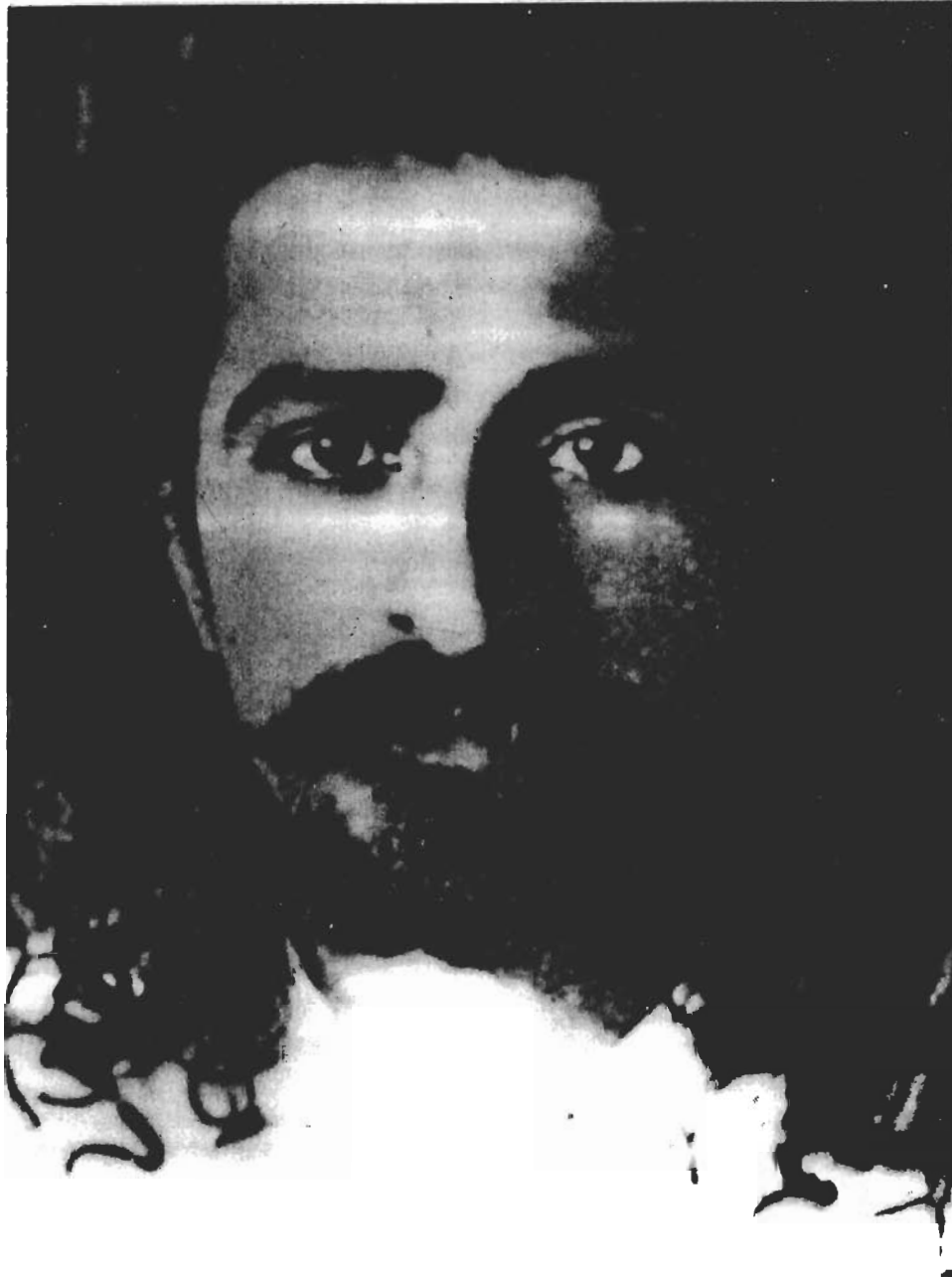


# THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Benjamin Zablocki



Meher Baba (1894-1969) "Don't Worry. Be Happy."

## THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Benjamin Zablocki

It's not always easy to separate birth from death in the study of new religious movements. One aspect of this difficulty is captured well in T.S. Eliot's poem about the three kings who were led by a star to journey to Bethlehem to witness the birth of Jesus, "The Journey of the Magi." Here are the closing lines of that poem:

. . . were we led all that way for  
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.  
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.  
I should be glad of another death.

In planning this paper, my original intention was simply to report some demographic facts about a database that I have been building. These facts have to do with the beginnings and endings of 100 new religious movements (nrms) of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the births and deaths of their charismatic leaders. But as my research progressed, my attention kept on being drawn to the moment when a religion's charismatic founder dies. There is a sense in which, if the religion manages to survive this trauma, only then is the new religious movement is born as a real religion as opposed to a mere cultic fellowship. This fascination

with the interconnection between personal death and institutional birth in turn led me to an interest in crises of succession in the early decades of a religion's history. By such turns, the original topic of this paper partially slipped away from me and perhaps the paper should now be titled "The Birth and Adolescence of New Religious Movements." But I've kept the old title as indicative of my longer range ambitions for this project. And in the closing pages of this paper, I do manage to say a few things about the deaths of new religious movements in earnest of the fuller treatment I want to give this topic in the future.

All religions, except perhaps the very earliest and most primitive, begin as new religious movements. That is, they begin as movements based on spiritual innovation usually in a state of high oppositional tension with prevailing religious practices. Often, they are begun by charismatic religious entrepreneurs. In Western history, the earliest nrm of which we have records is the monotheistic sun god cult of the Egyptians Akhenaten and Nefertiti begun in 1353 BC. This cult was not able to survive the deaths of its charismatic founders and Egyptian society quickly reverted to its traditional polytheistic religion. Tolerant co-existence of both of these religions within the same society was not a possibility in ancient Egypt. It took another 3000 years for full religious pluralism and its offspring-- religious competition within a faith marketplace-- to become cultural possibilities in Western lands.<sup>1</sup>

The kinds of new religious movements that I am interested in are thus comparatively recent phenomena requiring the sort of religious pluralism that began to emerge in Europe and America in the mid seventeenth century. Significant early evidence of the emergence of the pluralistic impulse is to be found in the charter of the Rhode Island Colony begun by Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, and others in the 1640s. The colony charter of 1647 provided that:

---

<sup>1</sup> I am ignoring here the more limited form of religious pluralism that was sometimes in practice within the ancient Roman empire.

. . . no person within the said Colony, at any time hereafter, shall be in any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinions in matters of religion, that do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said Colony; but that all . . . may from time to time, and in all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his and their own judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments . . . not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others. (Ahlstrom 1972, 170)

In Europe, just one year later, a more modest but ultimately further reaching blow for religious toleration was struck by the treaty signed at the Peace of Westphalia at the end of the Thirty Years War. The power of a political ruler to determine the religion of his subjects was for the first time modified “by a provision that, where divided religious worship had existed in a territory in 1624, each party could continue . . . and that a change of the lay ruler to one or the other form of Protestantism thereafter should not affect his subjects” (Walker et al. 1985, 534). Just 41 years later, these limited rights were expanded upon in England through the Toleration Act of 1689 which specified in part that:

. . . all who swore, or affirmed, the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary, rejected the jurisdiction of the pope, transubstantiation, the Mass, and the invocation of the Virgin and saints . . . were granted freedom of worship. It was a personal toleration, not a territorial adjustment as in Germany at the close of the Thirty Years' War. Diverse forms of Protestant worship could now exist side by side. (Walker et al. 1985, 559)

These important 17<sup>th</sup> century cultural innovations laid the foundation for the gradual evolution of full religious pluralism in America and Western Europe by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, it

was not until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that these liberties diffused into parts of Southern Europe, and not until the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that they diffused into Eastern Europe.<sup>2</sup>

For these historic reasons, I have taken the 200 year period from 1800 to 2000 as my historical frame within which to look at new religious movements.<sup>3</sup> I began with a base of 41 contemporary nrms that I knew well through my own direct experience either as an ethnographer or as an interviewer or both. To this I added an additional 59 religious movements for which my research involved primarily examination of secondary documents, although in a few cases, I also interviewed current or former members. This has given me a data base of 100 new religious movements to work with whose starting dates range from 1805 to 1988. This data base is still highly dominated by North American nrms although I have begun to include religious movements from other nations as well. My plan is to eventually expand this data base further to approximately triple its current size and to include many more nrms from continents other than North America.

On the following pages, I present, in tabular form, the 100 new religious movements in the current data base. In each case the starting date for the nrm is given and, if the movement no longer exists, the ending date as well. Only nrms that were founded by a charismatic leader were considered for inclusion in this data base. In each case the name of the leader is given along with birth year and year of death where applicable.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The Eastern European situation is actually more complicated and nonlinear than I have indicated because various Eastern European states enjoyed a fairly high degree of religious liberty in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century until this was interrupted by Soviet hegemony.

<sup>3</sup> This rather arbitrarily excludes some important nrms such as the Shakers whose starting dates were early than 1800.

<sup>4</sup> This is a work in progress and the data in this table should not be taken by the reader as a reference guide. There are almost certainly some remaining inaccuracies particularly in the leader's birth and death statistics. Some of these data have only been checked against one source at this point. I'm reasonably confident, however, that any remaining inaccuracies in this data are small.

## DESCRIPTIONS OF THE 100 GROUPS AND CHARISMATIC LEADERS

Before going on to discuss the groups in this table, something should be said about the criteria for inclusion and what larger population these 100 groups are meant to represent. I have already mentioned that religious movements founded earlier than 1800 were excluded from consideration as were any whose founding and ending dates could not be determined. Also excluded were any whose founding was not associated with a charismatic leader who could be identified by name and whose dates of birth and death were known. Only nrms with names<sup>5</sup> and public identities<sup>6</sup> were included. In addition, I made a rather arbitrary decision to include only religious movements whose membership was open to both males and females. This criterion excluded certain Wicca groups and other interesting nrms from consideration. I'm not sure I can defend this decision except by noting that I often found it difficult to find objective criteria for distinguishing single-sex religious movements from monastic orders and the latter are an entirely different kettle of fish with respect to the issues I am trying to look at. Admittedly, I stretched this somewhat arbitrary inclusion criterion in one instance in which the nrm was made up of a male charismatic leader all of whose followers were women.

In addition to deliberate selection criteria, there are also known sampling biases in this database. Ideally, I would have liked to draw a representative sample of all co-ed charismatic nrms with public identities that have had start dates within the last two centuries. In fact, this selection of 100 nrms is biased in under representing the more ephemeral movements especially among the 19<sup>th</sup> century cases. I have tried to compensate for this bias to some

---

<sup>5</sup> Many nrms are known by multiple names. In such cases, I tried to use the name by which the group is most generally known. This is not always the name the group itself prefers to be called by.

<sup>6</sup> Public identity is an essential sampling criterion. There is no way of knowing how many thousands of anonymous store-front churches and private religious circles have come and gone in the last two centuries and investigation of such phenomena would be an interesting research task. But it is hopeless to think of drawing even a highly biased sample of such entities. They tend to come and go very quickly and, when they disappear, they usually do so without a trace.

degree by being particularly zealous in tracking down information about short-lived groups in both centuries. Although I have had some success in this compensation, it can't come close to balancing out the many highly ephemeral groups that must have been overlooked. A somewhat less irreparable, but no less serious source of bias in this selection is geographical. The greatest share of these 100 nrms are located in the United States. Most of the rest are found in Canada, Europe, or Japan. The southern hemisphere has been entirely excluded<sup>7</sup> although South America, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand have all been fertile breeding grounds for charismatic religious innovation. This bias reflects nothing more than the fact that the current data base is a work in progress and that I made the decision to expand beyond my original contemporary American data base first in time and only later in space.

An examination of Table 1 indicates that most new religious movements do not survive much longer than a single generation. Looking only at those nrms that were started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>8</sup> we see that half survived only 37 years or less. If nrm disintegration were a random phenomenon with any group having a certain constant probability of disintegrating in any year, we would expect to find half of those remaining after 37 years to be gone within another 37 years. In other words, we would then say that 37 years is the half life of a new religious movement. Instead we find that more than half of those remaining in existence after the first 37 years survive for more than a century. From this we can conclude that nrm survival is not random. One possibility is that certain creeds, or certain types of organization, or certain kinds of charismatic leaders impart to their religious movements a differential ability to survive.

---

<sup>7</sup> When I say that the southern hemisphere has been excluded, I am speaking of the location of the central headquarters of these nrms. Many of the more successful of them, of course, have numerous branches throughout the world including the southern hemisphere. Also it should be noted that, while none of the 100 movements originated in South America, one of the charismatic leaders was born there.

<sup>8</sup> Analysis of the survival rates of the 20<sup>th</sup> century movements is more complex because of the right-censoring problem (i.e. the fact that not enough time has yet elapsed to know how long some of these groups (and their leaders) are going to survive). But such analysis as can be done under these circumstances indicates that the patterns of the 20<sup>th</sup> century groups are not markedly different from those of the earlier groups.

Another possibility is that all groups start out with more or less equal likelihood of survival but, the longer an nrm survives, the greater its chances of continuing to survive. We cannot distinguish between these two hypotheses with this database. Simply by coincidence, of the 100 nrms in the data base, exactly half have disintegrated and half are still in existence.

Turning our attention to the charismatic leaders, the first thing that jumps out at us is that they are overwhelmingly (94%) male. Even among the six groups that were not founded by male charismatic leaders, three were founded by male-female partners and in two of the additional three there was a charismatic male figure in the background. A majority of the leaders (58%) are White Americans which reflects nothing more than the current selection bias of the database. About one fifth are of Asian background, a majority of these from India. Seven percent are Black and one is a Native American. Seventy percent of the charismatic leaders are no longer living. Of those who have died, the average life span achieved was 62 years. Since some of the surviving leaders are in their eighties, it is reasonable to estimate that corrected life expectancy of all the leaders in the database is approximately 70 years. At least in life expectancy, charismatic leaders do not differ markedly from the male population norm.

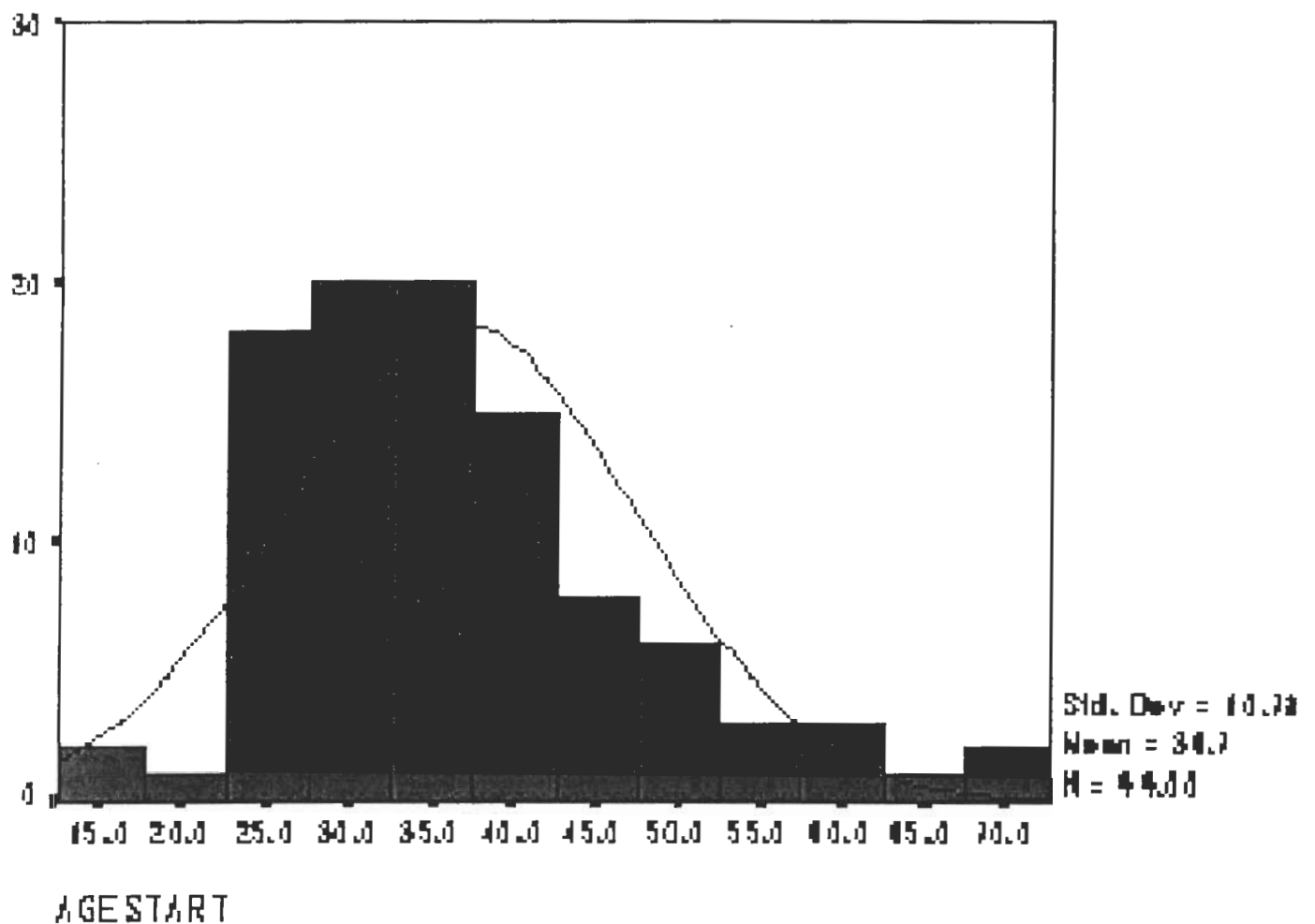
Founding a new religious movement, however, is a young man's game. As Table 2 indicates, the majority of our leaders were between 25 and 39 years of age when they founded their movements. However, there is a great variance within the range. The youngest was 13 when he founded his movement (as "the teenage guru") and the oldest was 69. That one's thirties is prime time for gaining a charismatic religious following fits with what we know of the founders of the major world religions at least in the West. As far as it is possible to discern, Moses<sup>9</sup> and Jesus were both around this age when their movements took shape. Muhammad

---

<sup>9</sup> Although a strict reading of the Bible would force us to believe that Moses was pushing 80 when God first appeared to him in the burning bush (at a time when he was soon to become the father of a son), this leads to a well-known problem of more than 40 lost years (as well as the implication that Moses led his people in the wilderness for



TABLE 2: AGE AT WHICH CHARISMATIC LEADERS  
STARTED THEIR RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS



was probably a little older, in his very late 30s or early 40s. The historical dating is inexact but we know that he was about 50 years old at the time of the Hijrah.

Finally, with respect to demographics, we may observe that there is no particular pattern in our data as to the sequencing of the death of the leader and the disintegration of the movement. Among the 50 cases for which such comparisons are possible, the leader died before the nrm disintegrated in 19 of the cases and in the same year in eight of the cases. In the remaining 23 cases, the leader was still alive when the religious movement disintegrated.

The raw statistical facts that emerge from this data base, of course, don't begin to exhaust the richness of the material. Each of the nrms is worthy of a full length monograph and many have been the subjects of several such. Each of the charismatic leaders is worthy of a book length biography and several have been subjects of such treatment. Just to give a bit of a sense of the enormous variation that is packed into the rubric of "charismatic leader" let me briefly describe two examples. Meher Baba, whose picture is featured on the cover page of this paper was born in India, the son of Zoroastrian parents. Following an incident (at age 20) in which he was kissed on the forehead by a guru, he instantly achieved enlightenment and went into a trance state that was reported to have lasted for nine months. He realized that he was this generation's Avatar, the personification of God on Earth. His central teaching was "Don't worry. Be Happy." At age 31, he realized that there was not much worth saying and he had said it all. So he took a vow of silence that he kept for the rest of his 75 year life. At age 36, he founded an ashram which gradually grew into an international religious movement. This movement is still growing slowly 31 years after Baba's death. It has the distinction of being one of the few nrms about which there has never been a breath of scandal. Victor Baranco was

---

40 years while he himself was maturing from age 80 to age 120) and contemporary scholarship is of the more plausible opinion that the historical Moses was probably less than half that age when he took up his liberation mission (Kirsch 1998).

born in California in 1934. In 1969, he founded the More Institute. In an interview done at that time, he said the following:

I am 34 years old. I have done everything there is to do. I have been a maitre d' in a fine restaurant and a used car salesman. I have peddled phony jewelry and flown people to Las Vegas to gamble. Some of the great people of the world—Mort Sahl, Francis Faye, Christine Jorgensen—know me by name. I have a wonderful wife, two perfect children and a Thunderbird. I have traveled to Los Angeles, Reno, Hawaii, and Mexico. And now I have solved the biggest logic problem of all: Who am I and why am I here? (Felton 1972, 111)

Today, Baranco's nrm is still thriving although he, himself, is serving a prison sentence for the possession and sale of narcotics.

My interest, however is not to describe specific nrms, or specific charismatic leaders, but to attempt to find patterns that cut across many of these groups and their leaders and to develop explanations at a middling level of generality to account for these patterns.

## **DEFINITIONS AND METHODS OF PROCEDURE**

What is this entity of which I have identified 100 specimens for our consideration? I have been calling them new religious movements but each of the three words in this label is problematic and requires further specification. First, what is so "new" about these new religious movements? Genuinely new religious ideas and practices are not all that common. Often we find that the ideas and practices that comprise a particular religious movement are new only in a combinatoric sense. Beliefs, rituals, structures borrowed from many older sources may thus

comprise a new religion only in the sense that they have never before been combined before in this particular way. Of course, all religions combine new ideas and practices with others borrowed from older traditions. But, in some new religious movements, it may be hard to identify any specific elements that are genuinely new (Hexham and Poewe 1997). Moreover, sometimes we do not find even combinatoric originality and a movement turns out to be new only in the sense of “new to you.” In other words, in our global culture it is not uncommon for a charismatic entrepreneur from, say, India, to bring an existing religious movement relatively intact to the West where it is experienced by its devotees as entirely new to their experience and sensibilities.

Second, the term “religious” is not as straightforward as it might at first appear. There is probably no reasonably concise definition of religion that would apply to all 100 groups on the list. Certainly not all of them believe in a god or gods. Some nrms shade off in the direction of psychological or self-help movements. Is Alcoholics Anonymous a religious movement? I have not included it or est or Silva Mind Control although some would argue that these groups are held together through a religious or spiritual faith. On the other hand, some groups on the list seem to have a largely therapeutic agenda. I have not employed any rigid rule of inclusion but have generally looked for at least some involvement of the movement with a supernatural world, or supernatural beings, or supernatural processes in order to include it.

Third, in what sense are religions “social movements?” I think that in their early stages, most of them are, but that the major world religions come to outgrow this classification. This is an important distinction. It should be clear that I am dealing in this paper with relatively simple early-stage religions. Of course, I am not making a claim to be able to distinguish among religions according to the simplicity or complexity of their theologies, practices, or teachings. Such judgments are not within the scope of sociology. But I do find it useful to distinguish a

religion that is coterminous with a single religious organization (simple) from one in which there are multiple and possibly overlapping organizational affiliations within the entire faith community (complex). There is no value judgment here but simply a statement about structural complexity. One simplifying assumption that this allows us to make is that a simple religion is structured in such a way that the terms “religion” and “religious organization” can be used synonymously. Although this assumption works well and is quite helpful in studying nrms, it becomes increasingly questionable as we attempt to apply the approach to older more complex religions.

And what about the term charismatic. For most purposes, we may employ the classical Weberian (1947 : 328) definition of charisma as a condition of “devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.” Elsewhere (Zablocki 1980a), however, I have argued that charisma is better understood as a relational property than as an individual property and that its dynamics can only be understood in terms of the reciprocal effects that leaders and followers have on one another. As we shall see, some of the events, particularly in the early years of a new religious movement can best be understood by keeping in mind the relational nature of charismatic authority.

What I am trying to do in this research project is to employ a method of exploration of deep analogies among large numbers of cases of the same socio-cultural entity. My goal is to steer a way on this narrow path between the miasma of historicism on the one hand and the excessive “gridification” of multivariate analysis on the other. I am attempting to generalize through the abstraction of patterns or syndromes found repeatedly across a number of cases although perhaps never in exactly the same form twice.

In addition, I’m trying to tease out linkages among different levels of analysis—macro, meso, and micro. The meso micro linkages are perhaps clear in my concern with the interplay

between the short life of a charismatic leader and the (potentially) long life of a religion. But these interactions are also dependent upon the influence of the macro level as well.

Charismatic leaders do not appear in a vacuum nor do religious movements. Both are the products, in part, of larger social and cultural trends.

Macro linkages are the least developed so far in my research. Although I do not ignore the importance of (for example) government authorities and economic forces, I deal with them as externalities.<sup>10</sup> As externalities, they may constrain but do not themselves have a major role in shaping religious beliefs and practices. Although there is no reason in principle why this approach would not be able to incorporate such linkages, the simple version of the approach that I have outlined here more or less assumes that religions exist in a semi-vacuum in which the only significant others are rival religions and the temptations of the secular world competing for the same “customers.”

With regard to these “customers,” another assumption that limits the applicability of my current approach is an assumption of psychological homogeneity among consumers of religion. We know that some people, in Freud’s (1953) terms, are “not religiously talented” and that others are not happy unless religion is occupying the place of central importance in their lives, whereas most of us fall somewhere in-between these two extremes. This limitation is not so important as long as we are dealing, as I am, with aggregates of highly committed religious seekers and true believers. But variation in the religious saliency would need to be considered more fully before this approach could pretend to be useful in understanding the religious choices of entire populations.

Using the approach outlined above, I would like to use the remainder of this paper to briefly touch on four themes that emerge for me out of an examination of the 100 stories

contained in my database and which also, I believe, resonate in interesting ways with what we know about some of our well-established world religions. These themes are the following: (1) the sense of urgency and recurring crisis that mark the relationship between a religious fellowship and its charismatic founder during the founder's lifetime; (2) the phenomenon of the "charismatic second", in which the death of the charismatic founder frequently gives rise to a crisis of succession in which a different type of charismatic leader emerges; (3) the struggle for control of the "means of authentication" that determines a religion's fate (or at least its power structure) as the charismatic legacy of its founder recedes into collective memory; and (4) the prolonged and boring deaths of many religious movements, particularly those that have overly routinized their charismatic legacies.

### **URGENCY AND APOCALYPSE: THE CHARISMATIC ATTEMPT TO CONTROL TIME**

Time tends to flow choppily in many religious movements during the early years when the leader is still alive. There are many short urgent spurts of crisis that punctuate longer intervals in which nothing much seems to happen and time moves slowly. In Jewish historical tradition, the curious juxtaposition of the story of the unleavened bread followed by the forty years in the wilderness perfectly captures this "hurry up and wait" mode of religious being-in-the-world. Among the 100 nrms we are investigating, this is reflected in an observation frequently made by participants in these groups that "the days feel long but the years feel short."<sup>11</sup> A good sociological treatment of the phenomenon of urgency has yet to be written but I think it is impossible to understand many aspects of religions in their early years without appreciating the important role that urgency plays.

---

<sup>10</sup> But for an exception see Herbrechtsmeier's (1996) "Religious Authenticity as a Function of State Power."

I would argue that this urgency stems in large part from the conscious or unconscious collective realization of how soon death is going to rob the young religious movement of its leader. And when the followers forget, the leader may be quick to remind them. Note, for example, the famous rebuke that Jesus gave his disciples when they chastised a woman for paying attention to Jesus instead of ministering to the poor: "For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always (Matthew 26:11). In a more sinister way, this can be seen in the way Jim Jones, in the weeks before the mass suicide, continually harangued his flock for causing his aches and pains and driving him to an early grave by their shortcomings.

In *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud (1939) argued that religion's dirty little secret was its desire to murder its leader and be free of him. As evidence for this, he presents the historically unlikely hypothesis that the Israelites killed Moses and hid the body before hightailing it into the Promised Land. Judging by the stories of the 100 groups in the database, I find this hypothesis highly unlikely. In no case among the 100 was a charismatic leader killed by his followers. If anything, the followers have more to fear from the leader, as violent crimes against disciples and mass suicides are not entirely unknown. Sometimes of course, these events do wind up taking the leader down along with his people.

It seems to me that the dirty little secret of early religion with respect to its leader is not a death wish but a sex wish. How did Freud miss that? Documented and/or alleged cases of sexual intercourse between followers and leaders of new religious movements are found in a significant majority of our 100 cases. This seems to be true in the celibate groups as well as those that believed in monogamous or plural marriage. It seems to have been true of male as well as female followers including many with no pre-conversion history of homosexual

---

<sup>11</sup> This is an observation that seems to characterize total and greedy institutions in general (Cosser 1974; Goffman 1961), not simply religious movements. For an interesting literary discussion of this phenomenon, see Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*.



orientation. And it was as true among the 19<sup>th</sup> century nrms as among those of the more permissive 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most common term of reproach used to characterize leaders of 19<sup>th</sup> century new religious movements, by their enemies and critics, was “whoremonger.”

The sense I get is that the motivation for much of this urgent illicit sexuality is not so much erotic attraction but severe chronic separation anxiety. The followers are desperate to keep some tangible connection to the leader, to preserve something of him inside them. The danger of this urgency for the nrm can be extremely great regardless of whether or not it is manifested sexually. The danger is that this urgency can easily set the stage for an impossibly escalating set of demands between leader and followers in which each side continues to up the ante in a way that can only lead to an apocalyptic denouement. Such apocalyptic endings are, unfortunately, far from unknown among nrms.

Such danger may be an intrinsic characteristic of charismatic social movements. The exercise of charisma produces not only loyalty and enthusiasm but expectations as well. A fundamental problem posed by charismatic authority is charisma’s tendency to create cycles of reciprocally escalating demands between the leader and the leader’s agents that result, for the collectivity, in a positive feedback loop which must, sooner or later, spin out of control unless the charisma becomes routinized or the agents made deployable.

Coleman has suggested that charisma can be explained as a rational response to the free rider problem (Coleman 1990). If all the members of a collectivity can somehow agree to transfer authority over their own actions to a leader who will make decisions on behalf of the group, there can be a vast increase in “social capital” allowing the collectivity to perform actions beyond the sum of the abilities of the aggregate of individuals. It is possible to see how the maintenance of even a very costly structure for perpetuating charismatic influence can therefore be rational for a collectivity in its pursuit of ambitious collective goals requiring many

willing hands. However, charismatic compliance is never or rarely in the interest of a reasonably competent individual conceived as a simple hedonic actor. As Coleman points out (Coleman 1990, 75ff) what is puzzling about charismatic influence is why a rational actor would ever submit to it.

An individual's control over his own actions is inalienable. The compliance of an agent can be revoked at any moment, however long the history of fidelity. This is illustrated well in the old joke about The Lone Ranger and Tonto who suddenly one day find themselves completely surrounded by ten thousand Indians on the warpath. Neither sees any way of escape. The Lone Ranger turns to his faithful companion and says, "Well, Tonto, it looks like we're really trapped this time." Tonto smiles back at his friend and says, "What do you mean *we*, kemo sabe?" For a charismatic collectivity to have any degree of stability over time, it must find a way to create agents that are not merely enthusiastic and committed but deployable as well. Otherwise, a rational individual will retain authority over his or her own decision making while taking a free ride on the charismatic investments of all the other members. This will eventually create for the group second-order and higher free rider problems.

In the short run, this problem can be staved off by a continuing cycle of crises and triumphs. But the point made by Weber (Weber 1947, 362) about the need for charismatic authority to be continually proved thrusts two ways. If the charismatic leader can never rest on his laurels in legitimating his authority, neither can the leader's agent be trusted to remain loyal through yet another crisis, just because he or she has been trustworthy in the past. The charismatic leader must appear to be capable of accomplishing extraordinary deeds. Otherwise, there is no basis for the heavy claims that charismatic influence makes on its agents. But one of the things that makes such accomplishments possible is the trustworthiness

of the leader's agents. This trustworthy corps of agents allows the leader to accomplish deeds that appear even more miraculous which, in turn, justify even greater claims on the followers.

It is obvious that such a system, caught in a positive feedback loop of mutually increasing expectations of miracles and loyalty, can never attain equilibrium. The most common way out of this dilemma, of course, is for the charismatic authority to be routinized. But, for those groups wishing or needing to keep their charismatic edge (and thus their competitive appeal in a faith marketplace whose shoppers tend to be bored by non-charismatic religion) another way out of the loop is to find a way for the loyalty of the agents to be guaranteed regardless of the actions of the leader. This is possible only to the extent that the hedonic self is transformed into one that always gives uncritical primacy to the goals of the collectivity with no thought of the costs to one's own person. Only individuals who have gone through such a transformation can be trusted to support a charismatic leader in the long run.

The need for such transformation gives us an important clue, I believe, as to one of the more puzzling motifs of contemporary nrms—the repeated pattern of apocalyptic confrontation with the outside world leading to collective violence or collective suicide.

## **SEPARATION AND LOSS: CRISES OF THE FIRST SUCCESSION**

If a new religious movement can avoid the trap of apocalyptic disintegration during the charismatic founder's lifetime, it still has to face the problem of how to cope with his death. The traumatic nature of this loss is poignantly expressed in the myths of both Judaism and Christianity. In Judaism, it can be seen in the restriction placed by God upon Moses, "Thou

shall not pass over <into Canaan>.” Although presented as Moses’ punishment for disobedience, the event may also be understood as a rite of passage for his Israelite followers. By having to leave behind the only leader they have ever known at the very moment of their triumph, the religious movement is painfully thrown back upon its own resources in a manner that will be essential for its own long term survival.

In Christianity, this transition is most vividly expressed in the *noli me tangere* moment (See Figure 1). This incident, popular among renaissance and post-renaissance painters, refers to the resurrected Christ’s appearance to Mary Magdalene. As she reaches out to touch him he pulls away and says, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father (John 20:17). The deep meaning of the incident, which I think Titian’s treatment is particularly good at conveying, is that the days of sensory network ties with Jesus are over and the followers must now learn to make do with only a supernatural relationship. This is a critical transition that every new religious movement must eventually face if it is to survive.

A big part of the problem of adjusting to the physical loss of the leader is that the charismatic founder of a new religion, whether a potential world religion or a small sect or cult is, for his followers, a source of ultimate authority. Often this authority is of an antinomian quality (Adler 1972) startling the followers out of old sterile preconceptions. This authority very often requires a break with the past, new ways of thinking and tests of faith, leaps in the dark. Whether it is Jesus breaking the Sabbath, or the Buddha turning away from the ascetic life, or the introduction of polygyny to the Mormons by Joseph Smith Jr. <sup>12</sup>, or the introduction of plural marriage to the Oneida Community by John Humphrey Noyes (DeMaria 1978), the charismatic founder of a new religion has often deliberately broken existing laws and norms in order to call

---

<sup>12</sup> The Mormons began as a monogamous sect but Joseph Smith Jr. introduced the practice of taking multiple wives very early in Mormon history, while the sect was still in Nauvoo, Illinois. Smith, himself, was thought to have had

# Figure 1. Titian. Noli Me Tangere

(C. 1511) National Gallery, London



his disciples' attention to the existence of a higher law. This is fine as long as the charismatic founder is alive. But what happens to the religion when its founder dies?

Often, the first crisis to be faced by a new religion is the crisis of the first succession. This is the crisis that occurs when the charismatic founder dies. What is to become of the now bereft religion. Like most new small businesses, most new religions do not survive the death of their charismatic founders.<sup>13</sup> Those that do survive must not only be able to use the charismatic legacy to engender sufficient commitment but must also respond to changing external conditions perhaps not foreseen by the religion's founder. Toth (1981) has pointed out that a surprisingly large number of religious movements display an initial series of two great charismatic leaders (e.g.: Moses/Joshua; Jesus,/Paul; Joseph Smith/Brigham Young) and that the second leader's gift is usually different from that of the first. It is a gift for consolidation. Sometimes there may be a split, as with Peter and Paul, with two lesser charismatic leaders dividing the instrumental and the expressive components of the charismatic legacy. This pattern of charismatic succession is frequently seen among those nrms in my database that manage to survive the death of their first leaders.

The problem that brings about the first succession crisis is fairly straightforward. The charismatic founder of a new religion, whether a potential world religion or a small sect or cult is, for his followers, a source of ultimate authority. This authority very often requires a break with the past, new ways of thinking and tests of faith, leaps in the dark. When the leader dies, he leaves a trust fund consisting of authentic interpretations of events, writings, and practices. Along with this legacy is left the problem of the management of this intangible trust and the

---

somewhere between 27 to 84 wives "though many of these were merely sealed to Smith and never lived with him as a wife. (Melton 1986 : 271)

<sup>13</sup> Gordon Melton, chronicler *par excellence* of new American religions has argued (personal communication) that this is not true, that a surprising number of religions do manage to survive the death of their founders. But this

problem of how, bereft of the leader as the ultimate arbiter of inevitable disputes over interpretation, the followers can avoid the twin problems of: excessive routinization (squeezing all of the juice of the spirit from the letter of the teaching); and permanent revolution (continuation of charismatic upheaval without the moral force and access to revealed truth that characterize the great founder or founders of a religion.) The unique succession problem of religious movements is that they must always remain in a state of partial routinization always stirring the pot but never, after the beginning phase, allowing it again to boil over. The stakes are high in successfully finding a golden mean between the extremes of excessive routinization and permanent revolution.

The needs of a religious movement change as it grows and adjusts to loss of first leader. So the problem is not one of simply finding a clone. Werner Stark (1970) discusses the problem of succession and what he calls the role of the "Second." He makes the observation that new religions and religious groups are more often given their final institutionalized forms by their second charismatic leader rather than by their first. It is interesting to note that, although very few of the founding charismatic leaders of the 100 nrms in my database are women, quite a few of these "second" charismatic leaders were women or male female couples. The qualities demanded of leadership change. These are qualities that Gusfield (1968) has referred to as mobilization leadership giving way to articulation leadership and that Toth (1981) has referred to as the charisma of the outer call giving way to the charisma of inner consolidation. Toth points out that the second leader of a successful religious movement is also charismatic but of a very different sort than the first leader. However, it is this very binary division of charisma that creates what is often the first serious crisis for religious movements. The first succession crisis becomes the prototype for the crises of authenticity which may be expected to recur

---

perception I think comes from a sampling error. Those religions that do not survive are much less likely to come to

sporadically throughout the religion's history.

## **CRISES OF AUTHENTICATION: THE QUEST FOR DYNAMIC STABILITY**

The power dimension in religious movements is frequently overlooked but it is always there. In religions, power comes from control over rights to distinguish authentic from inauthentic doctrine. From this perspective the study of religion can be understood as the study of the struggle for control of the means of authentication just as, In Marxian terms, the study of political economy can be understood as the study of the struggle for control of the means of production.

Crises of authentication are best understood in terms of the unique qualities of charismatic movements, whether religious or political, that make the very definition of authenticity a central issue. Unlike business organizations, there is no generally agreed upon bottom line by which religious or (revolutionary) political success can be measured. In the absence of objective standards of success, competing factions can easily accuse one another of idolatry, in Alan Berger's (1986) sense, as the imprecise ascription of ultimacy to the penultimate. It is easy to derive multiple interpretations of intrinsically ambiguous teachings, particularly when these are antinomian teachings. At the same time, obstacles to schismatic fragmentation are few making it difficult to resist the temptation to subdivide indefinitely into smaller and smaller ideologically homogeneous factions. Another way of putting this is that questions of spirit vs letter are more important in religion than in most other social institutions. This is particularly a problem in religions that strive for epiphany through the transcendence of rationality and logical distinctions.

Crises of authenticity are often found in religious or political movements after the death

---

the attention of sociologist and are therefore much less likely to be included in any sample.



of their founding fathers. The death of a charismatic founder provokes a crisis of authenticity. The disciples or followers remain faithful to the vision of the founder but lack clear direction as to how to implement that vision. In some instances, a new charismatic leader comes along immediately to provide an institutionalized form for the vision. In others, there is a lapse of years before this second phase began. In some, the transition takes place smoothly. However, in many, the transition is accompanied by a trend toward greater concentration of authority, sometimes taking this to totalitarian extremes.

Because of its importance in understanding religious authority, it is important that we understand what is meant by authentication. In his study of Protestant sectarianism, Stone (1996 :69) distinguishes authentication from authenticity as follows:

In this context, “authenticity” is a condition of legitimacy ascribed to a religious tradition by its adherents; “authentication” is the activity or activities by which members of religious groups or movements define the legitimate boundaries of their faith communities. “Authentication,” proper, is not to be understood as the *result* of these activities—the definition of what is and what is not orthodox or legitimate. Rather, it is the *process* through which orthodoxy or legitimacy is determined. “Authenticity” is a claim that can only be examined and confirmed by theological means, it is therefore beyond the range of sociological inquiry. But, because “authentication” is a process that can be studied independent of theological claims and theological categories, one is better able to explore its conditions and consequences through sociological and historical methods.

This distinction captures well the way I would like to use these two words. However, Stone, in his study of Protestant sectarianism focuses only on authentication in the service of boundary definition. I use the term in a broader sense to refer to any decisions concerning

values and goals that are made by or on behalf of the faith community to the extent that these decisions are justified in religious terms.<sup>14</sup>

Authenticity is sometimes confused with legitimacy so a few words should probably be said about the distinctions that I see between these two important overlapping concepts. Perhaps the easiest way to demonstrate the distinction is with an example drawn from Roman Catholicism. The Pope, as the head of the Catholic Church has important powers in the realms of both legitimacy and authenticity. When the Pope expounds upon non-doctrinal matters, he is exercising the legitimate authority of his office, and his orders must be followed, but he is not necessarily saying anything about the authenticity of the teachings from which his pronouncements derive. Indeed, he may later change his mind or future Popes may over-rule him without creating a crisis of authenticity. When the Pope expounds on matters of doctrine, he is defining or interpreting matters of authenticity and at the same time he is giving them legitimacy. Finally, when the Pope elevates a person in the Catholic Church to sainthood, he is making a judgment only about the authenticity of that person's vision not the legitimacy of that person's authority. Legitimacy has to do with authority and authenticity has to do with truth. In religious life, authority and truth are usually more bound up with one another than in other spheres of life. However, these examples demonstrate that the two terms are not equivalent.

---

<sup>14</sup> In the last few years, there has been a spate of excellent empirical studies of specific religious organizations using the authenticity perspective. Among studies of American religion, Stone's (1996) research on boundary maintenance among Protestant denominations, Zito and Lee's (1996) study of authentication practices among the Old Order Mennonites, and Wittberg's (1996) path breaking investigation of authentication struggles in American Catholic monastic orders have shown the utility of this perspective for research among older religions. At the same time, Carter's (1990) monograph on Rajneeshpuram, Hall's (1979) on Jonestown, and Tabor and Gallagher's (1995) on the Branch Davidians provide evidence of its power in studying the newer so called "cults." The perspective has been particularly useful in investigations of that most puzzling of American religions: the Mormons, where three recent studies, (Knowlton 1996; Mauss 1994; White and White 1996), have attested not only to the power but to the diversity of this approach. Nor has the use of the authentication model been confined to studies of American or even Western religions. The approach has demonstrated its applicability in a range of non-Western settings. For example, in recent studies of Shamanism (Jensen 1996), Hinduism (Hertel and Mehrotra 1996), Tibetan Buddhism (Lieberman 1996), and African religion imported to the New World (Glazier 1996), we have instances of the use of the authenticity concept to throw light on religious events.

I have never been satisfied with Max Weber's conceptual treatment of the routinization of charisma. My earlier research on religious sects and religious communes has convinced me that the routinization of charisma is not typically the linear devolution that Weber implies. Revivals and renewals are commonplace among religious organizations especially in their early decades. It is hard to think of a young religion surviving for even for a half a century that has not had at least one or two (Zablocki 1980b). But what is it that is being revived or renewed during such episodes? I would argue that it is precisely the charismatic spirit that engendered the religion initially that is renewed or revived, although usually with diminished intensity. If this is correct, then the routinization of charisma is much more of a cyclical and complex phenomenon than described by Weber. All this implies that an important aspect of the study of religions may be the study of what happens to the charisma, particularly after the death of the religion's founder.

On a slightly different tack, I am very interested in what happens to religions in the modern world where they are increasingly having to compete with one another in a faith marketplace. This has led me to a concern with the resources available to religions in their quest for market niche and/or market share.<sup>15</sup> Since the charismatic legacy left to the religious fellowship by its charismatic founder ranks high among these resources, I am led once again to the same question, what happens to the charisma. This charismatic legacy may be considered as a resource held in a kind of fiduciary trust for the religious organization as a whole. But who are the trustees and how, if at all, are they regulated by the religious fellowship as a whole?

In America, it is very interesting to note the following counter-intuitive empirical

---

<sup>15</sup> I know that this metaphor is overused and somewhat simplistic. Particularly for mature complex religions, it fudges the important distinction between religions and religious organizations. In this paper I have given myself permission to temporarily ignore this important difference by focusing my investigation on simple religions where there is no need for such a distinction. But in the last section of this paper, in which I begin to look at extensions of

regularity: high-investment Protestant denominations have consistently won market share at the expense of low-investment Protestant denominations. One of the most interesting and widely studied phenomena in American religious history is the decline of the so-called mainline denominations (Finke and Stark 1992). In the fiercely demand driven climate of the American religious marketplace, why should the more supply driven denominations appear to have a comparative advantage? Iannaccone (1992) has shown how the high investment religious collectivities gain this advantage through their ability to reduce free-riding among the group's members. A prediction of this theory is that the gain of the high-investment denominations should have been at its greatest under frontier conditions, in which the ability to minimize free-riding was of most importance. Data on changes in denominational size and influence suggest that this prediction is born out. The greatest of these changes did happen under frontier conditions.

During the first three generations of a new religion, many are found to obey a kind of iron law of charismatic devolution. This law says that the first generation gets the vision and the actuality, the second generation gets the memory, and the third generation gets the rules. A basic assumption of the model I am presenting is that full routinization of charisma cannot be allowed to happen if the religion is to thrive. Charisma must be tamed but not muzzled. Robert Lifton (1968) in his work on Communist China develops the concept of Permanent Revolution as a way of thwarting the iron law of devolution. Swatos (1986) has argued that the relative success of the Calvinist branch of Protestantism as opposed to the Lutheran branch is to be found in the early incorporation of this notion of Permanent Revolution into the charismatic legacy of the former but not the latter.

---

the authenticity paradigm to older more complex religions, there may be a need for more attention to this distinction.

In the absence of such Permanent Revolution, it is a particular temptation of religions, as they move beyond their early stages, to commit idolatry in Alan Berger's (1986) sense of ascription of ultimacy to the penultimate. The danger here is that the sacred texts, the rituals, and the techniques of the religion may absorb the charismatic legacy rather than the other way around. Perfectionism, apocalyptic millennialism, and a fundamentalist insistence on the inerrancy of sacred texts are three examples of how religions have succumbed to this form of stultification.

Eventually, if a religion is to achieve mature equilibrium, periodic revival crises must be balanced with reasonably stable succession rules. There cannot be a major succession crisis every time a leader dies. These succession rules can take a wide variety of forms. We can see this by looking at two such forms within two old established religions, Catholicism and Tibetan Buddhism.

In the Catholic Church, a key aspect of the succession rule is that the Pope does not get to choose his successor? The Pope clearly has a key role in the trusteeship of the Catholic Church's charismatic legacy. But for the first thousand years of its existence (Walker et al. 1985 : 273) there were no generally accepted rules to guide papal succession. Then, the Roman synod of 1059, acting in the spirit of the Church's previous successful attacks on lay investiture, adopted a set of clear guidelines calling for election of the new Pope by the cardinal clergy. These guidelines have essentially determined the course of papal successions up to the present day. The attention of historians has naturally been directed to the significance of this ruling for the balance of power between religious and secular authorities. But to my mind and equally important question is: why this particular succession rule? It seems to have served the Catholic Church well over the centuries providing a reason for hope that minority positions within the Church could eventually be made to prevail. How would the Church be different today if each Pope was able to play a major role in selecting his successor?

In Tibetan Buddhism, the death of a major lama sets off a world-wide search among young children for his reincarnate? One of the most interesting systems of charismatic succession ever developed by any religion is the trulku system of Tibetan Buddhism (Samuel 1993 : 283-286). This system assures that a continuous rotation of insiders and outsiders will have an opportunity to guard the charismatic legacy.<sup>16</sup> Under the trulku system, one of the chief disciples of the old Lama may be designated his dharma heir while the old Lama is still living. When the old Lama dies, two things happen. One is that his dharma heir succeeds to his position of authority. The other is that a search is instituted to discover among the children throughout the world the one who is the old Lama's reincarnate or trulku. When the trulku is found, he will be brought to the old Lama's monastery to be trained to eventually succeed him. But the dharma heir is more than just a regent holding office until the trulku grows up. The dharma heir has all the authority of his departed master and may frequently be designated a Lama himself if he proves worthy. The only difference is that he will not eventually have a dharma heir of his own but will pass the succession back to his original master now reincarnated in the body of the child whom he will help raise. This ingenious system assures a continual succession of insiders and outsiders to the trusteeship of the charismatic legacy. It remains to be seen, of course, whether this system gives Tibetan Buddhism the flexible cohesion it needs to survive and thrive in its own Diaspora.

## **THE LINGERING DEATH OF SOME RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

So far we have discussed religions that are successful in navigating the treacherous path from charismatic beginning to semi-routinized dynamic equilibrium as well as those that go down in flames with an apocalyptic bang. This leaves us with one additional observed pattern

---

<sup>16</sup> Note, however, that the trulku system has not been fully adopted in all Tibetan Buddhist lineages and, even where

to be discussed. Among our 100 groups there are those that seem to just gradually fade away after the deaths of their charismatic leaders. They cannot be said, in any meaningful sense of the word, to be successful although they may linger for additional decades or even centuries. Harmony, the first group on the list falls into this category, as do Amana, Christian Science, and perhaps the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Adventism is an interesting case that is marginal to this classification and shows the difficulty of imposing unambiguous classifications on religious movements. The ideological traces of a religious movement may well continue to live on even after the organizational infrastructure of the movement and the informal network affiliations of its participants have passed away. Thus a religion that seemed dead can suddenly spring to life again at the behest of a new charismatic leader. The complex tangled history of the Adventists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Davidian Adventists, and Branch Davidians exemplifies just this sort of organizational death and rebirth (Wright 1995).

A matter that needs some explanation perhaps is the relative scarcity of graceful deaths among nrms. Going out with either a bang or a whimper seems to be the rule. A simple acknowledgment by a religious movement that it lacks the resources to carry on after the death of its leader happens only occasionally. To understand this, we need to return to the intense socialization required of charismatic followers that we discussed earlier. We have discussed cases in which this has led to doomsday. While that scenario is always a risk, frequently it doesn't happen. When the nrm avoids apocalypse, it is still left with highly socialized group members who experience the possibility of separation from the movement as one involving very high subjective exit costs (Zablocki 1998). True believers who have sacrificed everything else in life to follow a particular religious calling will not easily accept the fact that the religion they

---

adopted, it is the exception rather than the rule that it guides the succession fully for several generations.

have been following is no more. When you add to this the fact that religious followers, in addition to a talent for urgency, also have a talent for waiting, the conditions for the frequently observed "long goodbye" are easier to understand. It is sometimes forgotten, for example, that even the members of such apocalyptically doomed groups as Heaven's Gate waited with excruciating patience for many years for the flying saucers to pick them up before finally succumbing with great urgency to their terminal charismatic crisis.

Finally, the complex relationship between the end of a religion and the expected end of the world deserves mention. Pre-millennial, post-millennial, and violent apocalyptic religious movements exist in uneasy symbiosis with prophesized 'end times.' The ability to set the time of ending is a powerful tool for charismatic social control within such movements. The other side of the coin is that the need to justify the failure of the end to come on schedule, while it usually does not destroy (and may even strengthen) the faith of the participants (Festinger, Riechen, and Schachter 1956), will generally provide a challenge calling for great inventiveness to the religious movement's leadership. These are issues I intend to explore more fully as this project continues.



## REFERENCES

- Adler, Nathan. 1972. *The Underground Stream: New Life Styles and the Antinomian Personality*. New York: Harper.
- Ahlstrom, Sydney. 1972. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Berger, Alan L. 1986. Hasidism and Moonism: Charisma in the Counterculture. In *Charisma, History, and Social Structure*, edited by R. M. Glassman and W. H. J. Swatos. New York: Greenwood.
- Carter, Lewis F. 1990. *Charisma and Control in Rajneeshpuram: The Role of Shared Values in the Creation of a Community*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Coleman, James S. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Coser, Lewis A. 1974. *Greedy Institutions: Patterns of Undivided Commitment*. New York: Free Press.
- DeMaria, Richard. 1978. *Communal Love at Oneida*. New York: Edwin Mellen.
- Felton, David. 1972. *Mindfuckers*. San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books.
- Festinger, Leon, Harold Riechen, and Stanley Schachter. 1956. *When Prophecy Fails*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Finke, Roger, and Rodney Stark. 1992. *The Churching of America 1776-1990*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1939. *Moses and Monotheism*. New York: Random House.

Freud, Sigmund. 1953. *The Future of Illusion*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor.

Glazier, Stephen D. 1996. "Authenticity" in Afro-Caribbean Religions: Contested Constructs, Contested Rites. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.

Goffman, Erving. 1961. *Asylums*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books.

Gusfield, Joseph R. 1968. The Study of Social Movements. In *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*. New York: Macmillan.

Hall, John R. 1979. Apocalypse at Jonestown. *Society*:52-61.

Herbrechtsmeier, William. 1996. Religious Authenticity as a Function of State Power. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.

Hertel, Bradley R., and Meeta Mehrotra. 1996. Authenticity in Hinduism-- Who, What, How? In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.

Hexham, Irving, and Karla Poewe. 1997. *New Religions as Global Cultures: Making the Human Sacred*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Iannaccone, Lawrence R. 1992. Sacrifice and Stigma: Reducing Free-Riding in Cults, Communes, and Other Collectives. *Journal of Political Economy* 100:271-291.

Jensen, Alan F. 1996. Possible Criteriological Categories Used in the Judgment of the Authenticity of Shamanism. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.

Kirsch, Jonathan. 1998. *Moses: A Life*. New York: Ballantine.

- Knowlton, David Clark. 1996. Authority and Authenticity in the Mormon Church. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.
- Liberman, Kenneth. 1996. Truth and Authority in Tibetan Religious Practice. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.
- Lifton, Robert Jay. 1968. *Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-Tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution*. New York: Random House.
- Mauss, Armand L. 1994. *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Melton, J. Gordon. 1986. *Biographical Dictionary of American Cult and Sect Leaders*. New York: Garland.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. 1993. *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.
- Stark, Werner. 1970. *Types of Religious Man*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Stone, Jon R. 1996. Defining Protestant Orthodoxy: Religious Authentication and the "New" Evangelicalism, 1940-1960. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.
- Swatos, William H. Jr. 1986. Charismatic Calvinism: Forging a Missing Link. In *Charisma, History, and Social Structure*, edited by R. M. Glassman and W. H. J. Swatos. New York: Greenwood.
- Tabor, James D., and Eugene V. Gallagher. 1995. *Why Waco? Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Toth, Michael A. 1981. *The Theory of the Two Charismas*. Washington, DC: University Presses of America.
- Walker, Williston, Richard A. Norris, David W Ltoz, and Robert T. Handy. 1985. *A History Of The Christian Church*. New York: Charles Scribner.
- Weber, Max. 1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Free Press.
- White, Daryl, and O. Kendall Jr. White. 1996. Charisma, Structure, and Contested Authority: The Social Construction of Authenticity in Mormonism. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.
- Wittberg, Patricia. 1996. "Real" Religious Communities: A Study of Authentication in New Roman Religious Orders. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.
- Wright, Stuart A. 1995. *Armageddon in Waco*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zablocki, Benjamin D. 1980a. *Alienation and Charisma: A Study of Contemporary American Communes*. New York: Free Press.
- Zablocki, Benjamin D. 1980b. *The Joyful Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zablocki, Benjamin D. 1998. Exit Cost Analysis: A New Approach to the Scientific Study of Brainwashing. *Nova Religio* 1:216-249.
- Zito, George V., and Daniel B. Lee. 1996. Authentication at the Periphery: Old Order Mennonite and Unitarian-Universalist Congregations and their Discursive Practices. In *The Issue of Authenticity in the Study of Religions*, edited by L. F. Carter. Greenwich, CN: JAI.

**TABLE 1: 100 NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

NAME OF RELIGION	BEGIN	END	NAME OF LEADER	LIFESPAN
1.Harmony	1805	1905	George Rapp	1757-1847
2.African Methodist Episcopal	1816		Richard Allen	1760-1831
3.Zoar	1817	1898	Joseph Baumler	1785-1853
4.New Bethlehem	1825	1832	James Wilson	1794-1832
5.Mormons	1830		Joseph Smith	1805-1844
6.Hopedale	1830	1912	Adin Ballou	1803-1890
7.Adventism	1831		William Miller	1782-1849
8.New Philadelphia	1832	1839	Bernard Mueller	1794-1836
9.Church of Christ	1832		Thomas Campbell	1763-1854
10.Amana	1842	1932	Christian Metz	1794-1867
11.Beth-El/Aurora	1843	1879	Wilhelm Keil	1812-1877
12.Abram Brook's Experiment	1843	1845	Abram Brook	1798-1863
13.Baha'i	1844		Mirza Ali Muhammed	1817-1892
14.Bishop Hill	1846	1862	Eric Jansen	1808-1850
15.Zodiac	1847	1853	Peter Dembler	1820-1853
16.Oneida	1848	1881	John Humphrey Noyes	1811-1886
17.The Kingdom	1848	1856	Christoph Neustadt	1817-1854
18.New Shiloh	1851	1853	Amos Grimes	1815-1870
19.Adonai-Shomo	1861	1897	Frederick Howland	1825-1893?
20.Amenia/Fountain-Grove	1863	1900	Thomas Harris	1823-1906
21.Salvation Army	1865		William Booth	1829-1912
22.Theosophical Society	1875		Helena Blavatsky & Henry Olcott	1831-1891; 1832-1907
23.Esperanza	1877	1878	John Hayes	1844-1902
24.Christian Science	1879		Mary Baker Eddy	1821-1910
25.Jehovah's Witnesses	1881		Charles Taze Russell	1852-1916

NAME OF RELIGION	BEGIN	END	NAME OF LEADER	LIFESPAN
26.Order of the Golden Dawn	1888	1957	MacGregor Mathers	1854-1918
27.Koreshan/Unity New Thought	1888	1980	Charles & Myrtle Fillmore	1854-1948;1845-1931
28.Ghost Dance Movement	1890	1904	Wovoka (Jack Wilson)	1856-1932
29.Church of the Living God	1893	1920	Frank Sandford	1862-1948
30.New House of Israel	1895	1920	Paul Banks	1863-1912
31.Holiness Pentecostal	1898		A.M. Crumpler	1866-1915
32.The Spirit Fruit Society	1900	1930	Jacob Beilhart	1867-1908
33.Zion City	1901	1906	John Dowie	1847-1907
34.Vedanta Society	1903		Swami Vivekananda	1863-1902
35.The House of David	1903	1928	Benjamin Purnell	1878-1927
36.Bride of Christ Church	1903	1907	Franz Edmond Creffield	1874-1906
37.Order of Theocracy	1910	1931	Jacob Ryder	1874-1919
38.The Burning Bush	1912	1919	Ralph Whitehead	1875-1940
39.Anthrosophical Society	1913		Rudolph Steiner	1861-1925
40.The Narrow Way	1914	1921	H. Bernard Pierce	1871-1918
41.Father Divine's Peace Mission	1914		Father Divine	1889-1965
42.The Bruderhof	1920		Eberhard Arnold	1883-1935
43.Heaven City	1923	1927	Albert J. Moore	1881-1927?
44.Subud	1924		Muhammed Subud	1901-1987
45.The Rastafarions	1927		Marcus Garvey	1887-1940
46.Nation of Islam	1930		Wallace Fard	1899-1934?
47.Soka Gakkai	1930		Tsuneburo Makiguchi	1871-1944
48.Meher Baba Movement	1931		Meher Baba	1894-1969
49.Emissaries of Divine Light	1932		Lloyd Meeker	1892-1954
50.Worldwide Church of God	1933		Herbert W. Armstrong	1892-1986

NAME OF RELIGION	BEGIN	END	NAME OF LEADER	LIFESPAN
51.The Local Church	1933		Watchman Nee	1903-1972
52.Branch Davidians	1935	1993	David Koresh	1960-1993
53.Rissho Kosei-kai	1938		Nikkyo Niwano	1906-1992
54.Epiphaneia	1942	1973	Calvin Reuter	1912-1969
55.Unification Church (Moonies)	1954		Sun Myung Moon	1920-
56.Ananda Marga	1955		Prabhat Ranjan Sankar	1921-
57.Scientology	1955		L. Ron Hubbard	1911-1986
58.Transcendental Meditation	1958		Maharishi Mahesh Yogi	1911-
59.Church Universal & Triumphant	1958	1999	Elizabeth Claire Prophet	1941-
60.The Way International	1958		Victor Paul Wierwille	1916-1985
61.Jonestown	1960	1978	Jim Jones	1931-1978
62.Eternal Flame Foundation	1960		Charles Paul Brown	1933-
63.Findhorn	1962		Pete and Eileen Cady	1936-; 1938-
64.Church of the Redeemer	1963	1995	W. Graham Pulkingham	1927-
65.Chimnoy Fellowship	1964		Sri Chimnoy	1931-
66.Eckankar	1965		Paul Twitchell	1908-1971
67.Hare Krishna (ISKCON)	1965		Swami Prabhupada	1896-1977
68.The Lighthouse	1965	1977	Tim Gaines	1939-1996
69.Integral Yoga Institute	1966		Swami Satchadenanda	1914-
70.The Farm	1966	1989	Steve Gaskin	1938-
71.Church of the Pure White Light	1966	1988	Alexander Cohen	1940-
72.Holy Order of MANS	1967	1993	Earl Blighton	1904-1974
73.Lama Foundation	1967	1996	Steve Durkee	1938-
74.Mvmnt for Inner Spiritual Awareness	1967		John Roger Hinkins	1946-
75.Children of God	1968		David Berg	1919-1994

NAME OF RELIGION	BEGIN	END	NAME OF LEADER	LIFESPAN
76.Happy Healthy Holy Org.	1968		Yogi Bhajan	1930
77.The Temple of Light	1968	1969	Garth Macrae	1936-1985
78.The More Institute	1969		Victor Baranco	1934-
79.Love Israel	1969		Paul Erdmann	1942-
80.Christ's Brotherhood	1970	1988	Thomas Brown	1939-
81.Vajradhatu	1970		Chogyam Trungpa	1940-1987
82.Siddha Yoga	1970		Swami Muktananda	1908-1982
83.Divine Light Mission	1971		Maharaj Ji	1958-
84.Arica	1971	1985	Oscar Ichazo	1931-
85.Synagogue of Christ	1971	1975	Candace Robbins	1946-
86.Elohim City	1971		Robert Millar	1926-
87.Solar Temple	1972	1994	Luc Jouret	1947-1994
88.Northeast Kingdom	1972		Elbert Spriggs	1930-
89.Urban Crusade for Christ	1973	1978	Edward Leary	1938-1991
90.The Cradle of Devotion	1973	1981	Michael Rock	1947-
91.Raelian Movement	1973		Claude Vorilhon	1946-
92.Rajneeshpuram	1974	1990	Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh	1931-1990
93.Heaven's Gate	1974	1997	Marshall Applewhite	1932-1997
94.The Garbage Eaters	1975		Jimmie Roberts	1939-
95.Temple of Love	1978		Yahweh Ben Yahweh	1935-
96.Multiplying Ministries	1979		Kip McKean	1954-
97.Aum Shinrikyo	1984		Shoko Asahara	1955-
98.Christ Star	1986	1996	John Hale Davis	1947-
99.Holy Land	1986		Luke Edwards	1926-
100.Church of Unlimited Devotion	1988	1992	Joseph Lian	1960-