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Mystical Religion as Social Leaven: An Excursus in The Sociology of Mysticism

In this paper we examine as a theme the relationship which obtains between mysticism and social change in the modern Western world. Contrary to classical depictions (Troeltsch, 1910, 1931; Weber, 1946, 1963), we contend that mysticism has positive ramifications for extant social relationships; that, in fact, it can and does actively impinge upon the social milieu. The time is ripe to move beyond conventional wisdom in the sociological study of mysticism—which has characterized the mystic as escapist, life-denying and “other-worldly”—to present a more accurate assessment of the role of mysticism in the modern world. It is our task in part, therefore, to offer a brief review of three seminal perspectives in the sociology of Ernst Troeltsch, Max Weber and, more recently, Roland Robertson. From there, we seek to ascertain the adequacy of their typologies in light of the social regenerative efforts of a prominent recent proponent of mysticism, Howard Thurman.

Ernst Troeltsch

The term “mysticism” has a long heritage in religious traditions. The credit for its first prominent association with sociology belongs, of course, to Ernst Troeltsch. In 1910, he initiated the inaugural meeting

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of the German Sociological Society, introducing his now famous trichotomy of socio-religious forms — church, sect, and mysticism — which he went on to elaborate in full in *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1931).

Generally speaking, Troeltsch's entire interpretation of the history of Christian social thought is based on this tripartite formulation. In *Social Teachings* he affirms each of the three types as rooted within the current Christian tradition, with each expression having dominant impacts in differing periods. Employing a rather convoluted schema, he concludes his formal survey of Christian thought and practice with the eighteenth century, remarking that after this time "Church history entered upon a new phase of existence" (1931: 991), which existence is typified by the rise of mysticism, the third type. It is most instructive to note that Troeltsch ends documentation of his study at this point, but not his discussion of modern Christianity's emerging structural forms. From the nineteenth century on, in other words, Troeltsch's remarks about the Christian Church and especially mysticism are clearly provisional and partial (1931: 991-992; cf. Garrett, 1975: 216)

Troeltsch's prognosis for the role of mysticism in the modern (Western) context is anything but flattering. He surmises that Christendom is in a state of veritable disintegration; there has emerged no new or apparent "compromise between church and culture" (1931: 991-992). With somber apprehension, therefore, he braces himself—and us—for what he believe to be the ineluctable rise of mystical religious individualism:

It is neither Church nor sect, and has neither the concrete sanctity of the institution nor the radical connection with the Bible. Combining Christian ideas with a wealth of modern views, deducing social institutions, not from the Fall but from a process of natural development, it has not the fixed limit for concessions and the social power

which the Church possesses, but also it does not possess the radicalism and the exclusiveness with which the sect can set aside the State and economics, art and science (Troeltsch, 1931: 381).

And again:

In general. . . the modern educated classes understand nothing but mysticism. This is due to the reflex action of the atomistic individualism of modern civilization in general, of an individualism which in non-religious spheres of life is already losing its hold, and is beginning to develop into its exact opposite. In its depreciation of fellowship, public worship, history, and social ethics this type of "spiritual religion," in spite of all its depth and spirituality, is still a weakened form of religious life (1931: 798-799).

To summarize this aspect of Troeltsch's argument, by all indications contemporary mysticism signals the decline and probable demise of (so-called) Christian civilization. For Troeltsch, the movement of modern mysticism beyond the parameters of historic religious individualism (as positively evidenced, for instance, in monasticism) is as potentially devastating as it appears inexorable.¹ The third type's major deficiency is an absence of socially formative power, which is compounded by an equal paucity of social concern. Too, it is fundamentally parasitical and incapable of holistic existence apart from the church and sect types (notwithstanding the fact that a similar symmetry probably applies to the other two types). Thus, about the best that Troeltsch could hope for was some unforeseeable socio-religious development which would reconcile the constructive elements in mysticism, church and sect forms (1931: 1009).

¹ Troeltsch used various terms to describe the elusive mystic-group type, such as "the association of mystics," "intimate circles for edification," and "parallelism of spontaneous religious personalities" (1931: 744, 746).

In basic terms, Troeltsch's monumental work on the life and teachings of the Christian Church merits continued attention. Yet for our purposes, his very inattentiveness to the post-1800 organizational forms of Christianity renders his model somewhat less than useful.² As we shall see, this is perforce the case as regards mysticism in at least one of its non-European Christian expressions.

Max Weber

A number of scholars (Garrett, 1975: 219; Mitzman, 1970: 195, 253-296; Steeman, 1975: 182) have noted the considerable intellectual reciprocity between Troeltsch and Weber. One of the most fruitful albeit negative results of their exchange was a dual conceptualization of mysticism. Troeltsch's emphasis, as we have indicated, was the socio-historical forms of Christian theology. Weber's preference, on the other hand, was for the social psychological forms of salvation (1973: 140-14). In Weber's estimation, mysticism was to be studied more or less as a general action orientation of those seeking salvation, irrespective of the participant's religious or philosophical inclination. The primary point we wish to make here is that Weber's elaborations on mysticism, even more than Troeltsch's, belied mysticism's social significance in that it was framed as a type of human rejection of or at least indifference toward the social cosmos ("acosmicism"). In Weber's work, the antipodal and superior counterpart to mysticism was asceticism, which action orientation sought to master the social world (cf. Garrett, 1975: 208).

Weber offered his fullest treatment of mystic and ascetic impulses in some of his final writings (1946: 267-301, 322-359; 1963: 164-183,

² Other shortcomings in Troeltsch's work include a too narrow focus on Protestant mysticism and the consequent dismissal of highly institutionalized mysticism forms in Christian and non-Christian traditions. Whereas his typology helped him to understand the history of Christianity, it could not unravel the complexities of the present or the future.

207-245). In these he presents mature typology of mysticism and asceticism, distinguished in the main by the addition of his other-worldly/innerworldly polarity. The end result is a four-tiered configuration, a classification of the basic types of religious orientation based on the extent of their involvement in the social world. We may prioritize Weber's assessments (or religious typology) in the following fashion:

- 1) inner-worldly asceticism (most typically Calvinism),
- 2) other-worldly asceticism (typified by the Hindu Yogi),
- 3) inner-worldly mysticism (no examples) and, lastly
- 4) other-worldly mysticism (Buddhist mendicants).

What this schema quite obviously confirms is Weber's low estimation of the social value (real or potential) of mysticism, modern mysticism included. What should concern us equally, however, is that Weber's views on mysticism were perhaps less substantiated than those of Troeltsch.³ Weber and Troeltsch are rightly held in high esteem for the prominence accorded historical and socio-cultural specificity in their work; nonetheless, it must be stated that neither put forth much of an effort to substantiate their positions on mysticism. In a real sense the excessive passion that both scholars had for demonstrating absolutes—in Troeltsch's case the veracity of the Christian faith, the polar concepts of inner-worldly asceticism and other-worldly mysticism for Weber—caused them to neglect cardinal re-

³ Benjamin Nelson states that "Troeltsch is aware of the crossing of mysticism and sect in the late-Medieval and early modern era. Thus it proves that Troeltsch does perceive the important role that mysticism played in the passages toward the illuminous sectarian groups and the extensions of the notion of reason and civil liberties. In a sense it is surprising that Troeltsch's [1910] remarks on mysticism. . . did not appear to prompt Weber to a larger response. . . Weber was so intent upon establishing the unique predominance in the West of the penetration and remaking of the world to innerworldly asceticism that he failed to give enough weight to another fact which he no less than Troeltsch implicitly recognized. Weber does not. . . sufficiently stress the significance of innerworldly mysticism as contrasted with otherworldly mysticism" (1975:236).

search principles (such as value-neutrality and, social probability) and ignore crucial intermediate (mysticism) conceptualizations. Thus, bereft of supporting documentation, perhaps the most that can be said for Troeltsch's and Weber's views on mysticism is that they were correct as far as they went. From a strictly empirical standpoint, however, it is clear that neither went far enough.⁴

At present the undervaluation of (aversion to?) mysticism continues, especially among English-speaking sociologists. One must search long and hard through the myriad of sociology of religion textbooks to find even brief mention of mysticism.⁵ While the historical reasons behind this development are quite involved, it seems safe to say that most sociologists have canonized the conceptualizations of the forebearers as normative if not outright definitive (cf. Eischer, 1973: 355-408; Garrett, 1975; Swatos, 1976: 129-144). And therein lies the problem: in bestowing analytical immortality upon the Troeltsch and (especially) Weber disquisitions on mysticism, the social-scientific community has rather effectively impaired its own ability to investigate new (alternative) conceptualizations. Fortunately, a scattering of theoreticians have emerged who are demonstrating that movement is possible beyond the time-honored utterances of the standard-bearers (cf. Mueller, 1973, 68-132; Nelson, 1965: 49-103; McCloskey, 1978).

Roland Robertson

The most important challenge to the venerable Troeltsch-Weber tradition to date comes from the sociologist of religion, Roland Robertson, who asserts that a new ethos of inner-worldly mysticism is

⁴ In all fairness to Troeltsch and Weber, however, it must be said that there is no indication that either considered or intended his remarks on mysticism to be the last word.

⁵ Excepted are studies concerned with elucidating the degree and intensity of mystical experience *per se*. (We need only mention Adler, 1972; Hay and Morisy, 1978: 255-268; Thomas and Cooper, 1978: 433-437). Unfortunately, the attention given to mysticism as an altered states of consciousness contributes little to the exploration its social-cultural contingencies.

present in the West (1975, 241-266; 1978, 103- 147). Robertson's primary interest is in some way to make less ramified the Weberian distinction between inner-worldly and other-worldly varieties of asceticism and mysticism. He accomplishes this feat in admirable fashion by giving analytic precedence to the understated dimension of Weber's analysis, that is, the inner-worldly/other-worldly variable. This then leads him to reprioritize inner-worldly mysticism as a "variation upon a more fundamental form of inner-worldly asceticism and other-worldly asceticism as a variation upon a more fundamental form of other-worldly mysticism" (1978: 128). The result, in the studied opinion of Robertson, is that mysticism and asceticism come to acquire a complement of the other in modern societies—an altogether healthy synthesis.

Speaking specifically of Western, inner-worldly contexts the development of a mystical complement to asceticism involves making good some of the deficiencies of asceticism. Mysticism counterbalances three particular characteristics of asceticism. First, it offsets the ascetic's tendency to execute in society something which he has no time to understand—that is, the ascetic does not from the point of view of the mystic really care about the nature of God. Second, mysticism counterbalances the ascetic tendency to manifest a 'happy stupidity' with respect to the meaning of the world; for the ascetic being a man of inner-worldly actions fails to cope, from the mystic's point of view, with the problem of ultimate reality. Third, the mystical orientation provides a counterpoint to the asceticist tendency in working for the glory of God to confuse this with self-glory—mysticism facilitating the differentiation of work-

ing for God from relating to God. The latter is a specialty of the mystic (1978: 131).⁶

From Robertson's point of view, then, twentieth century Western mysticism vitalizes the old ethos of inner-worldly asceticism through the role-motivational strategy of "ultimate completion." The emergence of various instrumentalities for the realization and enhancement of the "self" in the modern context —of which mysticism is but one option—coincide with asceticism, itself a condition necessary for the evolution of the social world. As Robertson so lucidly states, "society demands individual specialization, while individuals demand wholeness." Thus, the contemporary combination of mystic and ascetic orientations—ascetic mysticism—bridges "the hiatus between societal and self demands in conditions of extensive societalization and individuation" (1978: 139). Robertson also offers a brief but revealing perspective on mysticism in its collective forms. First he concurs with Joachim Wach's little-known contention that a protest nature is embedded in at least one aspect of modern mysticism (Wach: 1944: 164; Robertson, 1978: 125). He then goes on to spell out his own position:

Weber's discussions of mysticism, particularly when we consider them against the backdrop of early twentieth century German thought, point the way to our need to bring the sociology of religion more directly to bear on the discontents of modern societies. One would not realize from reading the growing number of studies of modern mysticism that the latter could have much bearing upon such matters as the nature of the modern state, the character of political authority in modern societies, and so on (1978: 125).

⁶ Robertson also makes some cogent observations with respect to other-worldly asceticism. It is clear from the body of his argument, however, that his main concern is with inner-worldly mysticism.

In this important statement Robertson strongly hints of a dynamic and viable interaction between the mystic and her/his environing society. Indeed, we fully concur with his observation that "there are, surely, significant echoes of the combination of rationalism and mysticism in some very recent protest movements" (1978: 130). Although Robertson offers little in the way of specific empirical evidence (the only stated example are the Free Spirits of the Reformation period, a rather curious selection given Robertson's focus on the twentieth century), the broad contours of his construct clearly point the way beyond the classics to what we perceive to be a more sociologically responsible and sympathetic approach to the phenomenon of mysticism in the modern world. We submit as a guide to our own work the following more straightforward variation on Robertson: *In situations of social unrest, mysticism may be a conduit for the articulation of dissatisfaction with extant social structures and for the introduction of innovations.* We shall now undertake to corroborative this thesis in the life work of the Black American mystic, Howard Thurman.

Howard Thurman: Mysticism in the Midst of the World

From the beginning of our presentation we have contended that the mystic can seriously and actively engage the world as part and parcel of her/his experience. The notion of interplay between religious experience and social change is certainly not a new one; but the mystic presents us with an unconventional and, as we have repeatedly noted, generally ignored type. For a combination of reasons, the mystic has with rare exception been excluded from conventional models and interpretations of religiously-promoted social change (cf. Pollard, 1987). If nothing else, this omission bespeaks our rather limited sociological interpretations of mysticism and the changes created by modernity. The contributions of Howard Thurman, a mystic of Black American

heritage, afford us an excellent opportunity to articulate some of the possible key factors relating mysticism to modern society.

Recently, historian Lerone Bennett made the following comments about Thurman's status as inner-worldly mystic:

He was uniquely qualified, first of all, because he was a social outsider. Thurman once said that it was no accident that Jesus was a Jew. Nor was it an accident that the historical Thurman was black. For he, like Jesus, had a special calling to truth and a special sensitivity born of a special place in a hierarchy of forces (Bennett, 1983).

Robert Young, Minister Emeritus at Duke University, more precisely describes the texture of experiences which impressed Thurman's life:

He was a man who grew up knowing first-hand the blatant racism of Jim Crow laws; who knew the painful ostracism of a class-ordered society in the Old South; who knew the factionalism of a Christian Church that was divided, not only into black and white, but into scores of splintered denominations and sects; who knew the elitism of the academic world as a student and as a faculty member; who came to know intimately the separatism and nationalism of various peoples and races of the world (Young, 1982: 55).

According to his autobiographical statement *With Head and Heart* (1979), Thurman (1900-1981) was born into the constricted environment of Daytona, Florida, and the old American South. He indicates that from a child he was acquainted with what he called a "sense of Presence," expansive and cohesive moments of transcendent participation. Initially, the setting for these mystic experiences was the

natural environment—the woods, the river, and the ocean's surf; the endless reaches of nightfall and the boundless energies of the storm. Over the years, however, he experienced mystical encounters in a variety of settings.

At the turn of the century Daytona did not offer a public school to Blacks beyond the seventh grade, so Thurman attended high school some 100 miles away in Jacksonville, Florida, graduating at the top of his class. From there he went on to Atlanta's Morehouse College and, later, to Rochester Theological Seminary in New York (now Colgate Rochester/Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary), where he was class valedictorian and one of only two Black students.

Professionally, Thurman pastored his first church in 1926, a small Black Baptist congregation in Oberlin, Ohio. During his brief tenure the church began to attract worshipers of widely diverging ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds. In 1929, he went to Haverford College for six months of independent study with the renowned Quaker mystic Rufus Jones. Three years later he was appointed the first Dean of Rankin Chapel and Professor of Theology at Howard University (1932-44). He also recounts from this period having a profound mystical experience while in India, shortly after a meeting with Mahatma Gandhi (1936). In 1953, Thurman was named Dean of Marsh Chapel and Professor of Spiritual Disciplines at Boston University, the first Black person ever to hold such a position at a White university; some twelve years later he formed the Howard Thurman Educational Trust (1965), a non-profit public foundation.

The most prominent of Thurman's many involvements, however, was the San Francisco-based church which he co-founded and co-pastored for nearly a decade (1944-53)—The Church for the Fellowship of all Peoples. Fellowship Church, generally acknowledged to be the first authentically inclusive model of religious fellowship in the United States—crossing lines of creed, race, sex, ethnicity, and cul-

ture—figures prominently in the remainder of our discussion (cf. Thurman, 1959, 1979).

Two concepts in particular will help us to clarify Thurman's mystic involvement in the social arena—"worship" and "social regeneration." Like mysticism itself, worship has been construed as basically removed from the more pressing concerns of our day. In Thurman's estimation, however, nothing was further from the truth. For him worship at its best was invariably heightening and liberating, a stimulus and guide to socially responsible involvement:

The center of our undertaking, the heart of our commitment, summarizes itself in terms of the worship of God. . . I mean [by] the worship of God, the immediate awareness of the pushing out of the barriers of self, the moment when we flow together into one, when I am not male or female, yellow or green or black or white or brown, educated or illiterate, rich or poor, sick or well, righteous or unrighteous—but a naked human spirit that spills over into other human spirits as they spill over into me. Together, we become one under the transcending glory and power of the spirit of the living God. . . And even for those who are not believers, something happens, a sense of being related to a power that is more than I am, that is not the generation of my mind, that is not the generation of my desires, that is not merely the ground of my wishful thinking, but a vitalizing, purifying, exciting moment of presence (Thurman, Fellowship Church, 1949).

We readily acknowledge that the relation of the mystic's experience to that of group worship is a most intricate one. There can be little question, for instance, that many of those who participated in Fellowship Church had no direct concerns about mysticism. Yet it is equally

clear that the bond of commonality between Thurman and the membership had much to do with Thurman's mysticism-oriented understanding of religious experience as a vehicle of quest or concern for the actualization of every person's latent potential. To give just one example, during Thurman's tenure the congregation indicated a strong desire to somehow give expression to their belief in every person's "equality of infinite worth" (Thurman, 1959: 61). In this connection, Thurman's mystic witness of self-affirmation (repressive racist society notwithstanding) and compelling and even interactions with "others" (condition and color notwithstanding) served as a much needed catalyst for social activism and community-building on the part of the church. At the same time, the objectification of Thurman's mystic-related utterances confirmed and even for some symbolized the seamless union of the human and the transcendent.

Thus we see that what Thurman really wanted was to perpetuate his experience of mysticism, particularly its disclosure of the essential relatedness and worth of all persons. Fellowship Church—the routinization of Thurman's mysticism—became a primary vehicle by which he was made accessible to other persons' conditions, and generally supportive of their particular movements toward authenticity and freedom. For those who gathered around him at the church, worship and its correlative symbols adumbrated, in the language of anthropologist Victor Turner, a state of "communitas," or community, in which all social contradictions to perfect human intercommunion were reversed (Turner, 1969: 96). In the communal worship event, the usual structures and distinctions of church and society paradoxically fell away, and ordinary barriers of creed, caste, sex and so forth—so focal and fontal in the larger society—were transvalued, becoming for the moment at least, of penultimate effect.⁷ Individual experiencers

⁷ This is not to deny Emile Durkheim's (1954) important focus on the socially reinforcing tendencies of worship. Rather it is to stress that worship also paradoxically affords a means of transcendence of normative social structures.

at the Fellowship Church have attested to this sense of being complete and "of one piece" within and with each other (Fellowship Church, 1949-1952; Thurman, 1959: 109-131). More and more, there occurred a felt necessity to replicate the sensation of community in extant social relations. Thurman writes:

Our worship became increasingly a celebration before God of life lived during the week; the daily life and the period of worship were one systolic and diastolic rhythm. Increasing numbers of people who were engaged in the common life of the city... found in the church restoration, inspiration, and courage for their work on behalf of social change in the community. The worship experience became a watering hole for this widely diverse and often disparate group of members and visitors from many walks of life (1979:144).

The ramifications of "systolic and diastolic rhythm" are clearly and plainly articulated in this statement. Those who participated in the worship experience at Fellowship Church made a vitally different assessment of both self and society. Elements of unity and inclusiveness re-integrated the worshiper into society as part of an organic whole. Let us stress that the focus of worship at Fellowship Church was never the polarity or inequality between the gathered community (relatively unstructured *communitas*) and society (excessive and repressive structure)—a common ploy of social change strategizers—but rather the elevating and revitalizing elements of community. The renewed individual was given the impetus to better the world rather than ignore it. He or she was empowered for consistent and continuous participation in issues. One member of the church stated it in this way:

When I, as an individual make possible the privilege of abundant life for all people, whether on Monday at noon, or

Tuesday at twilight, I become myself a revelation of the hidden meaning of the corporate worship hour of Sunday morning, a part of the true genius of The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples (Fellowship Church, 1949).

To reiterate, it is the sacramental quality—the unremitting consciousness of divine presence in one’s life—that was part and parcel of the Thurman-inspired Fellowship witness. There was an apparent need among the membership to demonstrate the truth of the religious experience in meaningful ways; to act as a contagion spreading beyond the perimeters of the local church. Thurman attests that

even the most radical of our congregation were eager to safeguard the centrality of the religious commitment that held the concerns of the spirit and the worship of God at center. However, radiating from this center were our deepest personal and corporate concerns for the total community; and we worked faithfully to implement this imperative of our commitment. We were citizens in the classical Greek sense, concerned with all aspects of the welfare of the state, responsible but penetrating critics aiding in every effort to make the good life possible for all people (1979: 145).

We have formally defined Thurman’s mystic style of social activism as “social regeneration,” in that it strives to replicate each individual’s experience of infinite and qualitative worth in the social milieu. Though Thurman himself does not make explicit reference to social regeneration as such, there are some key factors to commend its usage. “Social regeneration” is, of course, closely related to other phrases indicative of causality—“social action,” “social transformation,” and the like. However, as we understand it regeneration suggests a more

holistic consideration of purposes that are internal *and* external and, too, performances and processes which promote innovation *and* restoration. Taken together, then, the words "social regeneration" strongly hint of a type of leavening activism informed by the actor's religious experience, a vital response to outward situations as a result (in part) of an inward movement. In the case of Thurman and Fellowship Church, our concept lends clarity to what they considered the real point of their activism: It was not merely to improve society, relieve suffering, or end racism and sexism, as important as these are, but rather to remove anything "that prevents God from coming to [God's] self in the life of the individual. Whatever there is that blocks this, calls for action" (Thurman, 1978:21). A deep and abiding reverence for the essential integrity of every person *qua* person—and never as a means to an end—is what largely distinguishes the social activism of Thurman and the Fellowship community.

The social conscience of the church was expressed in myriad acts, both individual and corporate in nature, and informed by the common experience of spiritual discovery. Since space permits for only one illustration, we relate the following incident as told by Thurman:

One evening I walked past one of the most elegant department stores in the city. There was a window display of a black woman and several children, the stereotypical "Black Mammy and Pickanninies." I was shocked and angered. The following Sunday morning, I invited the entire congregation to go by this store to see the "interesting" window display and react to it in their own way. I was careful not to say what it was, nor why I wanted them to see it. By noon on Monday, the whole display had been removed (1979: 160-161).

To be sure, it should not be inferred from our discussion that the activism of Thurman and the Fellowship community took on the

implications of a major social movement. In conventional terms, it was and continues at best to be a small scale, microcosmic effort. What we are saying—and this idea must be stressed—is that the Thurman-led Fellowship community offers convincing evidence of a discreet mode of activism intimately tied to mysticism, a leavening activism which defines its own sociological import and defies those analyses and perspectives alien to it (to wit, Troeltsch and Weber). To repeat, for us this mode or process of mystic-oriented activism is best described as “social regeneration,” for it operates out of a principle of relatedness between persons that can (and does) bear manifold consequences and is part of the infinite network of interactions that comprise society.

Our discussion has attempted to lay the foundations for a more accurate appraisal of the mystic’s role in modernity. If, as Robertson indicates, the real impact of religious commitment “resides in its synergic characteristics—that is, in erecting a model that facilitates individuals conceiving of their making a simultaneous, positive contribution to the self *and* society” (Robertson, 1978: 158), then the social dimension of Thurman’s mysticism cannot be denied. Nor, we must add, is Thurman unusual in this respect.⁸ We conclude our essay with this statement from our mystic exemplar:

From what has been said, I do not mean to suggest that there has been any great social shift in the city because of Fellowship Church. These specific illustrations [of social regeneration] simply point out some of the ways by which the people of our land can at last find freedom in democracy. The existence of the church has become a beacon of truth in the

⁸ Examples of mystic-activism can readily be found among the Quakers, Black American slaves, women, and Native Americans (to say nothing of current developments in Latin America, Africa, and elsewhere). Unfortunately, the continued emphasis among sociologists on purely institutional studies, coupled with the prominent neglect of paradigms from the “under-side” of the world (in America and elsewhere) does not augur well for the future study of mysticism.

minds of many, many people who in their entire lives will never enter its doors nor be involved in its active program, but who, nevertheless, came to know from our experience that the unity of fellowship is more compelling than the superstitions and credos that separate (1959: 125).

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