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LIBERAL RELIGION AND THE PROBLEMS THAT IT RAISES FOR THE HUMAN CONDITION AND JEWISH EXPERIENCE

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DIGEST

This thesis attempts to analyze and evaluate the contemporary manifestations of liberal Judaism. An assumption is made about the nature of the various non-orthodox Judaisms in that they are all considered liberal in some respects.

The first chapter presents an examination of the term "religion" with the purpose of proposing a working definition. This discussion is preliminary to the presentation of a definition of liberal religion.

In the second chapter, the presentation is in three parts. Religion is understood to be influenced by other technical disciplines. Advances in psychology, philosophy, and scientific methodology has greatly affected our present conception of religion. Some of these influences are the subject of this chapter.

The third chapter presents an examination of five non-orthodox Judaisms. Problems of liberal religion, such as authority, belief structure, ritual content, and salvation, are addressed to each of these groups in order to help characterize them as liberal religions.

The final chapter is a subjective evaluation of the non-orthodox Judaisms which were examined in the third chapter. This evaluation is to be understood in the light of the conclusions presented in the first chapter about the nature of religion and in the second chapter about the nature of the human person.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

RELIGION AND LIBERAL RELIGION

I. Introduction

In any treatment of religion, we must explore beyond ourselves. For it is a very easy matter to become a victim of one's personal range of experience and thereby limit the exposition to one's interpretation of that experience. The study of religion, it has been said, should be directed by the right kind of interest.[1] This position holds that we should have a religious interest and attitude that will help determine what is correctly in the purview of religion and what is not. But this approach is not adequate for our purposes. "Proper" attitude alone cannot clarify the issues when we attempt a precise understanding and definition of the terms and concepts. It might be argued further that the attitude which one brings to a study of religion generally creates the basis of the problem in attaining an objective perspective.

Typically, a student comes to religion having received training in another discipline. The psychologist, sociologist, theologian, all bring to religion the inherent biases that their particular field generates. Thus the

theological student generally makes certain assumptions such as the existence of a deity. For that student, religion necessarily involves a god or gods. The sociologist views religion differently. He understands religion from the point of view of social relations, organizational behavior and change. The psychologist sees religion from a mental or emotional context. These specialized approaches to religion often lead to a limited and narrowly defined study of religion. In other words, such scholars limit the scope of their study to their particular field of interest.

There exists as well the opposite problem in the study of religion. One deals with religion so broadly and attempts to include so much of human experience that no clear distinction can be seen between it and other aspects of life.

> Thus [William] James defines religion as our total reaction to reality. In a sense, this is true, but it is not true in any sense which would mark off religion from other experiences. Each of us might be summed up as our total reaction to reality; and from this relation to ourselves our religion does not escape any more than anything else which belongs to us.
>
> We may go still farther and say that religion is the spring of all efforts after harmony both in our soul and in our conscience.[2]

Such broad generalizations about religion do little to distinguish religion sufficiently from the rest of human experience. In attempting to evaluate religion fairly, this problem is quite common.

The fundamental problem that is encountered in this study is of a still different nature. In attempting to define liberal religion, it seems logical that the proper starting point would be the definition of religion. This task is not so simple as one might expect. Vergilius Ferm states the problem thus:[3]

> The term religion belongs to that large class of popular words which seems acceptable as common coin of communicative exchange but which on closer examination fails to carry the imprint of exact meaning.

Therefore, as difficult as defining religion per se might appear to be, the problem of explaining liberal religion is all the more complex. On a practical level, this may not be so involved, but as one aspires for exactitude of usage and application, complexity is unavoidable. The intention of this chapter is to deal with the problems of establishing a working definition of liberal religion.

II. Methodology

Having noted that there are inherent problems in approaching religion from within a specialized discipline, it is appropriate to acknowledge these biases and to determine the extent they will enter into this study. The tack which shall be taken to minimize these biases comes from the fields of philosophy and modern science.[4] In other words, the approach shall be one of critical and rational evaluation. It is assumed that no position which will be examined is exempt from analytic scrutiny. Thus,

each subject will be addressed in the same manner. This is an important consideration with respect to how we understand the applicability of the specialized terminology to certain actualities. It is in this manner that we shall uncover both the strengths and weaknesses of the definitions and religions in this study.

How shall we proceed to examine, in the first part, the questions of definition and applicability? And in the second part, upon what basis shall we explore how the various religious groups meet the criteria of liberal religion? Several rules from the science of logic will offer some guidance. These are the rule of coherency, the rule of evidence, and the rule of consistency. Rules of logic are needed particularly with respect to the ordinary usage of the language of religion. Ordinary usage often involves inaccurate representation of concepts and ideas which do have more precise meanings. By comparing the use of words, we can perceive not only the true sense of what is being asserted when used properly, but also the difficulties that arise from vague and inconsistent usage.

Edgar Brightman writes in justification of an empirical approach to the study of religion.

> It is a fact that religion and religious knowledge [or claims to such knowledge] arise in our conscious experience and are in some way tested by it. To accept this fact is to adopt an empirical method of open-minded inquiry that commits us in advance to no conclusions. At the same time, it is obvious that the apriorist, the logical positivist,

> and the Barthian are committed in advance, the first to a rationalistic belief in God and religion, the second to skepticism, and the third to a supernatural religion. Is it not the part of wisdom to pursue the liberal and open-minded path of the empiricist? This is the path of genuine investigation--as John Dewey says, of inquiry."[5]

This study shall be guided by these two basic principles. As we proceed, it is worthwhile to keep these in front of us and note that experience does not always fall into easily marked categories. In such cases, it may be necessary to take into account other factors which cannot meet the above noted standards. When this occurs, all efforts shall be made to elucidate as to why not.

III. Ordinary Uses of "Religion"

Everyone uses the words religion and religious at one time or another. History shows us that these words have been applied to a vast range of experiences and ideas. Dr. Abraham Cronbach has written:[6]

> Religion is commonly identified with a belief in a deity or in deities. Yet the label "religion" has been applied to Buddhism, to Positivism, to Humanism, and to Ethical Culture, systems in which deity is either negated or ignored. Friedrich Schleiermacher, himself a theologian, actually concedes that "a religion can be without a God and yet superior to a religion with a God." The term "religion" has been attached even to communism despite the prevalent identification of communism with atheism.

As a matter of fact, the entire spectrum of human endeavor has been associated with the idea of religion. Wars have

been waged in the name of religion as often as aspirations for peace. Death and destruction and suicide have come from the religious nation just as often as hope, charity, and fellowship. Some religions have emphasized the communal experience, while others have made the individual the center of religious fulfillment. Alfred North Whitehead offered this simple definition: "Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness."[7] Religion can be concerned with externals like rituals and observances (e.g. Orthodox Judaism, Roman Catholicism); or it can be meditative and totally without formal celebrations (e.g. Quakers). In short, religion has been taken to stand for many diverse and often contradictory things.

Ordinary usage of the word religion and its derivations has both a positive and a negative side. The starting point of any consideration of these words must come from the way people currently use the words.[8] Yet, the common connotation of these and many such words is often vague, and, generally too unspecified for a technical utilization. We must therefore begin anew, identifying the drawbacks that popular conversation entails and establishing specific meanings. Three of the most common problems of ordinary usage have been identified as ambiguity, contradiction, and blindness.[9]

A common dictionary will provide the starting point for determining what religion means in ordinary usage.

Several of the offerings (in the dictionary) can be eliminated because they are tautologies. One which may be examined is the following:

> [Religion is] the personal commitment to and serving of God or a god with worshipful devotion, conduct in accord with divine commands esp. as found in accepted sacred writings or declared by authoritative teachers, a way of life recognized as incumbent on true believers, and typically the relating of oneself to organized body of believers.[10]

Even though this definition seeks to include numerous aspects of what comprises religions, it also admits the problem of narrowness. That is to say, it excludes certain groups identifiable as religions.[11]

At the other end of the spectrum of definitions, there is this one.

> [Religion is] a cause, a principle, systems of tenents held with ardor, devotion, conscientiousness, and faith.
>
> And [religion is] a value held to be of supreme importance.[12]

These definitions clearly apply to religion, yet may apply to other areas as well. Hence, they are too vague or too general for our purposes.

Summing up the various conceptions of religion, this statement is made.

> Religion is a general term esp. applicable to the great revelations and larger sub-divisions among their believers.[13]

Once again one perceives a particular bias in the formulation of this expression. The writer approaches religion from the point of view of Western religions and emphasizes in the definition what is fundamental in that kind of thinking. It must be concluded, therefore, that this way of approaching the definition will not provide much assistance.

We might consider what, if anything, common experience tells us about religion. William James notes that we are given to understand religion in two senses.[14]

> Worship and sacrifice, procedures for working on the dispositions of the deity, theology, and ceremony and ecclesiastical organization, are the essentials of religion in the institutional branch.
>
> In the more personal branch of religion it is on the contrary the inner dispositions of man himself which form the center of interest, his conscience, his deserts, his helplessness, his incompleteness.

Institutional religion can be illustrated by the organizations with which most of us are familiar. Reform Judaism, the American Lutheran Church, and the Roman Catholic Church are well known examples. Although the demarcation between these groups and personal religion is clear, it should be noted that the institutional branch, in James' words, operates generally on some level in order to serve the needs of the individual. Personal religion has as its exclusive concern the individual person and his/her needs. The first part of this study

will focus on this personal aspect of religion, while the effectiveness of institutional religions will be the subject for the second part.

IV. The Terms - Religion, A Religion, and Religious

Well within the realm of scholarly material related to and dealing specifically with religion, one can perceive the failures to clarify what is being spoken of. Often the issue of precise definition of terms is ignored in favor of the other aspects of theistic religion.[15] Or the meaning is dealt with in a perfunctory way in order to proceed to some other issue of interest to the writer.[16] Nevertheless, we are bound to attempt clarification. In order to do this, three derivative terms should be examined in relation to one another.

(A) The word "religion" is a generic noun indicating a class into which we can put both of the two branches noted above. This term can include all of the institutions which identify as religious, as well as the phenomenon of personal experience which is personal religion.

(B) The term "a religion" indicates something more specific than the generic term. When "a religion" is spoken of, a specific group or system is being identified. Such a term commonly connotes only the institutional forms, yet may also refer to the religion of an individual when so specified.

(C) Lastly, the word "religious" is an adjective which describes the nature or character of a person, an object, or an event.[17] The implications of this word are more complex than either of the two preceding terms. It is evident from any example that "religious" does not apply in a uniform manner to people, objects, and events. An event is religious by virtue of the specific time or place with which it is associated. An object may be religious because it has a symbolic or historic meaning attached to it. A person is said to be religious because of certain patterns of that person's behavior.[18]

With regard to people or a group of people, the following definition may serve.

> To be religious means that one's attitude or behavior is directed by aspects of one's psyche which respond to the human condition of finitude.[19]

A more elaborate explanation of this definition and its origins will be presented in another chapter.[20] It will suffice for now to note that by this definition, religion involves a response of the psyche that is called forth by the fundamental problem of human existence.

By contrast, Vergilius Ferm has offered this definition.

> To be religious is to effect in some way, and in some measure, a vital adjustment (however tentative and incomplete) to w(W)hatever is reacted to or regarded implicitly or explicitly as worthy of serious and ulterior (sic) concern.[21]

As in the above definition, certain phrases in Ferm's definition require further explanation.[22] However, we may understand that Ferm was attempting to include all manner of religious experience by specifying how the person responds (in some way and in some measure), how important the response is (a vital adjustment), to what it is that the person responds (w(W)hatever), and so on. This definition reveals a hesitancy on the part of the writer to make a definite statement about the nature of religion. Instead, it appears that by using language in a certain manner, he is able to be general enough to include many experiences other than the religious, and still not specific enough to identify a position of his own.

V. Prolegomenon to a Definition of Religion[23]

Reference has been made to a number of the problems in attempting a definition of religion. At this point, it would be well to formalize a set of guidelines by which we can proceed in arriving at a definition for this study.[24]

These criteria will for the most part indicate specific aspects that should be avoided in the formulation of the definition. In other words, the suggestions will be mostly negative; as opposed to positing what should be included, we will indicate what should not.

(A) First of all, the etymology of the word religion and its related forms provides little help. An appeal to the Latin source <u>religare</u> (meaning "being bound") or

relegere (meaning "gather together") may throw some light upon the word in some homiletical sense, but does not serve to elucidate a technical meaning of the word.

(B) A second common error was indicated above in the distinction between the three related terms, religion, a religion, and religious. Often, these words are applied indiscriminately to people, groups, or events, which leads to a confusion of issues.[25]

(C) Two related problems come from defining the term too narrowly or too broadly. In the former manner, one might say that to be religious means that one goes to church or synagogue. An example of the latter could be to say that religion is love or wonder. These examples might seem overly simplistic yet the reality and frequency of the problem is not refuted. James Martineau, in his Study of Religion, understands religion to mean "the belief in an ever living God, that is, in a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind." Renan, in The Future of Science, wrote "My religion is now as ever the progress of reason, in other words, the progress of science."[26]

(D) A fourth common error is related to the last one. A definition must not be too vague if it is to be useful as a definition. The definition of A. Comte in his Catechism of Positive Religion might be considered as an example.

"Religion, then, consists in regulating each one's individual nature, and forms the rallying point for all the separate individuals."[27]

(E) The next type of error is somewhat more complex. It involves the typical kind of nineteenth century philosophical understanding of religion.[28] Ferm states it this way:

> ...the psychological error of defining in terms of one phase of mental life. For example, to say that one is religious when one <u>believes in</u> or <u>affirms</u> a god is to commit the error of confining the meaning to <u>intellectual</u> activity; to say that one is religious when one <u>feels</u> (e.g. the feeling of absolute dependence - Schleiermacher) is to confine the meaning to emotional experience; to say that one is religious when one <u>performs</u> or <u>behaves</u> in a given way may well confine the meaning to activity. Man is ever more than a <u>mere</u> thinking, feeling, and active creature. He is a <u>whole</u> person with intermingled inner and outer responses and activities.[29]

(F) A sixth problem has grown within the past generation. Traditionally, the crux was that a distinction necessarily had to be made between religion and ethics. Some recent Jewish thinkers have said that religion and ethics cannot be separated in Judaism. Be that as it may, a distinction has to be made on some level. Not only between religion and ethics, but also between religion and theology and religion and philosophy. For some, these distinctions are neither clear, nor necessary.[30] But as history will bear out, neither morality, nor God, nor coherent thought inheres in religion. Therefore,

even though all are often present in religion, to limit religion to just one of these falls into the error of narrowness.[31]

(G) Tied into the last area of common errors is the tendency to equate religion with a god-concept. This presents at least two difficulties. First, the question may be asked as to whether or not we classify as religious the people or groups which exhibit religious behavior and yet do not assert a belief in a deity of any kind. Such groups like the Society for Humanistic Judaism might serve as an example of this kind of group.[32] Furthermore, it is possible that one may hold such a belief and yet not be in any way religious. Such a position might be extremely rare, yet not without precedent. Various primitive systems may in fact be classified thus.[33]

(H) Lastly, a definition of religion should be descriptive and not normative. It should state what religion <u>is</u> and not attempt to establish what religion <u>ought</u> to be. This criteria makes the problem all the more difficult, particularly given the numerous ways in which people have actualized their religions. In various contexts religion has been both rational and super-rational, theistic and agnostic (atheism might be considered a type of agnosticism), personal and impersonal, naturalistic and supernatural, traditional and innovative, humanistic and other-worldly, political and apolitical, or any mixture of these that one might conceive.

Thus, the guidelines for a definition of religion establish certain principles for us. As much as possible, these rules shall direct our efforts, but it should be noted that other definitions are subject to still other problems. Some definitions will be victim of more than one false judgement. Some may not encounter any of these problems, yet still may be inadequate. And we may eventually find that in order to arrive at a good, working definition, we must ignore some of these considerations. In the following section, several definitions will be offered and examined and a tentative conclusion reached.

VI. Definitions of Religion

The best that might be hoped for in arriving at a definition of religion is a general statement of common elements from several good definitions. By examining the opinions of several competent thinkers, an attempt can be made to come to some conclusion.[34] The definitions of Edgar Brightman, Frederick Ferre', Abraham Cronbach and Alvin Reines will be the subject of the section.

(A) Edgar S. Brightman[35] contends that given the divergencies in form, belief, and practice of <u>just</u> the major world religions, they still share enough commonality to warrant the following definition:

> Religion is a <u>concern</u> about experiences which are regarded as of supreme value; <u>devotion</u> toward a power or powers believed to originate, increase, and conserve these

> values; and some suitable expression of this concern and devotion, whether through symbolic rites or through other individual and social conduct. (italics are mine)[36]

There are three key words which indicate how Brightman understands the individual to be involved in religion. Through "concern," "devotion," and "expression", a person engages the totality of the psyche, not merely a single element (e.g. willing, thinking, feeling). From the perspective of the individual, therefore, this definition poses no problems.

Symbolic rites or some "other individual and social conduct" (or behavior) represents the kind of distinction that makes evident the differences between religion and the disciplines of theology, ethics, and philosophy. As one perceives these actions in an individual, they are identified as religious characteristics. For example, the concern with supreme value can also be a characteristic of philosophy, but the symbolic or religious rite used to express this concern would not be found in philosophy.

One point of Brightman's definition may be subject to criticism on the basis of the guidelines. Experiences of supreme value may be self-generated, in which case, the "devotion", normally directed outward, becomes self-devotion. When self-devotion becomes the sole psychic (religious) response of the individual, it may be termed illness or madness. In such a case, most of us would

venture that the experience is outside the realm of religion.[37]

(B) Somewhat more terse and in need of elaboration is Frederick Ferre's definition.[38]

> Religion is a way of valuing. It is one's way of valuing most comprehensively and intensively.

Ferre understands valuing to mean "taking conscious and desiderative interest." In other words, humans value with their entire being, and Ferre distinguishes religious valuing from other types by its level of intensity, as well as the ultimate goal of the action. Religion cannot be, therefore, a partial or half-hearted endeavor.

It is interesting to see how Ferre arrives at this kind of formulation. He establishes a set of basic requirements which he terms "resolutions of cruciality."[39] These are the characteristics which are crucial or necessary to a definition of religion. He lists them thus:

1. Be as <u>unspecialized</u> as possible regarding religion's relevance to types of people and aspects of life.
2. Be as <u>hospitable</u> as possible to diversity in specific doctrine and practice among religions.
3. Be as <u>permissive</u> as possible in acknowledging religion's personal and social roles.
4. Be as <u>open</u> as possible on the questions of truth and falsity in religion.
5. Be as <u>unprejudiced</u> as possible in terms of the beneficial or harmful effects of religion.

Clearly, it is Ferre's position that any definition should be as inclusive as possible. Yet, he also notes that the definition should be as specific as possible so as to include all varieties of religion and to exclude non-religion. But then he temporarily discounts these two requirements of scope to list the requirements which bring him to the concept of valuing.

> It must be something [that]:
>
> a. involves the whole of a man's life.
> b. open to all kinds of people.
> c. issues naturally in widely various activities or practices, practices often clung to with great fervor and attended with powerful emotions.
> d. issues naturally in widely various ideas or beliefs, beliefs often held with great tenacity.
> e. may be found either privately or socially.
> f. may be open to different opinions concerning its truth or falsity or its capacity for either one.
> g. has consequences that may be considered either beneficial or harmful.

These qualifying requirements and the proposed definition raise several questions. First of all, in attempting to present a definition that is inclusive as possible, Ferre' classifies orthodox and non-orthodox religion in the same category. From the objective, external perspective this presents no difficulties; yet internally, few, if any, orthodox religions would permit this democratic kind of evaluation. In other words, divinely revealed religions are not open to the issue of truth and falsity in their respective systems. The truth is necessarily inherent

for these religions and their consequences are also necessarily beneficial. Valuation or valuing is imposed by the absolute authoritarianism which prevails in most orthodox religions.

This same kind of objection from within may be raised with regard to other of Ferre's requirements. It is conceivable that an orthodox religious system would be open to valuing as the central process of religion, yet unless their particular system were given an unconditional exemption from doubt, falsity, and harmfulness, it is questionable. Since, objectively it is clear that these issues do stem from religions of all kinds, and since we have an obligation not to prejudge, it appears that we must evaluate the applicability of Ferre's definition. It would be my contention that these requirements are most usefully applied only to non-orthodox religions; and there, most appropriately.
(C) Jewish thinkers and philosophers have generally avoided dealing with the issue of defining religion. Contemporary writings are concerned with theology, faith, or reason in religion among other peripheral subjects. Only two presentations stand out in their attempt to clarify the definition of religion itself. Our study shall focus first on the work of the late Dr. Abraham Cronbach, and then on the writings of Dr. Alvin Reines.

Dr. Cronbach was writing on religion at a time when language analysis was a dominant trend among

philosophers.[40] It is this approach that he applied to his study of the language and phenomenon of religion.

> Nothing can be further from the truth than the shibboleth that all religions are essentially alike, that all pursue an identical aim, that "all of us are headed for the same place." Divergencies exist not only between religion and religion but also between individual and individual within one and the same religion when it comes to defining religious goals.[41]

Given that he perceived the diversity, and hence, the difficulty of a general purpose definition of religion, Dr. Cronbach proposed another approach.

> All of this justifies supplementing the noun "religion" and the adjective "religious" with the verb "religionize". The history of religion is a record of religionization. Ideas and practices which, at one period, do not belong to a given cult, are eventually brought within the cult.[42]

This analysis provides a way around the problem of defining the generic term religion. For, in such a case, the idea of process and change governs the aspects of particular groups, events, objects which make them religious. Thus, various degrees of individual involvement at different times is not only acknowledged, but condoned as well. Dr. Cronbach notes that beside the process of religionization stands its opposite number, dereligionization. This describes the historical abandonment of certain practices or customs, even beliefs, which lose their religious significance and are excluded from normative religious behavior.

We can understand therefore that Dr. Cronbach was sensitive to the difficulties of this issue. In another discussion of religion he wrote,

> Important likewise is the phenomenon of verbal conditioning. People experience an agreeable reaction to some words and a disagreeable reaction to others. The emotions habitually produced by such words as "God," "Christ," "Church," "Synagogue," "Prayer," "Religion," "Cross," "Jewish," "Mortal Mind," "Faith," "Science," "Evolution," "that blessed word 'Mesopotamia'", and many others are often crucial in determining people's response to religion. The real impulsion behind many a theological expatiation is the state of emotion generated by the sound or the sight of various slogans.[43]

Essentially, Cronbach developed an open-ended approach to the study of religion. The changeable human creature lent characteristics of change and diversity to religion. Therefore, religion must be a product of the growth and evolution of the individual person and collective humanity.

The approach that Dr. Reines takes with regard to a definition of religion is shaped by two disciplines. First of all, he uses terms which have perhaps several meanings, yet he specifies how these terms are intended. This technique is typical of medieval Jewish philosophy. The other influence is Sigmund Freud's perception of the human psyche. Modern psychology begins with and is influenced by Freud's work, and Reines elaborates on Freud's explanation of the origins of religion.[44] The conflict in the psyche between its infinite desires and the finite nature of the body generates the fundamental human dilemma according to Reines. He writes,

> The conflict between the finite being of the human person and the infinite strivings of his will is sharp, penetrating to the core of his personality and a threat to its unity and integrity. Finity entails aloneness and death, whereas finite, being wills unlimited relation and eternity. Man's response to the conflict between what he essentially is and what he desires fundamentally to be, in other words, his response to finitude is the definition I give to religion.[45]

> Religion is concerned with the whole man, and involves his entire being, psyche and body, but it relates essentially and directly to the psyche.[46]

> Salvation is the purpose of religion. Religion is defined as "man's response to finitude"; and salvation is the name given to a successful response.[47]

It is the nature of the human to respond to the condition of conflict in existence. Reines' definition accounts adequately for this response. In other definitions the distinction was often made between modifications occurring in the person and in the world. Observation will tell us that neither may be readily evident, and yet the existence of a personal response cannot be dismissed. The source of the response is a conflict, if you will, a psychic conflict, which necessarily involves the whole person.

Ultimately, Dr. Reines asserts that all religion seeks to provide soteria for its adherents.[48] This applies to theistic and non-theistic systems alike. When this goal of soteria is broadened to include various methods of symbolic resolution of the essential conflict,

then happiness or contentment or joy or peace of mind or salvation is attained by successful religion. In other words, successful religion is a successful resolution of the psychic conflict resulting in a positive state of being. Thus Dr. Reines' definition, along with the preceding ones, provides a general framework for our understanding of religion.

A summation of this analysis of the definitions can provide several generalizations about religion.

1. Religion has no requirements for participation/ behavior.
2. There are no requisite number of participants for religion. One person or one billion may hold to the infrastructure of a religion.
3. For a religion to be a real religion for a person, there must be some centrality of that religion to the life of the person.
4. Religion is a developing process in the lives of people which grows and recedes with the changes in life-situations.
5. The source of religion is an encounter with something which justifies 3 and 4 above.

It is evident that such generalizations do not comprise an adequate definition of religion. If anything, they merely point out the complexity of the problem, as has been indicated right along. However, this analysis has provided a clear picture of the constitutive elements of religions and a framework upon which we can proceed to examine conceptions of liberal religion.

VII. Liberal Religion and Orthodox Religion

When seeking a definition of religion from among

the scholarly sources, one can be literally overwhelmed by the magnitude of the discussions. This is not the case, however, in the realm of liberal religion. It is at once both refreshing and somewhat frightening to uncover the fact that little attention has been given to the clarification of such a prominent form of religion today. No volumes have been devoted to the elucidation of this subject and precious little has been written about liberal religion in contrast to orthodox religion. Just as was the case in the ordinary usage of the term religion, liberal religion carries a vague and often unspecified character which includes all non-orthodox religion.

(A) What is Orthodox?

Because the province of orthodox religion is much more clearly delineated, it may be helpful to begin by defining orthodox religion as a contrast to liberal religion. Two other terms are often taken to be synonymous with the adjective orthodox as applied to religion. One, fundamental religion or fundamentalism, can be dismissed immediately. Primarily a movement or theological position, this term has specific connotations which imply the organized Protestant resistance to the use of scientific methods for the study of Scripture.[49] The specific nature of this meaning excludes other orthodox groups and is therefore inappropriate. The other term is traditional religion, or traditionalism. In-as-much as certain liberal religions have a fairly

well established set of traditions, the inappropriateness of this term is self evident. Therefore, orthodox religion alone represents the specific area which contrasts liberal religion.

Orthodoxy, from the Greek orthos, meaning right or straight, and doxa, meaning opinion, represents correctness of religious belief, according to an authoritative standard; opposed to heterodoxy, or heresy. The deliverances of an individual's conscience or religious experience might be correct from the standpoint of truth but at odds with the accepted, authoritative view, and, hence, be heterodox. Orthodoxy is, thus, conformity to the official formulation of the truth.[50]

With regard to Judaism, the adjective orthodox implies the acceptance of the total Jewish tradition as divinely given and authoritatively interpreted. Orthodox Judaism is based upon the accumulated written legal codes, which gives it an essentially unified character. Individual Jewish communities around the world have institutionalized local customs and practices which allows for considerable diversity. Yet, in essence, Orthodox Judaism demands an uncompromising belief in the unity of God and an acceptance of God's law as revealed to Moses.[51] This law directs the total behavior and actions of the true believer. Deviation from it becomes grounds for condemnation or expulsion from the community.[52] Justification for harsh measures of this nature stem from

the fundamental understanding within the orthodox community that absolute truth inheres in their religion.

When a religious community believes that it has the truth, then it deems as justified any measures which bring its people in line with that truth. This is the position of orthodoxy against which we may view liberal religion. The foundation of liberal religion, that which distinguishes it from other non-liberal religions, generates from how the adjective liberal is understood. Evident is the fact that it must impose stricter limitations than a definition or conception of religion in general. But it must also be a "liberating" aspect, contrasted to our understanding of orthodox religion; that is to say, it will indicate a sense like its common meaning, i.e. "free from restraint or check" and "not strict or rigorous."[53]

(B) What Is Liberal?

> Liberal, the most general term, suggests an emancipation from convention, tradition, or dogma that extends from a belief in altering institutions to fit altering conditions to a preference for lawlessness; on the one hand it suggests a commendable pragmatism, tolerance, and broad-mindedness and on the other a highly questionable unorthodoxy, experimentalism or positive irresponsibility.[54]

This definition, though too broad for the purpose of this study, offers a general conceptualization of the term liberal. When we attempt to become more specific in our application of the term liberal to

religion several problems arise. These problems come from the diverse nature of the groups to which it is applied. In other words, these groups may not all be objectively considered liberal even though they are identified as such.

We can see this clearly in the definition of a Liberal Catholic.

> A person or group rejecting the authority of the Roman Catholic Church in specific matters of doctrine, discipline, or church government but accepting the body of its teaching or its form of worship.[55]

In the Catholic Church there appears to be fundamentally two distinct postures. An orthodox believer and a liberal believer. One accepts the absolute authority of the church or one rejects that authority. This distinction is clear-cut and unequivocal.

By contrast, Liberal Protestantism or Liberalism does not connote the same specific kind of character that Liberal Catholicism does.

> Liberalism is a movement in modern Protestantism emphasizing intellectual liberty and the spiritual and ethical content of Christianity.[56]

Any number of Protestant groups today might be classified in this manner. Many share numerous common aspects which makes differentiation between at least of the several sects difficult. This lack of sharp distinction does not further refine the general definition of liberal religion. Moreover, the common Christological doctrine

limits any criteria based upon Protestant liberalism to these Christian groups alone.

Unfortunately the phrase "Liberal Judaism" has developed a very specific meaning, at least, insofar as definition in several standard reference works.[57] It has commonly come to mean Reform Judaism. The descendant of the historically-critical development of Judaism in nineteenth century Germany and Liberal Judaism have become virtually synonymous. It is common to find little or no distinction made between Reform Judaism and other non-orthodox Judaisms. Thus, an examination of various manifestations of liberal religion is of no help in formulating the concept in-of-itself.

(C) Liberal Theology

Related to liberal religion but not necessarily the same is liberal theology. It may prove helpful to examine this area in which the distinction is explicit between liberal and orthodox. Julius S. Bixler has written:[58]

> ...a liberal theologian is suspicious of authority and [is] in revolt against it; he may or may not believe in revelation, but he tends to interpret it as continuous with and as furnishing data for rational and reflective methods of thought. He may accept the supernatural but here again he tends to minimize its distinction from the content of ordinary experience and to find its difference from the natural in its ideal quality or the characteristics which give it value above the usual. The liberal theologian is loyal to the religious institution but he tends, also, to consider it

> worthy of devotion not in itself but in so far as it becomes the bearer and representative of ideal truth. In theology as in politics the liberal is one who is favorably disposed to change, especially that which is in line with individualism and democracy. Liberal theologians are thus bound by a common method rather than a definable common content.

Several aspects of this definition regarding liberal theology may apply to our understanding of liberal religion. Primary to both would be the application of critical and scientific methodologies to the study of all aspects of the subject. Absolute authority or truth is rejected[59] and therefore no subject remains sancrosanct or unquestionable. This attitude directly leads to the concept of change as an integral aspect of any part of life today. To be able to account for and incorporate such change into a system of human experience is essential. Even orthodox systems are generally flexible to the extent that they can respond with some sensitivity to the flux of the world at large. Lastly, the problem of authority stands as central to any liberal institution. In religion as in theology, the participating liberal member must confront the issue of authority and its source. In the second part of this study, the issue of authority will be raised with respect to specific non-orthodox religions which may be classified as liberal religions.

(D) <u>A Definition of Liberal Religion</u>

In general, the same criteria that apply to a

definition of religion should apply to a definition of liberal religion. There must be, however, specific limitations to this realm which mark its own unique character. Such religions which make demands upon the constituents in terms of ritual or belief which they, as liberal religionists, cannot accept should be excluded. Since only one significant definition has been found, it shall be our starting point.

> 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 that religion is taken as 'Scripture' or any text and teaching the equivalent of Scripture that the religion may otherwise value.[60]

An analysis of this definition indicates that previously mentioned definitions of Liberal Catholicism, Liberalism, and Liberal Judaism, as religions of history and revelation, fit easily into this schema. The orthodox forms of each one rely upon Scripture as the ultimate source of authority and these liberal religions reject or are skeptical of the absolute nature of that authority.

Not typical of the three liberal Western religions, and yet implied in the above definition, is the absence of any doctrine or creed to which one must adhere. Each of the three religions has in practice as well as in theory certain tenets of faith, whereas true liberal religion has no foundation upon which such

tenets may stand. This is necessarily so inasmuch as these religions accept scientific or critical study of all aspects of the religion. As a result, they leave themselves open to the contention that there are no absolutes and no dogmas which can be required.

At least two issues might be raised in criticism of Dr. Reines' position. For the first, the definition offered for religion by Dr. Reines must be recalled. Briefly, it was that religion is the human response to the conflict between infinite desire and finite existence.[61] With regard to this understanding, it may be asked what would distinguish as "liberal" a personal religion which acknowledges no Scriptural authority. In other words, the definition of liberal religion would not apply to a personal religious expression, which would probably be liberal in some other sense. An argument could therefore be made that this definition of liberal religion is not extensive enough to include all manifestations of liberal religion.

Secondly, the definition offered by Dr. Reines for liberal religion addresses only the cognitive or intellectual aspects of religion. It appears to limit the response to the human condition to the level of thought alone. One may approach Scripture critically or one may opt to respond to other aspects of religious experience with the mind, yet this is not by any means the full extent of one's religion. A religious indi-

vidual responds to the human dilemma as a whole person, not merely as an intellect.

(E) Practical Considerations for Judaism

It may be possible for one to assume at this point that there exists merely two options for religion, and in particular for the Jewish religion. Only orthodox and liberal religion have been forwarded for consideration. Yet in the area of liberal religion-in-action, another important distinction must be made. As Dr. Reines points out the ideal of liberal religion differs from the actual, especially in the American Jewish Community.[62] Modern liberal religions do not emphasize the aspect of their nature which allows their adherents to make their own choices with respect to ritual and belief.

What is, in fact, the situation is that there is a clear dichotomy between the theoretical and the practical liberal religions. Whereas the theoretical liberal religion establishes no set beliefs for its adherents, the practical or actual liberal religion presents itself as a descendent of orthodox religion and seeks thereby to retain certain minimum restrictions for its members. Dr. Reines states this situation thus:

> In the orthodox liberal religion, as compared to the openly acknowledged orthodoxies, generally fewer principles of belief and practice are prescribed; the principles are varied and vague; and enforcement is loose, uneven, and for the most part covert. Hence the appearance of non-orthodox freedom in the existing liberal religions results from a fallacious, albeit mainly un-

> conscious, comparison with the acknowledged orthodoxies;--from the fewer principles the former require, and from a lack of uniformity and openness in the application and enforcement of those principles, but not to a true freedom from orthodoxy and authoritarianism.[63]

This kind of religion is untrue to the essential nature of liberal religion. It limits the absolute autonomy of the individual to choose rituals and symbols and other forms of religious expression that are personally meaningful. The very practical issue of what an individual does in fact encounter in the Liberal Jewish community will be discussed later in this study.[64]

Logically, there must exist another alternative for the community of liberal religionists who are aware of the inadequacies of an orthodox liberal religion. This alternative is what has been termed a "polydox liberal community."[65]

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

Such a conception does not defy any of the previously noted criteria, while allowing for the maximum inclusion into a liberal religion of all who choose this option.

More detailed analysis of its implications in the Jewish community will be presented later.[66]

(F) Summary

It can be seen so far that a working definition of liberal religion must be a direct result of a working definition of religion. Since the result of our analysis of religion provided us with guidelines for a definition and no specific definition, this must be the pattern for liberal religion as well. That liberal religion has certain desiderata must now be evident. It cannot pretend to exert absolute authority, nor can it usurp the autonomy of the individual. Further, liberal religion has two forms, one orthodox and one polydox, which operate in actuality.

Two statements can express what I believe has been revealed in the course of this discussion. I rely once again upon a distinction, noted earlier, by William James.

1) Personal religion is by its nature a direct response of the individual to his or her own needs and life situation. Although the individual may choose to abdicate the inherent freedom that he/she has, this kind of religion must ultimately be identified as liberal.

2) A religion or religious institution is liberal when it does not impose either explicitly or implicitly any authority structure which limits the freedom of religious expression for the individual. The individual's only obligation as a liberal religionist is not to violate in his/her expression the same right of other members of that community.

CHAPTER II

THE HUMAN CONDITION AND RELIGION

I. Introduction and Definition of Problem

Progress for the human being has meant that the perception of oneself among other selves has grown more sophisticated and more complex through history. Time has brought changes in the thought and behavior of human beings with the concommitant advances in the understanding of the human creature in the world. Science and philosophy have brought new insights into the nature of the world, while psychology and sociology have given us a better idea of how and why the individual acts. Yet with all of this, we still find that our knowledge of the person, the individual, the human being is scant. Conjecture and hypothesis still dominate when it comes to explaining why people do what they do.

In this chapter, the condition of the human in relation to the world will be examined. It may be understood that all aspects or all viewpoints cannot be discussed. What our immediate concern shall be is the thought and behavior identified as religious, and what certain disciplines other than religious studies per se offer in the way of explanation of religion. Three areas will provide the substance of this section. Psychology,

philosophy, and scientific methodology together offer a fair summation of human thoughts and actions in our time. A brief sketch of the modern development of these disciplines regarding religion and religious behavior can indicate the nature or essence of the human condition. The result of such an examination would be to present a picture of the status of religion in human existence and to attempt to establish the extent to which liberal religion may serve to fulfill any religious or spiritual needs.

Inasmuch as the human is a part of the Kingdom of animals, it is acknowledged that a person has some basic physical needs. To paraphrase some of the sentiments of more poetic souls, because as the human is part of the divine, a person has a spiritual or religious character attached to his being. It is this spiritual or religious aspect of the person upon which we hope to focus. Clearly, there are few statistical type factors that can be studied in this realm. It is true that religious opinions may be polled and religious behavior may be observed and recorded. But, true to the complex nature of the human, religious behavior defies easy categorization. Diversity is the rule and individuals experience religion in as many different ways as there are persons.

So, it may be asked, why bother to examine the human condition at all. If religion exists, and if it

is so complex a phenomenon as we have indicated, no study will reveal much beyond substantiation of these assertions. On the contrary, we would hold that an examination from perspectives outside of religion itself may in fact yield some crucial insights. What is sought in this study is an understanding or, perhaps, an explanation of the factors which comprise this type of behavior. In this way, we can take our observations and establish some generalizations relevant for the later concentration on specific liberal Judaisms.

II. Psychology and Religion

A. Introduction

We may approach religious behavior from two basic points of view. One is to look at this behavior in the context of the community or society in which it occurs. Such an approach would be the sociological study of religion. It might address, for example, what kind of purpose religion serves within a highly structured society in contrast to a primitive tribal community. The other approach would be to perceive religious behavior from the point of view of the individual. From this perspective, the behavior of the person can be seen to stem from the various psychic elements. In other words, religion is a response from the constitutive aspects of the human psyche.

Even though human psychology has long occupied a prominent place in the writings of all great thinkers

from Plato on, the psychology of religion is a relatively new area of study. Its specific task is to study the nature of the response which the psyche makes vis-a-vis things religious.[1] One may argue what this includes, however for general purposes, we may say that "things religious" implies the "mystery of life and death, and the impingement of an environment which in many ways appears to be even more mysteriously alive than man himself."[2] Thus, one may understand religion as a complex variety of actions which are produced in response to the internal and external experiences of the person.

The turn of the century brought with it the most significant and note-worthy studies which were the basis for the modern study of the psychology. Seminal works include E. D. Starbuck's Psychology of Religion (New York: Scribners, 1903) and William James' Varieties of Religious Experience (Gifford Lectures, 1901-2). Starbuck's book was based on a mass of personal testimony, gathered from many sources, dealing chiefly with the phenomena of religious conversion. In this book he attempted to explain the intense emotional conflicts in the religious life of adolescents. The volume by James, along with his Principles of Psychology (1890), was more of a religious nature, and consequently, of greater interest to us. We shall deal with James in more detail later.

Several major schools of thought developed out of the fundamental psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud. Among his famous disciples, who eventually broke away from their mentor were Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, and others. Freud developed unique theories about the origin of religion and its role in the modern human personality. However, the strict adherence to his theoretical concepts blinded Freud to other aspects of the psyche and religious experience.

Other schools of psychology which present various explanations for religious behavior include humanistic psychology and phenomenological psychology. Proponents of the former include Abraham Maslaw, Carl Rogers, Gordon Allport, and Eric Fromm; the later is represented by Orlo Strunk, Jr.

Our examination of what psychology understands of religion will be a survey of the positions of some of these scholars. At the conclusion, an attempt will be made to establish common principles for a liberal religion.

B. William James

His upbringing in a both intellectual and non-dogmatic home must account for James' distinction between religious doctrine and religious experience. Exposed as he was at an early age to many diverse opinions by some of the age's most brilliant men[3], James was never forced to and did not accept the religion of his father,

Henry James, Sr., or that of any of his friends. Personal religion, as he refers to it in the Varieties[4], was more directly his concern than institutional religion. In point of fact, he devoted most of this volume, his major work on religion, to an exposition of the various categories of personal religious experience.

Varieties stands, however, as a major contribution to the explanation of religious behavior, if only because of James' empirical methodology. Biased though he was by his fundamentally Christian background and his own religious beliefs, he sought to objectively account for the spontaneous religious emotions as opposed to any theological doctrines or institutional systems. He even comments about his attitude in the conclusion of the volume. "In rereading my manuscript, I am almost appalled at the amount of emotionality which I find in it."[5] Yet, this does not mitigate his basic feeling about religion as an enterprise composed of individual experiences.

> What religion reports, you must remember, always purports to be a fact of experience: the divine is actually present, religion says, and between it and ourselves relations of give and take are actual. If definite perceptions of fact like this cannot stand upon their own feet, surely abstract reasoning cannot give them the support they are in need of. Conceptual processes can class facts, define them, interpret them; but they do not produce them, nor can they reproduce their individuality.[6]

In his defence of personal religious experience, James denies de facto the authority of any ecclesia. Religion is based in experience and not in one's association with a particular religious group. This is not to say that James was passing judgement upon the validity of truth claims of any religion. Such was neither his intent nor his actual result. Rather, his empiricism for the world in general was applied to religion as well. Thus, only inasmuch as religion makes claims in a concrete and specific manner about the world's future could any question of its truth be raised.[7]

One more topic of interest in James' work can be mentioned before we procede. It is his concept of conversion which is at the heart of the religious experience. In his attempt to be scientific, James explained certain actions in the psyche in what we now know to be a dated and simplistic manner. Although he cites much evidence to demonstrate his thesis, it is clear that James had a narrow Christian perspective on what he was explaining. He wrote,[8]

> To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hither to be divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold on religious realities. This at least is what conversion signifies in general terms, whether or not we believe that a direct divine operation is needed to bring such a moral change about.

But what is this conversion for James in terms of psychology? It is the radical rearrangement of psychic energy around some new center of interest. In his own words,[9]

> When the new centre of personal energy has been subconsciously incubated so long as to be just ready to open into flower, "hands off" is the only word for us, it must burst forth unaided!

James sees this conversion as a kind of self-surrender which is a turning point in the life of the religious person. A change in the forces of the human subconscious occurs and, one possible conclusion from this view is that religion and religious experience both stem solely from the human mind. This is not James' conclusion, but it is an option to which his theory points.

C. Sigmund Freud

Freud's contributions to the understanding of the origins of religion and its fundamental operation in the individual are far beyond the scope of this chapter. Yet certain aspects of his theories yield insights which can be noted.

Preliminary to commenting upon his theories themselves, a brief sketch of Freud's religious training and the influence of his family life is in order. Although it has been asserted that Freud's liberal Jewish education and his close relationship with his teachers was a source of much of his later interest in religion, the attitudes which were cultivated in Freud's home must be considered as well. Reuben Rainey comments upon this aspect of Freud's life,[10]

> Freud in later life made no explicit statements about the influence of his parents' Judaism on his later interest in religion. Yet that influence must have been a factor. The life of the family was characterized by polarities. They were Jews in predominantly Roman Catholic Vienna. Jacob [his father] was probably a member of the Reform group in a Jewish community split between the strictly Orthodox and those of his persuasion. Within the family itself there was Freud's agnosticism over against his father's Jewish piety. Also, there may have been a difference of opinion between his parents over the question of assimilation. The situation was clearly one of "creative tension," that is to say, a tension which sharpens one's sensibilities to certain issues.

Philip Rieff presents a critical examination of Freud's work and how Freud, with all of his scientific objectivity, reflects an unusual aspect of his character in his work on the psychology of religion.[11]

> What first impresses the student of Freud's psychology of religion is its polemical edge. Here, and here alone, the grand Freudian animus, otherwise concealed behind the immediacies of case histories and the emergencies of practical therapeutics, breaks out.

What appears in his studies of psychoanalysis as the strength of his theories, becomes the blinding factor in his study of religion. Thus we find that in Moses and Monotheism, Freud attempts to explain Biblical history in accordance with his theories and falsely construes much of what now is accepted by Higher Criticism.

(1) Totem and Taboo

Basing his work on the studies of anthropologists

like Sir James Frazer and W. Robertson Smith, Freud made a major contribution to the understanding of the origin of religion in his Totem and Taboo. In it he tried to show a correlation between the behavior of neurotics and the religious behavior of primitive peoples. The prehistoric crises of the race illuminate, for Freud, the meaning of neurotic crises among historical men. At the same time, the neurotic crises of historical men reveal the original prehistoric crises.

Freud had developed the idea of an Oedipus complex, which involved the unresolved sexual feelings of the child towards his parents, particularly, the son toward the mother with related hostility toward the father. He saw this tendency as emerging from the primordial stage of human development, and evidenced in the concept of the totem in primitive cultures. In some detail, the common events of the historical tribe are generally like this. There is a father or tribal chieftan whose control and authority is such as to limit the rights and freedoms of the sons, either tribal or literal. These sons resent the power of their leader and plot his demise. With the death of the father and the ingesting of his flesh, the sons do not achieve the hoped-for power. The totem then becomes symbolic of the father and is treated with much the same reverence once afforded the father.[13] But, this attitude reflects an attempt to gloss over what in fact was the real state

of affairs; that is to say, the religious response is a device to hide the reality of the primal murder. Freud explains its significance.[14]

> In this connection some features were formed which henceforth determined the character of every religion. The totem religion had issued from the sense of guilt of the sons as an attempt to palliate this feeling and to conciliate the injured father through subsequent obedience. All later religions prove to be attempts to solve the same problem, varying only in accordance with the stage of culture in which they are attempted and according to the paths which they take; they are all, however, reactions aiming at the same great event with which culture began and which ever since has not let mankind come to rest.

All that may be concluded with regard to this aspect of Freud's work is that his attempt to apply the analysis of the individual psyche to society and primitive culture was never totally accepted. His other, later work on religion, the Future of An Illusion, had wider scholarly acceptance.

(2) The Future of An Illusion

Less technical than most of his other works and written late in his career, this volume is considered one of the most influential expositions of religion ever written. In it Freud presents his understanding of the factors which constitute culture. On the one hand, he observes with Marx and Durkheim, the influence that economic realities impose on human behavior. Secondly, Freud observes that controls must be enforced to curb

the passions of men. In this latter area, certain psychological factors are involved in what Freud terms, instinctual renunciation. Freud sees different classes of people, with very much the same kind of distinction as Marx made, responding to the culture and its remedies for the human condition in different ways. The better educated class knows and appreciates the art, music, and other sophisticated forms of the culture. The masses on the other hand, who are hostile as a result of their failure to appreciate this culture, find their share of the culture in terms of the religion.[15]

Culture can be seen, in Freud's words, as a "rich store of ideas...born of the need to make tolerable the helplessness of man, and built out of the material offered by memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and the childhood of the human race".[16] For Freud, religious ideas have sprung from the same need as all the other achievements of culture: from the necessity for defending itself against the crushing supremacy of nature.[17] As a child is helpless before the father, so the adult is helpless in his world, and according to Freud, man compensates with the projection of an all-powerful father figure, whom he calls his god, and to whom he entrusts his ultimate safety.

However Freud sees the developed idea of religion, the combination of dogmas and assertions about the world, to be based upon the "weakest possible claim to

authority".[18] When analyzed carefully, he finds that these religious ideas are illusory, that is, they do not admit of proof, and no one can be compelled to consider them as true or to believe in them. This is not to say that Freud discounted religion's claim to truth nor its valid use in dealing with the human condition. He wrote,

> It does not lie within the scope of this enquiry to estimate the value of religious doctrine as truth. It suffices that we have recognized them, psychologically considered, as illusions.[19]

But his skepticism of religion's claims is not masked very well, as he continues,

> We say to ourselves: it would indeed be very nice if there were a God, who was both creator of the world and a benevolent providence, if there were a moral world order and a future life, but at the same time it is very odd that this is all just as we should wish it ourselves. And it would be still odder if our poor, ignorant, enslaved ancestors had suceeded in solving all these difficult riddles of the universe.[20]

To sum up any of Freud's ideas is to do injustice to them, yet for our purposes it is helpful to try. It may be said that even in this volume, a monument though it is to Freud's creative genius, there were numerous points which drew criticism. For instance, he completely dismissed the role of the intellect in religion and leveled some sharp criticism at philosophers of religion.[21] The manner in which Freud characterizes human history has also been questioned. Yet, even with Freud's somewhat naive conception of religion as the dependence of

the person on some idea of a God-father figure, his analysis is important. The positing of an internal conflict and that the human needs to resolve this conflict is central to our understanding of the value of religion today. Whether or not all of the details are accurate, Freud presents the human condition in its truest form - a dilemma filled existence which strives to cope with existence. When we acknowledge that supernaturalism often comes from the unconscious desire for security and thereby recognize true reality, according to Freud, we become educated to reality. We come to rely upon our minds and science to explore the nature of our world.

D. C. G. Jung

Carl Jung broke his association with Freud in 1914 founding his own school of analytic psychology. As a result of his different approach to the human psyche, Jung developed different theories with regard to mythology and religion. In general, it may be said that Jung held a more sympathetic attitude toward religion and was particularly instrumental in the investigation of religious symbolism. He considered certain questions such as the reality of God beyond the realm of psychology, and therefore took a position accordingly in his writings. Amiela Jaffe comments on this in her introduction to Jung's autobiography.[22]

> In his scientific works Jung seldom speaks of God; there he is at pains to use the term "the God-image in the human psyche."

Yet in his private life, Jung was not so distant and apparently held strong religious beliefs.

> Jung explicitly declared his allegiance to Christianity, and the most important of his works deal with the religious problems of the Christian. He looked at these questions from the standpoint of psychology, deliberately setting a bond between it and the theological approach. In so doing he stressed the necessity of understanding and reflecting, as against the Christian demand for faith.[23]

Jung deeply believed in a personal God and wrote critically of our age and the non-theistic tendencies which he perceived.

> The gods whom we are called to dethrone are the idolized values of our conscious world. It is well known that it was the love-scandals of the ancient deities which contributed most to their discredit; and now history is repeating itself. People are laying bare the dubious foundations of our belauded virtues and incomparable ideals, and are calling out to us in triumph: "There are your man-made gods, mere snares and delusions tainted with human baseness - whited sepulchres full of dean men's bones and of all uncleanness." We recognize a familiar strain, and the Gospel words, which we never could make our own, now come to life again.

But Jung's poorly veiled epithets to Freud do not concern us. The spiritual realm, concluded Jung, possesses a psychological reality that cannot be explained away, and certainly not in the manner suggested by Freud.

> Freud has unfortunately overlooked the fact that man has never yet been able singlehanded to hold his own

> against the powers of darkness - that is, of the unconscious. Man has always stood in need of the spiritual help which each individual's own religion held out to him.[24]

Beside the personal unconscious, also postulated by Freud, Jung wrote that the individual unconscious has features which are common to every individual and do not derive from his personal history. This, he termed, the collective unconscious, which is the repository of human experience and which contains "the archetypes." These archetypes are the basic images that are universal in that they occur in many independent cultures. According to Jung, the irruption of these images from the unconscious into consciousness was the basis for religious experience and artistic creativity.

> ...the work of the poet comes to meet the spiritual need of the society in which he lives, and for this reason his work means more to him than his personal fate, whether he is aware of this or not.
>
> We see that he has drawn upon the healing and redeeming forces of the collective psyche that underlies consciousness with its isolation and its painful errors; that he has penetrated to that matrix of life in which all men are embedded, which imparts a common rhythm to all human existence, and allows the individual to communicate his feeling and his striving to mankind as a whole.[25]

Religion, for Jung, is an expression of both a personal subjective need and one in which all humanity through common symbolism shares. The process by which a person asserts the individual aspects of his character -

by which one establishes a singular personality was termed individuation by Jung. This growth process is a major element underlying all of Jung's work.

Later studies both in the psychology of religion, as well as mythology and mysticism, draw upon Jung's work.[26]

In sum, it may be said that Jung was not content with the scientific explanations of the psyche and religious experience that Freud offered. Instead, he saw the human as a creature tied to a realm which defied clear analysis, and thereby, left open the possibility for personal or mystical experience of the divine to have some grounding in reality.

E. Humanistic Psychology

Although its roots are clearly in the Freudian understanding of the human psyche, the most significant modern school of psychology to approach religion differs radically from its intellectual antecedent. The beginnings of humanistic movement in psychology are often credited to the work of Abraham Maslow.[27] Even though this approach is barely twenty years old, several other prominent psychologists and psychoanalysts have adopted and modified the fundamental theories of Maslow in new directions. Carl Rogers, Gordon Allport, Viktor Frankl and Thomas Szasz may be considered current representatives. These scholars have attempted an organic approach to the human psyche and human experience. In contrast to the

Freudian and behavioristic[28] schools, this approach sees the integration of all of the psychic elements as essential in evaluating the religious mode. Gordon Allport writes:

> ...subjective religion, like all normal sentiments, must be viewed as an indistinguishable blend of emotion and reason, of feeling and meaning. When we study it we are dealing with neither rationality nor irrationality, but rather with a posture of the mind in which emotion and logical thinking fuse. We are dealing with a mode of response wherein a combination of feelings is tied to a conception of the nature of things that is thought-provoking, reasonable, and acceptable.[29]

Maslow's understanding of human nature stems in part from his training as a behaviorist.[30] Yet, he differed from other psychologists in that his concern was not merely with the insane and the mentally ill, but with the potential for the best in the human. Maslow sought to explore the limits of human growth and achievement.

> What Maslow discovered was a whole new list of needs in a still higher category, which he described as growth needs (Being values or B-values), as contrasted with the basic or deficiency needs. He said that this higher nature of man needed the lower nature as a foundation, and without which the higher nature "collapsed." "The major emphasis in humanistic psychology," he stated, "rests on the assumptions regarding 'higher needs.' They are seen as biologically based, part of the human essence..." Thus, man is initially motivated by a series of basic needs; as these are satisfied, he moves toward the level of the higher needs and becomes motivated by them.[31]

It was in his study of people who were mentally healthy that Maslow concluded that Freud was wrong about the nature of the human unconscious (the id).[32] He saw that in creative, intelligent people - people whom he termed "self-actualized" - there was a basically positive outlook toward the world, in addition to particular unique experiences. These peak-experiences, explained Maslow, are the same kind of events that were once phrased in terms of supernatural revelation.[33]

What Maslow is able to do as a result of this kind of evaluation is to put religion into a realm for scientific investigation. For example, regarding organized religion he writes that it "can be thought of as an effort to communicate peak-experiences to non-peakers, to teach them, to apply them, etc." As such the history of religions and religious experience can be described in terms of the peak-experience and its concommitants. In one appendix to his volume, Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences, Maslow lists some of the religious aspects of peak experiences.[34]

This listing covers most all of the commonly accepted aspects of religious experience. The first example is as follows:

> For instance, it is quite characteristic in peak-experiences that the whole universe is perceived as an integrated and unified whole. This is not as simple a happening as one might imagine from the bare words themselves. To have a clear perception that the universe is all of a piece and that one has

> his place in it - one is a part of it, one belongs in it - can be so profound and shaking an experience that it can change the person's character and his Weltanschauung forever after.[35]

Maslow thereby understands these special happenings as part of the natural world and explainable, although with some limitations due to language, in natural, human terms.

It may be that the humanistic trend in psychology has opened up an entirely unique approach to religion. The conclusions which flow from this understanding of the human, set no limits in interpreting the religious experience. Given this kind of explanation of the origins of religious experience, Gordon Allport identifies this kind of conclusion,

> ...the subjective religious attitude of every individual is, in both its essential and non-essential features, unlike that of any other individual. The roots of religion are so numerous, the weight of their influence in individual lives so varied, and the forms of rational interpretation so endless, that uniformity of product is impossible.[36]

The implications of this system for this study of religion are clear. There can be no precise delineation of religious needs, and therefore, no ritual or ceremonial structure which is absolute for all religionists. Free and creative forms of religious expression would appear to be justified, or even demanded by the variety of needs of the human psyche.

F. Eric Fromm and Orlo Strunk, Jr.

The major movements have been discussed, yet there remains much yet to be covered in terms of psychological perspectives on religion. Before proceeding, however, two particular positions should be examined. One, that of Eric Fromm, because of his fame and influence in American thinking, and secondly, that of Orlo Strunk, because of the clarity of his presentation on the psychological aspects of religion.

(1) Fromm was among the many young disciples of Sigmund Freud. Yet, like so many others, he chose to strike out on his own, and his originality is clearly valuable for any such study. One important element in Fromm's thought is the sophistication of his integration of cultural change as it affects the human psyche. His attitude strongly resembles that of Maslow as he writes of the human condition.

> The disharmony of man's existence generates needs which far transcend those of his animal origin. These needs result in an imperative drive to restore a unity and equilibrium between himself and the rest of nature. He makes the attempt to restore this unity and equilibrium in the first place in thought by constructing an all-inclusive mental picture of the world which serves as a frame of reference from which he can derive an answer to the question of where he stands and what he ought to do.
> ...any satisfying system of orientation implies not only intellectual elements but elements of feeling and sense to be realized in action in all fields of human endeavor. Devotion to an aim, or an idea, or a power transcending

> man such as God, is an expression of this need for completeness in the process of living.[37]

Fromm's main concern in his book, Psychoanalysis and Religion, is a fresh approach to the complimentary nature of the two subjects. The antagonism born of Freud's perception of religion is unnecessary according to Fromm. The important thing is that the person be able to "live love and think truth". He writes,

> There is no one without a religious need, a need to have a frame of orientation and an object of devotion; but this statement does not tell us anything about a specific context in which this religious need is manifest.
>
> The question is not religion or not but which kind of religion, whether it is one furthering man's development, the unfolding of his specifically human powers, or one paralyzing them.[38]

The fundamental point which Fromm makes about religions is his division of religions into two types. This division is based upon his analysis of religion today, and the manner in which religious groups serve the needs of the human. Fromm's only distinction of relevance from a psychological standpoint is between authoritarian and humanistic religions.[39]

> The essential element in authoritarian religion and in the authoritarian religious experience is the surrender to a power transcending man. The main virtue of this type of religion is obedience, its cardinal sin is disobedience.
>
> Submission to a powerful authority is one of the avenues by which man escapes from his feeling of aloneness and limitation.

> In the act of surrender he loses his independence and integrity as an individual but he gains the feeling of being protected by an awe-inspiring power of which, as it were, he becomes a part.

Even though Fromm is even-handed in his explanation of this kind of religion, it seems evident that he holds it to be the inferior of the two. Fromm sees authoritarian religion, historically, as one which flourishes under the socio-political system of the same character.[40] The fear imbued by a totalitarian dictator, for example, will be reflected in the religious beliefs of the people living under the tyrant. Conversely, a free and democratic society will spawn the independent humanistic religious experience.

> Humanistic religion...is centered around man and his strength. Man must develop his power of reason in order to understand himself, his relationship to his fellow men and his position in the universe.
>
> Religious experience in this kind of religion is the experience of oneness with the All, based on one's relatedness to the world as it is grasped with thought and with love. Man's aim in humanistic religion is to achieve the greatest strength, not the greatest powerlessness; virtue is self-realization, not obedience. Faith is certainty of conviction based on one's experience of thought and feeling, not assent to propositions on credit of the proposer. The prevailing mood is that of joy, while the prevailing mood in authoritarian religion is that of sorrow and of guilt.[41]

Fromm endorses humanistic religion as a human answer to human needs and foresees psychoanalysis and

religion of this type as partners in the search for peace in the human soul. He has an exalted view of the human, and at the same time, a sympathy for the situation which confronts the person.

> The problem of man's existence, then, is unique in the whole of nature; he has fallen out of nature, as it were, and is still in it; he is partly divine, partly animal; partly infinite, partly finite.[42]

His insights into the human condition are helpful and can be seen as supportive of the concept of liberal religion presented in the last chapter.

(2) Orlo Strunk describes his approach to psychology as phenominal or perceptual.[43] In approaching religion from this point of view, he seems to combine elements of the other trends into a very systematic treatment of religious belief, experience, and practice. For Strunk, religion is,

> ...an organization of cognitive-affective-conative factors, perceived by the individual as being religious in nature, and of being especially appropriate or inappropriate in achieving self-adequacy.[44]

Although his definition seems to beg the question by using 'religious' with it, Strunk makes the significant distinction between the psychic elements and the role that they play in the religious life of the individual. For example, religious beliefs are derived from the cognitive operation of the psyche which is in itself dynamic in nature.[45] Beliefs differ from faith in that they are an organization of perceptions and cognitions

about some aspect of the individual's world. Faith, on the other hand, may be held without any perception or cognitives, that is, without any validation at all.

Each of the factors - the cognitive, affective, and conative - contribute to the individual's striving for self-adequacy. This concept can be interpreted in a way similar to that of Jung's individuation. Strunk explains,

> It is possible to look upon man as a problem-solving creature. From the moment of birth he is faced with a host of difficult situations or problems, and then, through hereditary and learned reactions, he attempts to meet these problems in a satisfying way. Though his specific problems are many in number, all are in reality a subdivision of one general and all-prevading problem: How to achieve self-adequacy.[46]

From still another perspective, that of Dr. Reines, this striving for self-adequacy can be seen as the response that the human makes to his fundamental dilemma of physical finitude verses infinite desire. Defined this way, most all of human activity is basically religious. All responses are thus religious.

> ...<u>self-adequacy means self-adequacy as perceived by the individual, thus producing a complexity</u>. For the person's self concept may be such that the simple, frequently physical aspects of the world are quite inadequate and unable to produce proper solutions to the basic and general problem. He is therefore forced to search and create, which leads him to the building and discovering of belief systems.[47]

Religion provides a comprehensive system which responds to this situation. The individual integrates

the system into his conscious self and utilizes this system as long as it serves his needs.

> If he then finds these religious factors to be appropriate, he will hold to them and internalize them. In this sense, religious factors always lead to integration of personality, for they obtain one way or another, self-adequacy for the individual.[48]

III. Philosophy and Religion

Modern philosophy has brought forth the most significant challenges to tradition religion. Beginning in the Middle Ages, philosophy engaged religion in intellectual combat in which religion was often the victim. The problem was exascerbated because of the overlap inherent in the two disciplines. Both philosophy and religion dealt with the fundamental questions of human existence and the universe. Hence it would be nearly impossible in this brief examination to account for all of the influences and developments that have come to our modern understanding of religion as an academic discipline by way of philosophy. A more reasonable goal for this study would be to review briefly some of the significant junctures wherein religion, and particularly, liberal religion, was advanced by its encounter with modern philosophy. With that intention, we shall consider the contribution of Descartes and Spinoza, as well as some of the philosophic trends of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. An attempt shall be made to indicate how the thinking of the particular

philosopher affected traditional views of religion.

A. Rene Descartes and Modern Philosophy

The modern era in philosophy can be said to begin with Rene Descartes in the early seventeenth century. Descartes, like most of the medieval philosophers before him, was concerned with presenting a systematic explanation of his world and God. After receiving what he perceived to be a divine sign, Descartes undertook the development of a unified science of nature based on mathematics. His major works, Discourse on the Method, Meditations on First Philosophy, and Principles of Philosophy, elaborated upon his fundamental method - that of critical doubt - and how he saw this method as basic to all intellectual inquiry.

Descartes explains the basis of his method in the beginning of part one of The Principles of Philosophy, as he comments on human knowledge,

> I. That in order to seek truth, it is necessary once in the course of our life, to doubt, as far as possible, of all things.
>
> As we were at one time children, and as we formed various judgements regarding the objects presented to our senses, when as yet we had not the entire use of our reason, numerous prejudices stand in the way of our arriving at the knowledge of truth; and of these it seems impossible for us to rid ourselves, unless we undertake, once in our lifetime, to doubt of all those things in which we may discover even the smallest suspicion of uncertainty.[49]

inevitably, Descartes realizes that he cannot doubt existence, and hence, his famous line Cogito Ergo Sum.

Descartes' system seeks to provide a basis for all human knowledge. First, he establishes that doubt is the fundamental principle and sole criterion of truth. Next, he raises the question as to what else can be known besides that he exists as the doubter. Is all else that we perceive merely illusion? Descartes writes in the Third Meditation, "...in order to be able altogether to remove it [i.e. doubt about the illusion of the world], I must inquire whether there is a God as soon as the occasion presents itself; and if I find that there is a God, I must also inquire whether He may be a deceiver; for without a knowledge of these two truths I do not see that I can ever be certain of anything."[50] Descartes concludes that God does exist and that He is not a deceiver. Since man finds the idea of God in his mind, and since man cannot be the cause of God, that idea of an infinite, omniscient, and omnipotent being must have been placed in the mind of man by such a being.

> "The idea of God I have received from God; it is innate. God is not only the cause, but the archetype of our existence; he has created man in his own image. We need not wonder that God in creating us should have placed this idea in us, to serve as the mark of the workman imprinted on his work. If God did not exist, we could not possibly be what we are nor could we have an idea of God. We know more of God himself and of the human mind than we know of corporeal objects. Reflecting upon the idea of God, we perceive that he is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, the source of

> all goodness and truth; the creator of all things. He is not corporeal and does not perceive by means of the senses as we do. He has intellect and will, but not like ours; and he does not will evil or sin, for sin is the negation of being".[51]

Although his idea of God was not radical, Descartes' method does have implications for liberal religion. His method of radical doubt eventually led to the questioning of all ecclesiastical authority. Descartes wrote the following regarding the basis for his conception of God, "It is free will alone or liberty of choice which I find to be so great in me that I can conceive no other idea to be more great..."[52] Man, according to Descartes, has "the miraculous power of free will," and consequently may accept or reject the authority of other men.[53] Yet, for most of his life, Descartes remained a Roman Catholic, loyal to the power and position of the church.

Descartes' influence was pronounced among later thinkers, particularly, the empiricists. It is the empirical movement in philosophy that has most successfully challenged traditional religious concepts and authority. The skeptical trend in philosophy also drew upon the thought of Descartes.

B. Spinoza and Religion

Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza, trained in the mathematical methodology of Descartes, advanced the cause of human knowledge still further.[54] Spinoza developed a unified system to explain the nature of the world.

All being, and hence all causality, had its source, according to Spinoza, in God. This system has been termed pantheism. Aladair MacIntyre writes that "the unity of Spinoza's system is not only the product of his deductive ideals; it is also in part the outcome of his theological preoccupations."[55]

Although indirectly relevant to his religious philosophy and beliefs, Spinoza's political philosophy is significant. It is the first statement in history from the standpoint of democratic liberalism.[56] Spinoza reveled in the free atmosphere of his native Amsterdam, and was boldly optimistic when he wrote the following.

> Now seeing that we have the rare happiness of living in a republic, where everyone's judgement is free and unshackled, where each may worship God as his conscience dictates, and where freedom is esteemed beyond all things dear and precious; I have believed that I should be undertaking no ungrateful or unprofitable task, in demonstrating that not only can such freedom be granted without prejudice to the public peace, but also, that without such freedom, piety cannot flourish nor the public peace be secure.[57]

Not only were political events to overshadow Spinoza's finest dreams, but religious controversy, both in his own Jewish community and in the Calvinist Dutch community, led to his famous excommunication, as well as other subsequent difficulties. But as a profound expression of the human aspirations for freedom, Spinoza's words resound clearly still today. The tone of liberalism of these words established the foundation of later

writings in both political philosophy and liberal religious philosophy.

Spinoza's philosophic liberalism is clearly reflected in his ideas about religion. Leon Feuer describes religion for Spinoza.[58]

> The Tractatus Theologico-Politicus had set forth the basic principles of the "universal religion" - that there exists a God, and that "the worship of this Being consists in the practice of justice and love toward one's neighbor." This was the content of religion as far as Spinoza was concerned.

Spinoza acknowledged an acute division between the masses and the patrician classes. This distinction based upon the political realities of his time gave Spinoza the impetus for his explanation of religious liberalism. All of the upper class should be religious liberals according to Spinoza. These are the ones who believe that the practice of justice and charity is the proper worship of God. Beyond this universal religion, no patrician should venture into the byways of dogma.[59]

With regard to the masses, Spinoza was more inclined to grant a kind of absolute freedom of religion. In the Tractatus he writes,

> Everyone may think on such [religious] questions as he likes. I will go further and maintain that every man is bound to adapt these dogmas to his own way of thinking...so that he may the more easily obey God with his whole heart.[60]

Spinoza felt that such freedom would divide the nation

into many small sects with many similar, yet diverse points of view. This would insure that no group would be large or significant enough to become politically powerful. Thus except for the patrician class which would adhere to the universal religion, there would be a plethora of religious groups, none too numerous or influential. Unfortunately, in order to enforce such a system, Spinoza posits the necessity of limiting certain rights, such as the right of assembly and the right of association. Given what other ideas he espouses about freedom, this is something of an inconsistent attitude at best.

With regard to Judaism, Spinoza had been trained in Torah and Talmud, as well as in the works of Abraham Ibn Ezra and Moses Maimonides. Yet he was at the same time not as concerned with reconciling his studies with traditional Judaism as he was with reconciling them with Greek philosophical thought. But these studies led him to express views on the nature of God, on immortality, and on the scientific authority of the Sacred Scriptures, which differed sharply from the views of the Jewish community of Amsterdam. What is more, he held that on matters determinable by reason, the Scriptures should be subject to examination by reason, and should be criticized when found contrary to it. It was the expression of these views which led to the herem being issued.[61] Although some of his views were considered

heretical, it has been argued that there were also political factors which influenced the Jewish leaders who issued the decree.[62]

Not all of Spinoza's religious view were considered heretical. He believed in a free, infinite, and necessary Being; affirming both God's existence and His unity.[63] Yet, Spinoza disagreed with Maimonides that God's essence was simple and one. He held instead the belief that God was substance and had many attributes. Noteworthy is the fact that three hundred years after his death, Hebrew Union College, the center of liberal Judaism today, honored Spinoza for his contributions to philosophy and religion. Three hundred years later, the Jewish community welcomed him back.

Spinoza's contribution to liberal religion is indeed significant. His rationalism applied to Scripture and to human freedom "in consonance with God's self-determined being" were precedent setting concepts. Possibly most importantly, he argues for freedom of religious thought in his Tractatus Theologio-Politicus, by showing that there is "...nothing taught expressly by Scripture, which does not agree with our understanding, or which is repugnant thereto..."

C. Trends in Eighteenth Century Philosophy

Philosophy in the eighteenth century was dominated by the British empiricists, of whom Berkely and Hume may be taken as two representatives.[64] They addressed the same issues that had interested their predecessors, yet

their approach was new in that they carried the pursuit of theoretical consistency beyond the realm of common sense. Nevertheless, both men were strong defenders of the social order, and, contrary to their philosophical views, were not inclined toward denying God or religion. Kant, the founder of German idealism, attempted a subjectivist response to the implications of Hume's thought. He attempted to discredit the intellectual proofs for God, much like Hume; but concluded that reason yields an idea of God and a religion of reason based upon moral laws is possible. In this section, we shall consider briefly the influence of Berkeley, Hume, and Kant on liberal religion.

1. Geroge Berkeley's position in the history of philosophy can be summed up by his statement, <u>esse est percipi</u>, to be is to be perceived. Until the term idealism came into use in the nineteenth century, Berkeley was known as an immaterialist. In other words, he denied the existence of any substance, other than as a passive object of a perceiving or active mind. It is as a epistemologist that Berkeley is primarily known, yet his work included, as would befit a bishop like Berkeley, significant theological ramifications.

It is in connection with his critique of the science of his day that Berkeley challenged the most common sense ideas of man. A position asserting nothing exists without the mind seemed preposterous, yet Berkeley was prepared with a response.

> In the Three Dialogues (2) he argued that since sensible things do not depend on the thought of human beings and exist independently of them "there must be some other mind wherein they exist." This other mind is God; and thus, according to Berkeley, the existence of sensible things when not perceived by finite spirits is a proof of the existence of an infinite spirit who perceives them always.[65]

One may conclude that Berkeley was essentially a conservative or a traditionalist with regard to his views about religion, even though his epistemology was deemed radical in its time. As a bishop of the Anglican Church, he would have been inclined to defend Scripture, even to the contradiction of his own position. Yet, he held his position both in the Church and as a philosopher in spite of contradiction. H. B. Acton writes,

> Berkeley's immaterialism is a strange and unstable combination of theses that most other philosophers have thought do not belong together. Thus he upheld both extreme empiricism and idealism, both immaterialism and common sense, and both subjectivism (as it would seem) and epistemological realism (as it would also seem).[66]

In short Berkeley's questions are of interest because of their directness. As a bishop, he defended God as the source of our ideas and the Sustainer of the world, concepts which did not challenge the doctrines of the Church. As a philosopher, Berkeley challenged the prevalent rationalist trends in science and philosophy and established the school of subjective idealism.

It is with respect to this idealism that Berkeley is significant for religious thought. For in the nineteenth century, Hegel, among others, redefined idealism and in the twentieth century, Royce and Brightman are two whose idealism influenced their understanding of deity.[67]

2. David Hume fancied himself a writer and sought, through his philosophical treatises though mostly published anonymously, to achieve fame in the literary world. This he achieved and more with his chief works on human nature, human knowledge, ethics, morals, and human understanding. In attempting to reformulate an entire system of philosophy, Hume developed the attitude of skepticism, which was to establish a place for him in philosophic history.

One of Hume's more important contributions was the Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, published posthumously, though probably written in the 1750's.[68] With the full brunt of his skepticism, Hume attacks religion, and, in particular, dogma. He examines in this and several other works the various arguments offered for the existence of God. In each case he presents a response showing the untenable character of each claim and thereby refutes all proofs. Hume still retains, however, a unique kind of "philosophical theism." In essence he held that something like a "designing mind" accounts for the universe. But this position rejected

all Scriptural descriptions and moral attributes found in Western religion, all of which Hume regarded as superstition.[69]

While opposed to the idea of theism as innate in man, Hume felt that "true" or "philosophical" religion did direct one to some god-concept. Although he rejected any rational explanation for causality, Hume maintained that causality holds sway over all, and limits, or determines man's fate. Thus Hume's God is subject to conditions beyond His control; the first modern suggestion of a finite deity. Later religious thinkers have used the finite god-concept to respond to problems such as evil in the world.

3. Immanuel Kant

Kant's writings and philosophic interests were both extensive and influential. He was the first of the major philosophers of modern time to spend his life as a professional teacher in philosophy.[70] Two distinct periods may be discerned from his work. The first may be identified as the pre-critical period. During the first period Kant followed closely the thought of Leibniz, primarily because of his own teacher's biases. After 1770, Kant broke with his earlier inclinations and established his own critical system which he referred to as "critical idealism." It is from this period in his life that Kant produced his magnum opus, the Critique of Pure Reason, and most all of his other important writings.

Religion Within the Bounds of Mere Reason (1793) was his primary work devoted to religion in the second period. In it Kant attempts to reinterpret Christian doctrine and practice in line with his ideas about religion. W. H. Walsh characterises Kant's view of religion.

> He treats religion as essentially, if not quite exclusively, a matter of purity of heart - thus dispensing with speculative theology altogether and assigning a meager importance to the institutional side of religion. To adopt the religious attitude, as Kant sees it, is to look on duties as if they were divine commands.[71]

Kant understood religion to be essentially a moral system with no dogmas apart from two fundamental articles of belief. That there is a God and an after-life were two ideas immediately accessible to the simplest intelligence. But any of the external factors, like a priesthood or ceremonies, as well as the historical elements were unnecessary for the religion of morality. Kant considered prayers and other religious utterances the grossest superstition.

Although Kant abided by King Frederick William II's restrictions on further writing on religion following the issuance of the above noted volume, he had firmly states his position. He opposed orthodoxy, and for that matter, any ecclesia, other than the invisible church of reason. Moral practice, and not religious ritual, was the key to true religion. Dogmas, other than the two which he acknowledged, were superfluous and

unjustified. For these reasons, Kant's influence on later liberal religious thought must be regarded as significant.

D. Nineteenth Century Idealism and Religion

Many significant directions in religion were cast by the philosophers of the nineteenth century, yet none was more influential than that of G. W. F. Hegel. Best known for his theory of the dialectic movement of history and thought, Hegel applied his formulation to all disciplines including religion. Several volumes of Hegel's writings were specifically on religion and presented a defense of Christianity. In two of his early unpublished books, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion," and "The Spirit of Christianity", Hegel engages in an assault on Judaism, terming it a religion of domination. He also presents criticism of Kant's ethics.[72]

After his death in 1831, Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion were published and have raised numerous questions about his ideas on religion. It is fairly certain that Hegel held religion, art, and philosophy all to be capable of expression of the Absolute Mind. Philosophy was for him the supreme expression. Where religion was merely able to picture or represent the Absolute, philosophy was able to conceive or think it.[73] Art was less defined in its representation of the Absolute than religion. The history of religions,

according to Hegel, is the evolution of spirit in its dialectical apprehension of the divine. It progresses from nature religions through religions of spiritual individuality, and through Judaism, to the Absolute Religion, which is Christianity, with its internal dialectic of Father (thesis), Son (antithesis), and Spirit (synthesis).

It may also be questioned exactly how Hegel saw himself with respect to religion. Hegel believed that he and his system of philosophy were the culmination of philosophy's long history. Inasmuch as he regarded religion secondary to philosophy in direct conception of the Absolute, Hegel may have seen himself as having advanced beyond religion. Had he not been born into a Christian home and in a Christian country, one might ask whether he would have held the same views on religion. However, Hegel was a Christian and upheld the doctrine of the incarnation, among other prominant Christian beliefs. This doctrine was, according to Hegel, the religious expression of the philosophic truth that the Infinite Being is not distinct from what is finite but is necessarily manifested in it.[74]

Hegel earned several distinctions of note in religion. First of all, he began the systematic study of the philosophy of religion. Secondly, his philosophy was by its nature evolutionary. He established an infrastructure which supported his views of what

history showed and how the present stage of the world and thought developed. Although his own biases figured in his study of religion, Hegel used the dialectic method to establish historically the changes and progress in religious thought. This development prepared the way for modern Biblical criticism, history of religions, and comparative religion, all fundamental disciplines for liberal religion today.

E. Language, Philosophy, and Religion in the Twentieth Century.

1. A new way of looking at philosophy emerged in the twentieth century. Numerous developments in culture and society affected the philosophers who were responding to the influences of Kant and Hegel in the preceding century. W. T. Jones identifies four areas which have exhibited a profound effect upon contemporary thinking.[75]

1) Loss of confidence
It seems to be a growing feeling of the radical ambiguity of the human mode of being in the world.

Thus what twentieth-century people acutely feel is the absurdity of their situation, the "disproportion," as Camus puts it, between human hopes and fears and the silence of the universe.

2) Concern with science
Twentieth-century reactions to science have been varied - some favorable, some ambivalent. But everyone in this century has been affected by science - not merely by technology...but also, and even more deeply if less obviously, by the repercussions of the scientific view of the world on people's perception of themselves.

3) The dissociated sensibility
More and more people long to return to a simple unconscious mode of existence in which they are indistinguishable from the rest of nature instead of proudly separated from it. And since they realize that this mode of existence is impossible for them, they experience anguish and despair.

4) The linguistic turn
In the first place, reality and the would-be knower...are interinvolved; knowers do not contemplate reality from outside, rather, they organize and articulate it from inside. In the second place, reality is too complex ever to be completely and finally articulated. Hence our attempt to understand the world and ourselves is an intolerable and never-ending "wrestle with words and meanings."

For each of these problems, certain responses were forthcoming from philosophy. Some were specifically answering one issue, as for example, existentialism which in certain manifestations dealt only with the problem of loss of confidence. Other philosophical schools attempted an integrated systematization of all of the problems. In this section, three of the important thinkers of the twentieth century will be briefly surveyed for their contributions to an understanding of liberal religion today.

2. Ludwig Wittgenstein has been called the most significant philosopher of the twentieth century.[76] As a student of Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore, Wittgenstein displayed a unique ability to grasp the fundamental and esoteric problems of philosophy. Yet it was the

problem of language which challenged him and led first to his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (London, 1922) and later to the Philosophical Investigations (Oxford, 1953). These two volumes, one written while he was a young man, the other published after his death, concerned the ordinary and exceptional use of words and language. Although Wittgenstein devoted little, if any, of his work to religion per se, his influence is significant nonetheless.

Born into a family of Jewish ancestry, Wittgenstein was baptized in the Catholic Church, and yet no mention is made in any source of the influence of religion in his life.[77] In the Tractatus Wittgenstein identifies certain areas of which we know nothing, and therefore, we cannot speak of them meaningfully. Wittgenstein's term for "things that cannot be put into words" but that "make themselves manifest" is "the mystical." Among these things are the values that people attempt to express in ethical and religious discourse.[78] It may be said that Wittgenstein regarded certain topics, such as religion and theology, beyond the reach of language. To speak in these areas is to speak "nonsense", for such speech produces no philosophical insights. The final major proposition of Wittgenstein's Tractatus is "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent"(7).

Wittgenstein did make some comments about the

mystical in his writings. These leave the reader with a sense of philosophical uneasiness, according to W. T. Jones.[79] One is not certain whether Wittgenstein was merely being theoretically consistent or whether he may, in fact, have been something of a mystic himself. In the Tractatus, he writes,

> 6.432 How things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself in the world....
>
> 6.44 It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.[80]

More than discouraging any further discussion of religion, it was as a result of Wittgenstein's work that others became more sensitive to the problems of using certain kinds of language. His later writings, published posthumously, reflect a complete revision in Wittgenstein's thought, and yet remain concerned with the same issues of language and meaning. The foci of these later works, however, were the real world and the language utilized by people, as opposed to the ideal language he sought to explicate in the Tractatus. In the Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein criticized his earlier work, but did not broach the subject of religion again.

It is worthy of note that Wittgenstein's later work has had an important influence on modern philosophy in the last twenty-five years. Several key concepts, such as the idea of language-games have come from

him. The only direct relevance for this study is that philosophers of religion must continually be on guard against meaningless language and how we so readily use such language to speak about religion. Wittgenstein's warnings must continually be heeded.

3. A. J. Ayer's first book is truly one of the most significant works in philosophy in this century. Language, Truth and Logic (1936; 2d ed,. 1946) derives in part from the thought of Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein, as well as from the earlier empiricism of Berkeley and Hume.[81] In it, Ayer adopts a principle of verification which requires that an empirical statement shall not be counted as meaningful unless some observation is relevant to its truth or falsity. On this basis, Ayer dismisses all talk about metaphysics as senseless.

> It is true, however, that although the greater part of metaphysics is merely the embodiment of humdrum errors, there remain a number of metaphysical passages which are the work of genuine mystical feeling; and they may more plausibly be held to have moral or aesthetic value. But, as far as we are concerned, the distinction between the kind of metaphysics that is produced by a philosopher who has been duped by grammar, and the kind that is produced by a mystic who is trying to express the inexpressible, is of no great importance: what is important to us is to realize that even the utterances of the metaphysician who is attempting to expound a vision are literally senseless; so that henceforth we may pursue our philosophical researches with as little regard for them as for the more inglorious kind of metaphysics which comes from a failure to understand the workings of our language.[82] (Italics are mine).

This attitude was typical of the Vienna Circle of Logical Positivists of the 1920's. Sciende and only sciende was a valid source of knowledge for these philosophers who held that experiment and observation alone yielded reliable information.[83]

Ayer asserted that the only information which we can legitimately devise from the study of our aesthetic and moral experiences is information about our own mental and physical make-up.[84] This analysis leaves us without the possibility of any kind of religious knowledge. Ayer's argument is essentially this. One may not, according to most philosophers, demonstratively prove the existence of any being with the attributes which define a god. Although someone may assert that they have had an experience of God, the lack of sense in any statement to that effect, makes such a statement valueless. What the person having this experience does when he speaks about it is merely to give us indirect information about the condition of his own mind.[85]

Like Wittgenstein, Ayer raises questions about the use of language, and in particular, language which has no referent. Religious language is just such a language, according to Ayer, when it is used to speak about God. He writes,

> The fact that people have religious experience is interesting from the psychological point of view, but it does not in any way imply that there is such a thing as religious knowledge, any more than our having moral experience implies there is such a thing as moral knowledge.[86]

By way of contrast to Wittgenstein, it should be noted that Ayer and other Logical Positivists were expressly harsher on religion. Rudolf Carnap comments on the work of metaphysicians writing about religion.

> The metaphysician believes that he travels in territory in which truth and falsehood are at stake...He polemicizes against metaphysicians of divergent persuasion by attempting to refute their assertions in his treatise. Lyrical poets, on the other hand, do not try to refute in the poem the statements in a poem by some other lyrical poet; for they know they are in the domain of art and not in the domain of theory.[87]

Thus this modern school of philosophy entirely removed the consideration of religion from the sphere of technical thought. The analytic tradition which Positivism perpetuated has since lost its force and no longer exists as it once did. However, its influence remains and as far as religion is concerned, whenever one makes a religious statement, the response called forth may be, "What exactly do you mean by that?"

4. Few modern Jewish thinkers seem to have been significantly influenced by the discussions of language and meaning. One who was, Dr. Abraham Cronbach, attempted to integrate the precise use of language indicated by the new wave of philosophy with a sympathy for the psychology and sociology of religion. His volume, The Realities of Religion (1957) is a unique study of the nature of religion. In it, Dr. Cronbach examines many of the terms associated with religion and shows how one

can use them with explicit and direct meaning.

Drawing heavily upon Biblical references, Dr. Cronbach suggests that the meanings of many words have changed. Therefore, a term can have one meaning today, while having meant something entirely different in an earlier time. Although language is mostly informational, according to Dr. Cronbach, it has numerous non-informational functions as well.[88] With respect to religion, he notes, precision is essential for clarity of meaning.

> As long as those characteristics [i.e. the informational and non-informational aspects] of language are ignored, the study of religion lies entangled in confusion. The understanding of religion halts at at a stage analogous to that of chemistry when the elements - and the only elements - were "hot", "cold", "moist", and "dry".[89]

Although the admonition of Dr. Cronbach has largely gone unheeded, the implication for liberal religion is clear. In order to understand anything about religion, if it is at all possible, one must define one's terms clearly and use language precisely. Otherwise, what one says about religion is merely bad poetry, or worse, just nonsense.

IV. Scientific Method and Religion

For the longest time science and religion were two disciplines which together sought to explain the nature of the world. In the nineteenth century, however, human progress in thought and technology gave science an inflated self-image. The empirical methods and

critical procedures of science were granted exclusive domination over the social sciences and humanities, and especially, over religion. This attitude has not lost its appeal and many still hold to it today, according to Allan W. Eister.

> One of the well known view of contemporary thought holds that "religion" - or more specifically religious beliefs - progressively ceased to command the assent and eventually the respect of rigorously educated, tough-minded people as modern science, with its distinctive methods, created an alternative (and increasingly more persuasive) world view. Science, it was argued, was clearly the better guide to a valid and reliable understanding of the world of human experience. Religious ideas were simply "myths" - or at best metaphors - lacking in plausibility where they were not downright false and misleading.[90]

The challenges which confronted religion were of two types. There was the direct challenge which came from those areas of study specifically concerned with religion or the assertions of religion. Historical Criticism or Higher Criticism of the Scriptures was one such area. It called into question the literalist understanding of the creation of the world and other Biblical narratives.

Biblical criticism denotes the application of sound historical methodology to the individual books of the Bible to establish their reliability and credibility as historical sources and to determine what meaning they had for their authors and first readers.[91] This kind

of scholarly endeavor includes lower criticism, that is, the examination of the text itself for corruptions and later additions, and higher criticism, which takes into account diverse factors such as the social, historical, economic, political, intellectual, and other information relevant to the time and place of composition. Thus the Bible has come to be viewed not as divine revelation, but as a record of human growth and development, a sharp contrast to traditional Bible study.

A second direct assault on religion was the publication and wide scientific acceptance of Darwin's On the Origin of Species (1859). His general theory was that organic forms are the result of a long process of development from the most insignificant beginnings under the continual influence of the environment. According to Darwin, man is the descendant of a favored variety of apes. This was, of course, denied by fundamentalists and much controversy followed this theory for a great while. Finally, however, it became the dominant understanding of human development and supplemented by Gregor Mendel's theories about heredity has been accepted as essentially accurate.

The indirect challenge to religion came with new theories and discoveries in disciplines related to the study of religion. Emile Durkheim's study of primitive religion evaluated it in terms of religion's "function." Function, according to Durkheim, is a relation between

a system of vital movements and a set of needs.[92] This view of religion was later adopted by Mordecai Kaplan in his formulation of Judaism as a civilization. He drew upon Durkheim's explanation of what religion is.

> Religion is "primarily a system of ideas with which the individuals represent to themselves the society of which they are members, and the obscure but intimate relations which they have with it." He thus regarded the explicit content of religious ideas as relatively unimportant. The reality they express is a sociological one, concealed from the worshipers themselves.[93]

In sum it was Durkheim's insistence on the social character of religion which gave us new insights into the ceremonial and ritual aspects of religion. Social focus and organization are reflected in the function of religion and indicate how liberal religion might legitimately reform the symbols and rites which express its purpose today.

Lastly, we may briefly note another challenge that scientific methodology has indirectly posed for religion. The dialectic of Hegel was adopted widely because of its rational foundation. One who utilized it for analysing the human condition was Karl Marx. Highly critical of his predecessor Hegel for his theological biases, Marx attempted to clear away this non-essential element in laying the foundation for a new social order. His attacks were direct, yet the influence which he wielded stemmed rather from the cogent nature of his social analysis. One central problem which he

identified was that of "the alienation of the worker from his object."[94] Alienation appears in three forms, according to Marx, alienation from the object of one's labor, self-alienation, and alienation of man from man, that is, of man from mankind. Instead of heightening human awareness of these problems and helping to overcome them, religion instead produces a soporific effect for the masses, or as Marx called it, "an opiate of the people." They do not realize, Marx said of the (prolitariat) masses, that the bourgeoisie were using religion to suppress any expression of discontent with the social order. Human dignity and self-actualization are the modern terms for what Marx hoped to achieve by exposing the deceptions of the upper classes. Under those conditions religion would become irrelevant.

Thus it can be seen that when science and religion have encountered one another, religion generally appears to have suffered. But closer scrutiny will reveal that only traditional or orthodox religion in fact loses by virtue of these challenges. And it is, in fact, only the institutional structures that admit of privation. Liberal religion, as well as personal religion, are strengthened by enlightenment with the truth. They gain a firmer grasp upon the values which scientific methodology verifies.

CHAPTER III

NON-ORTHODOX JUDAISMS: AN EVALUATION

I. Introduction

The primary question which shall be addressed to each of five non-orthodox Judaisms in this chapter is to what extent they can be considered liberal religions. An assumption which is made preliminary to the examination is that these religions or religious groups have in general met the basic criteria for liberal religion outlined in the first chapter. That is to say, none of these groups adhere to an uncritical approach to Scripture. It shall further become evident that the answer to the primary question of authority in each group cannot be a simple yes or no. Rather it will be necessary to examine several aspects of these religious systems in order to ascertain what kinds of authority are involved. It may be recalled that the distinction has already been made between an orthodox liberal religion and a polydox liberal religion. Based upon the way in which each of these religious groups establishes authority or how each perceives authority within their respective systems we can determine the extent of the liberalism.

Before examining each non-orthodox Judaism for its conception of authority, an understanding of what

is meant by authority is necessary. For the purposes of this study, the analysis offered by Dr. Alvin Reines shall be adopted. In order to utilize Dr. Reines' definition, it will be necessary to briefly sketch a much longer discussion found in his "Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism: Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy."

The different types of authority include the following, which can be referred to as: authority by power; authority by right; and authority by consent.

a) Authority by power: If the authority of an entity is based upon superior strength, so that others are compelled by reason of this strength to obey the entity, even against their will, the authority is termed authority by power.

b) Authority by right: If the authority of an entity is based upon morally justifiable grounds so that control over others is exercised by reason of these moral grounds alone, the authority is termed authority by right.

c) Authority by consent: If the authority is based upon the consent of the one over whom it is exercised, the authority is termed authority by consent.[1]

To these three kinds of authority, Dr. Reines adds a fourth which combines the first two.

d) Authority by power and by right: If the authority of an entity is based both on superior strength and morally justifiable ground, so others are compelled by reason of this strength and morality to obey the entity even against their will, the authority is termed authority by power and by right.[2]

Dr. Reines presents the argument that three of the four types of authority are invalid for liberal religion. The first one, authority by power, is not only invalid because no power to enforce such authority exists in any liberal religion, but also because many people consider this type of authority immoral.[3] Authority by right must be considered invalid for liberal religion because of the nature of the individual. That is to say, the assertions of modern psychology and philosophy hold that the person is ultimately free from any and all absolutes. Thus the free person cannot be subject to an absolute authority external to oneself. The person must be the source of the "ultimate right to self-authority."[4] Given this statement of individual autonomy regarding decisions of authority, it can be seen that the fourth type of authority, authority by power and by right, must also be invalid and, therefore, only authority by consent can be considered valid for a liberal religious system. In other words, the only religious authority which has any justification for its exercise over the individual is that to which the person consents.

Besides the central question of authority, several other aspects of the non-orthodox Judaisms under discussion will be examined to further determine the extent of their liberalism. It can be shown, for example, that any given religion can hold to an ideology which is contradicted in its practice. This inconsistency can help indicate

particular deficiencies of a specific religious system. A brief summation of the belief structure, the role of rituals, and the attitude toward salvation will be included as a part of the examination.

II. Conservative Judaism

> In a word, Conservative Judaism emerged from the clash of German Orthodoxy with Reform; it sought to blend the best features of the two wings; and it still attempts its delicately balanced synthesis today, over a century after the Conservative approach made its unofficial debut.[1]

1. This definition clearly does not do justice to one of the largest Jewish denominations in America today. Conservative Judaism represents about 800 congregations and over one million Jews.[2] With such a large following its role and influence can be considered an important factor. Yet, the problem of self-definition, which has plagued the movement since its inception, continues to prohibit any definitive statement of the principles of Conservative Judaism. Gilbert Rosenthal identifies the problem.

> Conservative Judaism is a protean movement. Consequently, it has produced no definitive program of beliefs and practices, nor any one "accepted" ideology. Moreover, it is a coalition of many diverse elements ranging from the almost Orthodox to the almost Reform. This, too, explains its reluctance to congeal into a monolithic theology. Finally, it is a pragmatic movement: life and practical realities have set the pattern for Conservatism rather than platforms and ideologies.[3]

Therefore, in attempting to make any characterization of Conservative Judaism, one must be cautious

and wary of the profound diversity that exists. At the same time, all efforts should be made to detect and identify the aspects held in common among the various conservative ideologies. In this study, in order to insure an objective view, two sources will be primarily used, one from within Conservative Judaism and one outside the movement.

2. Is Conservative Judaism a Liberal Religion?

In the very strict sense of being a religion which does not prohibit scientific examination of Scripture, the answer to this question must be in the affirmative. However, when we look more closely at what is in fact the practice, and perhaps more importantly, at what the attitude of the rabbinic and lay leadership is, the evidence would evoke a negative reply. The Conservative Movement has never been able to set up minimums for observance and belief, yet as Elliot Dorff remarks in offering his own list, such a list of requirements would probably find general acceptance among Conservative rabbis.[5] His list, somewhat abbreviated, is as follows.

1. There is a God.
2. God is One.
3. God takes an active role in human affairs, past, present, and future.
4. Man is God's partner in creation.
5. Man has free will.
6. The People Israel has a special duty to be "a light unto the nations."
7. Judaism is an evolving, religious civilization.

Dorff notes that the first six ideas are common to all

forms of Judaism and that only the last one distinguishes Conservative Judaism from other Jewish groups. This contention may be challenged on several points.

First of all, the first six conditions are not common to all Judaisms. If they were, then they would constitute some kind of creed or dogma, a characteristic of religion generally denied with respect to Judaism. The institution or establishment of such a creed would require an absolute authority to justify its implimentation. If this absolute authority existed, there would be no alternative other than to accept its validity and adhere to the beliefs which it required. But, it has been shown (in the second chapter) that the human is fundamentally free of philosophical and psychological absolutes. Furthermore, no evidence exists for the exercise of absolute authority by any divine or human being. Therefore, groups such as Humanistic Judaism, for example, would deny the validity of the six ideas on Dorff's list and would hold them to be irrelevant for their type of Judaism.

Secondly, the distinguishing feature of Conservative Judaism, according to Dorff, was formulated by Mordecai Kaplan. Kaplan has utilized this aspect of his understanding of Judaism as a civilization to establish Reconstructionism. It must be noted that Dorff includes Kaplan and Reconstructionism within the perimeters of Conservative Judaism. Yet, it would be

difficult to explain the Reconstructionist Foundation, and all of the separate liturgies and affiliated organizations which denote Kaplan's group today.

The issue of dogma aside, it can be seen from a reading of the historical sources about Conservative Judaism, that although in part it developed as a kind of moderate 'reform' movement, it has never broken from its more traditional roots.[6] Thus, although reform and change are fundamental to Conservatism, traditional observances and rituals have also made up its essence. It may be tentatively concluded therefore that Conservative Judaism falls substantially short of being a polydox liberal religion. To use Dr. Reines' other classification, Conservative Judaism is an orthodox liberal religion. That is to say, it acknowledges the right of its people to scientifically study Scripture, yet at the same time it attempts to impose standards of observance and behavior whose ultimate source is that same Scripture. A discussion of how Conservative Judaism confronts Scripture and its authority follows immediately.

3. Authority in Conservative Judaism

Within the Conservative movement, since its earliest days, the leadership has been divided over the issue of authority.[7] Conservative Judaism had marked out a place for itself between the absolutism of Neo-orthodoxy and the "excesses" of Reform. In order to justify what it wanted to do, its first task was to

eliminate from consideration the positions of the other two.

Reform Judaism could be negated in terms of its actions. Reform's leaders had, in effect, rejected all of the halachah because of the non-historicity of the Sinaitic revelation. Higher Criticism of the Bible had prompted Reform's radical rejection and Conservative Judaism arose in response to this action. The denial of all authority of the Scripture was something that the early leaders of Conservativism found repugnant. They held too dearly to the spirit of the divine in the law, even as they acknowledged the human factor in its actual writing.

The Conservative position clearly contrasted that of the Orthodox or Neo-Orthodoxy who still believed in the Written and the Oral Law as the exact words of God given to the Jews at Mt. Sinai. This absolute belief was also unacceptable to most Conservative Jews. As they perceived the continuum of Jewish life and law, changes due to time and circumstances were unavoidable. This is not to say that change was taken lightly. On the contrary, change was often not acknowledged as such, but enacted in the name of the more lenient of two halachic opinions. In some cases it was shown that a scribal error existed in the text, or, perhaps, that some element was an adaptation from a foreign culture and therefore could be removed. According to Conservative Judaism's leadership, there was a dynamic to Judaism

which Orthodoxy failed to fully appreciate. Therefore, Conservative Judaism, and in particular, the Rabbinical Assembly, would assume the responsibility for interpreting this dynamic for modern Jews. The only problem was that the Rabbinical Assembly was never able to assert a positive statement of principles upon which their interpretation could be founded.[8]

In his rabbinic thesis on the subject, Bruce Kahn discusses two primary sources and six secondary sources of authority found in Conservative Judaism. He notes that these are not comprehensive, but represent the dominant trends of the current movement.[9] Dr. Elliot Dorff, in his recent textbook on Conservative Judaism, cites only four different positions with regard to authority, one of which is that of Mordecai Kaplan and, what Dorff terms, his "reconstructionist tendency."[10] As Gilbert Rosenthal has observed, "If one looks for consistency of observance in Conservative Judaism one is not likely to find it."[11] The likelihood of finding consistency of belief is also remote. Diversity appears to be an inherent characteristic of Conservative Judaism. Nevertheless, a brief summary of the different sources of authority identified by Kahn and Dorff will serve to indicate some similarities and differences in the two perspectives.

Kahn worked with the conception of authority defined and explained by Dr. Alvin Reines in his essay,

"Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism: Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy," parts I, II, and III.[12] Kahn shows that the Conservative Movement has attempted to use an argument for authority by power and right and other similar arguments in the past. He raises the question as to whether the Conservative leadership has ever been able to substantiate this position or any other with direct evidence. Kahn concludes that at the beginning of the movement the issue of authority was skirted, and, consequently, the problem of a coherent and consistent ideology for Conservative Judaism remains unresolved still today.[13] A summary of Kahn's much more extensive evaluation of authority in Conservative Judaism follows.

Kahn writes:

> It is vital to keep in mind that two main areas of authority are being approached by the rabbis and scholars of Conservative Judaism's institutions:
>
> 1. The authority of the contents of biblical and rabbinic texts over rabbis and laity.
> 2. The authority of the rabbi and the authority of the layman.

Then he presents the case for six additional secondary sources of authority. These sources, he points out, serve generally to supplement the main sources in order to help establish a strong central authority for Conservative Judaism. Briefly these secondary sources together with the primary sources can be identified as follows:

1. Authority by a Single Pentateuchal Verse and by Assumption.
2. Authority Through Interpretation.
3. Authority by Consent and Need and Age.
4. Authority by Assumption and Minimal Use.
5. Authority by Appeal to the Invalid.
6. Authority by Assumption of Power and Right and Need.
7. Authority by Divine Power and Right.
8. Authority by Assumption.
9. Authority of the Individual.[14]

By presenting examples of the defense of each of these positions, Kahn shows how Conservative Judaism as a coherent religion or "specific, identifiable, knowable religious system does not exist."[15] The differences of ideology within Conservative Judaism appear from the outside to be so great as to preclude any precise identification of the group through its principles. Thus we must turn to the view from within to understand more clearly what authority exists in Conservative Judaism.

Elliot Dorff[16] presents four positions which he asserts are the basic responses that Conservative Jews make to the fundamental questions of authority. He formulates these questions as follows:

1. What is the method of study of the Scripture?
2. What is the nature of Revelation?
3. What authority is ascribed to the laws and ideas of the Bible?
4. What is the extent of the human ability to change the laws and ideas of the Bible?

In introducing his discussion comparing the four Conservative positions to those of Orthodoxy and Reform, Dorff makes the following statement.

> Despite some variations, the Orthodox answer those four questions in one basic way, and the same is true for the Reform Movement. There are at least four distinct responses in the Conservative Movement.[17]

Certain challenges may be addressed to Dr. Dorff regarding his generalizations. Initially, the question can be asked about the validity of his contention that Reform is essentially a monolith of belief with respect to authority.[18] As Gilbert Rosenthal indicates in his comparative study of modern Judaisms, Reform by its nature fosters wide diversity, both ideologically and in practice.[19] The variety in Reform conceptions of God and Torah are significant, so much so that one might issue a charge similar to that addressed to Conservative Judaism by Bruce Kahn. That is, that as a specific, identifiable knowable religious system, Reform Judaism does not exist.[20]

Secondly, Dr. Dorff does not indicate how it is possible that four distinct views can be incorporated into the same religious group, particularly since the views involve some explicit dogmatic statements. As a matter of fact, although he points out some of the differences and similarities, Dr. Dorff does not tell how or whether these four positions are reconcilable.

In order to avoid confusion with reference to these four Conservative positions, the same numerical identification used by Dr. Dorff shall be employed here.

Conservative I:

a) This position, as all of the Conservative positions, holds to the historical method of Scriptural study. That is, they distinguish between the Peshat and Derash and they determine Peshat through literary and historical analysis.

b) Regarding revelation, this position states that God in fact dictated His will at Sinai and at other times. These revelations were written down by human beings, however, and hence the diverse sources of biblical literature.

c) Since the revelation to Moses was by far the clearest and most public, it is the most authentic recording of God's will. Thus the source of authority is God.

d) From Sinai on, Jewish law and theology are to be identified with the ways in which the rabbis of each generation interpreted and applied the laws of the Torah. Rabbis, and rabbis alone, are authorized to modify the law for their time, but only with extreme caution.[21]

This position, Dr. Dorff tells us, is represented by such men as Isaac Lesser, Abraham Heschel, and David Novak. It can be seen as very similar to Orthodox Judaism, for it holds to the notion of God's direct communication of His will to man. This being the case, the individual is not granted the opportunity to consent

to the religious authority. On the contrary, the individual is expected to accept the conditions set down by the leadership because of its relation to divine authority.

The concept of authority in this position may be compared to several of the concepts in Bruce Kahn's list. It may in fact incorporate authority through interpretation as well as authority by divine power and right, among others. Both an adherence to the absolute or nearly absolute authority and concommitant beliefs are indicated by this position. The authenticity of the original revelation serves as the foundation for this view and prohibits full exercise of individual freedom not only in religious matters, but in the realm of the academic and critical questioning of the source of the religion and its authority.

Conservative II

This position consists of the following claims:

a) Human beings wrote the Torah at various times and places. Hence the diverse documents, laws, and ideas in the Torah.

b) These people were, however, <u>divinely inspired</u>, and therefore their words carry the insight and authority of God.

c) Jewish laws and ideas may be changed for two reasons. First since the Torah is a combination of divine inspiration and human articulation, we must distinguish the divine and human elements in the Tradition and change the latter when circumstances require it. Second, divine inspiration

did not happen once and for all at Sinai. The Torah is the document on which Judaism is based, and it therefore has special importance for us; but divine inspiration continues on in the form of new interpretations of the Torah in each generation.

d) When changes are made, they must be made by the community in two ways; i.e., through rabbinic decisions and communal custom. Only in that way can there be both tradition and change.[22]

Dr. Dorff comments that this is a very popular position within the Conservative movement. This is because it does not require one to be an "intellectual schizophrenic" in applying totally different methods of inquiry to the Jewish tradition from those one uses in understanding any other culture. But there is a glaring problem, which cannot be ignored nor easily rationalized: what does "divinely inspired" mean? If this is the source of authority here, it resembles authority by assumption noted by Kahn, and is equally as nebulous.

Conservative III. Advocates of this position assert the following:

a) Revelation is the disclosure of God Himself. It is not the declaration of specific rules or ideas, but rather a meeting between God and man in which they get to know each other. This meeting is asserted for different reasons and described in different ways by the existentialist and objectivist thinkers of this group. (These terms will be explained below.) In other words, there are variant understandings of the act of revelation.

b) Both schools agree, however, on the nature of the texts of revelation: the Torah is the record of how human beings responded to God when they came into contact with Him.

c) Jewish law has authority for the Jew both because it represents the attempt of the Jewish People to spell out God's will, as revealed in the ongoing encounter with Him, and also because Jews are members of a covenanted community and have obligations under that covenant to God and to the Jewish community of past, present and future. The divine and communal aspects of Jewish law make it a series of mitzvot (commandments), and not just minhagim (customs), in contradistinction to the position of Conservative IV below. For Conservative III, both God and the Jewish community command a Jew to act in accordance with Jewish law as it is interpreted in each generation, and the Jew renews his own personal contact with both in so acting.

d) However, since the Torah was written by human beings, if we want to learn about the origins and meaning of the Bible, we must use the techniques of biblical scholarship as thoroughly and honestly as we can.

e) Moreover, because the Bible is the human recording of the encounter between man and God during times past, the specific ideas and laws contained therein reflect the practices, values, and attitudes of those times. They may no longer be an adequate expression of our own understanding of what God demands of us now. We in our day have not only the right, but the responsibility, to make appropriate changes in the Tradition that has come down to us so that it will reflect God's

will as accurately as possible and accomplish it as effectively as possible in the contemporary world.

f) While every person may have his own relationship with God, it is God's encounter with the Jewish People as a whole that is of primary importance. The communal character of revelation is, in fact, a distinguishing feature of Judaism. Consequently, changes in the laws of Judaism must be made by the rabbis on behalf of the community, as the Tradition requires, and not by individuals on their own. But the entire body of Jewish law, as interpreted by the rabbis of our times, is binding on every Jew as a member of the community covenanted with God and with generations of Jews, past, present, and future.

This is the position which Dr. Dorff personally finds most intellectually satisfying. He argues that it preserves the sense of mitzvah, while still acknowledging what the scientific study of Scripture can provide for our understanding of the past. The difficulty here is once again in terms of the kind of statement that serves to prove authority. What does a "meeting between God and man" consist of? When and where did it happen? Would this encounter be necessarily subjective and explainable in psychological terms? It would seem that this parallels Kahn's authority by appeal to the invalid. What, other than the personal mystical experience of individuals, can justify any authority based upon this understanding?

> Conservative IV (=Reconstructionist tendency). The fourth position on the source and authority of Jewish law within the Conservative Movement is this:
>
> a) Human beings wrote the texts of the Tradition.
>
> b) Those texts and the patterns of life and thought that they created are neither better nor worse than those of other cultures. Hence no divinity is ascribed to them, and all talk of a Chosen People is in error and dangerous.
>
> c) Nevertheless, Jewish law has authority for us as the "folkways" (minhag, custom) of our People. In general, it should be observed in order to give our People continuity and coherence. If particular laws become offensive or fall into disuse, however, they should be changed.
>
> d) If the Jewish community succeeds in organizing itself into a cohesive, active group as the Kehillah was in medieval Europe, then communal methods for deciding issues in Jewish law and communal sanctions for it would make sense. Until such time, the individual Jew will make the decisions. That is as it should be in an area of ritual practices, but it is not a desirable situation in the realm of moral norms, and we must strive to create a Jewish community with real initiative and authority in such matters.[24]

This is the fourth position cited by Dr. Dorff and as noted it is that of Dr. Mordecai Kaplan. No appeal is made here to divine authority or other supernatural sources of inspiration. Kaplan's conception

of Judaism is altogether of a different variety and as such, we shall defer discussion until the section on Reconstructionism.

Thus we are forced to conclude that with respect to the question of authority, Conservative Judaism has a multi-faceted attitude which defies precise formulation. No one ideological stance has ever been officially recognized by the movement. No declaration of common principles has been adopted by its membership, congregational or rabbinic. Conservative Judaism, in fact, does not permit a single definition of itself either from within the movement or from without. Neither does it present a coherent explanation of its formulation of authority.

4. Belief in Conservative Judaism

There is a definite carryover of the same problem found with respect to authority in Conservative Judaism regarding the belief structure. Here again, no specific formulation of its principles of faith has ever been officially recognized. In practice, the list offered by Dr. Dorff which was quoted earlier may be the best possible compilation available. At best, as was indicated, there is nothing which distinguishes the list from Orthodox Judaism, other than the last point. Conservative Judaism has never been an ideological movement, except in the sense that it was a negative reaction to the excesses of early Reform Judaism. Observance of the basic rituals and practices was the norm in Conservative

Judaism and continues to dominate today. As no authority of any consequence exists, ritual behavior has often grown lax and beliefs are more commonly based upon nostalgia or a sense of guilt because of family ties to traditionalism. Conservative Judaism today attempts to infuse a sense of tradition in its members not by statements of creed or belief, but rather with rituals and symbols which demonstrate Judaism as opposed to understanding it.

5. Ritual and Salvation in Conservative Judaism

What must be evident by now from this study is the fact that it is almost impossible to make any all-inclusive characterizations about Conservative Judaism. Since the sources of authority and belief are diverse, it should not be surprising to find that the extent of ritual is exceptionally varied as well. The attitude toward salvation also presents some problems in its analysis, particularly given the influence of Mordecai Kaplan's concept of a civilization on modern Conservative Jews.

In examining some primary ritual guidelines of the Conservative Judaism, one can perceive the balance which is attempted between tradition and reform. The traditional schema of the High Holiday liturgy dominates the most recent Mahzor issued by the Rabbinical Assembly, tempered only by a pleasing layout and good English translations. A Rabbi's Manual, the rabbi's guide of

the Conservative Judaism, also reflects the fine line between tradition and change which is often tread by the movement.[25] Jules Harlow who edited both the Mahzor and A Rabbi's Guide includes the full text of most Hebrew prayers while rendering the English in an understandable and more modern form.[26] A summation of the Conservative situation with respect to ritual is given by Gilbert Rosenthal.

> What one is apt to find is an official, de jure commitment to tradition coupled with a belief that traditions must modify, grow and change. But de facto and in reality, there appears to be a growing gap between theory and practice, and a chasm between the observant clergy and the nonobservant laity. Halachah is honored more in the breach than in its observance. And therein, perhaps, lies the greatest dilemma of Conservatism.[27]

With a variety of theologies ranging from super-naturalism and neo-Hasidism to naturalistic humanism, Conservative Judaism still holds or attempts to hold as a movement to a more or less traditional concept of salvation. Obviously, those elements in the movement who are inclined toward a traditional God-concept and the accompanying practices understand salvation as a power of deity.[28] The other broadly based ideology of Conservatism follows more closely the thinking of Mordecai Kaplan. As such, salvation becomes a group responsibility in order to promote individual happiness.[29] In both camps, however, the emphasis is upon traditional ritual as the most efficacious religious expression,

one which in an orthodox context led to personal salvation.

Robert Gordis believes that the "inherent viability of Jewish tradition is a cardinal doctrine of Conservative Judaism."[30] This belief although widely shared among rabbinic leaders has lost some of its power in Conservatism today. Even as many Jews today return to a more traditional way of life, Conservative Judaism with its lack of well-stated principles has gained little ground numerically. Orthodoxy has made some small gains, while Reform has held its own with its problems of principle. By contrast, Conservative Judaism has had difficulty producing sufficient rabbinic leadership in recent years.[31] The ideological crises of Conservatism which have been indicated, contribute in no small measure to this ongoing situation.

III. Reconstructionism

1. Although some have said that Reconstructionism operates merely as a branch of the Conservative movement, it would seem to be a great injustice to a thinker, the caliber of Mordecai Kaplan, to classify his movement this way. Gilbert Rosenthal points out clearly why this is so.

> There is...[a] unique quality of Reconstructionism that sets it off from other religious movements... Reconstructionism is virtually synonymous and coextensive with the life and times of one man - Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan. Kaplan is the charismatic leader, founder, and

> architect of Reconstructionism: he conceived it, he formulated its program, he shaped its liturgy, he has devoted over seventy years of his rich and seminal life to expounding his ideology devoted to "the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Eretz Yisrael, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace."[1]

In contrast to a Conservative movement which has exceptional difficulty in formulating any consistant principles, Kaplan has generally been considered among the most lucid and meticulous of the modern philosophers of Judaism.

After experiencing frustration as a rabbi at an orthodox schul and finding the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Conservative movement too timorous, Kaplan founded in 1922 the Society for the Advancement of Judaism (SAJ).[2] This center for Jewish life became the prototype for the Jewish Community Center. Yet, because of Kaplan's reluctance to break his relations with the Seminary, the concept failed to develop into the dream which Kaplan envisioned.[3] Instead of becoming the social and spiritual center for Jewish life, the community center grew into an essentially social (and secular) institution, separate and distinct from the synagogue. The Reconstructionist Foundation was set up in 1940 in an attempt to shape a movement and capture formal support from Reform and Conservative rabbis as well as laymen, secularists, and Zionists.[4] But to this day the support both moral and financial needed for a

full scale effort have not been forthcoming. The Reconstructionist (Seminary) College established in 1968, although filled to capacity with a small, devoted core of teachers and students, has had numerous difficulties.

It can only be evident from what has been indicated that analysis of Reconstructionist principles must be an analysis of Mordecai Kaplan's thought. There are four basic volumes by Kaplan which expound his thought. These are: Judaism as a Civilization; The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion; The Future of the American Jew; and The Greater Judaism in the Making. It is from these that the analysis of Reconstructionist thought shall be drawn.

2. Is Reconstructionism a liberal religion?

Initially this question may appear to have an obvious affirmative reply. Kaplan has indicated repeatedly in his writings that the historical and critical study of religion and Scripture is essential. He terms revaluation, that is, a breaking away of out-dated aspects of religious tradition and integrating the remaining meaningful aspects, as the main task of modern religion, particularly, modern Judaism.[5] Thus Kaplan holds that as the life of the people changes and develops, whether in thought or behavior, the religion must adapt to serve their revised needs. This attitude clearly points to a liberal religion in the basic sense. It shall remain to be seen after addressing several other questions

to Reconstructionism as to whether or not it may be termed a polydox or an orthodox liberal religion.[6]

3. Reconstructionism and Authority

Before addressing directly the question of authority in Kaplan's thought, a slight digression is indicated. Kaplan does not accept religion by any means as the total expression of what Judaism is. Not that he accepts that it is separable from the "otherness" of Judaism, rather he holds that the reconstruction of modern Judaism should incorporate significantly more than merely the religious beliefs.

> Judaism as otherness is thus something far more comprehensive than Jewish religion. It includes that nexus of a history, literature, language, social organization, folk sanctions, standards of conduct, social and spiritual ideals, esthetic values, which in their totality form a civilization.[7]

The reconstruction of the Jewish civilization is the latest stage, according to Kaplan, in the historical growth and adaptation of Judaism. This civilization will be both humanistic and spiritual. "It will be," writes Kaplan, "an adventure into the unexplored possibilities of creative living."[8] Kaplan's image of this future for Judaism has failed to come to fruition. Although more and more Jews view Judaism as something greater than a mere religion, the structure of the American Jewish community has remained essentially the same after Kaplan's recommendations.

It is with regard to Kaplan's concept of Judaism as a civilization that the question of authority is to be raised. Regarding tradition as it relates to religion alone, he believes that the past has a vote, not a veto in modern decisions. "The past or its proxies can no more pass judgement upon the present than the child can sit in judgement upon the man."[9] When Kaplan speaks of a Jewish civilization, however, he conceives a vital, involved people with a variety of levels of participation. All elements of the civilization are not relevant nor can they all be readily accommodated by all Jews.[10] Yet Kaplan sees two aspects of a civilization which set forth certain conditions for Jews.

> There are minimum requirements, however, which anyone who wants to live as a Jew must meet. There are requirements which arise out of the very nature of a civilization. The main elements of a civilization are organically inter-related. It is this essential and organic inter-relation that differentiates a civilization from a religion, a religious philosophy, or a literary culture. For the purposes of planning a program, we may identify separate elements of Jewish civilization. Language is a vehicle of the group memories and devotions, literature and other arts their storehouse. Law and mores are the social cement among contemporaries and generate the sense of continuity with preceding generations. The religious elements of a civilization constitute the sanctions of the ideals and purposes of the group. They heighten the values of the civilization and protect it against absorption or destruction. But though these elements are distinguishable, they are organically related to each other, and the <u>organic character of Judaism is the crucial fact about it.</u>[11] (Italics are mine).

> The acceptance of Judaism as a civilization, even though it be of ancillary status, calls for a maximum program, that is, a maximum program of Jewishness compatible with one's abilities and circumstances. What constitutes such a maximum must be left to the judgement and conscience of the individual Jew, guided by the standards and ideals that will be evolved.[12] (Italics are mine).

Even as Kaplan denies the absolute authority of the past regarding beliefs and practices, and acknowledges that the individual is free to decide what is meaningful to each person, he seems to desire the order and guidance that the past offers. Thus it is possible to argue that Kaplan's organic view of Judaism justifies his attitude toward authority. It is equally possible, on philosophic grounds to question the consistency of Kaplan's thought here. For he speaks on the one hand of a "voluntarism" and on the other, of a set of requirements which each Jew must follow. What can be noted is the fact that Kaplan personally finds so much of tradition meaningful and operative in his life, that in addressing the issue philosophically he may let some of his own biases show. Not an unpardonable sin certainly, but a factor to be considered in examining Kaplan's thought.

4. Belief in Reconstructionism

Kaplan's definition of God and his attitude toward Torah have scandalized the Jewish traditionalists. In a word Kaplan holds that God is "the power that makes for salvation." The Torah has value, according to Kaplan,

yet it is not the product of divine revelation. It is, instead, the record of man's striving for salvation. These ideas coupled with Kaplan's concept of individual freedom, theoretically, leave Reconstructionism with no dogmas or required beliefs.

However, one cannot dismiss the issue so readily, for Kaplan's ideology involves certain conceptions of Judaism, God, and Torah which flesh out his idealistic notion of modern Judaism. First of all, it would be, at the very least, unusual to encounter a Jew of the Reconstructionist persuasion who did not accept the notion of Judaism as a civilization. While this and most all other associated ideas about Reconstructionism do not require belief in the sense of a blind faith, the acceptance of such a definition appears basic. A Reconstructionist Jew would have a conception of Judaism congruent with the distinction Kaplan makes between personal and folk religion.

"Torah means a complete Jewish civilization," writes Kaplan, and is not merely law. In line with many other Jewish thinkers, Kaplan speaks of Torah in the broadest sense, one that includes not only the Old Testament, but rabbinic writings and the later literature of the Jewish people.

> Torah should mean to the Jew nothing less than a civilization which enables the individual to effect affirmative and creative adjustments in his living relationships with reality. Any partial conception of Torah is false to the

> forces that have made for Judaism's development and survival. Torah means a complete Jewish civilization. But to the Jew in the diaspora it must, in addition, spell the duty of beholding in the non-Jewish civilization by which he lives a potential instrument of salvation. He must help to render that civilization capable of enhancing human life as the Torah enhanced the life of Israel. If, like the Torah, it is to be worthy of fervent devotion, those whose lives it fashions must be convinced of its intrinsic righteousness.[13]

Accordingly Kaplan writes that, "Whatever is right should be incorporated in our Torah, and whatever is wrong should be eliminated."[14] Nevertheless, Kaplan taught homiletics at the Jewish Theological Seminary and he trained Conservative rabbis to preach from the Bible with great meaningfulness. "The Bible, he taught, was important to the Jew in every age as the original source of the basic concepts which functioned as sanctifying influences on Jewish life. Those concepts have changes in the course of time, but in all their changes a common core of meaning is discernible, provided we consider them functionally as they have expressed themselves in the life of the people."[15]

Kaplan asserted that supernaturalist belief in God was mere superstition. Modern man "must no longer look upon God as a reservoir of magic power to be tapped whenever they are aware of their physical limitations."[16] God has a more potent, loftier role to play in modern Jewish religion, according to Kaplan. The concept of God holds the human ideals of truth,

goodness, and beauty, interwoven in a pattern of holiness.

> To believe in God is to reckon with life's creative forces, tendencies and potentialities as forming an organic unity, and as giving meaning to life by virtue of that unity. Life has meaning for us when it elicits from us the best of which we are capable, and fortifies us against the worst that may befall us. Such meaning reveals itself in our experiences of unity, of creativity, and of worth. In the experience of that unity which enables us to perceive the interaction and interdependence of all phases and elements of being, it is mainly our cognitive powers that come into play; in the experience of creativity which we sense at first hand, whenever we make the slightest contribution to the sum of those forces that give meaning to life, our conative powers come to the fore; and in the experience of worth, in the realization of meaning, in contrast to chaos and meaninglessness, our emotional powers find expression. Thus in the very process of human self-fulfillment, in the very striving after the achievement of salvation, we identify ourselves with God, and God functions in us. This fact should lead to the conclusion that when we believe in God, we believe that reality - the world of inner and outer being, the world of society and of nature - is so constituted as to enable man to achieve salvation.17

5. Ritual in Reconstructionism

Kaplan analyzed the contemporary setting in which modern Jews found themselves in order to demonstrate the many factors to be considered in the reconstruction of American Jewish life. For example, in one chapter of Judaism as a Civilization, he deals with the changes in the economic order which have weakened the family

unit and therefore the foundation upon which ritual Judaism is built.[18] Inasmuch as Kaplan defines Judaism as a civilization, he identifies two constituent elements of any civilization as the folk habits and the folk sanctions.[19] The later involve what we commonly call ethical standards and shall be dealt with under the next question. Folk habits include folkways, social etiquette, moral standards, civil and criminal law, and religious practices.

"Folkways," writes Kaplan, "are the social practices by which a people externalizes the reality of its collective being."[20] Affirmative folkways indicate a vital, active people, whereas negative folkways which abound in Judaism do not promote a colorful and interesting life-style. Kaplan further distinguishes between cultural and religious folkways. The Sabbath, the festivals, and worship constitute religious folkways which emphasize the cosmic relationship in religious experience. The Hebrew language and the Jewish calendar are typical cultural folkways. Kaplan uses "folkways" interchangably with the word "mitzvot," and yet his analysis in this manner is not intended to denigrate what he sees as the importance of these actions. He writes,

> The normal human being is exhilarated by any kind of ritual which gives him a sense of unity with the larger life of some group. In sharing that life, his own is redeemed from its dull and drab routine.[21]

But Kaplan is acutely aware of the problem that

plagues many, if not most Jewish rituals. A ritual should not be merely a remnant of a past age. If it has lost its meaning, a ritual must be infused with new meaning. If most Jewish rituals and customs have lost their meaning, then "a complete revision of the entire system of Jewish customs is imperative," according to Kaplan.[22] Such revision is not, however, a haphazard affair for Kaplan. Several principles should guide the changes and point to some specific goals.

For example, in revising Jewish worship, attention should be given as to how the experience intensifies Jewish consciousness. "There should be no mistake," writes Kaplan, "about the type of civilization and people with which Jewish public worship identifies the Jew."[23] This kind of service should also interpret the divine aspect of life as manifest in social idealism, emphasize the high worth and potentialities of the individual soul, and voice the aspiration of Israel to serve the cause of humanity. Thus the Jewish worship service takes on a meaning beyond its original intent and becomes relevant to the modern Jew.

> Accordingly, the principle that would then be adopted in the development of Jewish folkways would be that the elementary needs of human existence, and the significant events and turning points in a person's life should constitute an occasion for folkways to be practiced, whenever they do not involve an unreasonable amount of time, effort and expense. Of course, what is reasonable will depend upon how intensely Jewish one is. In the last

> resort, one's selective Jewish sense must be the final arbiter. There need be no fears about anarchy resulting from diversity in the practice of folkways. Diversity is a danger when we are dealing with law.[24]

6. Salvation and Reconstructionism

"It is true, no doubt," writes Kaplan, "that in Judaism the religious practices were for a long time interpreted as constituting the means of attaining a share in the world to come, or salvation."[25] But, Kaplan doesn't acknowledge that this hope was in-and-of itself the primary cohesive factor for the continued existence and survival of Jewish civilization. The people were in need of the rituals and mitzvot for self-identification asserts Kaplan. They would have continued as a people without the hope of salvation as long as they maintained their folkways and practices.

If this is Kaplan's assessment of traditional Judaism's concept of salvation, what kind of salvation is possible in his reconstructed Judaism? As with traditional Judaism, Kaplan ascribes the source of salvation to God. He differs with traditional Judaism, however, in his conception of that God. Whereas in traditional Judaism, God is a being who grants salvation as an act of grace or in response to the devout actions of the pious, for Kaplan, God is the Power that makes for salvation.

Kaplan further distinguishes salvation as having both personal and social significance. "In its personal

aspect," comments Kaplan, "it represents the faith in the possibility of achieving an integrated personality."[26] The smooth coordination of all of the elements of the psyche operating with the goal of attaining our desired ends constitutes personal salvation. But, warns Kaplan, it is not adequate to achieve only personal salvation, for no human being is self-sufficient. "In its social aspect, salvation means the ultimate achievement of a social order in which all men shall collaborate in the pursuit of common ends in a manner which shall afford to each the maximum opportunity for creative self-expressive."[27] Kaplan incorporates in his explanation the individual's psychological needs with a socio-political analysis that considers the active role humans must take in their own salvation. Given the fact that personal salvation in Kaplan's system is dependent upon there being social order, religion "must encourage men with faith and hope to apply human intelligence and good-will to the removal of these evils [i.e. social problems] in the achievement of the social salvation of mankind."[28]

Thus social salvation is the active goal of organized religion, and God, regardless of the understanding that one has of the term, remains central to the religious group. As God is the principle idea or being for Jewish religion toward which humans strive, we identify God with salvation. Religion, according to Kaplan, "represents the purposeful effort of the Jewish people to make the experience of Jewish group life in past and

present and future an instrument of salvation."[29] Central to that experience is the Shabbat, and three ideas associated with Shabbat bring out the Jewish identification with God. These ideas are creativity, reminiscent of the creation of the world; holiness, which recalls the Decalogue command; and covenantship, which bids Israel to remember the past and remain committed to the ideals of personal and social salvation. We need not believe in a personal deity or one which controls all of the universe asserts Kaplan,

> It is sufficient that God should mean to us the sum of the animating, organizing forces and relationships which are forever making a cosmos out of chaos. This is what we understand by God as the creative life of the universe.[30]

IV. Reform Judaism

1. The Reform Judaism of today has its roots in a historical movement begun in nineteenth century Germany. At that time some Jewishly educated and enlightened men sought to free traditional Judaism of its antiquated character. Their purpose was to bring to life the spirit which had been heavily ensconced inside the walls of the Jewish ghetto. The political emancipation of some Jews had opened the possibilities of intellectual and social intercourse with the rest of Western Europe. With visions of the contemporary Christian religious community in mind, many Jews hoped to bring their religious community into a similarly pleasant pattern of ceremony and worship.[1]

By virtue of eloquent principles and ideals, the

early Reformers were eventually able to make some small progress in Europe. Yet it was not until the movement came to America that Reform Judaism truly took firm hold. The expressed principles of these men of early Reform were bold and forthright assertions of their fundamental convictions and beliefs. They believed that change was a legitimate element in a vital Judaism and enacted such changes as they felt would benefit Judaism. Several times since its official organizations were established in this country, Reform's leadership has formulated statements of its fundamental principles.[2]

These pronouncements by the officially constituted representives of Reform Jewry have attempted to direct the movement in its internal life, as well as in its role in the Jewish and general communities. Entering the 1970's, Reform Judaism found that the last previous statement of principles was the 1937 "Columbus Platform." That statement was, in turn, essentially a restatement of the preceding one, the 1885 "Pittsburgh Platform." By comparing the two early statements of Reform on several issues, we can see how the tone of the later one was more concilliatory toward traditionalism. The poetic nature of this statement kept Reform in a vague, middle ground which attempted to mitigate the tone of orthodox rejection of their position. Further, it allowed Reform to buttress its own authenticity with an appeal to

tradition, a noble idea which failed miserably.

2. Is Reform Judaism a liberal religion?

The Columbus Platform (1937) identified its contents as the "Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism." Regarding God, it read,

> 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]

By way of contrast, the statement made regarding God in the Pittsburgh Platform 1885 was the following.

> 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.

This earlier statement clearly presents not only a more universalistic conception of deity, but also appears to allow for a non-theistic Reform Judaism. The Columbus Platform speaks in metaphorical terms, not unlike the English translations of the Union Prayer Book. Given the poetic nature of the 1937 statement,

it is only surprising that a revision was not forthcoming before it did. Reform's contemporary emphasis on science and critical thought should have prompted it.

The Columbus Platform also attempted to reformulate a statement on the Torah and its significance for Reform Judaism in the twentieth century. The emphasis of this statement was in the area of the ethical content of Scripture.

> 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.[4]

This was a significant change from the previous platform which was both vague in its language and evasive in representing itself in the light of scientific advances.

> 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.[5]

Given the broad universalistic attitude reflected in both statements, the obligation of interpreting Torah in contemporary terms is retained. This position assumes that, first, such interpretation is possible, and second, that it is desirable. No absolute authority is explicit or implied, yet commitment is assumed. As such, it is more difficult to delineate the source of any authority in Reform Judaism's pronouncements.

The Columbus Platform addressed the issue of religious practice. Yet the wording of the statement prevented a firm formulation of what a Reform Jew must do. Instead it implied that all Jews would feel moved to observe and perpetuate the ideals and practices of Jewish life.

> 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, synagog 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 synagog.
>
> 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.[6]

The earlier Pittsburgh statement had a greater task in positioning itself distinctly away from orthodox practice. Therefore, its wording indicated primarily what Reform rejected, rather than what it accepted.

> 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.

Since the "Centenary Perspective" was issued by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1976, numerous discussions have been carried on about the present state and future direction of Reform Judaism. With an early history reflecting both religious and intellectual integrity, and a recent past showing division, unrest, and apathy, Reform was ready to reevaluate its own nature as a religion and as a modern Judaism.

Before answering the question, 'Is Reform Judaism a liberal religion,' the criteria for assessing the position of Reform Judaism today should be clarified. Can Reform Judaism be represented by its official statements and their elaboration as produced by the leadership of the movement? Or should it be understood in terms of the teachings of its rabbis who speak from within the context of Reform? As both are actual representations, it seems only fair to utilize both to the extent that is possible.

Since the entire range of issues addressed by the "Centenary Perspective" are not of concern for this study, only three sections will be examined. These sections will assist in answering the questions regarding authority, belief, ritual, and salvation. The first question which we will ask will be to what extent is Reform Judaism a liberal religion.

> I. 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 and 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 called death.
>
> III. 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 milennia, the creation of Torah has not ceased and Jewish creativity in our time is adding to the chain of tradition.
>
> IV. 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; lifelong 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 synagogues 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.[8]

Rabbi Eugene Borowitz, author of the three book series and chairman of the committee which produced the "Centenary Perspective", writes that "Regardless of my officials positions, then, I know I speak in these pages only for myself, and yet in doing so I hope I articulate the contemporary spirit of Reform Judaism as a whole."[9] It can readily be observed, however, that Borowitz <u>is</u> presenting his own thinking as dominant and not the conceptions that hold sway among most Reform Jews. To cite but one example from chapter 13 of the volume entitled, <u>What We Believe</u>. The chapter is labelled, "How Torah Arises: Four Modern Views." Borowitz presents first views of Herman Cohen, Leo Baeck, and Mordecai Kaplan. The first two men have certainly influenced Reform Judaism and may, in fact, be considered liberal, yet it is doubtful that they

dominate Reform Jewish theology today. Kaplan's position may be widely held among certain groups of contemporary Jews, yet few Reform thinkers within the context of Reform have openly embraced his thought. As Rosenthal notes, in 1970 as few as 50 Reform rabbis identified with Kaplan's movement.[10] When Borowitz presents the last view of Torah, it is that of Buber and Rosenzweig, an existentialist position akin to his own. As a matter of fact, he specifically draws the conclusion that this position, among the four mentioned, is the most adequate modern view of Torah.[11] Although the statement of the CCAR committee expressed the sense of the "spiritual state of Reform Judaism," these volumes can only be understood as promoting one point of view in the continuing discussion of the issues.

On the basis of the three statements from the "Centenary Perspective," it may be inferred that Reform, although unwilling to state it explicitly, has certain minimum beliefs which it attempts to maintain. Since the specific beliefs to which all members must adhere involve the belief in God and the obligation of ritual practice, Reform Judaism must be classified as an orthodox liberal religion. It is, however, interesting to note that in practice this is not always the case. Actual Reform Jewish settings often neither teach nor mention explicitly any minimums expected of its members. Thus any conclusions about Reform Judaism and its ideology drawn from observation will often yield confusing

and contradictory information.

3. Authority in Reform Judaism

The analysis of Reform Judaism as a liberal religion necessarily involves the question of authority. In each of the three Platforms which have been discussed, the autonomy of the individual has been indicated, although in the 1885 Platform it was only implied. Coupled with the right of freedom has always been some statement of the obligations, or assumed necessary beliefs or duties and responsibilities for the Reform Jew. Although it may be historically true that absolute freedom cannot exist in a state/political entity without some conditions, Reform Judaism appears to be torn between granting just such freedom while expecting that those granted that freedom will accept the concommitant obligations of belief and practice.

The problem of the Reform position is evidenced by the on-going debate regarding a guide for observance for Reform Jews. Two such guides for Reform practice have already been compiled, although neither has been officially adopted.[12] At this writing the Central Conference of American Rabbis has prepared in final draft form the Gates of Mitzvah, a volume of Jewish legal codes and practical suggestions concerning life cycle events. All due precautions have been taken to assure that no one will understand this book to be a new Reform Shulhan Aruch. However, it will be the first guidelines issued by organized Reform and its

acceptance or rejection by Reform Jews will be significant with respect to Reform Judaism's self-definition.

Thus as far as Reform Judaism is concerned today no absolute religious authority exists. Reform is left with more of a hope of authority than anything substantial. Compared to previous generations, writes Eugene Borowitz, "most Reform Jews today have a far greater communal and historic sense of authority."[13]

4. Belief and Reform Judaism

Kaufmann Kohler wrote, "There is no Biblical nor Rabbinical precept, 'Thou shalt believe!'"[14] Although throughout its history, Judaism's great teachers have attempted to formulate some kind of creed, none has ever been deemed as the definitive Jewish dogma. Thus Reform Judaism had neither any precedent for a formulation of belief nor any desire to devise one of its own when making its statements of principle.

None of the Platforms, and in particular, the current one, bespeak anything that resembles a creed or dogma. Reform Jews need not hold to any specific doctrine in order to be Jews, according to the "Centenary Perspective." The vague language of this statement tells us that some of us are bound to these principles, some of us are devoted to its cause, some of us ground our lives in God, and some of us are called upon to confront the claims of tradition. But none of us are obligated to believe. The few indications that some commitment

is involved are directed to universal principles and reflect no specific Jewish religious identity. Therefore, it can be concluded that Reform Judaism in its official position requires no positive beliefs of its members. The one exception, if it may be so considered is the following. "We stand open to any position thoughtfully and conscientiously advocated in the spirit of Reform Jewish belief."[15] Unfortunately, "Reform Jewish belief" is nowhere defined in the rest of the document.

5. Ritual and Reform Judaism

The fourth section of the "Centenary Perspective" is entitled, "Our Obligations: Religious Practice." One is immediately aware upon reading this paragraph of the "conservative" nature of its intention. As Reform Jews, it asserts, we share the emphasis "on duty and obligation." Tradition is the ultimate source of all meaningful ritual from which Reform Jews must draw in order to express their religious life. In what may be perceived as an indication of some naivete, Reform Jews are called upon to engage in daily religious practices, which if one would so indulge, would place one outside the realm of Reform and into Conservative Judaism. This is not to say that daily religious activities are not proper for Reform, but rather that these actions would be more typical of traditional Jews, not Reform Jews.[16]

As noted above, Reform Judaism today faces a

serious dilemma with respect to belief. There have never been any specific guidelines for authority, belief, or ritual, and as such, these problems persist. Reform's leadership has called for Reform Jews to return to tradition to adopt those practices that are meaningful to the individual person. Other leaders have suggested in line with Mordecai Kaplan and Alvin Reines that new ceremonies for modern Jews be developed. At present, however, Reform attempts to reconcile both tradition and change. Religious ritual is a matter of custom in most congregations. Rabbinical leadership often becomes the de facto arbiter of ceremony and ritual. Although Reform Judaism began with the purpose of making Judaism more aesthetically pleasing in its worship service, its liturgy today reflects a meagre appreciation of liturgical beauty.

In the three volumes of liturgy which have been published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis within the last five years, not one captures the spirit of Reform which motivated the founders of the movement.[17] For the most part, they are written in a dry prosaic style, with precious little in the way of creative liturgy. These volumes which indicate the nature of official Reform ritual must be evaluated as basically traditional and indicative of a return to such practices as to blur the distinctions between Reform and Conservative Judaism.

6. Salvation and Reform Judaism

In examining the three volumes which give a background to the "Centenary Perspective", one searches in vain for any mention of salvation. Intellectually, all of the fine points of the "Centenary Perspective" regarding God and belief are explicated, including those aspects which give rise to some debates within the Reform movement. But it appears that since Reform has eliminated salvation as an explicit notion in its liturgy, it is justified in ignoring it in the statement of Reform principles. Instead of culminating in personal or social salvation, as in Kaplan's system, Reform, according to Borowitz, hearkens back to the messianic message of Judaism.

> Jewish faith in God and thus in humanity climaxes in the Jewish messianic hope. The Jews may be a quite particular ethnic group, with all the concrete, historical individuality that goes with peoplehood. Yet Jewish ethnicity is indissolubly joined to Jewish faith which moves on inexorably from God to people to a messianic vision of sin overcome and God's will as the inner law of every human heart.[18]

Reform Judaism seems to paint a strange picture of itself with the "Centenary Perspective". It sees itself as a movement, an organization, committed both to growth and the extension of its principles. The principles include a recollection of the past with a view toward the future.

They include a statement of God's reality and an affirmation of diversity as the means to a greater future. These principles attest to the existence of the people Israel and to the ongoing chain of Torah. Three types of obligations are engendered by the "Centenary Perspective", for religious practice, for both the State of Israel and Jews throughout the world, and for Jewish survival and service to all of humanity. And finally, the last section of the principles identifies hope as our Jewish obligation. All together, this image of Reform Judaism bespeaks the needs and duties of a movement, a religion of the institutional variety.

Salvation, although it requires much of what is called for in the "Centenary Perspective" must be the goal of the individual. Religion in at least one sense should provide for the individual the opportunity to attain that goal. Reform Judaism in its most recent statement of principles has apparently lost sight of that purpose of religion.

V. Humanistic Judaism

1. Less than ten years old, Humanistic Judaism, like its more traditional cousin, Reconstructionism, revolves around the charismatic personality of its founder and chief spokesman, in this case, Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine. Rabbi Wine is a graduate of the Reform seminary, Hebrew Union College and currently the rabbi of the founding congregation of the Society for Humanistic Judaism in Farmington Hills, Michigan. As with Mordecai Kaplan and Reconstructionism, there has been little in the way of an articulated ideology of Humanistic Judaism except by Sherwin Wine. Unfortunately, the amount and the quality of that material is minimal. Beside the rather sporatic publication of the journal, Humanistic Judaism, only one volume with the same title has been issued to date. It is from this collection of essays by Rabbi Wine printed first in 1978 by the humanist press, Prometheus Books, that the bulk of material for this section was culled.

2. Is Humanistic Judaism a liberal religion?

The first question to be posed is whether or not Humanistic Judaism is a liberal religion. We may, in fact, preface that question with another, that is, is Humanistic Judaism a religion at all? Recalling Dr. Reines' definition (see chapter 1), it may be said that Humanistic Judaism is a legitimate response to the problem of finitude. It may even be a successful response leading to salvation. However, that issue will

be addressed later in this section. Rabbi Wine discusses various questions about religions and humanism in his book. He deals briefly with the characteristics of religion and points out, quite rightly, that religion need not be identified only with theism.[1]

Wine's discussion of religion begins, as do so many others, with the question of the meaning of the word religion. He feels that clarification of this word best involves explaining what religion is not. Rather than offering a clarification, his presentation emphasizes the six historical realities which religion, according to Wine, seems to typically display. They are the resistance to change, the denial of originality in religious teachings, certain characteristics of behavior, life-cycle events in nature and of the individual, religious group activities, and the holy individual who has mystical experiences. Wine writes that, "any adequate theory about the nature of the religious experience and its unique characteristics must be able to explain these six facts."[2]

The answer which Sherwin Wine seems to think responds most adequately to these characteristics of religious experience is "the act of identifying with what appears to be 'permanent.'" Humanism as a total philosophy provides the foundation, according to Wine, which allows its adherents to balance their lives as humans, and to identify with the permanent. But

humanism and Humanistic Judaism are more than mere religions and as such, they affirm change and conditional knowledge as a part of life. Thus, although the humanistic philosophy offers a response to the need for permanence, it acknowledges process as part of life as well.

This information about the nature of Humanistic Judaism does little to help in answering the initial question about liberal religion. It can be noted that Humanistic Judaism does permit and promote the scientific study of Scripture and religion generally. Furthermore, it imposes no necessary beliefs with respect to a deity, or does it? Perhaps the most intriguing question about Humanistic Judaism involves the attitude toward the concept of God, both in their descriptive or explanatory literature and in their liturgy. What kind of attitude do Humanistic Jews opt for regarding God? Wine writes in his introduction,

> The most interesting Jews of the last one hundred years never joined a synagogue.
> They never prayed,
> They were disinterested in God.
> They paid no attention to the Torah lifestyle.
> They found bourgeois Reform as parochial as traditional Orthodoxy.
> They preferred writing new books to worrying about the meaning of old books.
> They had names like Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud and Theodore Herzl.[3]

Neither the book Humanistic Judaism nor the Meditation Services for Humanistic Judaism indicates that deity exists, is important, or should be believed in.

Instead, as Rabbi Wine has often said, since the term God is confusing and often implies many contradictory meanings, it is just as well that it not be used. Wine tells people who come to his congregation that if they want to talk about God in their services, they should go elsewhere. God-talk, as Wine refers to it, is meaningless and has the purpose only of adding a needless nostalgia to Humanistic Jewish life.[4]

It can be concluded, therefore, that Humanistic Judaism is an orthodox liberal religion. It does not prohibit scientific methodology applied to Scripture, however, it does limit the freedom of the membership of the community by its belief structure. There is, in essence, a negative absolute belief; that is, that no member of the community can express publically a belief in deity or include such a concept in their liturgy. In contrast to the expressed statement regarding religion in the Humanist Manifesto II, Humanistic Judaism, or at least Sherwin Wine, not only considers the person above any idea of God, but negates the value of the idea altogether.[5]

3. Authority and Belief in Humanistic Judaism

One finds the traditional notion of authority in religion as non-existent in Humanistic Judaism as most other traditional notions. Wine and Humanistic Jews are not concerned with what tradition offers to the modern person. For that matter, Wine appears to feel that "old books" are not as valuable nor as interesting

to modern Jews as new ones. It is not the sources of belief and similar religious ideas which confront the modern Jews according to Wine. Rather, today's Jews are more inclined to read and accept the ideas of Sigmund Freud or Franz Kafka.

> An honest Judaism does not describe what Jews used to believe; it clarifies and articulates what Jews do believe. Since Jewish identity is defined by society (and even by Orthodoxy) as an ethnic identity, Judaism changes from century to century....
> As long as a Jewish people persists, whatever beliefs the overwhelming majority of that people subscribes to is justifiably called Judaism.[6]

According to Wine, Jews today do not believe in any kind of God and have no need for the concept.

Whatever role God may have filled with respect to authority, this role is denied in Humanistic Judaism. Wine cites the rationalist and empirical examination of the world as ample proof that no supernatural being exists or interferes in the affairs of humanity.[7]

What then serves as the basis of authority in Humanistic Judaism and what do Humanistic Jews believe in? Sherwin Wine articulates several ideas which are central to the Humanistic Jew and Humanistic Judaism. Identity, rationality, community, and universalism are the fundamental ideals of Humanistic Judaism. Each of these concepts are defined by Wine in terms of their significance for his group.

With respect to identity, Wine takes a pragmatic approach. Jews are Jews by virtue of membership within

a particular extended family. They are identified by others as being Jews, and even Humanistic Jews are not overtly distinguished by their humanism. The reality of this membership is something that Humanistic Judaism accepts and their goal is in part to help Jews feel comfortable with their Jewishness. No authority or belief stems from this element of Humanistic Judaism, it is merely an acknowledgement of what is.[8]

Reason is one of two fundamental philosophic postures accepted by Humanistic Jews. The other, empiricism, serves to supplement the rational understanding which they accept regarding reality, according to Wine. In fact, in his book, Wine appears to make little or no distinction between these two ideas and uses rationalism and empiricism almost interchangeably. The attitude of Humanistic Judaism is expressed by Wine thus:

> The sensitive rational humanist sticks to reason, not because he is an enthusiastic devotee of logical order. He just isn't aware of any alternative procedure that is better suited to reduce human suffering and enhance human pleasure. He does not presume, in some pollyannish fashion, that it is easy to be reasonable. He understands the perils of self-deception and arid justification, while affirming the riskiness of all decisions. Although he knows that he does not yet live in an age of science, he hopes that man's self-understanding will grow.

The human is left by this measure to the feeble, limited workings of the mind in order to determine what is true and what is false. No absolute authority and

no definitive belief rules the actions of the Humanistic Jew; only reason helps to guide one's life.

Rabbi Wine writes that one of "our major functions [of his congregation] was to provide an atmosphere of free inquiry in which major ethical problems could be discussed." He apparently feels that the modern Jew needs to discuss issues of ethical and moral import in order to supplement one's own common sense ethics. This kind of attitude of practical ethics, according to Wine, "frowns on absolute certainty." And this he perceives as a good. Intelligent ethical judgements are not defined once-and-for-all, but are the products of continual testing and discussion. Wine holds that for a proper response to the dilemmas of modern life, the community serves to provide a forum for discussion of the issues and possible solutions.[10]

Lastly, the value of universalism is important to Humanistic Jews. Wine recalls how the perceptions of a Humanistic Jew come through the eyes of reason and empirical evidence. Thus, he asserts, one cannot legitimately be too particularistic, since we understand that the individual must be of primary concern.

> A consistent humanist maintains the right of an individual to pursue his own happiness in the way that his personal needs and temperment require, so long as he does not interfere with the right of other individuals to do the same.[11]

Given these values of the Humanistic Jew, no clear-cut authority or belief is indicated. Wine relies upon

the intelligence and sensibilities of the members to hold these values as he does in order for the community to operate smoothly. If someone believes something contrary to these ideals, then they apparently are asked to leave the group. This system of religion has much growing to do and until it expands beyond the person of Sherwin Wine, it will be very difficult to fairly evaluate.

4. Ritual and Salvation in Humanistic Judaism

Looking through the volume of Meditation Services for Humanistic Judaism, it is evident that no ordinary or typical Jewish liturgical format is used, nor even considered. Ritual is not a means to salvation, nor is salvation an aim or end for Humanistic Judaism. Wine writes,

> Religion, as a practical activity, is usually independent of theological belief. Most Jewish people who call themselves religious have very vague and nebulous theological notions, if any. What they share with each other is not a strong belief in God but rather a strong attachment to certain ritual practices.[12]

But Wine does not regard any traditional rituals as inherently meaningful. Like Kaplan, he holds that they have lost the meaning they once had. Unlike Kaplan, Wine is willing to discard them all in favor of a new order of relevant celebrations of life.

The Meditations are but one example of Wine's radical approach to ritual. The services of this volume include themes such as Beauty, Courage, Happiness,

Internationalism, Loyalty, Realism, Reason, and Universalism. Such ideals are eloquent for intellectual intercourse, yet one wonders about a religious service which extolls Realism or Reason. Ritual is, for Humanistic Judaism, a practical way of coming together as a community or individually to reaffirm the values that are important to its members.

Salvation in any conventional sense is inappropriate to Humanistic Judaism. The efforts of human beings will reduce human suffering and enhance life for all people. This goal is what is strived for, not any natural or supernatural redemption. In his critique of Reconstructionism, Sherwin Wine writes, "Humanistic Judaism beleives that we must <u>first</u> deal with the problem of integrity - making the symbols of religion truly fit what we are and do."[13]

VI. Polydox Judaism

1. Although there is an obvious fascination for many people today in non-rational, non-natural, and mystical religions, comments Dr. Alvin Reines, "it is clear that the most widespread principle of religious organization among Jews today owes it emergence and existence to rational commitment."[1] Dr. Reines is the national chairperson and founder of the Institute of Creative Judaism, the organizational body of Polydox Judaism. Like Humanistic Judaism and Reconstructionism, Polydox Judaism is primarily expressed in the writings of one person, in this case, Dr. Reines.[2]

In contrast to Humanistic Judaism which was organized about the same time, Polydox Judaism is made up mainly of rabbis. Since Dr. Reines is a professor at the Hebrew Union College, most of the people who have been exposed to his ideas have been his students and are now Reform rabbis. Thus, although the potential for influence of Polydox Judaism or Polydoxy is great, the actual congregational participation is still quite limited.[3]

Polydox Judaism retains a unique posture in comparison to the other non-orthodox religions examined thus far. Of the four other groups, only Polydoxy has been formulated with a distinct set of philosophic principles, upon which the organization is grounded. Dr. Reines has developed a unique critical approach to

religion, and in particular, to the different historical Judaisms. This approach has served to clear away the superfluous elements of past Jewish religious systems which were adopted uncritically, often due to outside social or political factors. Therefore, Polydox Judaism can claim to be both a coherent and a consistent religious system based upon reason and empiricism.

2. Is Polydox Judaism a liberal religion?

Polydox Judaism is identified as such because of the definition and analysis of liberal religion offered by Dr. Reines.[4] This definition was presented in the first chapter, and it can be recalled that the difference between an orthodox liberal religion and a polydox liberal religion is the way in which a polydoxy acknowledges the right of the individual to make all ultimate decisions concerning one's belief. The orthodox liberal religion acknowledges the scientific study of Scripture, which has the effect of denying any absolute authority of that Scripture, yet attempts at the same time to justify religious requirements based upon that Scripture or some interpretation of it. But, whereas in the polydox liberal community the principle of personal freedom is explicit and engendered by that community including with respect to Scripture, the orthodox liberal community makes numerous demands upon its adherents. These demands are commonly varied and vague beliefs and practices to which a member must agree in order to be part of the community. Dr. Reines

identifies a polydoxy as follows,

> In the polydox liberal religion, unlike the orthodox liberal religion, no principle or belief or practice, with the single exception to be noted, is obligatory upon its members. All beliefs regarding the great subjects of religion..., 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.[5]

Thus for the formation and for the continuation of the polydox liberal community and Polydox Judaism, the sole necessary obligation is the principle of democratic freedom. In the religious community this principle is identified as the "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.[6]

As such it can be seen that this principle need not define any specific group but may be applied to any religious group willing to accept this condition. For that matter, given the fact that no modern Jewish religious group in America is able to enforce any legal sanctions against a member, it may be asserted that polydoxy is at the core of each contemporary Judaism today. To the extent that modern thought influences these groups, Dr. Reines would hold that this is precisely the case. The only catch is, of course, the failure of each of the

groups to openly acknowledge this principle. As liberal Jewish groups in America begin to confront the reality of the behavior of its members, they will realize that the "freedom covenant" in fact governs the practice and belief structure of each of these religions.

3. Belief and Ritual in Polydox Judaism

From what has already been indicated, it should be clear that no specific beliefs are dictated by the principles of Polydox Judaism other than the one noted. No particular theological stance is prescribed or necessary for membership in the community. The polydox liberal community provides a forum for the examination and expression of different responses to the problems of finitude and only those views which are authoritarian in character or which attempt to exclude certain members from the community must be prohibited. Two criteria determine the appropriateness of any beliefs for the Polydox Jewish community. Obviously, these criteria can only be applied to those beliefs which are expressed in public. Private beliefs, as long as they do not have any direct influence on other members, cannot be, should not be and are not subject to community sanctions.

The first criterion which applies to the belief structure of any polydox liberal religion is consistency. For a person to be a member of a particular religious group and to hold beliefs which are inconsistent with its essence is absurd. One might reasonably ask this person, why, given the beliefs that they have, do they

belong to such and such religious community? Dr. Reines writes that, "it is hypocrisy for persons to state, particularly in reading a religious service, that which they do not believe; and no religious community can conceive itself as moral that would foster such deceitful behavior on the part of its members."[7] Yet one finds in the Reform Jewish or Conservative Jewish community this very situation of conflict of belief or inconsistency all too often.

The second criterion for the polydox liberal community is that the belief structure should be coherent. This is essential if the religious community values reason and logical thinking as validating factors for its essence. First of all, if the community holds certain values or beliefs as being important, these beliefs should not conflict with one another. To one who attempts to identify them, they must be communicable and intelligible. Furthermore, the beliefs of any member of the particular community should be recognizable by other members of that community. If one holds to beliefs that cannot be comprehended or understood by other members of the religious group, it would again appear absurd to be a part of that group.

Ritual is generally considered the expression of two aspects of the human psyche which are concerned with religion. These two aspects are will and feeling. Ritual can be either individual and private or social and public. When individual and private, ritual can be comprised of

any variety of activities, and often is. When social and public, this activity may be referred to as a common ritual according to Dr. Reines. A common ritual is one shared by the entire community. Typical of such rituals in most forms of Judaism are Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippor, Sukkot, Pesach, and the other festivals, along with the life-cycle events such as birth, marriage, and death.[8]

Polydox Judaism recognizes the need for common rituals which perform a number of important functions. Dr. Reines identifies some of these.

1. to bring a person, with full being, into relation with the ultimate aspects of existence;

2. to evoke meaningful modes and positive attitudes;

3. to enrich our perception and sense of wonder or reality by focusing attention on cosmic events such as the solstices and equinoxes, or earthly processes such as growth and maturation;

4. to quicken our sense of history and shared views of the past by commemorating significant past events;

5. to provide a family, through home ceremonies, with enriched moments of shared experience;

6. to enable members of a community to communicate to one another their joy on happy occasions and their compassion on sad ones;

7. 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;

8. 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.[9]

In the same way that two criteria should be applied to beliefs in the Polydox Jewish community, several criteria should apply to the ritual to determine the appropriateness of that ritual for the community. First of all, any common ritual should display both consistency and coherency as described regarding belief. Any common ritual which does not meet these criteria would certainly appear out of place in the Polydox community. A Polydox common ritual should be understandable and should not conflict with the essence of the community.

The third criterion for common ritual in the Polydox Jewish community is more difficult to apply, yet it is just as important. Common ritual should be rhythmic with the lives of the members of the community. In the American Jewish community, the general failure to apply this criterion is indicated by the poor attendance record at most religious services of all kinds. For the modern American Jew the social, economic, and other secular forces which dictate life today are much more compelling than religious ritual. An examination of the state of current common ritual will reveal that there is a serious crisis and that the failure to admit this aspect of reality is in part the answer. Particularly with respect to new common rituals, Polydox Judaism asserts the need to account for the time that will be most appropriate for the ritual.[10]

A final factor plays a significant role in Polydox ritual. Creativity is an inherent factor in the common ritual for Polydox Judaism. Past common ritual in Judaism invariably has grown up over long periods of time, expanding with the contributions of successive generations. This implies that much, if not all, of that ritual no longer has the same meaning it once had. For that matter, this traditional ritual often has so obscure a meaning that it is difficult to explain or interpret, if that is desired. Polydox Judaism, like Reconstructionism, asserts that interpretation or explanation for past rituals is possible, yet Dr. Reines believes that new rituals and celebrations make more sense for modern Jews.

4. Salvation and Polydox Judaism

According to Dr. Reines, the term salvation has too narrow a meaning to be used in the Polydox religious community. Generally connoting a Christian-like concept or something linked to the other world, salvation is for whatever reason inadequate for modern religion. Instead, Dr. Reines offers the Greek term soteria; "soteria is broader in meaning than usually connoted by 'salvation' (Hebrew: ישועה), referring to a state that can be produced naturally as well as supernaturally."[11] With this understanding of the term soteria, the entire purpose and goal of the Polydox Jewish community is identified. In other words, the reason for the individual to participate in the community, as with Reconstruction-

ism, is to find support in achieving personal salvation or soteria.

Moreso than in any other of the liberal Jewish groups, Polydox Judaism recognizes that the primary focus of the belief structure and the common ritual is the attainment of soteria. Phrased in another way, the goal of the polydox religionist is the achievement of intrinsically meaningful existence. This kind of goal is realized when the person resolves the fundamental human problem, finitude. What makes Polydox Judaism the unique religious enterprise that it is is this emphasis upon the purpose of religion as addressing the primary human problem. The Polydox Jew is a person committed to a free and open approach to the search for soteria, specifically in the here and now, and in a religious setting.

With the important emphasis which Polydox Judaism places upon the achievement of soteria, it is only fitting to address this final question to it. How does the Polydox Jewish community seek to obtain this lofty goal of soteria? The process of religious discussion and the development of meaningful common rituals serve as the foundation of the practical operation of the polydox community. It must be added that there is an assumption which is made at this point. It is that the members of such a community are committed to a certain measure of active involvement and participation. In this way, they contribute to the shaping

of new common rituals and they share their own personal thoughts and feelings about religious questions and religious experience with other members of the community. This active role that Polydox Jews play in the community is essential for the realization of its full potential. It may however be necessary because of this aspect of the community operation to limit the number of people involved in any one group. But, practical considerations, such as size and administration and leadership, are problems that Polydox Judaism will have to confront at some future time.

CHAPTER IV

LIBERAL JUDAISM: AN EVALUATION

To summarize what we have done thus far, we may say that this thesis has attempted to put liberal religion and the various non-orthodox Judaisms into perspective. First of all, we examined the term religion, and then how this concept was modified by the adjective liberal. Clearly, the best that we could conclude without any dogmatic requirements was the establishment of several basic principles which would delimit religion of the liberal variety from other forms of religion. Secondly, we looked at three areas outside of the direct sphere of religion - philosophy, psychology, and scientific methodology - which indicated how modern religion had to be redefined because of the developments in each of these respective disciplines. The most profound conclusion that could be drawn from this evaluation was the fact that these areas of study have progressively done away with the old absolutes of human thought, human behavior, and human activity. The person is not bound by any abstract laws attributable to divine beings. Human limitations are all self-generated, by virtue of the physical body which surrounds one, and by virtue of the intellect which acknowledges the bounds of time and space for the finite human creature. Lastly, we

conducive to the free and open search for personal answers to the great religious questions?

What is liberal Judaism? It is not necessary at this point to remind the reader about the distinction made earlier about orthodox and polydox liberal religion. Those concepts have been explained. What we may address briefly at this stage is rather the question of theoretical liberal Judaism and actual liberal Judaism. It is one thing to look at the official formulations of the principles of contemporary religions, and it is often another to look more closely at what is in fact happening in all of the different synagogues and temples throughout the country. On the one hand there is no question that the major Jewish groups in this country find themselves in a quandry about how to reenforce the structure of their organizations. Most of them are experiencing a mass exodus, or at least an epidemic of apathy, which threatens their very existence. If they are secure for now, the future which they perceive is certainly a bleak one. Sociological studies such as the Lenn and Fein reports paint unhappy pictures of what and where Reform Judaism is. Other studies show losses in members of Conservative Judaism to be the source of the increases in numbers, small though they may be, experienced by Orthodox and Reform Judaism. And the three major Jewish institutions, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox can still look at the fledgling movements and smile, knowing that the combined membership of the other three groups barely makes up a small fraction of the major groups.

On the other hand, we can perceive, if only because such groups exist, the beginnings of a trend in Judaism which looks to the future. The three smallest groups in American Jewish life, Reconstructionism, Humanistic Judaism, and Polydox Judaism, are the important responses to a new era in Jewish history. A study of the Jewish past shows that when the circumstances in which the Jew has lived changed radically, for whatever reason, new forms of Judaism emerged to replace the old. What we are now seeing with these new groups within Judaism are the birth pains of an emergent pattern of a future-oriented religion. And as with the new forms of life which evolve in the biological system and eventually supplant the old forms, this pattern will be replicated in religion. The strongest one, the one most capable of surviving in the harsh and changing contemporary environment, this shall be the liberal Judaism which emerges.

Therefore, we can understand liberal Judaism today to be a mutant of sorts, a kind of freak which is struggling to come face to face with a new sense of reality. The older forms of non-orthodox Judaisms are wallowing in their past, attempting to revive old forms which may bring forth feelings of nostalgia or guilt and thereby delude Jews into returning to the ways of their ancestors. Such a tack may be temporarily effective, yet nostalgia is a fad and guilt is a feeling which left unresolved is eventually supressed. At some time in the not too distant future, these methods will leave Judaism high and dry and devoid of people as well as content. Liberal Judaism has a foundation which seeks

to confront the diversity of the present and allows it to adapt to the needs of the future. Essentially, liberal Judaism is a system which has its roots in a long historical religious experience and its branches are stretching forth to embrace a unique modern Jew living in the complex world of progress and change.

Does actual liberal Judaism serve the needs of the modern Jew? We may preface this question with another point. The modern Jew is an unusual phenomenon in the history of the Jewish religious enterprise. Never before was it possible for a Jew to say, I do not need religion. Today, although, it is my personal feeling that they are wrong, many people express precisely this attitude. They say that they do not believe the mumbo-jumbo that goes on in the synagogue and that the rituals which Jews do are not meaningful to them. Interestingly enough, these people just as often speak about their own personal religion which provides them with a measure of spiritual comfort. I would contend that these people who assert that they do not need religion are in fact as in need of religion as any orthodox religionist who attends church or synagogue every week. The human condition as described in the first and second chapters of this thesis necessarily involves a basic dilemma - that is, the problem of finitude. Each individual person must be able to resolve that problem in some manner. Failure to find a successful resolution leads to madness or worse. A person may find any number of surrogate religions in money, drugs, success, alcohol, sex, or whatever. Nonetheless, the need

to resolve the dilemma remains and a modern, rational, educated person should be able to find in liberal Judaism an answer to this condition.

The need for religion does still exist, although it may be hidden deeply within the unconscious part of the human psyche. Traditional religion can no longer suffice for the person who has rejected on whatever grounds any of the claims that such religions make. Whether they deny the divine origin of the Bible, or the absolute authority of the priesthood, or the vague directions of the organizational leadership, or the literal meaning of the liturgy, once a person realizes that one of the fundamental aspects of a traditional religion contradicts the way in which they normally think and act, the eventual journey to rejection has begun.

Liberal religion is therefore the only alternative for the modern person. The modern Jew is fortunate because the alternatives to the traditional religious systems draw upon and allow the individual to retain aspects of the Jewish past. These elements from past stages of the Jewish religious enterprise are symbolically potent and thereby valuable in forming new common rituals to serve the needs of modern Jews. The modern Jew can look to liberal Judaism as a genuine expression of what one believes, if only because liberal Judaism does not dictate what a modern Jew should believe. If there is a serious obstacle to the full actualization of liberal Judaism, it is the lack of exposure that it has been given through establishment channels in the Jewish community.

However, it is only a matter of time before liberal Judaism takes its rightful place among the accepted Judaisms of today.

The final question which I want to address in this study is clearly the most subjective, both in the formulation of the question itself and in the answer which I will offer. Which of the non-orthodox Judaisms most effectively fulfills the needs of the modern Jew? I have indicated that the three major institutional organizations are no longer the meaningful structures that they once were. These groups are groping in their blindness for gimmicks which will attract and retain the interest of the American Jew. From Mitzvah-mobiles to Jewish cruises to the Caribbean, such efforts are doomed to make them the laughing stock of intelligent and sensitive modern Jews. Among the three smaller groups in Jewish life, two can be said to have only limited appeal. Both Humanistic Judaism and Reconstructionism are humanistic and naturalistic religions. Humanistic Judaism goes so far as to deny its members the right to speak about any kind of God-concept. It is not productive, they assert, to engage in prayer toward or discussion about something that we cannot prove exists. Mordecai Kaplan's group does not eliminate God from their liturgy. Instead, they will twist the meaning around so as to remove any semblance of what the term God ever stood for. Reconstructionist Jews live in the twentieth century, yet they retain the past as the main focus of what they do as a part of their religion. While they may understand that the needs of the modern person are not the same as those of our ancient ancestors, they continue to use the

same formulae as did those ancestors to meet today's problems. Some may find this approach meaningful, I am certain that many do not.

This leaves but one alternative from among the groups which have been discussed. Polydox Judaism offers to the modern Jew a religious system which recognizes and positively asserts the right of individual autonomy in addressing the fundamental religious questions. It provides a forum through which the modern Jew can explore the past and integrate, if one so chooses, aspects of that past into the present. More importantly, Polydox Judaism encourages the development of a creative approach to religious expression. The past is a teacher for Polydox Judaism, not a tyrant or dictator. We live in a world of change, and that fact must be recognized by a liberal religion. Polydox Judaism engenders an atmosphere where change is real, but neither does it control the directions of the movement. Individual people make up the Polydox Jewish community and individual people exist not merely in the present, but also in the past, and in the future. This kind of liberal Judaism, it seems to me, holds the greatest hope for the modern Jew.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. John Oman, "The Sphere of Religion," in Science, Religion and Reality. ed. by Joseph Needham (New York: MacMillan Company, 1925) p. 261.

2. Ibid., pp. 272-273.

3. Encyclopedia of Religion (EOR) ed. by Vergilius Ferm. (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Company, 1959) p. 646.

4. Since philosophical empiricism is most familiar to the writer as an academic discipline, that approach shall guide this study. Inasmuch as scientific methodology and philosophy are inter-related, that approach shall be applied as well.

5. Edgar S. Brightman, A Philosophy of Religion. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1940) pp. 7-8.

6. Abraham Cronbach, The Realities of Religion. (New York: Bookman Associates, Inc., 1957) p. 22.

7. Ibid., p. 23.

8. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953) pp. 6-7.

9. Frederick Ferre', Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion. (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1967) pp. 31-34. The problems of ambiguousness and contradiction are self-evident. Blindness, as used here, is not clear. What Ferre' means by this term is the fact that language is not prone to adapt and change formally as usage changes. Rules are, therefore, necessary. Usage alone also cannot resolve confusions in language, and, according to Ferre', guidelines are required.

10. Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language. (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1966) p. 1918.

11. E.g., the Eastern religions that are without any deities. Only the last part of the definition includes the point relevant to these religions.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience. (New York: The Modern Library, 1902) pp. 29-30.

15. vide John Hick, Philosophy of Religion. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963) p. 3.

16. vide Martin Buber, Between Man and Man. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965) pp. 17-18.

17. Ferre', op.cit. p. 71.
Ferre' uses the term religious-ness here instead of religious.

18. However, the absence of such behavior does not imply a lack of religiousity.

19. This definition is based upon the one offered in a course on the Metapsychology of Freud at the Hebrew Union College by Dr. Alvin Reines.

20. vide the section on Freud in the second chapter.

21. Vergilius Ferm, First Chapters in Religious Philosophy. (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1937) p. 61.

22. Such an explanation is quite long and need not be reproduced here in order to comment upon it. The full discussion can be found in the third chapter of the book just cited in footnote 21.

23. The basic outline of the guidelines offered in this section come from Ferm's work cited above.

24. The guidelines will apply to the definition of religion per se, but must be modified for a definition of liberal religion. The necessary changes will be noted when the definition of liberal religion is discussed.

25. Ludwig Wittgenstein has written regarding this problem in the Philosophical Investigations, p. 53e:
Must I know whether I understand a word? Don't I also sometimes imagine myself to understand a word (as I imagine I understand a kind of calculation) and then realize that I did not understand it? ("I thought I knew what 'absolute' and 'relative' motion meant, but I see that I don't know.")

26. James H. Leuba, A Psychological Study of Religion. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912) p. 343.

27. Ibid., p. 355.

28. E.g., Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher: Will, thought, and feeling. These thinkers each emphasized one aspect to the neglect of the other two aspects of the human psyche.

29. Ferm, Encyclopedia. p. 646

30. Jacob Needleman et al., ed. Religion for a New Generation. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973) vide pp. 25ff., pp. 69ff., pp. 104ff.

31. Perhaps, into the error of broadness as well.

32. The Society for Humanistic Judaism is often confronted with this very issue. An attempt to deal with the implications shall be made in chapter three.

33. Sir James G. Frazer, The Golden Bough., 1 Volume, Abrdged Edition (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922) p. 92,162. These sections deal with kings as divine beings and magic and gods.

34. By competent is meant those writers who have for the most part avoided the errors mentioned in the guidelines above.

35. The late Edgar Sheffield Brightman was Borden Parker Bowne Professor of Philosophy at Boston University. His most important work was entitled:A Philosophy of Religion and presented a coherent argument for a finite god-concept.

36. Brightman, op.cit., p. 17.

37. An argument for madness as a religious response is made by R.D. Laing in The Politics of Experience. (England: Penquin Books, 1967) pp. 108ff.

38. Ferre', op. cit., pp. 57-82.

39. Ibid., pp. 50ff.

40. Cronbach, op. cit., pp. 22-30.

41. Ibid., p. 25.

42. Ibid.

43. Abraham Cronbach, Religion and its Social Setting. (Cincinnati: The Social Press, 1933) p.46.

44. vide the second chapter on Freud and the development of religion.

45. Alvin J. Reines, Elements in a Philosophy of Reform Judaism. (Cincinnati: Mimeograph, 1976) pp. 147-148.

46. Ibid., p. 116.

47. Ibid., p. 214.

48. Dr. Reines opts for the word soteria instead of the better known salvation. The primary reason for this is the Christological connotations which the word salvation has. The meaning, however, is essentially the same, i.e. a personal redemption.

49. Ferm, Encyclopedia., p. 291.

50. Ibid., pp. 552-553.
The contrast which is offered here is between heterodoxy, which is change instituted within reason, and heresy, which is radical, unacceptable change. It will be shown that another position is possible, that called polydoxy.

51. Gilbert Rosenthal, Four Paths to One God. (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1973) p. 84.

52. Reines, Elements., pp. 38-39.
It may be noted that the means to enforce such punishments has long been lost to the Orthodox Jewish community.

53. Webster's., p. 1302

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Sources consulted included Ferm, Webster's, and Hastings.

58. Ferm, Encyclopedia., p. 442f.

59. Or at least held with some suspicion.

60. Reines, Elements., p. 37.

61. vide supra for a fuller explanation.

62. Ibid., p. 39.

63. Ibid., p. 40f.

64. vide chapter three on specific non-orthodox Judaisms.

65. Ibid., p. 41

66. Ibid.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. It is admitted that this is a vague definition, however, since the word religious was defined in the first chapter, the meaning which was identified there shall be used in this chapter as well.

2. G. Stephens Spinks, Psychology and Religion. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965) p. 6.

3. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes were among the friends of Henry James, Sr.

4. William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience. (New York: The Modern Library, 1902) Abbreviated as Varieties.

5. Ibid., p. 476.

6. Ibid., p. 445.

7. William James Earle, "William James," in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc. and The Free Press, 1967) pp. 240-249.

8. James, Varieties., p. 186.

9. Ibid., p. 207.

10. Reuben Rainey, Freud as a Student of Religion. Ph. D. Dissertation, (New York: Columbia University, 1974) p. 25.

11. Philip Rieff, Freud:The Mind of a Moralist. (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, 1959) p. 281.

12. Ibid., p. 212.

13. In Totem and Taboo, Freud defines the totem as follows:

> As a rule it is an animal, either edible or harmless, or dangerous and feared; more rarely the totem is a plant or a force of nature (rain, water), which stands in a peculiar relation to the whole clan. The totem is first of all the tribal ancestor of the clan, as well as its tutelary spirit and protector; it sends oracles and, though otherwise dangerous, the totem knows and spares its children. (p. 5)

14. Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo. (New York: Vintage Books, 1918, 1946) p. 187.

15. Sigmund Freud, The Future of an Illusion. (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1927,1953) ch. 2-3.

16. Ibid., p. 29.

17. Ibid., p. 34.

18. Ibid., p. 41, 45.

19. Ibid., p. 57.

20. Ibid., p. 58.

21. Rieff, Freud., p. 287.

22. Carl G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections. (London: Collins, The Fontana Library, 1961) p. 13.

23. Ibid.

24. Carl G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, "1933") p. 277.

25. Ibid., p. 198.

26. vide, e.g., Jung's Psychological Commentary to the Tibetian Book of the Dead. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1927, 1960).

27. For a brief biographical sketch of Abraham Maslow, see the second chapter of Frank G. Goble's book The Third Force. (New York: Pocket Books, 1970).

28. The psychological school known as Behaviorism will not be included in this survey. The reason for this is that it is primarily a technical discipline which relies upon observation and experimentation for analysis. As such there are few theoretical aspects which apply to liberal religion, and its methodology will be covered in the third section of this chapter inder the heading of scientific method.

29. Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950) p. 18.

30. Goble, Third Force., pp. 12-13.

31. Ibid., p. 47.

32. Ibid., p. 36.

33. Abraham Maslow, Religion, Values and Peak-Experiences. (New York: The Viking Press, 1964) p. 20.

34. Ibid., pp. 59-68.

35. Ibid., p. 59.

36. Allport, Individual., p. 29.

37. Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion. (New York: Bantam Books, 1950, 1967) p. 24.

38. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

39. Ibid., p. 34.
The terms which are used here by Fromm cut across the distinctions between theistic and non-theistic religions. The difference between Fromm's use of the word humanistic and Wine's use shall become clear later.

40. Ibid., p. 50.

41. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

42. Erich Fromm, The Sane Society. (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1955) p. 31.

43. Orlo Strunk, Jr., Religion: A Psychological Interpretation. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962) p. 7.

44. Ibid., p. 22.

45. Ibid., p. 64.

46. Ibid., p. 106.

47. Ibid., p. 107.

48. Ibid., p. 108.

49. The Meditations and Selections from the Principles of Rene Descartes. Translated by John Veitch, (Open Court Library, 1901, 1968) p. 130.

50. Quoted in Sprague and Taylor, Knowledge and Value. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1959) pp. 55-56.

51. Thilly and Wood, A History of Philosophy. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1914, 1951) pp. 305-306.

52. Sprague and Taylor, Knowledge., pp. 62-63.

53. Harry A. Wolfson, Religious Philosophy. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1961) p. 203.

54. Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza, (1632-1677); several other important philosophers of this time, such as Liebniz and Hobbes, also used the mathematical model as the basis of their philosophy.

55. Aladair MacIntyre, "Spinoza" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 7, p. 533.

56. Lewis S. Feuer, Spinoza and the Rise of Liberalism. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958) p. 65.

57. Quoted in Feuer, Spinoza., p. 65.

58. Ibid., p. 175.

59. Ibid.

60. Tractatus Theologico-Politicus., pp. 186-188, quoted in Feuer, Spinoza.

61. Feuer, Spinoza., p. 1; the decree of excommunication of Spinoza is cited here in tota.

62. Sprague and Taylor, Knowledge., p. 321; The leaders of the Dutch Jewish community were afraid that the gentiles would find something offensive in Spinoza's writings and would then limit their freedom.

63. MacIntyre, "Spinoza", loc. cit.

64. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945) p. 701. Some historians of philosophy have not been willing to identify Berkeley as an empiricist; Russell apparently has no trouble doing so.

65. H.B. Acton, "Berkeley" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Volume 1, pp. 301ff.

66. Ibid., p. 303.

67. Peter Bertocci explains about Edgar Brightman in his Introduction to a Philosophy of Religion. p. 430; Josiah Royce's thoughts on deity are expounded in his The Spirit of Modern Philosophy. (New York: Houghton Mifflin co., 1896).

68. D.G.C. MacNabb, "Hume" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 4, pp. 74ff.

69. Ibid., p. 89.

70. W.H. Walsh, "Kant" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 4, p. 305.

71. Ibid., p. 322.

72. H.B. Acton, "Hegel" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 3, p. 437.

73. Ibid., p. 449.

74. Ibid.

75. W.T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy: The Twentieth Century from Wittgenstein to Sartre. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1952, 1975) pp. 1-8.

76. Ibid., p. xxiv; Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951); also, N. Malcolm, "Wittgenstein" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 8, pp. 327ff.

77. vide N. Malcolm, Wittgenstein: A Memoir. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958, 1962).

78. Jones, Philosophy. p. 216.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. D.J. O'Connor, "Ayer" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 1, pp. 230-231.

82. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1946) p. 45.

83. Jones, Philosophy. p. 220f.

84. Ayer, L, T, & L., p. 114.

85. Ibid., p. 119.

86. Ibid.

87. Rudolf Carnap quoted in Jones, Philosophy., p. 245.

88. Cronbach, The Realities of Religion., pp. 1-12.

89. Ibid., p. 115.

90. Allan W. Eister, "Religion and Science in A.D. 1977...." in the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. Vol. 17, number 4, Dec. 1978, pp. 347-358.

91. Ferm, Encyclopedia., p. 74.

92. Peter Winch, "Durkheim" in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Volume 2, pp. 439ff.

93. Ibid.

94. Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscrpts of 1844. (New York: International Publishers, 1964) pp. 46-47.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

A. Introduction.

1. Alvin J. Reines, Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism: Reform Judaism as a Polydoxy. Parts I, II, & III, (Cincinnati: Mimeograph, 1970, 1971, 1973) Part II, p. 33f.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 43.

4. Ibid., p. 44.

B. Conservative Judaism.

1. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 149.

2. Elliot Dorff, Conservative Judaism: Our Ancestors to Our Descendants. (New York: United Synagogue of America, 1977) p. 51.

3. Rosenthal, Four Paths. p. 170.

4. The position from within the Conservative movement will be that of Elliot Dorff and the view from outside the movement will be that of Bruce Kahn and Gilbert Rosenthal.

5. Dorff, CJ., pp. 188-191.

6. Some of the better historical sketches of the Conservative movement include the works of Joseph Blau, Mordecai Waxman, Robert Gordis, and Elliot Dorff.

7. Bruce Kahn, Concepts of Authority in Conservative Judaism. Rabbinic Thesis, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, 1974.

8. Kahn, Authority., passim.

9. Ibid.

10. Dorff, CJ., pp. 114-157.

11. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 192.

12. Reines, Introduction., Part II.

13. Kahn, Authority., p. 7, 20.

14. Ibid.
More than six types of authority are listed because Kahn combines several different kinds into separate categories.

15. Ibid., p. 177.

16. Elliot N. Dorff was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary and holds a doctorate in Philosophy from Columbia University. He currently is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, California.

17. Dorff, CJ., p. 113.

18. The differences in the theological positions within the Reform movement are readily seen by comparing the respective views of Alvin Reines, Jakob Petuchowski, and Eugene Borowitz.

19. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 116.

20. Reform Judaism incorporates many diverse theological positions, some of which contradict others. This diversity makes the identification of a distinct position difficult. In this sense, Reform can be said not to exist. However, when Reform Judaism is defined as a polydoxy, this problem is overcome, for such a system encourages such theological diversity.

21. Dorff, CJ., pp. 118-126.

22. Ibid., pp. 126-127.

23. Ibid., pp. 134-135.

24. Ibid., p. 147.

25. Mahzor for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippor: A Prayerbook for the Days of Awe. Jules Harlow, editor; (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1972) and,
A Rabbi's Manual. Jules Harlow, editor; (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1965).

26. E.g., the marriage ceremony, in which the translation of the seven benedictions is done so as to be non-chauvanistic.

27. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 192.

28. Ibid., pp. 178-179.

29. Ibid., p. 180.

30. Robert Gordis, Conservative Judaism. (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1946) p. 66.

31. Statistics to this effect can be found in the American Jewish Yearbook from the past several years.

C. Reconstructionism.

1. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 214.

2. Ibid., pp. 216-217.

3. Kaplan retained the hope that one day the Conservative movement would adopt his ideology as its own. This has never come to pass, much to the discredit of the Conservative movement.

4. Ibid., p. 233.

5. Mordecai M. Kaplan, The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion. (New York: The Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, Inc., 1947) pp. 6-7.

6. vide Reines' distinction between orthodox and polydox liberal religion in the first chapter.

7. Mordecai M. Kaplan, Judaism as a Civilization. (New York: Schocken Books, 1934, 1972) p. 178.

8. Ibid., p. 214.

9. Ibid., p. 404.

10. Ibid., p. 215.

11. Ibid., pp. 218-219.

12. Ibid., p. 220.

13. Ibid., p. 414.

14. Quoted in Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 239.

15. Mordecai M. Kaplan: An Evaluation. Eugene Kohn, "Kaplan as Exegate" (New York: The Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, 1952) pp. 139ff.

16. Kaplan, Meaning of God., p. 25.

17. Ibid., p.26.

18. Kaplan, Civilization., pp. 28-35.

19. Ibid., p. 194.

20. Ibid., p. 432.

21. Ibid., p. 434.
22. Ibid., p. 438.
23. Ibid., p. 347.
24. Ibid., p. 439.
25. Ibid., p. 183.
26. Kaplan, Meaning of God., pp. 53-54.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 57.
29. Ibid., p. 59.
30. Ibid., p. 76.

D. Reform Judaism.

1. Joseph Blau, Modern Varieties of Judaism. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964) p. 28f.

2. The official Reform platforms include the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, the 1937 Columbus Platform, and the 1976 Centennary Perspective.

3. W. Gunther Plaut, The Growth of Reform Judaism. (New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1965) pp. 97-98.

4. Ibid., p. 97.

5. Ibid., p. 33.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Eugene Borowitz, Reform Judaism Today: Reform...Change., b. I, (New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1977) pp. xxi-xxiii.

9. Eugene Borowitz, Reform Judaism Today: What We Believe., b. II, (New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1977) p. 201.

10. Rosenthal, Four Paths., p. 225.

11. Borowitz, What We Believe., p. 131.

12. The two guides that have been offered are by David Polish and Frederic Doppelt: A Guide for Reform Jews, and William Silverman: Basic Reform Judaism.

13. Eugene Borowitz, Reform Judaism Today: How We Live., b. III, (New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1977) pp. 30-32.

14. Kaufmann Kohler, Jewish Theology. (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1968) p. 20.

15. Borowitz, Reform in the Process of Change., p. xxi.

16. Ibid.

17. Gates of Prayer., Gates of the House., and Gates of Repentence., (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1975, 1977, 1978)

18. Borowitz, What We Believe., p. 95.

E. Humanistic Judaism.

1. Sherwin T. Wine, Humanistic Judaism. (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1978) pp. 36ff.
The possibility for a theistic humanism is discussed in an essay in the volume edited by Paul Kurtz entitled The Humanist Alternative. pp. 67-69.

2. Ibid., p. 40.

3. Ibid., p. 1.

4. Some ideas expressed here were recalled from comments made by Rabbi Wine during his visit to the Hebrew Union College in Spring 1978.

5. Humanist Manifesto II. published by Prometheus Books, 1973, pp. 15-16.

6. Wine, HJ., p. 10.

7. Ibid., pp. 26-28.

8. Ibid., pp. 55-62 and passim.

9. Ibid., pp. 62-69.

10. Ibid., pp. 69-72.

11. Ibid., p. 72.

12. Ibid., p. 119.

13. Sherwin T. Wine, "Reconstructist Judaism" in Humanistic Judaism. Volume VI, number 1, Winter 1978, p. 9.

F. Polydox Judaism.

1. Alvin Reines, Elements., p. 9.

2. The volumes which Dr. Reines has written about Polydox Judaism include: Elements in a Philosophy of Reform Judaism, Introduction to a Philosophy of Reform Judaism (parts I, II, & III), the journal Polydoxy, and other publications of the Institute of Creative Judaism.

3. The only communities which officially operate as part of the Polydox Confederation are in Richmond, Virginia and St. Louis, Missouri.

4. vide supra chapter one on polydox and orthodox liberal religion.

5. Reines, Elements., p. 41.

6. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

7. Ibid., p. 85.

8. Ibid., pp. 116-117.

9. Ibid., pp. 117-118.

10. This understanding was presented to the writer by Dr. Reines in a course at the Hebrew Union College identified as Theology 18: Reform Jewish Ritual.

11. Reines, Elements., p. 68.

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