2 Private and Public Religions

Binary distinctions are an analytic procedure, but their usefulness does not guarantee that existence divides like that. We should look with suspicion on anyone who declared that there are two kinds of people, or two kinds of reality or process.—Mary Douglas[1]

Of all social phenomena none is perhaps as protean and, consequently, as unsusceptible to binary classification as religion. Of all dichotomous pairs of relational terms few are as ambiguous, multivocal, and open to discoursive contestation as the private/public distinction. Yet the private/public distinction is crucial to all conceptions of the modern social order and religion itself is intrinsically connected with the modern historical differentiation of private and public spheres. As inaccurate as it may be as an empirical statement, to say that "religion is a private affair" is nonetheless constitutive of Western modernity in a dual sense. First, it points to the fact that religious freedom, in the sense of freedom of conscience, is chronologically "the first freedom" as well as the precondition of all modern freedoms.[2] Insofar as freedom of conscience is intrinsically related to "the right to privacy"—to the modern institutionalization of a private sphere free from governmental intrusion as well as free from ecclesiastical control—and inasmuch as "the right to privacy" serves as the very foundation of modern liberalism and of modern individualism, then indeed the privatization of religion is essential to modernity.[3]

There is yet another sense in which the privatization of religion is intrinsically related to the emergence of the modern social order. To say that in the modern world "religion becomes private" refers also to the very process of institutional differentiation which is constitutive of modernity, namely, to the modern historical process whereby the secular spheres emancipated themselves from ecclesiastical control as well as from religious norms. Religion was progressively forced to withdraw from the modern secular state and the modern capitalist economy and to find refuge in the newly found private sphere. Like modern science, capitalist markets and modern state bureaucracies manage to function "as if" God would not exist. This forms the unassailable core of modern theories of secularization, a core which remains unaffected by the frequent assertions of critics who rightly point out that most people in the modern world still, or yet again, believe in God and that religions of all kinds, old and new, manage to thrive in the modern world.

Theories of secularization, however, have greater difficulty in answering those critics who point out that the modern walls of separation between church and state keep developing all kinds of cracks through which both are able to penetrate each other; that religious institutions often refuse to accept their assigned marginal place in the private sphere, managing to assume prominent public roles; that religion and politics keep forming all kinds of symbiotic relations, to such an extent that it is not easy to ascertain whether one is witnessing political movements which don religious garb or religious movements which assume political forms.[4]

Thus, while religion in the modern world continues to become ever more privatized, one is also witnessing simultaneously what appears to be a process of "deprivatization" of religion. To deal with this paradox, we need to examine once again the various meanings of the distinction between private and public religions. Without trying to develop an exhaustive and universally valid classificatory scheme, the following conceptual clarification has a threefold aim: (1) to serve as a conceptual tool in the interpretation of what could be called "varieties of public religion" in the modern world; (2) to reveal the extent to which theories of secularization double as empirically descriptive theories of modern social processes and as normatively prescriptive theories of modern societies, and thus serve to legitimize ideologically a particular historical form of institutionalization of modernity; and (3) to examine whether public religions may not play a role in redrawing the contested boundaries between the private and the public spheres in the modern world.

On the Private/Public Distinction

In "The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction," Jeff Weintraub has reconstructed four major ways in which distinctions between "public" and "private" are currently made in social analysis:

(1) The liberal-economistic model . . . which sees the public/private distinction primarily in terms of the distinction between state administration and the market economy.

(2) The republican-virtue (and classical) approach, which sees the "public" realm in terms of political community and citizenship, analytically distinct from *both* the market and the administrative state.

(3) The approach, exemplified for example by the work of Ariès (and other figures in social history and anthropology), which sees the "public" realm as a sphere of fluid and polymorphous sociability.

(4) A tendency . . . in certain kinds of economic history and feminist analysis, to conceive of the distinction between "private" and "public" in terms of the

distinction between the family and the market economy (with the latter becoming the "public" realm).[5]

Some of the terminological disagreements may be due to the difficulties of fitting the reality of modernity, which at least since Hegel has been known to be tripartite—family, civil/bourgeois society, and state—into the binary and dichotomous categories of "public" and "private," which to a large extent derive from the dualistic differentiation of the ancient city into *oikos* and *polis*. The novelty of modernity derives precisely from the emergence of an amorphously complex, yet autonomous sphere, "civil society" or "the social," which stands "between public and private" proper, yet has expansionist tendencies aiming to penetrate and absorb both. The actual empirical boundaries between the three spheres, moreover, are highly porous and constantly shifting, thus creating interpenetrations between the three. Indeed, each of the three spheres may be said to have both private and public dimensions.[6]

Since social reality itself is not dichotomous, the use of binary categories leads necessarily either to the clear delimitation of one of the poles, leaving the rest of reality as an amorphous residual category, or to the clear delimitation of the two extreme poles, leaving a no less amorphous residual sphere between public and private.[7] Those conceptions, for instance, which begin with a clear delimitation of the private sphere, understood either as the sphere of the individual self or as the intimate sphere of domestic and personal relations, tend to place all the rest into an undifferentiated category of "the public." Erving Goffman's sociology may serve as an extreme illustration. What Goffman calls "the field of public life" embraces the entire realm of face-to-face interaction, including the "face-to-face interaction within a private domestic establishment."[8] The private sphere proper is restricted to the "backstage," where the individual can relax unobserved before donning the theatrical personae which the public self will play in the strategic performance of "interaction rituals" in public places. By contrast those liberal conceptions which begin with a delimitation of the public sphere as the governmental public sector tend to group all other spheres into an undifferentiated "nongovernmental" private sector.[9]

But some of the conceptual differences between the various positions are not solely terminological, nor are they simply due to different perceptions as to where the actual empirical boundaries lie in reality itself. To a large extent they reflect, as Weintraub points out, "deeper differences in theoretical (and ideological) commitments."[10] In other words, they are normative counterfactual critiques of the actual historical differentiation between the public and private spheres in the modern world, as well as

ideological critiques of the conceptual reifications which serve to legitimate modern historical trends. Among the recent critiques one could mention: (a) classical/republican critiques of the modern tendency to reduce the political to the governmental sphere of the administrative state, a tendency which contributes to the dissolution of the "public sphere" proper;[11] (b) republican virtue critiques of modern utilitarian individualism with its tendency to reduce the public interest to the aggregation of individual private interests, or to privatize morality, reducing it to subjectivist emotivism or solipsist value-decisionism;[12] and (c) feminist critiques of the dichotomy between a male, public, political, and immoral realm and a female, private, apolitical, and moral realm.[13]

Against those evolutionary theories which prefer to interpret what I call the "deprivatization" of modern religion as antimodern fundamentalist reactions to inevitable processes of modern differentiation, I argue that at least some forms of "public religion" may also be understood as counterfactual normative critiques of dominant historical trends, in many respects similar to the classical, republican, and feminist critiques. The public impact of those religious critiques should not be measured solely in terms of the ability of any religion to impose its agenda upon society or to press its global normative claims upon the autonomous spheres. In modern differentiated societies it is both unlikely and undesirable that religion should again play the role of systemic normative integration. But by crossing boundaries, by raising questions publicly about the autonomous pretensions of the differentiated spheres to function without regard to moral norms or human considerations, public religions may help to mobilize people against such pretensions, they may contribute to a redrawing of the boundaries, or, at the very least, they may force or contribute to a public debate about such issues. Irrespective of the outcome or the historical impact of such a debate, religions will have played an important public role. Like feminist critiques or like republican virtue critiques of modern developments, they will have functioned as counterfactual normative critiques. Besides, one does not need to accept the normative premises of such religious critiques in order to recognize that they may help to reveal the particular and contingent historical character of modern developments and to question the normativity of modern facticity.

Private and Public Religions from the Perspective of Religious Differentiation

Some aspects of the modern differentiation between private and public religions already appear within the social scientific study of religion as

the distinction between "individual" and "group" religiosity at the interaction level of analysis; as the distinction between "religious community" and "community cult" at the organizational level of analysis; and as the distinction between "religion" and "world" at the societal level of analysis.[14]

"Individual and Group Religiosity"

Religion . . . shall mean for us *the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.*—William James[15]

Religion is not an arbitrary relation of the individual man to a supernatural power; it is a relation of all the members of a community to the power that has the god of the community at heart.—Robertson Smith[16]

One could hardly find two apparently more incompatible positions. William James and the individualist school insist that "personal religion" is primordial, while all the institutional aspects of religion—"worship and sacrifice, procedures for working on the dispositions of the deity, theology and ceremony and ecclesiastical organization"—are secondary.[17] Stretching his methodological individualism somewhat, one could perhaps place Weber in this camp, since Weber also views individual charisma, "the personal gift of grace," as the essential and elementary form of religious life, while religious roles and institutions he analyzes as the result of "routinization of charisma."[18] However, Weber's own theory of charisma implies that the personal power of charisma can be confirmed and maintained only by the recognition of others. Charisma, in this sense, is an eminently intersubjective—social—category. It expresses a relation between leaders and followers, which is the foundation for the transformation of charisma into institutional religion. Without its institutionalization into some kind of elementary charismatic community, personal charisma remains an autistic, sociologically and historically irrelevant experience.

By contrast, the collectivist school of thought, best represented by W. Robertson Smith and Émile Durkheim, insists that religion is always a group, a collective, affair; that there is no religion without "a unified system of beliefs and practices . . . which unite into, one single moral community." Durkheim recognizes that there is scarcely a society without "the private religions which the individual establishes for himself and celebrates by himself," but he insists that "these individual cults are not distinct and autonomous religious systems," that individual religion either is simply derived from group religion or is no religion at all, but magic. Indeed, the presence or absence of a church is, according to

Durkheim, what helps define both religion and magic: there is no religion without a church; there is no church of magic.[19]

All attempts so far to reduce religion to one of the two poles while excluding or explaining the other as a derivation of the former have been unsatisfactory. The attempt to solve the problem by ordering both forms of religion in an evolutionary sequence, which normally runs from primitive, collective religion to modern, individual religion, has proven equally problematic, irrespective of the fact that one can show clear historical trends in this direction. Malinowski showed conclusively that "even in primitive societies the heightening of emotions and the lifting of the individual out of himself are by no means restricted to gatherings and to crowd phenomena."[20] While Durkheim may have been correct in stressing the public nature of primitive cults, he failed to recognize that "much of religious revelation takes place in solitude." Against Durkheim, Malinowski shows that the *religious* and the *collective* are not necessarily coextensive; that much religion is individual and private, while much collective effervescence and many public ceremonies have no religious meaning.[21]

"Community Cults versus Religious Communities"

The primeval cult, and above all, the cult of the political association, have left all individual interests out of consideration. . . . Thus, in the community cult, the collectivity as such turned to its god. The individual, in order to avoid or remove evils that concerned himself—above all, sickness—has not turned to the cult of the community, but as an individual he has approached the sorcerer as the oldest personal and "spiritual adviser." . . . Under favorable conditions this has led to the formation of a religious "community," which has been independent of ethnic associations. Some, though not all, "mysteries" have taken this course. They have promised the salvation of individuals *qua* individuals from sickness, poverty, and from all sorts of distress and danger.—Max Weber[22]

A similar distinction between public "community cults" and private "religious communities" is drawn by Robertson Smith when he writes that "religion did not exist for the saving of souls but for the preservation and welfare of society" and that "it is only in times of social dissolution . . . that magical superstition . . . invade[s] the sphere of tribal or national religion."[23]

The two types of religion correspond to two different types of community with different membership entry rules. In the case of community cults, the political and religious communities are coextensive. Consequently, one is born into community cults and membership in both the sociopolitical and the religious community coincides.[24] Durkheim, fol-

lowing Robertson Smith and Fustel de Coulanges, correctly viewed the god of the community cult as the symbolic representation and sacralization of the community. Incorrectly, however, he presented as a general, universal theory of religion what in fact turns out to be a particular theory of one of its forms.

Religious communities, by contrast, are constituted in and through the association and congregation of individuals in response to a religious message. Originally, at its inception, the religious community is separate from and not coextensive with the political community, although it may soon also assume a political form. The most developed form of religious communities, "salvation religions," represents an individualized and usually privatized form of religion which is primarily constituted through the personal relationship with the savior, the personal God, the prophet, or the spiritual adviser. They are "twice-born" religions which presuppose the experience of "a sick soul" in need of redemption, of a "divided self" in need of "unification."[25] Because they release the individual from particularistic, ascriptive ties, salvation religions are potentially conducive to the formation of universalistic religious communities through processes of ever wider fraternization (and sororization).[26]

Strictly speaking, those are analytical ideal types. While one may find both types of religion side by side in some societies, normally most religions will be mixed types presenting some combination of elements from both. Usually religions perform social as well as psychological functions and meet collective as well as individual needs. But in certain historical periods or stages of development as well as in particular cultures and religious traditions, one form may clearly predominate over the other. Neither the typological variations nor the dynamics of transformation could be discussed properly, though, without entering into the systemic level of analysis to take into account the process of differentiation of the religious and the political spheres, as well as the internal process of rationalization of the religious sphere. It is unnecessary to retrace here the ground so painstakingly explored by Max Weber in this area. Only a few critical remarks are in order:

It should be obvious that the form of the community cult will be determined primarily, other things being equal (something that rarely happens in history), by the type of political community: clan, tribe, confederation, kingdom, empire, republic, nation-state, and so on. But we would lose ourselves trying to cover all the possible variations and combinations. After Weber's work, it is even more obvious that the form of the religious community is determined primarily, again other things being equal, by the content and structure of the religious message itself and by the dynamics of the ideal and material interests of those groups and strata to which the religious message is originally addressed. But the truly relevant dynamics historically emerge when the two forms—the dynamics of community cult formation and the dynamics of religious community formation—meet, fuse, interpenetrate, and repel each other in all kinds of combinations.

The Christian "church" is only one particular historical type of combination of religious community and political community, which emerged out of the complex encounter of the Christian religious community and the Roman imperial state structure. This is a truism, which needs to be repeated, however, since sociologists still tend to use the typology developed by Weber and Troeltsch as general ideal types, applicable to other times and places, when "church" and "sect" are strictly speaking "historical" ideal types, which are misleading when applied uncritically to non-Western contexts and are equally misleading when applied to modern times after the emergence of an altogether different and radically new form of political community, the modern state. The early Christian church was a particular, almost typical, form of congregational "religious community" or "salvation religion," organized around the soteriological-eschatological cult of Christ, which after a period of clear separation from the Roman political community and confrontation with the Roman imperial structure was adopted by the Roman Empire as its "community cult."[27] Afterwards, with the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire, the Christian religious community itself adopted the political machinery and the administrative and legal structure of the imperial state, becoming in the process a salvation religion with the political structure of an imperial state.

Such a "church," such a particular combination of salvation religion and political community, is unlikely to appear anywhere else, even though Islam and Buddhism, the other two great universalistic salvation religions, have developed their own various combinations of political and religious communities.[28] All modern territorial national churches cease to be sociologically speaking a "church" the moment they cease being compulsory, coercive, monopolistic "sacramental grace institutions." This happens either when the church loses its own means of coercion and enforcement, or when the state is no longer willing or able to use its means of coercion to maintain the compulsory and monopolistic position of the church. Indeed, the moment heretical "sects" and "apostasy" are officially tolerated within the same political community, or the principle of religious freedom becomes institutionalized, even the still established state church ceases being, strictly speaking, a "church." The differentiation of religious community and community cult reemerges once again, but now along a separate modern secular state which no longer needs a religious community cult to integrate and maintain the political community. The precariousness of "established" na-

tional churches (Lutheran, Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox alike) in the modern world is understandable, caught as they are between a secular state which no longer needs them as community cults and people who prefer to join religious communities, if and when they want to satisfy their individual religious needs.

Islam is the unique historical case of a religion which was born simultaneously as a religious charismatic community of salvation and as a political community. This was expressed in the dual religious and political charisma of its founder, Muhammad, as God's messenger and as political and military leader. It is even more literally expressed by the fact that the Islamic era begins not with the birth or death of a founder or with the date of revelation but, rather, with the *hijra,* or migration, which marks the foundation of the Islamic political community in Medina ("the City"). The *umma,* the Islamic community, has seen itself most of the time as simultaneously a religious community and a political community, the community of believers and the nation of Islam. But it is totally inaccurate to argue that Islam has no differentiated religious and political spheres. Indeed, the history of Islam could be viewed as the history of the various institutionalizations of the dual religious and political charisma of Muhammad into dual and differentiated religious and political institutions.[29]

Understandably, the foundational myth of any charismatic community has a special paradigmatic power in the historical transmission of traditions, particularly when the foundational myth can avail itself of the force of God's revelation. Rebellions, reformations, revolutions, and all kinds of historical changes can be introduced in the name of the foundational myth, while claiming to be reverting to the pristine purity of origins, to a time before any accommodation to the world had taken place. Like other religions, Christianity also had to find its own accommodation to modernity and to the differentiation of the secular spheres. But Christianity, particularly sectarian Protestantism, could eventually embrace both modernity and secularization as a return to the primitive church, when an exclusive religious community of salvation was organized separate from the political community. Similarly, the Catholic "reformation" in the twentieth century has taken the form of a conscious rejection of "Constantinian Christendom."[30]

Religion and "World"

Know that you can have three sorts of relations with princes, governors, and oppressors. The first and worst is that you visit them, the second and the better is that they visit you, and the third and surest that you stay far from them, so that neither you see them nor they see you.—Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali

This statement by the twelfth-century Muslim theologian captures most succinctly the basic options, as well as the typical and traditional attitude of all salvation religions toward the world of politics, and toward the "world" in general. Buddhists, Christians, and Muslims may read the statement differently, since their original paradigmatic attitude as well as the historical experience these religions have accumulated through the ages may vary significantly. Nonetheless, the three basic options remain and, if made to choose, the three great "world religions" would probably rank the three options in the same order. They fear most, perhaps because they know how frequently they have found themselves unable to resist it even in the modern era, caesaropapism in any form, that is, the "world" 's control and use of religion for its own purposes, most frequently to legitimate political rule and to sanctify economic oppression and the given system of stratification.

The second option, theocracy, the power to influence and shape the world according to God's ways, is always preferable. It is also a very tempting option which even the most otherworldly religions have often found difficult to resist. The will to power of ascetic religion and its power to shape and transform the world while trying to transcend it can be found in the most unexpected places, from the mountains of Tibet to the deserts of Utah. But ultimately all theocratic attempts tend to succumb to the paradox of unintended consequences. The more religion wants to transform the world in a religious direction, the more religion becomes entangled in "worldly" affairs and is transformed by the world. The third option, distance, detachment, and separation, is the one which ultimately tends to prevail and which both religious and worldly people tend to prefer, since it protects the world from religion and religion from the world. None of the three options, however, can permanently resolve the tension between "religion" and "world."

Taking a lofty view of world history while being conscious that such a perspective flattens out all the "differences," one may easily discern two great "axial" shifts in the relation between religion and world. The first axial shift, well noticed by Karl Jaspers and used by Max Weber as the foundation for his world-historical sociology of religion, was the wave of world renunciation which beginning roughly around the sixth century B.C. shook one ancient civilization after another, from India to China, from the Near East to Greece.[31]

The new attitude of world rejection took hold first of intellectuals and elites, of philosophers and prophets. But later, this attitude of devaluation and relativization of this world for the sake of a higher one became democratized and popularized by the new salvation religions, which emerged as the most consequential world-historical result of the axial shift. At least in the case of the Mediterranean basin, this wide-

spread shift from public to private religion, from community cult to mystery and salvation religions, from civic man to inward man, from objectivist to subjectivist philosophy, has been amply documented by historians of ideas and social historians. Peter Brown has explained the paradoxical and revolutionary triumph of Christianity in the ancient pagan world as "the surprisingly rapid democratization of the philosophers' upper-class counterculture by the leaders of the Christian church."[32]

But the inward turn of religion toward the private individual for the sake of salvation is full of public paradoxes and external consequences in the world. Precisely when religion wanted to leave this world alone, the powers of the world could not afford, it seems, to leave religion alone. Jesus' message to abandon the messianic hopes of a worldly kingdom and to find "God's Kingdom" in one's "inner heart" threatened the core of Judaism as a public covenanted religion. The "scandal of the cross" was the punishment for such a public crime. The Roman imperial state, which had abandoned its old republican civil religion, which had incorporated all kinds of foreign gods into its pantheon, which permitted its subjects to pursue privately the most exotic of religions and mystery cults, could not allow that the most private, world-indifferent, and humble of religions, Christianity, would refuse to participate in the only community cult left, the worship of the emperor. Thus, Christians had to meet public persecution.

The Christian "inward" turn toward "otherworldly individualism" had other external, unintended consequences in the world. Otherworldly asceticism showed its Janus face in the combination of world abnegation and world mastery. Historical sociologists starting from very different premises, from Max Weber to Louis Dumont, from Norbert Elias to Michel Foucault, have amply demonstrated that inner discipline has a greater "civilizing" effect than any this-worldly reward or any external discipline and punishment effected by the powers of this world. Certainly, the unique establishment of a "*Civitas Dei*" in this world, of a Roman church with real and significant worldly power, which pretended to rule the world directly or indirectly, was of crucial importance. Some observers have insisted that the historically unique character of the modern state cannot be understood unless one sees it as a secularized, "transformed church." In any case, the story ended paradoxically with an unprecedented commitment of the Christian individual to the world, with a new transformation of the outerworldly individual into the innerworldly individual, with the rise of the modern individual.[33]

Whether one views the joint rise of the modern state and modern capitalism as being codetermined by this new Christian attitude or whether one sees the new Protestant innerworldly attitude as being determined by the emergence of the modern world system, there is no doubt that it marks a new axial shift in the relation between religion and world. Eventually, the world forced religion to withdraw to a newly created and, for the first time in history, "institutionalized" private sphere. The new territorial national churches, one after another, were subjected to royal absolutist control and, despoiled of their large holdings by secularization laws, had to ingratiate themselves more and more with the rising bourgeois classes. The same dual process will become evident throughout eighteenth-century Europe: Erastianism, regalism, caesaropapist control from above, which transformed all branches of Christianity into "established" but impotent community cults of the new nation-states, and a new pietist turn inward, which liberated the modern individual from the external, ritual, and sacramental control of the church and transformed the various denominations ever more into private "religious communities."[34]

Protestantism, used here as an analytical model without entering into the very significant internal variations within it, pioneered this process and helped to shape the particular form the process of institutionalized differentiation of the spheres has taken so far.[35] In this respect, Protestantism set a powerful historical precedent to which other world religions had, and still have, to respond in their own ways. For centuries, the Catholic church fought quixotically both the modern innerworldly turn and the modern differentiation of the spheres as heretic windmills. Finally, with Vatican II came the "official" belated recognition of the legitimacy of the modern world. Throughout the world, Catholicism has been turning innerworldly with a vengeance. Yet the Catholic church, while accepting the modern principle of "religious freedom" and thus ceasing to be for all practical purposes a "church" in the Weberian sense,[36] continues nonetheless to uphold the "church" principle of an ethical community. Modern Catholicism wants to be both an innerworldly and a public religion. But can there be a modern form of public religion that does not aspire to being an "established," state or societal, church?

Private and Public Religions in the Modern World

Using as an analytical framework the four different ways of conceptualizing the "private/public" distinction examined by Jeff Weintraub, one could draw in principle four different binary combinations of "private" and "public" religions. Without aiming to present an exhaustive typology, the resulting types incorporate the threefold distinction between individual and group religiosity, religious and political community, and

religious and worldly/secular spheres, while illuminating the basic options religions have under conditions of modern differentiation, that is, in the modern differentiated secular world.

Individual Mysticism versus Denominationalism

Beginning with Goffman's sociological rather than political distinction between the private "backstage" sphere of the self and the field of "public life," where face-to-face interaction takes place—a distinction that is clearer than the one drawn by Weintraub from Philipe Ariès's social history—one could distinguish between private individual religiosity, the religion of the private self, and all the public forms of associational religion. This distinction corresponds roughly to the one drawn by Thomas Luckmann between invisible religion and church religion, as well as to the typological distinction between what Ernst Troeltsch called "individual mysticism," or "spiritual religion," and the typically modern form of voluntary, individualistic, and pluralistic religious association, "the denomination." Although it has no place in Troeltsch's tripartite typology, the modern denomination is bound to diffuse and absorb, if not to supersede, what in his view were the two traditional forms of organizational religion, "the church" and "the sect."[37]

It is a commonplace of sociological analysis that the modern differentiation of autonomous spheres leads irremediably to a pluralism of norms, values, and worldviews. Max Weber attributed "the polytheism of modern values" to this differentiation.[38] Undoubtedly, the differentiation of the spheres leads to conflicts between the various gods (Eros, Logos, Nomos, Mars, Leviathan, Mammon, the Muses, etc.). But this conflict can be institutionalized and contained through systemic functional differentiation.[39] In any case, this is not the true source of modern polytheism. If the temple of ancient polytheism was the Pantheon, a place where all known and even unknown gods could be worshiped simultaneously, the temple of modern polytheism is the mind of the individual self. Indeed, modern individuals do not tend to believe in the existence of various gods. On the contrary, they tend to believe that all religions and all individuals worship the same god under different names and languages, only modern individuals reserve to themselves the right to denominate this god and to worship him/her/it in their own peculiar language. Rousseau's "religion of man . . . without temples, altars or rituals," Thomas Paine's "my mind is my church," and Thomas Jefferson's "I am a sect myself" are paradigmatic "high culture" expressions of the modern form of individual religiosity.[40] Deism, the typical fusion of individual mysticism and enlightenment rationalism, is recognizable in all three expressions. "Sheilaism" is the name Robert Bellah et al. have given to the contemporary "low culture" expression, after one of the people they interviewed actually named her own "faith" after herself, "my own Sheilaism": "I believe in God. I'm not a religious fanatic. I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's Sheilaism. Just my own little voice." The interviewers add, "This suggests the logical possibility of over 220 million American religions, one for each of us."[41] The cultic form of modern polytheism is not idolatry but human narcissism. In this particular sense, the cult of the individual has indeed become, as foreseen by Durkheim, the religion of modernity.

While sensing that individual mysticism was the religion of the future, Troeltsch could not anticipate its organizational form: "Since it arose out of the failure of the real ecclesiastical spirit, it finds it difficult to establish satisfactory relations with the churches, and with the conditions of a stable and permanent organization."[42] In America, however, individual mysticism found a fertile soil. Evangelical pietism, "the religion of the heart," was the vehicle which served to spread individual mysticism, democratizing and popularizing it, as it were, throughout American Protestantism whereas denominationalism, the great American religious invention, became its organizational form. Indeed, pietism occupies in the modern transformation of religion the same place MacIntyre attributes to emotivism in the transformation—dissolution—of traditional moral philosophy.

The doctrinal basis of denominationalism had already emerged with the First Great Awakening. But as in Europe, the institutional structure of established churches and sectarian dissent, even though already highly pluralistic, did not permit it to crystallize. First, constitutional disestablishment and, then, the Second Great Awakening transformed Protestant churches and sects alike into denominations. By the 1830s, evangelical Protestantism, organized denominationally, had become de facto the culturally, though not politically, established American civil religion. Following World War II, Catholicism and Judaism were added to the system. "Protestant-Catholic-Jew" became the three respectable denominational forms of American religion. The great religious experimentation of the 1960s left the denominational gates wide open; and by 1970 with the *Welsh* decision, the Supreme Court, which has always regulated the rules of entry into the free, competitive, denominational religious market, basically let in any faith willing to play by the rules.[43] It is the denominational structure of the religious subsystem which transforms all religions in America, irrespective of their origins, doctrinal claims, and ecclesiastical identities, into denominations.[44]

In his comprehensive study of "society and faith since World War II,"

The Restructuring of American Religion, Robert Wuthnow documents in detail the weakening of internal denominational ties, the lessening of interdenominational conflicts and prejudices, and the increasing organization and mobilization of religious resources across rather than through the denominations. He interprets this evidence, however, as "the declining significance of denominationalism," when it could actually be interpreted as a further indication of the logic of denominationalism.[45] From its inception in the First Great Awakening, denominationalism has never meant an absolute exclusive allegiance to one's particular denomination. Those "born-again" souls who have "experienced" individually the redeeming power of the "New Light" have always tended to feel closer fellowship with kindred spirits in other denominations than with "Old Lights" in their own.[46] Once the denominations become particular vehicles for individual religious experience, the external organizational form and the doctrinal content of the particular denomination become ever more secondary. People no longer need to switch denominations to find their own faith, or to join kindred fellows in interdenominational social movements. While this development may indicate the declining significance of the denominational churches, it can also be interpreted as the triumph of the denominational principle.

Even typologically classical sects like Protestant fundamentalism or the classical church, the *Una, Sancta, Catholica, et Apostolica* Roman church, are externally constrained and, more important, internally induced to function as denominations. The myriad "independent" fundamentalist churches and preachers, each and every one of them holier and more fundamentalist than the other, proclaiming "their own" literalist interpretation of the fundamentals of the same Christian faith, contained in the same text, the Holy Bible, attest to the power of modern individualism. The individual, private reading of any text forms a very shaky ground for doctrinal fundamentalism. When those myriad fundamentalist atoms leave their self-imposed private sectarian seclusion in order to organize themselves publicly into a Moral Majority or, in what amounts to the same thing, when those individual resources are skillfully mobilized by political entrepreneurs for collective action, fundamentalism becomes just another denomination.

The Catholic church is exposed to similar internal and external pressures. Recent visits of the pope to the United States have shown conclusively that American Catholics are more than ever willing to express publicly and effusively their union with the "vicar of Christ" and their loyalty to the Holy See. But like other modern individuals, American Catholics seem to reserve for their own consciences the ultimate inalienable right to decide which doctrines from the traditional deposit of faith are truly essential. Even when Catholics accept voluntarily the authority of certain teachings as dogma or authoritative doctrine, the interpretive problem, or leeway, still remains. The meaning and relevance of any written or oral text for any given context still requires interpretation. Increasingly, moreover, it is individuals who are doing the interpretation. Thus, bumper stickers to the contrary, *Roma dixit,* or the fact that God has spoken loud and clear, by no means settles the matter. The history of the great religions of *The Book,* Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, whether or not they have hierocratic ecclesiastical institutions or authoritative schools of interpretation, indicates that they are all caught in the same doctrinal interpretive quagmire. Whenever modern structural differentiation and religious individualism are introduced, the same logic of denominationalism can be found at work. In any case, in the United States one religious organization after another—Protestant churches, Protestant sects, Catholicism, Eastern Christianity, Judaism, Eastern religions, and, lately, Islam—has become a denomination, both internally and vis-à-vis one another. The question that needs to be addressed, however, is whether the denomination, as the modern, voluntary form of religious association based on religious freedom and religious pluralism, can also assume a different kind of "publicity," a political one, in modern differentiated societies.

Established versus Disestablished Religions

Within the liberal political tradition the distinction between private and public religions has always been clearly drawn in terms of the constitutional separation of church and state. In accordance with the liberal tendency to limit the public sphere to the governmental public sector with all the rest lumped into a great "private" sector, established state churches are designated as "public" religions whereas all other religions are considered to be "private." Since the liberal conception tends to conflate and confuse state, public, and political, the disestablishment of religion is understood and prescribed as a simultaneous process of privatization and depoliticization. In the liberal conception religion is and ought to remain a private affair. The liberal fear of the politicization of religion is simultaneously the fear of an establishment which could endanger the individual freedom of conscience and the fear of a deprivatized ethical religion which could bring extraneous conceptions of justice, of the public interest, of the common good, and of solidarity into the "neutral" deliberations of the liberal public sphere.

The incongruence in the liberal conceptualization becomes immediately apparent in the paradoxical contrast between the highly depoliticized and privatized religion of the Established Church of England (or

of any national state church which accepts Erastian principles) and the public and political posture of free, congregational, "leveling," nonconformist sects or of any disestablished religion ready to clash with an unjust and sinful state. Even more paradoxical from a liberal political perspective has to be Tocqueville's perceptive and, at least for its time, largely accurate statement that "religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but it must be regarded as the first of their political institutions."[47]

The liberal rationale for disestablishment is as valid and unimpeachable today as it always has been. Historical pressures for the separation of church and state emerged from the dual dynamics of internal religious rationalization and the secular state's emancipation from religion. From religion itself came the sectarian demand for "religious freedom." As Georg Jellinek showed conclusively, the modern principle of inalienable human rights originated with the radical sects and was first institutionalized constitutionally in the Bills of Rights of the various American states.[48] Without this religious sectarian input one may reach the principle of religious "toleration," but not necessarily the principle of religious "freedom." Indeed, before becoming the enlightened liberal principle of "freedom of thought," the pressure for toleration more often than not found its historical source in *raison d'état*, in the modern state's exigency to emancipate itself from religion.[49]

The dual "no establishment" and "free exercise" clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution incorporated this dual historical rationale for separation. This duality has continued to this day to be the source of contestation since, as Thomas Robbins has shown, it can lead to very different interpretations of the principle of separation.[50] A "strict separationist" reading, based on radical sectarian, libertarian, or liberal "neutrality" principles, consistently rejects not only any government support but also any government regulation of religion. The "benevolent separationist" reading, by contrast, based either on the principle of historical tradition and "original intent" or on the functionalist argument of the positive societal functions of religion, rejects government regulation but demands general government support of religion. At the opposite pole, the "secularist" reading, suspicious of religion's negative functions, favors government regulation of religion while denying religion any government support. Finally, even when it accepts formal separation, the "statist" interpretation is also consistent with caesaropapist principles in favoring both government support and government's absolute control of religion.[51]

The limits of the liberal conception derive from its tendency to conceive of all political relations, religious ones included, too narrowly in terms of juridical-constitutional lines of separation. But the problem of the relation between religion and politics cannot be reduced simply to the clear-cut issue of the constitutional separation of church and state. While disestablishment and separation are necessary to guarantee the freedom of religion from the state, the freedom of the state from religion, and the freedom of the individual conscience from both state and organized religion, it does not follow that religion must be privatized in order that these freedoms be guaranteed. Here again it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the legal principle of separation and the liberal normative prescription of privatization. The soundness of the liberal principle of "separation" finds perhaps its best indirect confirmation in the fact that the Catholic church has accepted it after having rejected it obstinately as incompatible with the "church" principle. Indeed, given this incompatibility, the final Catholic recognition of the religious legitimacy of the modern principle of freedom of conscience, a principle which Catholic doctrine now sees grounded in "the sacred dignity of the human person," had to be accompanied by the surrender of its identity as a compulsory institution. The Catholic church in Vatican II, by adopting the principle of "religious freedom," officially ceased being a "church" in the sociological sense of the term. Yet the Catholic church still refuses to accept the related liberal principle of absolute privatization of religion and morality.

There is a sense in which the liberal principle of privatization is also unimpeachable. Insofar as the legal principle of separation is based not solely on *raison d'état* principles or on liberal principles of toleration as necessary conditions for a modern differentiated and pluralist social order but on the very principle of freedom of conscience, which is the foundation of the inviolable "right to privacy"—without which there can be neither a modern democratic state nor a modern civil society—then the "deprivatization" of religion presupposes the privacy of religion and can only be justified if the right to privacy and freedom of conscience are also legally protected from religion.[52] In other words, from the normative perspective of modernity, religion may enter the public sphere and assume a public form only if it accepts the inviolable right to privacy and the sanctity of the principle of freedom of conscience.

This condition is met and, therefore, the deprivatization of religion can be justified in at least three instances:

a) When religion enters the public sphere to protect not only its own freedom of religion but all modern freedoms and rights, and the very right of a democratic civil society to exist against an absolutist, authoritarian state. The active role of the Catholic church in processes of democratization in Spain, Poland, and Brazil may serve to illustrate this instance.

b) When religion enters the public sphere to question and contest the

absolute lawful autonomy of the secular spheres and their claims to be organized in accordance with principles of functional differentiation without regard to extraneous ethical or moral considerations. The Pastoral Letters of the American Catholic bishops questioning the "morality" of the arms race and of the state's nuclear policies, as well as the "justice" and inhuman consequences of a capitalist economic system, which tends to absolutize the right to private property and claims to be self-regulated by unchecked market laws, exemplify this second instance.

c) When religion enters the public sphere to protect the traditional life-world from administrative or juridical state penetration, and in the process opens up issues of norm and will formation to the public and collective self-reflection of modern discursive ethics. The public mobilization of the so-called Moral Majority and the Catholic public stand on abortion in support of "the right to life" are examples of this third instance.

In the first instance religion would serve in the very constitution of a liberal political and social order. In the second and third instances religion would serve to show, question, and contest the very "limits" of the liberal political and social order. At the very least, the deprivatization of religion might serve to question the empirical validity of the thesis of privatization of modern religion and, more important, it might force the theory of privatization to question its own normative foundations in the liberal model of the public sphere and in the rigidly juridical separation of the private and public spheres.

Public Civil Religions versus Private Religious Communities

The modern concept of "civil religion," from its inception in Rousseau's work to its elaboration by Robert Bellah, is intimately linked to the classical republican virtue tradition and its mistrust of the modern liberal political tradition. In Bellah's theory of American civil religion this republican tradition became fused with the Calvinist tradition of the covenanted religious and political community and with the Durkheimian normative functionalist tradition and its conception of a moral, functional individualism counterposed to an egoist, utilitarian, and dysfunctional one.[53]

When it comes to religion, the classical republican tradition would distinguish between, on the one hand, public civil religions functioning as the cult of the political community and, on the other hand, private domestic cults, associational community cults, and individual privatist religions of salvation. The tension here would be between the particularism of an ethical community which integrates all citizens into a political cult coextensive with the political community and competing allegiances

to either more primordial or more universalistic forms of community. Most corrosive of republican civil religions are those soteriological religious tenets which liberate the individual from absolute allegiance to the political community, freeing the self to choose individual, innerworldly or outerworldly, roads to salvation or to join other individuals to form wider, universalizable religious communities that transcend the particularism of the political community, be it a city-state or a nation-state. Indeed, the problem for the republican tradition is how to politicize religion, how to harness the integrative power of religion without exposing itself to the threat of theocracy, which, if triumphant, would eliminate the autonomy of the political sphere. Even when successful, however, Erastianism and all similar attempts to exert secular control over the religious institutions will lead to the impairment of religion. The field will be open either for iconoclastic prophetic critiques of political idolatry or for privatistic soteriological withdrawal.

Rousseau's discussion "Of Civil Religion" exemplifies vividly all these dilemmas.[54] He begins with the recognition that the old undifferentiated fusion of "the gods" and "the laws" of the state was destroyed by the Christian introduction of "a kingdom of the other world" and could no longer be reconstructed. The dualist political structure of medieval Christendom which replaced the political system of antiquity introduced not only "the most violent despotism" but also a "double power," a principle of dual sovereignty which resulted in "a perpetual conflict for jurisdiction which has made any system of good polity impossible in Christian States." In formulating his own proposal for a modern polity, Rousseau starts with the premise that "no State has ever been established without having religion for its basis." But he decides that none of the three existing forms of religion satisfies the conditions for a "good polity." The "religion of the priest," Roman Catholicism, is politically useless and evil. Internally, it "gives to mankind two codes of legislation, two chiefs, . . . requires from them contradictory duties, and prevents their being devout men and citizens at the same time." Externally, moreover, transnational ecclesiastical institutions transcend the territorial limits, the political community of citizenship, and the normative sovereignty of the modern nation-state. Hence, they cannot produce loyal subjects.[55]

By contrast, the "religion of the citizen" would undoubtedly produce loyal subjects through the sacralization of the state and the nation. But it "is also evil," because it is "founded in error and falsehood" and it leads to intolerant national chauvinism and sanguinary jingoism. Finally, the "religion of man" is "holy, sublime and true," as it transforms all the human race into "brothers." But politically it is useless, since, "having no particular connection with the body politic," it does not add anything

either to the legitimacy of the laws or to the "great bonds of particular societies." Furthermore, it undermines republican virtue by replacing in "the hearts of the citizens" their attachment to the state with their own private mundane or supramundane concerns.[56] In the end, Rousseau solves the dilemma by affirming simultaneously and inconsistently the modern right of religious freedom and freedom of opinion, which no sovereign has the right to abridge or control, and the need for "a purely civil profession of faith, the articles of which it is the business of the Sovereign to arrange, not precisely as dogmas of religion, but as sentiments of sociability without which it is impossible to be either a good citizen or a faithful subject."[57]

Durkheim's attempt to solve the Hobbesian problem and Rousseau's political dilemmas through a sociological theory of normative societal integration based on a scientific secular morality which could serve as the civil religion of modern societies only reproduced the same old unresolved tensions using a new sociological language. Robert Bellah's theory of American civil religion has the advantage of being empirically grounded, as it starts from the premise that historically the American polity appears to have had something like a civil religion. However, even if one accepts the premise that indeed there was a time when the American polity was integrated through a civil religion made up of a peculiar combination of biblical/Puritan, republican/Enlightenment, and liberal/utilitarian religious/moral principles, it was already obvious at the time of Bellah's formulation of the theory that whatever was left of this civil religion was becoming increasingly irrelevant. Bellah himself soon came to recognize that the national "covenant" had been "broken" and that no ordinary jeremiad could put the old covenant together again. Moreover, the very triad of principles which jointly constitute the American civil religion, and which are in some respects not unlike Rousseau's three religions, again illustrate the same dilemmas. Can the republican, the biblical, and the modern individualist traditions be combined without undermining each other? Can American civil religion be anything other than the patriotic cult of the manifest imperial destiny of the American nation or the cult of a nation made up of individuals pursuing their own private utilitarian forms of religion? Both would undermine republican virtue. A more committed republicanism would prefer to banish religion to the private sphere and to pursue the secular religion of politics.[58]

As long as civil religion is conceptualized either politically at the state level as a force integrating normatively the political community or sociologically at the societal level as a force integrating normatively the societal community, such a civil religion is unlikely to reappear in modern societies. Moreover, if and when there is extant something like a civil religion, it will be more likely than not the adaptation of a living tradition to modern conditions. In any case, to postulate the existence of such a civil religion on the functionalist ground that modern societies "need" such a civil religion is theoretically untenable and normatively undesirable. What needs to be examined is the different ways in which religions, old and new, traditional and modern, may play public roles, eufunctional and dysfunctional, in the public sphere of civil society. Consequently, the concept of "civil religion" ought to be reformulated from the state or societal community level to the level of civil society.

Following Alfred Stepan, one may conceptualize the modern "polity" as consisting of three differentiated arenas: the state, political society, and civil society.[59] Following the "discursive" model of "public space," one may conceptualize the "public sphere" as a constitutive dimension of each of these three arenas of the polity.[60] In principle, religion could be located, as it were, in each of these three public spaces of the polity. There may be "public" religions at the state level, the "church" being the paradigmatic example. There may be "public" religions at the political society level, as in all instances when religion becomes politically mobilized against other religious or secular movements, or institutionalized as a political party competing with other religious or secular parties. The whole range of Catholic counterrevolutionary movements from the time of the French Revolution to the Spanish Civil War, which David Martin has aptly characterized as "reactive organicism"; the political mobilization of religious minorities reacting to or proacting against different types of *Kulturkampf* coming from the state or from other religious or secular movements or parties; structural systems of religious-political "pillarization," such as those characteristically developed in Belgium or Holland; the church's mobilization of the laity through "Catholic Action" to protect or advance the church's interests and privileges; the system of Christian-Democratic parties which crystallized after World War II in Catholic and, to a lesser extent, in Lutheran countries; and the recent electoral mobilization of the New Christian Right—all these cases could be viewed as different types of "public" religion located at the level of political society.[61]

It is one of the central theses of the present work that, at least in Western Europe, this historical epoch, the "age" of reactive organicism, of secular-religious and clerical-anticlerical cultural and political warfare, of Catholic Action, of religious pillarization, and of Christian Democracy has come to an end.[62] Reactive organicism was the church's response to the French Revolution as well as to the nineteenth-century liberal revolutions, while Catholic Action and Christian Democracy were the church's response to the emergence of secularist and laicist, particu-

larly socialist, mass parties at the turn of the century. Both were defensive reactions to what was rightly perceived as a hostile, modern, secular environment. If the church today no longer seeks to reenter the state through the mobilization of the laity in order to regain control over society, it is to a large extent due to the fact that the church no longer feels threatened by a hostile secular state or by hostile social movements. The disappearance of anticlericalism from everyday politics in Catholic countries is perhaps the most telling indicator of this historical transformation.

A mutually reinforcing dynamic of recognition and rapprochement between religion and modernity has taken place, bringing to a close the conflictive cycles opened up by the Enlightenment critique of religion. On the one hand, the critical recognition of the dialectics of enlightenment and the postmodern self-limitation placed upon the rationalist project of secular redemption have led to a rediscovery of the validity claims of religion and to a recognition of the positive role of the Catholic church in setting limits to the absolutist tendencies of the modern state, whether in its Polish communist variant or in its Latin American "national security" variant. On the other hand, the Catholic *aggiornamento,* that is, the innerworldly turn of the church, the religious revaluation of secular reality, its prophetic commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, and solidarity in the social and political order have made superfluous precisely those aspects of the Enlightenment critique of religion which were still relevant not long ago in places like Spain or Brazil.

Most important, the Catholic church has largely renounced its own self-identity as a "church," that is, as a territorially organized, compulsory religious community coextensive with the political community or state. This change in self-identity, stimulated by the further secularization of a modern state which no longer needs religious legitimation, has led to a fundamental change in the location and orientation of the Catholic church from one centered and anchored in the state to one centered in civil society. It was this voluntary "disestablishment" of Catholicism, this change of self-identity, which permitted the Catholic church to play an active role in processes of democratization from Spain to Poland, from Brazil to the Philippines.

The most significant development which has emerged from recent transitions to democracy in Catholic countries is the fact that, despite finding itself in a majority position with unprecedented prestige and influence within civil society, the Catholic church everywhere has not only accepted the constitutional separation of church and state and the constitutional principle of religious freedom, but also abandoned its traditional attempts to either establish or sponsor official Catholic parties, which could be used to defend and advance politically the ecclesiastical privileges and claims of the church. The church appears to have accepted not only disestablishment from the state but also disengagement from political society proper. This does not mean, however, that Catholicism becomes necessarily privatized or that the church is no longer likely to play any public role. It only means that the public locus of the church is no longer the state or political society but, rather, civil society.

"Home" versus "Work": The Private Feminine Sphere of Religion and Morality versus the Public Masculine Sphere of Work and Legality

Finally, one could also apply to the religious field the distinction drawn by feminist critics and some modes of economic analysis between the public sphere of "work" and the private domestic sphere. Semantically, of course, the antonym of "work" is not "home" but "leisure." The distinction nonetheless describes the actual modern historical process of separation of the work-place from the household. Moreover, it plays a critical function in drawing attention to a dual process constitutive of modernity. It shows, in the first place, that under modern conditions of commodity production only the sphere of salaried employment is recognized as "work," thus excluding from consideration and reward (power, status, wealth) the entire sphere of human and social reproduction, from parturient "labor" to child rearing to the entire gamut of domestic activities connected with the reproduction of the labor force, all of them activities in which female exertion and work are preponderant.[63] Additionally, it points to the fact that under modern capitalist conditions the sphere of leisure itself has been commodified and transformed into the autonomous sphere of industrialized "mass culture," the sphere where cultural objects are produced, distributed, and consumed.

When applied to the religious field, the distinction between "public" work and "private" home immediately shows the ambiguous place of religion in the modern world. On the one hand, one could say almost categorically that religion belongs to the sphere of culture. Historically, religion has been, as attested by anthropological, cultural historical, and civilizational analysis alike, "the core" of culture. Some of the best sociological analysis of religion has shown that religion in the modern world like the rest of culture is also exposed to forces of commodification. "The pluralistic situation," writes Peter Berger, "is, above all, a *market situation.* In it, the religious institutions become marketing agencies and the religious traditions become consumer commodities."[64] Indeed, in the United States the "salvation" department may be one of the most diversified and profitable sectors of the entire mass culture industry. Yet it is symptomatic of the uncertain place of religion in the modern world that

theories of modern culture and the newly established field of the sociology of culture tend to ignore religion altogether. It is understood, at least tacitly, that by culture one means exclusively "secular" culture.

It is the feminist critique of the public male/private female split which perhaps illuminates best the deep meaning of the modern privatization of religion. To say that "religion is a private affair" not only describes a historical process of institutional differentiation but actually prescribes the proper place for religion in social life. The place modernity assigns to religion is "home," understood not as the physical space of the household but as "the abiding place of one's affections" (Webster's). Home is the sphere of love, expression, intimacy, subjectivity, sentimentality, emotions, irrationality, morality, spirituality, and religion. This domestic sphere, moreover, is the female sphere par excellence. Indeed, Ann Douglas has appropriately described the historical process of privatization of religion which took place in the first half of nineteenth-century America as a process of "feminization."[65]

As feminist critics and moral philosophers have pointed out, the feminization of religion and morality had impoverishing effects on both the private and the public realm.[66] Religion, like moral virtue, became so sentimentalized, subjectivized, and privatized that it lost not only public power but also intersubjective public relevance. Exempt from public discursive rationality and accountability, religion as well as morality became simply a matter of individual, private taste. While premodern societies tended to coerce public expressions of religion, from collective "Actos de Fe" in the public square to public and communal penance, modern societies by contrast tend to banish any public display of religion. Actually, the privatization of religion reaches the point in which it becomes both "irreverent" and "in bad taste" to expose one's religiosity publicly in front of others. Like the unconstrained exposure of one's private bodily parts and emotions, religious confessions outside the strictly delimited religious sphere are considered not only a degradation of one's privacy but also an infringement upon the right to privacy of others.

The consequences for the public sphere of "work" were equally significant. Politics and economics became literally "amoral" spheres, realms from which moral or religious considerations ought to be excluded. In the process, the "public sphere" itself became impoverished. Seyla Benhabib has shown that the liberal model of "public dialogue" and its "neutrality" rule impose certain "conversational restraints," which tend to function as a "gag rule," excluding from public deliberation the entire range of matters declared to be "private"—from the private economy to the private domestic sphere to private norm formation.

Yet, as Benhabib points out, "The model of a public dialogue based on conversational restraint is not neutral, in that it presupposes a moral and political epistemology; this in turn justifies an implicit separation between the public and the private of such a kind as leads to the silencing of the concerns of certain excluded groups."[67] Furthermore, the principle of "dialogic neutrality" tends to ignore the "agonistic" dimension of politics and fails to recognize that "all struggles against oppression in the modern world begin by redefining what had previously been considered 'private', non-public and non-political issues as matters of public concern, as issues of justice, as sites of power which need discursive legitimation."[68]

By incorporating the practical experience of the women's movements and feminist theoretical concerns reflexively into her political theory, Benhabib is able to show not only the limits of the liberal model of "public space" but also the extent to which Habermas's "discursive model" has inherited unnecessarily some "dubious distinctions from the liberal social-contract" that seem to be at odds with a more radically proceduralist reading of the theory. In the case of liberalism, the crucial need to maintain a clear differentiation between the spheres of legality and morality, in order to protect precisely all modern individual freedoms and the right to privacy, led to an overjuridical conception of the public and private divide.

The same justifiable concern, Benhabib argues, leads Habermas to establish overly rigid boundaries between "public issues of justice" and "private conceptions of the good life," "public interests" and "private needs," and "public matters of norms and private matters of values."[69] The issue, of course, cannot be the elimination of those boundaries which are necessary to protect modern freedoms and to structure modern differentiated societies. What is at issue is the need to recognize that the boundaries themselves are and need to be open to contestation, redefinition, renegotiation, and discursive legitimation. According to Benhabib, "If the agenda of the conversation is radically open, if participants can bring any and all matters under critical scrutiny and reflexive questioning, then there is no way to predefine the *nature* of the issues discussed as being ones of justice or of the good life itself prior to the conversation."[70] This should include all boundaries: private and public, moral and legal, justice and the good life, religious and secular. It should also include the boundaries between all the functionally differentiated systemic spheres: state, economy, civil society, family, religion, and so forth.

What I call the "deprivatization" of modern religion is the process whereby religion abandons its assigned place in the private sphere and

enters the undifferentiated public sphere of civil society to take part in the ongoing process of contestation, discursive legitimation, and redrawing of the boundaries. In the 1980s, religion throughout the world was in the forefront of various forms of public collective action, agonic as well as discursive, often on both sides of every contested issue, itself being both the subject and the object of contestation and debate. The issue, therefore, cannot be whether religion essentially is good or bad for politics, functional or dysfunctional for the social system, historically progressive or regressive. Social scientists, both as practical actors and as theorists who are also engaged in making "distinctions" and drawing boundaries, will need to develop analytical and normative criteria to differentiate the various forms of public religion and their possible socio-historical consequences. But above all, social scientists need to recognize that, despite all the structural forces, the legitimate pressures, and the many valid reasons pushing religion in the modern secular world into the private sphere, religion continues to have and will likely continue to have a public dimension. Theories of modernity, theories of modern politics, and theories of collective action which systematically ignore this public dimension of modern religion are necessarily incomplete theories.

II

Five Case Studies: Analytical Introduction