
AUTHOR Michael Alan Kagan

TITLE "A Critique of Polydoxy as an Interpretation of Reform Judaism"

TYPE OF THESIS: Ph.D. [] D.H.L. [] Rabbinic [X]
Master's [] Prize Essay []

1. May circulate ☒) Not necessary
2. Is restricted ☐ for _____ years.) for Ph.D. thesis

Note: The Library shall respect restrictions placed on theses or prize essays for a period of no more than ten years.

I understand that the Library may make a photocopy of my thesis for security purposes.

3. The Library may sell photocopies of my thesis. yes no

February 3, 1981
Date

Michael Alan Kagan
Signature of Author

Library
Record

Microfilmed _____
Date _____

Signature of Library Staff Member

A CRITIQUE OF POLYDOXY AS AN
INTERPRETATION OF REFORM JUDAISM

MICHAEL ALAN KAGAN

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College—
Jewish Institute of Religion

1981

Referee, Prof. Alvin J. Reines

DIGEST

The Introduction provides information concerning the definitions and assumptions which were required for the task of performing this philosophic critique of Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism.

Chapter One consists of an explication of Polydoxy as a philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism. It treats of the concept "polydoxy" as well as Polydoxy's epistemology, metapsychology, concept of religion, concept of authority, the implications of a polydox interpretation on the theology, liturgy and ritual, and education in a Reform Judaism so interpreted.

In Chapter Two, some alternative views concerning the interpretation of Reform Judaism have been abstracted for consideration and discussion. These include emergent, incomplete, and traditional views of Reform Judaism.

Chapter Three is concerned with some of the previous critiques of Polydoxy. Four such critiques were presented, considered, and analyzed.

Chapter Four distinguished between Essential and Reinesian Polydoxy and provided a critique of both in terms of their basic assumptions, according to the criteria of adequacy, coherence, and tenability which were explicated in the Introduction. This chapter concerns itself with the critique of Essential Polydoxy,

the interpretation of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy, and a critical analysis of Polydoxy focusing on its epistemology, metapsychology, concept of religion, authority and freedom, as well as the implications of such an interpretation on theology, liturgy and ritual, and education in a Reform Judaism thus interpreted. It also discussed other concerns which emerged from the previous critiques of Polydoxy.

The Epilogue concerns itself with the essential argument and thrust of the thesis in retrospect.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Sara.

"Enjoy life with the wife whom thou lovest
all the days of the life of thy vanity, which
He hath given thee under the sun, all the
days of thy vanity; for that is thy portion
in life, and in the labour wherein thou
labourest under the sun."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are owed to my teachers, living and dead; those with whom I fought in person, and those with whom I struggle in books. These include Harry Machin, Paul Illert, Howard Gambel, Tsvi Blanchard, Walter Kaufmann . . .

No list of teachers to whom I owe gratitude would be complete without the name of Alvin J. Reines, my thesis advisor, whose concern for truth helped make this endeavor possible. I shall never know the debt I owe to his teachers, advisors, and loyal opponents.

Yet, as the poet said, "ripeness is all." I would not have been ready for any of them if I had not been brought up in a family where religion was openly discussed, and all points subject to argument: where the object was not merely to win a debate, but to become a better person.

And, again, to my wife, with whom I once climbed a long flight of stairs only to find a plaque, and a path laid out before us. The plaque said, "the closer you come to truth, the closer you come to God."

CONTENTS

Introduction: DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS	1
CHAPTER ONE: AN EXPLICATION OF POLYDOXY	10
I. "Polydoxy"	10
A. Definitions of "Polydox" and "Polydoxy"	10
B. Etymological Considerations	11
II. Epistemology	12
A. Epistemology - Extrapersonal Facticity	12
B. Epistemology - The "Intrapersonal" and the "Ought"	17
III. Metapsychology	20
IV. Religion	25
A. Religion - Quest for Definition	25
B. "Religion" Defined	26
C. Religions Distinguished	36
V. Authority	38
A. Authority and Freedom	38
B. Authority and Revelation	41
C. Authority in Reform Judaism	44
D. Freedom and Reform Judaism	46
VI. Implications	48
A. Theology	48
B. Liturgy and Ritual	51
C. Ritual and Liturgy	54
D. Education	55
VII. Summary of Chapter One	57
CHAPTER TWO: SOME ALTERNATIVE VIEWS	60
Method of Abstraction	60
Some Alternative Views	61
Emergent Views: Montefiore	62
Incomplete Views	67
M. Kaplan	67
S. B. Freehof	69
S. L. Regner	75
Traditional Views	78
CCAR, 1946, <u>Judaism</u>	78
More Pronounced Versions	80
Borowitz and <u>The Centenary Perspective</u>	84
Discussion: Polydoxy, Emergent Views, and Traditional Views	86

CHAPTER TWO: SOME ALTERNATIVE VIEWS (Continued)

Discussion: Methodological or Procedural Flaw in Traditional Views	88
Concluding Methodological Postscript	90

CHAPTER THREE: SOME PREVIOUS CRITIQUES OF POLYDOXY 91

Jakob J. Petuchowski	92
Norbert Samuelson	98
Sherwin T. Wine	100
Bruce S. Warshal	105

CHAPTER FOUR: CRITIQUE OF POLYDOXY AS AN INTERPRETATION OF REFORM JUDAISM 109

Methodological Comment	109
Critique of Essential Polydoxy	109
Summary of Critique of Essential Polydoxy and the Interpretation of Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy	118
Critique of Reinesian Polydoxy	119
Epistemology	119
Metapsychology	120
"Religion"	121
Religions Distinguished	124
Authority and Freedom	126
Implications for Reform Judaism	126
Theology	126
Liturgy and Ritual	126
Education	128

EPILOGUE 129

FOOTNOTES	131
To Introduction	131
To Chapter One	132
To Chapter Two	138
To Chapter Three	142
To Chapter Four	145
To Epilogue	147

BIBLIOGRAPHY 148

APPENDIX	156
The Pittsburgh Platform of 1885	157
Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism of 1937	159

APPENDIX (Continued)

Reform Judaism: A Centenary Perspective of 1976

163

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The term "polydoxy" as well as the adjectival "polydox" can be used to denote or describe a variety of processes and entities. For example, "polydox" and "polydoxy" can be used to indicate or modify:

- (1) a general philosophy of liberal religion;
- (2) a philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism;
- (3) religious communities or practices which use materials (such as liturgy) based in (1) or (2);
- (4) non-authoritarian schools of thought or religions.

This work will be primarily concerned with the second meaning, which is intrinsically related to the first. The critique will be centered in that systematic interpretation of Reform Judaism which has been termed "polydoxy" by its originator, Dr. Alvin Reines.

By "critique" is intended "criticism philosophical". By this is meant a critique relying on some of the techniques of recent analytic philosophy which are sometimes useful in the conceptual analysis of philosophical systems. This methodology will reflect itself in a concern for definition and clarity, as well as in the goal of explication of assumptions. The evaluations which emerge from this process will be based on the criteria of adequacy, coherence,

and tenability. By "definition" is meant the provision of a term's "intension"; i. e. , "the necessary and sufficient conditions for the word's use. "¹

The distinction between a word's intension and extension becomes significant when we distinguish between nominal definitions and real definitions. The nominal definition of a word is that word's intension. After we decide upon a word's intension, we can proceed to investigate its extension, that is, the specific things to which it refers. Whether something is part of a word's extension depends upon whether it meets the necessary and sufficient conditions that determine the word's intension, that is, its meaning.²

Definitions, nominal and real, are subject to evaluation.

Nominal definitions can be evaluated in terms of their utility (whether said utility be heuristic value, convenience, amusement, etc.). According to Steven M. Cahn's explication, nominal definitions are limited only by the criterion of convenience. They "are neither true nor false; they are only more or less useful. " Real definition, on the other hand, is dependent upon factual consideration. A real definition is a statement about the relationship between a certain word and the world. If such a definition states that a certain relationship pertains between a given term and an entity, or class of entities, that statement is either true or false. "If a real definition does not properly delimit the class of things with which it is concerned, the definition is false. If it does properly delimit this class, the definition is true. "³

The word "assumptions" is being applied to propositions introduced (into a given argument or system) without evidence. Such introductions occur from a variety of reasons and causes, a few of which follow. At times certain propositions (implicit or explicit) are introduced or accepted without obvious consideration due to convention or oversight. Others may be accepted provisionally in order to facilitate a discussion, on grounds of expedience. Others are simply taken for granted by the assumer, however dubious they might seem to another. Consider the case of the letter-writer who under questioning admits to the following:

- (a) The letter is a physical object which will continue to exist unperceived.
- (b) There are other minds.
- (c) The postal system is reliable.
- (d) . . . and so on, including (possibly) determinism, free-will, and/or induction.

Although letter-writing may make little sense without the (at least provisional) acceptance of the above assumptions, they have all been rendered subject to serious question and doubt by a number of philosophers, psychologists, and others who prefer to no longer rely on the postal service.

"Assumptions" will also be used to refer to those propositions which have been accepted without evidence because (according to their assumers) they are more evident, more certain, more basic

than any kind of evidence adduced for them could possibly be. Assumptions of this type are often termed "intuitively true", "self-evident", and occasionally "true simply by virtue of our conceptual scheme."⁴

Examples of assumed propositions which have been held to be "self-evident" are:

- (1) Every event has a cause.
- (2) Man has free will.
- (3) No person has a right in another person prior to that other individual's rights in him/her self.
- (4) $P \equiv Q : \equiv : P \supset Q \cdot Q \supset P$.
- (5) Parallel lines never meet.
- (6) $8 \times 7 = 56$.

As Bertrand Russell has explained:

It is the business of the philosopher to ask for reasons as long as reasons can legitimately be demanded, and to register the propositions which give the most ultimate reasons that are attainable. Since a proposition can only be proved by means of other propositions, it is obvious that not all propositions can be proved, for proofs can only begin by assuming something. And since the consequences have no more certainty than their premisses, the things that are proved are no more certain than the things that are accepted merely because they are obvious, and are then made the basis of our proofs.⁵

One might further note the unpleasant prospects of infinite regress and vicious circularity which may eventuate from the

"explanation" of the assumed. It thus appears to be the case that we tend to accept such assumptions for many reasons, of which some appear to be:

- (1) We find that they are what we explain from, not to.
- (2) They are more certain to us than any supporting evidence could be.

It may also be the case that we accept certain assumptions because:

- (3) We are not aware of mutually excluding assumptions which are more obvious or more useful.
- (4) We have not yet questioned them.

An assumption is explicit when it is stated in words. It is implicit when its acceptance is a necessary condition for the meaningfulness of a conscious act. To be more clear, if an act is of that type which we would admit to being conscious and purposeful, and that same act is rendered purposeless without the acceptance of a certain assumption or assumptions, then we may infer implicit assumption(s). For example, the letter-writer of page three might have implicitly accepted the reliability of the postal system by posting his letter, while explicitly withholding comment or denying same. Similarly, one may implicitly acknowledge God as a lawgiver by acknowledging a certain set of laws as authoritative.

An explanation or system of explanations will be considered

adequate in so far as it explains without ignoring or explaining away that data which it purports to explain. For example, a philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism which did not take account of the scientific criticism of the Bible, or the religious beliefs of Reform Rabbis and laity, or the nature of religious experience would be inadequate in these respects. If there existed an alternative explanation which considered these issues, it would be relatively adequate, or more adequate. It will be assumed, for the purposes of this inquiry, that the more adequate of a series of explanations is the "best explanation" with respect to adequacy. This will be used as a criterion of polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism.

A proposition or series of propositions will be considered "incoherent" if it evidences:

- (1) Inconsistencies;
- (2) "the arbitrary disconnection of first principles."⁶

By "inconsistencies" is meant logical inconsistencies such as " $Fx \cdot \neg Fx$ " or " $p \cdot \neg p$ ". If statements central to a system of explanation are inconsistent, the system may be invalidated. Peripheral inconsistencies, similarly, may be more limited in their effects; i. e., they may have peripheral effects on the system.

"Coherence" will be used in connection with (a) meaningful connection of first principles and (b) consistency with experience (as opposed to logical consistency which concerns relationships

between propositions). If a philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism takes account of Higher Criticism, for example, it is adequate with respect to said datum. If it relates the datum to another fundamental datum, such as nature of religious experience, the interpretation exhibits the virtue of coherence as the meaningful connection of first principles. If such a system makes certain claims about religious experience which are at odds with our own religious experience, it is not coherent with our experience and such incoherence will be considered a defect for the purposes of this evaluation.

"Tenability" is also a more obviously subjective measure. In our worlds of conversational, literary, and political experience (not to mention the realm of religion), we find that different persons disagree concerning the believability of certain propositions. A statement which one individual would judge to be incredible can be held by another to be a paradigm case of tenability. For example, X may accept the Bible as a witness because the Bible itself bears witness to the accuracy of its own testimony as the revealed will of God. "After all," X might state, "I believed that Russell wrote 'The Elements of Ethics' simply because it says so at the beginning of the article." But, in a different individual's subjective universe, such testimony might be regarded as totally unacceptable (not to mention dubious) because the acceptance of such a witness' testimony begs the question concerning the reliability of same.

In this writer's subjective universe, for example, criteria such as those explicated above (i. e. , adequacy and the three varieties of coherence) as well as other criteria to be introduced throughout this work, will be crucial in weighing the acceptability of a system such as Polydoxy.⁷ It is here maintained, for example, that if more acceptable alternative assumptions are discovered, or if certain assumptions in this Polydoxy are questionable, that said assumptions be suspended or rejected. Similarly, if a system suffers from inadequacy, a more adequate will be devised or adopted, unless it be "the best explanation available", in which case it will be held provisionally. Analogously, if a system suffers from internal incoherence or is incoherent with experience, it suffers with respect to tenability.

Before Polydoxy as a system which asserts a certain philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism can be subjected to such criticism it will be explicated in terms of its assumptions and the positions which emerge from these assumptions. Alternative views will be considered. Previous critiques of Polydoxy will be presented and analyzed in terms of accuracy and method. At this time, the polydox system which was explicated in Chapter One will be criticized in terms of its epistemological and meta-psychological assumptions, implications and possible alternatives. The positions which emerged from these assumptions concerning "religion", "authority", "revelation", and "freedom" will then be

carefully examined. At that point, the realization of Polydox principles in theology, liturgy, ritual and education will be considered. Polydoxy en toto will be evaluated in terms of coherence and adequacy. As a result of this critical process, we should then have attained certain insights and possible conclusions concerning the interrelationship between Polydoxy and Reform Judaism.

CHAPTER ONE

AN EXPLICATION OF POLYDOXY

I. "Polydoxy"

A. Definition of "Polydox" and "Polydoxy"

A religious system can be characterized as "polydox" or termed a "polydoxy" if and only if it subscribes to the two essential¹ principles of a polydoxy:

- (1) There exists no authority, whether a person or document, that has issued commandments that members of the community subscribing to the religious system must obey; i. e., there is no entity with the right to absolute authority.
- (2) All such members remain within the presumption of their own radical religious freedom or self-authority; i. e., each member is his/her own ultimate religious authority whose freedom is limited only in that it ends where others' freedom begins.²

One of the unfortunate characteristics of definitions is that they involve terms which themselves remain undefined, at least at the time of initial definition. That is, definitions themselves may require explication. This chapter will be devoted to such an explication, the explication of that polydoxy systematized by

Dr. Alvin Reines and set forth by him and others as an interpretation of Reform Judaism, which shall henceforth, in the body of the text, be referred to as "Polydoxy", and be treated as a proper noun (i. e. capitalized) inasmuch as it is the given name of a particular philosophical or religious system.

B. Etymological Considerations

It would seem to be obvious that the neologism "Polydoxy" was developed in order to distinguish, or further separate conceptually, Polydoxy from Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy has been described as follows:

As the name implies, an orthodox religion is one that possesses one or more fundamental principles of belief, or of belief and practice which are regarded as "true doctrine." The true doctrine is obligatory upon every member of the orthodox community. . . . If the member of an authoritarian religious community refuses to believe or act as the (orthodox) community commands, he is condemned as a sinner or heretic and subjected to punishment.

. . . Some orthodoxies lay down extensive dogmatic requirements, others perhaps as few as one.³

Orthodoxy is here seen as an authoritative dogmatic form which is secured in its authority by virtue of its possession of "true doctrine."

Polydoxy, on the other hand, as its name implies, holds that there are "many ways" or "many doctrines":

In the polydox liberal religion . . . no principle of belief or practice, with the single exception to be noted, is obligatory upon its members. All beliefs regarding the great subjects of religion, (such as,

for example, the meaning or non-meaning of the term "god,") and all ethical and ritual practices are equally valid so far as the polydox religious community is concerned. The one obligation required of the polydox religionist is his commitment to the ethical principle of individual religious freedom that is ultimately necessary for the very existence of the polydox community itself. This principle may be stated in terms of a covenant, a freedom covenant: "Every member of the polydox liberal religious community pledges himself to affirm the creedal, ethical, and ritual freedom of all other members in return for their reciprocal pledges to affirm his own." In the polydox community, the individual's religious freedom ends only where the other person's freedom begins.⁴

We might thus infer that an orthodoxy is that form of authoritarian religious system and community that emerges from the certain possession of "true doctrine". In contrast, a polydoxy would be that kind of non-authoritarian religious system and community that emerges which possesses only that principle of freedom which remains when certainty has vanished.

With this last point in mind, we shall now consider an epistemological scheme from which this point has been derived in Polydoxy.

II. Epistemology

A. Epistemology - Extrapersonal facticity

In "Polydoxy and Modern Judaism," Dr. Reines outlines an epistemic system. This system provides a set of standards or criteria by which one might make reasonable choices concerning the affirmation of propositions.

"Faith" in this system is used to "refer to the act of assent that judges a belief or statement to be true."⁵

If it seems acceptable to credit an epistemic scheme with the implicit acceptance of all logical truths, we may credit this epistemological scheme with the assumption that any given act of faith is reasonable or it is not reasonable.

(1) $Rf \vee \neg Rf$

It is similarly and explicitly assumed that any instance of faith is an instance of faith based on evidence or is an instance of faith which is not based on evidence.

(2) $Ef \vee \neg Ef$

Further, it is explicitly assumed that:

If we may agree that the rational or reasonable procedure is to have faith or give assent when evidence exists for a belief, to suspend assent when no evidence exists, and to dissent when the evidence is contrary, we may conclude that a religion which requires evidence for faith is committed to at least a minimal rationalism. To say that faith without evidence is unreasonable or non-rational is not to denigrate the religion of those who subscribe to faith without evidence.⁶

Such a statement, viz., that faith without evidence is unreasonable, may indeed not involve any denigration of such faith. What it does appear to involve, however, is the assumption that faith is reasonable only if it is based on evidence.

(3) $Rf \supset Ef$

Such an assumption as (3) is maintained along with the explicit acknowledgement that there are those that hold that an insistence upon reasonableness within the realm of religion is a

scandal.⁷

It would seem to be implicitly argued that faith without evidence ($\neg Ef$) is uncertain or dubious ($\neg Cf$) because it is unreasonable (there is no reason for it). I. e.,

$$(4) \neg Ef \supset \neg Cf, \neg Cf \supset \neg Ef$$

One can also readily see that while faith without evidence is uncertain, we have no logical reason to maintain that faith with evidence is certain. I. e., the above schemata (1-4) are consistent with

$$(5) \neg(Ef \supset Cf)$$

and its equivalents. Evidence is thus held to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for certainty. Evidence is required for confirmation of propositions yet insufficient for the indubitable verification of same. The degree to which given evidence confirms depends on the nature of the evidence itself.

According to this epistemological system, the evidence for a given instance of faith may be either objective or subjective. Objective evidence is defined as that which is apprehended via sensation and reason. "Moreover, it is apprehended publicly by more than one person."⁸ Objective evidence is further subdivided into the categories of unique and repeatable. Instances of purported objective evidence are given in both categories:

Unique: The miracle at the Red Sea.

Repeatable: The Ontological Argument.

"Repeatable objective evidence is that which is experienced by many observers, and which can be reproduced at will."⁹ Such, it is explained, is the evidence of modern science as well as classical and medieval metaphysical and theological systems.¹⁰

Subjective evidence, in contrast, is private. Such evidence may be apprehended externally or internally. An example is given for each category:

External subjective: Burning Bush;

Internal subjective: Abraham's prophetic dream in Genesis 15.¹¹

The private character of subjective evidence is reflected in terms of its public acceptability. As Dr. Reines clearly states:

In any case, the point of subjective evidence is that it is neither witnessed nor verified publicly. When accepted as evidence by anyone other than the person who apprehends it, subjective evidence must be accepted on the person's bare word or say so.¹²

Thus, it would appear that there are three general categories of faith:

1. Faith without evidence.
2. Faith with subjective evidence.
3. Faith based on objective evidence.

It has already been held that the first category is unreasonable and dubious.

The second category suffers publicly due to its private character, which gives rise to two problems:

- (1) Why trust another's say-so?
- (2) How does one choose between two conflicting subjective evidential statements?

"Since, however," it is pointed out, "there is no way to prove conclusively the superiority of one kind of evidence over another," which implies that no evidence is certain, "the evidence or lack of evidence a person will require for his religious beliefs must be left to personal choice."¹³ Thus it is argued that epistemological doubt pries open the doorway to freedom which had been long sealed shut by the dogmas of certainty.

With the presence of such doubt established, along with its implication of ultimate personal religious freedom, it is suggested that "we may agree that the most compelling of these three kinds of evidence is the objective."¹⁴ This view is evidently held for three reasons:

- (1) The difficulties with the other two categories of evidence as set forth above.
- (2) Since subjective evidence is always suspect due to its unverifiability, it is not convincing: a characteristic of particular importance within the realm of religion because, "a religion can be said to be the religion of a person only if he accepts the beliefs of that religion as true."¹⁵ I. e. , if an individual is not convinced that a given religion is true, then it cannot be his religion.

- (3) Authority in the realm of religion is contingent upon knowledge. "The one who has possession of religious truth is in a position to lay down dogma or true opinion."¹⁶ It is for this reason that Jews have generally required objective evidence "for any claim to authoritative religious truth."¹⁷

Since the third reason involves a certain ethical principle, it seems advisable to re-emphasize that within Polydoxy it is statements of extra-personal facticity which find their evidential support in objective evidence. As the reader may have inferred, statements of "internal" and "ethical" facticity find their evidential support elsewhere.

B. Epistemology - The "intrapersonal" and the "ought"

Statements such as,

- (1) "Since, however, there is no way to prove conclusively the superiority of one kind of evidence over another, the evidence or lack of evidence a person will require for his religious beliefs must ultimately be left to personal choice,"¹⁸

are not held on the basis of objective evidence but find their evidential locus elsewhere. For example, consider:

- (2) "It is intuitively understood as incoherent to endow

someone with rights over oneself unless he can objectively establish those rights. "19

- (3) "We take it as a self-evident proposition that every person has the right to be free . . . every person is intuitively presumed to be his own authority . . ."20
- (4) ". . . the right of a person to authority over himself is intuitively presumed to be prior and superior to any right in him that may be claimed by some other person. "21

Statements (2) through (4) appear to give sufficient grounds for the inference that in Polydoxy, at least one proposition (in this case an ethical judgement concerning authority) can be legitimately justified by intuition. This view appears to be consistent with a position such as that of G. E. Moore. According to this position, the good is a directly intuited reality, liable to ostensive definition. Goodness, it is explained, is analogous to a color:

My point is that 'good' is a simple notion, just as 'yellow' is a simple notion; that, just as you cannot, by any manner of means, explain to any one who does not already know it, what yellow is, so you cannot explain what good is. Definitions of the kind that I was asking for, definitions which describe the real nature of the object or notion denoted by a word, and which do not merely tell us what the word is used to mean, are only possible when the object or notion is something complex. 22

A description of self-evidence in ethics which relates the self-evident quality of certain ethical propositions by a different analogy was provided by W. D. Ross in The Right and the Good.

Here the analogy is made with respect to certain basic propositions in mathematics, in contrast to the previously cited analogy to certain basic visual experiences:

That an act, qua fulfilling a promise, or qua effecting a just distribution of good, or qua returning services rendered, or qua promoting the good of others, or qua promoting the virtue or insight of the agent, is prima facie right, is self-evident; not in the sense that it is evident from the beginning of our lives, or as soon as we attend to the proposition for the first time, but in the sense that when we have reached sufficient mental maturity and have given sufficient attention to the proposition it is self-evident without any need of proof, or of evidence beyond itself. It is self-evident just as a mathematical axiom, or the validity of a form of inference, is evident. The moral order expressed in these propositions is just as much a part of the fundamental nature of the universe (and, we may add, of any possible universe in which there were moral agents at all) as is the spatial or numerical structure expressed in the axioms of geometry or arithmetic. In our confidence that these propositions are true there is involved the same trust in our reason that is involved in our confidence in mathematics; and we should have no justification for trusting it in the latter sphere and distrusting it in the former. In both cases we are dealing with propositions that cannot be proved, but that just as certainly need no proof.²³

Thus far, the type of evidence required by the epistemic scheme of Polydoxy has varied with the realm or universe of discourse in question:

1. In the realm of extra-personal facticity, public empirical (objective) evidence was held to be the most compelling.
2. In the realm of ethics, certain intuitions are held to be sufficient.

Another realm of discourse also not external to the person is that of the person as experienced by the person himself.

Accepted as a source of knowledge in this realm is the evidence of introspection - logically private, and by definition subjective.

It is to this realm, that of the metapsychological scheme utilized in Dr. Reines' presentation of Polydoxy, that we now turn.

III. Metapsychology

As has been seen above, in the section dealing with the definition of "polydoxy", the individual's right to self-authority is central to a polydoxy. The concept of self-authority, in turn, is itself rooted in a certain metapsychological portrayal of the structure and dynamics of "authority". The following quotations have been provided as examples for consideration:

For purposes of our discussion, we may divide the human person into two phases: the phase that constitutes the decision-making self and the phase that constitutes the decision-executing self. Following this distinction, when we say a person is free, we mean that his decision-making self has the authority to enforce the obedience of the decision-executing self.²⁴

Thus it is made clear that when it is stated of a given individual that X is free what is meant is that X's decision-making self has authority over X's decision-executing self. Now, since "every person is intuitively presumed to be his own authority,"²⁵ it would seem to be the case that every person is intuitively presumed to consist of a plurality of phases or selves. These

"parts" of the person and their relationship to decision and authority have been explicated as follows:

The decisions arrived at by the decision-making self, whether they concern the truth, reality, or goodness of a matter, are experienced as "one's own," a constituent part of the person. The decision-executing self which may be mind or body, serves as an instrument to carry out the choices and judgements of the decision-making (emended from "decision-executing" in the original text on the basis of context) self. Following this distinction, when a person is said to be free, this means that his decision-making self has the authority to command the obedience of his decision-executing self. When some entity other than the person has authority over him, this means the entity has the power to supersede the person's decision-making self and to command, in its place, the obedience of the decision-executing self.²⁶

Further research into the literature of Polydoxy yields further explications of the nature, function, and inter-relationships between selves and "religion":

One of the principles upon which this philosophy of religion proceeds is that the individual human being is not a unity but a pluralism of selves. This pluralism must be taken seriously, causing as it does some of the most troublesome and difficult problems people encounter, both in religion and in life generally. Consequently, it is possible for a person, owing to his several selves, to subscribe to two different sets of beliefs at the same time, so that, in effect, he has at one and the same time two different religions. Moreover, there are selves of which we are aware, and others that are concealed within us. Consequently, we may have one religion consciously, and still another, unconsciously. Such internal division results from the complex nature of the human psyche. The psyche is compartmentalized and functions on several levels simultaneously, some conscious, some unconscious, and some in direct conflict with others. We may call the different compartments of the psyche selves. The conflict among the various selves of a person can be particularly acute during adolescence, when the individual is in the process of leaving behind the childhood complex of selves

to attain an adult mentality. Still, few enough chronological adults in our time attain an adequately integrated adult psyche, so that we may say so-called "adolescent" religious problems stay with most of us all our lives. Nonetheless the religious enterprise has no more significant purpose than to aid a person (to) bring his various selves into a productive harmony.²⁷

The above explication of intrapsychic entities and their relationship to psychic development, crises, and the ultimate purpose of the religious enterprise demonstrates that the bifurcation of the human person into decision-making selves and decision-executing selves is verily a simplification of what are conceived to be complex intrapsychic processes. There is indeed a proliferation of selves which admit to similar subdivision or analysis:

In actuality, the various selves of the human person are each themselves divided into decision-making and decision-executing phases. To illustrate: The decision-making phase of an infantile self will decide to ask for help in solving some problem, whereas the decision-making phase of a more mature self will decide to resolve the problem by itself through its own resources.²⁸

No explication of the metapsychology used in the development of Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism could be considered adequate without the inclusion of two additional features to that complexity which is called a person. These are "finitude" and "infinite conation".

Finitude, as revealed by introspection and observation, is a pervasive feature of the human person. This means that all structures and powers of the human being, psychic and physical, are finite; they come to an end before reaching an ideal state, always falling short of perfection

and self-sufficiency. The human person is a finite being enclosed by a limiting boundary within a state of imperfection. Basic categories of human finity include: psychic finity; physical finity; territorial finity; and existential finity.²⁹

"Finity", we can see, is used to describe an inherent "flaw" in that complex of self entities which comprises the human person. What is meant by human finity is that no self or concatenation of selves within the person is liable to perfection. No human being is that which none greater can be conceived, or even eligible for such greatness.

Infinite conation is the intense willing within humans that wants without limit or end whatever is conceived or imagined to be pleasurable. Infinite conation is itself a pervasive or general will that is expressed through particular desires, imparting to them an infinite quality. As might be expected, the principle categories of particular desires through which infinite conation is expressed correspond to the general areas of human finity: psychic desires; physical desires; territorial desires; and existential desire. When infinite conation is expressed through a category of particular desires, these desires themselves become infinite and may be termed: infinite psychic conation; infinite physical conation; infinite territorial conation; and infinite existential conation.³⁰

As one might readily imagine, infinite conation would not be likely to rest satisfied with human finity without some sort of special action. The conflict between infinite conation and human finity has been termed "finitude"; the special action or remedy is "religion". As we will recall, "the religious enterprise has no more significant purpose than to aid a person to bring his various selves into a productive harmony."³¹ This productive harmony or

state of intrinsically meaningful existence is termed "soteria".

We have now collected a variety of assumptions and principles which are constituents in the metapsychology of Polydoxy:

1. The human person is divisible into self-structures, some conscious, some not.
2. Some of these structures are more mature than others.
3. These themselves can be divided into decision-making and decision-executing phases.
4. Decision-making selves' decisions are experienced as one's own.
5. A decision-executing self may be mental or physical.
6. These selves contain desires or desire structures, thus they can be in conflict with each other or with extra-psychic entities or conditions.
7. Some selves or concatenations of selves are capable of infinite conation.
8. No self or concatenation of selves is capable of realizing the aims of infinite conation.
9. Thus the human person, due to dynamic structural characteristics of the person is liable and subject to the conflict of finitude, which occurs on conscious and unconscious levels.
10. The human response to the conflict of finitude is religion.

IV. Religion

A. Religion - Quest for Definition

Polydoxy, as we will recall from the introduction, can be a general philosophy of religion or a philosophical interpretation of a particular religious enterprise such as Reform Judaism. We might have hoped that Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism would provide itself as a system with a definition of "religion" and some criteria by which one religion could be distinguished from another. That is, we might have hoped that a proponent of Polydoxy would attempt to answer the following two questions:

- (1) What are the necessary and sufficient conditions for the use of the word "religion"?
- (2) Given that X and Y are both religions, how can we distinguish between them?

Or, more idiomatically and perhaps less clearly:

- (1a) What is religion?
- (2a) What is a religion?

As may be seen, the latter two forms suffer from lack of clarity in that they could be understood as being equivalent.

It is suggested that a definition of "religion" be hoped for, but not expected. The search for the definition of "religion" in terms of an accurate description of the necessary and sufficient conditions for the use of the term (or more metaphysically, in

terms of the common essence of all religions and religious enterprises) and her relatives such as "pious" and "piety" is a search which has been going on for a very long time. It is a search which is as old as Western Philosophy itself, if we conceive of Western Philosophy in the Whiteheadian sense of a "series of footnotes to Plato."³² Since Plato's Euthyphro, questions of this nature have been live and important issues in the philosophy of religion. There are those who suggest that the question does not admit of an answer, holding that the concept of religion is "unbounded" and that the only thing which all religions and religious enterprises may have in common is the names "religion" and "religious"; such persons might conclude their Wittgensteinian analyses³³ with the suggestion that instead of such a commonality, there exists only a "family resemblance" which provides fuzzy guidelines for the use of the term.

The latter question - "How do we distinguish one religion from another?" - would seem to be less problematic. Most people, including ordinary language philosophers, would admit that there are different religions and that we can tell them apart.

B. "Religion" Defined

In the article, "God and Jewish Theology,"³⁴ Dr. Reines defines "religion" as the human response to finitude; "Man's response to the conflict between what he is and what he wishes

to be, in other words, his response to finitude, is the definition I give to religion." This definition was re-presented and explicated approximately a decade later in the article, "The Word Religion,"³⁵

Before this definition is here explicated, three aspects of the metapsychology of Polydoxy which we have previously encountered require further elaboration. As the reader may surmise, these are the basic characteristics of the human being "upon which the definition is based. These are: finity; infinite conation; and the conflict between awareness of finity and infinite conation."³⁶

We recall that what is meant by the concept of human finity is that no self or concatenation of selves within the person is capable of perfection, or of self-sufficiency. The human entity is imperfect and contingent. An enumeration of some basic categories of human finity included psychic, physical, territorial, and existential finity.³⁷

These four basic categories of human finity are further explained in "The Word Religion." Psychic finity is described in terms of intellect and emotion. Man's lack of omniscience breeds uncertainty and risk. A human being suffers similarly with respect to emotional satisfaction. "Humans lack emotional self-sufficiency, unable by their own power to achieve a state of happiness. A person cannot attain felicitous emotional states in

isolation from other humans. Human happiness generally is dependent upon relationships . . . with other persons, and particularly is this true of infants and children."³⁸

Physical finity is that which is evidenced by the sense and the body. One cannot see forever, hear sounds above a certain pitch or below a certain volume, etc. Neither does the body continue running without virtually continuous sustenance.³⁹

Similarly with respect to territoriality - no one can own and control everything. The human creature always falls short of attaining infinite territoriality. This inevitable "falling short" is our "territorial finity".⁴⁰

"Existential finity is the inability of the human person to continue in existence, so far as ordinary observation can tell, beyond a very limited period of time. The natural consequence of existential finity is death, the most dramatic of all instances of finity."⁴¹ It is perhaps this dramatic and overwhelming character of death which may cause it to overshadow the other categories of finity to such an extent that some may think it the only significant category of finity.⁴²

As was made clear in a previous citation from "The Word Religion": "Infinite conation is the intense willing within humans that wants without limit or end whatever is conceived or imagined to be pleasurable."⁴³ Infinite conation may be expressed through categories of personal desires which correspond to the four types

of human finity set forth above. Thus we have infinite psychic conation, infinite physical conation, infinite territorial conation, and infinite existential conation.⁴⁴

Infinite psychic conation is the will to knowledge omniscient as well as absolute emotional invulnerability and self-sufficiency.⁴⁵

Infinite physical conation is the will to physical power and omnipotence, as well as invulnerability. It can be expressed through somatic appetites, as in the case of "an infantile sexual desire" for "unbounded libidinal experience without regard for social or reality limits."⁴⁶

Infinite territorial conation is what one might ordinarily think of as the will to power that makes demagogues out of some politicians. Infinite territorial conation is the will to omni-territoriality, the desire to have and control every entity and process. Such conation may extend past the will to power and express itself in a desire to be it all.⁴⁷

Infinite existential desire is the will to immortality; "the desire never to die."⁴⁸

The awareness of finity conflicts with infinite conation. "A man's reach exceeds his grasp." This conflict engenders negative moods which issue in intolerable psychic pain.⁴⁹ Misery can only be eliminated through attainment, happiness needs a satisfaction. One passionately desires to be infinite. This conflict between the "reach" and the "grasp", between finity and infinite conation, is

termed "the conflict of finitude" or simply "finitude".

Dr. Reines provides four basic observations with respect to finitude:

The conflict takes place consciously and unconsciously. One can be troubled and not know why. One can be aware of it or express it through symbolic distortions which may represent the conflict as a tip represents an iceberg, as the nervous jokes of rabbinic students touring a funeral home might symbolize conflicts of existential finitude. The unconscious facets of finitude obscure the conflict, and keep us from seeing it as it is.⁵⁰

The second observation is that unresolved finitude "annihilates the meaning of existences."⁵¹ One experiences a variety of negative affective states such as despair, nausea, and anxiety. When repressed, the conflict may be evidenced by free-floating anxiety and depression.

The third observation concerns the metapsychological character of finitude. The conflict of finitude is ontal. It is a function of the structure and dynamics of the human person: it is built into his human being (ontos). For this reason it is held that though the problem can be influenced by cultural, economic, and political structures, it is not produced by them.^{51a}

The fourth observation derives from the previous three. The elements within the conflict of finitude such as finity, infinite conation, and their interaction can be viewed in terms of structure

or dynamics:

The ontal structure behaves much as a single, dynamic system, with changes in its basic constituents affecting and reshaping the entire structure. When a change takes place in a person's awareness of finity or infinite conation which affects the conflict of finitude in a lasting manner, this is an "ontal change" or "a change in the ontal structure." The act of will that produces a change in the ontal structure is an "ontal decision."⁵²

As was indicated in the section on metapsychology⁵³ the most significant purpose of the religious enterprise is the provision of aid to persons in such ontal decisions that they may enter into a state of productive harmony and intrinsically meaningful existence or "soteria". Unresolved finitude, as we have seen, is asoteria. Religion, with a variety of responses or ontal options, attempts to remove the conflict and engender soteria:

The negative moods produced by the conflict of finitude create intolerable psychic pain, and an urgent need, therefore, to deal with the conflict. The way in which a person deals with the conflict of finitude will be referred to as the person's "response to the conflict of finitude," or briefly, "response to finitude." With this we have arrived at our definition of religion: Religion is the human person's response to the conflict of finitude. Stated more fully: Religion is the human person's response to the psychic conflict produced by the awareness of finity and infinite conation, the passionate desire not to be finite. The ideal purpose of a religion is to provide a response to the conflict of finitude that enables a person to resolve the conflict and thereby attain a state of ultimate meaningful existence that the conflict's negative moods would otherwise destroy. The state of ultimate meaningful existence that is attained when the conflict of finitude has been resolved will also be referred to as "soteria" (from the Greek word for salvation). Thus the function of a religion is to produce soteria. Asoteria is the name given to the state of meaningless existence that arises from a failure to resolve the conflict of finitude. There

are three major categories of responses to finitude, or religions: the infinite response; the discognitive response; and the finite response.⁵⁴

The infinite responses are characterized by the denial of finity. An infinite personal response, for example, might emerge as an acosmic pantheism, such as occur in certain Eastern systems where one's self is identified with the godhead. Another rarer form of such a response occurs when finity is denied without identification with deity, as in the case where the soul or mind of the person is itself considered to be eternal, and thus not contingent upon deity or anything else, though not necessarily identified with deity or anything else.⁵⁵

The infinite relational responses are characterized by derivative contingent infinity. One's infinity is guaranteed or assured by a dependence on an infinite entity, usually the God of theistic absolutism. The infinite relational response in the Western world was framed by Pharisaic Judaism, and modified by Christianity and Islam with no alteration of its basic principles.⁵⁶

The cardinal requirement of the infinite relational response to finitude (as of all infinite responses) is that the religionist making the response believe with the profoundest conviction in the existence of the beings and the reality of the events that the infinite relational response presupposes. Genuine belief is required; lip service will not do. Not because lip service is wrong, but because it is ontally (structurally) ineffective.⁵⁷

Since the conflict of finitude permeates all levels of the human psyche, it can only be overcome by a conviction with

sufficient strength to produce integrating ontal decisions. Integration, as it were, requires integrity. This (as is the case with all other responses to finitude) response is ultimately made alone.⁵⁸ This is due to the special relationship which individual's have to their own experience. One can be aided and guided, but the response is theirs alone. " . . . the decision belongs to each of us, and to no other. Each stands alone before the empty grave."⁵⁹

The primary belief of which one must be convinced in order to make the infinite relational response of Pharisaism and Western religion generally is that theistic absolutism is true: namely, there exists an infinitely perfect personal deity who exercises providential care over humankind in this life; and after death continues this care in a hereafter; and this providential care is now and will be in the future granted the believer.⁶⁰

The discognitive response, as its name would imply, functions by destroying the human awareness or cognition of finity by destroying human awareness or cognition. This response is characterized by concealing or obscuring "from consciousness either knowledge of the conflict, or knowledge of the intolerable anguish it causes, or both."⁶¹ Prominent examples of discognitive responses to finitude in our time are psychosis and neurosis, alcoholism, drug addiction, and suicide.⁶² Dr. Reines considers discognitive responses to be non-authentic responses to finitude. His reasoning is as follows:

. . . (discognitive responses) do not resolve the conflict, they only make the person unaware of it, and in the case

of suicide, through death. Moreover, except in the case of suicide, the unconscious remains aware of the conflict, and great suffering takes place even though diffused or disguised by the illness or chemical employed. The conflict of finitude, until it is properly resolved, is an essential and fundamental part of the human person, so that it is not possible to destroy awareness of the conflict and its pain without destroying the person as well.⁶³

The finite response is described as follows:

The finite response contains essentially three elements: acknowledgement of the truth of the perception that one is finite; renunciation of infinite conation; setting and accepting limits in all areas of desire. Several forms of the finite response occur, based on different views of ultimate reality, and requiring different degrees of renunciation, but all share in common renunciation of infinite existential desire and the acceptance of the finality of one's own death. Accordingly, with infinite desire given up, the conflict of finitude, which is produced by the clash between consciousness of finity and infinite desire, is resolved. The finite existence of the human person, consisting of psychic, physical, territorial, and existential limits, satisfies a finite will; the finite being that a person is, is that which the person wishes to be. Being and will having thus been integrated, the harmony brings soteria.⁶⁴

Dr. Reines provides a description of how a soterial finite response might be possible in terms of a metapsychology of will. The description involves the problem of existential finitude, the conflict between human existential finity and the infinite human desire to exist indefinitely. The human person, it is explained, is capable of expressing the human will to exist in three ways, of which one is not necessarily infinite:

1. The wish to be it all, to exist eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, infinite, independent (for nothing else exists).

2. The will to be given it all by an infinite parent.
3. "the will to exist in and through one's own being even though that being is finite."⁶⁵

These three modes of the will to exist are all present in the human person in infancy and childhood. In the course of time, as the person moves towards adulthood, one of these three modes of the will to exist becomes dominant. (This should be qualified: often enough no one mode will dominate, resulting in conflict sufficiently intense to produce asoteria.) The mode of the will to exist that becomes dominant is the fundamental constituent of the personality and determines what the person generally and ultimately wants from life.⁶⁶

The various modes of will are intrinsically related to the various responses. The first two modes of will are satisfied (respectively) by the infinite personal and the infinite relational responses. The third mode of will which is capable of the finite response and finite satisfaction, the will to exist in and through one's own finite being is termed "the substantive will". Thus we can see that each of the three responses is soterial with reference to the dominant will of the religionist; thus it is possible to have a soterial finite response if the responding agent has a dominant substantive will.

Thus far we have seen "religion" defined as the human response to finitude, and have further considered the metapsychological bases of this definition. A threefold categorization of such responses or religions was provided: infinite, discognitive, and finite. We have been advised that the soterial value of a given

religion is directly related to the dominant self of the religionist in two ways: a religion is soterial in so far as it is believed and is appropriate to the existential will of the religionist (substantive responses don't appeal to infinite relational wills, for example). The unfaithful are not saved.

C. Religions Distinguished

The second question, "How can we distinguish one religion from another," is less complex. It does not necessitate an analysis of the human condition or fundamental human conflicts. Nor does it seek a definition which may well have been the object of philosophical search for over two thousand years. It requires for its answer criteria by which one might distinguish a Reform Jew from an Orthodox Jew, or a Jainist from a Zen Buddhist in the event that those individuals have different religions.

In Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy, such criteria are provided:

. . . let us review briefly what a religion is. A religion may generally be said to consist of three parts: factual beliefs; value beliefs; and symbolism. Factual beliefs concern reality or things that are real. A belief about angels, for example, that they do or do not exist, is a factual belief. Other factual issues religious beliefs are concerned with include: the question whether there is a real being referred to by any of the many meanings of the term "god"; whether supernatural revelation occurs; and whether there is an afterlife. Value beliefs deal with good and bad, just and unjust. Thus beliefs about the goodness of love or sex, and the justice of war or authoritarianism are value beliefs. Symbolism includes ritual and ceremonial practice. The Sabbath candles and Passover matzos are examples of symbolism. The fundamental part of a religion consists of its factual beliefs. The value beliefs and symbolism generally are secondary; they derive

from and are dependent upon the truth of the factual beliefs. That is, if no God who speaks to man exists (factual belief), then it cannot be true that He has revealed to man that a war can be just (value belief), or commanded that matzos be eaten on the Passover (symbolism). Owing, therefore, to the fundamental importance of a religion's factual beliefs, we may refer to a religion in its entirety by referring generally to its "beliefs" alone.

. . . We are now ready to give our answer to the question, "What makes a person's religion his religion?" It is:

A person's religion is his religion because he believes that the beliefs of the religion are true.⁶⁷

It is argued that the above is the case via a reductio ad absurdum. Dr. Reines holds that if the above were not the case, then statements such as "Religion 'X' is my religion, and I do not know what religion 'X' is" and "Religion 'X' is my religion and I believe that religion 'X' is false" would be coherent. According to his estimate, such statements are blatant incoherencies, contradictions in terms or nonsense.⁶⁸

With the above points in mind, it would seem that in Polydoxy (as in many other places) religions are distinguished one from another in terms of the beliefs they assert.

Given that Reform Judaism is a religion, Polydoxy's explication (in its own terms) of Reform Judaism would be an explication of those characteristics which distinguish Reform Judaism as a religion; i. e., those beliefs which Reform Judaism holds to be true. Such an explication would include the analysis of questions concerning authority, revelation, and freedom. One might construe that Reform Judaism's beliefs in these areas would

influence other areas. Thus, we would expect Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism to have something to say about the implications of such beliefs on Reform Jewish theology, liturgy and ritual, and education.

It is to Polydoxy's explication of Reform Judaism's beliefs concerning authority, revelation, and freedom that we now turn.

V. Authority

A. Authority and Freedom

Central to the nature of Polydoxy is its conception of authority, its appropriate locus and its proper limitations.

As we will recall, the human person is viewed within this system as a complex entity comprised of self-structures and enjoying dynamics such as infinite conation which may or may not be in conflict with each other. In his discussion of authority in Reform Judaism interpreted as a polydoxy, Dr. Reines generally prefers to simplify matters by dividing the human person into two parts, self-structures, or phases. The former is referred to as a decision-making phase or self; the latter is termed a decision-executing phase or self.⁶⁹

. . . Following this distinction, when we say a person is free, we mean that his decision-making self has the authority to enforce the obedience of the decision-executing self. And when we say that some entity has authority over a person, we mean that the entity has the right to supersede the decision-making self and to enforce, in its place, the obedience of the decision-executing self.

We take it as a self-evident proposition that every person has the right to be free. Or to translate this statement into terms of authority: every person is intuitively presumed to be his own authority, with the right to enforce obedience upon himself to commandments he himself issues. This statement is not to be understood as bearing upon the question of whether man's will is ultimately free or determined; it simply means that every person has the right to determine his own acts without external compulsion.⁷⁰

Dr. Reines has provided us with an illustration or "thought-experiment" which is used to further highlight and strengthen the point that the right of a person to authority over himself is intuitively presumed to be prior and superior to any right in him that might be claimed by some other person:

. . . If there were only two human persons in the universe, and they should happen to meet, no moral justification is evident why either one should possess authority to compel the other to do his will. No matter the number of human persons there might be in such a universe, the same reasoning as appears in this illustration ultimately holds true. Every human person thus has a primal right to self-authority.⁷¹

As we can see, the right to authority has been described as the right of a decision-making self to command a decision-executing self within an individual human person. Authority, morally conceived, has its locus within a "selfen-nexus"⁷²; i. e., one's rights to authority in one's self are held to be prior to the rights of any other persons in one's self. And one's own authority, similarly, would be morally derivative with respect to other persons due to the primal right to self-authority of their selfen-nexus. One's freedom ends where the other's begins.⁷³

If such is granted, any case where X has power over Y, and X and Y are not parts of the same person, is a case which requires justification. One might consider the case of the willing transfer of some authority to another. As Dr. Reines points out, if one willingly "consents to the transfer of his self-authority to some other entity, the use of authority over the person is by the very fact of that consent morally justified."⁷⁴ Such transferred authority, termed "conditional authority" derives from the individual's primal right to self-authority.⁷⁵

A case wherein the locus of authority is removed from an individual without regard to his consent is an instance of "absolute authority".⁷⁶ If the use of power in such an instance were morally justified, such an activity could be properly termed "absolute authority by right".⁷⁷

According to the opinion of Dr. Reines, the "prime", and to his mind, "only defensible argument that has been presented to vindicate the use of absolute authority by a religious community has been based on the theological foundation of a personal creator God."⁷⁸ A brief form of this argument occurs in "Authority in Reform Judaism"⁷⁹ in the following form:

1. There is a God who has created the universe;
2. By the very act of creation, He has authority over everything that He has created;
3. God therefore has authority over mankind;

4. Exercising His authority, God has issued commandments that mankind is to obey;
5. God has made known to X ecclesiastical body, through revelation or tradition or both, what these commandments are;
6. God has also, through revelation or tradition, delegated elements of his authority over mankind to X ecclesiastical body;
7. Therefore, inasmuch as X ecclesiastical body acts in the name of God, mankind is enjoined to surrender certain portions of self-authority to it and to obey the commandments that issue from it.⁸⁰

As Dr. Reines clearly indicates, "to justify the use of absolute authority in a contemporary religious community requires more than the existence of a personal creator God."⁸¹

For such persons to justify their right to absolute authority over others in their religious communities, or anyone else, they must prove that they possess a revelation from a creator God in which he has transferred to them absolute authority over their fellow humans, and that he has also communicated to them the commandments that they demand their fellow humans, in the name of God, obey.⁸²

B. Authority and Revelation

In "Authority and Reform Judaism", it is argued that the kind of revelation necessary for the above argument is not subscribed to in Reform Judaism.⁸³

This argument is based upon a three-fold characterization of revelation which relates categories of revelation to their legitimacy as sources of authority. The main line of the argument is that the particular category of revelation which is inconsistent

with Reform Judaism's acceptance of the Higher Criticism is the only kind of revelation which could justify absolute religious authority. The three categories of revelation are "verbal revelation", "dynamic revelation", and "natural revelation".

Verbal revelation is described as communication, by means of words, of contents of the divine mind to the human. These words (i. e. . their literal meaning)⁸⁴ are held to be as sacred as the ideas which they express, and are thus held to be as binding and authoritative as their contents. One would not, using the Pentateuch for an example, be free to accept an idea, such as that of a Day of Atonement, while rejecting the rituals commanded in the Torah for such a day.⁸⁵

In terms of the justification of absolute authority, the most salient feature of verbal revelation is its infallibility. ". . . according to the notion of verbal revelation, since revelation is the literal word of God, it must be considered entirely infallible and altogether insusceptible of change or alteration except through some subsequent verbal revelation."⁸⁶ Since "the inappropriateness of change by the human person in that which is ordained by the omniscient divine will is evident."⁸⁷

The second category of revelation is that of "dynamic revelation". Dynamic revelation is described as the revelation of the divine mind by means of the human. Such revelation may be conceived to be a result of divine influences upon such human

capacities as reason or imagination. Or it may stem from the human perception of a supernatural event.⁸⁸

According to this notion, the Torah would be seen as inspired by God and rendered by man; it is seen as partly divine, partly human. Those parts which are held to be historically conditioned fallible human ingredients may be in principle discarded by later generations, while the divine timeless and universal elements are retained. Thus, returning to the example of the Day of Atonement, one could retain the atonement idea as essential while altering the old rituals or prescribing new ones, in the service of the more meaningful expression of the idea itself.⁸⁹

It is crucial to note, with respect to the justification of absolute authority, that since the decision concerning which parts of such a revelation are to be considered essential is a human decision, this view of revelation causes such revelation to be fallible in practice. For human reason is evidently fallible⁹⁰ and the question always remains open whether the content chosen by man is divine, or human and thus lacking the divine mandate. As Dr. Reines points out, "although dynamic revelation is partially infallible in theory," in that it is partly divine, "it is entirely fallible in application and practice."⁹¹

The third category of revelation is that of "natural revelation". Here, revelation, such as the Pentateuch, is conceived to be a human creation in response to man's search through history for values,

purpose, and divinity in life and existence.⁹² According to such a view, revelation is fallible in theory and practice.⁹³

C. Authority in Reform Judaism

1. Does Reform Judaism affirm verbal revelation which would justify absolute authority?
2. What kind of authority does Reform Judaism accept?

The answer to these two questions concludes the argument against the existence in Reform Judaism of the kind of revelation which would justify absolute authority in Reform Judaism:

. . . The truth of a concept may be affirmed or denied explicitly in words. When the concept possesses behavioral implications, that is, when affirmation or denial of the concept implies that one should or should not perform some act, then it may be affirmed or denied implicitly by performance or lack of performance of the required action. The concept of verbal revelation clearly possesses behavioral implications in that if one affirms the Bible to be verbal revelation, then one affirms the obligation upon himself to act in accordance with its ritual and ceremonial obligations; no abrogation or change of the Bible's structure of obligation may be considered rightfully possible. Every Reform Jewish system, however, rightfully, in its opinion, abrogates or changes this structure of obligation . . . Therefore, every Reform Jewish system denies the notion of verbal revelation. Inasmuch as the act of affiliation with the Reform Jewish community is clearly assent to its universal procedure, this act of affiliation constitutes an implicit denial of the concept of verbal revelation and, consequently, the affirmation of the concepts either of dynamic or natural revelation. Hence, affiliation with or membership in the Reform Jewish community is religiously significant, pointing to the concept of revelation to which the religionist subscribes. Since this act is necessarily participated in by every member of the Reform Jewish community, it meets our standard that the essence of Reform Judaism is a universal act of the community; we have, therefore, the first element constituting the essence of Reform Judaism: the affirmation that the Bible is dynamic or natural

revelation and that there is in existence no revelation other than dynamic or natural revelation.⁹⁴

Since it has now been established that Reform Judaism denies that there is in existence the kind of verbal revelation which would justify absolute authority, we can consider that an answer to the first question having been given, that we should investigate the second, and learn what kind of authority would be acceptable, given the first element in the essence of Reform Judaism.

We turn now to the second element in the essence of Reform Judaism, the principle of radical freedom, which is a corollary of the first element. The denial of verbal revelation constitutes an implicit denial of absolute ecclesiastical authority. For though we take it as evident that the Creator, God, would have absolute authority over man, and that his indubitably assigned agents would as well, we take it as equally evident that an ordinary human without divine election has no such authority. There can be an indubitable assignment of authority from God to man only in an infallible revelation, that is verbal revelation, since fallible revelation, either dynamic or natural, is open to error and hence not sure. A religionist who affirms the existence of dynamic or natural revelation can always maintain that the scriptural passage, or whatever basis of the claim to absolute authority there may be, is human in origin or interpretation, therefore fallible and in no way binding. Thus the Reform Jew in denying verbal revelation denies that any human possesses an irrefragable claim to authority over his fellow men. Each person is sovereign, possessed of absolute self-authority--this is what is meant by the principle of radical freedom.⁹⁵

In summary, the argument runs as follows:

1. Absolute authority requires verbal (infallible) revelation;
2. If revelation is not verbal, it is dubious;
3. If it is dubious, then it is not binding;

4. In the absence of a binding revelation, the individual is ultimately free.
 5. Reform Judaism has no verbal revelation.
-
6. .'. In Reform Judaism, the individual is ultimately free.

D. Freedom and Reform Judaism

Thus, as we have seen, each individual remains within the presumption of his own freedom. Each person possesses absolute self-authority or "radical freedom".

We are now in a position to see that according to this argument, Reform Judaism is a "liberal religion".

"A liberal religion is a religion whose adherents subscribe to, or whose adherents have the right to subscribe to, the method and results of Higher Criticism, or any analogous method of scientific and critical research into the origin, meaning, and truth of whatever in religion is taken as 'Scripture,' or any text and teaching the equivalent of Scripture that the religion may otherwise value."⁹⁶

Since, it is argued, there is no moral justification for absolute authority according to the principles of a liberal religion, each individual's ultimate self-authority must be affirmed. This is the case with Reform Judaism, a liberal religion which accepts Higher Criticism, and implicitly denies verbal revelation. Thus Reform Judaism is morally obligated to deny the existence of such a justification and to affirm the ultimate religious freedom of its members. Reform Judaism, in other words, must be a polydoxy.⁹⁷

Or, to further clarify by filling out the summary argument

of the previous section:

1. Absolute authority requires the existence of a verbal revelation for its justification.
 2. In the absence of justifiable absolute authority, persons remain within the presumption of their ultimate freedom.
 3. Reform Judaism, qua liberal religion, and historically, denies the existence of such a verbal revelation and affirms the right to subscribe to Higher Criticism.
 4. Reform Judaism thus denies that there exists that which would justify absolute authority.
 5. In doing so, Reform Judaism thus affirms individual freedom.
 6. A religious system, by definition,⁹⁸ is polydox if and only if it holds that:
 - (1) There exists no authority, whether a person or document, that has issued commandments that members of the community subscribing to the religious system must obey; i. e., there is no entity with the right to absolute authority.
 - (2) All such members remain within the presumption of their own radical religious freedom or self-authority; i. e., each member is his/her own ultimate religious authority whose freedom is limited only in that it ends where others' freedom begins.⁹⁹
-
7. .'. Reform Judaism is a polydoxy.

VI. Implications

We have now explicated certain assumptions and principles of Polydoxy as a philosophy of religion and have attempted to show how, by use of a particular epistemological and metapsychological scheme, Dr. Reines has argued for a polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism.

The time has now come to consider the implications of such an interpretation of Reform Judaism on Reform Judaism. If Reform Judaism is a polydoxy it "has the duty to provide institutional theology, ritual, liturgy, and education that does not violate the freedom, integrity and conscience of its individual members."¹⁰⁰

It is to the explication of the implications of Polydoxy on the nature and execution of such a theology, ritual and liturgy, and education in a Polydox Reform Judaism that we now turn.

A. Theology

It would seem that one's definition of "theology" would be intrinsically related to one's ideas concerning freedom, or the permissible scope of such an enterprise. For example, it is not surprising that Louis Jacobs, who holds that "Theology is the science of God,"¹⁰¹ would also hold that, "The Jewish theologian accepts as the basis of all his work the belief that God exists."¹⁰² I. e., one who doesn't believe in God cannot be a Jewish theologian; and conversely, if one is to be a Jewish theologian, then one must

believe in God.

Apparently, the definition is being construed in something resembling the following manner: Theology is the science of God, and thus we find that the only way to make sense of the enterprise is to assume that there is a God that is the subject of such a study.

Such a position is not incoherent with Louis Jacobs' above remarks, or his desire for such dogmas in modern Judaism.¹⁰³ But in a non-authoritarian, Polydox Reform Judaism, a different concept of theology is required.

We recall that if Reform Judaism is viewed as a polydoxy, then "the members of the Reform Jewish Community are affirmed in their freedom, and that all opinions of Reform Jews, therefore, on such subjects as god are equally valid so far as the institution of Reform Judaism is concerned."¹⁰⁴ Thus, it is clearly the case that a classical definition of theology, with its implication that there is a God which theology studies, is simply not appropriate to a polydoxy. For in a polydoxy, as we have seen, individuals are free to affirm or deny existential propositions (not to mention qualitative utterances, etc.) concerning deity. Yet individuals within a polydoxy, with the support of a polydox institution might be involved in an enterprise which investigated such questions as:

1. What does "God" mean?
2. Is there such an entity?
3. What kind of evidence is there for and against the existence

of such a being according to meaning X? According to meaning Y?

4. What is the relationship, if any, of God (as conceived by W) to religious experience?

In light of the possibility of such an activity within a polydoxy, an activity which appears to be theological, Dr. Reines has suggested that a definition of "theology" which would be coherent with Reform Judaism interpreted as a polydoxy is, "the science or study which treats of the meaning of the word God."¹⁰⁵ Such a Polydox Reform Jewish theology would be based on objective and subjective empirical criteria,¹⁰⁶ as opposed to being based on an infallible revelation or infallible natural knowledge, the existence of such infallible authorities not being granted by a polydoxy qua polydoxy, which holds as an essential principle that they do not exist. Such empirical criteria as remain are held to be fallible and therefore "not authoritative so far as the community as a totality is concerned."¹⁰⁷

The polydox character, i. e., a character which allows for more than one valid opinion, of such a theology is clearly indicated in the conclusion of Part I of "God and Jewish Theology":

In concluding this discussion of the word theology, I should like to point out a significant corollary of the foregoing analysis. This concerns the phrase "Reform Jewish theology." "Reform Jewish theology" is often taken to refer to some one kind of study into the meaning of God, and some one conclusion resulting from such study. Added to this is the vague implication that this

one theology is obligatory upon all Reform Jews. The fact is that many theologies are consistent with the essence of Reform Judaism, and the phrase "Reform Jewish theology" is capriciously or erroneously used in referring to some putative system which is the only possible theology in Reform Judaism. Only if Reform as we now know it undergoes essential change can such an authoritative theology be established. Either the nature of Reform as a liberal religion or polydoxy will be arbitrarily subverted, or the entire community will share in an experience which conclusively and irrefragably establishes such a theology as true. Yet the phrase "Reform Jewish theology" is not without present meaning. It may refer either to the aggregate of particular Reform theologies, all consistent with the essence of Reform Judaism, or to the general discussion that lays down the conditions which a theology must meet to be appropriate to Reform Judaism, and as such refers to no single method of theologizing, nor to any particular conception of deity.¹⁰⁸

B. Liturgy and Ritual

If Polydox Reform Judaism were to provide rituals and liturgy consistent with the principle of radical freedom, it seems that such rituals and liturgy would have to fulfill certain requirements. It is to the nature of these requirements that we now turn.

Since individuals within a polydox community are free to disagree on all religious matters save the non-existence of absolute authority, and the acceptance of the freedom covenant, Polydox Reform Jewish religious services could not, on such principles, impose liturgical affirmations upon dissenting individuals. There would seem to be two basic possibilities for such services:

- (1) Individual services for individuals or groups of

individuals within the Reform Jewish community which suit the particular needs of such individuals or groups, and do not impose any liturgical affirmations on them:¹⁰⁹

- (2) Common services, which are so structured that they do not impose liturgical affirmations on dissenting individuals, even when the group of individuals being considered consists of the entire Polydox Reform Jewish community.

It would seem that individual services would be left to the discretion of the individual or group of individuals concerned.

Dr. Reines holds that the common service would have to fulfill three general requirements:

1. A polydox common service must be of such a nature that persons of different theological beliefs could participate in it with authenticity. In order to serve the public religious expression of all such persons, it cannot contain statements which any member in the polydox community would consider false.¹¹⁰
2. A polydox common service must be consistent with the two essential principles of a polydoxy:

The first is that there exists no authority, whether a person or document (such as the Bible), that has issued commandments that the members of the community must obey. The second principle is that every member of the community is affirmed as his own ultimate religious authority.¹¹¹

3. The polydox common service must be approved by every member of the polydox religious community or by their chosen representatives.¹¹²

Dr. Reines also inferred five further general requirements for a polydox common service:

- 1) The polydox common service book cannot be a prayerbook alone. Since there are those Reform Jews who take the word "god" to refer to that which is either beyond prayer or otherwise not open to personal address, the common services must lend themselves to other meanings than that of divine conversation.

- 2) The polydox common service book, accordingly, must be written in consciously equivocal language allowing private interpretation and meaning. This requirement was often satisfied in the past by the fact that the worshipper in the Jewish community did not understand the Hebrew he was reading, which enabled him to accommodate the public verbalization to his private religious needs. The Kol Nidre provides a classic example of this.

- 3) The polydox common service book obviously will demand personal creative activity on the part of the one who uses it. Thus in a polydox religious community, the temple service has at the same time a private and public dimension. It is a public occasion for a private experience, and a private experience conditioned by a public occasion.

- 4) The polydox common service book should not be understood as necessarily constituting in whole or in part the essential soterial act of every Reform Jewish religious system. For those who are conversion theists, the service book may well constitute such an act; for others, the service will not be, but rather point to or evoke, the essential soterial act.

- 5) The polydox common service book is not to be taken as a statement of the necessary beliefs or dogmas of Reform Judaism. To identify a liberal religion with any of its services is to confuse an ocean with one of its waves.¹¹³

C. Ritual and Liturgy

Just as the common service is a service which could be shared by the entire Polydox Reform Jewish community with authenticity, so a "common ritual" has been described as the practices shared by an entire religious community.¹¹⁴ A common ritual is vitally important to a religious community because of the goals which ritual serves. In the article "A Common Ritual for Reform Judaism", some significant elements in a teleology of ritual are provided. According to this teleology a common ritual serves:

- a) to bring a person, with full being, into relation with the ultimate aspects of existence;
- b) to evoke meaningful moods and positive attitudes;
- c) to enrich our perception and sense of wonder of reality by focusing attention on cosmic events such as the solstices and equinoxes, or earthly processes such as growth and maturation;
- d) to quicken our sense of history and of shared views of the past by commemorating significant past events;
- e) to provide a productive celebration of significant life-history events;
- f) to provide a family, through home ceremonies, with enriched moments of shared experience;
- g) to enable members of a community to communicate to one another their joy on happy occasions and their compassion on sad ones;
- h) to provide, by its distinctive nature, a sense of common identity and shared purpose to the members of a religious community who participate in the common ritual;
- i) to provide children with an elementary knowledge of their religious community, since, at first, a true and full comprehension of the beliefs of religion are beyond their capacities.¹¹⁵

Now, since it is the case in a Polydox Reform Judaism that

each Reform Jew is protected by the principle of free ritual, a corollary of the freedom covenant which protects one's right to make decisions concerning one's own ritual practices, the only way a Polydox Reform Judaism could have a common ritual consistent with the principles of a polydoxy would be if it were to propose rituals that by virtue of their intrinsic value to the choosing individual merit and gain such assent.¹¹⁶

A Polydox Reform Jewish common ritual would apparently have to fulfill the requirements which were set forth for a Polydox Reform Jewish common service.

We have now been acquainted with some of the basic implications of a polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism on theology, liturgy, and ritual.¹¹⁷ We shall now conclude our survey of Polydoxy's implications on a Polydox Reform Judaism by considering the nature of a Polydox Reform Jewish education.

D. Education

As we will recall, the two basic principles of a polydoxy to which it must adhere qua polydoxy are:

1. No one has the right to absolute authority over another; there does not exist an infallible authority.
2. Each individual is affirmed in his/her own radical freedom.¹¹⁸

In a Polydox Reform Jewish system these principles hold for

all members in all cases. That is, they are held consistently.

Education is not an exception:

The primary principle to be borne in mind by the polydox religious school is that the child of the polydox community is as much affirmed in his theological, ethical, and ritual freedom as any member who is an adult. Consequently, the child attends school for an education, not an indoctrination. In practice, this means the child receives options and open ritualism, not some single absolute system of closed beliefs and practices. It is clearly a practical impossibility for the polydox religious school to present every child at every age with all relevant options. For this reason it is basic to a polydox classroom that the teacher allow full discussion of all ideas taught, and affirm the right of the individual student to reject any notion if he so chooses. The right of every student to his own beliefs and practices does not mean that the student's rights in the polydox classroom are absolute. The freedom covenant governs the classroom as it does the community generally: the individual student's rights end where the other students' rights begin. 119

Similarly (and according to the first principle), the Bible is not treated as infallible for the purposes of education, any more than it is treated in such a fashion for any other purposes in a polydoxy. The polydox religionist, having weighed available evidence, decides the issue of Biblical truth by and for his or herself. To deceive a person (and small children are considered to be persons in Polydoxy) concerning such an issue is to violate that individual's freedom. Such deception and indoctrination is inconsistent with the basic principles of Polydox Reform Judaism for it:

. . . not only gives the polydox child false information in the name of religious education, but usurps his right to decide for himself truth and reality.

For this reason, it is a fundamental principle . . .
that no untruth wittingly is ever told a child. 120

Given the concept of religion as the human response to finitude discussed earlier, it is not surprising that polydox educational material, such as The Patriarchal Family,

. . . provides the student with the opportunity to consider fundamental personal and contemporary problems. Thus the "Narrative" sections are so written that they not only give information about the patriarchal family, but provide as well a point of departure for the consideration of basic human and contemporary concerns. In the "Discussion Questions" sections, the various points implicit in the Narrative are carefully developed. . . . 121

It thus is evidently the case that in a Polydox Reform Judaism, education would not be a process similar to indoctrination, but would be conducted in an atmosphere of freedom and honesty. In such an atmosphere, the child would be exposed to Jewish religious instruction according to polydox principles in a supportive environment (polydoxy, by definition, supports the child's right to choose). The goal of such an educational process might be emergent in the choices of the child, perhaps finding its best expression through the developing child's making of ontal decisions which would ideally culminate in his or her own personal resolution of the conflict of finitude.

VII. Summary of Chapter One

(1) A religious system is polydox if and only if it denies that

there exists the kind of evidence which would justify absolute authority in the realm of religion, therefore denies the existence of such authority, and consequently affirms the ultimate religious freedom of its members.

- (2) Polydoxy as a philosophy of religion and an interpretation of Reform Judaism is based on an epistemological scheme which requires public empirical evidence for assertions extrapersonal and allows introspection as evidence concerning assertions intrapersonal. (The kind of evidence allowed is fallible.)
- (3) Polydoxy as a philosophy of religion and an interpretation of Reform Judaism contains assumptions concerning the existence of a plurality of intrapsychic structures or parts consisting of reason, conation, and feeling.
- (4) Absolute authority (the right to authority over a person without that person's consent) can be justified in the realm of religion only by an infallible revelation from a creator God.
- (5) The three categories of revelation are natural revelation, dynamic revelation, and verbal revelation. Of these three, only verbal revelation is the justifying type required by (4). Verbal revelation is contra-indicated by Higher Criticism.
- (6) Reform Judaism affirms Higher Criticism. In doing so it must logically deny that there exists the kind of evidence

(verbal revelation) which would justify absolute authority in the realm of religion. In doing so, Reform Judaism must morally affirm the ultimate religious freedom of its members. Therefore, Reform Judaism is a polydoxy.

(7) Reform Judaism as a polydoxy (Polydox Reform Judaism) requires:

1. That theology be construed as the study of the meaning(s) of the word "God";
2. Equivocal common services;
3. Open rituals;
4. Educational materials consistent with the above principles; i. e. , materials that deny the existence of absolute authority by right in the realm of religion, and affirm the radical religious freedom of those involved in the educational process.

(8) We also discussed a definition of religion consistent with the fundamental principles of a polydoxy in which religion is defined as the human response to the conflict between infinite conation and human finity (i. e. , religion is the human person's response to finitude).

CHAPTER TWO

SOME ALTERNATIVE VIEWS

Method of Abstraction

Philosophical interpretations of Reform Judaism are quite rare, especially for those of us who see philosophy as an enterprise concerned with definition and clarity as well as the goal of explication of assumptions and principles.¹ For this reason, the attempt was made to abstract, in so far as such abstraction was possible, from non-philosophical interpretations of Reform, in order to present some alternative views to Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism.

For the sake of an abstraction, in this case the abstraction of some alternative interpretations of Reform Judaism, we ignore certain particulars. In doing so, we may reach certain conclusions, make certain evaluations. Such conclusions or evaluations concern our abstraction of a system and are not necessarily relevant, adequate, applicable, or coherent with respect to other abstractions of the system which may be based on the same particulars which we chose to ignore. Since our abstractions may ignore particulars which are of more importance than was realized, and since this writer is aware of his fallibility, such conclusions or evaluations will be treated tentatively.

Interpretation may add; abstraction may omit. Yet, if we avoid

both, we are left with our own silence accompanied only by the direct quotations of our predecessors; we are left without evaluation, understanding, critique, or grounds for our beliefs. Yet, given that we must interpret and abstract, it may be better to do so self-consciously, tentatively.

Some Alternative Views

A consideration of abstractions based on a survey of some of the literature interpreting Reform Judaism and the issue of authority in Reform Judaism (which is fundamental to the concept of polydoxy) revealed different streams of interpretation. One stream, evidenced in various degrees in some of the work of C. G. Montefiore and others, is expressive of an emergent view and similar in some respects to certain facets of Polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism. An "emergent view" is one which holds that that which is defining of Reform Judaism is some novel or emergent characteristic(s), principle(s), belief(s), product(s) or process(es) of Reform Judaism; i. e., such a view holds that Reform Judaism is essentially different from any previous Judaism(s).

Another basic main stream in the interpretation of Reform Judaism is exemplified by traditional views which deny Reform Judaism novelty per se, and see Reform Judaism as a purified form of earlier Judaism. Some of these interpretations, strictly speaking, are not interpretations of Reform Judaism at all, but are explicitly

set forth as essentialistic philosophies of Judaism.² Interpretations of Reform Judaism which follow this tendency have been abstracted from W. B. Silverman's Basic Reform Judaism; E. Borowitz's Reform Judaism Today - What We Believe, and The Centenary Perspective; and the CCAR's Judaism, A Manual for Proselytes, which appears to rely on 1937 Guiding Principles.³

Various attempts at the philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism can also be classified as complete or incomplete views. An "incomplete view" is one which describes certain basic principles of Reform and draws implications, but fails to determine what Reform essentially is and whether or not it is identical with or different from past Judaism(s).

It is here openly acknowledged that because certain particulars were omitted from that which was selected for the purposes of this abstraction, other interpretative abstractions from these works would reveal them as holding different and sometimes opposing views. This seems to follow from a state of affairs in which the totality of these views as represented in the above works contains positions which would appear to be mutually exclusive.⁴

Emergent Views: Montefiore

In "The Question of Authority in Liberal Judaism", C. G. Montefiore sets forth his own views concerning those issues which were presented in Chapter One concerning the two fundamental

principles of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy.

We cannot blink the facts. Liberal Judaism recognizes no Pope; it has no divinely appointed priesthood; it has no "living church," which can issue decrees that all must obey; it acknowledges no fixed and perfect code; no immaculate and binding Law; no book every utterance of which is divinely inspired and true.⁵

It indeed seems to be the case that Montefiore is in essential agreement with the polydox denial of the existence of the type of revelation which would justify absolute authority. Furthermore, he would appear to hold that Liberal Judaism qua Liberal Judaism denies the existence of such a revelation. Montefiore concludes his argument:

Therefore, in the last resort, it is true to say that the Liberal Jew must be his own Pope, his own Law. Each of us must believe that which is true, each must do that which is right, in his own eyes. There can be no surrender of freedom, for whereas the Orthodox Jew may be said freely to surrender his freedom, and freely to submit to the authority of a Code, (which has gravest implications for Belief as well as endless injunctions for action), the Liberal Jew, not being able to recognize the final authority of that code, must maintain, cherish, stand by, and make use of, his liberty.⁶

C. G. Montefiore's affirmation of a principle of radical freedom, as well as the connection of this affirmation to a non-verbal concept of revelation and acceptance of the Higher Criticism is even more strikingly demonstrated in the subsequent passages:

. . . in Liberal Judaism, there seems to me no halting ground till I come to the decisions of my Reason and my Conscience. What they bid me believe and do, this, and this only, will I do and believe. They alone are my ultimate, and my sufficient, authority. Only in them can I recognize for myself the voice of the Divine.

This sounds extraordinarily conceited and silly. "What," it may be asked: "Do you put your puny individual reason, and your doubtfully pure conscience, before the words of the Bible, or above the experience and wisdom of corporate Israel?" The answer is both yes and no. Yes, for the words of the Bible are by no means of a piece. They do not speak with a single voice, and as to the experience and wisdom of corporate Israel, they too have constantly differed among themselves. As there are many religions besides Judaism, so of Judaism have there been many varieties. It is true that there is a Pentateuchal Code, or rather, as my reason shows me, several Codes of varying ages and natures. As to the origin and worth of these Codes, history, criticism, and comparative religion tell me a good deal; I must listen (so my reason bids me) to what they have to say, and only then can I determine what my attitude towards these Codes must be. The long wisdom of Israel depends upon the Codes, so here too I am in no better case. In other words, there is an undoubted sense in which I do and ought to put my puny reason and my not unsullied conscience before the words of the Bible, and above the experience and wisdom of Corporate Israel.⁷

By "no", Montefiore explains that he will "give good heed" to the bidding of the Prophets, Sages, Psalmists, Law Givers of the Bible, as well as the views of Corporate Israel and the counsel of the Rabbinic teachers. "Yet," he admits, "even here I have to be critical . . . my doubt and my criticism and my disobedience do not diminish my reverence and my humility. . . . when I say my ultimate authority must be my own reason and conscience, I do not mean an uninformed reason and a grossly ignorant conscience."⁸ It appears as if his "no" is a clarification of his "yes".

Realizing that there is in the individual person a need for a religious community, Montefiore introduces his own view of some

of the circumstances which would justify the transfer of authority.

Such a situation occurs with respect to collective worship:

He who cannot remain an active member in the religious group of his fathers, or cannot find another group "suitable to him," is, to that extent, maimed. He leads a less full, or less developed, life than he might otherwise live. Therefore the Liberal Jew may wisely have to accept certain limitations upon his freedom, or if you will, certain contradictions to the best judgments of his reason, in order to secure group life for himself, and to help in securing it for many others. The most important manifestation of religious group life is public worship. Yet as regards public worship, the proverb quot homines, tot sententiae, applies. And not only tot sententiae, but one might add tot gustus. Not only "so many opinions" but also "so many tastes." But public worship means a collective worship, and therefore the wise Liberal Jew will attend a synagogue and help towards its maintenance, and urge others to attend it, where he and they might like many things that are said and done, but by no means necessarily all.⁹

Montefiore clearly recognizes Liberal Judaism as a new Judaism, which can be distinguished from its predecessors in terms of a new concept of authority and the manifold implications of such a new concept:

The old Judaism was held together by an authority. It was the authority of a book, a code, a law. The new Judaism can set up no authority in the place of the old. It cannot ask its adherents to accept an authority, because, for better or worse, it implies and defends the rejection of authority: not merely the rejection of the old authority; the Pentateuchal Codes and the Shulcan Aruch, but the rejection of all final authority in a code or book or church or society as binding, without question, the reason and conscience of the individual. . . . Liberal Judaism stands for movement, for progress, and even for change. It recognizes the right (which does not mean the frequent advisability) of any group of Jews to organize themselves afresh according to their special beliefs and ideals.¹⁰

Liberal Judaism, according to this interpretation, may make recommendations, but cannot issue commandments. There is no absolute authority. Its leaders lead on their own merits, and such authority as they do have derives from their followers. They may find certain doctrines and beliefs to be "essential", but such doctrines are not associated with sanctions against those who do not accept them. Freedom is not violated. Such leaders "would not even wish to possess any power to exclude those who seek admission to the group and yet reserve their adherence" to such doctrines that these leaders might propound concerning God, Morality, and Immortality.¹¹

That beliefs of this nature concerning authority and individual freedom are essential to Liberal Judaism is again confirmed in Montefiore's conclusion to "The Question of Authority in Liberal Judaism":

To conclude. Liberal Judaism, in my opinion, stands for the ultimate and final authority of the reason and conscience of the individual; yet that reason and conscience should be an instructed reason, an educated conscience, ready to listen with reverence and humility to the great religious and moral pronouncements of Biblical and post-Biblical teachers, as well as with due respect and attention to the judgments and advice of the living leaders of Liberal Judaism to-day. It stands for freedom and development, as against the fixity and stagnation of any book or code. Freedom and free self-restriction, freedom and free agreement; but in the last resort no authority except the reason and the conscience of each reverent, earnest, God-seeking, Liberal Jew.¹²
August 7, 1936

Incomplete Views

Note: As we recall, an "incomplete view" is one which describes certain basic principles of Reform and draws implications, but fails to determine what Reform essentially is and whether or not it is identical with or different from past Judaism(s).

Incomplete Views: M. Kaplan

The eighth and ninth chapters of Mordecai Kaplan's magnum opus, Judaism as a Civilization, are devoted to the presentation and analysis of Reform Judaism and his own Reconstructionist critique of same. This analysis, based primarily on the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885, interprets Reform Judaism as essentially a religious philosophy,¹³ based on a variety of non-verbal interpretations of revelation; such interpretations of revelation allow Reform Judaism to deny the infallibility and permanent validity of that which had been traditionally understood as a supernaturally revealed verbal revelation:

. . . But with regard to the concept "Torah" and to all that it implies concerning the form and authority of Judaism's social and cultural institutions, traditional Judaism and Reformism seem to have nothing in common. Reformism practically dispenses with the concept of "Torah." In the platform of the Pittsburgh Conference the very mention of the word Torah is omitted . . .

The main reason for this attitude of Reformism toward Torah is, no doubt, the loss of credence in its supernatural origin. With critical and historical research proving that the Pentateuch is a composite document which began to function as a single code not earlier than in the days of Ezra, the laws and insti-

tutions contained in the Pentateuch are deprived at one blow of the infallibility and permanent validity which traditional Judaism was wont to ascribe to them. From the standpoint of modern thought, all the laws and institutions dealt with in the Pentateuch cannot but be viewed as the spiritual response of various generations of the Jewish people to the needs which those generations experienced. Far from being static, the laws changed with each age under the pressure of shifting circumstances.

. . . By eliminating from Jewish life all occasions for any kind of civic or communal authority, Reformism has struck out the most characteristic element of the Torah . . .¹⁴

In his analysis of the first principle of the Pittsburgh Platform, which stresses the central importance as well as Judaism's possession of the highest conception of the God-idea, Kaplan reaches the conclusion that Reform Judaism is a philosophic religious faith, the doctrines of which should be a matter of choice according to its own principles; i. e., it should give up all pretensions to birth dogma:¹⁵

Having reduced Judaism to a religious philosophy, it will have to go a step farther and give up the idea to which it still holds that "the Jew is born into it (Judaism) and cannot extricate himself from it even by a renunciation of his faith." (According to M. Kaplan's footnote 16 here he is quoting from K. Kohler's Jewish Theology, p. 6.) The adherent of a philosophy should be free to give it up as soon as he finds it unacceptable, for at no time should the element of constraint be a factor in a loyalty whose chief value depends upon its being a matter of choice.¹⁶

Similarly, according to this interpretation of Reform Judaism, certain implications follow concerning the educational process:

A religious philosophy that lays claim to truth based on reason should insist upon that truth being accepted only by those who are sufficiently mature to judge for themselves. What has truth to do with blood relationship? The right procedure should be to acquaint the child with various religious and non-religious philosophies, and then allow him to choose. But the insistence that merely because one is born to Jewish parents he is duty-bound to remain a Jew, is certainly not consistent with the declaration that Judaism is the truest form of religious truth . . .¹⁷

Though noting the absence of authority in Reform¹⁸ and acknowledging the impropriety of birth-dogma in a philosophic religious faith,¹⁹ Kaplan does not explore the nature of freedom or its relation to its process of reform. That is, in terms of the two fundamental principles of a polydoxy, Kaplan addresses the former, but does not appear to deal with the latter principle either as a consequence of the former, or as a principle in its own right. Although his analysis, like Montefiore's, is strikingly analogous (with respect to certain features) to that of Polydoxy, it should be noted that this abstraction omits M. Kaplan's negative views about and objections to Reform Judaism.²⁰

Incomplete Views: S. B. Freehof

Solomon B. Freehof sets forth what appears to be an ambivalent emergent view of Reform Judaism in two of his works; the first being "What is Reform Judaism?" (published in 1937)²¹ wherein he describes what he understands to be the three essential principles of Reform Judaism. The second work further discusses the nature of

authority in Reform Judaism; this work, "Religious Authority in Progressive Judaism," was an address delivered at the Eleventh International Conference of The World Union for Progressive Judaism in 1959.

In "What is Reform Judaism?" Dr. Freehof explains that the strength of Reform is a function of its dynamic character or "spirit of living growth."²² The process nature of his view is further demonstrated by his injunction not to use the phrase "Reformed Judaism", but rather "Reform Judaism". According to Dr. Freehof there are three essential principles "common to the entire Reform movement" through all its changes, in all the countries wherein it has developed.²³ The first of these three essential principles of Reform is:

a) Each generation has the right to change the outward observances of Judaism whenever such change is necessary in order to preserve its inner spirit. It is not so much a question as to how many observances are held to or which observances are abandoned. A man may observe all the dietary laws and other ceremonials and still be Reform, and another neglect them all and still be Orthodox. The man who believes that the ceremonies are helpful and useful, and if no longer helpful may be changed, is a Reform Jew even if he observes them all. The man who believes that the ceremonials of Judaism are law, a mandate which may not be changed, is in principle an Orthodox Jew even if he neglects them all. The prophets of Israel were opposed to the opinion of their contemporaries that the ceremonials of Judaism were God's command. "I did not command your fathers" says Jeremiah (Jer. vii, 22 ff.) "concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices but this I commanded: 'Hearken to my voice. Walk in all the ways that I command you.'" It does not follow that the prophets were opposed to the sacrificial ritual but they deemed it secondary to the

ethical message of Judaism. It is with this point of view that Reform Judaism essentially agrees.²⁴

According to this view Reform Judaism is novel with respect to Orthodox Judaism in that Reform Judaism denies verbal revelation, or at any rate, the implications of verbal revelation, such as the immutability of same. But what might be easily understood in these terms as an emergent view is made somewhat more difficult to understand due to the existence of proof-texting, a method normally associated with Orthodox justifications of "apparent" changes. Here, it is not clear whether Reform Judaism is being interpreted as a new Judaism or as the pure Judaism; it is not clear whether it is the novelty or the tradition which is essential in Dr. Freehof's interpretation of Reform Judaism.

The second essential principle of Reform, according to the interpretation presented in Dr. Freehof's "What is Reform Judaism?" is:

b) Ritual of worship must be modified whenever such modification will make prayer more meaningful. Prayer is not a mystic, magical rite, an incantation. It is a supplication to God (Abot II, 18). It must be sincere and therefore must be in the language which the worshipper understands. That does not mean that Reform, which re-emphasized the vernacular, is opposed to the Hebrew language. Vernacular prayers (Aramaic) were inserted in ancient prayerbooks beside the Hebrew. Some Reform prayerbooks have more Hebrew, some have less. There are many vital reasons why the knowledge of Hebrew should be maintained, but the essence is that prayer should be understood and sincerely uttered. "Recite the Shma," says the Talmud, "in whatever language thou canst understand." (M. Sota VII, 1; B. Sota 32a.)²⁵

Once again the hands are the hands of Esau and the voice is the voice of Jacob. A novel innovation, the restructuring of the traditional liturgy and introduction of new prayers in Reform prayerbooks, has been justified by citations concerning the language of prayer from the same works which legislated the liturgical formulae which were so altered. It is still not yet evident whether it is tradition or novelty which is essential. Changes which might have their basis in a non-verbal concept of revelation are presented as if they were the lenient decisions of an Orthodox halachic process supported by a verbal revelation.

As we will recall, these three principles are Freehof's assertions concerning principles "common to the entire Reform movement."²⁶ What is particularly interesting about the third principle is that it itself acknowledges that it involves some disagreement between Reform rabbis:

c) Israel has a mission in the world. Its presence among the nations is not a mere punishment for past iniquities, nor a temporary abiding place awaiting a removal at the coming of the Messiah. Israel is part of the world process, contributing to the enlightenment of mankind. The older Reform rabbis held that this doctrine involved a denial of the return to Zion and of the reestablishment of the entire Messianic dream involving sacrifices, the Temple, and priesthood. Since the rise of Zionism they extended this principle into an opposition to the Zionist movement. Many Reform rabbis, staunch Zionists, believe that that is an unwarranted extension of the old idea. At all events, there is no Reform rabbi, whatever he may believe about Palestine and Israel's achievements there, who will deny the positive element in the doctrine of the earlier Reformers taken from the Prophets that Israel

in the world must be a light unto the nations. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of thy hand, and kept thee, and set thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." (Isaiah XLII, 6, 7.)²⁷

One could arrive at the conclusion that Reform Judaism, if it were as Freehof is here presenting it, is a new Orthodoxy claiming to be the True Israel on the basis of proof-texting from an authoritative scriptural text, in a fashion somewhat akin to that of the authors of the Gospels. To say that this view is an ambivalent emergent view of Reform is perhaps to say more than the abstracted sources thus far justify. Given the present citations, it would seem more tenable to describe this interpretation as an ambivalent orthodoxy.

This ambivalence in terms of novelty is evidenced in Freehof's description of the problems presented to a concept of verbal revelation by the Higher Criticism:

It was becoming clear that together with all the liberal forms of religion, Reform Judaism must now grope towards a new definition of authority and revelation; otherwise, its form of Judaism would degenerate into mere convenient construct of wilfully chosen observances, in which the will of God is only metaphorically present, but in which there is really no such thing as a commandment.²⁸

In his quest for an authoritative support in Reform, Freehof admits the propriety of Reform novelty with respect to a new definition of authority and revelation. He also seems to imply that in the absence of such an acceptable new Doctrine of Revelation that

Reform Judaism would emerge as a polydoxy.²⁹

In the beginning of the following paragraph Freehof admits that, "A doctrine of Divine Revelation which can reach the heart of modern man is still to be developed."³⁰ He thus reveals the ambivalence by setting up the premisses while failing to complete the argument. Similarly, he states, "We cannot completely deny God's presence in the rabbinic literature,"³¹ while acknowledging that Reform Judaism in its procedures has obeyed many rabbinic customs and neglected many more and proclaiming, "As long as we are thus selective we cannot believe that rabbinic law is God's mandate."³²

It is not until the conclusion of "Religious Authority in Reform Judaism" that Dr. Freehof denies absolute authority to Jewish Law (i. e., the Halachic process). Even this relatively clear denial occurs in association with two examples of such appropriate denial which themselves are possessed of parenthetical ambivalence:

If, for example, a study of the law would reveal that a full marriage service can be conducted only in the presence of a minyan of ten (which by the way, is open to some question) that decision would certainly influence us, but we would still occasionally conduct a marriage ceremony in the rabbi's study in the presence of only two witnesses. If a study of the law would reveal that only a pious mohel may perform circumcision, such a decision (which is also open to question) would influence us toward the use of mohelim, but would hardly prevent us from using a surgeon, especially a Jewish surgeon. In other words, the law is authoritative enough to influence us, but not so completely as to control us. The rabbinic law is our guidance, but not our governance.³³

The situation is not clear: either it is the case (as in Polydoxy)

that verbal revelation and absolute authority by right are denied or it is the case that Reform Judaism is a somewhat more lenient new Orthodoxy which remains silent concerning the nature and legitimacy of revelation.

Incomplete Views: S. L. Regner

Sidney L. Regner's "The Quest for Authority in Reform Judaism"³⁴ surveys the history of "authority" in Reform Judaism from the time of Holdheim and Geiger, through the Leipzig and Augsburg synods of 1869 and 1871, and continuing with Isaac Mayer Wise's America. In this article, S. Regner describes that which Freehof termed a "grope towards a new definition of authority and revelation."³⁵

In his concluding analysis, S. Regner holds that this quest for authority in Reform is in itself illusory, that Reform has rejected the basis for such authority by virtue of its acknowledgement of Biblical criticism and historical studies. His words on this matter could be read as a direct response to those of Freehof; but, unlike Freehof, Regner is less ambivalent in his acknowledgement that there is no justification in Reform Judaism for absolute authority:

The question of authority is still an unresolved problem. There are those who speak of Reform halachah, although we do not hear the term used as frequently as in the past. It is difficult to understand what is meant by the term. It certainly is not halachah in the old sense, the basis of which is gone, undermined by historical studies and Biblical criticism, and with no means of enforcement. One may

ask what its relationship is to the contents of the old halachah. If one depends on lenient decisions in the Talmud and the Codes, what about situations in which we must depart entirely from the old sources? And if one says we act not on the letter but in the spirit of the old halachah, who determines what the spirit is? Who in fact determines what so-called Reform halachah is? The matter becomes purely subjective.

We hear a good deal about Mitzvah. Mitzvah implies obligation, and indeed those who use the term use it in this sense. But what is the source of the obligation? Traditionally a mitzvah was commanded by God and this is what created the obligation to perform it. But if it is the purely voluntary assumption of what we decide to regard as obligatory, we are left again with pure subjectivity.

A review of the failure of the efforts to establish a basis for authority in Reform leads to the conclusion that the quest itself is illusory. Reform, if it continues to be true to its genius, must remain free. It must also remain Jewish. And this is the dilemma. Instead of seeking some basis for authority perhaps we should candidly assert a pragmatic approach to the changes we make. Some changes are patently out of bounds, such as imports from other religions with ideological content alien to and unassimilable by Judaism, which if espoused would be at once rejected by the Reform Jewish community. Some changes would run their course and be discarded. Others would become part of the main body of Reform Judaism.³⁶

As one might discern from a careful reading of the last paragraph, some ambivalence remains concerning the total and clear rejection of absolute authority in Reform; unless, of course, the changes which are "out of bounds" are changes which are rejected by every member of the Reform Jewish community (for in a case of such unanimity, no one is being subjected to absolute authority). Such a situation does indeed occur in Reform Judaism as a polydoxy with respect to the two fundamental principles of a

polydoxy, which are indeed elements the change of which is "out of bounds."

In his concluding analysis, Regner holds that the quest for authority in Reform is futile; that the absence of a verbal revelation implicit in Reform's acceptance of Biblical criticism precludes the grounds for such authority. Thus, like Kaplan, and possibly like Freehof, Regner seems to acknowledge that the first principle of a polydoxy is intrinsic to Reform Judaism. Unlike Montefiore and Reines, he does not explore at any great length the implications of same; neither does he appear to wholeheartedly affirm the existence and value of the related second principle of freedom in Reform Judaism.

Thus far, our sampling of certain abstractions from the literature concerning the "philosophical" interpretation of Reform Judaism has revealed a variety of interpretations of Reform Judaism which range widely in their resemblance to that of Polydoxy. The resemblance was strikingly close with respect to Montefiore; it was extremely limited with respect to the interpretation of Freehof (which could not be separated by any even partially faithful process of abstraction from a certain ambivalence). Kaplan appeared to accept the basic correctness of a polydox interpretation of Reform, but limited his exploration of freedom to the educational process, and rejected Reform Judaism thus interpreted. In the case of the relationship of Polydoxy's treatment of authority to that of Regner, we

seem to have a relation of standard to abridged.³⁷

Traditional Views

The traditional views of the interpretation of Reform Judaism, in contrast to the emergent views, do not appear to be particularly concerned with the problem of justifying authority in Reform Judaism. Like Freehof, they tend to associate authority with traditional sources; unlike Freehof, they do not usually explore the nature of this association to the problem of authority in Reform. But the primary, and essential or defining characteristic of traditional views of Reform Judaism lies in their denial of essential novelty to Reform Judaism. These interpretations tend to see Reform as an essential or purified Judaism, even though they acknowledge the legitimacy of some non-verbal concept of revelation.

Traditional Views: CCAR, 1946: Judaism

An elegant treatment in this vein which exemplifies this type of approach to Reform Judaism can be found in Judaism, A Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes. Published in 1946 by the Central Conference of American Rabbis as a manual for converts, this manual had as a manual for converts, to fulfill the task of stating the basic principles of the Reform Judaism which such a proselyte was obliged to believe in order to become a Reform Jew. Apparently written in consonance with the Guiding Principles of 1937,³⁸ this work holds that the four most important principles of Judaism are:

- (1) The belief in one, holy God (supported/presented along with citations from Deut. 6:4; Isa. 6:3);
- (2) Man's twofold duty to lead a righteous and holy life (Lev. 19:2, 18; Deut. 16:20);
- (3) "The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" (Malachi 2:10);
- (4) Israel's special duty to communicate God and His will to all mankind (Ex. 19:6) and the ideal of universal peace (Is. 2:4).³⁹

After setting forth a dynamic concept of revelation,⁴⁰ Judaism further clarifies Reform's position regarding verbal revelation in terms of the basic difference between Orthodox and Reform Judaism:

The basic difference between Orthodox and Reform Judaism is on the question of Revelation. Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah (Five Books of Moses) was literally dictated by God to Moses; hence it is divine, perfect and unchangeable. They believe further that the traditional interpretation of the Bible, "the oral Torah," now contained in the Talmud, was also given by God to Moses and is likewise binding. Orthodox Jews therefore are expected to observe without change or deviation all the Biblical and talmudic regulations of diet, worship, and conduct.

Reform Judaism holds the view we have already presented--that revelation is a continuing process. With all reverence for the Bible and for Jewish tradition, we can not follow them slavishly and mechanically. We do not try to believe what is contrary to reason and scientific knowledge; and we may discard observances that have lost their religious or ethical meaning for us. We distinguish between the changeless and basic truths of Judaism, and its changing outward forms. Liberal Judaism has eliminated many traditional customs; it has also added new observances, such as the ceremony of confirmation for boys and

girls.

All believing Jews accept as true the four basic principles we have listed in the section "What is Judaism?" Orthodox Jews would add a fifth principle: the law of the Torah is forever binding on all Jews.⁴¹

One might express some curiosity as to why this interpretation is viewed as a traditional view while Freehof's (for example) is not. Both concepts acknowledge that there is no verbal revelation in Reform; the second, perhaps even more than Freehof's, acknowledges freedom; they both acknowledge change, and the latter even allows for new ceremony. Yet, it is Judaism that speaks of the changeless and basic truths of Judaism and sets forth what amounts to four dogmas of the essential Judaism which all Jews believe. Concerning how these basic dogmas were arrived at, and how it was determined that all "Believing Jews" believe them (unless what we have is a "persuasive definition" of "Believing Jew"), these and other questions are left unanswered, and unasked. All we are told is that there is an essential Judaism of which Reform is an expression, and that the basic truths of Judaism are unchanged, whereas some novelty is allowed with respect to "outward (presumably non-essential) forms."

Traditional Views: More Pronounced Versions

Some writers are more blatant than others in their denial of fundamental novelty to Reform Judaism. Consider, for example, Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman's remarks in Reform Judaism A Guide

for Reform Jews, which (like Judaism) is at least partially based on the Guiding Principles of 1937.⁴²

When we speak of Reform Judaism we are not speaking of a new kind of Judaism. It was only the name that was new as it came into being near the end of the 18th century in Germany. This name has become the label of that interpretation of Judaism which recognizes and emphasizes the dynamic character of the Jewish religion--dynamic, which is the opposite of arrested or static Judaism. Reform Judaism emphasizes what is inherent in all Judaism, the principle of progression in the concepts and forms of the Jewish religion. Reform has its roots in the past! It proudly acknowledges the glory, the dignity, the validity of Jewish tradition. It chooses to identify itself with the tradition and it refuses to admit that Jewish tradition is something which is petrified, the crystallization of any one moment or era of Jewish religious thought and experience. The idea of a progressive Jewish tradition is not new. The Jewish tradition always was progressive but, especially in the 15th through the 18th centuries, an effort was made to freeze it. When the ghetto disappeared and the period of emancipation began, this frozen tradition failed to hold and to satisfy those generations because of its completely unbending and, in a very real sense, unorthodox position. It was then that a group of Jews, led by laymen at first, decided that it was time to unfreeze the tradition, and attempted the long overdue and the long dammed-up adjustments. This was the beginning of the modern Reform.⁴³

And so it is that Feldman informs us that Reform Judaism has been around for a very long time, that in fact, Judaism has always been essentially a Reforming Judaism, and that people like Orthodox Jews, who oppose changes, aren't orthodox Jews at all. The passion of Feldman's remarks on this issue is surpassed by treatments such as that abstracted from William B. Silverman's Basic Reform Judaism, in which we learn that Reform Judaism is more traditional

than Orthodoxy:

A true comprehension of historical Judaism reveals a principle of dynamism not only in "Reform" Judaism, but in an historical, evolving Judaism itself. Accordingly, basic, definitive, traditional Judaism is not Orthodox Judaism, as is commonly held, but Reform Judaism.

The principle that has characterized Judaism since its inception to the present day is the process of creative and constructive change--not for the sake of change, but in order to meet the religious needs of a growing, constantly evolving, progressive and progressing religious faith. Accordingly Reform Judaism is more traditional than Orthodoxy, more basically and historically true to the fundamental principle of Judaism than is Orthodoxy, for the reason that from the beginning Judaism has been Reform Judaism characterized by constructive change, progressive growth, and the continuous introduction of new ritual and congregational processes.⁴⁴

According to such a traditional view, any novelty which is introduced in Reform Judaism isn't really a novelty at all - that is, Reform Judaism is using a traditionally essential process of Judaism to introduce new products. It is this process itself which is viewed as lying at the heart of Judaism and its tradition. Any Judaism, such as Orthodoxy (as Silverman conceives it), which violates this progressive process which is essential to Judaism is not really traditional at all, but is introducing a real novelty with respect to process. Such, it would appear, are the possible implications of such an argument.

According to this view, virtually every event in the Jewish historical continuum was Reform. The Bible, Talmud, Codes, and Responsa are all seen as "literary reforms."⁴⁵ Abraham, Moses,⁴⁶

Ezra, Hillel, Gershom, Baal Shem Tov and Mendelssohn are all

"reformers".⁴⁷ Reform Judaism is Judaism:

. . . It is not Reform Judaism, but Reform Judaism.

Reform Judaism is not a sect, a splinter group, a separatist faction, a different brand or a deviation from a religion that began at Sinai and has grown and changed through the millenia of history. It has been nurtured by the same Torah, the same inspiration, the same literature, the same traditions, the same inspired leadership, the same prophetic passion for social justice, the same sublime yearning for God.

Reform Judaism may be regarded as a branch of Judaism, an interpretation of Judaism or even a movement within Judaism, but it is always Judaism--evolving, challenging, dynamic, creative, living Judaism.⁴⁸

This traditional view of Silverman also involves the Guiding Principles of 1937,⁴⁹ and expresses a non-verbal notion of dynamic or progressive revelation:⁵⁰

Reform Judaism rejects a certain interpretation of Jewish Law and will not accept the view that a law, once on the books, is valid and binding forever after--whether or not it has any relevance to the conditions of life under which Jews are living.

Reform Jews do, however, believe in the Law. The reading from the Torah, and the solemn opening and closing of the Ark, are still the central features of the Reform service. Reform Jews still say the blessing: "Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, Ruler of the world, who hast chosen us from among all peoples and hast given us Thy law."

In one respect, though, Reform Jews do differ from their Orthodox brethren. While Reform Jews believe that God is the Author of Law, most of them no longer believe that God thundered down on Mount Sinai all the detailed provisions which are now found in the pages of the Torah.⁵¹

Like many of the previous interpretations of Reform, Silverman's acknowledges the first principle of a polydoxy in Reform; i. e. ,

the absence of a verbal revelation is granted. But here again, the fundamental implications concerning the legitimacy of authority are simply not considered.

Traditional Views: Borowitz and the Centenary Perspective

Diversity Within Unity, the Hallmark of Reform

Reform Jews respond to change in various ways according to the Reform principle of the autonomy of the individual. However, Reform Judaism does more than tolerate diversity; it engenders it. In our uncertain historical situation we must expect to have far greater diversity than previous generations knew. How we shall live with diversity without stifling dissent and without paralyzing our ability to take positive action will test our character and principles. We stand open to any position thoughtfully and conscientiously advocated in the spirit of Reform Jewish beliefs. While we may differ in our interpretation and application of the ideas enunciated here, we accept such differences as precious and see in them Judaism's best hope for confronting whatever the future holds for us. Yet in all our diversity we perceive a certain unity and we shall not allow our differences in some particulars to obscure what binds us together.⁵²

The next section of the Centenary Perspective on "God"

begins, "The affirmation of God has always been essential to our people's will to survive . . . " and concludes with, " . . . Amid the mystery we call life, we affirm that human beings, created in God's image, share in God's eternity despite the mystery we call death."⁵³ Given the phrasing of the previous paragraph, the reader might have concluded that subsequent uses of the term "we" would function as the subjects of propositions which were agreed upon by all Reform Jews, and therefore were statements which proceeded

from and demonstrated our unity concerning "that which binds us together." "Yet," as Borowitz notes in his commentary on the Centenary Perspective, Reform Judaism Today: What We Believe, "this distinctive Reform Jewish emphasis is absent from the opening paragraph on God."⁵⁴ Since such a point is not made concerning diversity of Reform theological belief, and since according to the principle of personal autonomy the right belongs to individual Jews "to make the final decision as to what constitutes Jewish belief and practice for them(selves),"⁵⁵ one would expect the subsequent theological proposition, of which "we" is and we are the subject, to express that to which we consent. One might have assumed that these beliefs which bind us together are beliefs which all of us share. As it turns out, such an assumption would be four fifths correct, and twenty per cent wrong:

. . . For safety's sake we agreed . . . to adopt an unofficial criterion of 80 percent of the Conference as the group whose views we would seek to articulate. Thus it was our rule of thumb that anything we felt more than twenty percent of the Conference might disagree with could not be included in the document.⁵⁶

The Centenary Perspective does not itself mention that it may not express the views of up to one fifth of us.

Such a methodology does, however, make it somewhat easier to locate the unity present in the diversity. One abstracts unity from diversity, and for the sake of the abstraction, ignores the diversity. It is not surprising that with such dissent eliminated,

that "we perceive a certain unity." And, in its own way, the Centenary Perspective does acknowledge its own nature when it states, "we shall not allow our differences to obscure what binds (80 per cent of) us together."⁵⁷

In a manner similar to that of the Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes, the Centenary Perspective maintains that Reform Jews share beliefs with respect to God, Israel, Torah, and certain mysteries (including human eternity).⁵⁸

The use of certain words and phrases in the Centenary Perspective, such as "always", "Throughout our long history", "For millenia", etc. might be perceived as weighting the language of the Perspective towards a traditional view of Reform.⁵⁹

Discussion: Polydoxy, Emergent Views, and Traditional Views

There have been two divergent trends within Reform Judaism. One has put its stress on the noun Judaism, the other on the adjective Reform. The first seeks to maintain the continuity of Reform with the Jewish past, the second sees Reform as a revolutionary break with the past.⁶⁰

It would seem that both the traditional and the emergent views make allowances for the acceptance of the first essential principle of a polydoxy within Reform; i. e., Reform Judaism denies that there exists a verbal revelation of the type which would justify absolute authority (i. e., the kind of revelation which justifies an orthodoxy. Generally, these denials have been accompanied by, or accomplished through, the affirmation of either dynamic or

natural revelation. Thus far, the three platform statements to which we have alluded,⁶¹ Montefiore, Kaplan, Freehof, Silverman, Regner, Judaism, and Borowitz seem to agree in their interpretation of Reform. This agreement remains whether their interpretations be emergent or traditional.

Where these interpretations differ from Polydoxy is with respect to the implications recognized in the interpretations themselves. The incomplete views as well as the traditional views seem to be advocating dogmas, dogmas the nature of which would seem to constitute a denial of the second essential principle of a polydoxy, that of radical freedom or ultimate self-authority of the individual in the realm of religion. What is most peculiar is that some of these interpretations explicitly affirm such a principle of freedom.⁶² While none of these interpretations explicitly deny that which seems to follow logically and morally from the absence of a verbal revelation (i. e. , justifiable absolute authority in the realm of religion), virtually all of them set forth some principle, belief, or practice (imitatio dei in Judaism,⁶³ immortality in the Centenary Perspective,⁶⁴ or the prohibition of intermarriage by Montefiore⁶⁵) the violation of which apparently vitiates the violator's status as a Reform Jew in Good Standing.

When Silverman, Judaism, or the Centenary Perspective hold that we Reform Jews believe in God, Torah, Israel, mysteries, etc. , the implication would seem to be present that those who do not so

are not Reform Jews, at least not good ones. For example, if an institution of Reform were to publish a traditional enumeration of Reform Jewish beliefs which associated such statements with a certain unity of belief, that institution would apparently be setting forth dogmas, doctrines based on an ecclesiastical authority, the non-acceptance of which is not permitted the Reform Jew qua "Reform Jew," Reform Jew in good standing," "mainstream Reform Jew," etc. Fortunately (for those who advocate a principle of radical freedom), a certain vagueness in traditional essentialisms, in combination with their own occasional affirmations of such a principle of freedom, might mitigate their strivings for absolute authority.

Discussion: Methodological or Procedural Flaw in Traditional Views

The main difficulty with any traditional view concerning Reform Judaism as a purified or essential Judaism would seem to be situated in the realm of adequacy. It is not, it would seem, adequate to Reform Jewish experience for one to set forth as Reform Jewish belief that which one knows, or has good grounds to suspect, is not the belief of respected Reform Jews (not to mention other Jews whom they may represent). One would seek an argument with more force than the goal of consensus. For example, such an enumeration of Reform Jewish beliefs should not fail to expressly take into account--throughout its enumeration--the views of say, even one tenth of the members of the CCAR who, presumably, are Reform Jews in good standing possessing whatever might be construed

as the essential beliefs of Reform Judaism.⁶⁶ It is assumed here that to be a member in good standing of a religion entails belief in the fundamental principles of that religion.

Certain respected Reform Jewish leaders, presumably Reform Jews in good standing, would seem to have few or no beliefs in common with those set forth by the committees which produced the Centenary Perspective or Judaism. What one individual regards as essential with respect to Judaism may have little or nothing in common with the views of another. Dr. Reines, for example, might perceive an essential stream of rationality in Judaism which is evidenced by a demand for objectively demonstrated infallible knowledge in order to justify absolute authority in the realm of religion.⁶⁷ The Centenary Perspective, on the other hand, holds that the affirmation of God is such an abiding or essential principle, essential to our people's will to survive, and apparently, a belief which binds us together.⁶⁸

The advent of secular Zionism might function as a counter-indication to such essentialistic descriptions. The proponents of such views could hold that there are exceptions to every rule, and an interesting study could be undertaken in which one would investigate the relationship of such essential principles to events and processes in the religious history of our people.

For the purpose of this study, however, undemonstrated traditional views will be seen as suffering from inadequacy with respect

to the explanation of differences in Jewish experience, the degree of inadequacy being proportional to the magnitude of the experience unexplained.⁶⁹

Concluding Methodological Postscript:

Questions concerning the relative adequacy of these alternative views with respect to Polydoxy, as well as related questions concerning identity relationships between Polydox Reform Judaism and other "Judaisms" will be deferred until some of the extant critiques of Polydoxy have been themselves presented and considered. After that time, with more of the groundwork laid, treatment of these and related issues will be undertaken.

Until that time, Chapter Two, as it were, necessarily remains incomplete with respect to philosophic interpretation and critique.

CHAPTER THREE

SOME PREVIOUS CRITIQUES OF POLYDOXY

As the reader will recall, a religious system can be characterized as "polydox" if and only if it subscribes to the two essential principles of a polydoxy:

- 1) There exists no authority, whether a person or document, that has issued commandments that members of the community subscribing to the religious system must obey; i. e., there is no entity with the right to absolute authority.
- 2) All such members remain within the presumption of their own radical religious freedom or self-authority; i. e., each member is his/her own ultimate religious authority whose freedom is limited only in that it ends where others' freedom begins.¹

A distinction was previously made between "polydoxy" (a religious system possessing the two essential principles of a polydoxy) and "Polydoxy" (the proper name of the polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism systematized and set forth by Dr. Alvin Reines). This distinction of polydoxy from Polydoxy was deemed sufficient for the purposes of explication and comparison in the previous chapters. For those purposes, the wary reader was given notice that elements not essential to a polydoxy in Dr. Reines' own polydox interpretation of Reform would be associated to Reinesian Polydoxy.² This convention of capitalization bears a distinct resemblance to what is indeed normal usage.

Now, however, in order to further limit confusions in the sensitive area of critique, the words "Reinesian Polydoxy" will be

used in place of the earlier convention to indicate Dr. Reines' system which includes propositions (concerning the nature of religion, for example) which may be consistent with the two basic principles of a polydoxy while themselves not essential to a polydoxy. "Essential Polydoxy" will be used to refer to the two principles; "polydoxy" refers to any system which accepts these principles.

With this distinction in mind, it should be evident that there exist at least two polydoxies to be criticized. It should also be clear that one type of criticism will be more basic than another. If Essential Polydoxy were refuted, all polydoxies including Reinesian Polydoxy would suffer. However, just because the distinction between Essential and Reinesian Polydoxy has been set forth here in no way implies that the other critiques have made a similar distinction.

Jakob J. Petuchowski, Norbert Samuelson, Sherwin T. Wine, and Bruce S. Warshal have all set forth criticisms of Reinesian Polydoxy. Of these, some have focused their criticism on one of the essential principles; others have gone further.

Jakob J. Petuchowski

Dr. Petuchowski argues that the basic methodological question implicit in any endeavor to lay down criteria for Reform Judaism in such a way as to include the "non-theists who belong to Reform Temples (or occupy Reform pulpits)"⁴ is itself based on a mistake

when it refuses to make Theism a part of the criteria. He sets forth his views in an article, "Footnotes to the Current Debate":

If the definition of Reform Judaism must do justice to all who call themselves Reform Jews, and if it should be discovered that some unethical business men are members of Reform Congregations (needless to say, this is a purely hypothetical argument!), then the definition of Reform Judaism must be such that unethical business men are not being "crowded out" by it. To say in this case that ethical conduct is an absolute, while Theism is not, would be quite arbitrary and subjective. Who is to lay down the standards?! That, in the long run, such a broad definition of Reform Judaism would become increasingly meaningless needs no further underlining. Yet the fact remains that Reform Judaism is indeed becoming a polydoxy.⁵

Concerning the absence of an infallible revelation in Reform, Dr. Petuchowski suggests that the modern Jews may regard themselves as possessing the "תורה" which tells them what is human in Scripture, and what is divine."⁶ Quoting the Union Prayer Book (Vol. 1, p. 34), "God does not hide His light from any generation of His children that yearn for Him and seek His guidance," Dr. Petuchowski goes on to point out that "the yearning and the seeking are, of course, prerequisites."⁷ If this were the case, it would then seem that individual Reform Jews would be capable of receiving infallible revelations which would entitle them to authority over other Reform Jews.

Dr. Petuchowski concluded this article with an alternative to a polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism, a traditional essentialism in which Reform Judaism preserves the God of Israel and an ever-

renewable Covenant:

The "Jewishness" of Reform Judaism (and, therefore, its very survival) may well hinge upon our acceptance, not of the theistic "God concept" per se, but of the living God of Israel to Whom we are bound by an ancient and yet ever-renewable Covenant. There may be some (whether few or many) who cannot accept that. There always have been; and there is no reason why our age should be different in this respect. But it so happens that Reform Judaism itself came into being to safeguard that very affirmation in an age which had radically broken with the past. Ceremonies and observances could be sacrificed to the Zeitgeist of the nineteenth century, and that all the more readily because (rightly or wrongly) it was assumed that the "essence of Judaism" was independent of them. Yet, at all costs, that "essence" was to be saved. That's what Reform Judaism has been all about. Can modern semantics negate our own past?⁸

It is quite clear that Dr. Petuchowski is opposed to Reform Judaism as a polydoxy. What is not quite so clear is whether he rejects polydoxy as an interpretation of Reform Judaism, or whether he (like Mordecai Kaplan) rejects Reform Judaism itself qua polydoxy. If the former is the case, then he disagrees with Dr. Reines' interpretation of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy. If the latter is the case, he may well agree with Reines' interpretation, and yet find Reform Judaism so interpreted to be a morally and religiously unacceptable entity with little chance of survival. The latter is a criticism of a different kind; it might be seen as a diagnosis and prognosis of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy. Perhaps the situation will become more clear as we consider these criticisms.

Before we consider the first criticism, it might be of some

value to mention that nowhere in either Essential Polydoxy or Reinesian Polydoxy is it stated (or, to this writer's knowledge, implied) that a definition of Reform Judaism must do justice to all who call themselves Reform Jews. On the contrary, the entire argument is based on the concept(s) of revelation to which Reform Judaism subscribes (fallible), and the logical and moral implications of such a concept.

In the first criticism, Dr. Petuchowski makes an analogy between "unethical business practices" and "non-theistic belief." There is no reason, he explains, for Reform Judaism to reject unethical business practices and accept non-theistic beliefs. To elevate ethics over theistic beliefs is to be arbitrary and subjective.

Yet, in spite of the force of this analogy, it seems that "non-ethical business practices" are not the same sort of things as "non-theistic beliefs."⁹ To distinguish between the denial of a generally agreed upon proposition and the denial of one of the most debated propositions in religious history seems to be neither arbitrary nor subjective. A closer (though less forceful) analogy might perhaps have been between "unethical business practices" and "inappropriate beliefs."

According to the second point, a modern Jew can apparently know what is human in Scripture and what is divine. That is, one can, according to Dr. Petuchowski, by means of the "רוח ה' (and the proper attitude of yearning and seeking) approach the Toranic

Revelation (dynamically conceived) and sort out the divine and presumably authoritative elements from the human and unauthoritative. This point is not susceptible to any attempt at refutation.¹⁰ No way has been put forth to verify or falsify a given individual's claim to authoritative revelation by means of "עֲדָתָם אֵלֹהִים". This is not to say that individuals have or not have had experiences which they have understood in this manner. It is to indicate that there are no means by which to validate these experiences, or for that matter, to invalidate them. For some readers, this will weaken such a view; for others, this will be a sign of its strength.

The third criticism points out that the "Jewishness" of Reform Judaism and the possibility of its very survival might be contingent upon its acceptance of a living God to Whom we are bound by an ever-renewable Covenant. The existence of such a God and Covenant is presumably the distinctively Jewish aspect which cannot be denied.

Dr. Petuchowski may be right. After all, if one assumes that words mean what they are usually used to mean, and that meanings vary according to the vicissitudes of history, one might allow for a number of possibilities. Polydox Reform Judaism might not continue as a distinctively Jewish movement; it might continue for a long time and be rejected; it might last for thousands of years. The examples of the early Christian communities, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees are sufficient to show that the forces of history in conjunction with

certain decisions of a community can decide the fate of a new form of Jewish religiosity.

Yet, to affirm that Reform Judaism may well be doomed if it continues in a certain fashion is not the same as to deny that Reform Judaism is or ought to be a polydoxy, given its concept of revelation.

Dr. Petuchowski does not seem to agree with Dr. Reines on the desirability of a Polydox Reform Judaism; but, at the time of this criticism (1965), he appeared to maintain that, "the fact remains that Reform Judaism is indeed becoming a polydoxy."¹¹

In summary, three criticisms were presented in the "Footnotes." The one which had direct bearing on Essential Polydoxy involved the assertion that there is a means to sort out the divine revelation from a revelation dynamically conceived, the "רוח הקודש". This argument was treated in so far as was possible in light of the fact that it may be interpreted in a manner which precludes the possibility of offering counter-evidence for refutation. The other two criticisms were also treated, but do not appear to directly affect the interpretation of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy which Dr. Petuchowski may well be accepting as correct while rejecting as an immoral and inappropriate form of Jewish religiosity which, in his estimate, has little chance of survival.

Norbert Samuelson

In "A Therapy for Religious Definitions: Guides and Ignosticism in Reform Judaism," Rabbi Samuelson criticizes "a particular conception of Reform Judaism" which "has no specific title."¹² Apparently not recognizing the legitimacy of the term "polydoxy", he prefers to discuss "the radical freedom doctrine," a position which he thinks "is clearly fallacious."¹³

Rabbi Samuelson presents a dialogue between a Mr. P and a Rabbi Q who advocates radical freedom. In this discussion, Mr. P argues that according to the principle of radical freedom, a liberal Christian who wants to take the name "Reform Jew" has a right to that name.¹⁴

Rabbi Q objects. Unfortunately (with respect to the adequacy of Rabbi Samuelson's critique), he does not object in terms of any of the principles of a polydoxy, whether Essential or Reinesian. One might, for example, have expected him to reply with criteria for distinguishing between religions. Rabbi Q does not object on such grounds; nor does it seem that he comprehends the nature of a Polydox Reform Judaism.¹⁵

Rabbi Samuelson continues his exposition of the radical freedom doctrine with another brief conversation between Mr. P and Rabbi Q:

"You have told me what a Reform Jew has the freedom to do", asks Mr. P, "but what sort of things may he not do?"

"Well, for example, while a Reform Jew is free to eat pork", replies Rabbi Q, "he may not go to an Orthodox synagogue on Yom Kippur and eat his pork there."

"But why not?", asks Mr. P. "Because", answers

Rabbi Q, "it's simply in bad taste to do things like that."
 "Oh," replies Mr. R, "then good taste is a tenet
 and criterion of Reform Judaism. But that too is strange." ¹⁶

This writer is forced to agree with Rabbi Samuelson that Rabbi Q's reply is indeed strange. As a matter of fact, it appears to be a little too strange. One would have expected Rabbi Q to reply in terms of the freedom principle itself. If an individual so acts, as in the above case, as to obstruct the religious activities of other Jews, then he is violating their freedom. Apparently, the possibility of violating someone's freedom has not yet occurred to Rabbi Q. This is possibly also the reason why Rabbi Q is expected by Mr. P to be maintaining a principle which precludes the existence of rules of procedure in a community organized around freedom; such a community must be anarchic. ¹⁷

What Mr. P and Rabbi Q apparently fail to notice is that such a community is organized around such a principle; that such a principle protects the rights of those in the community with implications on their theology, liturgy, ritual, and education as outlined in Chapter One.

Arguing that the absence of definitions for Judaism is grounds against creating a definition for Reform Judaism, ¹⁸ Rabbi Samuelson suggests that institutional Reform should stress guides, not platforms of belief. "Someone says, 'I want to convert; what does a Jew believe?' The answer is, 'Don't ask, what should I believe; ask rather, what should I do?'" One need not survey the extant definitions of Judaism

and Reform Judaism in order to point out that this separation of belief and action would seem to be an excellent example of what Whitehead meant when he used the word "incoherence" to refer to the arbitrary disconnection of first principles.¹⁹

When this writer agrees with Rabbi Samuelson that the radical freedom doctrine as understood by Rabbi Q is "clearly fallacious" he does so because Rabbi Q arrives at conclusions which have nothing to do with his premise of radical freedom. But the fallacy lies with the argument of Rabbi Q, not with the principle of radical freedom.

Sherwin T. Wine

In an article entitled "Polydoxy,"²⁰ Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine presents his own critique of what he understands to be the principles of Reinesian Polydoxy. Throughout this treatment, Rabbi Wine assumes that the Polydox Judaism which he is criticizing is a new religious form like the Humanistic Judaism which he himself founded. Therefore, it is the case that when Rabbi Wine criticizes Reinesian Polydoxy that he is criticizing the principles themselves and not their relationship to the interpretation of Reform Judaism.

Rabbi Wine apparently relied primarily on one of Dr. Reines' articles, "Crisis, Polydoxy, and Survival"²¹ as well as his own conversations with polydoxists, not to mention information from some of Dr. Reines' students who are themselves active in

Humanistic Judaism. It is possible that his limited selection of sources affected the adequacy of his critique.²²

Rabbi Wine first presents what he takes to be a basic principle of Reines' and then offers a criticism of each one; we shall treat his criticisms similarly.

In his first criticism, Rabbi Wine considers what he understands to be Reines' concept of religion. According to Rabbi Wine, Rabbi Wine basically agrees with Dr. Reines' definition of "religion":

Religion. What Reines affirms is generally valid. Religion begins with the fear of death, or of the dead. It proceeds to use the reverence for the dead to enforce certain moral standards and it celebrates this reverence through community celebrations. The moral and community dimension is only one of the two major aspects of the religious enterprise. The other is the fascination with supernatural power (the power possessed by the dead) - how to appease it and how to use it.²³

Rabbi Wine may be in less agreement with Dr. Reines than he thinks. It seems that Wine's anthropological interpretation could be wrong and Reines' metapsychological definition right, and vice versa. As we will recall, Reines defines "religion" as the human response to finitude; according to Reines' definition, a given religion may have nothing to do with supernatural power or the appeasement thereof. In this writer's opinion, Rabbi Wine has not offered a criticism of Reines' definition of religion at all; rather, he has proposed one of his own.

Rabbi Wine claims that, "Reines' definition of a Jew is a generous commonsensical explanation, which is re-enforced by

the way people normally use the word."²⁴ But, Rabbi Wine sees the Jewish community as a family which one enters by birth or through "adoption"; not as a religious community which one enters by profession.²⁵ In doing so, Rabbi Wine disagrees with what Reines seems to hold: Judaism is religions which deal with the ultimate concerns of the human person. It appears that Rabbi Wine is in essential agreement with Mordecai Kaplan, not Dr. Reines.²⁶

Concerning the principle of radical freedom which is fundamental to any polydomy, Rabbi Wine (like Mr. P in Rabbi Samuelson's treatment) believes that such a principle cannot be used to organize a religious community. "Resistance to authority is purely negative. It has no glue to bind a community together."²⁷ Rabbi Wine's position seems to involve an assumption of dubious value in that a polydomy Jewish community does indeed exist (the Polydomy Jewish Confederation), which not only appears to be organized around the principle of the freedom covenant, but is also using theological, liturgical, and educational materials which aim at expressing this polydomy value. What is apparently not being realized here is the possibility that persons could come together in a voluntary religious community.

Whether the afore-mentioned materials succeed in expressing the values to which they aspire, whether they conform to the principles to which they purport to conform, whether such conformity

is possible or desirable--these are issues not touched upon in Rabbi Wine's critique. The closest he comes is in his stated attitude towards what he understands to be a polydox religious education:

Moreover, the educational system becomes vacuous, because no indoctrination is allowed. A thin smorgasbord of world religious options is presented, while the children are told to simply choose what is meaningful to them. No choice is better or worse than any other. Hare Krishna is as good as Bertrand Russell. The Lubavitcher Rebbe is as desirable as John Dewey. The greatest 'sin' is to tell children that some choices are better than others. The commonsensical boldness would smack of indoctrination.²⁸

This is not the case. Since both Hare Krishna and the Lubavitcher Rebbe both maintain beliefs which are directly opposed to the fundamental principles of a polydoxy, it is extremely doubtful that they would be presented as "as good" or "as desirable" as other views which are coherent with a polydoxy. What both Rabbi Wine and Norbert Samuelson's Mr. P apparently fail to understand is that the basic principles of a polydoxy do indeed exclude certain options within a polydoxy. The principle of radical freedom is a transethical principle about which certain processes may be organized and according to which certain processes are eliminated. One can choose to accept such an excluded option. One can choose to become orthodox. Such a choice is a rejection of Essential Polydoxy.

Rabbi Wine suggests that Reinesian Polydoxy is a timid

humanism which attempts to accomodate all options:

All that Polydoxy seems to arrange for is a situation where flexible humanistic Jews are compelled to spend their time negotiating a joint service with less flexible, more traditional Jews. The result is a timid cautious presentation pleasing to neither side.

What I say to Polydox Jews is what I have said to so many Unitarians. Since most of you are humanists, anyway, why torture yourself? Be bold. Announce your humanism and allow your paralyzing minority to find their religious satisfactions elsewhere. An institution which seeks to accomodate all options provides none.²⁹

It would seem that any humanists in a polydoxy would have to be in it by virtue of some factor besides compulsion in as much as any "polydoxy" which exercises compulsion is not a polydoxy at all. This writer seriously doubts that there are as many humanistic Jews in the polydox Jewish community as Rabbi Wine suggests. But, even if every single polydoxist in the Polydox Jewish Confederation were an "agnostic humanist" who had decided that all concepts of "God" were irrelevant to his or her own religious life--even then--these humanists might be polydox humanists (as opposed to orthodox humanists) and want their own children to be exposed to theistic options in an atmosphere of freedom. Such polydox humanists might realize that the provision of information about other positions does does not equal "accomodation"; though it may well be the case that such an approach precludes censorship while working against indoctrination.

Bruce S. Warshal

In his article, "Alvin Reines' Understanding of Judaism: Some Critical Comments," Rabbi Bruce S. Warshal criticizes Dr. Reines' definition of "religion"; he claims that Reines overemphasizes the authoritarian nature of previous Judaism; he suggests that Reines should know that Judaism has always been polydox. Rabbi Warshal then concludes his article with an expression of his displeasure with the kind of religious education implied by a polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism.³⁰

Rabbi Warshal limits his primary sources to two articles of Reines: "Birth Dogma and Philosophic Religious Faith" and "Polydoxy and Modern Judaism"; for the most part, he relies on the former. The limited nature of his sources may well be the cause of the inapplicability of certain of his criticisms.

An instance of such inapplicability occurs in Rabbi Warshal's consideration of Dr. Reines' definition of religion. As the reader will recall, Dr. Reines defined "religion" as the human response to finitude in "God and Jewish Theology" and explicated this definition at length in "The Word Religion."³¹ In the absence of these sources Rabbi Warshal argues that to define "religion" in terms of beliefs (as the reader will recall, Dr. Reines suggests beliefs as a criterion for distinguishing between religions) is to provide an inadequate definition of religion. In the absence of the afore-mentioned sources, Rabbi Warshal argues against using that which was presented in

Chapter One of this work as Reines' criterion for distinguishing between religions as a definition of "religion";³² this writer agrees.

Rabbi Warshal feels that Reines has overestimated the authoritarian character in the continuing tradition.³³ He claims of Dr. Reines that, "He basically ignores rabbinic Judaism with its tempering influences upon Torah law."³⁴ It seems that Rabbi Warshal is understanding the term "authoritarian" with its perjorative connotations of fascism and cruel totalitarianism. Dr. Reines uses this word to refer to a system which assigns to itself the right to absolute authority, however benevolently that authority might be applied. The point is not whether the punishment is more or less, but the nature of the system itself.

Rabbi Warshal suggests that Dr. Reines is not aware that Judaism itself could be characterized as polydox.³⁵ If by this, Rabbi Warshal is suggesting that Dr. Reines is not aware that Orthodox Judaism is polydox, Warshal is correct. Dr. Reines is not only unaware of this, but would probably regard such a statement as a contradiction in terms. If, however, Rabbi Warshal is suggesting that Dr. Reines is not aware that the totality of the Jewish continuum can be seen as polydox, then Rabbi Warshal is mistaken. In the same article in which Dr. Reines introduced his definition of "religion", Dr. Reines states that:

It is interesting to note that the totality of the Jewish continuum as revealed by the science of Judaism is itself polydox, containing varied and mutually exclusive theologies. Only a polydox Judaism in the present can offer the entire past (within the broad limits set by the logic of a polydoxy) as possibilities for choice and decision.³⁶

What is not brought to light by Warshal, and possibly not sufficiently highlighted in the above quotation is that although the totality of Judaisms may be viewed as polydox, it is not until the advent of the polydox interpretation of Reform that a particular Judaism has attempted to understand and conduct itself as a polydoxy.

Rabbi Warshal seems to be particularly concerned with the implications on religious education if Reform Judaism is to be interpreted as a polydoxy. His statement of such concern:

It is difficult for this writer practically to apply Reines' philosophy as it relates to the education of our youth. Is handing down the heritage of our fathers "indoctrination"? At what age do we patiently explain to our children their inalienable right to walk out of Judaism? Should we create a neo-scholastic Sunday school? Even without specific answers to these questions, it is important to know in which direction Reines and his disciples wish to see the Reform Movement go.³⁷

Perhaps the question that concerns Rabbis Wine and Warshal in their reluctance to forswear "indoctrination" involves a belief that if one were to tell children the truth in an atmosphere of freedom, they would leave. Reines seems confident that a child educated in such an environment of truth, morality, and freedom would choose out of his or her freedom to subscribe to the religious

system out of conviction.

CRITIQUE OF POLYDOXY AS AN INTERPRETATION OF REFORM JUDAISM

Methodological Comment

As explained in the Introduction, the critique to be given of Polydoxy is to be based on the criteria of adequacy, coherence, and tenability. These standards are to be applied to the assumptions and definitions of Polydoxy which emerged in the analysis given in the previous chapters of this work.

Critique of Essential Polydoxy

The two principles of Essential Polydoxy are the essential principles of all polydox systems. Consequently, it is the case that if Essential Polydoxy suffers with respect to adequacy, coherence, or tenability, Reinesian Polydoxy will suffer derivatively.

The first principle:

There exists no authority, whether a person or document, that has issued commandments that members of the community subscribing to the religious system must obey; i. e., there is no entity with the right to absolute authority.¹

In Chapter One, we presented what, according to Dr. Reines, is "the only defensible argument that has been presented to vindicate the use of absolute authority by a religious community . . . "; this argument " . . . has been based on the theological foundation of a personal creator God."²

The argument is based on three propositions:

1. There is a God who has created the universe;
2. By the very act of creation he has the right to authority over everything that he has created;
3. There is an infallible revelation through which God makes known his commandments.³

Dr. Reines reminds us that the first premise has been deprived of its philosophical support since Kant and Hume applied their considerable critical abilities to the analysis of the classical proofs for the existence of God. Dr. Reines also points out that scientific criticism of the Bible has counter-indicated the kind of revelation necessary for such an argument (affirmed in the third premise). In this writer's opinion, Dr. Reines has been exceedingly gentle with this argument when he renders two of its three basic premisses dubious. After all, one premise still stands, in the sense that Dr. Reines leaves unrefuted the proposition that a creator God has the right to absolute authority over his creation. There are at least two ways of arguing that such a claim is unwarranted. Consider the following argument of John Hospers:

Are we entitled to draw this conclusion? Let us assume that there is someone (not merely natural agents) who brought us into being, that this being is God, and that this same being laid down certain moral commands for us to follow--unless one already believed all these things, he would not use this argument. One can still ask why we ought to obey these commands. "God created us, therefore we should do as He commands" is an incomplete argument: it requires the additional premise that creatures

ought to obey their creator. Suppose that creatures were created by a malevolent creator who brought them into being only to make them suffer (a view which has sometimes been held), would the upholder of this argument still say that he should obey the commands of such a creator? It would seem to depend on what kind of creator it was. The simple fact of the power to create, plus the use of that power, would hardly entitle any being to our unquestioning assent to his commands. Only if the creator were good as well as powerful would we be likely to say that we should do as he commands; we should obey him, not simply because of the bare fact that he created us, but because his commands are good ones.⁴

According to thinkers such as Hospers, it appears that no authority, whether it be divine or human, can be justified by a proposition such as the second on page 110. Even if the individual were to know that a command proceeds from God through an infallible verbal revelation, he still has the right to say "no!", and if he says "yes!", he should do so because the command is right. Goodness, and not creative power, would be the source for the justification of divine authority. As the reader might have gathered, ownership, not goodness was involved in the argument for authority.

One could also argue against the claim made in the second proposition by conducting a thought-experiment. If we imagine a universe consisting of one person and a creator God, it seems possible that that person might reply to God's first command with "By what right do you exercise authority over me?" And it does not seem that such an imprudent individual would be convinced by the reply, "By ownership."

These arguments, it seems, only serve to strengthen the first principle of Essential Polydoxy, the principle which holds that there exists no entity with the right to absolute authority. Given the first principle, Essential Polydoxy holds a second:

All members of the community subscribing to the religious system (not to mention other persons) remain within the presumption of their own radical religious freedom or self-authority; i. e., each member is his/her own ultimate religious authority whose freedom is limited only in that it ends where others' freedom begins.⁵

If there were any one particular polydox principle which troubled previous critics of polydoxy, it appeared to be this principle which affirms the individual's ultimate self-authority. For some reason not immediately apparent to this writer, they seemed to understand it as an anarchic principle of a purely libertarian nature. They failed to note that a universalized principle which protects individual freedom and therefore might be seen as liberating, restricts individual freedom with respect to the freedom of other individuals. It is for this reason that a corollary of the freedom principle is that one individual's freedom ends where another's begins. It is for this same reason that this principle which is explicitly liberating, may be seen as essentially limiting and vice versa. The limits of freedom are implicit in the nature of freedom itself, as defined within this system, which is one's right to self-authority with "authority" understood as the (right) to exercise power over decision-executing selves. It is this writer's contention that any critic who fails to note this restrictive character

of the freedom principle is criticizing a different principle. Such a failure, it seems evident, explains why these critics could not conceive of anything but anarchy in a religious community organized according to such a principle.

Dr. Reines defines authority in terms of a decision-making self having a right to enforce the obedience of a decision-executing self. " . . . when we say that some entity has authority over a person, we mean that the entity has the right to supersede the decision-making self and to enforce, in its place, the obedience of the decision-executing self."⁶ He then explained how it is that one arrives at the freedom principle:

We take it as a self-evident proposition that every person has the right to be free. Or to translate this statement in terms of authority: every person is intuitively presumed to be his own authority, with the right to enforce obedience upon himself to commandments he himself issues. This statement is not to be understood as bearing upon the question of whether man's will is ultimately free or determined; it simply means that every person has the right to determine his own acts without external compulsion.⁷

At this point we are faced with a variety of critical options. We can point out that what is obvious to one thinker is ridiculous to the next; that the self-evident propositions of Locke's generation were anathema to Hobbes. Or we can pause, re-read carefully, and discover the obvious for ourselves. Dr. Reines qualifies the claim for "self-evident truth" with his usage of the phrase, "intuitively presumed." We need not embark on a lengthy critique of intuitionism

to realize that intuitive presumption is presumption; i. e., Reines acknowledges the status of the freedom principle as an assumption. If the reader has different assumptions (perhaps those of Hobbes or of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor), he may favor the use of external compulsion. In this writer's opinion, the level of discussion has become so basic that argument ceases to be of value. The Grand Inquisitor knows in his heart (or intuitively) that happiness is a supreme virtue, and that freedom makes men unhappy; the polydoxist is just as sure that the individual's right to self-authority is, as it were, morally sacred.

Reines points out that the freedom principle has, "no bearing upon the question of whether man's will is ultimately free or determined; it simply means that every person has the right to determine his own acts without external compulsion."⁸ Again, what is obvious to one person may be obscure to another. It seems to this writer that what is being pointed out here is that the freedom principle is public; i. e., it deals with the propriety of one person exercising authority over another; it is explicitly not concerned with internal psychological issues such as free will and determinism. It is suggested that a treatment of these issues in a manner consistent with the essential principles of a polydoxy be undertaken.

Under initial analysis, it seemed to be the case that the concept of authority in Essential Polydoxy, and the acceptance of the freedom principle necessitated a minimalist metapsychology in

Essential Polydoxy; i. e., the polydox concept of human freedom involves the possibility of the division of a person into decision-making and decision-executing selves. Further thought has yielded the conclusion that this wider Reinesian metapsychology, though consistent with Essential Polydoxy, is not necessary to it. Rather, a minimal metapsychology which allows for at least one self, which may be conceived of as decision-making or decision-executing (depending on the circumstances and the issue under discussion), is sufficient. This minimalist metapsychology does seem necessary to Essential Polydoxy.

Here too, the criticism of such a basic and minimalist position involves the explication of its fundamental character. It is admitted that certain religio-philosophical systems involve or rest on the denial of the existence of a self.⁹ But, this denial of self seems to say more about the variety of views which have been presented in religious and philosophical systems than about the weakness of the minimal selfhood required for the existence of the freedom principle. The existence of other persons has also been questioned in philosophy;¹⁰ still, we would not consider it a fatal flaw in Essential Polydoxy that its non-trivial nature depends on the existence of other persons (otherwise it would be of little point to caution the one existent person not to violate the freedom of non-existent entities).

If there be minimalist positions in philosophy, Essential

Polydoxy would seem to qualify as a paradigm case of same. A denial of these principles is indeed a denial of basic principles.

Before we continue to our analysis of Reinesian Polydoxy, it seems that we have already arrived at a point at which we can consider the question: "Is Reform Judaism a polydoxy; i. e., does it subscribe to or imply the two principles which we have just discussed?"

This writer believes that the conclusion will be relatively apparent if we simply review some facts (facts, which like all others may be debatable):

1. Reform Judaism has not produced a proof for the kind of deity which is required for even the possibility of justifiable absolute authority;
2. Reform Judaism not only permits its adherents to subscribe to the scientific criticism of Scripture which vitiates its claim to the kind of infallibility necessary for a justification of absolute authority, but teaches such criticism in its institutions;
3. In the absence of such authority, Reform Judaism is obligated to affirm a freedom principle in order to provide a coherent explanation of its own existence.

The wary reader may have noticed that the third "fact" contains an ethical recommendation. We shall consider that shortly. First, it seems abundantly clear that Reform Judaism lacks the Scriptural justification appropriate to an orthodoxy, and is in this respect a system that accepts the first principle of Essential Polydoxy. However, in this writer's opinion, institutional Reform Judaism does not affirm the second principle of Essential Polydoxy.¹¹ Reform institutions in general have long been known for their restrictions

of certain ritual behavior (this writer remembers the tale of a young man who was not permitted to wear a tallis for his bar mitzvah). Furthermore, prayerbooks have been printed by the Reform Movement which seem to affirm the existence of the kind of revelation and commandments which are denied by the scientific criticism which Reform affirms.¹² Thus, the unusual phrasing of "fact" number three betrays this writer's feelings that Reform Judaism should be a polydoxy.

Unfortunately, in this writer's opinion, Reform Judaism is not a polydoxy. A polydoxy requires a principle which limits persons' freedom with respect to other persons' freedom, a principle which itself can be used for the organization of a community; i. e., the freedom covenant. Due to the limiting nature of this principle, a polydox Reform Judaism would not tolerate certain acts, such as services which trespass on the participants' freedom in what is set forth as a liberal service. To put it less literally, a polydoxy respects freedom, but will not tolerate intolerance; Reform Judaism, lacking as it does a fundamental organizing principle, is unable to reject intolerance. Thus, Reform Judaism is looser, in a certain sense, than a polydoxy. One can do things in Reform which would not be permitted in a polydoxy qua polydoxy. Some readers will find non-polydox Reform Judaism preferable to a polydox Reform Judaism; some readers will not accept the freedom principle. They can do so and remain Reform Jews; they can not do so and remain

Polydox Reform Jews. This is, of course, for each reader to decide.

Summary of Critique of Essential Polydoxy and the Interpretation of Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy:

It is here contended that Dr. Reines would himself agree that Reform Judaism (institutional Reform Judaism) is not a self-conscious or avowed polydoxy, but that he would hold that it ought to be. It seems that he would justify this ethical claim not only by means of a certain self-evident principle, but with another, more apparently evident statement: If Reform Judaism is not a polydoxy, then since Reform has not suggested any other clear principles, Reform has no clear principles, and therefore has no identity. If he were to use human development as an analogy, he would say that the relation of non-Polydox Reform Judaism to Polydox Reform Judaism is that of the embryo which is not yet a person to the human person. He would also hold that without clear fundamental principles of identity, a religion philosophically simply does not exist.

In any case, we have demonstrated that although Essential Polydoxy consists of basic principles which have been debated, such principles are minimal (and thus enjoy approbation via Ockham's Razor) and indeed basic.

We have also shown that Essential Polydoxy purports to be an explanation not only of what Reform essentially is, but also of what it ought to be.

It further seems to be the case that polydoxy offers a coherent interpretation of Reform Judaism which would enjoy not only logical but relatively greater Whiteheadian coherence than an institutional Reform which denies revelation of the verbal type in its research and affirms it in its services.

Critique of Reinesian Polydoxy

Epistemology

We have earlier seen^{12a} that according to the epistemic scheme of Reinesian Polydoxy, the type of evidence required with the realm or universe of discourse in question:

1. With respect to the external world, public empirical (objective) evidence was held to be the most compelling;
2. In the realm of ethics, intuition of certain principles is taken as sufficient justification for accepting the principles;
3. In the realm of intrapersonal experience, introspection is an acceptable source of information.

It would seem to be foolish to deny that in the realm of public events, public empirical evidence is compelling. The arguments presented in Chapter One¹³ seem to be quite adequate.

Concerning intuitions for the justification of ethical statements, we have already indicated in this critique that such intuitions are themselves understood to be assumptions of the most basic type.¹⁴ We have argued that all systems of explanation rest on premisses which themselves lack explanations;¹⁵ this being the case, to indict Reinesian Polydoxy as a system of explanation because it contains

such premisses or ultimate assumptions is to indict the system of explanation for being a system of explanation.

Dr. Reines accepts introspection as a valid method in order to reach conclusions about the realm of intrapersonal experience. It seems that such evidence may be chancier than we would like, more subjective than we would like, less (as it were) "scientific" than we would like. It also seems that it is the only kind of evidence we are likely to get. Our only option, it seems, if we restrict ourselves to empirical public objective evidence in this realm, is to relinquish the quest for any information in this realm.¹⁶ It seems to this writer that to sacrifice the realm of the intrapersonal by sacrificing introspection as evidence is to destine a system to inadequacy with respect to human experience.

Metapsychology

In the Reinesian Metapsychology, as we will recall,¹⁷ the individual human person is seen as consisting of a plurality of selves which make decisions, are decided upon, execute decisions, and experience feeling states and desire states such as infinite conation.¹⁸

On the most basic level, Dr. Reines introspects and finds that one self can exercise authority or gain dominance over another self or selves, that selves can be in conflict with other selves, and that there is a conflict of finitude. At this basic level, Reinesian

Metapsychology requires only the minimal principles that a person can be divided, that a person thinks, that a person wants, that a person feels. These can be denied. But they are generally accepted; they have also been held throughout the history of philosophy since Plato by virtually every philosopher who has taken as real the subjective life of the person. Again, it is to the reader to decide whether or not he or she enjoys the attributes of feeling, desire, and will.

What seems particularly interesting to this writer is the use of this minimal metapsychology to define "religion", a term which has resisted definition for quite some time.

"Religion"

Dr. Reines has, like metapsychologists before him, given formulation to insights and experiences that have been previously described in the history of religion and literature.

As we will recall,¹⁹ "religion" was defined as the human response to finitude, with "finitude" itself being defined as the conflict which arises in the human person between infinite conation and the fact that the human is limited. In his Critique of Religion and Philosophy, Walter Kaufmann has provided us with a threefold typology of definitions of "religion". Crediting this distinction to Leuba, Kaufmann lists them as intellectualistic, affectivistic, and voluntaristic or practical definitions.²⁰

- (a) The first defines religion as a type of knowledge;
- (b) The second defines religion in terms of a feeling;
- (c) The third looks for some essential practice.

As Kaufmann points out:

The chief lesson of a survey of attempted definitions of religion is that, in religion, practice, feeling, and belief are intertwined, and every definition that would see the essence of religion in just one of these three facets is too partial. . . .

The term "religion" has come into use as a label for referring all at once to Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Confucianism, as well as a great many other siblings, some of whom have proper names and some of whom do not, but all of whom are taken to be sufficiently similar to the seven mentioned here to make it useful to lump them together. Religion is a collective name, and what we say of religion should be true of the various members of the family. If it is not, then our statements are wrong, though perhaps they could be made right by substituting for "religion" some particular religion or religions.²¹

It is interesting to note that the endeavor of creating a definition of religion appropriate to a polydoxy forces the definer to avoid a monolithic, and therefore inadequate, definition of the type that Kaufmann criticizes. A definition of religion consistent with a polydoxy has to be, in order to maintain such consistency, more open than any of Leuba's three types. It is also the case that the Reinesian definition includes the dimensions of practice, feeling, and belief. What is more fascinating is that the seven religions that Kaufmann lists can all be understood as human responses to finitude. Some are patently infinite relational responses (such as Orthodox Judaism, Christianity, and Islam); others are acosmic infinite responses (such

as Hinduism and certain forms of Taoism); the remaining might be classified as substantive responses, depending on the variation.

This writer, it is apparent, is substantially in agreement with the Reinesian definition of religion. This definition seems to be applicable to the religious systems with which this writer is familiar, and further, even allows for metaphorical uses of the term and its relatives such as "worship", "piety", etc. Consider the psychodynamics involved in the worship of money, for example.²²

It also seems to be the case that the Reinesian analysis of the discognitive response contributes to our understanding of a variety of human behavior.

Concerning the Reinesian analysis of religious responses, this writer would suggest the addition of at least one more substantive response to the response categories. As we mentioned before,²³ the "finite response contains essentially three elements: acknowledgment of the truth of the perception that one is finite; renunciation of infinite conation; setting and accepting limits in all areas of desire."²⁴ According to Dr. Reines:

Several forms of the finite response occur, based on different views of ultimate reality, and requiring different degrees of renunciation, but all share in common renunciation of infinite existential desire and the acceptance of the finality of one's own death. Accordingly, with infinite desire given up, the conflict of finitude, which is produced by the clash between consciousness of finity and infinite desire, is resolved. The finite existence of the human person, consisting of psychic, physical, territorial, and

existential limits, satisfies a finite will; the finite being that a person is, is that which the person wishes to be. Being and will having thus been integrated, the harmony brings soteria.²⁵

Dr. Reines did not explicitly point out that there are authentic asoterial responses in which the person does not practice self-deception or use any other discognitive device. For purposes of clarity, such a response might be called the "tragic response" to finitude. In it one acknowledges the finality of one's own death but refuses to relinquish infinite existential conation. In such a response, the individual continues to experience infinite conation, yet refuses to indulge in self-deception concerning finity. For such an individual, the renunciation of infinite conation might be understood as a renunciation of an authentic part of the person, just as (in all finite responses) the renunciation of the consciousness of finity would be seen as a renunciation of an authentic part of the person.

Religions Distinguished

As we have indicated, according to Dr. Reines, religions can be classified according to their responses to finitude (which they lay down or propose). He also maintains that a fundamental criterion for distinguishing among religions is that of belief.²⁶ This seems to be in accord with the common usage of persons and religious institutions. It also seems to be justifiable. If we observe two individuals engaging in a similar practice that we are told is a

religious practice, say eating wafers and drinking wine, we could not conclude that they were practicing the same religion until we investigated their beliefs. Similarly, we understand that certain religions vary some of their practices from culture to culture, but maintain dogmas. That religions are distinguished in this fashion is so basic that if we find a group with different beliefs that claims to be practicing the same religion as another group (for reason of, for example, a similarity in symbols or practices), we would, under normal circumstances, be skeptical.

Those who take the fact that belief is employed as a fundamental criterion for distinguishing among religions as meaning that belief is the fundamental or essential characteristic of religion have misunderstood Reinesian Polydoxy. As stated earlier, according to Dr. Reines, there is nothing more fundamental than the response to finitude; thus, the importance of a belief in a religion is significant to the extent that it is vital for the response(s) to finitude of that religion.

Those who take the criterion of belief for distinguishing among religions as Reines' definition of religion in which belief is most important, or as an inappropriately given Reinesian definition of religion are operating with what this writer understands to be an inadequate interpretation of Reinesian Polydoxy.

Authority and Freedom

The issue of authority and the related issue of freedom in Reinesian Polydoxy is, for the purposes of this critique, understood to be that of Essential Polydoxy, which we have already treated.

Implications for Reform Judaism

Dr. Reines, as we recall, made a case for certain implications for Reform Judaism if Reform Judaism were to conduct itself as a polydoxy. He pointed out that a Polydox Reform Judaism, "has the duty to provide institutional theology, ritual, liturgy, and education that does not violate the freedom, integrity and conscience of its individual members."²⁷

Theology

Dr. Reines provided a definition of "theology" appropriate to a polydoxy as, "the science or study which treats of the meaning of the word God."²⁸ Such a definition of theology plainly allows for its study within a polydoxy, preserving as it does the freedom of the individual from authoritarian limitations which would interfere with the freedom of those pursuing the theological enterprise. Such a definition is therefore coherent with the study of theology within a Polydox Reform Judaism.

Liturgy and Ritual

This writer agrees with Dr. Reines that an equivocal liturgy

is necessary for a polydox common service. It is clear from experience, however, that the creation of such a liturgy is difficult. One problem is that what is perceived as equivocal by one individual at a given time may not be so understood by another individual, or even (in some instances) by that same individual at a later time. A problem of this nature occurred with respect to the Hebrew portions of the earlier common services.

Initially, the Hebrew portions were seen as equivocal, in as much as the overwhelming majority of Reform congregants did not understand them. Given this, and the complications which were involved with musicians which served these congregations (and knew only the old words), the Hebrew portions remained untouched, whereas the English portions were rendered equivocal.

More recently, however, more members of Reform congregations know Hebrew; many of them wanted a polydox common service with Hebrew which could be faithfully translated into English: they also wanted English which adjoined Hebrew passages to be a faithful translation; not a paraphrase (for example) which stressed the main idea of the Hebrew.

As a result, the Hebrew portions of the extant polydox common services are being rendered equivocal, a difficult task. The main point to be stressed, with respect to the common service is that any given common service is one option among many presented to the polydox community; like all such options it may be accepted or

rejected by other polydoxists.

Education

The education required by a Polydox Reform Judaism is characterized by the adherence to the two essential principles of a polydoxy which entail full disclosure (of the findings of the science of Judaism, for example), and the explicit affirmation (as well as an atmosphere) of freedom. Dr. Reines holds that this educational process, with its commitment to honesty and freedom, itself has as a fundamental purpose assisting the polydox child to deal productively with the conflict of finitude. The education will acquaint the child with his or her own freedom and its basis, as well as the options among which he or she may choose. Ideally, such a choice would be an ontal decision which resolved the conflict. In this case, the essential religious education of the child would end with the child's own response to finitude and resolution of religious identity. Such fundamental purposes for a Polydox Reform Jewish education seem adequate to as well as coherent with Essential Polydoxy.²⁹

EPILOGUE

The polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism treated in this work is a philosophical interpretation¹ which argues that Reform Judaism is logically and morally obligated to accept as its fundamental principle affirmation of the individual's right to self-authority or freedom (i. e., a freedom covenant). The reason given for this is that there exists no justification in Reform for any entity (person or group of persons) to exercise absolute authority over another person or persons. Specifically, Reform Judaism lacks the infallible revelation appropriate to and morally necessary for such an exercise of authority; i. e., Reform lacks the justification to be an orthodoxy. Lacking such justification, Reform has a duty to conduct itself as a polydoxy.

We presented several other interpretations of Reform Judaism with the clearly stated qualification that these were not philosophical interpretations. They are not concerned with the quest for and the implications of basic principles qua principles on Reform Jewish theology, metaphysics, epistemology, or ethics. These other interpretations were evaluated as presented. Since, however, the polydox system presented herein is the only extant philosophical interpretation of Reform, we realize that comparisons of a polydox interpretation with other interpretations on the level of philosophic competence (including relative adequacy) must wait until systems

of non-polydox philosophical interpretation of Reform Judaism come into existence.

We have considered objections to the interpretation of Reform Judaism as a polydoxy which arose from the examination of other critical reactions to Essential and Reinesian Polydoxy, as well as those which arose from our own analysis.

We have analyzed Essential and Reinesian Polydoxies in terms of their implicit and explicit assumptions and principles, coherence, adequacy, and tenability. The assumptions and principles of Essential Polydoxy were minimal and of the most basic nature. Both polydox systems emerged as internally consistent and coherent. Both Polydoxies explain what they attempt to explain: what Reform Judaism essentially is, and given what it essentially is, how it ought to conduct itself if it is to be consistent with its own basic principles. These polydox systems, being consistent and based on available evidence, are tenable; i. e., I find them credible and am of the opinion that others in a position to evaluate them philosophically will concur.

Neither the Essential nor the Reinesian system was found wanting in the sense of being philosophically unsound or invalid. Yet, I would not wish the reader to forget that it also seems evident to me that there are open frontiers in polydox philosophizing and that this work is an invitation to same.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Steven M. Cahn, A New Introduction to Philosophy. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1971) p. 22.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 24.
4. vide W. V. Quine, Methods of Logic, Third Edition. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972) p. 3. Here Quine discusses the "true by virtue of the meanings of the words involved" such as logical, definitional, tautological and mathematical truths as "true simply by virtue of our conceptual scheme."
5. Bertrand Russell, "The Elements of Ethics," in Readings in Ethical Theory, ed. by Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1970) p. 4.
6. Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1929; First Free Press Paperback Edition, 1969) p. 9.
7. e.g., the proper name of Dr. Reines' polydox interpretation of Reform Judaism; vide our first chapter, p. 11.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. In saying "the two essential principles," the implication is intended that no other propositions held by polydoxists (although they may be coherent with these two principles), are themselves essential principles of a polydoxy.
2. Alvin J. Reines, Elements in a Philosophy of Reform Judaism. (Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976) p. 91.
3. Ibid., pp. 38-40.
4. Ibid., p. 41.
5. Ibid., p. 11.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p. 12.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 11.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 13.
14. Ibid.
15. Alvin J. Reines and Paul Menitoff, Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism: Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy (hereafter referred to as Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy). Parts I, II, & III, (Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1970, 1971, 1973) p. 16.
16. Reines, Elements, p. 15.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 13.

19. Ibid., p. 18.
20. Ibid., p. 2.
21. Ibid., p. 43.
22. G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica, as quoted in Readings in Ethical Theory, ed. by W. Sellars and J. Hospers (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1970) p. 37.
23. W. D. Ross, The Right and the Good, as quoted in Human Conduct: An Introduction to the Problems of Ethics, by John Hospers (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1961) p. 539.
24. Reines, Elements., p. 2.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., pp. 42-43.
27. Reines, Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy., pp. 18-19.
28. Ibid., p. 35.
29. Reines, "The Word Religion," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism (hereafter referred to as Polydoxy) Vol. 4, #2 (1979): 1-15 (p. 3).
30. Ibid., p. 4.
31. Ibid., pp. 6-7. vide Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy., pp. 18-19.
32. Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 53.
33. Ludwig Wittgenstein has written a parallel analysis of "games" in the Philosophical Investigations, #66; he suggests that instead of such a commonality, there exists only a "family resemblance" which provides fuzzy guidelines for the use of the term.
34. Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," in Contemporary Reform Jewish Thought, ed. by Bernard Martin (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968) p. 73.
35. Reines, "The Word Religion," in Polydoxy., Vol. 4, #2 (1979).
36. Ibid., p. 3.

37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 4.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Consider Sherwin Wine's position as indicated in his critique of Polydoxy in Humanistic Judaism, Vol. VI, Number II (1978): 6-9 (p. 7); vide our treatment of this critique in Chapter 3, "A Critique of Polydoxy as an Interpretation of Reform Judaism," (hereafter referred to as COP).
43. Reines, "The Word Religion," p. 4.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., p. 5.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 6.
50. Ibid., p. 5.
51. Ibid., p. 6.
- 51a. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. vide COP, p. 22.
54. Reines, "The Word Religion," pp. 6-7.
55. Ibid., pp. 7-9.
56. Ibid., p. 7; vide Ellis Rivkin, A Hidden Revolution (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978) pp. 302-308.

57. Reines, "The Word Religion," p. 8.
58. Ibid., p. 7; vide Rivkin's A Hidden Revolution, Chapter VIII, (pp. 296-311).
59. vide M. Smovilinski's comment in this writer's "The Empty Grave," (unpublished fiction, 1979) p. 1.
60. Reines, "The Word Religion," p. 8.
61. Ibid., p. 10.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid., p. 11.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., p. 12.
66. Ibid.
67. Reines and Menitoff, Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy, pp. 15-16.
68. Ibid., pp. 16-17.
69. Ibid., p. 35; vide Reines' Elements, p. 2.
70. Reines, Elements, p. 2.
71. Ibid., p. 43.
72. vide this writer's "Who Decides?" (unpublished paper, 1979) for a treatment of the relationship between this concept of the person to Freud's metapsychology, and problems of personal identity.
73. Reines, Elements, p. 41.
74. Ibid., pp. 43-44.
75. Ibid., p. 44.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., pp. 1-8; longer forms of this argument occur in the following locations: Elements., pp. 1-8; Elements., pp. 44-46; Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy., pp. 48-67.
80. Reines., Elements., p. 3.
81. Ibid., p. 47; vide p. 3.
82. Ibid., p. 47.
83. Ibid., p. 3.
84. Ibid., p. 24.
85. Ibid., pp. 3-4, 24.
86. Ibid., p. 4.
87. Ibid., p. 24.
88. Ibid., pp. 4, 24.
89. Ibid., pp. 4-5, 24-25.
90. Ibid., p. 25.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid., pp. 5, 25.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid., pp. 25-26.
95. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
96. Ibid., p. 37.
97. Ibid., p. 51.
98. COP, p. 10; vide Reines' Elements., p. 91.
99. Ibid.
100. Reines, Elements., p. 52.

101. Louis Jacobs, A Jewish Theology. (New York: Behrman House, 1973) p. 1.
102. Ibid., p. 15.
103. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
104. Reines, Elements, p. 137.
105. Ibid., p. 138.
106. Ibid., pp. 140-142.
107. Ibid., p. 142.
108. Ibid., pp. 142-143.
109. Ibid., p. 87.
110. Ibid., pp. 90-91.
111. Ibid., p. 91.
112. Ibid., p. 92.
113. Ibid., p. 111-112.
114. Ibid., p. 116.
115. Ibid., pp. 117-118.
116. Ibid., p. 119.
117. Equivocal services and materials concerning open rituals are published by and can be obtained from the Institute of Creative Judaism in Cincinnati.
118. Reines, Elements, p. 91.
119. Alvin and Hera G. Reines, The Patriarchal Family. (Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1975) pp. ii-iii.
120. Ibid., p. 3.
121. For selections of material which illustrate the points made in this quotation, consider The Patriarchal Family, pp. 69, 77.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. vide COP. Introduction.
2. Much of the literature consists of interpretations of this type. Each reader will have favorites such as Heschel, Baeck, etc. These interpretations are not specifically treated herein because they are set forth as interpretations of Judaism per se and it appeared that to treat them as philosophies of Reform Judaism would be to mistreat them.
3. The Pittsburgh Platform, The Guiding Principles, and The Centenary Perspective are included in the Appendix.
4. The reader interested in abstractions of such positions for non-philosophical purposes is recommended to the histories of Schwartzman and Plaut (see Bibliography).
5. C. G. Montefiore, "The Question of Authority in Liberal Judaism," in Papers for Jewish People, No. XXXIII (London: Jewish Religious Union for the Advancement of Liberal Judaism, 1936) p. 2.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 3.
8. Ibid., pp. 3-4.
9. Ibid., p. 5.
10. Ibid., p. 7.
11. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
12. Ibid., p. 21.
13. Mordecai Kaplan, Judaism as a Civilization. (New York: The Reconstructionist Press, 1957) p. 112.
14. Ibid., p. 104.
15. I. e., a belief incumbent upon an individual by virtue of birth; vide Reines, "Birth Dogma and Philosophic Religious Faith, A Philosophic Inquiry," in the Hebrew Union College Annual,

Volume XLVI (1975): 297-329.

16. Kaplan, Judaism as a Civilization., p. 119.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 104.
19. Ibid., p. 119.
20. Ibid., pp. 124-125.
21. Solomon B. Freehof, "What is Reform Judaism?" in Popular Studies in Judaism, No. 27 (Cincinnati: The Tract Commission, 1937). In 1961, this work was republished as What is Progressive Judaism? (New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism).
22. Freehof, "What is Reform Judaism?" p. 18.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 19.
25. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
26. Ibid., p. 18.
27. Ibid., p. 20.
28. Freehof, "Religious Authority in Progressive Judaism," address given by the President-Designate of The World Union for Progressive Judaism at the Eleventh International Conference on Sunday July 12, 1959. (London: World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1959) p. 11.
29. If we were to ignore the polemic tone we might retranslate into neutral or positive terminology: "otherwise, it would evolve into a system of freedom and choice, in which each seeks the divine in an atmosphere of freedom free from any taint of absolute authority."
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 13.

33. Ibid., p. 14.
34. Sidney L. Regner, "The Quest for Authority in Reform Judaism," The Journal of Reform Judaism (formerly the CCAR Journal) Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (1979): 29-37.
35. Freehof, "Religious Authority in Progressive Judaism," p. 11.
36. Regner, "Quest." p. 36.
37. It has appeared somewhat strange, to say the least, that this treatment which duplicates so much of that set forth by Dr. Reines fails to treat or mention Reines or Polydoxy.
38. vide Appendix.
39. CCAR, Judaism, A Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes, (apparently published in Cincinnati: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1946) pp. 12-13.
40. Ibid., pp. 17-20.
41. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
42. Abraham J. Feldman, Reform Judaism, A Guide for Reform Jews. (New York: Behrman House, 1956) pp. 11-13.
43. Ibid., p. 5.
44. William B. Silverman, Basic Reform Judaism. (New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1970) p. 4.
45. Ibid., p. 7.
46. Ibid., p. 5.
47. Ibid., p. 7.
48. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
49. Ibid., pp. 24ff.
50. Ibid., pp. 140ff.
51. Ibid., p. 147.

52. Ad Hoc Committee on the President's Message, Eugene B. Borowitz, Chairman. Reform Judaism, A Centenary Perspective. (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1976) p. 2.
53. Ibid.
54. Eugene B. Borowitz, Reform Judaism Today: What We Believe. (New York: Behrman House, 1977) p. 14.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid., p. 177.
57. Ad Hoc Committee on the President's Message, Centenary Perspective, p. 2.
58. Ibid., pp. 2-3; vide Centenary Perspective I-IV (in Appendix).
59. Ibid.
60. Bernard J. Bamberger, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Reform Judaism," CCAR Journal Vol. XIII, No. 4 (1966): 20-26; p. 20.
61. vide Appendix for these platform statements.
62. vide Ad Hoc Committee's Centenary Perspective, p. 2, and Borowitz's What We Believe, p. 4, for two examples of such affirmation.
63. CCAR, Judaism, A Manual, p. 12.
64. Ad Hoc Committee., Centenary Perspective, p. 2.
65. Montefiore, "Question of Authority in Liberal Judaism," p. 13.
66. It also might be seen as incoherent to proclaim unity while acknowledging diversity in the area of the unity proclaimed.
67. Reines, Elements, p. 146.
68. Ad Hoc Committee., Centenary Perspective, p. 2.
69. "Adequacy" refers to the ability to explain that which a proposition or series of propositions purports to explain; vide COP, Introduction.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Reines, Elements, p. 2.
2. Any individual "X"'s interpretation of polydoxy can be termed "Xist" or "Xian Polydoxy."
3. However, just because this distinction between Essential and Reinesian Polydoxy has been set forth here in no way implies that the other critiques have made a similar distinction.
4. Jakob J. Petuchowski, "Footnotes to the Current Debate," CCAR Journal (hereafter referred to as CCARJ) Vol. XIII, No. 3 (1965): 13-17.
5. Ibid., pp. 15-16.
6. Ibid., p. 14.
7. Ibid., p. 15.
8. Ibid., p. 17.
9. The fool who says in his heart that there is no God is not the same kind of fool who would deny that unethical business practices are indeed unethical.
10. Any example which one might give of an individual who approached the Scriptures with "yearning and seeking" and did not discover what was human and what divine could be discounted. One could either suggest that there was insufficient yearning and seeking, that the individual did not look long and hard enough, or that perhaps the individual simply was not sincere. Such replies may themselves veil tautologies; they may not. The point is that they remove the possibility of counter-evidence to this critical claim.
11. Ibid., p. 16.
12. Norbert Samuelson, "A Therapy for Religious Definitions: Guides and Ignosticism in Reform Judaism," CCARJ Vol. XIV, No. 3 (1967): 19-27 (p. 19).
13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
15. One might also have expected Rabbi Q to offer a definition of "Jew" consistent with a polydoxy such as, "A Jew is a person who wishes to take the name Jew, and who is descended from a Jewish parent, grandparent, or ancestor; also a Jew is a person who wishes to take the name Jew, and is a member of the Jewish Community." vide Polydoxy., Vol. 3, No. 2/3 (1978).
16. Samuelson, op. cit., p. 22.
17. Ibid., p. 23.
18. Ibid., pp. 24-26.
19. Whitehead, Process., p. 9; vide COP, Introduction.
20. Sherwin T. Wine, "Polydoxy," Humanistic Judaism Vol. 6, No. 2 (1978): 5-9.
21. vide Polydoxy., Vol. 3, No. 2/3 (1978).
22. This last point is difficult to verify in as much as Rabbi Wine fails to specify his sources.
23. Wine, op. cit., p. 7.
24. Ibid., p. 8.
25. Ibid.
26. Which of these two interpretations, if either, of "Jew" and "Judaism" is the most faithful to the use of these terms historically is the subject of another work and cannot be treated adequately or competently here; the reader who is interested in such a treatment is recommended to Robert Barr's rabbinic thesis (HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 1981).
27. Wine, op. cit., p. 7.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 8.
30. Bruce S. Warshal, "Alvin Reines' Understanding of Judaism: Some Critical Comments"; citations are from a draft of this paper which was submitted to the CCARJ in 1980.

31. vide Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," in Contemporary Reform Jewish Thought, ed. by Bernard Martin (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968); also "The Word Religion," in Polydoxy., Vol. 4, No. 2 (1979).
32. Warshal, op. cit., pp. 1-3.
33. Ibid., p. 5.
34. Ibid., p. 15.
35. Ibid., pp. 5, 6.
36. Reines, "God and Jewish Theology," in Contemporary Reform Jewish Thought, p. 87.
37. Warshal, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Reines, Elements., p. 91.
2. Ibid., p. 44.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
4. John Hospers, "Why Be Moral?" in Readings in Ethical Theory, ed. by Wilfrid Sellars and John Hospers (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1970) p. 741.
5. Reines, Elements., p. 91.
6. Ibid., p. 2.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Consider, for example, David Hume's Treatise of Human Nature, Book 1, part iv, chapter 6; or the Buddhist principle of anatman.
10. Descartes provides sufficient example of this.
11. Certain Reform rabbis, with the approval of Reform Jewish institutions (or, at least, the consenting silence of same), do not acknowledge the right of a Jew to choose to become a non-Jew; nor the right to marry a non-Jew; nor, in the case of a Jewish man, the right to call his offspring from a non-Jewish wife by the name "Jew".
12. vide Reines, "Shabbat as a State of Being," CCARJ Vol. XIV, No. 1 (1967): 29-38.
- 12a. vide COP, Chapter One, section on "Epistemology."
13. Ibid.
14. vide COP, Introduction.
15. Ibid.
16. Some Skinnerian behaviorists have quite cheerfully made this sacrifice in order to be "scientific."

17. vide COP, Chapter One, on "Metapsychology."
18. The reader who has encountered Freudian Metapsychology may have noticed certain pronounced similarities. It is here suggested that the Reinesian Metapsychology reflects a certain concept of the human person; in this concept, a person is, as it were, a society. An explication of this concept which includes translations from the terminology of Reinesian Metapsychology into the language of Freudian Metapsychology can be found in this writer's "Who Decides?"
19. vide COP, Chapter One, the sections on "religion".
20. Walter Kaufmann, Critique of Religion and Philosophy. (New York: Anchor Books, 1961) p. 101.
21. Ibid., p. 103.
22. i. e., response to territorial finitude.
23. vide COP, p. 34.
24. Reines, "The Word Religion," p. 11.
25. Ibid.
26. Reines and Menitoff, Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy., pp. 15-16; vide COP, pp. 36-37.
27. Reines, Elements., p. 52.
28. Ibid., p. 138.
29. The reader may have noticed that this writer has not set forth his personal viewpoints in every instance where one might have felt that it was appropriate to do so. The reason for this is that critique often emerges as a series of propositions about the subjective feelings of the critic instead of a more objective evaluation of the material criticized. There is no doubt that this is a pitfall in the critical enterprise. My intention has been to present the reader with sufficient information to make his or her own decision.
Philosophical works are, for the most part, written to be read more than once. What appears obscure in a first reading may seem almost overstated in a third. Moreover, the earlier chapters of this work were written with subsequent chapters in mind.

FOOTNOTES TO EPILOGUE

1. By "philosophical interpretation" is meant an interpretation which is concerned with the basic principles that constitute Reform Judaism and the implications of these principles; vide COP, Introduction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ad Hoc Committee on the President's Message, Eugene B. Borowitz, Chairman. Reform Judaism: A Centenary Perspective (adopted June, 1976). New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1976.
- Alper, Robert A. "A Polydox Conversion Ceremony to Reform Judaism." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1974.
- Alper, Robert A. and Reines, Alvin J. "A Rosh Hashanah Service for the Young at Heart." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1973.
- Bamberger, Bernard J., "Continuity and Discontinuity in Reform Judaism," CCAR Journal 13 (January 1976): 20-26.
- Borowitz, Eugene B. Reform Judaism Today; Book Two: What We Believe. New York: Behrman House, 1977.
- Cahn, Steven M. A New Introduction to Philosophy. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1971.
- Central Conference of American Rabbis. Judaism, A Manual for the Instruction of Proselytes, Revised. CCAR, 1946.
- Cohn-Snerbok, Dan, "Philosophic Religious Faith," Journal of Reform Judaism (formerly the CCAR Journal) 25 (Summer 1978): 73-77.
- Cohon, Samuel S. "The Teachings of Progressive Judaism." Address given at the Ninth International Conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism in July 1955, Paris. Great Britain: John Wadsworth Ltd., 1955.
- Cronbach, Abraham. The Realities of Religion. New York: Bookman Associates, Inc., Publishers, 1957.
- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. The Brothers Karamazov, trans. Andrew R. MacAndrew. New York: Bantam Books, 1972.
- Fass, David E. "Enomination Ceremony." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1972.

Feldman, Abraham J. Reform Judaism, A Guide for Reform Jews. New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1956.

Freehof, Solomon B. "Reform Revaluation of Jewish Law." The third Louis Caplan Lecture delivered in Cincinnati, April 18, 1972. Cincinnati: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1972.

Freehof, Solomon S. "Religious Authority in Progressive Judaism." Address given by the President-Designate of the World Union for Progressive Judaism at the Eleventh International Conference on July 12, 1959, London. Keighley, England: John Wadsworth Limited, Royal Press for the World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1959.

Freehof, Solomon B. What is Progressive Judaism? New York: The World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1961.

Freehof, Solomon B., "What is Reform Judaism?" Popular Studies in Judaism, No. 27 Cincinnati: The Tract Commission, 1937.

Glasner, Samuel. "An Equivocal Wedding Service." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1971.

Holz, Anthony. "Symbols, Salvation, and Liberal Judaism: An Evaluation of the Belief and Ceremonial Structure of Contemporary Judaism." Unpublished Rabbinic Thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1970.

Hopp, David I. "High Holy Days Service." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1977.

Hospers, John. Human Conduct: An Introduction to the Problems of Ethics. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961.

Hospers, John. An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis. Great Britain: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co. Ltd., 1963.

Hume, David. A Treatise of Human Nature, reprinted from the original edition in three volumes and edited, with an analytical index by L. A. Selby-Bigge, M. A. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Institute of Creative Judaism. A Book of Common Service. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.

Institute of Creative Judaism. "Equivocal Service I." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1974.

Institute of Creative Judaism. ICJ Communicator Vol. I, No. 1 and following. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976-1981.

Jacobs, Louis. A Jewish Theology. New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1973.

Kagan, Michael A. "The Empty Grave." Unpublished fiction, 1979.

Kagan, Michael A. "Who Decides? an essay in Philosophical Psychology." Unpublished paper, 1980.

Kaplan, Mordecai M. Judaism as a Civilization: Toward a Reconstruction of American-Jewish Life. New York: The Reconstructionist Press, 1957.

Kaplan, Mordecai M. Judaism Without Supernaturalism: The Only Alternative to Orthodoxy and Secularism. New York: The Reconstructionist Press, 1967.

Kaplan, Mordecai M. Know how to Answer: A Guide to Reconstructionism. New York: The Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, Inc., 1951.

Kaplan, Mordecai M., "The Next Step in the Reform Movement," Hebrew Union College Quarterly 36 (December 1949): 3-6.

Kaplan, Mordecai M. Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers. New York: Reconstructionist Press, 1956.

Karff, Samuel E., "Judaism, Reform and Radical Freedom," CCAR Journal 15 (April 1968): 16-31, 53.

Kaufmann, Walter. Critique of Religion and Philosophy. New York: Anchor Books, 1961.

Martin, Bernard, ed. Contemporary Reform Jewish Thought. Chicago: Quadrangle Books in cooperation with the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1968.

Mattuck, Israel, ed. Aspects of Progressive Jewish Thought. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1954.

- Menkus, Belden and Gilbert, Arthur., compilers and editors.
Meet the American Jew. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963.
- Montefiore, C. G. "The Question of Authority in Liberal Judaism."
Papers for Jewish People, No. 33 London: Jewish Religious
Union for the Advancement of Liberal Judaism, 1936.
- Petuchowski, Jakob J., "Footnotes to the Current Debate,"
CCAR Journal 13 (October 1965): 13-17.
- Plaut, W. Gunther. The Growth of Reform Judaism: American
and European Sources until 1948. New York: World Union
for Progressive Judaism, Ltd., 1965.
- Plaut, W. Gunther. The Rise of Reform Judaism: A Sourcebook
of its European Origins. New York: World Union for
Progressive Judaism, Ltd., 1963.
- Quine, W. V. Methods of Logic, Third Edition. New York:
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972.
- Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli and Moore, Charles A., editors.
A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy. Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 1957.
- Regner, Sidney L., "The Quest for Authority in Reform Judaism,"
Journal of Reform Judaism 26 (Autumn 1979): 29-37.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Are We in Exile?" Dimensions Symposium:
Are We in Exile? Spring 1971. New York: Union of
American Hebrew Congregations, 1971.
- Reines, Alvin J., "... Baal/Baalat Mitzvah..." Polydoxy,
Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 2 (Spring 1977):
1-4.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Birth Dogma and Philosophic Religious Faith:
A Philosophic Inquiry," Hebrew Union College Annual 46
(1975): 297-329.
- Reines, Alvin J. "A Ceremony of Baal(at) Mitzvah." Cincinnati:
Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.
- Reines, Alvin J. A Concise Guide to the Celebration and Under-
standing of Chanukah, The Festival of Affirmation.
Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1980.

- Reines, Alvin J., "Crisis, Polydoxy and Survival," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 3 (1978): 1-11.
- Reines, Alvin J. Elements in a Philosophy of Reform Judaism. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.
- Reines, Alvin J., "The Festival of New Beginnings," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 2 (Autumn 1976): 1-4.
- Reines, Alvin J., "The Future and the Holy," CCAR Journal 14 (October 1967): 6-10.
- Reines, Alvin J. "Haggadah: A Passover Service for the Family." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Halachah and Reform Judaism," Dimensions in American Judaism 4 (Spring 1970): 21-23.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Hanukkah: The Festival of Affirmation," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 1 (Winter 1975): 1-3.
- Reines, Alvin J. "A Memorial and Concluding Service for Yom Kippur." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism.
- Reines, Alvin J., "The Name 'Jew' . . ." Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 3 (Fall 1977): 1-10.
- Reines, Alvin J., "The New Beginnings," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 1 (Autumn 1975): 2-4.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Passover: The Festival of Creative Freedom," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 1 (Spring 1976): 1-3.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Polydox Judaism: a Statement," (copy of original draft submitted to and later published by the Journal of Reform Judaism 27 (Fall, 1980).
- Reines, Alvin J., "Religious Inter-marriage . . ." Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 2 (Winter 1977): 1-4.
- Reines, Alvin J. "A Rosh Hashanah Service for the Family." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.

- Reines, Alvin J., "Shabbat as a State of Being," CCAR Journal 14 (January 1967): 29-38.
- Reines, Alvin J., "Who is the 'Author'?" Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought 29 (Winter 1980): 81-84.
- Reines, Alvin J., "The Word God," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 4 (1979).
- Reines, Alvin J., "The Word Religion," Polydoxy, Journal of the Institute of Creative Judaism 4 (1979): 1-15.
- Reines, Alvin J. "A Yom Kippur Service for the Family." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1974.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Alper, Robert A. "A Hanukkah Service for the Family." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1972.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Holz, Anthony D. "Funeral and Memorial Services." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1979.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Holz, Anthony D. "Service of Freedom and Personhood: In Celebration of National Gathering II." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1980.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Levine, Joel L. "Havdalah Service." Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1978.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Menitoff, Paul. Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism: Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy, Parts I, II, and III. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1970, 1971, 1973.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Reines, Hera G. Joseph: The Hebrews Come to Egypt, Level C, Volume I. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1980.
- Reines, Alvin J. and Reines, Hera G. The Patriarchal Family, Level A, Unit I. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1975.
- Rivkin, Ellis. A Hidden Revolution: The Pharisees' Search for the Kingdom Within. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978.
- Samuelson, Norbert, "A Therapy for Religious Definitions: Guides and Ignosticism in Reform Judaism," CCAR Journal 14 (June 1967): 19-27.

- Schachtel, Bernard. The Candles' Rebellion: an Original Play for Hanukkah. Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1973.
- Schwartzman, Sylvan D. Reform Judaism in the Making. New York: The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1955.
- Schwartzman, Sylvan D. Reform Judaism Then and Now. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1971.
- Sellars, Wilfrid and Hospers, John, editors. Readings in Ethical Theory, Second Edition. New York: Meredith Corporation, 1970.
- Silberman, Jeffrey Martin. "Liberal Religion and the Problems that it Raises for the Human Condition and Jewish Experience." Unpublished Rabbinic Thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1979.
- Silverman, William B. Basic Reform Judaism. New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1970.
- Warshal, Bruce S., "Alvin Reines' Understanding of Judaism: Some Critical Comments," (copy of original draft submitted to and later published by the Journal of Reform Judaism 27 (Fall 1980).
- Whitehead, Alfred North. Adventures of Ideas. New York: The Free Press, 1967.
- Whitehead, Alfred North. Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology, Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of Edinburgh during the session 1927-28. New York: The Free Press, 1969.
- Whitehead, Alfred North. Religion in the Making, Lowell Lectures 1926. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926.
- Wine, Sherwin T., "Polydoxy," Humanistic Judaism 6 (1978): 6-9.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Philosophical Investigations, the English text of the Third Edition translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Preliminary Studies for the "Philosophical Investigations"; Generally Known as the Blue and Brown Books. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Wolf, Sylvin Lawrence. "Reform Judaism as Process: A Study of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1960-1975." 1978 Thesis--St. Louis University. Microfilm of typescript. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1979.

APPENDIX

1. The first of the
two is the "Preliminary"
which is the "Preliminary"
which is the "Preliminary"
which is the "Preliminary"

2. The second is the "Regular"
which is the "Regular"
which is the "Regular"
which is the "Regular"

3. The third is the "Final"

The Pittsburgh Platform

In view of the wide divergence of opinion and of the conflicting ideas prevailing in Judaism today, we, as representatives of Reform Judaism in America, in continuation of the work begun at Philadelphia in 1869, unite upon the following principles:—

First—We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite One, and in every mode, source or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended amid continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race.

Second—We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as priest of the One God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific researches in the domains of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age and at times clothing its conception of divine providence and justice dealing with man in miraculous narratives.

Third—We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and to-day we accept as binding only the moral laws and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

Fourth—We hold that all such Mosaic and Rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas altogether foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.

Fifth—We recognize in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect the approach of the realization of Israel's great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to

Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the administration of the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

Sixth—We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past. Christianity and Islam being daughter-religions of Judaism, we appreciate their mission to aid in the spreading of monotheistic and moral truth. We acknowledge that the spirit of broad humanity of our age is our ally in the fulfillment of our mission, and therefore we extend the hand of fellowship to all who co-operate with us in the establishment of the reign of truth and righteousness among men.

Seventh—We reassert the doctrine of Judaism, that the soul of men is immortal, grounding this belief on the divine nature of the human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject as ideas not rooted in Judaism the belief both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden (hell and paradise), as abodes for everlasting punishment or reward.

Eighth—In full accordance with the spirit of Mosaic legislation which strives to regulate the relation between rich and poor, we deem it our duty to participate in the great task of modern times, to solve on the basis of justice and righteousness the problems presented by the contrasts and evils of the present organization of society.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF REFORM JUDAISM

In view of the changes that have taken place in the modern world and the consequent need of stating anew the teachings of Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis makes the following declaration of principles. It presents them not as a fixed creed but as a guide for the progressive elements of Jewry.

A. Judaism and Its Foundations

1. Nature of Judaism. Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people. Though growing out of Jewish life, its message is universal, aiming at the union and perfection of mankind under the sovereignty of God. Reform Judaism recognizes the principle of progressive development in religion and consciously applies this principle to spiritual as well as to cultural and social life.

Judaism welcomes all truth, whether written in the pages of scripture or deciphered from the records of nature. The new discoveries of science, while replacing the older scientific views underlying our sacred literature, do not conflict with the essential spirit of religion as manifested in the consecration of man's will, heart and mind to the service of God and of humanity.

2. God. The heart of Judaism and its chief contribution to religion is the doctrine of the One, living God, who rules the world through law and love. In Him all existence has its creative source and mankind its ideal of conduct. Through transcending time and space, He is the indwelling Presence of the world. We worship Him as the Lord of the universe and as our merciful Father.

3. Man. Judaism affirms that man is created in the Divine image. His spirit is immortal. He is an active co-worker with God. As a child of God, he is endowed with moral freedom and is charged with the responsibility of overcoming evil and striving after ideal ends.

4. Torah. God reveals Himself not only in the majesty, beauty and orderliness of nature, but also in the vision and moral striving of the human spirit. Revelation is a continuous process, confined to no one group and to no one age. Yet the people of Israel, through its prophets and sages, achieved unique insight in the realm of religious truth. The Torah, both written and oral, enshrines Israel's ever-growing consciousness of God and of the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life, and seeks to mould it in the patterns of goodness and of holiness. Being products of historical processes, certain of its laws have lost their

binding force with the passing of the conditions that called them forth. But as a depository of permanent spiritual ideals, the Torah remains the dynamic source of the life of Israel. Each age has the obligation to adapt the teachings of the Torah to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism.

5. Israel. Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body. Living in all parts of the world, Israel has been held together by the ties of a common history, and above all, by the heritage of faith. Though we recognize in the group loyalty of Jews who have become estranged from our religious tradition, a bond which still unites them with us, we maintain that it is by its religion and for its religion that the Jewish people has lived. The non-Jew who accepts our faith is welcomed as a full member of the Jewish community.

In all lands where our people live, they assume and seek to share loyally the full duties and responsibilities of citizenship and to create seats of Jewish knowledge and religion. In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.

B. Ethics

6. Ethics and Religion. In Judaism religion and morality blend into an indissoluble unity. Seeking God means to strive after holiness, righteousness and goodness. The love of God is incomplete without the love of one's fellowmen. Judaism emphasizes the kinship of the human race, the sanctity and worth of human life and personality and the right of the individual to freedom and to the pursuit of his chosen vocation. Justice to all, irrespective of race, sect or class is the inalienable right and the inescapable obligation of all. The state and organized government exist in order to further these ends.

7. Social Justice. Judaism seeks the attainment of a just society by the application of its teachings to the economic order, to industry and commerce, and to national and international affairs. It aims at the elimination of man-made misery and suffering, of poverty and degradation, of tyranny and slavery, of social inequality and prejudice, of ill-will and strife. It advocates the promotion of

harmonious relations between warring classes on the basis of equity and justice, and the creation of conditions under which human personality may flourish. It pleads for the safe guarding of childhood against exploitation. It champions the cause of all who work and of their right to an adequate standard of living, as prior to the rights of property. Judaism emphasizes the duty of charity, and strives for a social order which will protect men against the material disabilities of old age, sickness and unemployment.

8. Peace. Judaism, from the days of the prophets, has proclaimed to mankind the ideal of universal peace. The spiritual and physical disarmament of all nations has been one of its essential teachings. It abhors all violence and relies upon moral education, love and sympathy to secure human progress. It regards justice as the foundation of the well-being of nations and the condition of enduring peace. It urges organized international action for disarmament, collective security and world peace.

C. Religious Practice

9. The Religious Life. Jewish life is marked by consecration to these ideals of Judaism. It calls for faithful participation in the life of the Jewish community as it finds expression in home, synagogue and school and in all other agencies that enrich Jewish life and promote its welfare.

The Home has been and must continue to be a stronghold of Jewish life, hallowed by the spirit of love and reverence, by moral discipline and religious observance and worship.

The Synagog is the oldest and most democratic institution in Jewish life. It is the prime communal agency by which Judaism is fostered and preserved. It links the Jews of each community and unites them with all Israel.

The perpetuation of Judaism as a living force depends upon religious knowledge and upon the Education of each new generation in our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

Prayer is the voice of religion, the language of faith and aspiration. It directs man's heart and mind Godward, voices the needs and hopes of the community, and reaches out after goals which invest life with supreme value. To deepen the spiritual life of our people, we must cultivate the traditional habit of communion with God through prayer in both home and synagogue.

Judaism as a way of life requires in addition to its moral and spiritual demands, the preservation of the Sabbath, festivals and Holy Days, the retention and development of such customs, symbols and ceremonies as possess inspirational value, the cultivation of distinctive forms of religious art and music and the use of Hebrew, together

with the vernacular, in our worship and instruction.

These timeless aims and ideals of our faith we present anew to a confused and troubled world. We call upon our fellow Jews to rededicate themselves to them, and, in harmony with all men, hopefully and courageously to continue Israel's eternal quest after God and His kingdom.

REFORM JUDAISM

A Centenary Perspective

The Central Conference of American Rabbis has on special occasions described the spiritual state of Reform Judaism. The centenaries of the founding of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion seem an appropriate time for another such effort. We therefore record our sense of the unity of our movement today.

One Hundred Years: what we have taught

We celebrate the role of Reform Judaism in North America, the growth of our movement on this free ground, the great contributions of our membership to the dreams and achievements of this society. We also feel great satisfaction at how much of our pioneering conception of Judaism has been accepted by the Household of Israel. It now seems self-evident to most Jews: that our tradition should interact with modern culture; that its forms ought to reflect a contemporary esthetic; that its scholarship needs to be conducted by modern, critical methods; and that change has been and must continue to be a fundamental reality in Jewish life. Moreover, though some still disagree, substantial numbers have also accepted our teachings: that the ethics of universalism implicit in traditional Judaism must be an explicit part of our Jewish duty; that women should have full rights to practice Judaism; and that Jewish obligation begins with the informed will of every individual. Most modern Jews, within their various religious movements, are embracing Reform Jewish perspectives. We see this past century as having confirmed the essential wisdom of our movement.

One Hundred Years: what we have learned

Obviously, much else has changed in the past century. We continue to probe the extraordinary events of the past generation, seeking to understand their meaning and to incorporate their significance in our lives. The Holocaust shattered our easy optimism about humanity and its inevitable progress. The State of Israel, through its many accomplishments, raised our sense of the Jews as a people to new heights of aspiration and devotion. The widespread threats to freedom, the problems inherent in the explosion of new knowledge and of ever more powerful technologies, and the spiritual emptiness of much of Western culture, have taught us to be less dependent on the

values of our society and to reassert what remains perennially valid in Judaism's teaching. We have learned again that the survival of the Jewish people is of highest priority and that in carrying out our Jewish responsibilities we help move humanity toward its messianic fulfillment.

Diversity Within Unity, the hallmark of Reform

Reform Jews respond to change in various ways according to the Reform principle of the autonomy of the individual. However, Reform Judaism does more than tolerate diversity; it engenders it. In our uncertain historical situation we must expect to have far greater diversity than previous generations knew. How we shall live with diversity without stifling dissent and without paralyzing our ability to take positive action will test our character and our principles. We stand open to any position thoughtfully and conscientiously advocated in the spirit of Reform Jewish beliefs. While we may differ in our interpretation and application of the ideas enunciated here, we accept such differences as precious and see in them Judaism's best hope for confronting whatever the future holds for us. Yet in all our diversity we perceive a certain unity and we shall not allow our differences in some particulars to obscure what binds us together.

I. God

The affirmation of God has always been essential to our people's will to survive. In our struggle through the centuries to preserve our faith we have experienced and conceived of God in many ways. The trials of our own time and the challenges of modern culture have made steady belief and clear understanding difficult for some. Nevertheless, we ground our lives, personally and communally, on God's reality and remain open to new experiences conceptions of the Divine. Amid the mystery we call life, we affirm that human beings, created in God's image, share in God's eternality despite the mystery we call death.

II. The People Israel

The Jewish people and Judaism defy precise definition because both are in the process of becoming. Jews, by birth or conversion, constitute an uncommon union of faith and peoplehood. Born as Hebrews in the ancient Near East, we are bound together like all ethnic groups by language, land, history, culture and institutions.

But the people of Israel is unique because of its involvement with God and its resulting perception of the human condition. Throughout our long history our people has been inseparable from its religion with its messianic hope that humanity will be redeemed.

III. Torah

Torah results from the relationship between God and the Jewish people. The records of our earliest confrontations are uniquely important to us. Lawgivers and prophets, historians and poets gave us a heritage whose study is a religious imperative and whose practice is our chief means to holiness. Rabbis and teachers, philosophers and mystics, gifted Jews in every age amplified the Torah tradition. For millennia, the creation of Torah has not ceased and Jewish creativity in our time is adding to the chain of tradition.

IV. Our Obligations: religious practice

Judaism emphasizes action rather than creed as the primary expression of a religious life, the means by which we strive to achieve universal justice and peace. Reform Judaism shares this emphasis on duty and obligation. Our founders stressed that the Jew's ethical responsibilities, personal and social, are enjoined by God. The past century has taught us that the claims made upon us may begin with our ethical obligations but they extend to many other aspects of Jewish living, including: creating a Jewish home centered on family devotion; life-long study; private prayer and public worship; daily religious observance; keeping the Sabbath and the holy days; celebrating the major events of life; involvement with the synagogue and community; and other activities which promote the survival of the Jewish people and enhance its existence. Within each area of Jewish observance Reform Jews are called upon to confront the claims of Jewish tradition, however differently perceived, and to exercise their individual autonomy, choosing and creating on the basis of commitment and knowledge.

V. Our Obligations: the State of Israel and the Diaspora

We are privileged to live in an extraordinary time, one in which a third Jewish commonwealth has been established in our people's ancient homeland. We are bound to that land and to the newly reborn State of Israel by innumerable religious and ethnic ties. We have been enriched by its culture and ennobled by its indomitable

spirit. We see it providing unique opportunities for Jewish self-expression. We have both a stake and a responsibility in building the State of Israel, assuring its security and defining its Jewish character. We encourage aliyah for those who wish to find maximum personal fulfillment in the cause of Zion. We demand that Reform Judaism be unconditionally legitimized in the State of Israel.

At the same time that we consider the State of Israel vital to the welfare of Judaism everywhere, we reaffirm the mandate of our tradition to create strong Jewish communities wherever we live. A genuine Jewish life is possible in any land, each community developing its own particular character and determining its Jewish responsibilities. The foundation of Jewish community life is the synagogue. It leads us beyond itself to cooperate with other Jews, to share their concerns, and to assume leadership in communal affairs. We are therefore committed to the full democratization of the Jewish community and to its hallowing in terms of Jewish values.