe 2019, 161). At least in rhetoric, Trump promised a prosperous economy and a sense of security for believers (Howe 2019, 16). But he provided this sense of well-being to his "congregation members" through vilifying other peoples, races, and faiths. Evangelicals who supported Trump have essentially soiled their souls in this this partial gaining of worldly power: "Bitterness over faith, Vengeance over justice. The world over the soul" (Howe 2019, 243).

The conventional fear regarding religious nationalism is that is that it will transform a democracy into a rigid theocracy. Ironically, Trump has done the opposite: he has taken the ambiance and content of the Great Awakenings and secularized it. Not only have many evangelical leaders been lured by access to political power, in the process, they have become enablers of a religious nationalism that continues to find undesirable "others" to castigate in the name of spiritual renewal. Trump's civil religion is clearly antithetical to a genuinely pluralistic democratic society in which an increasing number of religious and secular moral heritages are able both to practice their beliefs and to contribute to charting a common good for society.

Conclusion

To summarize, whereas many have asked how could leaders of the Christian Right get behind a leader of such moral ill-repute such as Donald Trump, I have shown that Trump more so than his Republican predecessors delivered on many of the issues on the Christian Right's agenda in the contemporary culture wars. Other studies have rendered the Christian Right support for Trump as primarily a projection of male dominance, ethnocultural ideology, or simply an opposition to issues such as affirmative action and gay marriages. I contend each of these arguments, although valuable, too easily overlook that the Christian Right's engagement in the contemporary culture wars can be traced to a longstanding rejection of elites and opposition to some racial/ethnic/religious demonic other in the Great Awakening heritage. Trump's genius has been to tap into this normative vein and give it a secular rendering both in affect – his rallies – and in effect – his nativist policies and practices.

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How Individuals see Religion in Japanese Animation: The Introduction of a New Theoretical Framework for Understanding How Audiences View Religion

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Abstract

Can individuals see religion in anime (?); some scholars say yes, and some answer no with few experiments dealing with similar social domains related to race, gender, and ethnicity; the domain is still open for much debate and argumentation. However, a more pressing issue that this paper will give explication to is that of possible cessation of personal religious identity of audience members engaged in with the entertainment medium of anime. I believe that the issue is one that is rooted in the signified and signifier, the two parts of signs that are utilized to construct not only the sign but also its meaning. I will argue in this paper that individuals, when engaging with media - for which I will focus on anime – the signified meaning of a sign is suspended for what is known in that world, in opposition to the natural, physical, or real world. This I will argue, presents the viewer with a presentation of the material inside the anime that the viewer must navigate with very little if none reference back to the real world.

Introduction

In 2020 the anime ID:Invaded was released. The show was originally created by Ōtarō Maijō; the story follows an ex-detective and murder named Akihito Narihisago as he helps a politically independent and secretive organization called the Kura, which is dedicated to solving homicides. The premise of the show centers around the use of a system of machines called the mizuhanome that gathers "cognition particles" of murders collected from Kura's (a governmental agency) field analysts' and forms an id well (i.e., a representative world based on the murder's unconscious), which Narihisago and the other characters can dive into. Once inside an id well, Narihisago and the other characters who undergo the same dive lose the memories of who they were before the dive; however, still each character will have a name, and they will know they are the great detective and they are in the world to solve the big mystery.

Complementary to what is shown in ID:Invaded, in addition to my reading on the subject of the phenomenon of mukokuseki, I am motivated to ask whether individuals voluntarily surrender their identity (including religious identity) when viewing media with a particular emphasis on Japanese animation. This is a non-existent research topic located in the intersection between the academic disciplines of the studies that surround psychology, sociology, and film, cinema, television, and other media that is often known under the title of media studies. And, although this is a non-existent researched topic, there are important implications for research into this topic. For example, explications such as the one presently being undertaken could be utilized to reinvigorate, design, and specially tailor media to or for different national and international audiences. And the media I am targeting the current explication at is anime; in her 2005 edition of the book,

Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation, the scholar Susan Napier notes that anime are self-contained within non-referential worlds (Napier, 2005, p. XII). Napier (2005, p. XII) argues this is one feature of anime that makes animation an extremely important medium of the twentieth century. These non-referential worlds, as Napier put them, are a self-contained cultural construction that sociologist Georg Simmel calls a "world" (2005, p. XII; 2011, p. xvii). According to Simmel, worlds are another aspect of culture beyond objective and subjective culture made by the spirit of men and operate as legitimate forms of organizing information (2011, p. xvii).

Simmel (2011) has noted that worlds slowly come into existence through the interaction of different specific ways of experiencing: Four of these specific ways that are mentioned in his book, *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*, are the religious, the practical, the aesthetic, the scientific (p. xvii). Worlds formed from specific ways of experience operate as socio-cultural mechanisms which organize information such as values, art, religion, theoretical knowledge (Simmel, 2011, p. xvii).

Antonia Levi notes in the chapter titled *The Americanization of Anime and Manga: Negotiating Popular Culture* that the "worlds" of anime are encoded by the creator's according to values that are drawn from social and economic realities (2006, p. 43-44). As the viewer reads the anime, they act as a decoder of information of those encoded values; however, the viewer may be using a different framework that is complete with a different set of values and view of reality (Levi, 2006, p. 44). This complex process between encoding and decoding is one that is always active; the process is used to produce negotiated messages between what values are encoded into the animation and how those values might be translated from the original by the viewer watching (Levi, 2006, p. 44).

Moreover, since the late 1990s, there has been scholarly discussion over the impact of transnationalization or globalization on anime. A prominent voice in the field of study Koichi Iwabuchi in 1998, wrote an article entitled, *Marketing 'Japan': Japanese Cultural Presence Under a Global Gaze*, in which he discusses strategies of the cultural industry of Japan in addition to cultural industries of other local Asian countries. Iwabuchi (1998) notes the appearance of a "global gaze" that has arisen over Japan after the Western gaze has disappeared. This gaze is what he believes to be causing the exportation of Japanese cultural products to become odorless as a result (Iwabuchi,1998). For anime, this trend is no different as Iwabuchi described a response from Mamoru Oshii, a famed animation director who said that when drawing characters, Japanese manga and animation artists unconsciously choose to render them with unrealistic Japanese features (Iwabuchi, 1998, p. 167). And even though these artists do not realistically conformation their characters to realistic standards through conscious means; Iwabuchi (1998) notes that anime industries have their mind in the global market where the industries will sell Japanese exports with the effect of being culturally odorless harnessed to become an advantage when selling goods such as Japanese animation.

In this paper, I will be arguing that individuals engaging in the medium of anime tend to experience a split between the signifier of the real physical world and the signified from the world of the specific anime. The shift or split between the signifier and signified, I will argue, happens because the language of the real physical world and the anime are only observed to share the signifier but not the signified of the specific sign.

Literature Review

What is Anime?

Anime comes about from the Japanese pronunciation of the English word animation (Galbraith, 2009). In, *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's Guide to the Subculture of Cool Japan,* scholar Patrick Galbraith defines anime as "Japanese cartoons … Japanese animated television series or animated" (2009). Although, in Japan, the term is more defined as animated shows on television or aimed at children (Galbraith, 2009). In scholarly and academic circles, there has been some argumentation over the concept of anime (Gan, 2009; Napier, 2005; Suan, 2017). This argumentation mainly stems from two major discourses within the study of anime: The first discourse revolves around questioning the ontology of anime, what does it mean to be anime (Napier, 2005; Suan, 2017), and the second discourse explores the "nationality" of the medium, is anime Japanese (Gan, 2008).

In her paper *Anime's Performativity: Diversity through Conventionality in a Global Media-Form,* Suan (2017) argues anime as a product is diverse in regards to the many different styles of animation, voice actors, narratives, and genre. Although, at the same time, anime can be argued to express notes of similarity through the appearance of recurrent trends in anime (p. 63). This is because the single category label of anime is creating a reinforcing cycle that is used to sell anime as anime, thus leading to constructed stylistic boundaries for the medium (Suan, 2017, p, 63). Moreover, the philosopher Azuma Hiroki has argued that Japanese anime went through three different periods of ideologue located in Japan's postwar era (Hiroki, 2007, p. 178). First stage: 1945 to 1970: Stage in which overarching unities such as grand narratives, ideals, society, and the nation still functioned; this stage is known as the "age of ideals" or can also be known as prepostmodern (Hiroki, 2007, p. 178). Second stage:1970 to 1995: Stage in which the overarching narratives known as grand narratives have started to deteriorate and breakdown, this stage is known as the "age of fiction," or Hiroki also notes that the age of fiction can be understood as the "first stage of postmodernism" (2007, p. 178). Third stage: 1995 to present: Stage in which all overarching narratives or grand narratives have completely disappeared; according to Hiroki, this stage is known as the "second stage of postmodernism" (2007, p. 178).

The media scholar, Thomas Lamarre, stated in a 2002 article titled "Introduction: Between Cinema and Anime" that any attempt made by scholars and academics to theorize about anime will have to face its relations with cell animation, cinema, and digital animation (p. 184). Alternatively, anime or animation, according to the film director and producer Ueno Toshiya can be perceived as a alternative world or a form of reality. Moreover, the reality of anime is what the Japanese literary scholar Susan Napier notes as a important feature of anime, as the reality of an anime she argues, is nonreferential to the reality outside of the anime itself (2005a; b). Levi (2013) has discussed that anime fans typically do not care for knowing about the history and culture of Japan and do not typically associate anime with the state. Levi (2013) has noted that anime fans tend to care more about the storytelling elements of the anime itself rather than the story elements behind it. Moreover, as was argued in "The Sweet Smell of Japan: Anime, Manga, and Japan in North America," there is a possibility that fans of anime have a hard

time understanding what is Japanese and what is not in the medium due to the multiple cultural influences that have shaped the medium over time (Levi, 2013).

Mukokuseki, Cultural Odor, and Cultural Products

Anime is noted by several scholars, including Dana Fennell, Ana S.Q. Liberato, Bridget Hayden, & Yuko Fujino (see: Consuming Anime, (2012)); Levi Antonia (see: Anime, manga, and Japan in North America, (2013)); *Koichi Iwabuchi (see: Recentering Globalization (2002)); and* Susan Napier (see: *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation (2005a))* to be mukokuseki (the term translates to statelessness or nationalessness: Iwabuchi (1998)). As scholar Koichi Iwabuchi discusses in his article "Marketing 'Japan': Japanese Cultural Presence Under a Global Gaze," the concept of Mukokuseki is deeply connected to the idea of cultural odour (1998). Cultural odour is defined by Iwabuchi as "the way in which the cultural presence of a country of origin and images or ideas of its way of life are positively associated with a particular product in the consumption process" (1998, p. 166). Mukokuseki is the idea that certain types of cultural goods are culturally odourless (Iwabuchi, 1998). Iwabuchi termed these items the three C's: Consumer technologies, comics/cartoons, and computer/video games (1998, p. 166). Regarding academic scholarship surrounding mukokuseki, nearly all of the literature has been done in relation to the second category of Iwabuchi's comics/cartoons. Most of the literature consists of writing on the topic of anime and mukokuseki's effect on the medium and its possible effects on the audience (cf. Yano, 2013). For example, Levi (2013) discusses the point that the audience because of the structure of anime and the multiple points of influence that fans of the medium might have trouble recognizing what is Japanese and what is not and might proceed to view the narrative as being separate from that of Japan. Conversely, Iwabuchi has been argued that mukokuseki could be a consequence of the global international market and the construction of anime through transnational supply chains (1998). Fennell et al. (2012, p. 441-442) briefly discuss in their article that a number of scholars contend that the elimination of cultural odour that causes a cultural product to become mukokuseki is caused by either cultural editing or mistranslation or a combination of both.

Words, Meaning, Communication, and Identity

Words are a type of sign that is represented by a relationship between the physical object or word called the signifier and the mental concept known as the signified (Gorham, 1999). According to the 20th-century anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss, signs like words gain their meaning from the relationship between seemingly independent terms which are related to each other in a system (1963, p.33). Although not all systems are the same as between systems, there are different meanings that can be encompassed in the same words; the scholar Antonia Levi explains this in her 2006 essay "The Americanization of Anime and Manga: Negotiating Popular Culture" as follows:

> What I saw as a failure to appreciate the uniquely Japanese aspects of anime and manga can just as easily be seen as an example of the type of negotiated

> understandings that result from encoding and decoding. This assumes that meanings and messages in popular culture texts are not predictable or simple transmissions but are encoded by the creator(s) according to values drawn from their social and economic realities, and then decoded by an audience that may be operating within a framework of very different values and realities. The result is a negotiated message or meaning (p.44).

The sociologist and cultural scholar Stuart Hall in his essay titled "Encoding/Decoding," argued that much like Levi (2006, p. 44), individuals do not passively consume media texts but instead encode and decode them (2010). Hall (2010) writes that

> We say "dominant," not "determined," because it is always possible to order, classify, assign, and decode an event within more than one "mapping." But we say "dominant" because there exists a pattern of "preferred readings," and these mappings both have the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them and have themselves become institutionalized. The domains of "preferred mappings" have the whole social order embedded in them as a set of meanings: practices and beliefs, the everyday knowledge of social structures, of "how things work for all practical purposes in this culture," the rank order of power and interest, and a structure of legitimations and sanctions. (p. 35)

Beyond the dominant code, which is encoded and decoded using the dominant ideology code presented in the text's creation there is the negotiated code where the audience takes their own code and negotiates their own code with the dominant ideology of the society. Levi (2006) speaks in her text about how audience members tend to use what Stuart Hall (2010) referred to as the "negotiated code" where the individual has knowledge of the dominant ideology present in a present text; however, at the same time, the individual finds flaws and caveats in the dominant ideology and makes adjustments to the dominant ideology in response (Hall, 2010). In anime, negotiated codes are important to consider, as Antonia Levi noted in the text above, because of the socio-cultural change between the producer and consumer (e.g., Japan (producer) to United States (consumer)), which could lead to the occurrence of the possible problem of mistranslation or misinterpretation or the possible alienation of the individual from the original meaning of the animated text.

This encoding/decoding process that results in the creation of negotiated codes ultimately results in different negotiated codes for every individual because the process of encoding/decoding is based in part on the individuals' identity and its location in the society at large. In regarding the identity, it is important to remember that the individuals' identity under the understanding given by the sociological paradigm of symbolic interactionism is along with the individuals' self shaped through the past, present, and future interactions with other individuals and available symbols in a certain socio-cultural environment (Sandstrom, Martin, & Fine, 2006). Through these interactions, individuals interpret the meaning of the social reality around themselves and form an understanding of themselves in the process.

Analysis

Who are we as individuals when we watch media? Are we the person watching the media? Or, are we the character we are watching in the media we are consuming? Moreover, when individuals are absorbed in the media they watch, do they hear the same words with the meanings attached? I believe this is not the case.

I rest my case on the arbitrary relationship that exists with all linguistic semiotics, the signified and the signifier. I make the claim that although the words expressed by the signifier (form) are the same within the media as outside, the signified (meaning) is different and has to be learned relative to the media being consumed. Let me give a simple example to prove my point: In the physical world (outside the media), we have an internal basis for knowledge about what a criminal is. However, in shows like Law & Order, CSI, Criminal Minds, and The Glades, the definition of criminal is formed throughout the original episode and is given some flexibility to change throughout the progressing episodes; but the main point is that the show's definition of criminal that it forms may not be the same as the individual's socially learned, constructed, and interpreted, signified meaning of criminal, when attached to the signifier criminal.

Although opposed to American crime shows, anime is a more complicated form of media that is sustained through animation and imagination rather than acting and live-action portrayal. Scholar of Japanese literature Susan Napier in her 2005 book *From Akira to Howl's Moving Castle: Exploring Contemporary Japanese Animation,* argues that anime encompasses a sixth landscape beyond the five scapes argued by Arjun Appadurai in his book Modernity at Large, called the fantasyscape (p. 293). And, in the 2005 article, "The Problem of Existence in Anime," Napier noted:

> [W]hen we watch a live action film, we have certain expectations that actions will progress in a "normal" format. For example, if I throw a ball, I expect it to follow a reasonable trajectory, say, from one end of the room to another, and then to bounce back. In animation, however, we might throw a ball and anything could happen. The ball might triple in size, turn from blue to red, or burst into a bouquet of flowers. Animation challenges our expectations of what is "normal" or "real," bringing up material that may seem more appropriately housed in dreams or the unconscious, and this can be a deeply disconcerting process. (p. 73)

Susan Napier terms anime as a non-representational medium which, as she discusses in the above text, is a characteristic that allows anime to create and construct unique non-representational worlds for individual audience members to explore and escape reality. I believe it is here where the distinction between the signified and signifiers of the text and those present outside the media becomes clear and physical as Napier (2005, p. 73) again notes: '" [W]hen we watch a live action film, we have certain expectations that actions will progress in a "normal" format . . . if I throw a ball, I expect it to follow a reasonable trajectory, say, from one end of the room to another, and then to bounce back.'. . . 'In animation, however, we might throw a ball and anything could happen. The ball might triple in size, turn from blue to red, or burst into a bouquet of flowers.'" We can see from the example given by Susan Napier that there are two different sets of expectations, the expectation that comes from real-world environments found in

the live-action movie and the expectation found in the imagination of animated series (the first set of expectations are considered natural and the second set are considered unnatural). And, we can see in the different expectations constructed through each type of media, live-action and animation respectively, that the signified and the signifier split in much the same way, with the live-action film, however, the split is less distant than with animation, which as a textual medium can produce huge shifts in meaning between the signified and signifiers of the text. This shift happens because live-action film is related closer to the reality the text in question is based on conversely, the animated text is based more in the imagination of the author than that of any reality or realistic setting and allows for the meaning constructed between the signifier and the signified to have a larger split between both parts of the signs that make up the text but additionally, it allows the meaning of the text to experience a greater shift between the meaning interpreted or constructed inside the animated media-based text and outside.

One problem that could be argued from this is that while the expectations produced animated media such as anime may produce the fantasyscape as argued by Napier (2005, p. 293) that allows audience members to escape the real world (cf. Oatley, 2012); the huge shift experienced between what we understand as the physical word such as "criminal" for example and what the audience understands to be the meaning from the signifier sign "criminal" itself creates the need for the audience to inhabit not just the world but the characters as well. In this process, where do we go, where does our identity go when we inhabit the world, and moreover, the character. Furthermore, where does the religious part of our identity go when we are absorbed into the show, in addition to when the audience takes the perspective of the character.

By taking another character's perspective, we as the audience are able to learn the language of the world, and what purpose everything has in the world we are inhabiting as the character themselves as they are interacting with mechanisms of the world in question. For example, in the anime *Law of Ueki*, in the first episode, the show presents the audience with the main character Ueki and the main device of the show Ueki's power to turn trash into trees and while the word trash is a common word in the English language in Law of Ueki the signifier word trash takes on a new connotated signified meaning which the audience encounters as Ueki turns a piece of trash into a tree for the first time. Though, at the same time, the narrative of the show also shapes the definition of what trash is and gives the signified a set of forms from which Ueki's power can be activated that the audience will understand. These integral pieces of the world come to form through the interaction between the characters and the world the characters are set in and form the audience's knowledge of what is going on in the series.

Mukokuseki and anime's perceived lack of cultural odour additionally affects both the split and shift in meaning maintained by the signified and signifier along with the expectations of the animated medium. The part of the anime that is affected most by mukokuseki and the lack of cultural odour is the fictional component of the medium. The fictional component is fiction which by natural design is one level removed from the accurate depiction of the reality experienced in the physical world outside of the fictional media. The ability of fiction to be removed by some measure from the physical reality known by the audience is what starts the split between the signifier and the signified. As was noted prior in this essay, the world of a particular fiction is replete with the same words we know outside the media; however, the removal of the particular fiction from

physical reality creates the necessary task of the audience to learn the language of the world which the characters interact with and which gives meaning to the language of the particular fiction. The component of animation in the medium of animation can be thought of as a second level removed from the reality experienced outside the media being viewed. The second level adds abstraction to constructed fictional universes; but, at the same time, goes beyond what is presented in the fiction by presenting the narrative device of possibility into the structure of the work itself. The addition of animation to that of fiction presents the audience with a larger shift in meaning between the signified and the signifier due to the multiple possibilities in meaning that could arise from a particular action in an animated series as the actions of animation itself presents few limitations in the environment of the overall narrative due to the flexible nature of the medium. Normally live-action films have limitations on the performance of actions in relation to a particular narrative which relays certain expectations about the film to the audience; however, the expectations are harder to relay in animation where the limitations are almost non-existent, leaving the narrative to create arbitrary limitations for the animation itself. The two levels mentioned directly above are easier to spot in animation because of the mitigation or removal of national, bodily, and racial features along with the presumed lack of cultural odour in the medium (i.e., [T]he cultural presence of a country of origin and images or ideas of its way of life are positively associated with a particular product in the consumption process (Iwabuchi, 1998, p. 166)).

In the last part of this essay, I want to return to the question of where does our identity go when we inhabit the world and, moreover, enter the character to take their perspective. And furthermore, where does the religious part of our identity go when we are absorbed into the show and its characters. Or, a more important question is when we do enter into another character do the audience retain their religion, or do they let go in order to understand the world the audience is in and the characters that surround them. I think that the audience does let go of their religion as a part of their larger identity because the construction of media, which includes in our case fictional media is built with an overall implicit rule set that forms the media in a certain manner that allows audience members to recognize the media in question and how to engage with it in turn. The form of media being engaged with whether it is print, music, television, internet, ultimately molds the rules for each type of media; but the rules are generally the same for works placed in the genre of fiction. These rules aid the audience in being absorbed into the world they are engaged by first realizing that the media is fiction and not, not-fiction. Second, because fiction presents the audience with a different world, reality, or place where information is processed differently, the audience must learn the meaning of the language of the world as the language of the world is the primary tool that the audience uses to navigate the world as a whole – although, first the audience must realize that the world they are experiencing is fiction and not reality. Third, as the audience descends deeper into the reality of the media world being consumed, the meaning or signified of the language presented outside the media is routinely exchanged for language inside the world of the media itself. Fourth, the characters and their interactions with the world of the media being consumed and its language are fundamental in constructing the narrative so in order to better understand the narrative being constructed needs to take on the perspective character's in the particular world thus perhaps leaving their own perspective while inside the media. I think these four steps most accurately represent the loss of identity of the

audience. Words are used to construct and their meanings are meant to give substance; words ultimately construct the identity through social interaction and meaning gives substance to the identity. However, as shown in these rudimentary and basic four steps understanding the media in question requires us as the audience to take in the words, the signifier, and their shifted meanings, the signified, presented in the universe of the media and understand ourselves, the world, and the characters as the shifter meanings of the presented words.

Biographical Note

Nicholas Elliott graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University in 2018 with a Bachelor's Degree in multidisciplinary degree concentrated in psychology, sociology, and anthropology; and in 2020 graduated with a Master's Degree in the concentrations of Psychology and International Studies from the University of St. Thomas. Currently, Nicholas is a Ph.D. student in the Communication Studies program located in the school of Communication where his academic interests are related to anime, mukokuseki and cultural odour, video games, and webtoons.

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