Mystical Society

AN
EMERGING SOCIAL VISION

PHILIP WEXLER

The
Mystical
Society

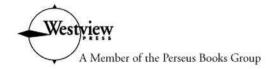*This page intentionally left blank*

The
Mystical
Society

∞

An Emerging Social Vision

Philip Wexler

Contents

Acknowledgments

This page intentionally left blank

I

∞

Prologue: A New Society

In this book, I take the view that a new society is being created within and against the current society. I believe this societal shift is a profound one, although it is still incomplete. However, we can see the shape as well as many of the elements of this emerging society.

I call it a "mystical society" because that is the furthest reach and the fullest expression of the social, cultural, and personal changes that we can already ascertain. This deep change in the way of social life represents a different attitude and understanding of the world, a different cosmology, and a different way of being in the world. It is a reversal, a change of course from the very secularized, instrumental, modern social world. And it is not simply "postmodern." I argue that postmodernism is a transitional form, acting as the destructive completion of modernity and as a preface to a society and culture that is very different from anything that current postmodern preoccupations with culture and identity would recognize.

Unlike postmodernism, the new society is not about the power of signs and the pervasiveness of cultural representations. Nor is it about the decentering of the person or the dispersion of meaning. Rather, it is about being and experience, bodiliness and transcendence, and access to very old traditions of religious interpretations as successors to the current hegemony of social scientific languages in the academy and the diluted versions of those in mass culture.

It is a *mystical* society because the search for deeper and more authentic experience, which has strongly characterized the underlife of the corporate modern society, leads to a resurgence of religion— though not in its modern institutional forms. In the quest for authentic experience, we see efforts to revitalize social being by a host of practices, methods, disciplines, and techniques that begin with the noninstitutional, informal educational work of changing the self, which leads finally to the recreation of historic social movements for collective transformation. Even as the alienating conditions of modernity are intensified in postmodernity, the stage is simultaneously set for the renewal and revitalization of everyday life. I describe this process of revitalization and try to show how it leads to change in the terms and categories of social understanding, as well in the character of ordinary experience.

Currently, one form of this drive toward collective transformation is expressed by aspirations joining self-spirituality and collective redemption in millennialism. Yet this book is not about the millennium. The changes I describe are not sudden eruptions and, in my view, are not going to be instantly and entirely realized. We are instead witnessing an evolutionary process of change in the meaning that people give to social life, in the forms of human interrelation, images, and understandings of personhood, and of social processes.

The mystical element is in part an enactment of the fluid, boundaryless state of self and society that was seen as a mark of postmodernism. Instead of complete fragmentation, which would actualize the alienation of early industrialism that Marx described, we have processes of reintegration—alienation's antidote. Through these processes, the self is related to a cosmic Self, and vital power and pleasure are sought neither in simple control of production nor in the endless gratification of consumption. The essential elements of mysticism (Merkur 1999) are an unbounded self of "boundless being," as Lord Tennyson described, and the experience of egoless deifying union with God, Nature, or the Cosmos. In Martin Buber's language, "I know well that there is a state in which the bonds of the personal nature of life seem to have fallen away from us and we experience an undivided unity" (quoted by Merkur 1999, p. 15).

The mystical state is the opposing alternative to the experience of alienation. Against the disorientation, decathexis, and desensitiza-

tion that I suggest characterize modernity and postmodernity, the emerging form of life in a mystical society is characterized by unification rather than dispersion; holistic relationality rather than functional specialization; release of historically pent up emotion rather than cool instrumental calculation; faith against skepticism; and joy rather than mourning, which postmodernism celebrated in its black fashion and macabre fiction.

Most mystical of all is the renewed vision of a human–cosmic or divine *direct* relation, which is the transcendental absolutized form (Simmel 1996) of social intersubjectivity: the I-Thou relation. That is the spiritual, experiential core of a return of the sacred—resacralization—in the organization of meaning in cultural codes. Although this change was being registered, if not exploited, by mass media reports of angels, spirits, miracles, prayer, rapture, and pervasive popular mystical experience ("nearly half—43 percent of all Americans and 48 percent of all British people—have had one or more mystical experiences"; Forman 1998, p. 3), academic social science slept soundly in its complacent insularity, with tired debates about postmodern culture or class, race, and gender identity politics.

Thus resacralization of cultural codes (Wexler 1996) was only the beginning of the deep, cosmological social shift that we are now signaling. Lived experience and the forms of everyday social being began to change next, against the grain of a powerfully resilient institutional social structure of corporate informationalism.

Religion, Sociology, Education

I indicate, describe, and analyze some of these changes in this book. But my aim goes beyond reportage of social, cultural, and personal changes. More than offering sociological interpretations of these changes, I try to show how social dialectics, or irony, works to bring social mysticism out of technological and organizational innovations. I take the changes seriously enough to not reduce them to sociological explanation. Though often noninstitutional and even apparently private, these collective life changes bring forward new/old languages, concepts, and rhetorics of interpretation and meaning.

These languages used for interpretation, these hermeneutics that are at first advertised as "New Age"—only to then be discovered as

repackaging of ancient religious traditions—also provide an alternative to our current explanatory, secular social cosmology. They begin to replace the understandings of social science and cultural studies. We start to move away from familiar concepts: from self and socialization to talk of immortality as permanent transformation or "reselfing"; from culture to being; from society to practices of revitalization; from social theory to cosmicization; from an intellectual, transcendental to an embodied criticism; from critical and deconstructive school studies to an ethnography of being; and, ultimately, from alienation to reintegration in everyday mysticism—in the mystical society that emerges beyond modern and postmodern social forms.

The mystical society includes also a mystical culture of interpretation, a mystical hermeneutics, although some might claim that mysticism is defined by its ineffability and incommunicability. In fact, the attainment of a divinized, cosmic, altered state of being within the world—Weber's so-called innerworldly mysticism—is ordinarily attained within the articulated practices of religious traditions of meaning and interpretation (Gimello 1983). Even American nature mysticism—the individualized forms of altering perception by debounding the self/environment or individual/cosmos relation—is not without ritual practice and lore, conceptual traditions, and articulated methodologies, as well as theosophies, and thus is not without a schema of interpretive meanings. This is even more the case within Western Christian mysticism, Hindu Tantrism, and Jewish Hasidism. The implication is radical. The mystical society offers an alternative to a key element in the interpretive superstructure of modern capitalism: social science.

This complex relation between religion and social science has ordinarily been swept under the explanatory rug. However, with religion and its "unchurched" form in religiosity or spirituality (Simmel 1996; Wuthnow 1998) coming so incontrovertibly and empirically to the fore of culture, it is increasingly difficult to deny the relation between sociology and religion. I try to show the integral relation between religion and sociology, particularly with examples from the classical sociology of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Émile Durkheim.

I also want to synthesize two apparently disparate lines of work: one in education and the other in religion. At least in my own work, I now see these strands as connected. They are both about alienation,

social homelessness and disorientation, powerlessness and loss, emotional and sensorial destruction and death, and about the antidotes, in meaningfulness, renewal, and rebirth.

In both domains, I try to see the connection between the overall organization and changes in society and the experience of everyday life, within and outside conventional institutions. This approach— the connection between the societal and the experiential, or the public and the private—is what C. Wright Mills called the "sociological imagination." Like Mills, I have been influenced in this connection by the tradition of classical sociology. Like Mills, I see in the present historic moment a loss of this imaginative capacity, rooted in the loss and destruction of society itself.

I want to reiterate the importance of religion for the classical sociologists. Religious traditions can provide cultural resources from which sociological theories are created (Lowy 1992). At a time when the secular coding of culture is being challenged by resacralization, and the experience of being in the social world increasingly resembles core elements of mystical experience rather than mechanical interchanges, it should not be surprising that we can locate social interpretation increasingly within sacred rather than secular traditions of knowledge.

This does not deny that the classical sociologists were moderns, embracing the scientific rationalism of Western modernity. But they were also preoccupied with problems and pathologies induced by societal modernization. As students, we know them first as avatars of social science and the triumph of reason in social life and social understanding. But they were all captured by the centrality of the *irrational* and, especially, the *religious*. For all the emphasis on objectivity and scientific neutrality, they were all deeply *critical* of modern society, driven not only to diagnose societal pathologies but to reverse and transcend them. They longed for a different, better social day.

With regard to religion and the irrational, Marx gave religion pride of place, though of course with a negative valence. Religion was the paradigm of powerlessness, the palimpsest of the alienated life promulgated by industrial capitalism. We know Weber as the prophet of rationalism, the analyst of bureaucracy, the conscience of objective analysis. But Weber was also the theorist of "charisma" and referred to the irrational as the "real kernel" of social life. The author of *The*

Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism saw culture as the basis of social life and religion as the progenitor of culture. Durkheim is revered as the founder of scientific sociology, the author of *The Rules of Sociological Method*, and the careful empirical analyst of social statistics. Yet he wrote of religion as the "germ from which all other social phenomena are derived." His turn-of-the-century masterpiece, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, has only recently been translated into accessible American English.

Marx's criticisms of the modern society, "capitalism," are well-known: poverty and inequality of classes and a general powerlessness. His analysis of the commodity economy may have eclipsed his earlier interest in alienation as the central social pathology. For him, alienation went beyond power or wealth; it was the effect of the industrial capitalist social and work organization on the very being of the person:

> First, the fact that labor is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy, but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home. His labor is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labor. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. (Ollman 1971, p. 137)

Weber's social criticism was also about the modern societal destruction of being. The bureaucratic world was one of excessive rationality, leading to a numbing of feeling and a loss of spiritual vitality. Not alienation but, relatedly, "mechanical petrification" was the upshot of secularization and the demagicification and "disenchantment of the world." As Weber put it, modern society becomes an "iron cage." Who will live in this sort of society in the future, what sort of person, what way of being in the world? Weber answers in an unambiguously critical tone: "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart."

Though in a different analytical language, Durkheim also chronicled the destructive effects of modern isolation in what is considered

primarily a methodological classic, *Suicide*. Like Weber, he searched for a way out of the "coldness" and "mediocrity" of his times, proposing empirical and theoretical alternatives to "anomie," the normlessness and social deregulation of modern hyperindividualism, "the cult of the individual." He wanted to reenergize and revitalize the collective life of social being.

If sociology is a legitimization of modern corporate capitalism, as its critics have claimed, then with postmodernism's rending the veil of modern culture and evolution to a historically revolutionary social structure of global, informational capital, alternative cultural resources come into play to replace a demystified sociology. Under these conditions, it becomes important to see different systems of interpretation and explanation in the rise of the mystical society, as well as a new mass cultural code and new forms of everyday social life. Through the esoteric traditions within the mainstream, civilizational religions, mysticism becomes one alternative to the demise of sociology. It is a cultural resource. Just as social theory has always drawn from the wider, general culture in the work of creating more specialized cultures of systematic understanding, so now do esoteric religious traditions provide the cultural resources for historically novel forms of social understanding, particularly because of their affinity with mysticism.

Yet we are not done with sociology. Along with trying to draw the implications of the societal and cultural shift toward a resacralized, mystical society, I carry forward the religious and critical interests of classical sociology and try to revise some of its key assertions in the light of historical change. We already know many of the modern and postmodern empirical critiques of Marx about the course of class society and the analytical ones about neglecting the importance of culture and psychology. Still, Marx's approach to alienation remains foundational. David Harvey (1989), Manuel Castells (1996), and Alberto Melucci (1996) provide contemporary, illuminating revisions of Marx, which take us into "postindustrial" postmodernity, the "information age," and the "planetary society."

I value and use their explanatory revisions to set the socially determinative stage for the mystical society. I depart from the more traditional collective action logics, which would imagine the reconstitution of some sort of collective, class actor in history, in favor of a more

individually enacted but collectively realized view of social and cultural change. Perhaps as an indicative bridge to the supersession of sociology by religious thought, I am closer to Moshe Idel's (1998) effort to show historically how individual mystical efforts at redemption may be preconditions of collective messianic social movements. The value of contemporary, revisionist, collective-action Marxism is not diminished, however. It shows how social structural changes set the terms for the emergence of new cultural and personal forms, which, I suggest, are the bases of a mystical society.

Weber's thought continues to provide a prominent backdrop for our contemporary story. The cultural sociologist par excellence of modernity, as I have suggested, Weber at once showed the religious basis and character of modern culture and also tried to understand whether and how it was possible to transcend it. The famous thesis he articulated in *The Protestant Ethic* is part of a much larger work in the sociology of religion. He tries to show that the Protestant ethic, "innerworldly asceticism," becomes the "spirit of capitalism." Religious culture provides the cultural foundation not merely for capitalism but for the modern, disenchanted, demagicified, secular, bureaucratic society in general.

Of this society—despite his interpretive chronicle of its genesis and foundation—Weber was no friend and admirer, as we have observed. His explanatory acumen argued against a simple, formulaic "way out" of this society, recognizing early the dangers of oversimplified social solutions. But seek he did, at least intellectually, and also within mystical precincts. On the whole, he concluded that mysticism was a contemplative, otherworldly, "world-fleeing" social practice.

But for Weber there was also an innerworldly mysticism, which I describe as the quest for enlightenment within this world. I see this as akin to a Hindu Tantric "open-eyed samadhi" (Silburn 1989) or to a Mosaic prophetic ecstasy of "falling down, but with opened eyes" (Heschel 1962). Weber discussed this innerworldly type of mysticism—and then rejected it as a potential religious foundation of culture and society. I disagree with Weber and try to show that this innerworldly mysticism, a mysticism of everyday life, is being unintentionally induced by the social structures of postindustrial informationalism. Mystical traditions are now being renewed, although

in the commercial, commodified, and diluted forms of mass New Ageism. The New Age forms may be antechambers for the rediscovery and cultural confluence of religious traditions of classical mysticisms, which are now renewed as a cultural foundation for a new society, as well as an interpretive resource that can be used to make sense of it.

As I have indicated, Durkheim too was keenly aware of the complex interrelation of sociology and religion, suggesting that religious phenomena were the basis of both social life and the categories of social understanding. For Durkheim, this is a reciprocal relation, so that religion ultimately reflects and represents the basic forms of social life. I review Durkheim's analysis specifically because he was both advocate and analyst of social revitalization, and his sociology of religion offers a more general theory of societal revitalization.

Nevertheless, Durkheim's view is finally too collective for the experiential social interpretation that succeeds postmodern cultural theory. He denies importance to the everyday, individualized forms of social revitalization that become pervasive in a mystical society. These forms, however, do not represent the traditional religion of total collectivization of experience and meaning, exemplified by the totemic religion that Durkheim took as the paradigmatic, "elementary" form of social revitalization. His "antipathy" to mysticism leads to a denial of mystical forms for the very societal revitalization that he sought in the "electricity" of collective religion. We read beyond Durkheim to Buber's (1963) more interactive creation of religious/social "energy" to Mircea Eliade's (1957) more precisely specified primordial rituals of self-transformation and shamanistically led social immortality, and finally to Moshe Idel's (1995) "magical-mystical" model of redemption.

Despite these differences from the classics, we are not done with sociology because we continue to work out problems that the classical social theorists and critics identified. We react to the more recent social analyses of the present by incisive analysts like Harvey, Castells, Melucci, Lasch, and others. I address those problems—of alienation from Marx, innerworldly mysticism from Weber, and social revitalization from Durkheim—by juxtaposing them to the discourses of mystical traditions—Hasidism, Tantrism, the American nature religion, and others—to try to better articulate and answer these questions in

light of the present. Contemporary varieties of these traditions are examples of counteralienating, everyday revitalization practices, as well as intellectual resources for grasping the new society.

In this sense, I take seriously Marx's empiricist complaint that the "bourgeois theorists have only to look before their eyes." I want to describe and make sense of the emergent elements of experience in a mystical society that social structural changes bring to the surface. I hope we can begin analytically to appropriate the traditions that have framed those mystical forms in order to understand changing ways of being in this everyday social world.

Interaction: Structure, Discourse, and Being

The method and the spirit of this book is interactional. Our story includes continuous interaction—of interpretive traditions and levels of analysis among historic figures and contemporary social processes and, mystically, even across "worlds."

The central interaction, however, is a familiar social scientific one that belongs to the tradition of the sociology of knowledge. In this view, there is an interaction between events in social life and the categories of understanding that we use intellectually to appropriate experienced society. The renewal of esoteric traditions of understanding, of making sense of experience, emerges along with and in interaction with the contemporary empirical reality of those mystical experiences. There is a kind of circularity in the interaction between lived experience and systematic interpretation. I try to neither ignore nor wish that away but work it through specifically, in order to show how we are better off with a sometimes circular, interactional view than with a linear, neatly dualistic, and compartmentalized understanding of the relation between thought and action; being, interpretation, and society; culture and social understanding.

The skeleton of the interactional body of the mystical society is that there is a social determination of culture and experience. My criticism of postmodernism, both in the academic and popular discourse, is that it has hidden the continuing impact of social structure on our lives, in favor of an often inventive analysis of the various media and texts of culture and of academic psychologizing of mass, self-centered individualism. Cultural studies, on the one hand, and psy-

chology and its critics in identity-centered political analyses, on the other, have blocked our vision of the "sociological imagination." We are forgetting the determinative power of organized social life, social structure, and technology to affect not only meaning and identity but also the conditions of experience and, perhaps most importantly, to set the terms for opposing, transforming, and transcending the social present. That is the danger of denying social structure—by textualism in culture and individualism in psychology and identity politics.

Here, however, I depart from the classical sociologists. Religion was the problem, not the solution, for Marx; Weber saw the possibility for a respirited society through a nonescapist innerworldly mysticism but envisioned its realization as only a minor social expression, seen "pianissimo" in social life. Durkheim tried to transmogrify the "electricity" of religion in order to transubstantiate it into the modern package of scientific, secular individualism.

My hypothesis is that postmodernism induces a variety of forms of noninstitutional religion, of "mysticism," which are at least incipient antidotes to an intensified destruction of being. These forms of creation occur within social terms and express reversals, and perhaps solutions, of the basic forms of social destruction. I offer three examples of everyday social mysticism in which we can see "strategies" for going beyond the destruction of self, interaction, and society that continues to characterize social being in our times.

Religion, but mysticism especially, plays a multifaceted role here. I review some of the sociological analyses of postindustrialism and informationalism by tracing the outlines of the social structural and technological determination of the conditions for widely shared, however apparently individualized, mystical practice and experience in society. Perhaps less obviously, I also see mystical traditions as the current repository of utopian hope.

Mystical practice and theory contains suppressed alternative forms of life that are at once created and denied by the current organization of social life. Thus mysticism is simultaneously a characterization of a host of emergent social practices and of empirical social life that we see reported in the research studies of W. C. Roof (1993) and Robert Wuthnow (1998), the theoretical arguments of Dan Merkur (1999), and the very different sorts of critical histories by Lasch and Idel. But it is also the contemporary social unconscious, the place where our

socially induced imagination of fearful and hopeful possibilities resides. Articulating mystical, esoteric traditions and placing them in interactional relation with sociological explanation and empirical observation is a theoretical work of de-repression.

Mysticism: Analysis and Utopia

In contrast to the repressive desublimation in the sexual revolution foreseen by Herbert Marcuse (1955), I see in mysticism a sublimated *de-repression*. There is a sublimated social vision, a reality-based envisioning of possibility in the mystical, dimly articulated space of the social unconscious, which the depth and rapidity of current social change churns to the surface by grinding its defenses down quickly in the path of instant productivity.

Mysticism is then triply and interactively important: first, as part of an empirical social emergent, belonging to the observed practical return of the sacred to social life; second, as offering access to the terms of interpretive understanding to help make sense of everyday social life; and third, as the locus of social imagination and the sublimation of the forms of life that might be actualized in the social world. When this sublimated vision is reached and the defensive boundaries that protect it are reduced, we have the revitalization and enrichment of individual experience that William James (1910) described as an enlargement of reality, as the lived joy of the "faith-state."

I take all three paths in order to make sense of the interaction between social structure and culture, or the discourses of popular and academic culture, and the character of everyday experience, as best as that can be accessed. I trace these paths, or modalities of the mystical, along the lines of social structure, discourse, and being.

I address the classical mystical concern of the boundary between Self and Other, between the monadic, bounded self and the boundless, "oceanic" cosmic environment of the universe, by focusing on this boundary and how it changes socially. Instead of the traditional sociological understanding of the individual–society relation through the concepts of self and socialization, I draw at once from the popular experience of the many and different contemporary practices of self work—what Foucault called the "work of the self on the self." This

self-work is placed within Eliade's understanding of the performative discourses of primordial religions. I call contemporary versions of this process "reselfing." I show how the self/society boundary works differently now in the mystical society by drawing from the historical anthropology of religious practice and not primarily on explanations from social science. In that way, I understand the mystical self as endless ritualized transformation, even to immortality.

If we are like the classical sociologists in caring about social possibility and in being critical of the social present, then we ask what sort of analytical social criticism is possible under these altered conditions. I look for answers, first in the work of Christopher Lasch and then in the Frankfurt School of critical sociology. Lasch made the connection between social and religious criticism and even, dissidently, to a gnostic form of mysticism. The Frankfurt School's critique of mass culture antedates and sets the tone for both Lasch's and my own dissent from postmodernism and for the effort to historicize the very meaning of social criticism. After the transformative processes of reselfing, there are then the discursive questions of how to appropriate the social present critically, not merely taking the present for granted and as inevitable but trying to work toward some more ideal social alternative.

In a mystical society, I suggest, criticism has to be bipolarly recontextualized: between heaven and earth. Criticism subverts alienated life when it reclaims the petrified body and enlivens and revitalizes being through intellectual work. I ask about the nature of an embodied criticism and, beyond that, of the recontextualization of critical understanding, not only when it replaces critical thought within bodiliness but further recontextualizes it within a cosmic environment. Here social criticism becomes a complement to the apparent silence of classical mysticism and offers a mode of transformative, spiritual, intellectual voice under conditions of a new society. Criticism moves from culture to being.

In addition, social theory demands reconfiguration, especially if we take seriously the tradition of critical social analysis that always places conceptual work within, and not beyond, the bounds of historical time. The classical sociologists are revised throughout the discussion, but special attention is paid to Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of*

Religious Life and its meaning for individual and social revitalization in a different type of society. Stephen Toulmin's (1982; 1990) "return to cosmology" provides a clue for a cosmic social analysis. Ioan P. Couliano's (1987) reconsideration of a premodern, prerepressive Renaissance gives direction toward a wider screen for social theory; a screen that could include magic, alchemy, and mystery. Theory moves from society to cosmos.

In my view, education is a key locus of transformative social interaction, or at least another name for it. Nevertheless, institutional education has become a major purveyor of feeling-denying contemporary cognitive performance obsession, yet another expression of the classical types of alienation and mechanical petrification of individual and social being. Though prefigurations of a mystical, redemptive approach to education (Wexler 1998) are still scarce, we can at least begin to ask about an education for being. Further, we can question the nature of research into an educational "ethnography of being" against the grain of traditional, critical, and postmodern analyses of school culture.

Although we might see all social interaction as transformative and therefore educational, the work of connecting religion, social interaction, and education is only beginning. An important step is to begin describing the practices of everyday mystical social life. I offer such a description, drawing on a variety of mystical traditions. These traditions are now being renewed in an emergent mystical society. Their forms are not classical but eclectic, hybridized and commodified in the contemporary social apparatus. Nevertheless, I see them as important incipient alternative social forms. That is why I try to make sense of these traditions, although I am a sociologist and neither a sacred nor secular religious scholar. I recognize that religious scholars may be unhappy with my own eclecticism.

Unlike Durkheim, I view the "elementary forms of religious life" as being found in the other-side of religion. This involves the spiritual and esoteric traditions of subterranean and primarily orally transmitted traditions of master–disciple mystical knowledge and practice. I try to describe this other type of elementary form in a schema of everyday mysticism. In a discussion of American nature mysticism and William James, Hindu Tantrism, and messianic Hasidism, I see

various antidotes to the modern, industrial alienation, mechanical petrification, and anomie diagnosed by modern sociology, as well as to the disorienting, decathecting, and desensitizing destructive moment of postmodernism.

In an earlier empirical study of social emptying and alienation in schools (Wexler 1992), I identified the absence of interaction, society, and self as the concrete, everyday institutional meaning of a postmodern society. Looking at examples of esoteric, mystical traditions, I see reversals of those forms of social emptiness in a new society. As ideal type or schema, each tradition offers creative alternatives to social destruction and provides the terms for redefining self, society, and interaction under very different historical conditions—both to modern industrialism and to the premodern social contexts in which they were first elaborated. The practical redefinition that is now occurring also provides clues for a new "mystical sociology."

The mystical society is not fully actualized. Yet, "in front of my opened eyes," I do see new social practices, attitudes, and types of understanding and a new social cosmology. The new society is mystical because it is about the quest for direct experience of the transcendental, the "more," as James put it. It is mystical because it represents the search for a cosmic reality of the "eternal present," as Romain Rolland (in Parsons 1998, pp. 509–510) labeled it. The new society is mystical because it arises on the grounds of a social process of demediation—the wiping away of cultural and social infrastructures—unintentionally instigated by the hyperefficiency of informational social production. Such apparent social destruction of institutions, routines and collective representations—society and culture—that operate between the self and world boundary ironically makes possible an experienced life different from the individualism and alienation of modernity or the postmodern symbolic proliferation and cultural density of a "saturated self" (Gergen 1991).

Instead, it invites an immediacy and a revitalization of the capacity for being, which has been the deep utopian subtext of classical sociology. At the same time, the vitality, joyousness, and experiential enlargement made possible by such immediacy is the hallmark of a mystic consciousness and life. Social informationalism and mysticism converge. Where the mystical response to socially induced unbound-

edness and unification is not deformed into cheap, momentary collective catharsis; where it is neither escapist nor totalitarian; where it is not a sudden, erratic eruption but a continuous, constant state. There emerges a way of being that is inalterably different and irretrievably mystical. Mysticism becomes the experiential cultural foundation of a new society.

2

∞

Society:
Informationalism,
Mysticism, Revitalization

The interaction of structure, discourse, and being is represented in the relation between society, sociology, and religion. Sociologists of knowledge have shown repeatedly how the origin and changes in sociological discourse are linked to changes in society (Bramson 1961; Friedrichs 1970; Gouldner 1970; Lemert 1995). Two aspects of sociology's relation to society stand out for us now. The classical sociologists were critics of the society whose emergence they described. Alienation, hyperrationalizing mechanical petrification, and devitalizing anomie were social pathologies integral to modern society. And these sociologists focused on religion, whether as the paradigmatic negative, for Karl Marx, or as clues to overcoming modernity's problems, for Max Weber and Émile Durkheim.

Contemporary social change makes the critical and religious aspects of sociology more transparent, opening up the boundaries between society, sociology, and religion. Perhaps because we have less need to legitimate sociology in the rhetoric of science, we can better analyze the early religious influences on the classical sociologists. Eve Tavor Bannet (1992) has argued for the influence of religio-mystical themes and the interplay of Christianity and Judaism in Marx's the-

ory of alienation. Similarly, Roland Robertson (1978) and Gert Mueller (1973) have asserted the particular influence of Lutheranism in shaping Weber's sociology, especially his sociology of religion. The affinity between Durkheimian sociology and Jewish thought and practice has been explored in relation to education (Wexler 1996) and sociology (Wexler and Stein 1998).

Contemporary societal change returns sociology to religious discourse but does not erase the social pathologies of modernity. This new hybrid is the product of a postindustrial, postmodern, informational society. Informationalism changes the terms of cultural orientation and the everyday experience of being in a way that reverses the secularization of society chronicled by classical, modern sociology. It also makes traditional religious discourses of mystical experience seem fitting interpretations of social life.

The hybrid is a mystical informationalism, a technologically driven social structure of global informationalism in which we can observe a parallel between society and religion, informationalism and mysticism. Discourse and being, social understanding, and everyday life are linked on this new societal stage by shared social practices. These are the practices of revitalization in which the very problems of modern and postmodern society—alienation, petrification and anomie or disorientation, decathexis and desensitization—are addressed by individuals in their everyday efforts to adapt to and harness societal changes.

In this chapter, I review recent accounts of societal change, emphasizing the emergence of an informational society in recent sociological accounts. I show the effects of this society in the resurgence of religion—resacralization—and then compare them to classical models of mysticism. I then link the parallel between the apparent everyday life requirements of informationalism and the terms of mystical experience by showing how revitalization practices are responses to societal structure that encourage mystical discourses and ways of being.

Informational Society

In 1989 David Harvey argued persuasively that postmodernism is not simply a new theory of literary academics. Instead, he showed how the ethos of postmodernism fits with a more general change in the so-

cial organization and technology of capitalist economies, within a regime of flexible accumulation as a newer mode of production. In comparing it with the earlier industrial model, Fordism, he wrote: "It rests on flexibility with regard to labour processes, labour markets, products, and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation" (1989, p. 147).

This "capitalism is becoming ever more tightly organized *through* dispersal, geographical mobility, and flexible responses in labour markets, labour processes, and consumer markets, all accompanied by hefty doses of institutional, product, and technological innovation" (p. 159). The acceleration and deregulation is accompanied by functional boundaries becoming more "porous" as part of the general "volatility" and "ephemerality" of social processes and products. Harvey understood cultural postmodernism as the aesthetic of flexible accumulation. "The relatively stable aesthetic of Fordist modernism," he observed, "has given way to all the ferment, instability, and fleeting qualities of a postmodern aesthetic that celebrates difference, ephemerality, spectacle, fashion, and the commodification of cultural forms" (p. 156).

According to Harvey, "The experience of time and space has changed," with the effect that in everyday life there will be "the search for secure moorings in a shifting world." He hopes for a "counter-attack" of "narrative against image" in a new version of the "Enlightenment project."

More recently, Manuel Castells (1996) represents his analysis of the informational economy and globalization as defining a "network society." "Networks," he writes, "constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of network logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experience, power and culture" (1996, p. 469). The network society is a

capitalist economy based on innovation, globalization, and decentralized concentration: for work, workers, and firms, based on flexibility and adaptability; for a culture of endless deconstruction and reconstruction; for a polity geared towards the instant processing of new values and

public moods; and for a social organization aiming at the suppression of space and the annihilation of time.

The process of the "disassociation between spatial proximity and the performance of everyday life's functions" he refers to as the "space of flows." The production, technology-based transformation of time, the "mixing of tense to create a forever universe," Castells labels "timeless time."

Here too the transformation of technology and societal structure are seen as having profound consequences for everyday life. The individual self becomes a central locus for the enactment of broader societal structural changes. Personal identity and everyday shared meanings become especially problematic. The work of making meaning and producing meaningful selves comes to shape the possibilities for social changes that do not simply reproduce global informationalism, but alter it toward the direction of a new society.

"The search for meaning takes place then," observes Castells, "in the reconstruction of defensive identities around communal principles. Most of social action becomes organized in the opposition between unidentified flows and occluded identities" (1996, p. 11). These "resistance identities," these "defensive identities," in a state of societal dissolution, have the potential to become the basis for the formation of active, collective historical subjects, forming Castells's hopes for the social future.

The "new power," he writes, lies in "people's minds," where symbols can be mobilized either in decentered networks that mirror the networks of domination or in the voices of "prophets" who speak on "behalf of the insurgents." It is possible that we may remain in a dissolved social system composed of "shattered identities." But there is simultaneously a symbolic, social mobilization that is located in the self's struggle around space, time, and technology. Castells's vision of the future is not one of a restoration of the Enlightenment project, as Harvey implies. Rather, in a more traditionally Marxist vein, he sees the emergence of a new collective subject as our best hope within and against the network society.

Sherry Turkle (1995), in her empirical study of participants in computer MUDS (multi-user domains, associated with interactive role-playing games), explores the effects of informational society on mean-

ing and identity—on the redefinition of not only space and time but also self and social interaction. Here, life on the Internet is not traditionally "informational," based on an earlier model of computer use. "The lessons of computing today," writes Turkle, "have little to do with calculation and rules; instead they concern simulation, navigation, and interaction" (p. 19). In these interactions, "children have been playing at morphing, an activity synonymous, from preschool on, with the transformations of Power Rangers, a group of teen-aged martial arts experts who can turn themselves into person/machine hybrids with super-robotic powers."

Whether in a regime of flexible accumulation or in a network society, talk of ephemerality and flexibility of meaning and identity becomes real in the virtual life of children and adults who project their fantasized selves and roles into a life on the screen, which becomes one of many possible worlds. Turkle tells "the story of the eroding boundary between the real and the virtual, the animate and the inanimate, the unitary and the multiple self" (1995, p. 10). Instead of being computational-informational, this interactive screen not only enables a dematerialized morphing of forms but makes life itself beyond "artificial intelligence" conceivable as an artificial life on a frontier where human identity requires the reference point of biology, specifically DNA, to differentiate from what is virtual and artificial.

The self-altering, subjective effects of informationalism are carried further into the "inner planet" by Alberto Melucci's (1996) analysis of the "playing self." Here "experience dissolves into the imaginary." Melucci's social phenomenology of informationalism explores how adaptation to temporal change induces an emphasis on "inner time," a mythical time of a world of subjects living under conditions in which "the problem of boundaries becomes the crux of individual and collective life" (1996, p. 56). Like Castells's analysis, Melucci's includes a reactive self-inwardness. Efforts to recompose the inner world are individually adaptive for the changing pace and coordinates of experience.

Melucci describes a quest for unity and holism that pervades the inner journey to experienced and mythical time. It is reflected by emphasis on the body, healing, and environment. For Melucci, this inwardness of the "playing self" remains within a "disenchanted world," despite its recourse to mythic time. The road to the future in postu-

topian society is to activate creativity and to "open our minds and to broaden our horizons." We need to create an attitude that allows for the ability "to wonder." Melucci's social phenomenology of informationalism in the "planetary society" stops at the threshold of mystery. I argue that there, increasingly, on the grounds of religion and mystery, an individual and societal revitalization occurs that is transformative and adaptive.

Religion and Mysticism

The social infrastructure of technological and organizational informationalism dissolves boundaries and forces the creation of meaningful being into an inner journey. In that journey, social practice increasingly takes place in resacralized and mystical terms.

The end point of mystical informationalism and resacralization is reflected in extreme social events, like the mass suicide of the Heaven's Gate group in California, though in a gnostic, dualist, millennial form. The *New York Times* gave extensive coverage to the event, which it characterized as "on the furthest fringes of millennialism" (March 28, 1997, p. A1). Although millennialism represents a specific sort of religious movement and is not novel in the American or the global context, it gives dramatic force to the more general resacralization, as well as to one strain within an emergent mystical society. The *Times* reported that "the 39 men and women found dead in a mass suicide at an estate near here were members of an obscure computer-related cult" (March 28, 1997, p. A1). According to the newspaper's interpretation, the group "can be counted as just one more element in the ever-expanding universe of contemporary American spirituality." The report continues: "On the surface, Americans tend to display a pious uniformity. When questioned by pollsters 19 out of 20 people attested to a belief in God: a majority report praying regularly."

The social practices of a resacralized inner journey extend far beyond the Internet MUDS or such millennial movements that create Web sites and follow the planetary signs of the apocalypse on their computer screens. More mundanely, there is a vast network of New Age publications, centers, and practice-oriented organizations offering less extremely dualistic and more body-centered approaches to sacred self-realization. For example, one established center of self-

journeying advertises that there "you'll find love and support for your inner journey in a community sharing heartfelt spiritual values. You'll discover inner peace and well-being, and abundant opportunities to nurture yourself."

In more mainstream social settings, the boundary between work and religion is increasingly crossed and reduced. A center for "visionary leadership," for example, announces a national conference on "spirituality at work." Even the skeptical, iconoclastic *Utne Reader* reports that

> the International Symposium on Spirituality and Business, held in Boston in March, attracted the best and the brightest of business thinkers and lecturers. Indeed, since the early 90's, when titles like *The Corporate Mystic* and *True Work: The Sacred Dimension of Earning a Living* began to hit the bookstores, corporations have begun scrambling to come to terms with the new spirituality. The World Bank has a 400-member study group called the Spiritual Unfoldment Society. (Nichols 1998, pp. 24–25)

The same infusion of religion into mainstream institutions is made by growing numbers of prayer groups that are organized in work settings. Although the journey may be inward, these are outer, public signs of intensified religious interest. Although "no comprehensive surveys" are available, the *New York Times* reports very significant increases in Christian, Jewish, and Muslim prayer groups in well-established private and public corporate and bureaucratic settings, all occurring during the workday.

This cultural resacralization and its popular phenomenology of inner reconstruction are reminiscent of the ethos of another time, late in the history of the Greek classical age. Later we shall see how Christopher Lasch connected gnostic Hellenism with the ethos of the New Age. Historian of Greek religion Gilbert Murray has written that "it is the great characteristic of the ancient world, revealing itself in many divergent guises and seldom fully intelligible to modern men; faith in the absolute supremacy of the inward life over things external" (1925, p. 147).

Classical mysticism, the so-called perennial philosophy in the Western Christian tradition, represents the specific elements of this inwardness. Mysticism is *defined* by practices that recompose the in-

ner self by working to transcend time and space; aim to create a more fluid self, if not to dissolve it entirely; show how the individual can simultaneously be present in this and other worlds; and attune the self to become relationally receptive and tied to a larger absolute universe, which generates meaning and vitality.

The mystic is "reborn into eternity." F. C. Happold observes, "His object was to break through the world of history and time into that of eternity and timelessness" (1990, p. 18). Although there are different types of mysticism, there are also shared characteristics across the diverse traditions. In addition to a lived timelessness, there is also an accomplished connection, a reintegration, with the world beyond the self. There is a "consciousness of the Oneness of everything" (Happold 1990, p. 46). The mystic lives in the eternal present ("timeless time"), "where everything is unified." "Perception, thought, expression cease to be dualistic and become non-dualistic. The sense of Oneness and Timelessness . . ." (p. 71). Summarizing his effort to define mysticism, Happold writes,

> It is seen to have three interconnected aspects, which we have called the mysticism of knowledge and understanding, the mysticism of love and union, and the mysticism of action. In it are found four interrelated visions: the vision of Oneness, the vision of Timelessness, the vision of a Self other than the empirical self, and the vision of a Love enfolding everything that exists. (1990, p. 18)

Dan Merkur's recent analysis of mysticism (1999) emphasizes the unifying aspect. "Unitive experiences" are universally available. "In some sense we are all of us mystics," he observes. In this cognitive, psychoanalytical approach, the mystical experience of union is the result of unitive thinking, which comes to the fore as an immediate self-suffusing experience of love, vitality, energy and omnipresent power, and creative inspiration. This occurs when there is a "relaxation of resistance to unconscious mysticism" (1999, p. 130). There is a "religious integration through a lowering of resistance to unconscious superego materials."

Although Merkur may be correct in emphasizing a "random" reshuffling of "meaningful imaginations" as the explanation of mystical moments as revelations, I would add an emphasis on the *societal*

context of mystical experiences. Where such experience becomes more commonplace and is no longer as selectively limited to an eso-teric elite—which is a change at least from the culture of moder-nity—then we ask about the character of the social environment in which mysticism occurs. Informational society sets the stage for low-ered resistance to unconscious mysticism. The emergent way of being may be seen as a debounded, fluid self, unmoored from stable coordi-nates of time and space and embarked on an inner quest for connec-tion beyond the isolated individual. This way of being is induced by the societal structure of informationalism.

Weber's "innerworldly mysticism" may become no longer a minor social phenomenon that we can see only "pianissimo" in society. Rather, innerworldly mysticism becomes a more general, socially nor-mative practice. This possibility was already adumbrated by Robert-son in his incisive review of Weber's concept of innerworldly mysti-cism. For Robertson, the central theme of mysticism is that "the deepest immersion into ourselves overcoming all diversity, leads us at the same time into the absolute unity of things" (1978, p. 110). Agreeing with Mueller's (1973) view that Weber's conceptualization of the phenomenon is limited, he urges a reassessment that recognizes the relevance of mysticism for a contemporary culture in which there is an emphasis on self-consummation and self-realization. He notes that "we particularly have in mind the significance of the concern with self-realization which has been such a strong feature of modern America—the attempt to discover the noumenal in the self" (1978, p. 132).

In that culture, asceticism and mysticism can be combined in ways that Weber could not foresee. "Ascetic mysticism . . . allows . . . con-tributions to 'self-perfection' of a rational and rationalizable nature . . . pivoted upon the notion of self-realization" (1978, pp. 139–140). The relevance of mysticism to the present is not only its emphasis on de-ifying technologies of self-perfection but also its role in "any attempt to vitalize the world." In this view, there emerges an "ongoing culture of mysticism."

Similarly, Ralph Beals (1978) argues that the current cultural em-phasis on identity and self-actualization in conditions of change in-duces a quest for a "transcendent identity." He too notes the resacral-ization of culture, as well as the relevance of Weber's type of

innerworldly mysticism for contemporary identity dynamics. The inner "true self" finds stability and unity in the practices of mysticism. "It is possible," he concludes with the caveats of a social scientist, that "if present trends continue, mysticism in its many forms may yet emerge as the characteristic 'religion' of our era."

Edward Tiryakian (1996) also offers an analysis of cultural change. Drawing on Pitrim Sorokin more than Weber and more inclined to see a reassertion of neopaganism rather than mysticism, Tiryakian also sees the appearance of an alternative culture beyond modernism and postmodernism. He offers a theory of immanent change in the "metacultures of modernity" rather than an innerworldly mysticism.

For Tiryakian too the view of a broad-scale cultural resacralization is empirically accurate, though unproven:

> Not only has the "secularization" thesis of the 1960s been contradicted by the upsurge of religious currents in the public sphere of various "secularized societies" (socialist and liberal, democratic and authoritarian), but the reappearance and reinvention of the "chthonic" point to the fact that "the return of the sacred" does not halt at the "historic" stage of religion but to older, even ancient "traditions" whose very distance from the "modern" social order is a source of powerful appeal. (1996, p. 112)

He views cultural resacralization as the culture of "Christian industrialism" in an "uneasy alliance" with its oppositional "mirror image," gnosticism, being supplanted by the renewal of a third ancient cultural system, which he calls "chthonic." This metaculture "refers to a basic ontological affirmation of earth as the primordial locus of reality, and of the forces of life which have to be cultivated, enhanced or placated in order to insure the reproductive processes of survival" (1996, p. 195). This culture was repressed, "driven out of the public sphere," but now returns—as earthly, ritual, pagan pleasure-oriented, and survivalistic. Its contemporary forms are exemplified by "ecofeminism," sexualism that includes self-mutilation, and various forms of primitivism and communalism. These "new neo-pagan religions" are now a "vehicle of cultural opposition and antagonism to the Christian metaculture," against which it competes for cultural dominance, along with gnosticism.

Such accounts are *culturalist*. They abstract individual and cultural symbolic dynamics from any larger, systemic organization of technology and societal structure. Yet they yield observations similar to our deduction from the *social structural* analyses of informationalism. Both culturalist and structuralist types of analysis identify parallels between shared discourses and individual experiences of being. But how do we link the public and the private, the collective and the individual, the discursive and the existential?

Between social structure and culture on one hand and the "inner journey" of individual being on the other, there is *a decentered social movement of everyday life that is effecting a revolution in the material practices of social being in the world*. By "revitalization" I refer to these practices of self and social transformation and the mysticism that vitalizes self and the social world in an eternal but historical and describable present.

Revitalization

Anthropological theorists first described revitalization movements ordinarily among colonized peoples, dominated and excluded by hegemonic, modern society. Anthony Wallace (1958) established a paradigm for the phenomenon, which was then elaborated by others (notably Fernandez 1986). The anthropological theory of revitalization rightly points to the totalizing character of such movements. Though that totality includes even the "cells and organs" of the participants, the systemic change is saliently a cognitive one. James Fernandez extends Wallace's concept of "mazeway reformulation" to a process of cognitive reclassification, an "argument of images":

> Revitalization movements are responses to the hyper- and hypo-arousal associated with the collapse of accustomed masteries and the frustration of received strategies once applicable within and between the various domains of the object world. In such situations of epistemological crisis, dreams, visions, and deathlike excursions occupy an incipient and central part. They rise from the depths of experience with old or newly rehabilitated images with which to reclassify and reintegrate. (1986, p. 183)

"Movement" is a misleading term for what we observe: a dispersion of social practices occurring as individual technologies of adaptation and perfection. Late postmodern revitalization is a *decentered* social movement. Vision is important; indeed, the renewal of vision and imagination against the reductive digitalization of the world and its computer screen–centered iconization is a key element in revitalization. But the current revitalization movement does not have such easily delimited borders. It refers to ongoing social practices that have the appearance of continuity and stability that we once attributed only to institutions. Image is relevant to these practices and their effects on interactions occurring across boundaries—intraself processes, interactions between self and environment, and interenvironmental relations.

However, it is increasingly less meaningful to see these imaginings in a purely cognitive, disembodied way, separately from the lived body. The "newer anthropology" is precisely about the integration of imagination and bodiliness. Thomas Csordas's (1994) impressive study of charismatic Catholic healing relies on the concept of "imaginal performance" to describe the interaction between visioning and embodiment. Starting from Csordas's empirical examples of imaginal performance, this reintegration of image and body returns us to a revision of Renaissance psychology; to the magic, Eros, and memory of pre-Reformation thinking about vitality across boundaries described by Ioan Couliano (1987) in his provocative account of social dynamics in Renaissance thought.

Revitalization is now decentered and embodied. It is only an apparently "individualized" movement because its object is the mass transformation or, in resacralized language, the "elevation" of a collective self. Decentering and diffusion go even further. In the practices of self-transformation, which are the various and mainly sacralized New Age practices that include body awareness, healing, ecological renewal, and sacred Eros, the self is itself diffused. Whether from overload at the self-site or from the depletion of traditional individualized forms of motivational fuel, this self becomes less anchored in either its own customary reference points or the sociocultural mediation that we social theorists have taken as the object of our study until now. Societal informationalism promotes relational immediacy, the medium of mystical experience.

Contemporary resacralization of culture and the re-cosmicization of consciousness dissolve familiar social boundaries between self and world. A sacred code of meaning is reestablished that encourages communion and fusion as core practices of the revitalization of social interaction.

There are at least three identifiable domains of revitalization: vision and imagination; the body and senses; and a union or communion of Self and Other that implies at least a temporary dissolution of the individual self and its merging into a more inclusive totality or collectivity. These are practices of mind, nature, and transcendence.

I suggest that they are domains of the dynamic and fluid practices that emerge as normative within and against the institutional society under such conditions of societal disassociation and dissolution of social action, described by Castells (1996). Following his view, revitalization practices may represent a compensation or balancing against informationalism. Melucci (1996) has also described such reactions as an integrative response to the implosion of overwhelming informationalism. For him, the return to "wisdom" strategies of knowledge is the integrative antidote to the fragmentary effects of informational production.

This first, integrative and visionary, practice of revitalization is more than a postmodern adjustment. It addresses the continuing modern social problem of modern commodification. Whether against alienation, rationalization, commodification, and reification or simply "the reduction to number" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972), the life of imagination is revitalized along with a popular *re-cosmicization of everyday being*. Imagination, however, is not simply another form of disembodied abstraction. It is a return to the vitality and efficacy of images in a daily life that industrial modernity has limited to the cognitive sphere.

The modern abstraction against which the revitalization process reacts was not only of thought but also of desire. Freud is the modern prophet of this religion of desire as sex. Although his theory appears embodied and romantically critical of modernity, it also carries abstraction of desire along with the central, modern project of individualism. Idea and Eros together collapsed the larger field of environmental energy and imagination, now being reconstituted in the revitalization of magic and alchemy, and the interaction of images as

a foundational social dynamic. Couliano (1987), in the language of the Renaissance, calls this dynamic the "theater of phantasm." In her empirical studies of life on the Internet, Turkle (1995) also observes the new, techno forms of phantasmic projection that Renaissance thought in Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and Bruno saw in magic interactions (see Shoham 2000; DeLeon-Jones 1997). Return to magic may be an extreme form, but it is driven by a thirst for the recuperation of the lost arts of seeing.

Revitalization of alchemy is part of this quest to reignite the "fire" of the body, which is the "crucible and the raw material of individual and collective alchemy," as Raoul Vaneigem (1998) puts it. But it is more than a motivational trek to redeem the lost energy of life swept up into the invisible flows of informationalism. The contemporary emphasis on the body is related to the renewal of the mystical methodological *linkage* of macro and micro, by the principle of "as above, so below."

Mass practice of embodiment is the other pole of the recosmicization of consciousness. Bodiliness has surpassed its defensive cultural beginnings in narcissism. Not merely ego-greed, the search for a less easily incorporable voice that is immune from the economy of surplus postmodern discourse deposits meaning in the body. Not an inscription of social text but a generative site for being in the world that increasingly bypasses the "sociocultural" to establish its dialectical polarity with the transcendent, the sacred, or the cosmological. The body is an active cocreator in the production of new forms of motivational fuel, a "flow" very different from the impersonal movement of information.

In my view, *imagination, embodied sensory presence, and the reintegrated Self/Other* constitute the revitalization practices that have come to replace the sociocultural as mediation between structure and being. As we shall see, these practices are scarcely institutionalized in schools as "education." But they are already discernible as a decentered curriculum in the society of mystical informationalism. Education, in a deschooled version, becomes increasingly synonymous with them. It becomes a counterforce to the social destruction of informationalism (imagination is the counterpractice), commodification (vs. sensory presence), and self-centeredness (now, reintegration and union).

Examples

The new pedagogy of revitalization can be glimpsed in the work of contemporary commentators, who can already describe the trajectory of the practices of sensorial presence, interactive merging or unification, and reintegrative imagination. From the vantage point of individual psychodynamics, the elements of mysticism indicated by Merkur (1999) are seen by at least several observers as historical, collective, ecological, and structural phenomena.

David Abram (1996) exemplifies this hybrid of prophetic articulation of revitalizing practice and analytical, even academic, interpretation. Both genres compose the contemporary *hermeneutics of experience* that increasingly replaces postmodernism, even in the academic rear guard. The "flow" that he wants is ecological, "nourishment" from the "vital sources" of the environment. The "commodification of nature" creates barriers to a self that is really more like a "membrane" than an object. Such a breathing, sensing body reduces the human, animal, and plant boundaries and enables an attunement of receptive, creative surrender to the world. This new animism is based on relational reciprocity and the perception of "participation" in the flux of phenomena. Experience is pretheoretical in the sensing body. Revitalizing bodily presence, the "sensuous," is what Abram calls for in a "return to our senses." A combination of ecology, phenomenological philosophy, mysticism, and Native American culture forms the basis of his manifesto for "rejuvenation of our carnal, sensorial empathy with the living land that sustains us" (1996, p. 69).

The relation of self to the world is one of the participatory interchanges that take place in the "vaster discourse" of the "animate earth." His ecology leads to a perceptual shift aligned to mysticism. Like the classical mystic, he lives in the "eternal present" in the face of the "beyond-the-horizon." He reiterates Native American wisdom: "Listen to the air. You can hear it, feel it, smell it, taste it. Woniya wakan—the holy air—which renews all by its breath . . . spirit, life, breath, renewal . . . we feel it between us, as a presence" (1996, p. 225).

Marianna Torgovnick (1996) recounts the European quest for ecstasy through practices of merging, fusion, or unification. "Primitivism" is one form of these efforts to cross the boundary of the West-

ern self to the cosmos, to "openness to the Other," to the feminine, the communal, ecstatic, spiritual, and natural. She recounts the "quest for renewal" among European writers and philosophers in Africa, in the American Southwest, and in the forms of feminine European primitivism—in those places and in life among animals. She then finds the same "impulse to merge" in contemporary "piercing." "As the joining of mineral and flesh, piercing is almost a pure symbol of mergings and crossings," she writes (1996, p. 206). Even popular postmodernism is now seen as a sign of an "oceanic" spiritual transformation, a mass, practical mysticism of revitalizing power.

Harold Bloom (1996) is less sanguine about current sacralized practices of the New Age. Scholar and American prophet of gnosticism, Bloom at once condemns its commercialism and envisions the political potential of a "religiously inspired resistance." Of the current resacralization, he observes,

> But the major manifestations transcend the churches, and are far larger than even the legions of New Age fellow travelers. Our rampantly flourishing industries of angel worship, "near death experiences" and astrology-dream divination networks are the mass versions of an adulterated or travestied Gnosticism. (1996, pp. 31–32)

Still, these are his "omens of millennium." Now Metatron is the "archangel of the moment," for he represents "reintegration." Gnosis, knowledge, and the possibilities of illuminating revision remain, despite New Age heresies.

The revitalization of social practice occurs in between the social structure of informationalism and a mysticism of experienced being. There it is especially manifested in the perpetual transformation of the individual—a social "reselfing."

3

∞

Self: Reselfing

The modern ambivalence between individual self-assertion and so-cietal socialization and the postmodern celebration of self-dissolution in a perfusion of signs is replaced in the mystical society by archetypal revitalization practices of incessant self-transformation. I call these practices "reselfing," which is expressed in contemporary forms of an-cient ritual performances. Immortality, the endless self-transforma-tion, is the ideal type of reselfing. I begin by exploring Mircea Eliade's analysis of primordial, shamanistic transformational ritual and a simi-lar Hasidic view of continual self-transformation as an everyday sa-cred practice. Then I provide a theoretical context for reselfing processes by investigating classical and postmodern views of self-transformation in Marx, Weber, Melucci, and Foucault. Against that background, I offer a typology of reselfing and then ask how these ex-periential practices are related to societal structure in the mystical society.

Immortal Self

The types of revitalization practices that I described earlier are trans-formative and not simply individually defensive and socially repro-ductive. Whether self-revitalization begins as an extension of narcis-sism or as an identity-stabilizing reaction against informational alienation, it springs from the platform of social structure to create

new dimensions of everyday life and to enable new forms of social understanding.

The response to informational implosion in digital or iconic terms is a renewal and an extension of capacities of Mind, in renewing visualization and imagery as an experienced self-need. In the face of commodifying reduction in the range of experience, sensorial rediscovery refocuses attention on bodiliness, replaces thought within the senses, and recontextualizes being in Nature. The increasingly evident limitations of self-centeredness lead to a crossing of the self-society boundary in order to seek a merging, fusing, and unification with the world outside as Divine and Cosmic.

These practices of mind, nature, and cosmos represent the active work of the self in mystical society, *not* the ancient revolutionary wish for the "collective subject" or the reproductive socialization of self to society. Whether New Age "body work" or cyberculture "morphing," this work of "the self on the self," as Foucault called it, evidences a new dynamic that is different from the postmodern "multiple," "minimal," or "saturated" self. The current quest is for a timeless, eternal self.

Immortality is the paradigm, the mythogene (Shoham 2000) or phantasm of self-revitalization. It represents a "permanent revolution" in the "forces of self-production" of informational capitalism. Only dying ensures the possibility of continuous rebirth. Only continuous rebirth is adequately novel for a self that must operate the fast flows of informationalism. Ultimately, this is a biological process, and there are signs that it may be realized by biotechnologies that include a so-called immortality of cells, cloning, and "dematerialization." Currently, we look to cultural, symbolic devices to realize immortality through rituals of self-transformative revitalization.

This perpetual symbolic regeneration of self occurs by displacing the modern phantasm of self-assertion and socialization. Instead, there is a recuperation of the ancient social technologies of a culturally induced self-immortality. In modernity, the religion that helps vitalize the petrification of the commodity economy is sex. The ideal of heterosexual, genital sex was the locus of vitality ("libido") and living sensibility. It served as a condensation and substitute for a much wider range of sensuality and embodied experience in an environmental field of secular and sacred energies (Classen 1998).

The sexual reification of ecological energy that I earlier referred to as an "abstraction of desire" is a key part of the larger pattern of secularization and individualization that characterized the modern era. Of course, Freud was the leading prophet of this religion, which was also a movement for revitalization in its time. He scientized the romantic revolt against modern industrialization and secularization, which Weber expressly called "mechanical petrification." In revolt against this same desiccation of the senses (which Marcuse later called "surplus repression"), Freud carried along the modern model of centralization of energy within the individual. Secularization, or as Weber termed it, "demagification of the world," meant de-energization. This was an end to easier premodern interchanges of energy between the self and world in order to fortify a separate, individual self. In this context, Freud worked to revitalize being by locating a dynamic force within this self, as sexual energy, or libido.

The new society reverses secularization and individualization. As I and others (Roof 1993; Wuthnow 1998) have suggested, a cultural shift occurs that undoes the modern suppression of a sacred coding of experience. Resacralization, even this-worldly mysticism, becomes a mass practice. The individualism of self-asserting self reaches its limit in social practices that involve deboundarying and dissolution. This recontextualization of self directs attention away from the internal to seek energy sources in the external social and cosmic worlds. What was ignored, suppressed, and stigmatized now returns.

Although still partially repressed socially as a social unconscious, the sacred is rediscovered and reinvented. The location of energy *outside the individualized self in a re-energized view of the environment— whether animistic, virtual, or cosmic*—asserts a multicoded pantheism as an alternative to energy that is individually internalized as libido.

Eliade and Hasidism

Resacralization and reversal of internalization set the tone for *immortalizing practices of permanent revitalization*. Eliade (1957, 1964a, 1964b, 1967) did not foresee the social-self dynamics of a postmodern, mystical society. But he did argue strongly that archaic meanings and practices live on in the contemporary world. I suggest that the archaic practices he described have become paradigmatic for the New Age.

In archaic society, before libidinal drive, there is an "ontological thirst." This is the desire to return to the beginning of time, *illo tempore*, in order to participate in the birth of the world and thereby to recreate symbolically one's own social rebirth. Being becomes real by participating in the sacred world. Spiritual regeneration occurs in an archetypal process of rebirth that begins with "initiatic death."

Eliade identified for primordial society what is increasingly represented in mystical society. Of revitalizing social practices of a new kind of immortality, he wrote:

> Consequently, immortality must not be conceived as a survival after death, but as a situation which one creates continuously. . . . Nondeath, immortality, must then be conceived as a limit, an ideal situation toward which man tends with his whole being, and which he strives to capture by dying and coming back to life continuously. (1964a, p. 36)

The shaman epitomizes this shared practice, as he passes from one "cosmic region to another." Like the mystic, he represents transtemporal being. The shaman engages in a "celestial journey." He follows a deep collective script of cosmic flight and reunification with ancestors and animals. This journey leads to a profound recontextualization of the self in which profane time is abolished. The shaman enters the primordial sacred world and returns with new vision, energy, and an altered state of being, which is then shared with the uninitiated. This plane crossing to life beyond historical time makes Bloom's (1996) New Agers' near-death experiences appear a relatively weak generative source. The shaman's first initiation and her repeated shamanizing practice contain also a physiology and an anatomy, an *embodied* understanding of the energizing cultural script of self-transformation.

The shaman symbolically divests himself of his flesh to return to the bones. The skeleton, in its embryonic primordialness, is fundamental to the regenerative process. According to Eliade, "the bone represents the very source of life, both human and animal. To reduce oneself to the skeleton is equivalent to re-entering the womb of primordial life, that is to a complete renewal, a mystical rebirth" (1964b, p. 63).

To describe the "resurrection from the bones," Eliade cites also the prophet Ezekiel:

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? . . . Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. . . . [A]nd behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone . . . the sinews and the flesh came upon them. (pp. 162–163)

Similar symbolic processes of embodiment and disembodiment are central practices in what Gershom Scholem referred to as the "highest form of applied Jewish mysticism": Hasidism. Indeed, Moshe Idel (1995) refers to the Hasidic saint, or "tsaddiq," as a shaman. As we shall see, Idel's "magical mystical model" reflects the shaman's spiritual economy of energy production and distribution. Here too the work of immortality is continuous in a complex set of self/environment dynamics. Prayer and study and a range of meditative practices, both textual and visual, are more often the vehicles than reunification with ancestors and animals. But there is "celestial flight" in ongoing ascents and descents to the "Ein Sof," the timeless, infinite realms at the end of the upper worlds.

The "stripping away of corporeality" (Elior 1993) is one method of access to the revelation of divine sparks of immortalizing energy, which are believed to be contained in the unilluminated shells of the profane environment. To liberate energy in this world, an external, higher, divine world is needed, in which resides the infinite, energic source that is at the root of all being. Hasidism posits a flow of cosmic energy across worlds and beyond individual self-life, in soul reincarnations. These flows are activated by individual practices of transformative meditation and collective prayer. Weber's "real kernel of social life," the irrational "charisma," in Hasidism becomes the kernel of all profane being, animate and inanimate. Proper, divinely inspired practice is revitalizing and transforming, "elevating" being to the sacred plane.

Rachel Elior's account of a continually revitalizing, culturally immortal self, according to Hasidism, includes "a complex dialectical structure [that] corresponds to the dynamic of concealment and manifestation, coming into being and self-annihilation, stripping away and concretization, emanation and withdrawal, infusing and removal, or to the dynamics of the unity of opposites" (1993, p. 104).

She writes of "a dialectical structure of self-realization and self-annihilation within the Godhead . . . a structure of self-realization and self-annihilation is posited within human consciousness." Sacralized processes of continual self-transformation reside in an interplay of ritualized practices of self-abnegation and denial and dematerialization on one hand and, on the other hand, of a process of returning to become material, concrete, and tangibly present. Of course, this oscillating wave of nothingness and being, self-reduction, or "brokenness," and reinspiration of material being is done in the service of the cosmic: to restore a shattered universe to primal unity by shared, transformative practice.

Hasidism offers more than a wave-like oscillation between the sacred and profane, asserted by Durkheim. As we shall see, this is not only his central dynamic of societal revitalization, but also the definition of the *very meaning of the social*. Beyond the wave, there is a drawing down of cosmic or supernal energy that the saint accomplishes in mystical practice, only then to distribute it for a communal transformation of the self. The Jewish mystical saint or shaman is not driven by a gnostic interest in hidden knowledge alone, but by a cosmic thirst and desire for union with what is seen as the generative source of the universe. Samuel Dresner writes that for the saint "above all else is the yearning, the spark of the flame which sets fire to 'hitlahavut' (enthusiasm or passion)—the craving, the longing for His love" (1970, p. 35).

Such self-dynamics imply a different social understanding. It is not merely signifiers that are circulating nor information that is flowing. Rather, it is a flow of energy and visualization or, in Ioan Couliano's (1987) terms, an interchange of phantasms. The generative source is in the cosmos, but practice is within the world; a practice that is ineluctably transformative. Life's purpose is this continual interaction with a generative source. In Hasidism, as in animism, this is a dispersed source. Even God's primal energy is decentered from the very beginning in a cosmogonic myth, a mystical story of creation occurring through a shattering of the vessels, which leaves the supernal spark of being within all things. Even such a monotheistic pantheism sees revitalization as the central social practice; it views sparks, fire, or energy as core to the practice and discourse of being.

Taoism (Cohen 1997) has an even more expressly sacral energic theory of being, focused on the creation and circulation of *qi* in the body and in the world. Taoist alchemy is materialist, with biophysical analogues and measures of cosmic *qi*. This and other ancient models, including Ayurveda (Svoboda 1995), provide further examples of the dynamics of a sacralized, decentered self that acts in a living world. In these models, self processes move from questions of internalization and reproduction to continuous transformation based on broad-ranging, boundary-crossing interactions of energy. Indeed, the socially nonreproductive effects of such practices have now become a political issue in China. Falun Gong, a contemporary mass practice based on *qigong* theory, is seen as a threat to public order in China. The *New York Times* reports:

> Claiming *tens of millions* [emphasis added] of ardent followers in China, Falun Gong has emerged as a powerful if hard-to-define force to be reckoned with. The group has no obvious political agenda and claims only a loose organization. But the demonstration in April displayed its enormous power to move its members, and its capacity to embarrass the Communist Party if it does not get its way. (June 29, 1999, p. A4)

These ancient practices are the cultural resources for a contemporary resacralization of collective discourse and revitalization of social being. Basic material practices of living are now coded by numerous popular observers and analysts as sacralized. Birth, breathing, eating, sex, and death are readily explored as sacred practices; from the popularization of Tantric Buddhism as a sexual technology, to a move in food books from dieting for consumer competition of the body to food as "nourishment for the soul." How energy is created and flows across boundaries to effect self-transformation is the topic of reselfing.

Reselfing

Some years ago, I tried to apply Marx's theory of social relations to an analysis of social interaction in high schools (Wexler 1992). I argued that the basic categories of a political economy of social relations—alienation, exploitation, and commodification—formed the basis of a

critical social psychology (1983, 1996). This political economy organized symbolic interchanges in American high schools. By working from the concept of alienation, I tried to show how class differentiated social identity processes shared a common absence, lack, or emptying of the self.

The historic emptying of self is equivalent to the effects of alienation described by Marx, the "mechanical petrification" decried by Weber in the Protestant ethic, and the biopolitical regulation detailed by Michel Foucault. I now want to suggest that this emptying is accompanied by a *counterprocess*: a filling or "reselfing" antidote. Reselfing or, as Erich Fromm (1956) called it, "dealienation," can now be more fully specified.

The types of "reselfing" processes that I describe are analytically derived from the sorts of premodern and "non-Western" practices of self-transformation that were studied by Eliade and are central to Hasidism. I observe that these paths of self-transformation are now becoming prototypical in Western, post-postmodern society—the mystical society. In part, this results from cultural diffusion and the end of Eurocentrism. But, more importantly, the dynamics of relation between self, religion, and power have become relevant owing to a combined shift in our cultural, discursive premises (Sorokin 1957) and in social structural attributes of the information society (Melucci 1994).

The discursive, structural shift makes the self important—intensifying both the congratulatory individualism of modernity and the anxious self-dispersion of postmodernity. This shift also defines the self increasingly in terms of replenishing or renewing "being" by "spiritual work of self empowerment and transformation through the 'technology of the self'" (Foucault 1988, p. 18).

Foucault's interest in religion and practices of self-transformation centers on the transition from the Greco-Roman world to the early Christian one; mine will be more ecumenical and more oriental. Marx, of course, coded religion in relation to the self as the exemplar of alienation and fetishism—a projective disempowerment of human being. My view is that religion, engagement with the sacred, now becomes a central vehicle for undoing alienation and for replenishing and reempowering self-identity. Weber's position was that self-empowerment through self-sanctification could occur in the West only by self-instrumentalization and self-asceticism. My view is that

the alternative religious type that he identified but marginalized as an empirical possibility, "innerworldly mysticism" (1946, p. 326), succeeds innerworldly asceticism as the religious foundation of contemporary culture and society.

In this view, premodern and Eastern religions increasingly define the character of self-work. This work, or "technology," does not occur in withdrawal from everyday life, although its practices are more contemplative than ascetic and its access to the sacred is more mystical than institutionally religious. This self-work operates within the social world, against alienation and decentering, in order to replenish being. Though apparently individualized, this empowering process of self-renewal represents a current form of collective social movement.

How do classical and contemporary social theorists understand the relation between religion, self, and social power?

Classical Sociology: Religion, Power, and Self

Marx

Despite inventive efforts by commentators to reclaim his theory of alienation and praxis for its religious foundations (Bannet 1992), Marx viewed the relation between religion and self as the essential disempowering paradigm of alienation and fetishism. Religious practices take power away from the self and, like the fetishism of commodities, empty human being of its capacities and potential. Yet Eve Tavor Bannet argues persuasively that Marx's critique of religion can be attributed to his Jewish struggle to overcome "the dualism of heaven and earth, of the spirit and the flesh, of mysticism and life, of idea and realty—a dualism which Marx and his contemporaries thought stemmed from Christianity" (Bannet 1992, p. 124). Nevertheless, the effect for Marx is to empirically identify religious action as alienating (1956, pp. 170, 172):

> The more the worker expends himself in work, the more powerful becomes the world of objects which he creates in face of himself, and the poorer he himself becomes in his inner life, the less he belongs to himself. It is just the same as in religion. The more of himself man attributes to God, the less he has left in himself. . . . All the qualities in-

volved in the production of this activity, which really belongs to man, are attributed to the intermediary. Man himself becomes poorer, that is separated from the intermediary, as the intermediary becomes richer.

Of the "intermediary" of first resort, Bertell Ollman quotes Marx: "Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all of his own divinity" (1971, p. 224). In Ollman's words:

> God emerges from all this as the estranged power of a socialized humanity. . . . [T]hat which mediates between man and his real life is seen to dominate both. Through religious activity, the individual's potential for controlling nature is transferred to God, which in turn, reduces the actual control he is able to exercise. (p. 224)

In the Marxist tradition, religious practice leads to the sort of incapacitating disempowerment of the full sensuous range of human being signified by the term "alienation" and even to the loss of efficacy indicated in the "fetishism of commodities." Moreover, following Ollman, religion leads to a "self-contempt":

> Whereas religious activity directed toward the self is suicidal, directed toward the other, toward God or his "agents" on earth, it is sacrificial. Prayer is a superstition which renders one helpless, and obeisance is total submission before the knife. Through unthinking worship, the repetition of empty symbols, the only God served is self-contempt. (1971, p. 223)

The relation between religion, power, and self is evident. Religion, we might say, is a technology of self-destruction.

Weber

Although religious practice can obviously follow the disempowering path described by Marx, a historical alternative is finding an identifying, empowering relation between self and sacred, instead of a projective disempowerment in the self-sacred relation. During a cultural movement of resacralization, self-capacity can be replenished rather than exhausted, as it is in the traditional Marxist model of alienation.

However intertwined its roots may be with the current global, capitalist postindustrialism, resacralization has an unintended effect: the reinforcement of an unusual hybrid that Weber identified in his typology of religious action—innerworldly mysticism.

In his critical sociology of modern industrialism, Weber did not fully foresee the potentialities of any such innerworldly mysticism. He consistently attributed the cultural foundations of the modern, bureaucratic, "rationalist" apparatus to ascetic Protestantism:

> This innerworldly asceticism had a number of distinctive consequences not found in any other religion. . . . The clear and uniform goal of this asceticism was the disciplining and methodical organization of the whole pattern of life. Its typical representative was the "man of vocation," and its unique result was the rational organization and institutionalization of social relationships. (Weber 1964, p. 183)

The polarity to asceticism is contemplation or mysticism. Weber is convinced that such contemplative, ecstatic mysticism generally does not engage this world and certainly not in a socially transformative direction. There are exceptions, briefly, for example: "The transformation of a mysticism remote from the world into one characterized by chiliastic and revolutionary tendencies took place frequently, most impressively in the revolutionary mysticism of the sixteenth-century Baptists" (1964, p. 175).

But he quickly reasserts the socially quietist consequences of contemplative rather than ascetic mysticism: "To the extent that an innerworldly religion of salvation is determined by contemplative features, the usual result is acceptance of the secular social structure" (1964, p. 175).

And elsewhere, in his essay on *The Social Psychology of World Religions*, he claims emphatically that asceticism must be the modern religious cultural foundation: "In their innermost beings, contemplative and ecstatic religions have been rather specifically hostile to economic life" (1946, p. 289).

Our point is precisely that this religious, innerworldly ascetic foundation of modern culture is transmuting to an innerworldly, ecstatic, contemplative, or mystical orientation. Like the postmodern tendency that precedes and prepares it, innerworldly mysticism depends

on the erasure of boundaries and not the Weberian and Habermasian modern autonomy of separate spheres.

Examples like twelve-step revivalism, baby boom religion, or even the "culture of narcissism" more generally, are only signs of a much broader mass tendency: resubjectification and resymbolization toward innerworldly mysticism as the religious foundation of a new society.

More than Marx, Weber saw the ambivalent effects of religion. For example, in describing religious ecstasy, he notes that its effects can be "tending either toward greater intensity of life or toward alienation from life" (1964, p. 157). His identification of a type of social action in which religion is an effective path of self-empowerment, enhancement, and realization is even more important than his identification of innerworldly mysticism as at least a logical possibility or his canonical recognition of the multiple and unintended effects of religion (1958).

In Weber's historical sociology of religion, there is a clear recognition that "methodologies of sanctification" are directed toward self-fulfillment and empowerment. Indeed, religious consecration is ultimately a methodology of "self-perfection." Unlike Marx, Weber sees the attainment of power through identification as the social meaning of early religion, rather than the projection of power. The ecstatic becomes a more diffuse "habitus," a conscious methodology of self-perfection.

The relation between person and God is not the subsumption of self being in God; instead, it is the appropriation of the power of the sacred by the self. In his analysis of types of religious social action, Weber writes almost colloquially of "the different roads to salvation" (1964, p. 158):

> The ultimate purpose to be served by the planned procedure of sanctification remained everywhere the same purpose which was served in an acute way by the orgy, namely the *incarnation within man of a supernatural being, and therefore presently of a God. Stated differently, the goal was self-deification.* (emphasis added)

Even more explicitly, Weber writes:

> Self-deification was the prevalent goal of sanctification, from the beginnings of the soma cult of intoxication in ancient Vedic times up

through the development of sublime methods of intellectualist ecstasy and the elaboration of erotic orgies. (p. 160)

However, in the West this identificatory methodology of sanctification, of self-production by possessing God, disappears in favor of an *instrumentalization of the self*. The unbridgeable gap created by belief in a transcendental God supplants the earlier methodology by a self-surrendering method of identification, in becoming God's subjective instrumentality:

The goal of sanctification becomes oriented to the world beyond and to ethics. The aim is no longer to possess the God, for this cannot be done, but either to become his instrument or to be spiritually suffused by him. Spiritual suffusion is obviously closer to self-deification than is instrumentality. (1964, p. 159)

Although Weber goes on to argue for the historical sublimation of the experience of suffusion and possession by "methodical procedure" or more "systematic regulation of life" to ensure "lasting grace" in the face of a transcendental God (i.e., asceticism), he also recognizes pantheism, "contemplative mysticism," and its social possibilities:

In any case, the typical mystic is never a man of conspicuous social activity. . . . Wherever genuine mysticism did give rise to communal action, such action was characterized by the acosmism of the mystical feeling of love. Mysticism may exert this kind of psychological effect, thus tending—despite the apparent demands of logic—to favor the creation of communities. (p. 176)

In the modern Western world, the transcendental God has led to an ascetic alienation from God and to transmutation of the ecstatic suffusion of orgy and mystical illumination into a methodical organization of practical, ascetic rationality: Its typical representative was the "man of vocation," and its unique result was the rational organization and institutionalization of social relationships.

Yet, as Arthur Mitzman (1969) argues and as we see directly from Weber, mysticism is viewed as an alternative ethic to asceticism, although its realization in social life could be found now only "pianis-

simo," in the cultivation of intimate personal relations. Socially, through the "acosmism of love," mysticism leads to an ethic of "universal brotherhood." But its time is not now. Weber concludes his late essay, "And, in the midst of a culture that is rationally organized for a vocational workaday life, there is hardly any room for the cultivation of acosmic brotherliness, unless it is among strata who are economically carefree" (1958, p. 357).

Mitzman puts Weber's countervailing charismatic, mystical alternative to the present time of "specialists without spirit" into an eschatological time. He translates Weber's translation of Isaiah: "Morning will come but yet is it still night. If you wish to ask, come again another time" (1969, p. 229).

Weber's historical social analysis illustrates how the relation between self and sacred can be empowering: in "methodologies of sanctification" aimed toward self-perfection as self-deification by identificatory possession of God, in ecstasy and the habitus derived from its diffusion and sublimation. But it was only in the "Asiatic" societies, lacking a transcendental, all-powerful personal God, that the pantheistic, contemplative, innerworldly mysticism enabled incarnation and possession of the Gods as a sacred method of self-perfection.

The resacralization hypothesis suggests that the religious basis of modern culture has ruptured its sublimating surface and found expression in New Age forms of innerworldly mysticism. This is not just a dialectic of rationalization and charisma or commodity and sacred, a cyclical appearance of an ideational culture in the wake of the collapse of the sensate era (Sorokin 1957), or simply a nostalgic reassertion of the premodern as antidote to the tumultuous uncertainty of postindustrial postmodernism (Harvey 1989). Instead, there is the possibility that resacralization and its innerworldly mystical forms *and* their place as methods of counteralienating reempowerment of the self are produced integrally within the social dynamics of informational postindustrialism.

Postmodern Self in Society: Melucci and Foucault

In the contemporary context, Alberto Melucci (1994) argues that contemporary social movements, "conflicts," "move from the economic-industrial sphere to the cultural sphere. They focus on per-

sonal identity, the time and space of life, and the motivation and codes of daily life" (1994, p. 109). He offers a social structural explanation for the salience of both self-work and resacralization.

In the required emphasis on symbolic social processing, the information society and its struggle over knowledge codes leads to a neglect of meaning systems for integrating these instrumental codes with interpretation of personal experience. Knowledge evermore replaces wisdom, to the detriment of effective processes of self-identity production:

> A split opens between the realm of instrumental knowledge, which efficiently manipulates the symbolic codes that select, order and direct information, and wisdom as the integration of meaning into personal experience. . . . The result is the search for identity, the quest for self that addresses the fundamental regions of human action: the body, the emotions, the dimensions of experience irreducible to instrumental rationality. This search allows the rediscovery of an irremediable otherness (other people, the Other, the sacred), a silent void that escapes the ceaseless flux of encoded messages. (p. 112)

In his review of social movements that offer countervailing possibilities to the dominance of the symbolic code in the information society, Melucci points to the resacralization tendency, and to its historical relevance for self or identity processes, as one of the "shadows" offering wisdom against the "operational codes":

> In this appeal to the shadow, to the unsaid and the unsayable, lies the most profound meaning of the new spiritual urgency that drives the collective action of many groups. Where it is not a renewal of the message of religion, where it is not a specialized sector of the market in emotions, spiritual experience in information societies is an appeal to wisdom; it is a call to that encounter with the self that is never entirely expressible in operational codes. (p. 122)

Read otherwise, as a mode of self-work, innerworldly mysticism is brought to the fore as a functional "shadow" within the information society. What I now want to suggest is that our analytical and empirical work of social analysis lies in *specifying* these identity processes,

not as paths of "salvation" but of potentially dealienating self-renewal, which is the premier site of collective action. This work was already begun, perhaps not from such a distant starting point, in the last phase of Foucault's oeuvre. As he wrote in one of his final essays, "I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of the self" (1988, p. 19)

Foucault describes this analysis as

> technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality. (p. 18)

In other words, these are secular, discursive, historical analytic descriptions of what Weber called the "roads to salvation." Mark Poster (1993) analyzes the evolution of Foucault's work, particularly the move from the study of the dispersed subject in discourse to a "hermeneutics of the self," or even more precisely to a study of the practices of "self-constitution." He quotes Foucault's *History of Sexuality* to indicate that self-constitution is concerned with

> the models, proposed for setting up and developing relationships with the self, for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the decipherment of the self by oneself, for the transformations that one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object. (p. 77)

Poster suggests that Foucault's move toward the study of these processes of self-constitution should not simply be explained biographically but historically, as an effect of the character of current social conditions. This is expressed in Foucault's shifting of his lens toward self-constitution and in the recentering focus on self-productive processes—the "work of the self on the self." Poster observes that "one could well ask if the question of self-constitution does not in fact derive its urgency and force from its problemization in the present, and

if that in turn is what raises the issue of its historical transformations" (1993, p. 77).

His answer is that in the "mode of information . . . new language experiences pervade everyday life—electronically mediated language experiences in which the individual is structured to constitute the self and to do so in drastically new ways" (p. 79). It is the new consumer self to which Poster wishes to draw attention as the object of inquiry.

This process of self-constitution includes not only the preparation of New Age, informational consumers, but also practices of self-constitution in the languages and media of the resacralization processes, which have emerged as countervailing force or "shadow" to commodified informationalism. As Foucault does in theory, these processes move *in practice* from dispersion and decentering and a postmodern elaboration of emptying modernist self-alienation to a self-filling, a self-recentering or dealienation and renewal of being that I refer to as "reselfing."

There are several empirical studies of these practices, notably in the work of Meredith McGuire (1988) and Thomas Csordas (1994), who emphasize religious healing movements as contexts of self-transformation. I want to offer an outline of paradigmatic processes of reselfing in order to set out a frame for additional empirical work. I believe that we can describe the paths of innerworldly mystical "roads to salvation." This typology of reselfing draws on ancient and sacred models to chart the future of the self in a mystical society.

A Typology of Reselfing

Despite the accusation of self-site politics as narcissism, contemporary reselfing processes represent self-work that is socially relational. I think we can suggest at least *three analytic types of reselfing.*

The first emphasizes active self transformation through ritual—behavioral action that is scripted by collective memory. The second is a more cognitively based alteration of meanings, definitions, categories, and collective representations, which changes the self imaginatively by mental refiguration. The third is an emotional fusion of self and sacred collective Other, an emotional reenergizing that is accomplished in part by the activation of historical, collectively recog-

nized visionary experiences, however esoteric they may appear. These are revitalization practices of mind, body, and nature. They are instances of embodiment, imagination, and reintegration: re-creation, re-positioning, re-union.

Re-Creation

The first is a ritual re-creative process; the second, a cognitive re-positioning one; and the third, an emotional-visionary re-integrative re-selfing. All are transformative recreations of the self and all are conversions in the sense that the old self surrenders or dies as a predicate of rebirth, revitalization, and renewal. In this sense, I view *reselfing as a microcosmic model of revolutionary social change*.

The empty self is refilled; the alienated exhaustion of being is replenished by regenerative rituals that recreate the original, primordial plenitude of being in collective ritual in which a new, initiated self is reborn. As we noted earlier, this type is at the heart of Eliade's (1960, 1969, 1987) comparative structural, historical anthropology of archaic religion and its meaning for the transformation of experience. As already noted, the "cosmogonic" method, the eternal return to *illo tempore*, is the core of the archetypal model of birth and initiation that defines becoming a social person in archaic societies. Becoming social is entering the sacred because the sacred is the real. There are a series of "spiritual transmutations" and "spiritual regenerations" that engage an archetypal process for which tribal initiation is the exemplar.

These initiations include "seclusion, tortures and trials, death and resurrection, imposition of a new name, teaching of a secret language, etc." (1964, p. 15). These are ritual, symbolic processes that "repeat the exemplary deeds that were enacted at the dawn of time" (p. 3). The reactualization of the origin quenches the "ontological thirst." It is an "archaic therapy," a "symbolic rebirth," that obviates the "fall into time" in a return to the fully cosmicized, sacred time of beginning. In that sense, the rituals are a "solemn recitation of the cosmogonic myth as a therapeutic method" (1960, p. 48). The self is regenerated at critical stages in the life course by rituals that enact the beginning of time that is full of being. Reselfing occurs as a replenish-

ment of being because the collective rituals have "reintegrated one into the original plenitude" (p. 48).

For Eliade, this "creative hermeneutics" of sacred regeneration, the "notion of life as perpetual renewal," is an explicit alternative to the historicized, desacralized European societies that have expunged the "hierophanies," the manifestations of the sacred in everyday life action. His archaic sociology of sacred transformations has not only a retrospective, nostalgic interest but a prospective one as well:

> For some time now, Europe has not been the only maker of history: the Asiatic world is actively re-entering the stream of history, soon to be followed by other exotic societies. . . . European values will lose their privileged status as universally recognised norms: they will be back at the status of local spiritual creations; that is, of cultural tributaries of a certain historic amplitude, conditioned by clearly circumscribed traditions. (1960, p. 232)

Re-Positioning

Complementing Eliade's sacred structural existentialism is work among symbolic anthropologists, like that of Fernandez (1995), for whom self-revitalization occurs particularly in an "argument of images," a "practical poetics," in which there is a "figurative displacement" that accomplishes a "metaphoric predication of new identities" (1995, p. 22). Fernandez sees the practical poetics of establishing new self-consciousness as antidote to the "inner loneliness of the individual" and disenchantment, expressly following Weber and Marx. As already indicated, his anthropology of revitalization movements displays how the "performance of images revitalizes" and compensates for the "deficit of meaning" (1986, p. 175). New self-consciousness is created in various recategorizations, reclassifications by which groups replenish meaning and being by repositioning their collective representations.

Common in these works of metaphoric transformation is a "returning to the whole," an imaginative cognitive process, a "metaphoric movement" that effects categorical redefinition of the self by repositioning it symbolically from periphery to center of the social whole,

compensating for the meaning deficit of alienation by representational repositioning. Although Eliade finds the renewal of experienced being by reintegration of the self with the surplus energy of God's creation of the beginning or by a ritual eternal return, Fernandez finds a repositioning of the individual as a new self in sacred social movements that renew being by displacements of categories and definitions.

Re-Union

The contemplative, mystic attainment of self-perfection via self-deification that Weber saw as historically marginalized in favor of a systematic sanctification methodology of regulative grace renews the self in a possessive process: "possession of, or mystical union with the divine. This is a distinctive organization of the *emotions* which seems to promise a certain type of knowledge" (emphasis added) (1964, p. 168).

In mystical traditions, this union is the full realization of the ecstatic moment, directed by visionary guides to its attainment (Merkur 1999). Here too, as in the ritual recreation of initiation or the new consciousness of category displacement that repositions the lonely, devalued individual into a new identity in central relation to the meaningful social whole, the self surrenders and dies to be regenerated into the fullness of being. Lamborn Wilson (1993) offers an "heretical" hermeneutic from "the margins of Islam" to explore a Sufi model of spiritual regeneration that sublimates and transmutes erotic and spiritual energies. This is a spiritual, sexual hermeneutics that shows Islamic mysticism in the "flashes of prismatic light" (p. 63) as a strategy of awakening the "desire for desire," a renewal of self-energy and emotional being on the mystical path of his interpretive "nomadology" of Islamic mysticism.

The "intoxication" of being is a "psychotopography of everyday life" (p. 159), in which self-renewal is finally represented in a recontextualization of Islamic history as a "poetics of wandering." For Wilson, the image of the transmuted self is in the ancient tradition of Sufi travel. "It is always morning," he writes, "the caravan is always ready to depart" (p. 159).

I have attempted a somewhat related transposition of Jewish mysticism (the following is excerpted from Wexler 1996b) in an effort to rethink the reenergizing of the self from the vantage point of Kabbalistic traditions. Beginning with Buber, I reread Scholem, Idel, and Afterman in the light of a sociological interest in recontextualizing mystical union within social structure.

The self–other relation, or social interaction, is not ideally an action of exchange or combination or even of "meeting" and "dialogue," as Buber would have had it. For the self is only an imagic crystallization, a substantial covering of inner sparks of light representing infinity; these sparks became separated and dispersed in the shattering drama of Creation. Insofar as they have a movement, their uplift and reparation is the latent force or drive of interaction in an instantaneously renewed moment of direction toward reaggregation, or ingathering—a movement toward reunification and the wholeness of light or energy that is holographically present in every being.

Time is understood differently in this paradigm of social interaction, neither as monotonically linear "progress" nor as a religious foundation for secular Enlightenment that mistakenly appeals, as Scholem observes, to messianism for legitimation. Rather, time is subjective and social and is seen as distance from infinitude. As Allen Afterman interprets Adam's fall, it is a descent into profane time, "his awareness fell into finitude" (1992, p. 35). The measure of life is subjectivized into a consciousness of the infinite and the whole. A "long life" is life lived with a certain quality of awareness in recognition of infinity. Time as finitude is separated or, in our terms, alienated; this is when we worship or become attached to the outer fragments of this-worldly vessels, "the ten thousand things" in the language of Taoism. Idolatry of the fragmented externals of the world is both a reflection and extension of the exile of the holy sparks, "Shehkinah's exile."

The immediacy of recognition of the infinite and eternally transcendental "holy sparks" concealed within persons is opposed to alienated time. This is Buber's mystical existentialism, the "incessant renewal" of the lived concrete moment. It is also opposed to the alienated, entropic, deenergizing time of separation and the movement against exile. The movement of return from the living whole is the reintegrative aspect of time both as exile and dispersion. It is time

that proceeds slowly in uplifting reparation, or "tikkun" through intentional but ego-detached fulfillment of the "mitzvot," or commandments and laws, that contain and direct diffuse and excess energy.

In Afterman's poetically condensed language, "the infinite is home." But time does not move only to the counteralienation of consciousness of the transcendental kernel of vital being or to the returning home where consciousness of the integrated and eternal is heightened. This heightened consciousness occurs through intended action and the collective rituals of temporal demarcation: the Sabbath provides a preview of restored, harmonious, integral time, and the seasonal holidays more mundanely activate collective memory and ecological integrity. Time moves also across generations and worlds in theurgies of cyclical and spiraling movements, "rollings" or "revolutions" of the wheel of individuated sparks and souls, in theories of reincarnation that imagine forms of interaction before and after the body dies. Concerning the Kabbalistic interpretation of time, Scholem describes it as the movement of the latent divine energy behind the "sefiroth," or potencies, that organize every level, from body to psyche, relation, and cosmos: "It flows out and animates Creation; but at the same time it remains deep inside. The secret *rhythm of its movement* and pulse beat is the law of motion of all Creation" (emphasis added) (1991, p. 39). The same ebb and flow, wavelike pulsation, "contains the ineffable that accompanies every expression, enters into it and withdraws from it" (1991, p. 41).

Even in its most mundane appearance, this time returns to this world; the movement of interaction that is transcendental serves as an energizing moment of return to this-worldly social interaction. The drive for unification with the prophecies of celestial ascent to God's throne by chariot or ladder, Shehkinah, are always complemented by stories of return to the social, intersubjective world. Return is the only safe path in the mystical quest for unity through cleaving or communion with the divine. Indeed the cleaving, or "devekut," is generative, being the effect of ecstatic and meditative preparation as well as producing new force, light, and energy. As Scholem writes, "This vital force, which is *aroused by communion*" (emphasis added) (1971, p. 219). The person, according to Idel (1988, p. 170), is "viewed as a vessel collecting the divine efflux . . . a vessel receiving the Shekhinah." Mystical practices producing ecstasy

are a prelude to unity or transcendental, divine bonding, which is itself a prelude to social interaction. As Idel writes,

> Furthermore, although devekut is a preeminently personal experience, it serves here as *an opening toward other-oriented action* [emphasis added]. Mystical union, or communion, thus serves as a vehicle used by the individual in order to better serve the community; personal perfection is transformed into a means of contributing to the welfare of others. (1988, p. 53)

He continues, describing these mystical unitive states as "attempts undertaken by the perfecti to reestablish broken links between the divine and lower worlds by the mediation of their spiritual faculties."

Mystical union redefines the character of social interaction as a transcendentally mediated intersubjectivity. Just as alienation is deeper than the appropriation of labor power, intersubjectivity is interpreted as more than linguistically undistorted communication or empathy. Social interaction as intersubjectivity is mediated by a third, normally silent term between subjects. It is not circumscribed by the "between-people" or the "in-between people," in Buber's view of relationality. Rather, it is the silent but energized *presence*, the sparks or kernels of being within the shells of images and things, which is transformative and finally determines the interaction.

Both Wilson's and my own efforts are secular hermeneutics of revitalization that draw on mystical paths of renewal by transcendental reintegration and transpose that fusion to everyday life. Weber saw "suffusion" as being inevitably replaced by instrumentalization; the intent here is to show that this "suffusion," like the tactic of self-empowerment in the present time, can itself be replaced by technologies of self based in innerworldly mysticism.

Self and Structure

Poster interprets Foucault's interest as a historically apposite problemization of self-production at a time when a new, consumer self is required for the information society. I have suggested that reselfing is a socially transformative, though microcosmic, change process and that it is an empowering counterprocess to alienation and mechanical pet-

rification and disenchantment. But even if there are such social processes of the refilling of an emptied self-being, their implications are ambiguous for altering "the whole," or the social structural frame, in which they are happening.

Following Melucci (1994), we might identify such self-processes as inchoate, incipient practices increasingly crystallized in new social movements, which in turn are both institutionalized and institution altering. Or, following Poster and Harvey, we may see only an anticipatory socialization that accommodates the emergent structure of a postmodern informational, consumer capitalism. My speculation is that reselfing types are part of a redefinition of the *meaning* of consumption and production.

Self-work is not simply preparation for a sign consumer node on the information network. Rather, self-work is *itself* constitutive in changing the nature of consumption: less external object acquisition, more infrastructure and instrumental technology for "perpetual self-renewal."

All reselfing is the product of sacred self-technologies, not simply immersion in the cosmogonic myth in which the real is the sacred. These technologies are "soft," interpersonal, and symbolic; they are consumed along with hardware, object techniques, and thereby add to the cycle of capital. But their larger efficacy is in the creation of the perpetually renewable, reenergized self, which is both the object and subject of capital.

Reselfing is a post-postmodern production of an entirely new form of labor power. It is labor power that dies in the alienation of instrumental corporatism but is directly and immediately reborn in the innerworldly mysticism of a suffusion of restored being, provided by the new methods of secular sanctification.

This process overcomes the disempowering destructiveness of alienation, which, at its limit, would incapacitate or deactivate consumers and the diminishing stratum of required producers. In this virtually *simultaneous* social production of death and life, the appearance of reselfing methods delivers replenished being; in their internal emplacement within humanly destructive social apparatuses and their increasingly direct coupling to the entropic processes, these negentropies provide a new social model of instantaneous immortality.

Indeed, their seductive power lies in their becoming more dependent on the deathlike self-destruction of alienation and decentering to realize their affirmative potential, not just in the memory of the fullness of some collective or individual being (the value of the psychotherapies lies here). Life and death are yoked in dynamic tension within both consumption and production.

In consumption, the living, energic drive is fostered by the instrumentalizing death of objectification of commodity and routine and presses for the perpetual invention and proliferation of new forms of reselfing; this is consumable not only as objects but also as technologies of the self. "Lifelong learning" is only the earliest sign of the displacement of socialization by new social methods of self-production. In production proper, the social immortality of yoked reselfing and objectification is accessible only to the surviving elements of the new class, leaving a growing proportion of the population to die various physical and existential deaths. "Life chances" takes on a new, literal meaning.

The surviving agents of production are reselfed, even in the routinized objectification of sign production. A more relational, expressive, and cognitively agile recategorizing self emerges to work the postindustrial apparatus. A new agent of social production becomes normative, perpetually renewing even in routine objectification, displaying self-power as re-creative, re-positioning, and re-integrative emotional fusion.

It is the work of social criticism and social theory to interpret the placement of these transformative practices of reselfing in relation to the possibility of structural change. What form does such critical interpretive work take in a new, mystical society?

This page intentionally left blank

4

∞

Criticism:
From Culture to Being

Against the grain of postmodern criticism that deconstructs discourse, the work of the late Christopher Lasch is an example of a different kind of social criticism. For him, criticism is an impassioned summons to the transformation of being by revitalizing public life. Lasch is an important precursor in indicating the nature of social criticism in a new, mystical society because he links social criticism to religion. He authorizes his criticism of society by appealing to sacred ideals and ways of being in the world rather than to secular, cultural ideals.

In his later, lesser-known essays on esoteric religion, Lasch saw parallels between the present New Age and the ancient world of Hellenism. In the biblical prophetic voice, he condemned the gnosticism and nihilism of both historical moments in favor of a covenental Jewish–Christian moral affirmation.

Lasch was influenced by the social criticism of the Frankfurt School. This brand of social theory has provided a major impetus to social and cultural criticism during the last forty years, across a wide range of socially critical work. Perhaps their best-known social criticism is the critique of the mass "culture industry," which has served as a model of cultural criticism. I admire both Lasch's critical American transcendental Puritanism and the Frankfurt School's dialectical cul-

tural historicism; however, neither takes us far enough into the new grounds for criticism under conditions of mystical informationalism and social revitalization and neither offers an "embodied criticism."

In this chapter, I analyze Lasch's mode of social criticism as well as that of the Frankfurt School. I want to highlight Lasch's pioneering effort to move from the cultural style of Frankfurt criticism to a new critique, aimed against nihilism, from the vantage point of religious traditions. In this sense, Lasch has done for criticism what I am aiming at more generally: to shift the resacralization of discourse and focus on an "elevating" transformation of individual being in relation to collective life.

Lasch: Social Criticism and the Sacred

Lasch wrote about intellectual and political figures, heroes, as a way to establish the tradition of his own thought and also to craft its direction, to differentiate as well as to identify and authorize. He acknowledged ambivalence particularly toward sociology, which often operated as the simplifier of historical specifics and scientized a disempowering ideology of irreversible progress and its twin shadow of stereotypical concepts of community. But sociologists, as critical intellectuals, also appeared in Lasch's hall of heroes.

He wrote admiringly of C. Wright Mills, whom he saw as embodying three conceptions of intellectual life: the voices of conscience, reason, and imagination. As in other intellectual portraits by Lasch, we can see and hear shades of Lasch himself. He writes of Mills: "Mills' thought notoriously resists classification. He was something of a Marxist, something of a populist, maybe even something of a liberal. He was a sociologist whose work was never accepted by sociologists" (Lasch 1986, p. 102).

He continues that "he defined himself as a maverick, an interloper from the heartlands" whose work aimed to "give shape to the inchoate longings of the American soul." Comparing him with Thomas Wolfe, John Dos Passos, and Jack Kerouac, he wrote that Mills shared "the same ambivalence about America, on the one hand a rejection of small-town America, on the other hand a desire to give its inarticulate struggles some kind of form and direction. . . . He wanted to put

intellectual work at the service of historical change" (Lasch 1986, p. 103). Doing this required a "rehabilitation of publics," a reawakening of "common ties," the ties of humanity itself, "a reminder that a community is more than a collection of individuals bound together by common interests or even common values" (Lasch 1986, p. 106).

A community that acknowledges dependence and "need for others" must be expressed in a "public discourse." Lasch wrote of Mills, who defined the "sociological imagination" as the relation between the private and the public and an understanding of "private troubles as public issues," that "the idea of the public reminds us that community life has a moral and educative dimension and cannot be understood merely as a means of satisfying private wants" (Lasch 1986, p. 106).

Lasch quotes Mills's *Power Elite*, using Mills's phrase "absence of publicly relevant mind" to characterize its effects. He concludes the commentary on Mills with his own view of the intellectuals' role:

> Here is the basis of a salutary appeal to intellectuals to concern themselves with the old-fashioned business of moral and political education, not with the deployment of expertise, with the leadership of would-be revolutionary movements of new classes, or with the celebration of the moral superiority of the underdog. (Lasch 1986, p. 107)

Lasch wanted to underline in Mills an assertion that Lasch called "the original sense of the intellectual's calling—the intellectual as moral teacher." The typology of intellectuals, especially Lasch's emphasis on the moral voice of conscience, shows how his positioning of the "intellectual's social role" was directly connected to the substance of his intellectual concerns. Of this first conception, which has "religious roots" and "upholds the disinterested ideal of love of truth," he self-revealingly explained:

> This moral and religious ideal makes the intellectual an adversary of the rich and powerful. The moralist, however, challenges them not by aligning himself with the downtrodden and dispossessed but by *invoking the counter-authority of tradition*, which he construes not as a body of timeless commandments, but as a conversation with the past that illuminates the conflicts of the present. (emphasis added) (1987, pp. 81–85)

Lasch's other sociological hero is Philip Rieff. If Mills spoke to the political and the moral meaning of social analysis as public discourse, Rieff speaks to the religious, to the "life of the spirit." For Lasch, this is a necessary critical complement to "civic life." In Rieff, Lasch finds a religious sensibility and a dissent from modernity: "A people's way of life has to be embedded in a 'sacred order'—that is a conception of the universe, ultimately a religious conception, that tells us 'what is not to be done'" (1990, p. 33).

But for Lasch, "religion is not culture" and "the university is not a sacred institution." "God, not culture, is the only appropriate object of unconditional reverence and wonder." Yet "unless it rests on a disinterested love of being in general, religious faith serves only to clothe human purposes with a spurious air of sanctity" (1990, p. 36).

Lasch sees Rieff in the tradition of religious prophecy and the kindred "exemplary tradition of secular intellectuals like Freud and Weber." From the prophetic, anti-modern, anti-postmodern vantage point ("it is not an improvement," Lasch observes of postmodernism), Lasch notes Rieff's "central preoccupations"—and so underlines his own: "the displacement of religion by therapy, the conflict between moral and aesthetic attitudes toward experience, the 'hypertrophy of criticism, by which the character disorder of psychologizing intellectuals is best diagnosed'" (1990, p. 33).

Gnosticism and the New Age

The exposition of counterauthorities, particularly those who did not fall easily into the camps of progress or nostalgia, Enlightenment or romanticism, took Lasch to various intellectual heroes and paths, many of which he chronicled in *The True and Only Heaven* (1991). One of the more unusual of such paths, however, is reported in a series of papers on gnostic religion. Critical intellectuals can certainly understand Lasch's "immersion," as he put it, in the work of the Frankfurt School.

Why an evidently equally deep immersion in the study of gnostic religion? This is puzzling, particularly since it is an area of scholarship about which Lasch admits, "With considerable relief, we turn from this imposing but confusing and ultimately unsatisfactory body of scholarship—this admirable collection of fragments which refuse to

come together" (1992, p. 29). Indeed, his comments on reading in the area offer a paradigmatic observation—analogous to Mills's—on intellectual craft:

> We see here the familiar, unavoidable, disheartening effects of academic scholarship in introducing new qualifications to every generalization, complicating every picture until it becomes unintelligible to anyone but an expert, and finally dissolving the object of study into its components, too fragmentary now to be reassembled into any kind of synthetic view. (1992, p. 29)

Of course, the answer is that "the Gnostic impulse finds expression in our time." Like Hans Jonas, whom Lasch describes as "the preeminent historian of Gnosticism" (1992, p. 28), it is because there is a "thrill of this dimly felt affinity" to gnosticism and its original context in second-century Hellenistic civilization. "It was a time," writes Lasch, "of expanding horizons and failing eyesight, of learning without light and great expectation without hope—a time very like our own" (1992, p. 28).

It is the prophetic, not the scholastic, approach to gnosticism that "puts the study of Gnosticism at the service of social criticism" (1992, p. 29). The prophetic approach "lures" him into the "Gnostic labyrinth," as Lasch quotes Jonas. Prophetic discourse is not only a mode of social criticism; as in Lasch's discussion of Thomas Carlyle, it is also heroic: "The prototype of the hero is the prophet." But the prophetic approach "seems to lose in historical precision what it makes up in moral passion." Among all the contradictory readings, it is "Jonas [who] comes closest to the truth when he identifies the heart of the Gnostic religion as 'nihilistic despair'" (Lasch 1992, p. 33). In Lasch's own definition, "Gnosticism is the belief that the material world was created by evil deities and that salvation lies in the soul's escape from the flesh into the spiritual realm whence it came" (1991, pp. 10–11).

Gnosticism is a belief in enlightenment by secret knowledge accessible to an elite in an evil cosmos, where a return to a pre-Creation nonbeing represents perfection. Gnosticism's dualism—between spirit and matter, the spiritual and civic life, and knowledge and feeling and faith—makes it a suitable progenitor of a long history of escapist religions. According to Lasch,

In our time . . . it finds expression . . . in the scientific dream of solving the mysteries of the universe [and in the modern form of the gnostic ideal in technological "disembodied intelligence"], in New Age spirituality, more generally in a mood of extremity and existential nostalgia [in which we have] lost confidence in the world around us. (1992, p. 40)

The contemporary problem is highlighted in the expression of ancient gnosticism's dualism in predicating religious salvation not simply on flight from the world but on rejection of matter, civil society, and an "absolute and unconditional . . . separation of religion and politics" (Lasch 1992, p. 36). Without an integral relational tension between religion and politics, there is no accountability to a "supernaturally derived standard of political conduct" and therefore no basis for a "good life," "ethical guidance," or social criticism. Instead, there is either pure matter or pure spirit: Enlightenment, science, technological domination of nature; or romanticism, inward-turning mythologization, and the sort of escapism that Weber termed "world-fleeing mysticism."

The contemporary expressions of the ancient dualism express "nihilistic despair" of a this-worldly grace and faith nurtured by revelation and transcendence stemming from the providential, covenantal religions of Judaism and early Protestantism; these expressions also eschew the Jewish and Christian "prophetic tradition" as a demand and definition of redemption. As moral covenant and based on its illuminative reliving as revelation, religion recedes from its claims on politics in favor either of new, elite, material, esoteric knowledge enlightenment or spiritual escape to a noncreated nonbeing. The empty space between is filled by the market. Here Lasch's anger and Frankfurt-style social criticism shine forth:

The global market has no place for peoples who assert their own traditions in public or claim superiority for those traditions. Ethnic and religious diversity is tolerated, even celebrated, but only as a kind of tourist attraction. Civic life is swallowed up by the market; buying and selling become the only activities we have in common. (1992, p. 40)

This market, and the kinds of spirituality that surrender the earth to it, is antithetical to the producerist, prophetic Puritanism that

Lasch found in Carlyle, Emerson, James, and later in Niebuhr. For Lasch, New Age gnosticisms are not the religion of Jonathan Edwards's "true virtue," "the union of hearts," or "Being in general." It is not Emerson's "eternal revelation of the heart," a religion that has "a life-giving force" and a vitality for the strenuous life in which "goodness of being" can deter the modern "homelessness," which gnosticism naturalizes in favor of a life-giving fervor and sense of wonder. Of William James's typology of religious experience, Lasch writes: "The twice-born type of religious experience, on the other hand, asserts the goodness of being in the very teeth of suffering and evil." Not "nihilistic despair" but "fructifying" "vitality of the soul" is what combats the death or "desiccation" of modern life. Lasch quotes James: "Your bogey is superstition; my bogey is desiccation."

While he writes of gnosticism in science, romanticism, and mythology, Lasch pursues the New Age movement as its most recent, powerful embodiment. Here too the "strenuous" tone of criticism, coated with Frankfurt-style aphoristic punchiness, typifies Lasch's writing: "The New Age Movement . . . invites a mixture of ridicule and indignant alarm" (1991, p. 8). It is "old-fashioned," "the same old commodities" as nineteenth-century mind cure ("the mind-cure market is booming"), mesmerism, and early twentieth-century New Thought. Its effect is the opposite of what religion promises as a spiritual basis for criticism and as a vigorous ethical standard: "The New Age replacements for religion soothe the conscience instead of rubbing it the wrong way" (Lasch 1991, p. 9).

Yet he acknowledged that these movements addressed "supremely important" phenomena and have "genuine insights." But in the end, the New Age is a "degenerate form of an ancient tradition." It is "another drug in a drug-ridden society" (Lasch 1991, p. 12). It is gnosticism again, the ever disappointing nihilist displacement of a prophetic tradition of faith in the goodness of being within what Christianity sees as "God's wicked world." It sacrifices faith, grace, being, and the redemption of the ethical covenant of providential prophecy for the worst of all worlds: "a therapeutic view of religion." It is based on a fundamentalist belief in the power of immediacy rather than the "spiritual discipline," the "strenuous sainthood" that is the hallmark of a religion that can serve as the theology for a political, ethical populism. New Age religion is alarming. It is a commercialization that represents a "degradation of piety." As in Weber's crit-

icism of "academic prophecy," it is "ersatz," a fake religion. Lasch concludes that "the only corrective . . . is to turn to the real thing."

Social Ethic of Being

Informational society sets the social structural stage for a new sacred social psychology of reselfing and a new social discourse of inner-worldly, pantheistically oriented and transformative mysticism. In this setting, which includes a confluence of informationalism and mysticism, my view complements Barglow's (1994) more technologically centered inquiry into the effects of computers on the psyche.

In addition to the rationalizing commodification of informationalism, Barglow also sees the emergence of forms of social relationality in informational relations, which counter modern individualist rationalization. Information processing encourages not only connection against alienating separation but a "subjectless state" (1994, p. 14); unconsciously, the computer operates as a "pre-oedipal object related to its user as a mother is bonded to her child before its own boundaries and personal identity have been consolidated." He sees the emergence of a new language, significant to the drive for relationality and the hunger for "linkage" and connection. The computer intervenes and recasts the self/environment relation; this also leads Barglow to ask whether postindustrialism has reached its psychocultural limit, opening toward a New Age spiritualism as its unintended reversal:

> From a spiritually inclined perspective, the disintegrative influence of post-industrial institutions and technologies on the foundations of Western civilization, including its notions of "individual", "ego", and "self", might even be a good thing. . . . Our best chance may lie in Eastern teachings that call into question the rifts between subject and object that Western conceptions cannot close. (1994, p. 195)

As we have seen, Melucci (1996) writes on the same horizon, though less centered on the direct effects of technology and more on the identity uncertainties created by postindustrialism. Postmodern "gaps, voids and dissonances" (1996, p. 15) lead to the need to "recompose the inner world and to reassemble the fragments of temporal experience into a unity of some kind." The "incessant communica-

tion" of what he calls "the planetary society" leads to inwardness as a basis for orientation. Melucci also sees the temporal "infinity of worlds" and argues that in a processual world, "the problem of boundaries becomes the crux of individual and collective life" (p. 56). Culturally renewed interest in nature, attention to the body, the displacement of pedagogy by therapy, and the holistic investment in "self-realization" through self-care in the life course are all social methods to overcome the disintegration of a "playing self" in the industrial world and encourage its emergence in the postindustrial world.

He too concludes that the transition leads us not only to therapy and care but beyond even creativity to "wonder," in Lasch's view of James's conceptualization. This "wonder" involves the "indeterminable" and a relation with all those who are "witnesses to the possible and unknown" (p. 143). Finally, he concludes, mystically, "not everything has been revealed, not everything has been said."

The new culture is no longer simply alternative or oppositional; nor is it exogenously disseminated from the suspected Eastern, silent other. The internal social structural, social psychological dynamics of postindustrial, informational network society create the basis for a different culture; a culture beyond the present particularisms of postmodern eclecticism and conspicuous pluralism to a new universalism, grounded in New Age versions of classical mysticism. This mystical informationalism is still not a culture, but only a mass and quite individualized social psychology. Though internally evolving in reversals of the limits of modern industrialism, mystical informationalism is neither fully legitimated culturally nor yet routinely institutionalized as social structure. Despite the integral connection between "self and society," the recycling of structurally produced mass mystical social psychology first requires the cultural legitimization of the new practices.

The cultural legitimization of new practices now takes a variety of forms, from "altered states" psychologies that scientifically defend what Arthur Deikman (1980) called "bimodal consciousness" to reconnection of current practices with legitimate traditions of knowledge and being: *beyond* New Age gnosticism to the "real thing." Only then can we speak of something beyond a structurally induced social psychology as a new culture.

Those traditions of knowledge and being are the cross-cultural canon of the universal mystical experience, which has come into the public sphere actively only in the very recent past. In America, those traditions exist in what Robert Fuller (1986), following William Clebsh (1973), refers to as the "aesthetic spirituality" of the transcendentalist tradition. This tradition flows from the Puritan divines whom Lasch admired: Jonathan Edwards; through the sage of Concord, Ralph Waldo Emerson; the poet of the American soul, Walt Whitman; and, of course, the founder of modern American psychology, William James. James also proclaimed his own allegiance to the "More" of the "higher self" in his study of mystical experience in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1982).

According to postmodern gnostic Harold Bloom (1992), the "American Religion" is gnosticism, not Christianity, and we are now fully living this experiential, orphic gnosticism in a post-Christian nation. On the contrary, following Lasch, the roots of an alternative might be better sought in New England transcendentalism and in the European Pietist revivals of the post-Reformation sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which Campbell (1991) calls the "religions of the heart." Of particular interest in Campbell's chronicle of movements for direct, affective religious experience rather than cognitively mediated, institutional sacramentalism, is the extent to which he sees them as part of the social ethic of the ascendant bourgeoisie, a "mysticism of the bourgeoisie" (1991, p. 18). In the United States, the New Age movement may be seen as part of the present reconstitution of the "American Religion," on the heels of a major technological and institutional social transformation.

It is this structurally generated, transformative, innerworldly mysticism that offers the conditions for a new social ethic of being as the basis for social criticism. To the current twin alternatives of innerworldly repressive asceticism and escapist gnosticism, my reply is to echo Lasch's use of the ancient prophetic term: "plague on both their houses."

Frankfurt School

This was also the sentiment of the Frankfurt School theorists, expressed in part by the classic essay "Culture Industry." The force of the

critical theorists' culture industry analysis is the defeat of art as a signal outside vantage point for reflection and theory that is critical, alternative, or different from the status quo.

Nothing is outside this totalizing apparatus. By virtue of its categorizing effect, culture is part of the system of social control, further alienated as art and entertainment in America. Art and culture have become "business," thriving on the false hope that they do offer an alternative to the system of repression and control—only to be shown as vultures of stereotype, as "incantations" or "trade-marks," so that culture itself simply "amalgamates with advertising." "The bread which the culture industry offers . . . is the stone of the stereotype."

The value of their analysis is not simply in the distaste for the sameness of mass culture, nor even in the one dimensionality of no-exit alternatives in art or the closing of the outside, the different and the exclusion of the stranger in person or cultural representation. Rather, the particular present value of the analysis is in the insistence on acknowledging the systemic, integrated, totalizing character of modern cultural expression. Neither culture nor psychology has to be "contextualized" with political economy and society, as we now do; they are integrally interconnected, albeit malevolently.

The critique of culture is of its effects in destroying any true individuality, any capacity of autonomous reasoned thought and mature, responsible action. Whatever industrialization itself did not already destroy, culture finishes off. It tyrannizes the soul and confines the body. Intimate relations are reified, and there is simply no room for imagination, reflection, or spontaneity—for human being.

Postmodernism revolted against this systemic, integrative tendency of a culture that promises bread but gives stone and expresses desire by tantalizing while creating the desiring-machine of the consumer as a historical figure. In implosion, diffusion, and decentering, and the ironic celebration of artifact and representation, there was hope that somehow exaggeration and caricature would keep open the possibility of another, better way of life. Instead of the destruction or dispersion of the systemic character of social life, I think we are beginning to see now that the real alternative is its *redirection* under historically different circumstances.

Art for us is not what it was to these surviving critical European intellectuals. The outside—the difference, vantage point, or basis for

"freedom" in American parlance—is now sought fully *inside*: interiorized in the mass movements for reembodiment, reintegration of the body in "nature" or ecology, and the revitalization of the soul through mass spiritual practices of old, new, and syncretic religions.

Consciousness, the critical theorists' fulcrum, now flees from reification and complete standardization in exchange for redirection to body awareness. This more conscious body is seen to be alive and is not seen as a petrified commodity. An energy body (Whitman's "body electric") becomes participant in a still deeper distancing from art and mass culture in a living Earth and a dynamic ecology that has a broader vision of life than that of European humanism. The devaluation of culture as either private creation or mass exchange takes the sociocultural middle out, between the Earth's body and Heaven's soul.

Simultaneous with the redirection of consciousness to the internal energy of the body and to *its* generative source in the Earth's ecology, the sublimation of the drive to transcendence in art and culture has been effectively desublimated, now permitting an open mass striving for religious redemption.

Each of these movements is no longer simply a reaction against culture as a fake exit from the labor process, nor indeed simply against the labor process itself. The current outside that is *inside* the body, in the Earth and its inhabitants and in the soul's quest for innerworldly transcendental being, arises from a very complex set of determinants.

As we have seen, it develops out of general historical social structural contradictions and productive tendencies of the planetary, network society, described differently by Melucci and Castells, for example. Technical rationality reaches its limit and calls for the integrative wisdom and practices of the spirit. The social relations of high informational production dematerialize the body and restructure time and space, unintentionally setting the stage for a mass resacralization of shared meanings.

As we shall see in connection with educational change, the labor process that created the poisonous cure that critical theorists called the "culture industry" is not the machine stamp of sameness that they decried. Interpersonalism and modular, even spontaneous, routines of intracorporate strategic management succeed television as the container of consciousness. Mass entertainment is not an adequately powerful antidote to this form of the occupation of consciousness,

which is somewhere between reified intimacy, technical rationality, and culturally organized cathartic distraction.

The contemporary version of the mass culture industry is mass mobilization of the techniques and beliefs of self-care, revitalization by environmental repair, and reimmersion and recall and revision of religious traditions. Like mass culture, the current mass mobilization is vulnerable at every point and moment to a reincorporation that reverses its direction. It is no longer simply that everything can become a stereotype or even a commodity. Rather, it becomes like culture, whatever it aims to oppose and negate. Regardless of its modality (stereotype, commodity, subroutine), reincorporation and revitalization remain a central dynamic of this civilization system.

Yet these movements have supplanted the hope for culture as an outside or alternative to instrumentalism and commodification in everyday life; they are indeed creating new forms of being, discourse, and social structure against the backdrop of destruction described by critical theory.

Beyond the resacralization of culture that I described in relation to education in *Holy Sparks* (1996), the so-called New Age movements are becoming increasingly transparent as only signs—sometimes distorted and deformed—of a deeper, more extensive, and yet undeveloped dynamic of revitalization. This is true not only in criticism but also in social theory and education.

I have been trying to encapsulate the plethora of these movements as complex processes combining elemental social practices of revitalization: fusion, presence, and vision. I think these practices constitute the new movements. I believe and hope that we can now begin to describe them already within the current collective drive toward revitalization, which remembers the despair, exile, destruction, and death of the European critical theorists and thereby revitalizes them.

But remembering should not fetishize them or their work. They liked to quote Nietzsche: "Wir haben unsere Gründe vergessen," which has been translated that "we forgot why we ever began." But I think it is more aptly translated as "we have forgotten our groundings."

We have begun to remember them. Not to aim at a revivalist copy of *their* groundings in European art and philosophy, from which they could see the degeneracy and inadequacy of culture, especially Amer-

ican culture. Instead, as the cultural middle drops out, we have begun to remember—beyond self-centeredness, high and academic culture, beyond "kitsch" and postmodern self-flattery—our own wider groundings in an environment that includes a revitalizing return to the Earth and to the Cosmos. From there, we begin to see, feel, think, and act differently from outside the apparatus and to create within it the future in a living present.

Embodied Criticism

This *regrounding of social criticism* occurs through the return of the body and the cosmos, certainly to mass consciousness and practice, but also to more sublimated, intellectualized forms of discourse. But the new and even fashionable academic interest in "the body" is not the same as bodiliness, and it is not an embodied criticism. In reviewing the emergence of the body as a focus for social theory, T. Turner observes "a propensity to ignore the primary character of the body as material activity in favor of an emphasis on the body as a conceptual object of discourse. The severance of the body's social roots, its dematerialization as a figment of discourse, and its reification as a transcendental individual" (1994, p. 28). Lyon and Barbalet make a similar point: "The representation of the body in scholarly discussion significantly reflects the ideology of the body found in the consumerist and medicalist formulations. . . . [T]he scholarly treatments of the body in society fail to see anything but a social artifact, rather than an active source of social processes and institutions" (1994, p. 54).

There is no parallel critique of treatments of the cosmos in contemporary social discourse; with the significant exception of Stephen Toulmin's pioneering efforts, little of that has yet occurred (1982, 1990). In the "future of cosmology," Toulmin tried to explain the disappearance of attempts to relate natural religion and natural science in the sorts of coherent theories that characterized pre-Renaissance and ancient thought. His contextual, historical explanation is novel for an eminent philosopher of science, but it is even less heretical than his major assertion a few years later of the primary importance of social context in the history of scientific thought. He goes on to argue for recent return of a cosmological interest "to reverse the cosmologi-

cal destruction wrought by modern science, from A.D. 1600 on" (p. 264). "Ecological ideas" and new biological thought combine to encourage this return, which he applauds. Despite this authoritative appeal and the many voices of popular New Age thinkers, academic social science and radical social critics are still silent to the power of a cosmological perspective as a grounding polarity in a revitalized, embodied social criticism.

Just as the initial industrial mechanism and then postindustrial information are supplanted in importance by decentered sacral energy and the circulation of imaginary phantasms in the society of mystical revitalization, so too do the terms "culture" and "society" seem less to capture the implications of the return of cosmology: the perceptual shift toward seeing the macro/micro linkage not as one that is under the sign of the sociocultural, but outside and beyond it. This is apparent in the linkage between the flows of social body energy alchemy and the resacralized hermeneutics of experience.

Classical mysticism's *integration* of the upper and lower worlds, the cosmic and the bodily, is what we now want to enact when we talk about "social criticism." According to Hasidic teaching (Elior 1993, p. 61), "Now, the core and the essence of the blessed Ein Sof is the same in the higher and lower worlds." The generic mystical expression is "as above, so below." However, more accurately, there is a dynamic dialogue between what is above and below, between macro-cosmos and micro-cosmic body. In the words of Job, "in my flesh I shall see my God" (1993, p. 36). And in mystical Hasidism, the body microcosm is the "living Torah." Indeed, cosmic and bodily interrelation—the fully contextualized self—is the larger dialectic of the self, in which the phantasm of immortality works.

In a reembodied world, criticism is only truly revelatory if it is simultaneously transformative of embodied being. As we have observed, the ancient biblical and cross-cultural shamanistic imagery of bones and breath is a complement to Taoist theories of the macro- and micro-cosmic orbit of energy within the body. Even New Age body workers who focus on the release of muscular tension as "healing" may not see the reconnected or cosmological interpretation of bodily practices, despite their formulation in classical religions.

A contemporary commentary on skeletal shamanism is to see the muscle, fascia, and skin—the "flesh"—as the corporeal embodiment

of that which is less primordial and less linked to the original source of spiritual existence and nature. The sociocultural that is not transtemporal is enacted in the flesh, whereas the transtemporal, spiritual, or mystical is "engraved in the bones." Here the body is itself divided between the sacred and the profane. The profane is inscribed in the rigidifications and deformations of the flesh, while the bones enable the flow of water and light and thus the regeneration of energy that begins its orbit macrocosmically.

Such speculative remapping of the body points to *healing* as embodied criticism. Here we look to the new anthropology of healing for studies regarding the way in which knowledge or image and body interact in a variety of transformative practices; this is examined critically, against the apparently static ritual order. Andrew Strathern (1995) explores how "trance facilitates such a reframing" (p. 127), where reframing is the means to altered images that work at the bodily level. He cites Rossi's experimental work to assert that "there can be a complex relation between mental images into cellular modifications" (p. 129). Similarly, Kapferer writes, "Consciousness takes form in an intentional body, a body directed and oriented towards the horizon of its life world" (1996, p. 135).

Phantasms and Energy

Thomas Csordas's (1994) study of healing in the "empirical laboratory of ritual practice" underlines the "performative force of imagery." At the same time, it highlights a "somatic mode of attention" and his view of "the phenomenological unity of mind and body, self and other, internal and external, past, present, and future" (p. 148). He underscores the term "presence" as the "synthesizing symbol of the experience as a whole" (p. 244).

The question raised by the parallel processing of image and energy is whether the definition of embodied criticism as transformative healing surrenders that distance from experience that we have traditionally taken as a general requirement of social criticism and social theory. But, as the creative synthesis of new polarities and the traditional reference point for critical distance, the very meaning of social theory will also have to be reconsidered.

5

∞

Social Theory:
From Society to Cosmos

The Social

In a sense, we have been rethinking and revising the modern social theory canon, "classical sociology," Marx's social structural and technological determinism and Weber's analysis of the relation between religion, culture, and self.

Now we include Durkheim in the sociological triumvirate. Durkheim is the theorist of the "social," a reality "sui generis" as he referred to it, in justifying the independent scientific status of sociology. This is the social "reality" that we have seen as dispersing between the poles of "heaven and earth," both embodied revitalization practices and reimmersion in the cosmos. However, Durkheim's science that has "the social" as its object is itself already sacralized. For the social is fundamentally religious, a phenomenon, as Durkheim wrote, that is "the germ from which almost all others are derived."

The social begins and always returns to religion for its definition. Society is based on a process of religious revitalization. But Durkheim's model of the social as quintessentially a process of religious revitalization is not the same as our view of revitalization. For him, social energy ("electricity" he called it) does not derive from the reintegration of active, self-enhancing practices of transformation.

Rather, social revitalization is produced in surrender to a nonroutine but nontranscendent, noncosmological aspect of social life. Ritualized ecstatic surrender is the generative source of society. In his view, this source did not spring from "enthusiasm" or animism (which he expressly rejected), magically eroticized phantasms, visionary practice of meditation, text-based sacred hermeneutics of experience, or the shamanic saint's cosmic ascent to the divine source and descent to a sacralizing human community.

Our attention to Durkheim's revitalism emerges from three vantage points. First, appropriations of classical texts change along with alterations in professional discourses: the culturalist and postmodernist readings belong to the wider ascendance of various cultural models. This cultural interest is now challenged by a move toward emphasis on "being" and "embodied consciousness," from within no less a bastion of the core concept of culture than anthropology. Anthony Cohen writes against an overdetermined and reified cultural approach:

> It now seems inadequate to write as if the outer life of symbolic forms, institutions and norms is all there is, or as if an outer life of overt behaviors somehow speaks for itself or is intrinsically meaningful, a social fact somehow independent of the creative consciousness of the individual. (1995, p. 3)

To this individual consciousness interest, Thomas Csordas adds a bodiliness that is not simply cultural studies' body-as-social-text object of inscription by social discourse. "Culture is grounded in the human body" and "bodiliness" and "embodiment" are "not the passive object of abstract culture" (1994, p. 6). More pointedly, Terence Turner argues against the postmodern culturalist way of "treating bodies, bodily functions, and powers as products or projections of cultural discourses or symbols rather than as pragmatic individual and social activities of production and appropriation" (1994, p. 44).

Second, beyond the changing professional discourse, recognition of the historical, social context—both Durkheim's and my own—inevitably creates a vantage point for reading. A great deal has been written about the context of Durkheim's work generally and regarding his sociology of religion particularly (see notably Pickering 1984). Fundamental to the broadly agreed reform interest of Durkheim's so-

ciology, we see a commitment to a deeper, transformative revitalization and renewal of society: a "revival of the profound collective experience" (Bellah 1973, p. xlvi).

This interest in social revitalization characterizes the contemporary context within which we read Durkheim. As I have argued (Wexler 1996), this context is one of incipient "resacralization" and shifting cultural premises that are expressed through a variety of New Age movements against the prevailing instrumental, petrifying commodification of everyday life and toward a revivifying resacralized form of social existence. This is a transformation in the "depths of social existence," as Bellah described the intent of Durkheim's analysis.

Third, the central vantage point is the text of "Formes" itself. In this text, Durkheim asserts a coherent and consistent theory of religion and society, of the sacred and the social: a theory of social life as continuous revitalization with educational relevance. This "dynamogenic" model reflects Durkheim's desire for a "new day," in which we will know hours of "collective effervescence" and leave the "current period of transition and moral mediocrity" again to be "electrified" (1995, p. 429). I share the desire, if not Durkheim's form.

Social Energy

For Durkheim, religion is the basic social phenomenon "from which all others—or at least almost all others are derived" (Durkheim 1960, p. 350). The religious process, and thus the social process, is primarily an alternating wave of concentration and dispersion of social energy. This energy is created in the oscillation of a two-phased social being or system. The two phases are two different and separate types of existence; one (the sacred) expressing a "higher life" than the other (the profane) pole of social being. "Intensity" and "energy" may "charge" the other phase of profane economic everyday life. The source of that "strength" and the collective representations around which it is organized in the first, higher phase of group life is exemplified by the collective assembly of the "corroboree" of the totemic religion of the Australian tribes.

In this higher phase, the everyday is cast off, and in conventionalized shared practices, the assembled individuals lose self-control, intoxicated by their shared presence and the absence of everyday

constraint. Any new revitalized social existence will have to return to these periodic feasts of social being for energy. The social being regularly returns to these unstructured states, which Edward Tiryakian (1988) terms "dedifferentiated" and Francisco Alberoni (1984) refers to as "nascent," to recharge ideals of the social whole that shape socially structured action. This primary and primal state is an orgiastic and ecstatic condition in which collective effervescence describes the scene of action; this also describes the process and source of energy, without which societies are demoralized and die and there is no individual strength of being or affirmation of life force.

Durkheim's text offers an abundance of instances by which a destructured, orgiastic assembly of a shared ecstasy of being creates energy that is incarnated both in collective representations and in the formation of individual persons. This energy, or "wakan," is the reason for the subsequent sacralization of objects; it is at the center of the separated times and places demarcating a separate social zone as the sacred. The specific objects and images depend on social energy for power and meaning. Durkheim's theory of the social is a theory of social energy.

The dynamic dualism of "the sacred and the profane" that organizes social existence is "always and everywhere conceived by the human intellect as separate genera, as *two worlds with nothing in common*. The energies at play in one are not merely those encountered in the other, but are raised to a higher degree; they are different in kind" (emphasis added) (1995, p. 36). Durkheim continues, "In that case, one must ask what led man to see the world as two heterogeneous and incomparable *worlds* [emphasis added], even though nothing in sense experience seems likely to have suggested the idea of such a radical duality" (1995, p. 38).

In terms of concentration, periodicity, and communion, Durkheim explains the nature and operation of social energy: "The religiousness of the place . . . radiates beyond and is transfused into all that surrounds it. Within that space, part of the creative process is understood by observing initiation rites: "With this kiss, he enters into relations with the religious principle that is held to reside in it [the totemic object]; it is a genuine *communion* [emphasis added] that is to give the young man the strength he must have to endure" (1995, p. 124). Of the cultural, symbolic core object, the totem, he writes: "It

is the tangible form in which that *intangible substance* is represented in the imagination, diffused through all sorts of disparate being, *that energy alone is the real object of the cult*" (emphasis added) (1995, p. 191).

Lest it is thought that the language of energy and force is my own retrospective projection, Durkheim cautions otherwise:

> When I speak of these principles as forces, I do not use the word in a metaphorical sense; they behave like real forces. In a sense, they are even physical forces that bring about physical effects mechanically. Does an individual come into contact with them without having taken proper precautions? He receives a shock that has been compared with the effect of an electrical charge. They sometimes appear to be conceived of more or less as fluids that escape via the extremities. . . . [T]hey play the role of *life-principle* [emphasis added]. . . . All life is based on them. (1995, p. 192)

What is that "life principle"? For Durkheim, "the common life principle is wakan. The totem is the means by which the individual is put in touch with that source of energy. If the totem has powers, it has them because it incarnates wakan" (1995, p. 197). He stresses that "the spirits, demons, genies and gods of every degree are only the concrete forms taken by this energy [this potentiality, as Hewitt calls it] as it became individualized . . . and condensed . . . wakan goes and comes throughout the world, and the sacred things are the places where it has alighted" (1995, p. 201).

Not only by materialization in objects, but also in the "communion" of "a man who is speaking to a crowd" (1995, p. 212), we can see that "this extraordinary *surplus of forces* [emphasis added] is quite real." Durkheim notes the fluctuations of surplus energy in historical as well as situational circumstances:

> Under the influence of some great collective shock in certain historical periods, social interactions become much more frequent and active. Individuals seek one another out and come together more. The result is the general effervescence that is characteristic of revolutionary or creative epochs. The result of that heightened activity is a general stimulation of individual energies. People live differently and more intensely than in normal times. Yet, there is virtually no instant in our lives in

which a certain rush of energy fails to come to us from outside our-
selves. (1995, p. 213)

Durkheim reiterates an alternating two-phase theory of social en-
ergy throughout the text:

> The two phases stand in the sharpest possible contrast. The first phase,
> in which economic activity predominates, is generally of rather low in-
> tensity. . . . This dispersed state in which the society finds itself makes
> life monotonous, slack, and humdrum. Everything changes when a cor-
> roboration takes place. Since the emotional and passionate faculties of
> the primitive are not fully subordinated to his reason and will, he easily
> loses self control. . . . There are transports of enthusiasm. . . . Once the
> individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from
> their closeness. (1995, p. 217)

In the regenerative phase, social life is elevated to "a communion—
that is in a *fusion* [emphasis added] of all the individual feelings into a
common one. . . . [A] *mystical* [emphasis added] sort of germinative
plasma that is transmitted from generation to generation" (1995,
pp. 231, 273).

The socially creative states are cyclical, "reanimating" "orgies of
collective and religious life" that "make men forget the real world so
as to transport them into another where their imagination is more at
home" (p. 384) and is "sometimes even delirium . . . man is carried
outside [emphasis added] himself" (pp. 386–387). Emergent man is
the "object" (1995, p. 417) of these practices "to lift man above him-
self and to make him live a *higher life*" (emphasis added), a life and
"aptitude for living outside the real" that make him stronger and add
"vital energies" that offer a "new life," a "higher life" (p. 425).

This social energy reading of Durkheim's classic text is supported in
the observations of other contemporary readers. For example, in ap-
plying the analysis of the "Formes" to her study of the French Revolu-
tion, Lynn Hunt observed:

> The sacred therefore has its origins in a surplus of energy created by an
> extraordinarily high level of social interaction. The energy trapped by
> this intense social exchange is then invested in some object which is
> taken to represent collective ideals. (1988, p. 27)

Similarly, Edward Tiryakian (1981, 1988) sees in the "Formes" a theory of both social renewal and social revolution, in a sacralizing process of "de-differentiation." This process is one of "transformation" and is characterized by a high level of energy (Tiryakian 1988, pp. 45, 49). For a number of recent historical instances of social revolution, Tiryakian writes that "the religious factor was important in launching the process of dedifferentiation as a process of societal renewal" (1988, p. 52).

Randall Collins (1988) sustains the same perspective: "For Durkheim, the social gathering is a kind of machinery for charging such objects with sacredness. . . . [T]hey become 'batteries' (my expression, of course, not Durkheim's) for carrying over this moral energy into subsequent situations" (p. 111). Perhaps the preeminent analyst of Durkheim's sociology of religion, W. S. F. Pickering (1984), also supports the social energy interpretation in his concept of "effervescent assembly." Quoting Durkheim, he writes of "a source of social energy superior to that which is at the disposal of the individual and which, nevertheless, can be communicated to him" (1984, p. 387). Lastly, Mike Gane suggests that Durkheim's vitalism replaces the charisma of the romantic hero with the figure of the charismatic social (1992, p. 87).

Beyond Dualism

Durkheim is a proud dualist. "The duality of our nature," he wrote, "is thus only a particular case of that division of things into the sacred and the profane that is the foundation of all religions, and it must be explained on the basis of the same principles" (1973, p. 159). His model of religion, and therefore of society, is based on the creative power of this fundamental dualism. The duality of the sacred and the profane and of the places, times, objects, and states of being that must be separated, is the source of the social energy that animates all of social life. The sacred is naturally supernaturally Other. Paradoxically, it is not *iconically* social or *normatively* social, though ecstatic assembly is the locus of the social. The social spirit/substance precedes the sign and rule. "The object that serves as a prop for the idea does not amount to much as compared to the ideal superstructure under which it disappears and, furthermore, it has nothing to do with that superstructure" (Durkheim 1995, p. 230). "It is in the form of collective

thought that impersonal thought revealed itself to humanity for the first time" (1995, p. 438). The wordless becoming of the natural supernatural that transubstantiates the profane and transfigures representation, this emergent logos, heralds the "impersonality and stability" of collective immortality:

> To think logically, in fact, is always, in some measure, to think impersonally; it is also to think sub specie aeternitatis. Impersonality and stability: Such are the two characteristics of truth. . . . To say that concepts express the manner in which society conceives of things is also to say that conceptual thought is contemporaneous with humanity. . . . [L]ogic evolves as societies themselves evolve. (1995, pp. 437, 440)

The ecstatic "fusion of all the individual feelings into a common one brings their moral unity" and "teaches the mind to dominate what appears to the senses and join what the senses put asunder" (1995, p. 232). Historically and transcendentally, religious communion initiates the millennial logos:

> As soon as man became aware of the internal connections between things, science and philosophy became possible. Religion made a way for them. It is because religion is a social thing that it could play this role. To make men take control of sense impressions and replace them with a new way of imagining the real, a new kind of thought had to be created: collective thought. If collective thought alone had the power to achieve this, here is the reason: Creating a whole world of ideals, though which the world of sensed realities seemed transfigured, would require a hyperexcitation of intellectual forces that is possible only and in society. (1995, p. 239)

Social energy has supralogical life in accord with the spiritual principle "that singularly creative and fertile psychic operation—which is scientifically analyzable—by which a plurality of individual consciousnesses enter into communion and are fused into a common consciousness" (Durkheim 1973, p. 160). The feasts of the festival are epiphanies of the collective soul, gatherings in synthesis of "bits of divinity" (Durkheim 1973, p. 159; 1995, p. 267) that idealize collective consciousness in "freedom consist[ing] in deliverance from blind, un-

thinking physical forces" (Durkheim 1974, p. 72). Participation in the life of spirit is an "accession made by the grace of society": "If collective consciousness is to appear, a *sui generis* synthesis of individual consciousnesses must occur. The product of this synthesis is a whole world of feelings, ideas, and images that follow their own laws once they are born" (Durkheim 1974, p. 72; 1995, p. 426).

Durkheim's sacred, and thus his social, is other to all profane: other to the embodiment of existence, to intersubjectivity only possible by difference, to feminine religious activity, to the presence of magics of social healing originating in organic sensibilities of everyday praxis (Marcuse 1969; McGuire 1996). Not simply from his Jewishness, Durkheim's sacred finally is the other of rabbinic, rational Talmudism of the Lithuanian, or Jewishness that historically opposed Jewish pietistic religions of the heart known as Hasidism. Motivated by these "others" of his dualism, Durkheim's social energy moves from experience—away from the ordinariness of life in order to transform life by communion with ideals.

I suggest that the dualistic infrastructure is inaccurate. Durkheim's social energism presupposes a monological collective consciousness, identical with its knowledge and known in the removal of difference via communion. To the contrary, I propose that the social space is *between*, existing between differences as embodied practices of social energy and as the sensual, dialogic forms of education.

These "other sides" of Durkheim constitute the "alter-grounds" of his theory of the sacred. The sides that are diminished, refused, or repressed "return" as *constituting the energic core of his theory of the sacred and of society. Vitalism, mysticism, feminine religion, magic, and Hasidism* are expressed in his theory and also offer an alternative to it in their elaboration. In these other sides of his dualities can be found the bases for a *nondualistic* approach to religion and society.

The otherness of the sacred lies not only in its vital substance, dispersing ("like fluids") to animate and revitalize, but in its "undifferentiated" state, as Tiryakian described it. This is the "other" of the two phases. Although it is "higher," it is at once a depersonalization or deculturation simultaneously, as it is the source of person and culture. This is the "heart" that Stjepan Mestrovic (1992) sees as Durkheim's other side of compassion and will; Mestrovic suggests that it is based on the life-force philosophy of Schopenauer. For Mestrovic,

Durkheim's sacred is feminine: "Feminine aspects of Durkheim's sociology—especially his claim that religion is the *womb* from which all the other social institutions originate—have never been the centerpiece of the social scientific study of religion" (1992, p. 95). In one of a growing number of exceptions to that pattern, Victoria Erickson notes in her feminist sociology of religion that "Durkheim's analysis of religion reveals religion's sacralization process as a tool used by particular men to create and sustain society from which women and the rest of the profane collectivity, are excluded" (1993, p. 46). She goes on to observe, "Durkheim selected the rationality of religious thought over the profane, magical, erotic world view" (p. 47). Yet if the sacred is the place of return of the regressed ego, the undifferentiated origin of creation, is it not also an eternal return to the Mother who gives life, in Durkheim's unnamed polarity to the male religion of rites and beliefs?

Pickering, echoing earlier observers, similarly describes Durkheim's antimysticism: "Durkheim was expressing an innate fear of mysticism which seized him at the beginning of his life and remained with him to the end" (1984, p. 183). Yet Durkheim names the process of collective energy creation in the sacred as a "mystic mechanics" and the social transmission of that energy across generations as one of a "mystical plasma." The dualist theory of society is premised on a nondualistic experience.

Magic too is refused centrality by Durkheim. "Magic . . . [he notes early in "Formes"] beliefs do not bind men. . . . *There is no Church of Magic*" (original emphasis) (1995, p. 42). Durkheim's monotheistic social-as-god attempts to dispel the spirits and the agency of mediums and shape-shifters as dreamers, travelers, and world vagrants that transversely alter reality as "living sites" of and between interpenetrating existences (e.g., Jackson 1989, 1995; Stoller 1995). In the illogics of magic, there is a divination in the everyday of felt absences and tacit recognitions, an insurgent, sensuously social and commensual imagination of the real. For Durkheim, the purgation of magic cleanses the social body and soul and represents revitalization as a vigorous hygiene of social experience.

Durkheim's social is modern, a secularization and concentration of a wider field of social energy in apparent service of sensually social ways of knowing the places *between* differences; this is in contrast to

transparency of "communion" to the conceptually impersonal and universal. Yet on the other hand, magic and spirits are *experientially* possessed, voiced, and *performed*. As ways of sacred sociality, the senses and the flesh are not ciphers or abominations but permeations of awareness to living relationality (Levy, Mageo, and Howard 1996; Csordas 1994; Stoller 1989; Seremetakis 1994; Jackson 1983). By the practical poesis of magical sensibility, affirmation in the ordinariness of the everyday reverses the Durkheimian elevatory trajectory of ritual toward impersonal truth, adding the modern secularization and concentration of knowledge to that of desire and of social being.

Pickering raised Durkheim's last muted pole of duality, his Jewishness: "The subject of Durkheim's Jewishness, however, has never been dealt with systematically" (1994, p. 11). Pickering underlines Durkheim's understated and unreflected Jewishness by positing Durkheim's desire to conceal his roots: "Durkheim's wish for hiddenness might also be seen in the fact that he, who was named David Emile, chose always to be known as Emile rather than by the more Jewish name of David" (1994, p. 19). Pickering pursues this speculative line by linking Durkheim's particular Jewish lineage to his putative antimysticism: "Derczansky maintains that Durkheim's father stood in the tradition of Lithuanian Judaism which had come from Eastern Europe. It was strongly juridical and stood aggressively opposed to every form of messianism and mysticism" (1984, p. 158).

Reintegration

For Durkheim, the source of social energy is in otherness. In psychoanalytic terms, such energy comes from a "regression of the ego" to an undivided, deregulated primal state of ecstatic fusion with the social; this is God, Durkheim tells us. In this sense, Durkheim's model is "other" in that his descriptions of the sacred contain the other, *refused* polarities in his dualism; it is "other" also in the important sense that it is otherworldly. Mana and wakan become concentrated in social aggregation so that pantheism and even the polytheism of William James, which Durkheim rejected, is condensed to one social, unified God.

At once, Durkheim's social, vitalistic monotheism is divided (two worlds, two beings, two phases), to use Weber's term (1964), an "oth-

erworldly" mysticism—an empowering of the worldly—only by an exiting fusion with the primal flow. Such a resacralization is precisely the dynamic of revolution, as Tiryakian argued, and of a discovery of "will," as Mestrovic imputed. This occurs through a "gnosis" of body/mind that lives by surrender of the ego's will. The reliance on otherworldly fusion as the final source of social energy in a depleted, "mediocre" age leads to a cult of hyperindividualism, as Durkheim prophesied, and also to cults of collective immolation; these are cults involving ritual forms of collective self-abnegation to the point of destruction. The contemporary "forms" are not the sacralizing prefaces of social revolutions, but the informational, gnostic mass suicides of Heaven's Gate in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

That is the end point of an otherworldly generative source of social energy that relies on collective rites of self-denial and fusion. Is a this-worldly, narcissistic, nihilist hedonism the best social alternative? Or is it the individualist mysticism that Durkheim (1983) castigated James for unscientifically advocating? Of course, the alternative is to find social energy within the world, in social life that does not require and posit everyday life as inevitably "utilitarian," "cold," and "dying," as Durkheim did.

This is Buber's aim: to bring contact with the summons of a transcendental to the enlivening of the self in the mutuality of validating, creative human interrelation. This involves locating the sacred energy in the "in-between" people; Buber referred to this as "the spark that leaps the gap." Integration, or "unification" as Buber puts it, is the solution to the vitalization and renewal that works against the unfettered chaos and decay of the modern era. *The sacred is returned to the world*—not to strengthen the ordinary for further utilitarian economic and social reproduction, but to transform it relationally. This involves vitalization by instigating the freedom of response—and responsibility—as an articulate voice, rather than through surrendered fusion and ego regression communion rites of merger. The sacred, and thus the life force, is engendered by the response to the other. But for that, the call must be heard.

This other is both transcendental and worldly, the eternal but historical Thou of the Bible; it is also the Thou of the humanly different, "e-stranger-ed" other. Social energy that enlivens the individual and the collective comes through social interaction that depends on a free choice of an autonomous being who chooses relation as the answer,

not a surrender or merger or return to the primordial flow. "Here," writes Buber, "dualism is fought with the utmost vigor" (1963, p. 141). Buber proclaims, "Hallow the earthly" and "affirm the covenant with God in everyday life" (1967, p. 163). This "love" is the social bond sought in the communion of fusion and self-surrender; it becomes generative itself because it is an answer and a simultaneous affirmation of both self and other, in responsibility.

Social energy is in the in-between; social revitalization in a life of "dialogue" is proposed against the model of an orgiastic beginning. The love that binds is not a dedifferentiated return but a creative interaction: "Wherever genuine human society has developed, it has always been on this same basis of functional autonomy, mutual recognition and mutual responsibility, whether individual or collective" (Buber 1958, p. 131).

In his formative interpretation of Hasidism, Buber replaces dualism with integration. In a more recent reading of Hasidism, Moshe Idel (1995) offers a more mediated version of Hasidism, which is not only ecstatic in its mystical, Kabbalistic roots but also magical in historically heterogeneous influences.

It is a reconstitutive process that involves a "drawing down" of divine influx and its subsequent distribution through practices of "elevation." Not a two-phased but a two-tiered, more vertical model of distribution is offered. And this model involves distribution of the divine influx, or social energy, that binds the tsaddiq to the divine source and thereby to the human community.

The vessel of this energy is not collective representation (though the letters of Torah carry this energy and, by proper practices, can be "called" forth); instead, the vessel is the experiential body (1995, p. 59): "The human body was thereby conceived as the locus where the divine influx is received and as a vessel to hold the descending influx." It is the tsaddiq who draws down this divine energy, which Idel refers to as "a kind of spiritual electricity." For Idel (1995), these are basically astrological terms; the magical practices of Hasidism include also talismans, which are powerful; "the strongest talisman is the divine name" (p. 74). Like Durkheim's theory of the sacred, Idel's version of Hasidism is one of both social energy and social binding:

> The quintessence of the mystico-magical model can be defined as the
> sequence of an inner, mystical experience that consists of a cleaving to

God, often preceded by a self-induced feeling of 'nothingness'—that is an expansion of consciousness, and the subsequent return to this world and drawing down into it the divine energy by performing the ritual and then distributing the energy to others. (p. 107)

In the mediated sacral energy process, the saint, tsaddiq, or shaman expresses "his capacity to bring down and distribute divine power, or influx, to the community he serves as spiritual mentor" (p. 204). Such return does not dissolve existential contradictions by abstract transformation but sacralizes the embodied, relational structure of experience.

Education As Embodied Mediation

A mediated and embodied theory of social energy contrasts with that of a direct, undifferentiated, and ideational sacred theory of social energy. The difference between these two perspectives is exemplified by comparing Durkheim's application to education to the view that education is embodied mediation, a practice of presence (Wexler 1996, pp. 133–152). For Durkheim, education is an immersion in collective representation that replicates the collective practices of totemism in a secular, reformist, and socially revitalizing modality. Social immortality via continual collective rebirth is the very goal of education for Durkheim (1956, pp. 123–124, 71–72):

Education consists of a methodical socialization of the younger generation. In each of us . . . there exist two beings, which, inseparable except by abstraction, remain distinct. One is made up of all the mental states that apply only to ourselves and to the events of our personal lives: this is what might be called the individual being. The other is a system of ideas, sentiments and practices which express in us, not our personality, but the group or different groups of which we are a part; these are religious beliefs, moral beliefs and practices, national or professional traditions, collective opinions of every kind. Their totality forms the social being. To constitute this being in each of us is the end of education.

By placing the embodied relationship of educator and student in the pivotal position rather than ideals, a mediated education turns the work of education to the social suffering in existence and the pos-

sibilities of revitalized living. If we secularize and educe the magico-mystical model, the educator's precursor is the shaman rather than the totem. Before the shaman is the practice of presence that feels, thinks, listens, and converses in a relational covenant; this replaces totemism as the "elementary" form of religious and thereby social life.

Cultural resacralization offers a truly *post*modern critical social theory of education, a vitalization of social being-in-presence, an unspeakable, sensual animation of theory/practice as transformational material practices between learners in "the light of an infinitude that is not separated from this world" (Wexler 1996, p. 154).

The religious and educational formation is not fusion, but interactive presence and not "progressive" informational exchange, but the intermediation of the "spiritual mentor," creating a vital social space of difference. Durkheim grafted the two trees of knowledge and life in communion, only to transplant the roots in transcendent ideals; these trees are joined at the root by the resacralization of expansive presence in the soil of education.

From the Social to the Cosmic

In a nondualistic view, the social does not speak in dead symbolic displacements of the primal collective abandonment of reason and moral constraint. Rather, this social is a summons and a call from beyond the visibly mundane ("the yearning for His love") that is heard and answered through imagination, memory, hermeneutics of redemptive traditional texts, and holy deeds that link "God in the flesh," body and cosmos, in a transformative dialogue. This social-as-sacred requires not a cultic surrender but a response, a "responsibility."

Social energy comes from this response because it is in the practice of response that the commodified shells of everyday relationality are broken; as above, so below: as in the Kabbalistic creation myth, so too in social practice. Energy is released in the breaking of these vessels and the collectively messianic process of redemption is in their repair ("tikkun").

The creation of the social as vital is a nondualistic practice of ongoing generativity that occurs by breaking the fetters of all that is not flowing and luminous, in order to release sacred energy. The original source of this energy is an analogous cosmic process to this human,

social, perpetual creativity. *Durkheim becomes*, malgre lui, *a prophet of the cult of collective irrationality as the best social hope.* That is his only other, when society is cut loose from the cosmos, erotic magic, and the prophetic mysticism that characterized everyday life before the dawn of the modern era.

Stephen Toulmin (1990) reopens the question of social theory in such a recosmicized world. "If an historical era is ending," he writes, "it is the era of Modernity itself" (1990, p. 3). In his view, "the 17th-century rationalists beat a strategic retreat from the achievements of Renaissance humanism" (1990, p. 24). He wants a renewal of the Renaissance attitude in science: "from Erasmus to Montaigne, the writings of the Renaissance humanists displayed an urbane open-mindedness and skeptical tolerance" (1990, p. 25). By contextualizing science and arguing for contextualization as an analytical practice more generally, he tries to show how the philosophers of the seventeenth century reacted to their social context intellectually, in a quest for certainty that was at once a search for social stability and hierarchy. For Toulmin, their rationalism and commitment to abstraction of knowledge from context was also "political," helping legitimate the emergent order of nation-states from the religious wars and crises that preceded it.

As a historical contextualist, he traces the shifting fortunes of decontextualized knowledge through the "profundity" of the cultural changes of the 1960s and 1970s—the "superannuation of the modern world view." By the 1980s, this view had led to a recontextualization of knowledge and renewed appreciation of both the "cosmopolitical function" of knowledge and the particular value of the Renaissance view. He describes this as a "serious interest in four kinds of practical knowledge: the oral, the particular, the local and the timely" (1990, p. 30). Toulmin proposes a "reformed version, . . . which redeems philosophy and science, by reconnecting them to the humanist half of Modernity" (1990, p. 180). The "reformist version" is to keep both, as he concludes: "We are not compelled to choose between . . . 16th century humanism and 17th century exact science; rather, we need to hang on to the positive achievements of them both" (1990, p. 180).

Ioan Coulianu's (1987) view of the Renaissance is less "skeptical and urbane," a lot hotter, and more deeply immersed in the cosmology whose disappearance Toulmin notes with nostalgia. The Renais-

sance is alive for Coulianu. Its importance is not in contextual discourse but the passion for imagination and transformation—for revitalization—which he argues the Reformation forcibly destroyed. Renaissance social science, "applied psychosociology," is about the communication of the "inner sense" and the transferable vitality of the pneuma, through which alchemy transmutes being by love and magic. Its vehicle is imagination, the phantasm "which has absolute primacy over the word" (1987, p. 5). Its methods are those of interaction, as the communication of the eroticized phantasm can transform its object. The Renaissance recovers classical and hermetic traditions of magic, interactional practices that are "practical methods to attract, nourish, and accumulate, or store up the divine spirit. In most cases, the pneuma is contained in a material object made for this purpose, or in an animal. With this reservoir of spiritual energy within his grasp, the magician . . . " (1987, p. 112).

The spiritual, intersubjective magic of the Renaissance is deeply vitalistic, aiming toward a "solarization" of the spirit (1987, p. 131). Phantasm and pneuma, image and energy, are the means for the expression and communication of the inner, passionate sense of the heart. Coulianu sees in Renaissance "intersubjective magic" the practices of what we have called a sacred social psychology. But these arts of memory and magic, Eros and alchemy, assume "the idea of continuity between man and the world" (1987, p. 23) and are rooted in the "cosmic nature of all spiritual activity," the "relations between microcosm and macrocosm" that lead to the "cosmicization of man and the anthromorphization of the universe."

All these ancient traditional arts of "revitalization," as I have termed it, and the elaborated theories of the origins and perpetual production in interchanges were destroyed by the Reformation, the religious aspect of modernity. "The witch-burning stakes covered Europe," writes Coulianu of this time (1987, p. 183). Among the Puritans, there was "total rejection of the 'pagan' culture of the Renaissance, of which the sole substitute is the study of the Bible" (1987, p. 193). Also, "the Reformation leads to a total censorship of the imaginary, since phantasms are none other than idols conceived by the inner sense."

This was a censorship not of debate, but of force: "A magical invocation or an alchemical experiment could cost a man his head. Fear

justified everything, and that is why people gave up astrology, magic and alchemy or retired into cautious silence, as did Newton, on matters of an occult nature" (1987, p. 183). Coulianu concludes that it was a time of "a complete victory of culture over nature, free will over imagination, the reality principle over the pleasure principle, Thanatos over Eros" (1987, p. 221).

The cosmos was destroyed, which "conceived of the natural and social world as a spiritual organism in which perpetual exchanges of phantasmic messages occurred." It was not just capital that "came into the world, dripping from head to toe with blood and dirt." So too did its religious-cultural foundations. These foundations were eroded in its own juggernaut, in a dynamic regime of flexible accumulation and mystical informational production. Are these gravediggers reopening the treasures of our history for use in a collective revitalization? Or should we say "education"?

6

∞

Education:
From Postmodernism to
Ethnography of Being

In schools, there is little sign of the cosmic reversal that I referred to in Chapter 5. As the institutional sedimentation of earlier movements for social change and renewal, schools show instead an antivitalist preoccupation with decontextualized, abstract intellectual, so-called cognitive performance.

Even worse, the pained cries to rediscover repressed being through violence in schools are heard in the flexibilized school assembly lines of seemingly customized but incontrovertibly standardized individual outcomes. The Associated Press reports: "After sharing their pain for a day, representatives from five communities that have had fatal school shootings in the past eight months sent the rest of America a message yesterday: It can happen to you, too. . . .The little time bombs are out there ticking, waiting to go off." In one such instance, a teenager testified about killing his parents and classmates and stated that he had been driven by demons who told him that he would be "nothing" if he did not kill.

After I wrote those introductory lines, violence erupted again, this time in Littleton, Colorado. The *New York Times* (April 22, 1999, p. A22) quoted a surviving student, talking about one of the teen killers

who had committed suicide: "'He really felt unloved,' she said. 'He wasn't so bad. He was lonely. I just wish I could give him a hug and tell him that I care.'" Almost a decade before, I had written about the emptying of the self in American high schools. I described the plaint "nobody cares and the identity dynamics that led to various forms of noninstrumental violence." "Violence against the null totality of the school," I called it (Wexler 1992).

The educational field is constituted contradictorily by sensually repressive performance cognitivism that denies realization of the fully lived being of students. It is outside the schooled universe of discourse there to talk of an education-for-being. Simultaneously, the field does offer educative life practices through the revitalization processes that I have already described—the reawakening imagination, the coming to sensorial nature, and the reintegration of self, community, and cosmos. They function as a *decentered social curriculum*, not simply in our analyses but in the popular practices of a host of loosely connected New Age institutions.

Although it remains to be described empirically, this counternetwork enrolls hundreds of thousands and perhaps millions of adults in a mass, dispersed campaign of revitalizing education. Its most visible face is various New Age "healing" practices. But as I have suggested, "healing" is more than alternative medicine; it includes multiple practices of ongoing, rather than initiatic, "reselfing." An embodied critical education is occurring for adults, perhaps in "recovery" from the "other education" that is now being organizationally decentralized and flexibilized in school choice. However, this "other education" hardly alters its program for the abstract decontextualization of being in the name of "learning."

I want to incite this education-for-being, first, in research, since it is closest to academic work. So I begin by asking about the nature of an ethnography of being in school research. Then I explore some early signs of the recontextualization of the educational self in the family/school/community movement of "parental involvement."

Looking well beyond this point, we may ask what form that transformative education can take within resacralized, mystical informationalism, without succumbing to Durkheim's answer regarding the locus of social energy. As in the wider climate of cultic murder and collective suicide, in school violence we see how the drive toward re-

vitalization can lead to the ritual, totalizing cultism that may be sociology's own deeper, shadowed phantasm.

Educational Research

I want to try to answer the question of how we should now study the everyday life of schooling. Having spent a number of years in the daily, detailed, and precise work of social field research in schools and in a variety of national, ethnic, and social class environments, I do not deny or dismiss the importance of practical research questions as being subsidiary issues of "technique." These techniques make all the difference in the product and the experience of research. But I do think that research techniques are tangible, material practices that are best learned "on the job," in the old, early industrial craft model. I can imagine a truly informational, "virtual" methodology of social research in education, but I think that the academy is still some distance from that state.

Meanwhile, the contemporary research discussion about school culture is divided between rationalizing and even formularizing these craft practices; on the other side, it offers speculative theories on cultural research, often by people who have themselves engaged only perfunctorily in the arduous craft labor of actually studying school culture.

I put research practice within a broader social, historical, and cultural context—to embed discourse in social structure, first, because de-contextualization of social research in education opens the door to a research version of modernism's familiar dualist split between objectivism and subjectivism and between formulaic commodification of research and practically abstracted "theory" about research and its topic. Second, I observe that the character of empirical school research changes with alteration of this wider context; this is something that we can chart empirically and straightforwardly over the past twenty years of school culture, especially in so-called qualitative research. Third and most pressingly, I believe that the context of this research is now undergoing a profound sociocultural transformation in which the topics and analytical strategies of school research will change, as well as the material practices and the "techniques" of the everyday social research in education.

The de-contextualization of social research, not simply from schooling but from society itself is part of a still wider process. As we have noted, Stephen Toulmin's (1990) view is that science and then the culture of modernity has been based on the assumption of universal methods and timeless truths since the seventeenth century. This has involved a de-contextualization from politics, theology, culture, and social history: "Only in the 1980s have scholars gone beyond changes in the internal content of the sciences and asked how the external context influences their choice of problems and patterns of explanation" (1990, p. 132).

And further, "Only now is it publicly acknowledged that scientific ideas have hidden as well as explicit agendas, and that even after all the explanatory work is done in theory, we need to look at the secondary interests that new ideas serve in practice."

This view of the recontextualization of science comes not only from the philosophical and cultural outside as a formal, methodological observation but also from within the changing character of the content of the paradigmatic science, physics. In juxtaposing a quantum to a mechanical physics, Danah Zohar observes:

> This inherent uncertainty of quantum reality, its both/and character, replaces the familiar fixedness of the mechanistic world. Machines are very definite things, the same in all circumstances. . . . [T]hey may rust . . . but they don't change internally.
>
> An electron or a photon . . . is in a constant creative dialogue with its environment, with the overall context of the whole experimental situation in which it is being measured. . . . In quantum philosophy this is known as "contextualism." (1993, p. 43)

Context of Educational Research

I do not want to de-contextualize from either Toulmin's postmodern philosophy of science or Zohar's presentation of quantum physics. First, it is of allusive value; the interest lies in the *specific* context of social research in education. Second, I do not see research as simply reflecting or corresponding to a more general social environment of "cosmopolis." Third, the character of the contextual change that is going to alter research in education is not a paradigm shift among

philosophers or physicists. Rather, it is the changing character of the societal culture *itself* that makes a difference for how we study school culture—both the culture of academic researchers and the wider societal culture in which they participate. Research discourse in education is changing along with the emergence of a new society.

I have suggested that we are in the transition out of postmodernism and into a new resacralized society within global informationalism's "network society," as termed by Manuel Castells (1996). As we have seen in the analyses of Alberto Melucci (1996), Castells (1996), Raymond Barglow (1994), and others, a new mode of discourse and being emerges from the infrastructural dynamics of postindustrial, planetary capitalism; this new mode consists of a new "culture" in "mystical informationalism." Although Weber (1964) correctly identified innerworldly asceticism as the religious foundation of the spirit of capitalism and of modern culture generally, I suggest that his "negative" secondary type—innerworldly mysticism—is now becoming the religious foundation of a new culture. This new culture is formed out of the problems and contradictions of postindustrialism and on the ruins of cultural postmodernism.

This change is evident in a very extensive range of social practices, described in part in the work of W. C. Roof (1993) on baby boomer spirituality, more generally and recently in Paul Heelas's (1996) review of New Age movements, and by Robert Wuthnow (1998). I argue that this society has historic roots in America not only in Puritan New England transcendentalism or in cultural borrowing and syncretism in the global society, but also in the history of European pietist religious premodern movements. But most importantly, a new society, culture, and psychology is being socially structurally generated and humanly created with these historic and global cultural resources in order to address the existential situation of the present. Newly shared practices and beliefs are being developed out of this new structural configuration and existential situation that are being increasingly legitimated culturally and incipiently institutionalized socially.

True, there is a gap between everyday culture and academic culture and, further, between academic culture and the form and content of specialized academic research. An examination of the history of social research in education and particularly in school culture research

reveals a linkage between alterations in societal culture and paradigms of educational research; there is an interaction of discourses within social structure. But the linkages are tenuous and are not connections among stable entities, but interactions of dynamic processes across domains.

In the modern era, research on school culture begins with a view that "we see education as cultural transmission," as George Spindler (1987, p. 153) put it. The school was remarkably understudied empirically from the standpoint of cultural transmission research, except for impressionist accounts offered by Talcott Parsons (1953) and Robert Dreeben (1965). Moreover, cultural transmission research was embedded in a more general, theoretical structural-functionalist framework and assumed a natural and unproblematized relation between researcher and the object of research; in short, it was a one-way conversation. This silence of the human research object broadly fit the larger culture of silence and an ethos of the avoidance of problematization in everyday life that characterized the postwar culture of the 1950s.

We are familiar with the historic social and cultural movement reaction against this era from the wider screen of social movements, especially of so-called racial minorities, youth, and women. This found a channel into academic culture generally and into social research in education specifically (Wexler 1976). However, this social movement representation was incorporated and accommodated by institutional constraints that changed the social research discourse of education. The topic of research became the reproduction of inequality (see Ladwig 1995 on the move to race and gender studies) rather than the system and its role. The paradigmatic research study was Paul Willis's (1971) *Learning to Labour*, which was succeeded for almost twenty years by a host of studies in "critical ethnography," as termed by Gary Anderson (1989). These "critical ethnographies" supplanted the "atheoretical and neutral" avoidance of class, race, and gender issues that characterized previous transmission research, thereby adding an empirical quality to the more general, theoretical introduction of critical theory to education, beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Wexler 1987). By the mid-1990s, critical ethnography was successfully rationalized and could be taught to a new generation of social researchers in education as a "method" (Weis 1995; Carspecken 1996).

The critical approach shifted the topic of research, but as poststructuralist and feminist theorists argued (Wexler 1987; Lather 1991; Gore 1993; Britzman 1995), it maintained a "positivist," or traditional scientific realist, approach to research. It did not problematize the research process itself and so reproduced the "essentialist," "male" gaze of social superordination and domination as a knowledge practice. Identity construction rather than class reproduction became the most salient topic, and this was also applied to the research process. As Britzman put it, "educational ethnographers must now account for how their constructions of culture produce their identities as researchers" (1995, p. 136).

Research is an identity process for the researcher and ideally should stimulate even the readers' identity constructions: "Poststructuralist theories have the potential to move readers to interested identities, reminding them of the constructivist, perspectival, and metonymic nature of knowledge and of the multiple silences and inscriptions of any text" (1995, p. 153).

Educational research on culture, so-called ethnographies, has resonated themes of the larger culture and of regnant academic paradigms. This is evidenced in the problems presented in the literature, from "transmission" to "class reproduction" (and "resistance") to the overwhelming emphasis on school life and school research itself as "sites" of "identity construction." Critical theory and ethnography supplanted functionalism; critical theory continues today, albeit subject to the inevitable routinization of research charisma. Critical theory was then replaced by a poststructuralist emphasis on identity and its discursive construction, which extended the academic interests of postmodern cultural studies to schools (Morrow and Torres 1995).

The postmodern emphasis on discourse and identity remains overwhelmingly the dominant paradigm in school research and, with few exceptions (Wexler and Smith 1995), gives few signs of abating. But this relation between research and the context of culture is not statically coherent or integral in the manner of either Functionalist "integration" or Marxist "correspondence." Neither is it a nonrepresentational, poststructuralist/structuralist assumption of an arbitrary relation between sign and signified. Rather it is a *historical* relation, where topics, analytics, and problematization pass through phases of ascent, consolidation, and disintegration—for societal and specialized

research cultures alike. Correspondence between research and context is greatest in the societal culture's integrated phase. As the vibrancy of the cultural premise diminishes, assertion of the ephemerality of its objects and problematization of the researcher's role increases.

With the rise of a new culture, vibrancy, and commitment return; the altered object of study, in its revived cultural confidence, calls out to be represented by research. The current interest in narratology in educational research is an initial, but only partial, expression of this return of cultural confidence as expressed in the need to represent (Casey 1995).

This is the place in which we now find ourselves, as the academic subculture of high postmodernism is increasingly succeeded by an everyday New Age culture in an informational society. This collective discourse will also have its impact on social research in education. Now less needful of social reassurance through postmodernism's politics of identity construction as topic and resource of research, its call will be to represent the New Age, mystical informational problematic in a school "ethnography of being."

Mystical Education

Postmodernism in socioeducational theory and research has appropriated only the most superficial aspect of its sociocultural regime, as educational narratology now does for the return of representation that occurs along with a renewed cultural coherence. Postmodernism is not simply about texts, discursive practices, and the construction of identity in the academy or even in everyday life. As we have seen, postmodernism is about postindustrialism, changes in societal structure, the organization of institutions, and, even more fundamentally, an altered existential situation and the practices of revitalization that develop within and beyond it.

Resacralization at the general code level, reselfing at the transformational practice level, and new cosmology in everyday culture are fed back and interwoven with institutional changes. These changes lead to a redefinition of the meaning of education in society. Along with change in the broad sociocultural context, the institutional infrastructure of education in society is shifting. The cultural and insti-

tutional changes together encourage different topics, analyses, and methods in the study of school culture—an ethnography of being.

However, education in the new society remains remarkably resilient. The bureaucratic social form of schooling and the old skills curriculum seem to resist every wave of school reform. However, there are signs of an effective "postindustrialization of education." At the practical level of everyday organizational life, postmodernism is less about discursive construction of identity and more about *reengineering*. The focus is on building organizations and human capital that are "flexible," "smart," oriented to customization in production and consumption, and open to the reduction of organizational and institutional boundaries to produce a better "bottom line"—an ideal that carries over to education. Just as the efficiency movement (Callahan 1962) in education expressed the interest and form of early industrialism, so now do schools and school leaders respond to the press for a postindustrial profile in the schoolplace, for the establishment of what I have referred to as "the Toyota school" (Wexler 1996).

In leading to a redefinition of the meaning of education, the "de-boundarying" and institutional despecialization of schools begins in the external reorganization of schooling. An infinite number and structural variety of "partnerships" and "collaborations" already exist to "break the mold" of the isolated, bureaucratic, industrial school in favor of a process and product suited to a "reengineered," postindustrial workplace and workforce. In this initial phase, the focus of school reform is on "outcomes," academic achievement, "high performance" schools, and high performance students who fit the high-performing, reengineered, downsized, customer-oriented, flexible and smart (informated) workplace. School reform focuses on cognition.

Combined with the boundary-crossing, collaborative style of the postindustrialization of education, the cognitive emphasis opens the way to institutional despecialization. Although heretofore functionally assigned to the family, the affective role is increasingly defined as necessary for cognitive high performance and therefore integral to education. The recognition of "affect," or emotion, as cognitively necessary incites and legitimates the establishment of organizational devices that blur institutional boundaries. Family/school de-boundarying begins in support of achievement, skills, and performance, as

justified by social research in education. The leading American researcher in the area, Joyce Epstein (1997), writes of "an interdisciplinary field of inquiry into school, family, and community partnerships, with caring as a core concept."

The school/business partnerships are now complemented by school/family partnerships, with the recognition that emotional mobilization—and the institutional forms that sustain it—are integral to cognitive-performance success. As in the school reform movement generally, collaboration is the initial link that proceeds to institutional reshaping and redefinition in the meaning of the institution's process and its "product." We now have a national network of school, community, and family "partnerships" to which municipalities and states subscribe.

The cognitive, achievement-based social drive toward emotions ("caring") and the family is only part of the institutional redefinition of education. The farther edge is that schooling requires emotion and cognition, but also a *healthy* performer and one whose health, affect, and school/work performance is finally contingent on "meaning."

This confluence of education, health, and meaning is increasingly evident at the institutional level in the establishment of "integrated services" in schools that include a wide range of health and social services (shades of a postindustrial progressivism). As Melucci (1996) argued, informationalism creates a need for integrative meaning. Similarly, the press to performance creates a need for attention to the "being" of the performer. There is a dual despecialization of functional and cultural boundaries at work. First, issues of health and meaning and belief begin to be fused to education and learning. Second, as part of being, the question of health is itself fused to the need for meaning.

This double fusion shows itself in the enormous importance attached to public discussions of health. Health becomes the universal main criterion of evaluating action. The divide between performance (work/education) and health recedes. Simultaneously, health is redefined away from its mechanical, industrial definition and toward a "holistic," postindustrial definition; like postindustrialism itself, it evinces a need for meaning and belief. The enormous popularity and public investment in so-called alternative or countercultural health

care carries as its core assumption that health or well-being is centrally a question of belief and meaning. Indeed, America's most popular health writers are now Herbert Benson (1996) and Andrew Weil (1996), both of whom assert the importance of belief and "faith" for healthfulness.

The fusion of work/education/health (through "being") is fused to meaning, belief, faith, and so to religion. American mass media now routinely report the healthful effects of prayer and the relation between health and religion. By this series of truly postmodern social transformations, the end point of this fusion (a point that is not yet evident) is that education will become "healing," the core New Age transformative practice. This shift will be resisted by both industrial, mechanical medicine and cognitive, performance education.

School Ethnography of Being

This is the discursive, existential, and social structural context that makes possible a favorable reception of a different research interest and style in the study of schooling. This interest and style do not grow organically from within the educational establishment's practical or academic sectors. Like the cultural diffusion of Eastern cosmologies in the global society, it comes in part from the outside, arising in this instance from a new anthropology of consciousness, embodiment, healing, and transcendence.

The anthropological work to which I refer has virtually no current application or emphasis on education in the traditional mode, as we have defined it. But it has every implication for the study of school culture, if we can envision further development of the new culture and of an unbounded, despecialized redefinition of education as a transformative practice that is at least closely aligned to healing, if not identical to it. A spate of recent ethnographic works from the recognizable academic specialties of medicine and religion have brought to the fore studies of ritual and symbolic healing practices, social psychological transformations in religious revival movements, and the reinvestigation of so-called altered states of consciousness, or ritually induced trance states. These developments in the anthropology of medicine and religion engage a variety of social movements for heal-

ing and religious revivals. This work has the same effect as the cultural shifts and institutional redefinitions that I have described that focus on "being."

This focus on being, however, is not a new subjectivism. It is *social being*, created in historical contexts and ineluctably intersubjective; for all the creative, agentic interest in these tendencies, it is socially patterned. Yet it is the creative drive for being, enlivenment, or *Leib* as T. Ots (1994) terms it in German. As I have described its social genesis, it is the "shadow" of alienated mechanism and virtual living death that an incipient regime of mystical informationalism brings to light.

This contemporary expression of what I must call, awkwardly, "the life force," the "drive for being," or simply human "energy," animates the conceptual directions and analytic strategies that unify this otherwise diverse set of cultural studies.

As the best province of social science determinism and the hard-won conceptual weapon so regularly used against individualism, "culture" itself is now seen as overly determined and reified. Here it is not deconstructed in favor of the discursive practices of the text, but of the embodied consciousness of the intentional and feeling living human being. Anthony Cohen describes the internal shift in the direction of research (absent analysis of the historical social context) and the move away from postmodernism:

> As genres blur and/or change, so that it has become proper (if not obligatory) for anthropologists to write reflexively, deconstructively and politically, then, correspondingly, it now seems inadequate to write as if the outer life of symbolic forms, institutions and norms is all there is, or as if an outer life of overt behaviours somehow speaks for itself or is intrinsically meaningful, a social fact somehow independent of the creative consciousness of the individual. (Cohen 1995, p. 3)

And further, "An anthropology of consciousness should contribute to the 'decolonization' of the human subject . . . to temper and moderate the language which social scientists have used to alienate conscious intentional behaviour from individuals, and to reify and typify it in impersonal abstractions" (p. 11).

Similarly, the emphasis on "the body" is not the contemporary body as social text of cultural studies—the object of inscription by social

discourse. Instead, the body is alive, a "being in the world" where "culture is grounded in the human body" and "not the passive object of abstract culture," as Csordas writes in his introduction to an anthropology of "embodiment and experience" (1994, p. 6). "Bodiliness" and "embodiment" signify the activity of being in a cultural world. In contrast to Csordas's conciliatory suggestion that the paradigm of embodiment should not try to supplant textualism but should be its "dialectical partner," Terence Turner (1994) presents a more radical rejection of poststructuralism. He begins (1994, p. 44) with a critique of the depoliticizing analytics of Foucault to argue for a social relational materialism of bodiliness. He writes against positions that argue for "treating bodies, bodily functions, and powers as products or projections of cultural discourses or symbols rather than as pragmatic individual and social activities of production and appropriation" (1994, p. 44).

M. L. Lyon and J. M. Barbalet write that "the scholarly treatments of the body in society fail to see anything but a social artifact, rather than an active source of social processes and institutions" (1994, p. 54). Significantly, it is what Ots (1994, p. 116) refers to as the "silenced body," the body without emotion and heart, that Lyon and Barbalet also want to describe by indicating the "role of feeling in social embodiment" (p. 61).

The de-reification of culture has now progressed to the second degree, from integrated monolith to pluralized discursive textual to consciousness and embodiment. This de-reification is intensified in a range of recent ethnographic studies of healing. Most notably, Csordas's (1994) study of Catholic charismatic healing as "imaginal performance" internalizes the ritual performance analyses of the symbolic anthropologies of Turner and Fernandez to analyze how the "divine embrace" of charismatic healing operates on the transformation of being in an interaction of memory, ritual, and embodiment. In addition to Csordas's work, the new medical anthropology of healing presented by C. Laderman and M. Roseman (1996) provides analyses of the "therapeutic process," a "rhetorical-persuasive approach" in which "the power of the performance is a heightened intensity of communication, and enhancement of experience" (1996, p. 2).

In Robert Desjarlais's account of the performance of ritual healing, "healings involve imagining of symbolic ascent from weakness to

strength, fragmentation to integration, disharmony to harmony, and defilement to purity" (1996, p. 150).

Desjarlais shows how experience is symbolically reframed and the sensory worlds of the ancestors are activated (Castells's [1996] "timeless time") ironically to enhance life capacity and restore sensory awareness and "vitality" in a ritual performance of healing that "jump-starts a physiology." Through imagery and symbolic, timeless time travel, the "search for the soul" in image and chanted sound "carve[s] out a poetics of movement, activity, and presence" (1996, p. 156).

Reframing of experience is often performed socially through a "fusion of worlds" as Paul Stoller describes it (1996, p. 178). "In Songhay," he writes, "people use the senses of sound and taste—more than sight—to organize sociocultural experience." Not the text or even the image, but sound performance works to restore the senses and heal, in a fusion of temporal worlds: "Through the sounds of violins, drums and words, the social and spirit worlds have been fused. . . . [S]ound is a dimension of experience in and of itself. . . song as power energy, the veritable force of life" (p. 178). "To be blunt," Stoller writes, "a visually based textual analysis removes us from the sensory world of taste, hearing and touch" (p. 180).

"Abnormal or altered states of consciousness" may have special relevance to an ethnography of being; Cohen argues that these states "should be axiomatically privileged in analysis" (1995, p. 13). The relevance of these states of consciousness to an ethnography of being is further reflected in the "coming to the senses" in ritual healing, the enlivenment of being, and the "presence" that is ironically restored by a ritual departure from the present. Andrew Strathern reviews the interaction of consciousness, embodiment, healing, and transcendence by emphasizing how altered states of consciousness are crucial in the "reframing of experience" (1995, p. 116). He observes that trance facilitates such a reframing (p. 127).

Strathern sees the road back to the senses in the "ethnotheory of being" and the linkage between imagery and embodiment in physiology. In ethnotheory, the soul's trance travel reframes experience and reorients the sense toward healing. In terms of the link between imagery and embodiment, Strathern views this as extending to the point at which "there can be a complex translation from mental images

into cellular modifications" (1995, p. 129). Strathern approvingly cites Lambeck's work to show how trance and spirit possession are this-worldly, not only in relation to the senses but also to an "embodiment of knowledge." The new religious anthropology blends with the new medical anthropology in a recognition of *feeling* as well as sense and knowledge. As B. Kapferer writes, "emotions are the passionate expression of the intentional direction of human beings into their life worlds. . . . [C]onsciousness is always rooted in the body, and always experienced as motions of the body" (1995, p. 149).

Prophetic Education

These are the topics that constitute an ethnography of being. A radically changing historical, social, educational context and new research in fields adjacent to education show how an ethnography of being can be actualized in studying education. Societal change has led to new research in adjacent fields by raising questions that are considered "educational."

This is a move away from the textualist aspect of postmodernism to the *existential situation* that the new social formation produces in everyday life; it is represented in new topics, resources, and practical and academic problematics and strategies. The topical move is to the reinterpretation of education as a process of being and meaning, for which "healing" may be the ideal, paradigmatic type. Its topics are consciousness, embodiment, emotions, and transcendence as altered states, the senses, energy, and complex transformations across lived worlds of timeless time that reframe consciousness and experienced embodiment.

In terms of the interest and emphasis in research, everyday problem solving, and socially shared individual practices, this entails a shift from discourse to an interactional study of beings and worlds. These are not simply constructions; they are imaginary recreations in which the "secondary interest," to use Toulmin's term, is not identity stabilization in an ambiguous world, but creation and sensorial transformation (Stein 1999). In this regard, its practice is not reproductive, critical, or disruptive, but revitalizing. The aim is vivification and enlivenment, the filling of a self emptied in an earlier time. The medium of this practice is not deconstructive mass media, but an ana-

lytical privileging of the charismatic and mystical religious movements and revitalizing practices of mind/body healing.

Under these historical conditions, the socially induced alteration in the meaning of education is taken actively; in Buber's terminology, it is a practice that "goes beyond mere liberation." At its apex, it moves from renewal of life sense to realization and enlightenment. This is not a new teleology, but an enlightenment of the present and a sociology of presence (Wexler 1996) in which there is a "practicing of eternity" (Stein 1998) in this world. Its cosmology abandons both the linear narrative of progress and the fetishism of spatialized temporal incoherence; this is abandoned in favor of an intentional fusion of worlds that is also present instead of being dualized as this- and often-worldly. The reframing of experience requires not a simple demolition of contemporary authority, but a reauthorization of traditions that can mythologize and reenchant without losing the capacity for intentional, rational critique: a cosmic social criticism.

Here I am not going to enter into the more fine-grained discussion of detailed research practice, of the "techniques" that will be the "proof of the pudding." I hint at a turning in technique as well: away from deconstruction to "the truth of the way things are," or "dharma" as J. Goldstein (1993) puts it. Empirically, I think there will be a move in research practice to liken its techniques increasingly to the sorts of disciplines of *present awareness* that are currently more characteristic of meditation than of "research," as it has traditionally been conceived.

These practices of awareness move outward as well as inward, in a new regime of mystical informationalism. With cultural reintegration, research is again about "objectivity," but a new objectivity of awareness that works through the social limitations of consciousness instead of denying it. Goldstein puts it aphoristically in the language of the Buddha:

> The mind is radiant, shining, glowing forth; but it is stained by the defilements that visit it. The mind is radiant, shining, glowing forth, and from uprooting of defilements that visit it, it is freed. (1993, p. 8)

However, in educational practice cognitivism continues the seventeenth-century cultural regime of decontextualizing knowledge and

separating epistemology from ontology and cosmology. This remains the regnant educational theology, despite the more socially historicized (but no more living or deeply reintegrated) contextualism of the educational, political so-called radicals.

Rather, the counterpractice is the return to heaven and earth, to being and cosmos, in the practices of revitalization. But as an opposition, even the revitalizing process from within mystical informationalism is prey to rigidification in a dualistic polarity of rationalism and mysticism. This is the problem that I attributed to Durkheim, in whose practical, educational analogue we find in the combined desiccation of standardized school performance and identity-desperation that compensates by violent self-assertions.

Ecstatic mysticism, then, is an effect of the mystical informational dynamics that we have considered. But in education, as in society more generally, the danger associated with it is a proliferation of violently destructive cults, reminiscent of Lasch's condemnation of gnostic Hellenism and its New Age parallels. The alternative is a nondualist interweaving of epistemology and ontology or, more precisely, of intellectual vision within existentially mystical states.

This is the "contemplative seeing" that Elliot Wolfson (1994) documents in his history of medieval Jewish mysticism. Contrary to the usual expectations about Jewish textualism, Wolfson shows the "ocularcentrism" of mystical practice; a visionary, symbolic intellectualism that goes well beyond the text, the word, or even the letters for its "enthronement," in what scholars of Sufism have called the "imaginal body." Vision, body, and emotion are combined in a practice of "the heart": "In the Islamic-Jewish Neoplatonic tradition, the vision of the heart is an intellectual intuition of that which is incorporeal and thus invisible in a physical sense" (1994, p. 171). Since "imagination is critical in shaping the vision of the luminous forms in terms of corporeal substance, then the whole inside/outside dichotomy is overcome" (1994, p. 112).

The mystical process here is not a simple desocialized ego surrender to the collective ecstasy. Instead, there are complex interchanges, which might be referred to as alchemies, of intellectual and theoretical assumptions, imagination, visual images, sounds, phantasms, and the physical body. This sort of mysticism is more than simple merging in the cosmos to find "timeless time." It is an active capacity of mind

and heart, strength and receptivity of body, openness to nature (water, for example, is a "medium though which the glory can be seen," 1994, p. 242), and conscious cultivation of practices for reintegration with the eternal, energic Presence. This is a reintegration that in Kabbalah is "intensely eroticized." It is dialogical: "The movement of the imagination is from the human body to God and from God back to the human body again" (Wolfson 1994, p. 397).

Abraham Heschel (1962) wants to differentiate intellectual, symbolic visionary mysticism of the heart from undifferentiated ecstatic mysticism. He argues for a type of rational mysticism, despite the substantial debate about the role of ecstasy in emotional and intellectual vision, or prophecy. Heschel uses biblical examples and language to express this in his analysis of prophecy, describing Moses' mysticism as rational in this way: "Moses received his revelation while retaining his full power of consciousness. . . . [He] sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, yet with opened eyes" (1962, p. 119).

This difference between prophecy and ecstasy in and of itself, even prophetic ecstasy, also signals the non-consummatory aspect of prophecy. It is a call, and the prophetic act is always incomplete. Perhaps that is because "the prophets' field of concern is not the mysteries of heaven, but the affairs of the marketplace; not the spiritual realities of the Beyond, but the life of the people. . . . What the prophet's ear perceives is the word of God, but what the word contains is God's concern for the world" (1962, p. 144).

It is this "falling down with opened eyes" that is a necessary condition for the work that lies ahead. This work is *to create a social vision from the mediating revitalization practices by a shared rediscovery of redemptive traditions, both in a study of the traditional texts and in an active renewal of the ancient techniques of self-realization.* A prophetic mysticism, even in deformed expressions of closed-eyed irrationalism, already hovers about the cognitive schoolhouse.

7

∞

Social Interaction:
From Alienation to Mysticism

We can now see the possibility of reversing alienation in everyday life. Informational corporatism intensifies the abstraction, powerless dependency, and fragmentation and dispersion of energies and experience that typified industrialism. To that, it adds a middle level between machine and worker. Interpersonalism of the corporate form substitutes for simple social interaction and carries with it an entire culture and psychology of everyday life.

The academic emphasis on postmodernism has drawn attention to the decadent, dissolute aspects of this culture, but not to its integrity, strength, and durability. In its haste to describe the dispersion of the subject, the multiplicity of forms and media of cultural expression, and the supersession of social structure itself by cultural psychology, it has neglected to underline the power of the continuing social determination of alienated life.

This alienated life is harder to read because its source is less easily identified than the capitalist's personalized, transparent oppression. The global postindustrialism described by contemporary analysts of social structure like David Harvey (1989) and Manuel Castells (1996) is impersonal and almost invisible by virtue of the abstractness of its origins and operation. Although partly occluded and distracted by the very means of culture and psychology to which we now aim so

much of our analytical attention, the effects of global postindustrialism in everyday life are no less real, pervasive, and deeply consequential to our being as a species than Marx first realized in his descriptions of industrial alienation.

The displacement of sociology by cultural studies simply follows the mass cultural ideology in ignoring study of the determinations of social organization for social being. Perhaps this is due to the apparent complexity of such determinations and to the tendency, even among professional social analysts, to assume as natural the events in our everyday lives. Or perhaps we have simply lost our capacity to imagine what is possible.

The "end," not of ideology but of utopia, is part and parcel of our obsession with describing postmodern culture and our preoccupation with study of "the self," in both instances mirroring popular concerns instead of questioning and dissenting from them. The decline of social analysis in favor of cultural and psychological interpretation, even as they may claim to be "critical," combines with the loss of utopianism to warn of the imminent loss of a social or even "sociological" imagination.

But imagination is a master of hiding, disguise, playacting, and sublimation. I think the stage has been set socially. Like earlier forms of social organization, the social regime of postindustrial, capitalist market informationalism includes within it and sets the terms for alternative, oppositional forms of organized social life, even when it does not promote and encourage their actualization. Of course, this is the view of social dialectics, which more poetic Marxist rhetoric has always seen as "the system creating its own gravediggers"—who, as we now know, do not come to the fore inevitably and automatically.

I have argued that we have now the conditions of a "mystical informationalism." The displacement of the coordinates of time and space that Castells describes in his version of the informational age are not simply the conditions for the emergence of defensive, compensatory, communal counteridentities. In his view they indicate the locus and form in which alternative social practices can be imaginatively elaborated. At the same time, there are more tangible compensatory social practices, which I place under the rubric of revitalization. Simultaneous with intensified alienation, the hyperabstraction of the prevailing society creates the relocation and reframing of the possibilities of an

alternative social life into the language and thought of mysticism. Within those terms, we find elaboration of already emergent counter-practices.

This rhetorical displacement now brings a revival of interest in varieties of traditions of mystical thought. I see this revival as providing cultural resources for a contemporary appropriation. The social imagination of structurally possible social alternatives is now being creatively and dynamically held in the flowering of mystical expression. This is not an entirely "imaginary" social, but one that amplifies contemporary, observable, alternative practices of social being. Mysticism is not simply the current discursive location of utopian fantasy. It is also the cradle of present, though inchoate, social practices and forms and the harbinger of a different model of everyday social life.

Destruction

In this (I hope) more dialectical view, the importance of postmodernism is in the work of destruction. Disorientation of conventional time and space coordinates, deeper feelings of social homelessness, pervasive fear, discommitment, distrust, personal anxiety, disease, despair, cynicism, and endless instrumentalism are effects of the destruction of the social structure of modernity and of its cultural and psychological integument. In academic and mass culture, the worry and the embrace of narrative incoherence are testimonies to a loss of cultural force, to the ineffectuality of culture's claims of commitment on beliefs that create meaning.

Yet the same analytic obsession with culture among the critics corresponds to the cognitive performance emphasis of self-denying corporatism. This is the educational cognitivism that suppresses being and indirectly instigates the self-denying affirmation of school violence. It represents a lack of feeling and interest in feeling, a "decathexis" to complement disorientation, except for its uses in an instrumental interpersonalism. Along with the academic view that postmodernism leads to a dispersion, a decentering of the older, repressed self of modernity, lack of cultural force leads to an evacuation of social routines that create a feeling self. This tendency to a cognitively overloaded stripping of a fully social, feeling selfhood goes along with the sort of "sensorial numbing" or "neutralization" and loss

of sensual, existential memory that Nadia Seremetakis (1994) as-
cribes to the commodified life of modernity (I suggest that this
process is completed by postmodernity):

> The particular effacement of sensory memory in modernity, is mainly a
> consequence of an extreme division of labor, perceptual specialization
> and rationalization. The senses, in modernity, are detached from each
> other, re-functioned and externalized as utilitarian instruments, and as
> media and objects of commodification. (1994, pp. 9–10)

And perhaps more deeply:

> The capacity to replicate a sensorial culture resides in a dynamic inter-
> action between perception, memory and a landscape of artifacts, or-
> ganic and inorganic. This capacity can atrophy when that landscape, as
> a repository and horizon of historical experience, emotions, embedded
> sensibilities and hence social identities, dissolves into disconnected
> pieces. At the same time, what replaces it? (1994, p. 8)

Constance Classen (1998) also describes the modern occlusion of a
premodernist cosmology, a "visualist regime" that denies a broader
sensorial reality:

> The visualist regime of modernity, in fact, prides itself on its trans-
> parency; everything can be seen, everything can be known, nothing is
> withheld from our inquisitive and acquisitive eyes. The microscopic
> view and the panoramic view intersect to display our world to use in-
> side and out. However, the very visualism of modernity has, so to speak,
> thrown a cloak of invisibility over the sensory imagery of previous eras.
> So thick is this cloak that one can scarcely see through it, or even rec-
> ognize that there might be something worth exploring underneath.
> When this cloak is lifted, however, the cosmos suddenly blazes forth in
> multisensory splendor: the heavens ring out with music, the planets ra-
> diate scents and savors, the earth springs to life in colors, temperatures,
> and sounds.
>   . . . a glimpse at the fertile aesthetic landscape of pre-modern cos-
> mologies by delving into ways in which the cosmos was conceptualized

through sensory imagery before the rise of the modern scientific world view.

Televangelism notwithstanding, in many ways Christianity would seem to have escaped the visualizing tendencies of modernity and remained a stronghold (or perhaps a museum?) of multisensory iconology. Many churches in the twentieth century West are still fragrant with incense. Religious services are still held in the time-honored oral fashion. However, if the traditional sensory signs of worship remain in certain branches of Christianity, much of the symbolism which once integrated them into a larger sensory and sacred reality has been forgotten. It is this vanished multisensory cosmic order. (Classen 1998, pp. 1–2)

Disorientation, decathexis, desensitization, and the accompanying demotivation, are aspects of both the emergence of a social structure of corporate informationalism and the failure of a postmodern culture to provide a culturally or individually integrative alternative. This is a failure that postmodern cultural analysts ordinarily accept as a necessity, if not a virtue, of postmodernism.

Creation

In this view, two societies, two cultures, and two types of selfhood exist simultaneously. One is modern society with an industrial capitalist base, a culture of clear cognitive and moral orientation built on the tradition of Western, Protestant asceticism and the unified, if repressed and neurotic, individualized self. Whether as postindustrialism or informationalism, the other is a society of flexibility and flow, of "de-mooring" or "timeless time," and of an eclectic mass culture that supports by diversion the work culture of a corporate interpersonalism. This work culture is characterized by an interaction of instrumentally driven intersubjectivity.

And in its ferocious technological dynamism, this second society wipes away unnecessary social, cultural, and psychological mediations, intermediary structures and arrangements that impede the fast flow of information and production. Postmodernism completes the modernist destruction that Serematakis describes; in answer to her question, postmodernism replaces it with the valorization of empti-

ness, boundarylessness, abstractness and intangibleness, selflessness, and an extensive de-differentiation that erases even the border between life and death in the ideal of immortality.

It is precisely and directly on the grounds and in the terms of this postmodern destruction that the creation of a new social being, a different organization and understanding of everyday life, occurs. Its effects set the stage for that which we recognize as classical forms of mysticism. The practical move from a postmodern to a mystical society began with what has been described in academic and mass culture as a "resacralization."

But the return of religious interest is not in the traditional forms; institutionalized religious attendance and membership have not increased. Rather, I suggest that the resacralization of belief is an indicator of a reorientation of experience. Against the postmodern effort to reclaim human agency by ironic play in and with discourse and in its sign-centered, consumption cognitivism, the resacralization of meaning opens to collective, but apparently individualized, practices to create a different everyday experience of being in the social world.

These practices, although obviously subject at every point to continual incorporation as commodity culture fuel, are generative and ultimately socially creative. In the cauldron of the contemporary form of alienation through technological, social organizationally induced disorientation, production-corporatist routines of interpersonalist self-denying decathexis, and in the consumption castle of desensitization, these very conditions of social, cultural, and individual evacuation and emptying constitute the experience of collective creation. For it is precisely characteristic of mystical experience that it generates being under these conditions.

The demediation of modern social, cultural, and psychological forms—the destruction of spatially and temporally grounded, stable predictabilities of interstitial, interrelated types of organization, meaning, and identity—leads to the creation of everyday life in their very absence; indeed, this leads to a form of life characterized by their absence. Mysticism is traditionally typified by its lack of mediation and its immediacy.

The boundarylessness and timelessness unintentionally created in the experientially alienated present become the means for experientially creating meaning. The implosion of the modern self by informa-

tional saturation (Gergen 1991) is the basis for identity formed out of self, transpersonally, beyond the self. I believe one can reasonably argue on purely theoretical grounds that there is a clear parallel between the "alienated" existential conditions of the social present and the ideals of mystical thought and life as described in many cultures in Western and Eastern traditions.

However, I want to suggest more than a theoretical parallelism, which I think would have a certain Archimedian, if not utopian, value. My point is that in resacralized religious and other current revitalization movements, these mystical practices are already emergent. Beyond that, my own effort here represents a recognition that the infusion of the elements of a mystical society, as antidote to postmodern alienation in everyday life, has already occurred to such a recognizable extent that we are now engaged in its legitimization, by citing precursors and canonical sources.

American Religion: Drugs, Nature, Immanence

The most evident feature in the creation of a mystical society is the popularity of religion. In his recent account, Robert Wuthnow begins:

> Judging from newspapers and television, Americans' fascination with spirituality has been escalating dramatically. Millions of people report miraculous interventions in their lives by such forces as guardian angels who help them avoid danger and spirit guides who comfort them in moments of despair. Faced with death, many people report seeing a brilliant tunnel of light that embraces them in its mysterious glory—and live to write best selling books about these experiences. When pollsters ask, Americans overwhelmingly affirm their faith in God, claiming to pray often to that God. (1998, p. 1)

Wuthnow goes on to chronicle the transformation of American religion from the "dwelling" institutional religiosity of the 1950s to the "seeking," freer, self-improvement, market-, and technique-oriented religion since the 1960s, and now to a still more individualized religion of spiritual practice. Not only is religion more personal, privatized, and inward, but at the same time it recreates interest in the

"soul" as a method of gaining comfort and hope in a more "fluid," "complex," and "homeless" world. The evolving interest away from institutional religion to spiritual practice that is displayed in interview materials indicates the unmediated, devotional efforts of direct individual relation to divinity and to a pervasive spirituality—a spirituality in everyday life. Wuthnow quotes an example of the newer emphasis on a noninstitutional inner life of everyday spirituality: "Spirituality is a practice of everyday things and everyday life; it's not limited to ritual times; it calls me to honor everything that is before me. Everything is a spiritual activity" (1994, p. 164).

The shift from the religion of dwelling was, Wuthnow writes, "being challenged by religious movements that reasserted some of the mystery that had always been part of the conceptions of the sacred" (p. 57). In fact, as Fuller argues in his history of the "unconscious" in American thought, there is a deeply rooted "mystical or aesthetic strain of Puritan piety" in American Protestantism (1986, p. 7). This "aesthetic spirituality," for Fuller, "consists of those forms of belief and practice based upon the conviction that there are hidden depths to nature in which resides the secret to achieving spiritual composure" (p. 6). The aesthetic religious posture emphasizes instead the inner experience of beholding God as spiritually present within the natural universe. This "American religion," which he finds in Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson, is a religion of harmonial piety. It is not the Yankee individuality founded on an unbridgeable divine-human gap, but a cosmic, mystical nature religion that relies not on the self, but on a person's "rapport with the cosmos" (p. 18), *a generativity of self-surrender.*

Quoting Emerson, "that beyond the energy of his possessed and conscious intellect he is capable of a new energy (as of an intellect doubled on itself) by abandonment to the nature of things," Fuller traces the mystical nature religion strain in "the American religion" through its expressions (1986, p. 16). These expressions are reflected in conceptions of the unconscious in American psychology to the present popular cultural religious interest, one that Fuller sees as a "repackaging of indigenous spirituality" (1986, p. 185).

This is not the American religious tradition of innerworldly asceticism, the Ben Franklinism that Max Weber (1958) described in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* The unconscious is a good place to find it, for it has been a subterranean tradition punctuated by

intense, though isolated, moments of fervor or expressed obliquely in ephemeral revivalist movements. But evidently the 1960s cultural movement is resisting attempts to make it just another temporary tent meeting of mind curists and mesmerist, as Lasch caricatured the New Age movements. Instead, as we see in Wuthnow's account, there have been profound changes in the form and content of American religious expression over these past three decades.

The decade of the 1960s was a watershed time that saw the eruption of different forms of experience directed precisely against the American version of orderly modernism, not merely the recovery of muted American traditions of mystical spirituality. In this way, it prefigured the innerworldly mysticism that was antithetical to the hegemonic innerworldly asceticism that Weber so prophetically analyzed as the cultural basis of modernity. Robert Fuller (1998, 2000) amplifies his earlier history of an "aesthetic spirituality," or "mystical piety," sublimated in conceptions of the unconscious as it is represented "scientifically" in academic psychology. For him, the "unchurched spirituality" that Wuthnow explained as an effect of the anomic complexities and "fluidity" of the social times is directly instigated by baby boomers' drug use:

> More specifically, I will argue that the Baby Boomers' acquaintance with these drugs played an important role in popularizing a form of spirituality that emphasizes both the pluralistic and the symbolic nature of religious truth, monistic ideas of god, and the primacy of the "private" sphere of religious experience. (1998, p. 4)

In this view, the quest for "metaphysical illumination," or "inner light," which Aldous Huxley found taking mescaline in Los Angeles, was at first a direct result of drugs. Later it was interpreted religiously and disseminated as a mystical spirituality. Thus religion rather than drug ingestion became the basis of illumination. "Turn on, tune in, and drop out," proclaimed the late Timothy Leary. Fuller interprets Leary as going beyond the drug-induced alteration of perception to a mind-altered state of expanded consciousness:

> Yet for Leary, sense and sensuality have a sacramental quality to them. Turning on was thus a form of nature religion. Turning on was intended to celebrate the intrinsic delight to be found by becoming especially re-

ceptive to the sensations emanating from the pristine depths of nature. (1998, p. 9)

And lest the wider cultural meaning of this view be lost, Fuller adds, "Common to these urges to drop out was a pervasive rejection of modernism and the grip it held on American culture" (1998, p. 11). Nor was the drug effect limited to mere psychedelics:

> The marijuana "high" floods the sense and deepens a person's appreciation of *interiority* [emphasis added]. In the way marijuana facilitated the Baby Boomers' growing identification of religion as the inner-directed pursuit of personal mystical experience. . . . The cultural history of marijuana in the late twentieth century is thus very much the history of unchurched American spirituality. (1998, p. 15)

The upshot, according to one user, is that "religion is the altered state of consciousness." Even as the drug instigation of mysticism receded, the interpretive or "ideological reorientation" toward mystical belief as the code of meaning for perceptions of so-called expanded consciousness remained as part of the "spiritual awakening" of the 1960s. This awakening was included in the "various mystical philosophies that made up the era's alternative spirituality (and that were in large part the nucleus of the 'New Age' spirituality of the 80s and 90s)" (1998, p. 20). The mystical coding of this experience, of this consciousness, drew some cultural sustenance from the earlier tradition of American spirituality. "Beginning with Huxley," Fuller writes, "users of psychedelics attributed metaphysical importance to their visions of bright light, their feelings of vibrations, and their sense of being enveloped by an ineffable presence" (p. 26).

The 1960s drug transgression of socially conventional perception inscribed the preexisting belief of the American religion in an "immanent presence of the sacred" in the "human heart and natural world" more indelibly than a revivalist campaign. It offered a model of a cultural and social alternative that was based in a very different, unmodern, direct, individual perception of an inner recharting of experience along the lines of mystical traditions. It was a precursor or a "nucleus" of the alternative model of social life; the everyday or innerworldly mysticism for which social structural changes increasingly set the conditions in a mystical society, as I have suggested.

William James:
Over the Threshold to Mystical Revitalization

The drug-inspired new perceptions of reality and discovery of new and "ecstatic" dimensions of intellectual and emotional inner experience were a radical disruption of the ordinary social definitions and routines of midcentury, American-style modernity. As Fuller has shown (1986, 1998, 2000), the new modality of meaning was continuous with, though perhaps not derived from, an older American tradition that defined an expanded awareness as consciousness of the presence of a sacred, godly, immanent being as the essential foundation of the natural world. William James, better known for his philosophy of Pragmatism and his empirical psychology, is also the best-known forebear of this American nature religion of immanent spirituality.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, James already displayed both core elements of our contemporary, emerging mystical society and some of the limitations in the American perspective. The advance toward mysticism is seen in James's canonical, empirical descriptions of a variety of such experiences in his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, his relentless curiosity to analyze the phenomenology of mysticism, and his willingness to assert his own "overbelief" in the "more" of transcendental being. He follows the accounts of other scientific and religious seekers such as Leuba, Myers, and Fechner. He trusts the value of his own experience, trying nitrous oxide, his own time's version of marijuana. And most valuable for us, he pursues the phenomenology of direct experience, the individual-cosmic relation that defines the religious experience.

In this sense, he exemplifies one of the structural bases of contemporary tendencies toward a socially mystical being, namely, the un-mediation and the boundarylessness of the self that is generated within the societal-technological organization of the information age, as suggested by myself and others (Barglow 1994; Castells 1996). Like his spiritual descendants in the psychedelic 1960s, James understood this largely in *individual* terms as a description of inner individual experience; this is caused by an alteration, or a demediation, in the boundary between the conscious awareness of the experiencing individual and the surrounding field of energy/consciousness that includes the cosmic. In my view, this demediation, or debounding, is an initial element in a more inclusive set of practices, which constitute a social model.

My intention is to go beyond the bounds of James's boundaryless-ness, to describe more fully the causal conditions of this state and also to specify more extensively the dynamic processes of relation and interaction that occur in the unmediated, unbounded "close contact" of the individual with the higher self of "the More." James is important for this purpose in that he underlines and describes this first condition of unbounding the self and, further, that he locates the generation of individual energy in such states, seeing mystical experience as the basis for ongoing individual revitalization.

In one of the last essays he wrote before his death in 1910, James encapsulated the heart of the experiential religious conversions and mystical moments that he had recounted in case fashion a decade earlier. He offers "A Suggestion About Mysticism":

> The suggestion, stated very briefly, is that states of mystical intuition may be only very sudden and great extensions of the ordinary "field of consciousness." . . . [B]ut the extensions would, if my view be correct, consist in an immense spreading of the margin of the field, so that knowledge ordinarily transmarginal would become included, and the ordinary margin would grow more central. (1971, p. 204)

He apparently eschews explaining this alteration of consciousness (p. 204): "Concerning the causes of such extensions I have no suggestion to make." But he does offer his understanding that what it consists in is a "fall in the threshold,"

> a movement of the threshold downwards . . . enlargement of the nimbus that surrounds the sensational present . . . we shall have the conditions fulfilled for a kind of consciousness in all essential respects like that termed mystical. . . . It will be of rarity, enlargement, and illumination, possibly rapturously so. It will be of unification. . . . [A]nd the sense of *relation* will be greatly enhanced. Its form will be intuitive or perceptual, not conceptual. . . *uncovering* of some sort is the essence of the phenomenon. (pp. 205–207)

And for the unboundedness, he describes a dream: "in this experience all was diffusion from a centre. . . . Unless I can *attach* them, I am swept out to sea with no horizon and no bond" (p. 208).

I believe William Barnard's (1997) contemporary account of James as mystical philosopher reinforces this view. Barnard sees the philoso-pher-physician-psychologist as an "explorer of unseen worlds" and supports the emphasis on debounding is supported by Barnard:

> Spiritual techniques strip the would-be mystics of their sense of self, and this dissolution of the boundaries that define the self opens up the possibility of an influx of heightened awareness from a transnatural source.
>
> In this continuous ebb and flow of our awareness, the "horizons" or "margins" of consciousness lack specific boundaries. (1997, p. 16)

Perceptual alteration of boundaries also has a wider, emotional, al-most organic concomitant: "mystical states of awareness have the ca-pacity to *revitalize life*" (emphasis added) (pp. 73–74). The "self-sur-render" of the "personal boundary" is a "way in which human beings are able to access their reserves of inner energy" (p. 179). There is an "inherent potency of these mystical experiences." And then, quoting James,

> as if an extraneous higher power has flooded in and taken possession. Moreover, the *sense of renovation* [emphasis added], safety, cleanness, rightness can be so marvelous and jubilant as well to warrant one's be-lief in a radically new substantial nature. (p. 183)

The experience provides a "new centre of personal energy," a state "of confidence, trust, union with all things . . . this is the Faith-state" (quoting James, p. 183). The "abandonment of self-responsibility" that opens the doors of perception and emotion—of joy, confidence, equanimity, and harmonious trust—has the ironic effect of revitaliz-ing individual energies.

Barnard expressly acknowledges the similarity between Jamesian field mysticism and the Eastern traditions, particularly Hindu Tantrism:

> A nondual reworking of this field model of the self and reality creates numerous points of connection between James' work and several other nondual metaphysical systems (of which the Tantric understandings,

with their focus on unity-within-diversity and the vibratory nature of reality and consciousness, are perhaps the best "match."). (p. 207)

He goes on to describe

these traditions, those who are rooted in this nondual awareness have no need or desire to close their eyes. . . . [W]hether eating, drinking, making love, or talking with friends, the enlightened being continually swims and dances in the ecstasy of the natural state, a state in which a consciousness of underlying unity is fully interwoven with an awareness of the uniqueness and wonder of diversity. (p. 240)

Hindu Tantrism:
New/Old Dynamics of Embodied Mystical Mediation

I have suggested that James and the American nature mystics open the doors of perception beyond the desiccated cognitive ego and over the threshold of conventional conceptions to contact with the immanent being of a higher, cosmic Self—a transcendental "More"—who offers a joyous and calm revitalization of individual being. But the relation "between" the self and cosmos, the direct experience of lowered thresholds is in itself, in the most general if not reified terms, the source of the influx of beneficent energies. Although one would not want to reduce its esoteric complexities to the current fashion of sex manual level of appropriation, even the amateur outsider can see precisely this specification of the dynamics of the transformations of being in various contemporary articulations of certain Hindu traditions. These transformations of being occur as re-mediated, beyond the bounds of boundless selfhood.

Further, these processes of a remediated dynamism form a "meso" level between the micro and macro, as referred to by David White. Here the mediations are specified. But they are not the mediation of Western modernity, where sociology only mimes the popular reification by calling it "culture." Instead, there are complex interchanges across media between the human and the cosmic, as well as interhumanly. These interchanges are described classically by Lilian Silburn (1988) as transformations of energy and by White (1996) as complex equations that analogize the human and the divine bodies. Embodied

transformative interchanges are not only the energizing product of direct contact as in the American Religion, but ritualized practices of sequential realization of this-worldly enlightenment that are parallel but differentially embodied in alchemy, yoga, and Tantric sexual intercourse.

The aim is not the "faith-state" of the revitalization of centers of personal energy, but of immortality itself—through transmutational reversals of energy-creating fluids of the body of the person, the world, and the divine cosmos. It is not only about dropping the boundary but also of ritualizing the knowledge of the transactions that take place across lowered thresholds. This ritualization of knowledge also involves the effects of these transactions in producing a profound alteration of being that can be seen as an altogether different, divine enlightenment or even near-death state in life—an open-eyed samadhi. To boundarylessness and revitalization of feeling and energy are added embodied, ritual practices of transformative interaction. Beyond the postmodern destruction of mediation, we can see here at least exemplars of an alternative mediation; this mediation is of embodied, this-worldly enlightenment to the point of immortality, rather than the alienating desiccation of both modernity and postmodernity. This esoteric Hinduism is quickly appropriated and mass packaged in the postmodern "West" perhaps because we can glimpse within it detailed social methods for the realization of full being that are consistent with the "flow" of postmodern transmutability.

In complete contradistinction to the "mechanical petrification" of the alienated and dispersed self-body, Silburn (1988) describes the energy-body of Kundalini. In Kundalini, the difference between energy and consciousness is dissipated in a dynamic "twin movement of separation and return" (p. 11) and in a vibrating universe of pulsation to whose unity the practitioner is reintegrated. Such a self of simultaneous moving energy/consciousness vibration and immobilized total integration resolves the informational society's contradictory requirement for a motivated, agentic, and individualized location of self-action (not too alienated in fragmentation and dispersal to act) and a fluidity of movement that de-essentializes matter into the very movement of the universe itself. As Silburn describes the dynamics of Kundalini, this process is not simply a lowered threshold, but a loosening and untying of the blocking knots of embodied energy centers. What

opens is not just a more confident perception into the "oceanic" margins of consciousness:

> When the universal Kundalini regains her spontaneous activity, one enjoys the tide of the ocean of life, with its perpetual ebb and flow of emanations and withdrawals.
>
> The surging back of all the energies to the center . . . a retraction. . . . He remains unmoved at the Center, like the foundation of the world, never losing contact with the inner Reality. Enjoying the samadhi with open eyes, he unfolds the cosmos anew. . . . Filled with wonder, the yogin recognizes the Self in its universal nature and identifies with Siva.
>
> For the yogin resides at the source of the movements of emanation and resorption of the universe. . . . [T]his realm of bliss has some connection with sexual experience. . . . [T]he organs are subjected to a similar contraction and expansion conducive to an intimate union. . . . [A]ll is still, time is no more. (pp. 51–52, 58–59)

The Tantrism described by Silburn is a this-worldly practice of energy release and process of back and forth, emanation and resorption of individual/divine relation in energy and awareness. "In Tantrism," she writes, "indeed, unification must be achieved in the course of ordinary life experiences, whatever they may be. . . . Kundalini energy tears away from duality, unifies, universalizes and transfigures. . . worldly energy turns into all-pervading consciousness" (p. 207).

David White's (1996) analysis of Hinduism includes the traditions of the Siddha alchemy, yoga, and Tantra. His "alchemical body" is a "divinized body," alchemical not only in the direct metallurgical analogy but also in its continual transmutation of substance—of semen, breath, energy, and consciousness—in the service of a living immortality. Like Silburn, he portrays a vibrational universe of energy movements: "In tantric metaphysic, it is the kundalini's coiled body itself that is the turning point between emanation and participation, emission and resorption" (1996, p. 219). And again, "the tantric universe was a unified system that oscillated between withdrawal (nivritti) and return (pravritti) on the part of a cosmic yogin, between effulgence (prakasa) and reflection (vimarsa) on the part of supreme consciousness, between emission and resorption, etc." (p. 263).

Lastly, Hindu alchemy is tantric in its goals and in the means it appropriates to realize those goals. Total autonomy, omniscience, superhuman powers, bodily immortality, and a virtual identification with godhead. . . . The tantric universe is a *pulsating, vibratory* universe, in which matter, souls and sound are the stud of the outpouring of godhead into manifestation. . . . It is a *bipolar, sexualized* universe, in which all change and transformation are viewed as so many instances of an interpenetration of male and female principles. . . . It is a *radiating* universe. (p. 143)

Siddha practice is sequential, and White offers a description of the phases of types of activity. In relation to the goal of "immobilization,"

What a difficult, even heroic undertaking the immobilization of the body constitutes, yet what fantastic results it yields. For immobilization leads to reversal, reversal to transformation, and transformation is tantamount to bodily immortality, and precisely, to the supernatural ability to transform, reverse, or immobilize whatever one desires in the physical world (siddhi). (p. 174)

In these accounts, esoteric Hinduism and particularly Tantrism provide a ritualized model and therefore social practices, however "supernatural" sounding, to produce a "divinized body" by interchanges of substances (semen, breath) internal and external. It is a consciously this-worldly or "everyday mysticism" in the sense that both the social origins of its practitioners (according to White) and a text-based religious hierarchy are rejected in favor of a living enlightenment achieved through transmutational interchanges. The sacred immanence and cosmic "presence" of the American religion is here activated, well beyond perception and contact to dynamic interchange, and specified by substantial medium and method of transformation within a larger living, vibrational framework of the energy and awareness of a cosmic Self.

Contemporary Western borrowings and selective adaptations from these alchemical energy mystery traditions can be discounted as further commodifying colonization of even the more opaque aspects of the so-called non-Western world to new colonial infocapital. Alternatively, sympathy and even glimmers of understanding of Siddha, Kundalini, and Tantric traditions can be taken as an inchoate, quasi-

conscious resonance, a newer sort of "elective affinity," to use Weber's phrase. The affinity is to an already charted map and methodology of interactional transformational self-deification and immortality. This is a map that can be laid over the American self-help techniques movement resuscitated within the 1960s cultural shifts. It builds on the assumptions of the American religion and provides on the surface a technology that might be deracinated from traditional ritual locations in order to realize the meso, intermediary level of mediating practice. This is a level that postmodernism diminishes without surrendering its teleology of materialized, individualized deifying immortality—the new accumulation of capital—within a field of transmutation that goes well beyond simple "flexibility" as a key modality of being in the world of postindustrial informationalism.

Hasidism:
Individual Redemption and Collective Messianism

Jewish mysticism adds a messianic element to the recognizable debounding and back-and-forth transformations of these varieties of contemporary mysticism and even attempts to link the transformed body and soul of saintly inner experience to historic movements of collective social transformation. Although the preeminent contemporary scholar of Jewish mysticism, Moshe Idel (1998, 1995), echoes the general view of Hasidism as individually redemptive, he simultaneously blurs the traditional line of distinction between mysticism and messianism by suggesting that inner mystical experiences may be integral and initial aspects of messianic, historic social movements. As Idel puts it, "The following proposal is therefore intended to address decisive moments of inner experience that may *precede* [emphasis added] the emergence of these collective manifestations" (1998, p. 37).

His panorama is much wider than Hasidism, spanning the history of Jewish mysticism in a series of studies of the variants of Kabbalah. Despite differences of interpretation, Idel's studies of Hasidism within the larger mystical trajectory and the vast literature of specifically Hasidic studies (Idel 1995; Loewental 1990; Elior 1993; Schatz-Uffenheimer 1993; Buber 1958; Scholem 1971, for example), reveal a common core of understanding. Gershom Scholem (1991) referred to

this as "the highest form of applied Jewish mysticism." Idel echoes this evaluation, calling Hasidism "the most influential form of Jewish mysticism" (p. 212). In all of their works, again, despite the many disagreements (see Idel 1995, for a review of the major debates) a common portrait emerges.

There is a recognizable social practice of mystical transformation, even among the historical and current factions of Hasidism. This is the case regardless of whether Hasidism is a continuation of Lurianic Kabbalah in a more individualized democratic, practical form or whether it more directly incorporates ancient and medieval magical elements; this social practice is present also regardless of whether it fully deflects earlier messianism in favor of use as an individualistic soteriology or is less "apocalyptic," as Idel suggests. After all, Hasidism is in many ways (see Sharot 1982) a relatively decentralized "revitalization movement" that centers on the feudal-style courts of tsaddiqim, or saints. Idel described these saints as shamans, serving as channels or "pipes" for the distribution of the supernal influx to the wider community of everyday followers. As Naftali Loewenthal (1990) shows, in this sense there is a "communication ethos," notably in Habad Hasidism. In this ethos, neither direct religious experience nor intermediation of a this-worldly, other-worldly bridging saint inhibits the intersubjectivity and communal character of individual redemption in exile or more collective messianic aspirations.

This social communication, or intersubjectivity, derives from the emphasis on communion with the godhead and the long records of various "ascents" beyond the material world. However, the value for Hasidism is not only the to-and-fro of ritualized mystical practice, in the tsaddiq follower or hasid relation or the actual bodily prayer practice, but in the ethos of "descent" or return to the material, corporeal, communal, social world of the here and now. Like Tantrism, but with a very different theosophy, the everyday is the site of mystical practice, with a goal of "service or worship through materiality."

The derivation from the earlier Lurianic mysticism is in the reintegrative ideal; for "heaven's sake" the initial destructive dispersion of a unified holiness is re-collected, re-assembled by an intentional elevation of mundane activity to holiness. As in Jamesian jubilation, there is a commitment to an "ecstatic fervor," a revolt against "rabbinism" as Buber saw it and against textualism (at least in the earliest stages of

the movement's history) in favor of a joyful wisdom of everyday re-sacralization. And here we find the ideal of self-surrender, self-abne-gation for divine purpose, which attracts or draws down the energy of a supernal source to the channeling saint and thereby to a wider community.

Idel's important recent departure is to argue for the relevance of ap-parently individualized mysticism to collectively oriented messian-ism: "The complete reconstruction of the supernal Adam, of the di-vine anthropos, is therefore an eschatological and cosmic project which involves automatically a preceding personal redemption" (1998, p. 172). "It is the "mission . . . of the mystic, to reenact the lost perfection" (1998, p. 187).

Underlining further the mystical precedent in relation to messian-ism, Idel notes, "It is less a matter of re-creation as one of creation that haunted the Jewish mystic in search of the peak experience that is conducive to messianism" (1998, p. 292).

Secular Mysticism

The tension between mysticism and messianism and between the in-dividual inner experience and collective social action is not limited to debates about the character of historical and contemporaneous Jewish mysticism. In academic, religiously neutral social science, the ahistorical, decontextualized approach is represented by the view of mysticism as an "innate capacity" (Forman 1998). Robert Forman ar-gues for a PCE, a pure consciousness event, as the modal form of mys-tical experience. He represents the anticontextualist, even "decon-textualized" view of mysticism: "Furthermore, the general outlines of the transformative process are reasonably consistent across cultures. The key feature of the transformative process is stripping or letting go of concepts, attachments, and pictures of one's self and others" (1998, p. 30).

He reiterates James's notion of uncovering "something that they have been all along" (1998, p. 31), an "innate capacity." Indeed, For-man reminds us that "nearly half" of all Americans and British people "have had one or more mystical experiences."

On the other hand, Gimello (1983), writing within Katz's collec-tion of "contextualist" studies of mysticism, asserts,

Mysticism does not stand apart from the 'lay world' of duty, station, prudence, 'law and order', labour, etc. It is woven together with all these things into a whole pattern or 'form of life', and the institutions *within which* it flourishes help to give it its particular character. . . . [T]hose social, political, economic and legal contexts which have nurtured mystics in all cultures and at all times. (1983, p. 84).

Secular intellectuals have long debated the character of mystical experience. Of course, Freud (1930) saw religion as regressive and reduced his friend Romain Rolland's accounts of the "eternal present" to a regressive "oceanic feeling" (see Parsons 1998). Parsons juxtaposes Rolland's literary descriptions of his discovery of "Being" of a joyful unity to James's transient experience. Rolland's "constant state" (Parsons 1998, p. 513), a "continuous feeling of contact," is much more than Freud's allusion to a "rare . . . state of ecstasy" (1998, p. 514). Parsons calls on Kohut's psychodynamic explanation of mysticism as a "cosmic narcissism" (1998, p. 523). As Parsons integrates Rolland and Kohut:

Through mystical experience, introspection, renunciation, and what Rolland called the 'blows of life', one gradually *decathects* [emphasis added] the self, displacing the locus of identity from self to Self conceived as contentless and superordinate. (1998, p. 523)

Merkur's recent (1999) exposition of a theory of mysticism draws from these secular, social scientific, psychodynamic traditions to argue that "mystical experiences occur when recent achievements of unconscious unitive thinking manifest consciously as a momentary inspiration" (p. ix). For Merkur, "in some sense we are all of us mystics." He offers a psychological typology of the elements of mysticism as "a heightened awareness of otherwise ordinary, everyday unitive thinking" (1999, p. 38). Even science is an accommodation of the drive for unitive thinking to the "impersonalism of the external world" (1999, p. 40). The root is an "unconscious mysticism that is expressed when there is a 'relaxation of resistance'" (1999, p. 130).

In secular mysticism too the historical social structural determination of experience is neglected in favor of individual, psychodynamic models of mystical experience. It remains an eruption, a relaxation,

an inspiration in the boundary of the individual/environmental relation. As we have seen, the socially structured world that emerges after postmodernism brings these traditions together and to the forefront of our consciousness. This is also a secular variety of contemporary secular mysticism, though less individualistic. As Merkur asserts, perhaps we are "all of us mystics." However, we do not make this new everyday mysticism just as we please, but in terms and conditions that we inherit from the past. As Gilbert Murray put it in the closing remarks in lectures he gave concerning Greek religion at Columbia University in New York (1912):

> On the surface all is new writing, clean and self-assertive. Underneath, dim but indelible in the very fibers of the parchment, lie the characters of many ancient aspirations and raptures and battles, which his conscious mind has rejected or utterly forgotten. And forgotten things, if there be real life in them, will sometimes return out of the dust, vivid to help still in the forward groping of humanity. (1925, p. 238)

8

∞

Epilogue:
Mystical Sociology
and Beyond

Mystical Sociology

Contemporary varieties of mystical practice are examples of changes in everyday social life. The way of being a self, the modes of social interaction and the relation between private inner experience, and collective social movements are all changing and moving away from a modern and postmodern society to what I call a mystical society.

The evidence for this shift is neither systematic nor conclusive. In this book, I have relied on the empirical work of Castells, Melucci, Wuthnow, Roof, Csordas, and others. Of course, there is ample precedent of so-called secondary analysis, or interpretation of extant empirical work, as a core practice in sociology. On a grander scale, especially Durkheim's monumental *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* but also Weber's *Sociology of Religion,* are works that combine their own scholarship with the firsthand empirical work of others. Nevertheless, I offer the caveat that the idea of an emerging mystical society is still a hypothesis that will take more fleshing out to be fully persuasive. This means not only a future program of additional systematic empirical work on the practical social tendencies and movements that I

have indicated but also a continuing openness to that which is "in front of our eyes," including anecdotal knowledge and reports of ongoing social events from various media.

For example, should we dismiss the importance of the Fulan Gong, *qigong*-based social movement, because no academic sociological study yet presents itself? Or should we instead ask how current journalistic accounts of this movement fit our broader interpretation of a changing way of everyday life and social organization that reflects the importance of mystical traditions?

The *New York Times* reported from Beijing of the powerful expression of this social movement of everyday practice based in the sort of mystical energy interests described in this book. In contrast to the expressly political movements of the modern era or the cultural, identity politic actions of postmodernism, a mystical society challenges the reproduction and stability of the social present through the aggregation of ordinarily dispersed and apparently individual spiritual practice.

According to the *Times* report:

> It was the biggest illegal rally in Beijing since the Tiananmen democracy movement of 1989, held without any forewarning to the authorities, suggesting formidable powers of mobilization. Furthermore, the group says it has 100 million members around the world. . . . With its mixture of martial arts and mysticism, it bears enough resemblance to popular movements that wreaked havoc in the final decades of the last imperial dynasty to make the Communist authorities apprehensive. (July 22, 1999, p. A8)

I have suggested that historically changing social practice is the basis for changing social understanding. The emergence of a mystical society also incites its intellectual representation in a mystical sociology.

If we take as examples of sociological concepts the arenas of everyday social practice that have surfaced repeatedly in our discussions, we can perhaps add to our understanding and reformulation of very basic sociological categories, specifically in social psychology (reselfing), social criticism, social theory, and education. In that way, we begin to outline the mystical sociology that develops within and reflects on a mystical society.

Self

The arenas and categories of self, social interaction, and society are the very same categories I studied as empirical practices of emptying or social evacuation in postmodern conditions (Wexler 1992). I think that the process of "becoming somebody," the social process of defensive identity formation, has been surpassed by surrender of that hard-won, stable, well-defended private self. We have seen a debounded and debounding self, rather than defended self, emerging from the innerworldly mystical traditions that influence contemporary everyday life. The mystical processes of corporealization and de-corporealization, of the open-eyed samadhi of enlightenment, may still be far from a mass social practice. But the direction of an open rather than inert self, a wavelike flow of self/environment relation, means an embedded, ecological self. The separate self in relation to social other and society is replaced by a different sort of "dialogue." For the dialogic interchange is not simply of words among social subjects, but of signified experience between self and environment. The outside/inside wall is eroded, and self-processes are increasingly integrated with environmental meanings and dynamics.

Bruce Wilshire (1998) writes about our self-condition as one of ecstasy deprivation, in which ecstasy is based on the depth of our connection to the environment. The costs of this connective lack are the widespread but privatized addictions and sufferings of the modern world. For the environment is not simply a colony of the imperial self, or only an external threat to be defended against. That place around us is real, and it is the dialogic partner of the hungry self. According to Wilshire, we now seek the necessary ecstasy of connectedness to place, which he calls "wilderness":

> Wilderness has its own periods and ways. Cultures since the advent of agriculture nine thousand years ago have striven to conquer will-of-the-place. Yet we have continued, apparently, to long for the excitement of will-of-the-place that catches us up as a vital part of itself. (1998, p. 8)

In my view, Wilshire's term "wilderness" and this reintegration of self/environment is a contemporary ecological version of Mircea Eliade's longing for primordial belonging, which he referred to as "onto-

logical thirst." Wilshire sees this primary motive for self-integration with environment, this "ecstatic wholeness," as an unmet need and failure of the modern world:

> Historically and prehistorically the most important task of civilization has been to survive by integrating us in will-of-the-place. Among earliest evidences of distinctly human cultures are lunar calendars incised on animal bones. That we might be caught up ecstatically as a vital part of the enwombing universe, its recurrent cycles were recorded and celebrated in ours—rituals, ceremonies, stories and myths. (1998, p. 12)

This reintegration in place belongs to our vision of a mystical society. "But this experience of belonging in what catches us up ecstatically," writes Wilshire,

> is the experience of the *sacred* [emphasis added]; of what roots and empowers us in the world and centers and orients us, of what we know can never be completely known or controlled. "Whole," "heal," "holy" are connected. . . . Loss of ego is a kind of sacrament that leaves room for something much greater than ego. As it was in the beginning [Eliade's *illo tempore*], so it is now, and ever more shall be, world without end, Amen. The Christian doxology exhibits roots in more ancient human practices or restoration and homecoming. (1998, p. 13)

A sacralized self-environment dialogue differs from the conventional sociological understandings of "socialization," which mean the stamping of historical social routine to make a "person." It is the dialectic of reproduction and resistance, which polarizes power. Instead, there is the flow (Castells's "space of flows") in between place and person. Neither the self nor the environment is inert, reified, or empty of meaning, power, or the history of experience. A mystical sociology of the self will be dialogic and nondualistic, like the mystical traditions of innerworldliness from which it draws. It is a sociology of reintegration.

Social Interaction

However, a nondualistic, mystical sociology is not static or inert and is not a harmony of silent being; it is not a withdrawal from the world.

On the contrary, it is an expansion, an "enlargement" in James's language, of experience by enhancing and redefining the self/environment boundary or threshold (as James did) and by enlarging the meaning of both world and self. Concretely, this means a broader, multidimensional understanding of the concept of social interaction.

We sociologists sometimes imagine that we have made great progress from earlier, modern Functionalist models of social interaction as normative conformity and role performance—the interactive side of socialization of the self—by now seeing social interaction as intersubjective communication. But, practically, intersubjectivity often means the sign exchanges of solid selves. However, we have seen that in the traditions of innerworldly mysticism, in Hasidism and Tantrism, that text or signification is entwined with experienced being. Interchanges are not merely of the social currency of belief and expectation, or even of consciousness, but of multiple substances of vitality, bodily breath, and fluid. Such interchanges are themselves not merely of material, vital substances, but are embedded in a larger grid of interchange across media as well as persons; these interchanges are not exchanges but transformations.

The extreme case is immortality, where those very material media interchanged through and on the body are themselves dematerialized—a transformation of matter to energy, as we might say in another vocabulary. Indeed, mutation of the media or substances of interchange within the interactions themselves is why "alchemy" is not only a good description of certain historical, mystical practices but also a good clue to the nature of an enlarged process of social interaction, as everyday social life.

This enlargement redefines the social, first, to include the body. White's "alchemical body" is not simply an analogy but a description of practices that induce physiological and material changes as part of a larger set of ritual, social activities. Embodiment in social criticism and social theory means bringing the social down to earth, emplacing it in Wilshire's ecstatic whole of ecological wilderness and also expanding the definition of its active elements. Consequently, social interaction is not only about language and mores but is seen instead as an ongoing process of the transformation of social energy.

We are reluctant to even think of energy as the field of nondualism, as the way in which the polarity of the physical and the social is overcome. But social interaction is not just language sign, ritual perfor-

mance, or direction of consciousness. To say that social interaction, no less criticism and theory, is embodied means that it is physical. We can easily grant the interchange of bodily fluids in sexual interchange. A few biosociologists are willing to explore the relation between physiology, emotions, and social interaction (Kemper 1990). But seeing breathing, consciousness, material bodily process, and social belief as entwined in ongoing social interaction is a complex equation model that is beyond modern and postmodern sociological interests.

Mystical models of Kundalini energy, alchemy, yoga, and shamanistic, celestial ascents, descents, and the everyday healing and social distribution of energy associated with the sacred are being pressed forward to sociological awareness by the course of everyday social life. New Age body practices, increasingly being legitimated as "complementary medecine," are folk enactments of our still sociologically unarticulated consciousness of this broader meaning of social interaction.

As Weber understood it, the sociological work is to "sublimate" (intellectualize or critically rearticulate) these historical practices. A mystical sociology will have not only an elaboration of a "wild" self and a nondualistic relation of self and world, but will also include research and analysis of an alchemy of everyday social life. This is not an alchemy of esotericism, but an alchemy of complex, multivariate interchanges within a much wider and simultaneously more physical and spiritual understanding of that which is dynamic in social life. This is a field now reified in the concept of "culture," as self is immobilized in "socialization." For now, "social energy" and its transformations point to the field within which these specifications will be made in a mystical sociology. That hope is based on an understanding that here too theory follows practice or, at best, anticipates the fuller realization of practice based on a reading of early, partial signs. That is our hermeneutic of identifying the emergent mystical society and the outlines of a mystical sociology. And this hermeneutic of small-sign extrapolation or exegesis itself belongs to mystical traditions, like Kabbalah (Idel, forthcoming).

Society

"Self" is rethought in terms of ecological reintegration, of a dialogue of wholeness. "Social interaction" is broadened to include the physi-

cal and embodied, along with a less tangible spiritual consciousness, as channels of interchanges within which transformations of social energy occur. This more "flowing," debounded sociology draws from mystical traditions and brings them down to earth in everyday social life, in following contemporary New Age practice and the undeniable surge of "unchurched spirituality," as referred to by both Wuthnow and Fuller. The irony of a mystical sociology is that it is a "living sociology." Outside the inert and reified approaches to self, interaction, and society, the range of relations and dimensions is broader and more dynamic.

Mystical traditions are part of the revitalization processes that I have described. Saliently, those processes include repositioning or imagination; reunion, which includes reintegration; and a recreation or enlivenment of self/body and world. And revitalization entails a transformation of the whole. Yet that largest and last element in our conceptual triad of self, interaction, and society remains conceptually the most elusive. Although I have suggested that the social production of informationalism sets the stage for a new, innerworldly mysticism, it does not yet actualize the shape of a fully transformed whole, or "society." As we saw in the discussion of messianic mysticism, that is partially because the creation of a mystical society may involve the causal sequencing of change that moves first from the revitalization of individual being as mystical experience and only later toward a collective movement that feeds back to transform the stage setting of social production. Emergence of a redefined society comes later, both in practice and in theory.

We have seen that Durkheim already anticipated this living whole in his version of a wavelike oscillation between the sacred and the profane, the everyday routine and the collective effervescence of religion. Durkheim's dynamic is continued by Alberoni's (1985) collective vibration between "movement and institution," between the established social state and the inchoate and unstable "nascent state" of dynamic sociality. Touraine (1981) also put social movement at the defining core of society instead of relegating it to a social dualism of order and change.

In a mystical society emerging after postmodernism and in conditions of corporate informationalism, the wave is more dispersed, more decentralized. The dynamic that constitutes society is not simply between institutions and organized social movements. Rather, the late

postmodern decentralization and individualization of the sacred as personal spirituality or mystical experience—the social unmediated relation between self and Self—means that social-ity is created more microcosmically. Within the large waves of social movements are the smaller eddies and currents of a centrifugal and centripetal movement of aggregation and disaggregation of individual experience and collective action. The "electricity" that Durkheim sought to reheat a cold society is not found predictably in the stable rituals of institutionalized religion, a "church," as Durkheim put it. Rather, "society" is in the smaller movements between private mystical experience and socially shared revitalization. It is in the shaman's distribution of cosmic energy upon celestial descent, the zaddik's relation to his Hasidism, and even in the mutual recognition of common body piercing, as Torgovnick described a contemporary form of the quest for a living, experienced form of sociality.

The sacred totality is miniaturized in mystical experience. But sociality comes in the simultaneous activation of spiritual practice. As we saw in mystical traditions at the individual level, when this back-and-forth movement of sociality encounters structural resistance and opposition, then it becomes clear that the currents were waves and that what is apparently individualized is actually a different form of society that disassembles and reassembles. That movement, the to-and-fro, distinguishes society as a life process, against the "mechanical petrification" of modernity's "iron cage," which Weber prophesied. We have no simple name for it. But if we begin to think of self-processes as dialogic ecology and social interaction as transformations of energy, then the to-and-fro of sociality is a sort of societal "respiration" (Stein 1999). When it expands *against* the reified sociality of state power, then we know it as a more fluid form of society.

As if a background to this analysis, the aggregation of Fulan Gong practice in China illustrates the *political* meaning of individualized spiritual practice for society. Now the Chinese government has banned the "sect." The *New York Times* reported:

> But the ferocity of Beijing's campaign—aimed at a group of mainly middle-aged people who practice a form of Chinese breathing exercises and meditation—suggests that it regards Fulan Gong as more than a move-

ment of physical and moral uplift. At a time when China's economy is slowing and social unrest is rising, officials here view this amorphous but fast-growing sect as a dangerous political force. (July 23, 1999, p. A1)

Pedagogy of Revitalization

The "respiration" of society is blocked in education. Although popular innerworldly mysticism represents what I have called a decentered curriculum, engaging a vast apparatus of New Age adult educational activities, in-school education remains unilinearly aimed toward the accumulation of cognitive capital. Although there are counterinstances of New Age education and the existence of revitalization practices in marginal, alternative school movements, school education is caught in the paroxysm of a duality of everyday school repression in the name of "academic achievement" and sporadic episodes of violent outbursts against schooling and society.

Elsewhere (1996, 1998) I have tried to describe an interactive mutuality of teacher and student, or even a "redemptive" teaching, but there is still no school-based curriculum to match the informal educational movement for the revitalization of everyday life. Although Pinar (1999) and his colleagues have worked to articulate such a curriculum for more than twenty years, it remains idiosyncratic and detached from an embeddedness in a wider movement of society.

As we saw in the discussion of revitalization, this is an education: of the imagination (for an exception, see Maxine Greene 1995); the capacity for cognitive reframing rather than cumulative information processing; ecological self-integration (Laura 1998); and a reselfing reunion through connection to some transcendental Jamesian "More," Kabbalistic "Ein Sof," or unboundedness and an embodied, continual process of recreation within society.

The articulation of the "small signs" (Pinar 1999; Greene 1995; Laura 1998) of such a curriculum into an active pedagogy of revitalization means less an encounter with the state apparatus (though public schools remain static on these dimensions, despite more than a decade of school "reform") and more a challenge to the economic logic of fast-track mobility via educational credentialism. Yet it is precisely in this arena, submerged in the informational and not the mys-

tical aspect of the new society, that we look for the next round of educational transformation.

Such a pedagogy will require first a change in the pedagogues and their theories and practices. As Marx put it, "the educators must be educated." Our educators and educational theorists remain deeply committed to the logics of modernity and, more critically, to models of postmodern education. Yet, as with changing social practice, we already see the emergence of questions on the overlapping domains of religion, education, and society. The intersection of Buddhism and critical pedagogy, curricula of spirituality in the workplace, ecofeminism as a sacred pedagogy, and the dynamics of faith and reason, are examples of issues posed by a new generation of educators raised in the mystical society (Wexler 2000). Along with a redefinition of social concepts, there is a beginning also toward a new pedagogy—of revitalization.

"Forgotten Things"

A mystical society and a pedagogy of revitalization do not occur outside of history. Informationalism's slogan of an "end of history" is a new form of alienation, a deracination of collective being not from place, but from time. Even flowing time can have a memory. Without an intentional memory or a practice of remembering, "forgotten things" do return, but in misshapen forms, encrypted in the deformations of denial and repression. Mystery is emplaced in traditions of meaning, I think (concurring here with Gimello and Katz against "pure consciousness events," if that means outside any social history). Without memory of those traditions, mystical experience dissolves into momentary pleasure and is easily caught up in the commodity machine of consumption as a new product for sale: mystical experience. If we need a "wild" hunger to quench our ontological thirst, a dialogue with place that creates wholeness that we feel as ecstasy, then we also need a "wild" history to satisfy our being in time. This is an active, living, remembered history and not a facticized accumulation of a dead, inert otherness.

The antidote to the alienation-antidote of mystical experience becoming a new social poison is the intellectual and emotional work of connecting such experience not simply with the momentary unifica-

tion (Merkur 1999) of psychological gratification and understanding, but also with the long, historical way of collective memory of shared life. This entails both a scholarly and an experiential effort. Alongside the conceptual work of creating a mystical sociology and the educational work of creating and articulating a pedagogy of revitalization, there is also the historical-experiential work of remembering and the scholarly work that feeds memory. This involves an uncovering and a renewal of the mystical traditions that have, until very recently, been erased by the claims of the modern world. The elements of the traditions that are now returned to us are only invitations, only beginnings.

As Murray wrote, these forgotten things can "help still in the forward groping of humanity" (1925, p. 238). In these tasks of reimagining, teaching anew, and creating vivid, presently active memories from traditions, we too participate in a historic revitalization of culture, theory, and education. This is the creative work of being truly alive everyday; this is the passion enlightened by mysticism.

This page intentionally left blank

References

Abram, David. 1996. *The Spell of the Sensuous*. New York: Vintage.

Abrams, M. H. 1971. *Natural Supernaturalism*. New York: Norton.

Afterman, Allen. 1992. *Kabbalah and Consciousness*. New York: Sheep Meadow.

Alberoni, Francisco. 1984. *Movement and Institution*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Alexander, Jeffery. 1995. *Fin de Siècle Social Theory*. New York: Verso.

Alexander, Jeffery, and Philip Smith. 1996. "Review Essay: Durkheim's Religious Revival." *American Journal of Sociology* 102, no. 2: 585–592.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 1988a. "Culture and Political Crisis: 'Watergate' and Durkheimian Sociology." In Jeffrey Alexander, ed., *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*, 187–225. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1988b. "Introduction: Durkheimian Sociology and Cultural Studies Today." In Jeffrey Alexander, ed., *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*, 1–19. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Allen, Gay Wilson. 1971. *A William James Reader*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Anderson, G. 1989. "Critical Ethnography in Education: Origins, Current Status, and New Directions." *Review of Educational Research* 59, 3: 249–270.

Arditi, Jorge. 1993. "Out of the Maze? Twists and Riddles of Postmodern Thinking." *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* 22: 1.

Bakan, David. 1966. *The Duality of Human Existence*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Bannet, Eve Tavor. 1992. "Marx, God, and Praxis." In Philippa Berry and Andrew Wernick, eds., *Shadow of Spirit: Postmodernism and Religion*, 123–134. London: Routledge.

Barglow, Raymond. 1994. *The Crisis of the Self in the Age of Information: Computers, Dolphins, and Dreams*. New York: Routledge.

Barnard, G. William. 1997. *Exploring Unseen Worlds: William James and the Philosophy of Mysticism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Beals, Ralph C. 1978. "Religion and Identity." *Contributions to the Sociology of Knowledge* 11: 147–162.

Bellah, Robert N. 1970. *Beyond Belief*. Berkley: University of California Press.

Bellah, Robert N., ed. 1973. Introduction to *Emile Durkheim: On Morality and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Benson, H. 1996. *Timeless Healing: The Power of Biology of Belief*. New York: Scribner's.

Bloom, Harold. 1992. *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

———. 1996. *Omens of Millennium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams, and Resurrection*. New York: Riverhead.

Bramson, Leon. 1961. *The Political Context of Sociology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Britzman, Deborah. 1995. "Beyond Innocent Readings." In W. Pink and G. Noblitt, eds., *Continuity and Contradiction*. Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton.

Bruner, Edward M., and Victor W. Turner. 1986. "Argument of Images." In Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, eds., *The Anthropology of Experience*, 182–187. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Brunner, Diane DuBose. 1994. *Inquiry and Reflection: Framing Narrative Practice in Education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Buber, Martin. 1948. *Israel and the World: Essays in a Time of Crisis*. New York: Schocken.

———. 1949. *Paths in Utopia*. Boston: Beacon.

———. 1958a. *Hasidism and Modern Man*. New York: Horizon.

———. 1958b. *I and Thou*. New York: Macmillan.

———. [1948] 1963. *Israel and the World: Essays in a Time of Crisis*. New York: Schocken.

———. 1965. *Between Man and Man*. New York: Macmillan.

———. 1967. *On Judaism*. New York: Schocken.

———. 1992. *On Intersubjectivity and Cultural Creativity*. Edited by S. N. Eisenstadt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Callahan, Raymond E. 1962. *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Campbell, Joseph, ed. 1964. *Man and Transformation: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Campbell, Ted A. 1991. *The Religion of the Heart*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

Carspecken, P. 1996. *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research*. New York: Routledge.

Casey, Catherine. 1995. *Work, Self, and Society; After Industrialism*. New York: Routledge.

Cassirer, Ernst. 1972. *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Castells, Manuel. 1996. *The Rise of Network Society*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

_____. 1997. *The Power of Identity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Chen, David W. 1997. "Fitting the Lord into Tight Schedules." *New York Times*, November 29, 1997, A1.

Cladis, Mark S. 1992. *A Communitarian Defense of Liberalism: Emile Durkheim and Contemporary Social Theory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Classen, Constance. 1998. *The Color of Angels: Cosmology, Gender, and the Aesthetic Imagination*. New York: Routledge.

Clebsh, William. 1973. *American Religious Thought: A History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cohen, Anthony P., and Nigel Rapport, eds. 1995. *Questions of Consciousness*. London: Routledge.

Cohen, Kenneth. 1997. *The Way of Qigong: The Art and Science of Chinese Energy Healing*. New York: Ballantine.

Cohn, Norman. 1993. *Cosmos, Chaos, and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Collins, John, and Michael Fishbane, eds. 1995. *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Collins, Randall. 1988. "The Durkheimian Tradition in Conflict Sociology." In Jeffrey Alexander, ed., *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*, 93–106. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, David A. 1992. *Silence, Simplicity, and Solitude: A Guide for Spiritual Retreat*. New York: Bell Tower.

Couliano, Ioan P. 1987. *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance*. Translated by Margaret Cook. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Csordas, Thomas J. 1994a. "Introduction: The Body As Representation and Being-in-the-World." In *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self*, 1–26. New York: Cambridge University Press.

_____. 1994b. *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Deikman, Arthur. 1980. "Bimodal Consciousness and the Mystic Experience." In Richard Woods, ed., *Understanding Mysticism*, 261–269. Garden City, N.Y.: Image.

DeLeon-Jones, Karen Silvia. 1997. *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah: Prophets, Magicians, and Rabbis*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Deleuze, G., and F. Guattari. 1977. *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. New York: Viking.

Desjarlais, Robert. 1996. "Presence." In C. Laderman and M. Roseman, eds., *The Performance of Healing*. New York: Routledge.

_____. 1997. *Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood Among the Homeless*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dreeben, Robert. 1965. *What Is Learned in School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dresner, Samuel H. 1960. *The Zaddik: The Doctrine of the Zaddik According to the Writings of Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polnoy*. New York: Schocken.

Durkheim, Émile. 1956. *Education and Sociology*. New York: Free Press.

_____. 1960a. *Essays on Sociology and Philosophy*. Edited by K. Wolff. New York: Harper Torchbooks.

_____. 1960b. "Preface to L'Annee Sociologique." In K. Wolff, ed., *Essays on Sociology and Philosophy*. Vols. 1–2. New York: Harper & Row.

_____. 1961. *Moral Education*. New York: Free Press.

_____. 1962. *Socialism*. New York: Macmillan.

_____. 1964. *The Division of Labor*. New York: Free Press.

_____. 1973. *On Morality and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

_____. 1974. *Sociology and Philosophy*. New York: Free Press.

_____. 1979. *Essays on Morals and Education*. Edited by W. S. F. Pickering. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

_____. 1992. *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*. New York: Routledge.

_____. 1993. *Ethics and the Sociology of Morals*. Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus.

_____. 1995. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, Émile, and Marcel Mauss. 1963. *Primitive Classification*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Eliade, Mircea. 1957. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt Brace.

_____. 1960. *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*. Translated by Philip Mairet. New York: Harper & Row.

_____. 1964. "Mystery and Spiritual Regeneration in Extra-European Religions." In Joseph Campbell, ed., *Man and Transformation*, 3–36. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

_____. 1969. *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

_____. 1972. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Elior, Rachel. 1993. *The Paradoxical Ascent to God: The Kabbalistic Theosophy of Habad Hasidism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ellwood, Robert S. 1994. *The 60s Spiritual Awakening: American Religion Moving from Modern to Postmodern*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Epstein, Joyce L. 1997. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin.

Erickson, Victoria. 1993. *Where Silence Speaks: Feminism, Social Theory, and Religion*. Minneapolis: Fortress.

Fernandez, James W. 1986. "The Argument of Images and the Experience of Returning to the Whole." In Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, eds., *The Anthropology of Experience*, 159–187. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

_____. 1995. "Amazing Grace: Meaning Deficit, Displacement, and New Consciousness in Expressive Interaction." In Anthony P. Cohen and Nigel Rapport, eds., *Questions of Consciousness*, 21–40. London: Routledge.

Fishbane, Michael. 1994. *The Kiss of God: Spiritual and Mystical Death in Judaism*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Forman, Robert K., ed. 1998. *The Innate Capacity: Mysticism, Psychology, and Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Foss, Daniel, and Ralph Larkin. 1986. *Beyond Revolution: A Theory of New Social Movements*. Massachusetts: Bergan & Garvey.

Foucault, Michel. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon.

_____. 1973. *The Order of Things*. New York: Random House.

_____. 1978. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Random House.

_____. 1988. "Technologies of the Self." In Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds., *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, 16–49. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Friedman, Maurice S., ed. 1974. *Pointing the Way: Collected Essays by Martin Buber*, 31–58. New York: Schocken.

Friedrichs, Robert. 1970. *Sociology of Sociology*. New York: Free Press.

Fromm, Erich. 1956. *The Art of Loving*. New York: Harper & Row.

_____. 1964. Forward to Karl Marx, *Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

_____. 1966. *You Shall Be As Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and Its Traditions*. Greenwich: Fawcett.

_____. 1976. *To Have or to Be*. New York: Harper & Row.

_____. 1989–1994. *The Art of Being*. New York: Continuum.

Fuller, Robert C. 1986. *Americans and the Unconscious*. New York: Oxford University Press.

_____. 1998. "Drugs and the Baby Boomers' Quest for Metaphysical Illumination." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Orlando, Fla., November 1998.

_____. 2000. *Stairways to Heaven: Drugs in American Religious History*. Boulder: Westview.

Gane, Mike. 1992. "Durkheim: Woman As Outsider." In Mike Gane, ed., *The Radical Sociology of Durkheim and Mauss*, 85–132. New York: Routledge.

Gergen, Kenneth J. 1991. *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life*. New York: Basic.

Gerth, H. H., and C. Wright Mills. 1946. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Giller, Pinchas. 1993. *The Enlightened Will Shine: Symbolization and Theurgy in the Later Strata of the Zohar*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Gimello, Robert M. 1983. "Mysticism in Its Contexts." In Steven Katz, ed., *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, 61–88. New York: Oxford University Press.

Goldstein, J. 1993. *Insight Meditation: The Practice of Freedom*. Boston: Shambhala.

Gore, J. 1993. *The Struggle for Pedagogies*. New York: Routledge.

Gouldner, A. 1970. *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. New York: Basic.

Greene, Maxine. 1995. *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gross, Rita. 1993. *Buddhism After Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Guenther, Herbert V. 1969. *Yuganaddha: The Tantric View*. Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Vidyavilas Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Boston: Beacon.

Happold, F. C. 1970. *Mysticism: A Study and an Anthology*. London: Penguin.

Harvey, David. 1989. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell.

Hawthorne, Geoffrey. 1976. *Enlightenment and Despair: A History of Sociology*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Heelas, Paul. 1996. *The New Age Movement: The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Heinze, Ruth-Inge, ed. 1989. *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternate Modes of Healing*, September 3–5, 1998. Berkeley, Calif.: Independent Scholars of Asia.

Heschel, Abraham J. 1962a. *The Prophets: An Introduction*. New York: Harper & Row.

———. 1962b. *The Prophets: Part 2*. New York: Harper & Row.

Hinkle, Roscoe C., Jr., and Gisela J. Hinkle. 1954. *The Development of Modern Sociology*. New York: Random House.

Hirschhorn, Larry. 1988. *The Workplace Within: Psychodynamics of Organizational Life*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Horkheimer, Max. 1992. *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Continuum.

Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. 1972. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. New York: Herder & Herder.

Humphrey, Caroline. 1996. *Shamans and Elders: Experience, Knowledge, and Power Among the Daur Mongols*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hunt, Lynn. 1988. "The Sacred and the French Revolution." In Jeffrey Alexander, ed., *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*, 25–43. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hunter, J. D., and T. Fessenden. 1992. "The New Capitalist Class: The Rise of the Moral Entrepreneur in America." In Hansfried Kellner and Frank W. Heuberger, eds., *Hidden Technocrats: The New Class and New Capitalism*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction.

Idel, Moshe. 1988. *Kabbalah: New Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. 1995. *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

———. 1998. *Messianic Mystics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. Forthcoming. *Hermeneutics of Mysticism*.

Jackson, Michael. 1983. "Knowledge of the Body." *Man* 18: 327–345.

———. 1989. *Paths Toward a Clearing*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———. 1995. *At Home in the World*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

James, William. [1902] 1985. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Penguin Classics.

———. 1980. "A Suggestion About Mysticism." In Richard Woods, ed., *Understanding Mysticism*, 215–222. New York: Doubleday.

Jay, Nancy. 1992. *Throughout Your Generations Forever*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kaminer, Wendy. 1992. *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional: The Recovery Movement and Other Self-Help Fashions*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Kant, Immanuel. 1960. *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. New York: Harper.

_____. 1963. *Lectures on Ethics*. New York: Harper.

Kapferer, B. 1995. "From the Edge of Death: Sorcery and the Motion of Consciousness." In A. Cohen and N. Rapport, eds., *Questions of Consciousness*. New York: Routledge.

Katz, Steven, ed. 1983. *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kaufman-Osborn, Timothy. 1988. "Emile Durkheim and the Politics of Knowledge." *Theory and Society* 17: 121–145.

Kellner, Hansfried, and Frank W. Heuberger, eds. 1992. *Hidden Technocrats: The New Class and New Capitalism*. London: Transaction.

Kemper, Theodore. 1990. *Social Structure and Testosterone: Explorations of the Socio-Bio-Social Chain*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rugers University Press.

King, Dr. Richard. 1999. *The Politics of Defining Mysticism: A Genealogy of "The Mystical."* New York: Routledge.

Klausner, Joseph. 1995. *The Messianic Idea in Israel*. New York: Macmillan.

Kroker, Arthur, and David Cook. 1986. *The Postmodern Scene*. New York: St. Martin's.

LaBier, Douglas. 1989. *Modern Madness: The Hidden Link Between Work and Emotional Conflict*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Laderman, C., and M. Roseman. 1996. *The Performance of Healing*. New York: Routledge.

Ladwig, J. G. 1995. "Sociology of School Knowledge." In W. Pink and G. Noblitt, eds., *Continuity and Contradiction*. Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton.

Lamborn Wilson, Peter. 1993. *Sacred Drift: Essays on the Margins of Islam*. San Francisco: City Lights.

Langman, Lauren. 1991. "From Pathos to Panic: American Character Meets the Future." In Philip Wexler, ed., *Critical Theory Now*. London: Falmer.

Lasch, Christopher. 1986. "A Typology of Intellectuals: II. The Example of C. Wright Mills." *Salmagundi* 70–71: 102–107.

_____. 1987. "Conscience, Reason, and Imagination: C. Wright Mills and the Life of the Mind." *Social Science* 72: 81–85.

_____. 1990a. "Probing Gnosticism and Its Modern Derivatives: Notes on Gnosticism-Part II." *New Oxford Review*, December 1990, 4–10.

_____. 1990b. "Religious Contributions to Social Movements: Walter Rauschenbusch, the Social Gospel, and the Critics." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 18: 7–25.

_____. 1990c. "The Saving Remnant." Review of *The Feeling Intellect*, by Philip Rieff. *New Republic* 19: 32–36.

_____. 1991a. "Anti-Modern Mysticism: E. M. Cioran and C. G. Jung: Notes of Gnosticism—Part IV." *New Oxford Review*, March 1991, 20–26.

_____. 1991b. "The New Age Movement: No Effort, No Truth, No Solutions: Notes on Gnosticism—Part V." *New Oxford Review*, April 1991, 8–13.

_____. 1991c. "The Spirit of Modern Science: Notes on Gnosticism—Part III." *New Oxford Review*, January-February 1990, 10–15.

_____. 1991d. *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics*. New York: Norton.

_____. 1992. "Gnosticism, Ancient and Modern: The Religion of the Future?" *Salmagundi* 96: 27–42.

Lather, Patti. 1991. *Getting Smart: Feminist Psychology and Pedagogy in the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge.

Laura, Ron, and Matthew Cotton. 1999. *Empathic Education: An Ecological Perspective on Educational Knowledge*. Philadelphia: Falmer.

Lehmann, Jennifer. 1993. *Deconstructing Durkheim: a Post-Poststructuralist Critique*. New York: Routledge.

Lemert, Charles. 1995. *Sociology After the Crisis*. Boulder: Westview.

Levy, Robert, Jeannette Marie Mageo, and Alan Howard. 1996. "Gods, Spirits, and History: A Theoretical Perspective." In Alan Howard and Jeannette Marie Mageo, eds., *Spirits in Culture, History, and Mind*, 11–27. New York: Routledge.

Liebes, Yehuda. 1993. *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Lindholm, Charles. 1990. *Charisma*. Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell.

Loewenthal, Naftali. 1990. *Communicating the Infinite: The Emergence of the Habad School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lowen, Alexander. 1962. *Pleasure: A Creative Approach to Life*. Middlesex, U.K.: Penguin.

Lowy, M. 1992. *Redemption and Hope*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Lyon, M. L., and J. M. Barbalet. 1994. "Society's Body: Emotion and the Somatization of Social Theory." In T. Csordas, ed., *Embodiment and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maffesoli, Michel. 1993. "The Imaginary and the Sacred in Durkheim's Sociology." *Current Sociology* 41, no. 2: 59–67.

Mandelaro, Doug. 1998. "www.God.com." *Democrat and Chronicle*, Rochester, N.Y.

Marcuse, Herbert. 1955. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. Boston: Beacon.

_____. 1969. *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon.

Marquardt, Marie Friedmann. 1998. "Globalizing the Rainbow Madonna: Old-Time Religion in the Present Age." Paper presented at the annual

meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Orlando, Fla., November 21–24, 1998.

Marx, K. 1956–1964. *Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy.* Edited and translated by T. B. Bottomore, with an introduction and notes by Maximilien Rubel. New York: McGraw-Hill.

McGuire, Meredith. 1988. *Ritual Healing in Suburban America.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

———. 1990. "Religion and the Body: Rematerializing the Human Body in the Social Sciences of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 293: 283–295.

———. 1996. "Religion and Healing the Mind/Body/Self." *Social Compass* 431: 101–116.

Melucci, Alberto. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

———. 1994. "A Strange Kind of Newness: What's 'New' in New Social Movements?" In Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield, eds., *New Social Movements,* 101–130. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

———. 1996. *The Playing Self: Person and Meaning in the Planetary Society.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mendes-Flohr, P., ed. 1989. *From Mysticism to Dialogue: Martin Buber's Transformation of German Social Thought.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Merkur, Dan. 1993. *Gnosis: An Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Unions.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

———. 1999. *Mystical Moments and Unitive Thinking.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mestrovic, Stjepan G. 1992. *Durkheim and Postmodern Culture.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Miller, Donald E. 1975. "Religion, Social Change, and the Expansive Life Style." *Contributions to the Society of Knowledge* 9:149–159.

Miller, W. Watts. 1996. *Durkheim, Morals, and Modernity.* London: UCL Press.

Mills, C. Wright. 1943. "The Professional Ideology of Social Pathologists." In Larry T. Reynolds and Janice M. Reynolds, eds., *The Sociology of Sociology.* New York: David McKay.

Mitzman, Arthur. 1969. *The Iron Cage: An Historical Interpretation of Max Weber.* New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

Moore, Wilbert. 1963. *Social Change.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Morrow, R., and C. Torres. 1995. *Social Theory and Education: A Critique of Theories of Social and Cultural Reproduction*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mueller, Gert H. 1973. "Asceticism of Mysticism: A Contribution Towards the Sociology of Faith . . ." *Sociological Theories of Religion* 8: 68–112.

Murray, Gilbert. 1925. *Five Stages of Greek Religion: Studies Based on a Course of Lectures Delivered in April 1912 at Columbia University*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Neitz, Mary Jo, and James V. Spickard. 1990. "Steps Toward a Sociology of Religious Experience: The Theories of Mihaly Csikszentmihaly and Alfred Schutz." *Sociological Analysis* 51, no. 1: 15–33.

Nichols, Martha. 1998. "The Gray Flannel Soul: The Absurdity of Seeking God on the Job." *Utne Reader* 87 (May-June): 24–25.

Noble, Douglas. 1991. *The Classroom Arsenal: Military Research, Information Technology, and Public Education*. London: Falmer.

Olalquiaga, C. 1992. *Megalopolis: Contemporary Cultural Sensibilities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ollman, Bertell. 1971. *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Neill, John. 1986. "Sociological Nemesis: Parsons and Foucault on the Therapeutic Disciplines." In Mark L. Wardell and Stephen P. Turner, eds., *Sociological Theory in Transition*. Boston: Allen & Unwin.

Ortner, Sherry. 1974. "Is Female to Male As Nature Is to Culture?" In Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lampere, eds., *Woman, Culture and Society*, 67–87. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ots, T. 1994. "The Silenced Body: The Expressive Leib." In T. Csordas, ed., *Embodiment and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parsons, Talcott. 1953. "The School Class As a Social System." *Harvard Educational Review* 294: 292–308.

———. 1968. *The Structure of Social Action*. Vol. 1. New York: Free Press.

Parsons, William. 1998. "The Oceanic Feeling Revisited." *Journal of Religion* 74, no. 4: 501–523.

Pickering, W. S. F. 1979. Introduction to Émile Durkheim, *Essays on Morals and Education*, 99–125. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

———. 1984. *Durkheim's Sociology of Religion: Themes and Theories*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

———. 1994. "The Enigma of Durkheim's Jewishness." In W. S. F. Pickering and H. Martins, eds., *Debating Durkheim*. London: Routledge.

Pinar, William, ed. 1999. *Contemporary Curriculum Discourses: Twenty Years of JCT*. New York: Peter Lang.

Poster, Mark. 1993. "Foucault and the Problem of Self-Constitution." In John Caputo and Mark Yount, eds., *Foucault and the Critique of Institutions*, 63–80. University Park: Penn State University Press.

Rapoport-Albert, Ada, ed. 1996. *Hasidism Reappraised*. London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization.

Rawls, Anne Warfield. 1996. "Durkheim's Epistemology: The Neglected Argument." In *American Journal of Sociology* 102, no. 2: 430–482.

Rhea, Buford. 1981. *The Future of the Sociological Classics*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Robertson, Roland. 1978. *Meaning and Change: Explorations in the Cultural Sociology of Modern Societies*. New York: New York University Press.

Roof, W. C. 1993. *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation*. New York: HarperCollins.

Rotenberg, Mordechai. 1983. *Dialogue with Deviance: The Hasidic Ethic and the Theory of Social Contraction*. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

Schneider, Michael. 1975. *Neurosis and Civilization: A Marxist/Freudian Synthesis*. New York: Seabury.

Scholem, G. 1971. *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*. New York: Schocken.

_____. 1991. *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah*. New York: Schocken.

Schott, Robin May. 1988. *Cognition and Eros: A Critique of the Kantian Paradigm*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Schwanenberg, Enno. 1975. "Affectivity and Information Mediation." *Contributions to the Sociology of Knowledge* 9: 105–119.

Schweitzer, David. 1996. "Fetishization of Alienation." In Felix Geyer, ed., *Alienation, Ethnicity, and Postmodernism*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood.

Schwendinger, Herman, and Julia R. Schwendinger. 1974. *The Sociologists of the Chair: A Radical Analysis of the Formative Years of North American Sociology, 1883–1922*. New York: Basic.

Seidman, Steven. 1991. "The End of Sociological Theory: The Postmodern Hope." *Sociological Theory* 9, no. 2.

Seremetakis, Nadia C. 1994. *The Senses Still*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Shakolsky, Leon. 1970. "The Development of Sociological Theory in America: A Sociology of Knowledge Interpretation." In Larry T. Reynolds and Janice M. Reynolds, eds., *The Sociology of Sociology*. New York: David McKay.

Sharot, Stephen. 1982. *Messianism, Mysticism, and Magic: A Sociological Analysis of Jewish Religious Movements*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Sheler, Jeffrey L., and Mike Tharp. 1997. "Dark Prophecies." *U.S. News and World Report*, December 15, 65–71.

Shoham, Shlomo. 2000. *God As the Shadow of Man*. New York: Peter Lang.

Silburn, Lilian. 1988. *Kundalini: Energy of the Depths*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Simmel, Georg, Horst Jurgen Helle, and Ludwig Nieder, eds. 1997. *Essays on Religion*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Slater, Philip. 1980. *Wealth Addiction*. New York: Dutton.

Slaughter, Sheila. 1975. "Social Control of Social Research: The Development of the Social Scientist as Expert, 1875–1916." Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin.

Smith, Dusky Lee. 1970. "Sociology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism." In Larry T. Reynolds and Janice M. Reynolds, eds., *The Sociology of Sociology*. New York: David McKay.

Smith, Gregory, and Dilafruz Williams, eds. 1999. *Ecological Education in Action: On Weaving Education, Culture, and the Environment*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Smith, Philip, and Jeffrey C. Alexander. 1996. "Review Essay: Durkheim's Religious Revival." *American Journal of Sociology* 102, no. 2: 585–592.

Sorokin, Pitirim. 1957. *Social and Cultural Dynamics: A Study of Change in Major Systems of Art, Truth, Ethics, Law, and Social Relationships*. Boston: Porter Sargent.

Spindler, George. 1987a. *Education and Cultural Process: Anthropological Approaches*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland.

_____. 1987b. *Spirit: Postmodernism and Religion*. New York: Routledge.

Stein, Paul. 1997. "Practicing Eternity: Socialization, Development, and Social Life." In Joe Kincheloe, Shirley Steinberg, and Leila Vilaverde, eds., *Rethinking Intelligence*, 119–143. New York: Routledge.

_____. 1999. "Magics of the Flesh." Paper presented at the World Congress of Sociology, Montreal, Canada.

Steinsaltz, Adin. 1988. *The Long and Shorter Way: Discourses on Chasidic Thought*. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson.

Stoller, Paul. 1989. *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

_____. 1995. *Embodying Colonial Memories*. New York: Routledge.

_____. 1996. "Sounds and Things." In C. Laderman and M. Roseman, eds., *The Performance of Healing*. New York: Routledge.

Strathern, Andrew. 1995. "Trance and the Theory of Healing." In P. Cohen and N. Rapport, eds., *Questions of Consciousness*. New York: Routledge.

Svoboda, Robert, and Arnie Lade. 1995. *Tao and Dharma: Chinese Medicine and Ayurveda*. Twin Lakes, Wis.: Lotus.

Thompson, Kenneth. 1990. "Secularization and Sacralization." In *Rethinking Progress: Movements, Forces, and Ideas at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Thompson, William I. 1981. *The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light: Mythology, Sexuality, and the Origins of Culture*. New York: St. Martin's.

Thornton, Robert. 1992. "The Rhetoric of Ethnographic Holism." In George Marcus, ed., *Rereading Cultural Anthropology*, 15–34. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Tiryakian, Edward A. 1962. *Sociologism and Existentialism: Two Perspectives on the Individual and Society*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

_____. 1978. "Emile Durkheim." In Tom Bottomore and Robert Nisbet, eds., *A History of Sociological Analysis*, 187–236. New York: Basic.

_____. 1981. "Durkheim's 'Elementary Forms' As 'Revelation.'" In Rhea Buford, ed., *The Future of the Sociological Classics*, 114–135. London: George Allen & Unwin.

_____. 1996. "Three Metacultures of Modernity: Christian, Gnostic, Chthonic." *Theory, Culture, and Society* 13, no. 1: 99–118.

Tole, Lisa Ann. 1993. "Durkheim on Religion and Moral Community in Modernity." *Sociological Inquiry* 63, no. 1: 1–29.

Torgovnick, Marianna. 1997. *Primitive Passions: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Toulmin, Stephen. 1982. *The Return to Cosmology: Postmodern Science and the Theology of Nature*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

_____. 1990. *Cosmopolis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Turkle, Sherry. 1995. *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Turner, Terence. 1994. "Bodies and Anti-Bodies: Flesh and Fetish in Contemporary Social Theory." In Thomas J. Csordas, ed., *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self*, 27–48. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Turner, Victor W., and Edward M. Bruner, eds. 1986. *The Anthropology of Experience*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Uffenheimer, Rivka Schatz. 1993. *Hasidism As Mysticism: Quietistic Elements in Eighteenth-Century Hasidic Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Vaneigem, Raoul. 1998. *The Movement of the Free Spirit*. New York: Zone Books.

Vidich, A. J., and S. Lyman. 1986. "State, Ethics, and Public Morality in American Sociological Thought." In M. Wardell and S. Turner, eds., *Sociological Theory in Transition*. Boston: Allen & Unwin.

Vidich, Arthur J., and Stanford Lyman. 1985. *American Sociology*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Vincent, Jean-Marie. 1991. *Abstract Labour: A Critique*. New York: St. Martin's.

Wallace, Anthony F. C. 1958. "Revitalization Movements: Some Theoretical Considerations for Their Comparative Study." *American Anthropologist* 582: 264–281.

Weber, Max. 1946. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Translated, edited, and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 1958. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Scribner's.

———. [1964] 1991. *The Sociology of Religion*. Boston: Beacon.

Weil, Andrew. 1996. *Spontaneous Healing*. New York: Ballantine.

Weinstein, James. 1968. *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900–1918*. Boston: Beacon.

Weis, L. 1995. "Qualitative Research in Sociology of Education: Reflections on the 1970s and Beyond." In W. Pink and G. Noblitt, eds., *Continuity and Contradiction*. Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton.

Wexler, P. 1987. *Social Analysis of Education: After the New Sociology*. New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall.

———. 1998. "Reselfing After Postmodern Culture: Sacred Social Psychology." In *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.

Wexler, P., and Richard Smith. 1995. *After Postmodernism: Education, Politics, and Identity*. Bristol, Pa.: Falmer.

Wexler, Philip. 1976. *Sociology of Education: Beyond Equality*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

———. 1983. *Critical Social Psychology*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

———. 1992. *Becoming Somebody: Toward a Social Psychology of School*. Washington, D.C.: Falmer.

———. 1996. *Holy Sparks: Social Theory, Education, and Religion*. New York: St. Martin's.

———. 2000. *Religion, Education, and Society*. Forthcoming.

Wexler, Philip, and Paul Stein. Forthcoming. *Self, Society, and Class*.

White, David Gordon. 1996. *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Willis, Paul. 1971. *Learning to Labour*. London: Saxony.

Wilshire, Bruce. 1998. *Wild Hunger: The Primal Roots of Modern Addiction*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Wilson, Peter L. 1993. *Sacred Drift: Essays on the Margin of Islam*. San Francisco: City Lights.

Wolfson, Elliot R. 1994. *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Wuthnow, Robert. 1992. *Rediscovering the Sacred*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.

_____. 1998. *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Yeatman, Anna. 1990. "A Feminist Theory of Social Differentiation." In Linda J. Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism*, 281–300. New York: Routledge.

Zohar, Danah. 1994. *Quantum Society: Mind, Physics, and a New Social Vision*. New York: William Morrow.

Index