The Web of Religion and Science

Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas

Hanan Reiner

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In memory of my mother

Sylvia Reiner

and

In honor of my father

Moses Reiner

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION

> It is therefore easier to understand the meaning and the sce-
> nario of that formidable hammer blow which rang throughout
> the West when its catastrophe had reached its peak, and which
> is called the death of God. It was first of all, we must say, like a
> new annunciation. We seem to see, two millennia later, the
> same crowds of heretics brandishing the same torch of a soul
> restored to itself. We seem to be dreaming when we hear the
> joyful songs and explosion of jubilation that appear to have
> arisen from the beginning of the world. Since Christianity,
> there has never been such wild enthusiasm, blowing like a wind
> overheads that rose again. (Henry-Levy 1980: 89)

The death of God and the torch of a soul restored to itself are
meaningful expressions symbolizing two ideas whose motion was
expected to occur in parallel dimensions. However, in my opinion,
a different motion can be identified.

This book deals with this different motion and its implications
for sociological theory and manner as presented in the ideas of
Robert Bellah, Anthony Giddens, and Jurgen Habermas.

It is obvious to me that we are dealing with a "meeting" be-
tween the past and the present, between the "traditional" and the
"modern," and most of all between science and religion, at a time
when it is accepted that an absolute separation between epochs and
ideas is impossible (Sambursky 1987; Wisdom 1987).

Several scholars have discussed diverse aspects of the relation
between religion and science. Merton (1973b: 228–53) claims that
religion, and specifically the Protestant stream, played an important
role in the development of science, because it encouraged a ra-
tional, systematic search for order in nature, resulting from the
consolidation of less dogmatic ideas in the Puritan stream. This
process opened the way to critical ideas about religion, while its by-
product created the foundation for the emergence of science
(Douglas 1973). Society thus became heterogeneous—religion and
science were an integral part of human life (a heterogeneity that
implies continuity and change of cultural patterns) (Giddens 1972).

From that point on, relations between religion and science became an important subject in various academic disciplines, including the social sciences.

Bellah (1970: 237–57), who is one of the leading scholars of the sociology of religion, claimed that the social sciences influence religion, while religious aspects can simultaneously be found in the social sciences. This expresses Bellah's idea of complex relations between science and religion which are, to some extent, an organic unit. Since the mid nineteenth century it has become more and more accepted that religion played a role in the development of human awareness. This idea is opposed to the supposition of a reverse connection between science and religion. According to Bellah, differentiation without integration is not possible. He concludes that science did not and cannot become the only factor explaining the world, and that we need open relationships between science and religion which will be based on the mutual exchange of ideas due to the complexity of social reality (ibid.). This is an elaboration of Schutz's idea that life is composed of numerous realities in which human development can occur, but only if there are "open borders" between them—synergy without the self-elevation of either side (Anthony and Robbins 1975). Together, science and religion comprise social reality, and attention must be paid to both in order to reach a better understanding of the social reality of which we are part (Lemert 1979; Bellah 1985).

These ideas can be summarized as follows:

A.   Ideas from previous epochs can create and/or encourage current changes, yet they can also be a cause of vagueness.
B.   Transitions between epochs simultaneously express continuity and change.
C.   Religion plays an important role in the development of science.
D.   There is no room for scientists' self-elevation when analyzing religious activity.
E.   Religion and science are located in different dimensions. However, understanding both thought patterns leads to a better understanding of man and society.

The last idea clarifies the foci of discussion of this book: an examination of two thought patterns, a search for ideas that construct a common denominator between them, and a primary explanation for the meaning of that common denominator.

1. RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND SOCIOLOGY

1. GENERAL TRENDS IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE

The transition from mythological thought to logical thinking, which took place in the mid sixth century BCE, announced the birth of science as we know it today (Sambursky 1987: 20–21). At that point, the discovery of the scientific framework occurred concomitantly with achievements in the arts, literature, and philosophy, while people discussed scientific problems only if they helped enlighten religious subjects (ibid.). As a result, there exists a factor common to the questions dealt with by science, philosophy, and theology (Koyre 1957). These three fields deal with the nature, structure, and value of human thought. Thus, analyzing issues solely from the point of view of one field will yield only a partial understanding of social reality (ibid.). Nonetheless, philosophical research was directed by religion, while philosophy led men toward salvation (Ben-David 1971). Ben-David's claims that the scientist is derived from the philosopher and that we must examine how the two interact, and his previous remark about religion's influence on philosophy, lead these three fields into a common framework of thinking. Still, these fields took on a different shape as time went by (ibid.).

In the past, philosophers were usually holy people who helped the masses find their way to the good life. During the Macedonian empire a change occurred, which led to the construction of a more complex social structure and which resulted in different problems that previous concepts could not deal with properly. Two main groups emerged, moral-religious people in the first, and administrators and politicians in the second. The main philosophical challenge is found in the achievements of natural philosophy. However, these achievements could not help in finding solutions to religious, moral, and political issues, because at this stage the main problem was how to enable a proper social order in society while previous guiding codes lost their position as the leading force of social order.

In the Hellenistic period, philosophy and science were first regarded as two separate systems. The metaphysical purpose, in the Aristotelian concept of proving the existence of supernatural reality, did not agree with scientists' need to be able to question without imposed limits. Concern for scientific progress thus became a minor issue in philosophical schools, and what could be accepted for the first time as meaningful scientific progress at the end symbolized a decline in the scientist's status. If that is the case, the claim that pure theory is not a relevant guiding force to practical ethical life comes as no surprise. Even when it was said that theoretical life is the only way to supreme good, it was said in the context of religious thought and metaphysics and not of science. During the fourth century, scientists, who were considered a minor group, had moved to the cultural and political center of society as part of a philosophical program based on moral and religious ambitions. This transformation afforded science a moral supplement that was previously absent. Despite science's differentiation, an effort to create a concept independent of philosophy, which would emphasize the superiority of the scientific method compared to the philosophical method, could not be discerned. Two causes for this situation can be proposed: lack of social recognition of the scientist's role, and absence of a scientific community that could set its goals independently of nonscientific events (Ben-David 1971).

Consolidation of the scientist's status is an outcome of several events that occurred independently. Despite the fact that a separate academic community can be identified, theology, to which philosophy is still connected, is located in the highest stage compared to other subjects studied. Philosophy, on the other hand, was regarded as a separate field that did not attain meaningful scientific achievements. This fact prevented confrontation between these two thought patterns and prepared the ground for separating the intellectual from the religious-political revolution, which was a necessary condition for science's consolidation as an independent intellectual field. The process I have just mentioned continued also in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although two more points should be mentioned. (1) Recognition of scientific ability could occur only if a person also had a degree in medicine, law, or theology in addition to his field of interest. (2) Excluding medicine, knowledge that contributed to scientific progress came from nonacademic sources. At this stage, empirical methods took the lead

and led to a comparison and confrontation between God's power and man's intellectual ability. Catholic and Protestant Christianity, as well as Judaism, adopted an attitude that ranged between hostility toward and cautious acceptance of empirical science. It should also be mentioned that at this stage only part of the Protestant segment could attain scientific knowledge that was compatible with its religious beliefs, mainly those interested in a more secular education and who also strived to disconnect themselves from traditional components of accepted scientific activity. Science was gladly accepted, since it was less involved in philosophical and theological disputes, although the scientific explanation of natural events was not accepted.

Dominant social groups from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century included people with ambitions for social and economic mobility who searched for an epistemological structure that would be compatible with their personal motives and with the idea of society as a pluralistic, future-oriented environment. Natural sciences fulfilled that need and supplied a reason for believing that, with science's help, it would be possible, at a certain stage, to reach a full understanding of man and society. The positivistic methodology was therefore largely accepted.

Since the seventeenth century, continued epistemological change, which was one of science's by-products, had an effect on social and moral philosophy that was expressed in a continued process of the scientization of philosophical and moral thinking. At this stage, a complete split occurred between science and religion. The fact that religion had false ideas about nature not only established the above division, but also hostility between the scientific and the religious. However, as time went by it was recognized that science alone could not afford an absolute answer, and scholars were willing to accept the importance of tradition, including the religious tradition, as a factor helping to create and control social and moral order. This idea expresses a recognition that science did not succeed in creating a satisfactory social and moral order and also led to many philosophical interpretations. The fact that consolidation of less dogmatic ideas in the Puritan stream led to an atmosphere critical of religion which, as a result, created the foundations for the flourishing of the scientific wind of change cannot be ignored (Douglas 1973). By the nineteenth century, the common understanding was that religion played an important role in the de-

velopment of human thought, that religion also had certain truths, and that scientists had to find the truth inherent in religious ceremonies and myths (Bellah 1970: 237–57).

2.   RESEARCH IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

A.   General Background

In addition to finding the truth in religious ceremonies and myths, other research trends can be identified. A review of several trends will be presented not only to familiarize readers with this field of study, but also to enable them to understand the unique contribution of this book.

As a preliminary step it is necessary to present Karl Marx's, Max Weber's, and Émile Durkheim's positions, which were, and still are, expressed in sociological approaches to religion (Giddens 1990b).

Several scholars, including Ludwig Feuerbach, influenced Marx. According to Feuerbach, religion consists of ideas and values created by human beings during their cultural development. Since they could not propose rational explanations for events, they attributed mundane affairs to divine activity. When it was understood that what had been attributed to religion was actually a human product, things were no longer related to the other world but to earthly life.

God is perceived as the perfect "thing." However, Feuerbach also insists on a dynamic component that can be found in human beings when they reach the proper consciousness. In that context we must mention religion's position within the superstructure. However, it would not be correct to say that Marx had no religious influence; consider his opinion that religion is the heart in a heartless world and is therefore a place of escape (Giddens 1990b).

Durkheim, who unlike Marx devoted much time to researching religion, does not primarily make the connection between religion and inequality or power. Durkheim claims that the source of religion is society itself, that society's control over Subjects has a religious context, and that a connection exists between religion and the general character of social institutions. He distinguishes between sacred and profane. He claims that the sacred can be observed in general social ceremonies, thus creating a platform for new ideas to emerge and for previous ideas to be reinforced. Dur-

ing these processes, social cohesiveness is reinforced, while individuals feel that they are "above" earthly life. All in all, cultural patterns are established during the ceremony. The Subject discovers these patterns and becomes aware of them. This process enables the Subject to save himself.

Durkheim thought that the influence of religion would decrease, while that of science would increase, as a result of various changes that give birth to modern society. He assumed that religion would not disappear completely but would take a different form, such as personal religious obligation, which, according to Durkheim, would not weaken commitment to society (Robertson 1977).

Weber's idea of religion is different from Durkheim's. He points mainly to the connection between religion and social change and, unlike Marx, claims that religion does not necessarily play a conservative role. Examination of the influence of the Protestant stream on Western development is part of an effort to understand the influence of religion on economic and social life in various cultures (Giddens 1990b). Weber linked religion to theodicy, indicating that Weber regards religion as part of the relationship between the Subject and the world. From this perspective, Weber's position is different from Durkheim's, who regards religion and the world as two sides of the same coin. Furthermore, while according to Durkheim (who turns religion into a social thing and society into a religious thing), legitimation is not a problematic issue; according to Weber, relationships between the individual and society are always problematic. Another difference between Weber and Durkheim is that Weber does not make a package deal, which includes ceremony and morality as a central component of religion, but focuses on concepts of ethical and personal beliefs. For example, salvation is connected to autonomic activity, through which a person connects himself to common values.

During the disenchantment period, personal ideas became the normative yardstick, and Weber and Durkheim claimed that expansion of individualism in society would lead to an increase in rationality. At this point, Durkheim and Weber went in different directions. Durkheim thought that the rationalization process would make society more understandable, while Weber believed the opposite.

B.   Some Research Trends in the Sociology of Religion

Toolin (1983), Jones (1986), and Neitz and Spickard (1990) proposed three research trends. Toolin assumes the existence of a connection between religion and politics and tries to expose that connection by reviewing the use of religious terms in political ceremonies. According to Toolin, relationships between president and civilians are reminiscent of the relationships between priest and believers. In this context she uses the term "civil religion" and claims that civil religion in American society has three main functions that show up in political ceremonies: cultural construction, cultural confirmation, and legitimation. These findings bring Toolin to the following conclusions:

1.   Modernity does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of religion.
2.   Religious terms also have an integrative power in modern society.

Jones (1986) claims that Durkheim considers religion as a true action source and that the objective of social scientists is to explain the nature of the power on which religious actions are based.

Neitz and Spickard (1990) believe that scholars in the social sciences should also examine religious experience. This claim is a continuation of a research trend proposed by Clifford Geertz, who claims that anthropological research into religion is composed of two parts: an analysis of systems of meaning based on symbols, and an analysis of the connections between these systems and the social-structural and psychological processes. However, in the above situation the experience dimension is neglected and, according to Neitz and Spickard, the sociology of religion needs a methodology that will enable scientists to understand people's experience and how they understand their experience. That is the only way to bring the consequences of religion to light.

The experiences that scholars would like to deal with are transcendental experiences of day-to-day personal limits. Neitz and Spickard claim that they are aware of the complexity of their suggestion—common opinion being that such data, though it can be gathered, cannot lead to a comprehensive understanding through observation. Neitz and Spickard believe that the theories of "flow experience" (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi) and of "tuning in relationship" (Alfred Schutz) afford the tools that enable them, as well as others, to understand the religious experience. These theories can

help us understand how individuals and groups relate to what they experience, how they relate to each other, and how they interpret and reinvent experiences in terms of accepted social ideas.

Lemert (1975a) tries to deal with a different problem: the proper way to define the concept "unchurch religion," which is similar to Bellah's concept of "civil religion." The need to distinguish between what can and cannot be understood as a religious activity is a basic condition for scientific analysis. According to Lemert, attention must be paid to the following subjects when dealing with definitions: the definition's location in research, its type (its clarity, form, and components), and the presentation of basic religious components included in it. Lemert introduces a possible definition and deals separately with each component. His definition is: "We will find religion where people take as obvious that their ethos corresponds to the cosmic meaning." Lemert thinks that this is a better definition than others because it points the way to applied research into "unchurch religion" while relating to three terms—"ethos," "reification," and "cosmization"—that set the foundations for this research.

With "ethos" he refers to all cultural products through which a social group defines its connections with reality, such as common history, social institutions, and interaction patterns. These are empirical social-general foundations and also empirical foundations of religion in society, which must be examined when trying to understand "unchurch religion." It is a process in which a linkage is discovered between the empirical elements mentioned above and various religious components. According to Lemert, it is a necessary research condition and this examination should not take place solely in religious "areas."

The term "reification" refers to a social process through which cosmic meaning is given to various components of "ethos." It is a dynamic objectivization process of several "ethos" components that, as a result of the process, are conceived as components located outside the "ethos" in which they were created. Reification can occur in the context of various cultural products that exist alongside religion, including ideology, national symbols, and so on. In the end this can be regarded as a construction and preservation of the cosmic-conceptual dimension in relation to the dimension of day-to-day life—the "ethos"—and research into religious reifica-

tion therefore means examining the "distance" between "ethos" and "cosmos."

The term "cosmization" means a frame of reference from which a given "ethos" transfers itself, and that some "ethos" components are styled in terms of general existence patterns. A certain similarity can be observed between this term and the term "transcendental." Lemert preferred not to use the term "transcendental," since this may conjure contexts of former religion and supernatural powers. The term "cosmization" does not include a supernatural dimension, since Lemert emphasizes reality construction from "below" while turning some of its components into independent ones.

The researchers presented above express a positive attitude toward religion. The fact that leaders today use religious terminology, either consciously or unconsciously, indicates that religion can have an integrative power (Toolin 1983). Scholars are therefore asked to deal with aspects that have religious roots. Other scholars mentioned in this section follow that line, each aiming at a specific subject. Some scholars pointed to the importance of understanding the Subject, whereas Lemert showed a wider perspective when dealing with general theoretical aspects. It is a macro-aspect from which a more general and comprehensive understanding of the status of religion today can be obtained, which will be required in the pages to come because of the focal point of this book. It is therefore necessary to deal with this understanding at greater length.

C.   A Theoretical Framework for Research of Religion

Several scholars have presented new concepts for researching religion. Lemert claims that, despite criticism of a lack of new theoretical achievements in the sociology of religion, no changes have taken place. This is due to a previous lack of attention to metatheoretical components, since every change in the scientific tradition first necessitates an examination and change in these components (metatheory indicates theoretical assumptions that are "above," "behind," or "below" obvious scientific theories) (Lemert 1975b).

Metatheories are used in epochs of transition as rules and clear ideas, which enable the examination of social borders, social processes, and theories on the way to a new construction of these three dimensions. Lemert's starting point is that every attempt to

present a new theory necessitates a new formulation of one or more metatheoretical components. According to existing working assumptions in sociology, there are two metatheoretical anchors that determine research trends:

1. Examination of connections between man and social structure.
2. Examination of the nature and place of meaning in social connections.

With reference to section 2 above, the man–social structure problem was solved by locating meaning on the side of man in Weber's and Mead's ideas, on the side of social structure in Durkheim's and Marx's ideas, or between man and social structure in Parsons' idea.

Lemert's criticism indicates that no change has occurred in the above-mentioned points. At the same time, other scholars claim to have "A NEW SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION"—a claim that is not necessarily accurate. Lemert presents scholars who view social structure as a problematic factor because it is not a source of meaning supposed to result from religion. Therefore, the man–social structure dichotomy is still used, and the accepted idea is that meaning is a central component for understanding the role of religion in action, construction, or social change.

Changing that idea, we must introduce a new theoretical framework that will be able to explain as many components of modernity as possible. Linking this idea to the sociology of religion will have to include the following: a positive attitude toward social structure, and the understanding that meaning is an unnecessary category in scientific discourse. In order to work in accordance with these two assumptions, Lemert uses French Structuralism, whose roots can be found in the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Edmund Leach, and Roland Barthes. Their ideas can explain social order without a tendency to claim that meaning is a central factor in social activity. The following two assumptions present the methodological tools for the new approach: social structure can be viewed as a semiotic system, and since a semiotic system is a system of differences, social phenomena cannot be used for discovering a meaningful center. Such an attitude necessitates viewing social systems as sign systems related to communication and meaning. Systems have meaning since they include codes by which a social order is constructed. If society is

viewed as a system of differences located next to each other, then religious, economic, or rule systems cannot be regarded as systems that create social integration. On the other hand, each factor can be regarded as carrying a social code within an understandable code system. It can be said that our goal is to see which meaning is significant and not to make *a priori* demands that religious or any other symbols be significant. We must explain how these symbols, if noticed, connect between social behaviors in general from a point of view that states that religious symbols do not necessarily have to be found in the center of human discourse.

Anthony and Robbins (1975) also deal with theoretical issues. However, they focus on the conceptual dimension and present the problematic of reductionistic approaches attempting to explain religious symbols. These approaches derive from "higher" realities, while considering symbols to be nonreductionistic. According to Anthony and Robbins, the principles of the social sciences are not more objective or more universal than those of religion.

The two scholars present several additional shortcomings in the structural concepts of religion research. These concepts do not show how universals of religion meet with other subjects in the social sciences on the way to constructing cultural and religious divergence. Therefore, the permanent and the changeable in religious systems cannot be distinguished, leading to a decrease in the influence of structural approaches in the sociology of religion. Anthony and Robbins think that as part of dealing with the structural issue it is necessary to uncover universal religious components—to demonstrate the dimension in which all religions are similar. This point of view offers a glimpse of Lévi-Strauss's and Noam Chomsky's thoughts. When Chomsky introduced his structural theory of language, he claimed that there are grammatical structures of language in human beings that cannot be influenced by nongrammatical components—they do not evolve from and cannot be transferred to other dimensions (Anthony and Robbins 1975). From this perspective we can think about internal-universal-structural principles in religions that do not result in anything but religion. On the other hand, these principles "meet" with nonreligious components—Sociology, Economics, Psychology, and so on, in order to construct local-unique religious patterns.

From this perspective, it is necessary to expose the universal religious components and to find the way by which unique religious

components "meet" with nonreligious factors, in order to construct local-unique religious patterns. A distinction must thus be made between natural language and what is defined as pseudo-language (Anthony and Robbins 1975). Natural language can express the entire range of cultural meaning, whereas pseudo-language cannot. This conceptual framework leads to another idea—that the structural theory of religion should define religions as symbolic systems that can clearly and fully express the value orientation of each culture. The above distinction is between religion and religion-like, where the former is linked to the above-mentioned value orientation.

This section deals with two main topics: first, the need for a meta-theory as a condition for constructing a new conceptual framework; second, that there is no room for reductionist attitudes toward religion. The common factor between the two topics is a positive attitude toward religion. In the first topic, religion is presented as one of several dimensions existing in human society, while the second topic clarifies that there is no justification for science to view itself as a superior framework to religion. I would like to discuss this topic in greater detail.

D.   Attitudes toward Religion

The question concerning the existential justification of postmodern postindustrial society arises when the difference between traditional and present society is recognized (Robertson 1977). Some scholars also claim that the new society lacks authority and legitimation. Expressions such as "preservation of meaningful cultural-traditional aspects of religion" and "need for guiding patterns" indicate that there is no complete epistemological severance with the past in general and with religion in particular. This tendency can be observed with sociologists who take exception to religion and with those who do not. This is because those who try to understand the enormous change undergone by human society should at least take a look at the past so as not to be left without guidelines. Knowing the past is apparently a necessary stage when trying to understand the present—thought patterns that were part of religion in the past are also part of our present epistemological tools (ibid.). The question emerging at this stage is whether religion restricts human beings or whether it creates the foundations for their freedom.

Research on religion and society deals mainly with the relationships between Subjects and society. These relations are always complicated (Weber 1965). However, in trying to understand the place of religion in society, we begin from an assumption that religion is something transcendental that controls society. This assumption brings to mind the ideas of Saint-Simon and Comte, who claim that society cannot produce self-legitimation (Nederman and Goulding 1981).

Still, many years have elapsed since Saint-Simon and Comte, and we must reexamine how religion is perceived by society. One option is to analyze different concepts of the term "secularization" (Dobbelaere 1984). This analysis necessitates examination of processes that led to a new social order in which religion became one of several components. The ideas of Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Niklas Lumann, and Bryan Wilson are examined in the following section (ibid.).

According to Berger, religion is both a dependent and an independent component. He claims that the religious tradition in Western societies is a historical force that stands at the foundation of modern-secular world construction. However, once a secular world was constructed, it began restraining the influence of religion on society. One possible conclusion is that the roots of social change are anchored in religious ideas that are, as mentioned above, one of the components of present-day society. Luckmann continues this line by claiming that the secularization process was a result of "breaking" the clear tradition of the holy cosmos. Luckmann also claims that secularization is a result of the differentiation of social structure, which can also be observed in the simultaneous existence of political, economic, and religious institutions. The influence of the latter is less than in previous epochs, but their existence alongside other institutions symbolizes a social need that remains part of the modern world.

A causal combination of functional differentiation and secularization can be found in Lumann's writings. According to him, religion used to be the source that could give answers to infinite questions. Today several other sources can be identified, and religion has become one of several points of view. These sources can be regarded as an undermining of religion's status in society. However, this can also be viewed as evidence of a social need for religion in today's society.

Wilson has a different point of view. According to him, secularization means that the community is no longer a source of social organization, and a change toward a private foundation for legitimation can be identified. Nonetheless, evidence for the idea that religion did not die but still has a place in society, albeit a smaller one, can be seen in Wilson's writings.

What we have seen so far indicates that scientists, who are aware of religion's role in present society, do not ignore religion. What should be discussed now is the legitimation process in present-day society, or how a constructed social universe attains legitimation (Berger and Luckmann 1969).

There are apparently sources of legitimation inside and outside of religion (ibid.); religion has lost its exclusive integrative status, and today's integration is based more on epistemological dimensions and less on normative mechanisms. Nonetheless, Wilson's remark that even today there is no complete alternative to the "traditional way" should be remembered. We must therefore still use some aspects of the "traditional way" (Dobbelaere 1984). It can thus be concluded that modernity and completeness are not congruent expressions (Putnam 1977; Berger 1974).

We can also learn about attitudes toward religion from analyzing definitions of religion.

Reductionist definitions were accepted as the scientific concept became more established. Religion was perceived as a "disease of the language" (Max Müller), as "partial philosophy" (E. B. Tylor), and as "false consciousness" (Marx and his followers). Later scholars defined religion in terms connected to the meaning of the phenomenon. The "Religionswissenschaft" phenomenological school made another change in the definition, and the Functional perspective became part of the social sciences with the help of Durkheim, Bronisław Malinowski, and Freud. In the 1960s and 70s, the functional definition became the predominant perspective in the United States. For example, Bellah viewed religion as a system of symbolic forms and actions connecting human beings to the fundamental conditions of their existence. Geertz had a different definition: a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive, long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence, and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

Berger had reservations concerning the functional definitions of religion. According to Berger, the need to examine things from within is more important. In order to do so he returned to phenomenology and to Schutz's term, "multi-reality." Berger also claims that science should not create senseless definitions that will prevent scientists from understanding processes that occur in society.

To summarize what has been said so far, the transition from reductionist to nonreductionist definitions expresses a change in the perception of religion, and it can therefore be concluded that there is no room for an attitude of superiority on the part of scientists toward religion. Religion is one of the components of human society, and not necessarily a marginal one.

The issue of religion and social marginality can also be examined without dealing with religious definitions (Johnson 1977). During the process of secularization, it was accepted that religion would disappear from society. This process was not only expected, but also viewed as positive. The common attitude was that science would take over the role of the creator of social order, which used to be the role of religion. Only later did people begin to question whether science could really replace religion. One of the reasons for this might be that empirical science can say nothing about the truth or falsity of religious beliefs and about religion in general. Another outcome of this idea is a positive attitude toward religion (ibid.). Modern theories of religion therefore also used expressions such as "religion gives meaningful answers to the disappointments each man faces in one stage or another of his life," "religion creates a foundation that enables social groups to function," and "religion helps construct the path of social change and of personal development." It is also recognized that religious ideas deal with nonempirical reality. Therefore, some issues in human society are not part of the scientific discourse. Still, despite sociologists' official avoidance of theological subjects, they have made statements relating to these subjects.

Based on the above, we can say that there is a willingness to bring social scientists and theologians into a dialogue with one another that will broaden human freedom, will not bind it, and will continue without self-elevation from either side. It was apparently an illusion to think that the deterministic-mechanistic scientific model is better than religious activity (Martin 1978).

A change toward religion can also be found with neo-Marxists, who claim that religion is a factor that influences and is also influenced. First, religion is not just a passive influence of manufactured social relations (Maduro 1977). It is an active component of social dynamics that is a condition for and is conditioned by social processes. Second, religion is not something that is just produced through social processes. It can also take an active role in constructing social structure. Finally, religion is not necessarily a conservative functional factor in society: it sometimes creates the path to social revolution.

Scientific research on religion is undoubtedly not an easy task. It must occur by using a multidimensional approach whose results cannot be predicted *a priori* by theoretical assumptions. We must therefore accept the Neo-Marxist approach concerning the fundamental influence on superstructure as one of several attitudes (Bruce 1985).

Turner (1983), on the other hand, still thinks that a materialistic approach to religion is more accurate, since religion is located at the "meeting point" between nature and culture and can only be understood through materialistic manufactured patterns of individuals and societies. Turner also claims that Hermeneutic and Phenomenological approaches to religion cannot understand that social structure constructs or limits activities.

Even though Turner has a different point of view, it can still be said that the conservative Marxist approach is less accepted, and that Neo-Marxists view religion as both a dependent and an independent factor.

In an attempt to understand attitudes toward religion in sociology, I turned to various scholars whose topics were not necessarily "attitudes toward religion." Subjects that were examined include:

- the need for epistemological tools that can be found in traditional society,
- examination of the term "secularization,"
- religion as one of several sources of legitimation for social order,
- examination of definitions of religion, attitudes toward religion in sociological theories, and attitudes of Neo-Marxists toward religion.

From all we have seen in this chapter, we can present a clear path: its beginning is identified by scientists' reservations toward religion

and its "end" by scientists' attitude without reservations toward religion. Ending the circuit begun by Henri-Levy necessitates a more direct examination of the relationship between religion and science.

E.   Religion and Science

According to Lemert (1979), when dealing with science and religion we necessarily deal with questions related to modern society. The scholar claims that until he conducted his research, "regular" questions characterized the examination of the relations between science and religion. It is about time, Lemert says, to raise new questions.

We usually deal with questions concerning the definition of religion, its place in modern society, and its role in the social psychology of modern man. However, we must analyze the relationship between science and scientism as an accepted belief in science, and how it can act in a value-functional way similarly to religion. We must also examine the sense in which the modern scientist can be a prototype for what is known as modern consciousness, and how scientific values can explain continued devotion to religious beliefs. The interlacing of religion and science can be observed in the ideology that stands at the foundation of the technological-scientific interlacing. The accessibility of science to society through technology results in the glorification of science as technology (Lemert 1979; Merton 1973b: 254–66). It has also been said that science can and should take the metaphysical and theoretical role that used to be part of religion.

Despite the glorification of science, religion did not disappear as expected, and science did not necessarily secularize scientists. Dichotomous distinctions between sacred and profane are less accepted today, and religion will still be a part of our life but in a different way (Lemert 1979). Religion brings together traditional and modern components. It is a search for freedom in a technocratic culture. Another role of religion is a strengthening of feelings of collectivity (Hadden 1975; Larrain 1980). We can also regard it as a need to combine ideas of change with ideas of identity (Bellah 1970: 64–75). This thought pattern considers faith something steady and knowledge something changeable (Chadwick 1975: 161–88).

At this point it should be clear that there is no full rejection of religion in modern society. We must accept these two dimensions as part of the social whole, and science should recognize that we cannot look solely at the physical world (Temple 1884). Hostility between religion and science has also diminished. Secularization does not mean fewer religious needs, and religion can also afford answers to the mental needs of modern intellectuals (Shepherd 1972). It can be viewed as a source of meaning in the life and actions of human beings (Bellah 1970: 196–209). Some might claim that it strengthens human consciousness and enables integration and compatibility with present society (Temple 1884; Schofthaler 1984). A possible conclusion may be that science cannot be the foundation for values connected to the meaning of reality, whereas religion can (Turner 1983; Stauffer 1975). Society apparently cannot rely solely on technical rationalism (Martin 1978), and utilitarian individualism cannot be the sole source of meaningful life (Robbins, Anthony, and Richardson 1978).

The main question that arises is whether a completely new ethical social foundation can be constructed (Antonio 1986; Gross 1986). Skeptics may claim that the technocratic substitute lacks a normative foundation. However, a new foundation of moral integration might emerge from social movements that oppose the technocratic society and point to subjectivity as a meaningful factor (Antonio 1986). An accepted idea is that science did not produce new patterns of meaning, while it tended to put aside religious patterns (Westley 1978). The process of deleting the moral aspect of religion apparently caused unexpected problems when people tried to expand the influence of the new moral system (Chadwick 1975: 229–49). Thus the theoretical system, the university and the sociologist that replaced God, the church, and the priest (Young 1986), succeeded in placing religion on the irrational side, giving science an advantage (Treiber 1985; Merton 1973a). However, at the end of that process it was recognized that there is no reason for scientists to feel above religion and that the time has come for a dialogue between these two dimensions (Kelly 1978). This dialogue is based on the thought that we are not dealing with a science that searches for explanations based on universal rules, but rather an interpretational science whose focal point is a search for meaning. This attitude is not completely new in sociological discourse (Mayrl 1976, 1978).

Today the starting point is that questions that used to come up between theologians and philosophers have become part of the world of social scientists (Shepherd 1975). We can apparently accept the claim that there is a certain similarity between science and religion, since both express reality, connect between various factors, classify them, and place them within a systematic framework (Larrain 1980). This similarity expresses a basic human need to understand the world in which we live (Bellah 1970: 193–95). However, even if we accept the claim that religion is the source of scientific logic, we must add that science afforded religion/religious ideas a new direction—took out the random components and added a critical dimension in order to minimize systematic decline (Durkheim 1915).

3.   PRELIMINARY SUMMARY AND METHODOLOGICAL CLARIFICATIONS

It seems to me that after reading the above-mentioned ideas, the reader has a general idea of the different stages that characterize religion–science relations. Starting with a review of several trends of human history in order to bear in mind the arena sociology entered, we moved to an examination of the relations between science and religion in sociology—research trends, theories, and common positions. The main ideas can be summarized in the following conclusions:

A.   Religion was one of the sources from which scientific thought emerged.
B.   As science became well established, a rift emerged between these two dimensions, and religion seemed, from the scientists' point of view, to be something inferior.
C.   When it was realized that science was not a perfect substitute for religion, recognition of the importance of religion emerged.
D.   As a positive attitude emerged towards various meanings of religion, scientists became aware of the common influence/aspects between the two dimensions.

However, except for recognition of the common influence/aspects of science and religion, no effort has been made to take another step.

At this stage the following question arises, if common aspects* exist, as various scholars claim: Where can we identify them, and what can we learn from them?

There is no doubt that this is an extremely broad subject, and that a process of condensation is needed. At this point the question is where the first step should be taken. This led me to focus on the writings of Giddens, Habermas, and Bellah, the first two because they are contemporary and very important scholars who have contributed significantly to the sociological discourse. The other aspect—religion—is presented according to Bellah's idea of modern religion, since he is one of the leading scholars of religion.

I do not hint that any of the three scholars can be regarded as the sole representative of his field of study. Nevertheless, they have provided us with an analytic framework based on their significant scientific achievements. Its analysis can enlighten different, and even new, perspectives.

I begin with a summary of Bellah's concept of religious evolution. This is followed by a comparison between his idea of modern religion and the social-scientific thought of Habermas and Giddens, and then a primary explanation for this comparison.

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* I called this common aspect the "Tangential Meeting Point." I defined it as "every idea and/or saying, apparent or latent, that can be identified in one dimension and at the same time can also be identified in another dimension, which has the same or the opposite meaning." Further methodological clarifications can be found in Reiner 1997: 33–34.

2 BELLAH'S STAGES
OF RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Robert Bellah, religious evolution can be divided into five stages, from the primitive to the modern stage (1970: 20–50). Bellah examines four aspects in each stage: symbolic system, religious action, religious organization, and social implications. This chapter presents these five stages with reference to the above four aspects.

2. THE PRIMITIVE STAGE

Symbolic system: The mythical world is related to the actual world. There is no need for a mediator between individual experiences and external factors, and no separation exists between the individual's spirit and the world. Bellah explains that religious symbolization connects man to his experiences and in this manner he is connected to himself. Religious images enable the differentiation between an individual's experience and the external world such that man has a better chance of matching himself actively and rationally with human suffering. The primitive myth has free associative characters and a monistic worldview.

Religious action: Religious action is ritualistic and characterized not by worship or sacrifice, but by identification, participation, and acting out. Since there are no mediators, all who are present are involved in this action. During a ritual, the distance between man and the mythical being disappears, and every WHEN becomes NOW. Myths and rituals are constantly changing, enabling holy people to create new original ideas.

Religious organization: Church and society are one, and religious roles are fused with other roles.

Social implications: Rituals maintain solidarity and are part of the socialization process. Symbols and images enable people to actively and rationally confront pain. Therefore, there is an as-

pect of self-control and free action. Since there are no extreme changes, religious life tends to be routine.

3.   THE ARCHAIC STAGE

Symbolic system: This stage is characterized by a monistic worldview. A steady symbolic structure emerges. However, there is still room for change. Instead of great paradigmatic figures with which men identify during the ritual process but with whom they do not really interact, there exist mythical beings—gods. These gods are more objectified and are conceived as willfully controlling the natural and the human worlds. Gods are characterized in a clear and definite manner. Thus all things, both natural and divine, have a place.

Religious action: One correct way of worship emerges. The distinction between man and God becomes more definite, and the need arises for a communication system through which man and God can interact. This communication is carried out by holy people, as well as through sacrifice. One of the differences between the primitive and the archaic stage is that instead of the passive identification occurring during ritual action (in the primitive stage), the sacrifice process of the archaic stage enables greater intentionality and entails more uncertainty regarding the divine response. It is a freer differentiated religious action with uncertainty also in the relations between man and the ultimate conditions of his existence.

Religious organization: Religious organizations are usually part of existing social structures. Divine people are still subordinate to the political elite.

Social implications: There is a status division between the clergy and the politicians who claim that they control the political, military, and religious power. The individual and society are still entwined, and there is little tension between religious demands and social conformity. Order and social activity are integrated within a holy cosmic hierarchic structure, and social conformity is reinforced through religious sanctions. The flexibility that characterized the previous stage is still present, but the shaping of religious rules reveals a constant symbolic structure according to which man acts. The ability to read and write enables criticism of the mythical tradition, which, as a by-

product, can lead to new orientations resulting in a problem of preserving religious symbolization.

4. THE HISTORIC STAGE

Symbolic system: Religion became transcendental, and the supernatural world is above the earthly world in terms of value and control. Religious symbolization first leads to a clear, structured idea of a central and responsible self, which has a deeper meaning than the daily routine experience. Salvation becomes a central component, while men are regarded as being saved.

Religious action: The purpose of religious action is salvation. In the primitive stage, man could simply accept the world through rituals, which enabled him to reach harmony with his natural surroundings and overcome his mistakes. Archaic man could atone for his failures through sacrifice. Religion promises man that he can understand the fundamental structure of reality, and that through salvation he can actively participate in the process of world understanding. Man is therefore more responsible for his own success and failure.

Religious organization: There are political and religious groups, and the religious elite claims a direct connection to the supernatural world. This prevents the political elite from having the control over the religious elite that it had in the past. Differentiation between the political and the religious clearly exists at the leadership level. Implications for this in other contexts can also be observed. There are distinct rules for the individual and the believer, and each has a different rules framework.

Social implications: The implications of the differentiation between the religious and the political have increased. The possibility exists of a confrontation between the prophet and the king, since political activities can be criticized using religious terms that are unfamiliar to the politicians. The accepted dualistic idea can be observed in the hierarchic division between this world and the next. Since failure is possible, religious life tends to be distinct from this world, and the diffuse identity that could be found in previous stages cannot be found in this stage. Compared with the previous stages, historic religions are universal and integrative but also afford a background for revolutionary activity. World rejection is a possibility.

5. THE EARLY MODERN STAGE

Symbolic system: Symbols actualize the direct connection between man and the next world. The dualistic idea of the previous stage still exists, but with a different meaning. There is no distinction between the earthly and the next world. The Christian cosmological idea of the Middle Ages is now regarded as superstition. This and other changes reinforce positive autonomic activity in the world and replace passive acceptance of the world.

Religious action: The Protestant Reformation introduces the idea that divine people are no longer the only ones who can mediate between man and God. Religious activity can thus be performed independently. The Reformation also reduces passive acceptance of the world. Religious action is identified with one's entire life, and serving God becomes a total demand in each step of life. However, the believer can save himself even if he has sinned. This salvation is accepted not as a withdrawal from the world but as being located in the center of activity. The Reformation thus enabled an avoidance of world rejection, which was not possible in the historic stage. An anti-ritual interpretation of the divine community and of historical events can be identified, while simultaneously emphasizing the internal-personal faith dimension and not solely actions designated as being "religious." Nonetheless, the process of unified identity-making can still be identified, as in the historic stage.

Religious organization: There is, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, a multidimensional social organization model based on contract connections—a voluntaristic aspect. One group does not control the other, and therefore neither controls the entire society. The law controls State and Church. The Church functions as an ethical-cultural society, and religious frameworks can be said to affect issues such as philosophy, literature, and social well-being.

Social implications: In the early days of modern society, religious impulse led to secular institutional structures. These institutions sometimes confronted the state and from time to time restricted the state. Pressure for social change was applied toward the recognition of institutional religious values, which are part of the social structure. Worldly institutions that have religious values as part of their culture mediate influences of

religious orientation over society. Man can act and save himself despite his sins. Science develops during this stage.

6. THE MODERN STAGE

Symbolic system: During this stage, collapse of the dualistic idea is observed. However, this is not a return to the monism of the primitive stage, but it is the idea of an infinitely complex world, which replaces the idea of a simple dual structure. The multidimensional active self creates as many worlds as the self can understand, leaving no room for a dualistic hierarchic religious symbolic system. The symbolization of man's relation to basic social codes is not the responsibility of either group, and analysis of modern religion is performed according to the assumption that modern religion is an integral part of the human situation itself. Modern analysis of religion is not performed based on knowledge and science, and previous terms are reinterpreted. A pseudoscientific rationalization can be noticed in the present world as a result of the willingness to bring epistemological harmony to faith. Every idea can be questioned as part of the effort to understand man and his situation. While this idea points to the existence of a free intellectual dimension, ideas relating to symbols that express the obvious are less accepted.

Religious action: Religious action is more demanding, due to the collapse of the conservative idea. The search for adequate standards of action, which is simultaneously a search for personal maturity and social relevance, is in itself the heart of the modern quest for salvation and does not have the previous dualistic meaning. The search for meaning is not limited to the church, and various movements that emphasize social action are part of an effort to meet present needs. Religious action in the modern period is a continuation of the tendencies of the early modern stage.

Religious organization: Although the present situation is the result of religion, it does not control it. It is recognized that answers to religious questions can be found in various secular areas. There is no conservativity and each church member can be responsible for himself. Many special-purpose subgroups form and disband. This is regarded not as a sign of indifference and secularization, but as an increasing acceptance of the notion

that each Subject must reach a solution independently. The most the Church can do is provide a favorable environment in which there is no prefabricated set of answers. Examination of the status of modern religion must not focus only on religious dimensions, since man's symbolization of his elementary condition of existence is no longer the unique role of religious groups. The question that emerges is, How will religious organizations fit modern conditions?

Social implications: Dichotomous divisions do not enable a proper understanding of our world. Modern analysis of religion is performed through examination of the entire human situation and not just religious institutions. Statements of faith should be reinterpreted, and every viewpoint is open to question as part of the effort to understand man and his position in the world. Modern man should not be characterized as secular, materialistic, nonhuman, and in the deepest meaning nonreligious, since such an analysis does not encompass all the characteristics of the modern spirit. Historical religion discovered the self, whereas early modern religion found the foundation according to which the self can be accepted with its various empirical meanings. Modern religion begins to understand the laws by which the self exists and as a result helps man take responsibility for his own faith.

The search for sufficient action standards, which is simultaneously a search for personal maturity and social relevance, is in itself the heart of the modern search for salvation, but not in the previous dualistic meaning. The self is capable, within limits, of continuous personal transformation and of recreating the world by the symbolic forms he faces, including the forms that shape his condition of existence. This is possible as a result of the knowledge that exists concerning the self and the world structure. People also give new interpretations to traditional symbols. This is an expression of man's decision-making ability. Bellah claims that religious pressure in modern society resulted in the development of a social method that reexamines itself and can be found in democratic society.

Culture and personality can be revised endlessly. This has been characterized as the collapse of meaning and a failure of moral standards. It remains to be seen whether modern soci-

ety, which has implications for the cultural, personal, and so-
cial dimensions, can be stably institutionalized in large-scale
societies. Furthermore, the processes that led to the collapse
of meaning and the failure of moral standards can be viewed
as opening unprecedented opportunities for creative innova-
tion in every sphere of human action.

Here I wish to clarify an important point. Bellah (1985) softened
this subjectivistic orientation in the chapter "Religion" in the book
Habits of the Heart. From this viewpoint, his later publications can
be viewed as his personal criticism of ideas that he had himself
raised on the role of religion in modern society and on the freedom
he attributed to the Subject in his earlier publication. In my opin-
ion, if what Bellah writes in both publications is regarded as a single
unit that can help determine the position of religion and the indi-
vidual in society, it can definitely be concluded that even at the later
stage, namely, in his 1985 publication, Bellah does not deny the
creative ability of the individual. He claims that man is not a com-
pletely free creature and needs a social-structural context without
which his personal activity is meaningless and perhaps even impos-
sible. However, this context does not turn the individual into a
solely passive factor.

3   JURGEN HABERMAS
     AND ROBERT BELLAH

1.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The main characteristics of Habermas' theory are presented first. A comparison between Habermas' theory and characteristics of Bellah's theory of modern religion follows, which explores points of contact between these two scholars.

The sections presenting Habermas' thought clearly do not present his entire theoretical construct, nor do they examine the reliability and validity of the theory he constructed. The purpose of the following sections is solely to explore points of contact between the main perspectives of Habermas' social-scientific thought and characteristics of Bellah's theory of modern religion, with special attention to the sociological meaning of these findings.

2.   JURGEN HABERMAS' THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

A.   Basic Assumptions

The Theory of Communicative Action is the climax of Habermas' research. This theory is not dealt with in this book, but several ideas that constitute its foundation must be presented in order to create a starting point from which the social meaning of Habermas' ideas can be understood. Habermas' starting point is that social theory should not assure the normative content of bourgeois culture, of art, and indirectly of philosophical thinking. According to Habermas, the Theory of Communicative Action clarifies the normative foundation of a critical theory of society (1987: 374–403). In practice, communication theory examines the intuitive knowledge of people, knowledge in which we can find structures of common activity and understanding. In that, it differs from a theory of history, which according to Habermas cannot distinguish between problems of developmental logic and problems of developmental dynamics. It also differs from critical theory, in which human con-

sciousness is positioned before the integrative mechanism of administration and economics. This is why the Theory of Communicative Action should achieve two goals: (1) to separate the development of epistemological structures from the historical dynamics of events; (2) to separate the development of societies from the historical construction of general forms of life. It can thus be concluded that Habermas' thought is based on two basic assumptions:

1. Society can exhibit developmental dynamics that are independent of the mass historical construction of human patterns.
2. Epistemological structures that also act independent of historical events.

Habermas says that man is involved in constructing human culture and society. Social events can therefore also be understood by understanding the Subject's behavior.

These two assumptions mean that Habermas rejects a strict concept of reason acting as the foundation of all unique reasons. In this his viewpoint is not compatible with Hegel's and Kant's. The Subject is not solely a receptor factor, since it has the ability to understand. It is, at the same time, both social and active/autonomous. At this point a disagreement can be observed between Habermas and classical philosophy. According to Habermas, classical thought claims that an objective framework exists that externally shapes human knowledge and behavior, and what we see is no more than a reflection of this framework (1971a). Habermas says that through theory—the logic-objective framework—social life has been shaped to fit theoretical and basic assumptions, and that the theory is reflected in those who adopt its terms of reference. Habermas rejects the idea of idealistic epistemological concepts, since he claims that society has room for independent social influence.

These basic assumptions will be referred to at a later stage. At the moment, I would like to discuss Habermas' idea of modern society.

B.   Lifeworld and System

Two central terms can be used for understanding Habermas' social image of our society: "Lifeworld" and "System." The former means culture, morality, human relations, and so on. "Lifeworld" is subjective, social, and historical (Habermas 1987: 119–52). A

common "Lifeworld" creates a background for communication, which means that it acts as a shaping factor. It is also shaped, since people have a reflexive attitude toward the "Lifeworld" (1984: 75–101). The term "System" means aspects of administration, power, and economics that exist in society (1985). According to Habermas, the rationalization of the "Lifeworld" is a necessary condition for the development of other subsystems, which are independent of the "Lifeworld." This enables them to turn against it (1987: 157–97).

The process begins with the exclusive existence of the "Lifeworld." Its continuation is the rationalization in that dimension, leading to the creation of an independent "System" that turns against the "Lifeworld." Habermas calls this "the colonization of Lifeworld" (1987: 332–73). Colonization means that as a result of capitalist growth, economic and administrative systems take a growing part in the "Lifeworld's" reproduction.

A by-product of the social differentiation that spreads to various fields is an integration based on exchange rules and power in which no other type of communication can be identified (Habermas 1984: 339–44). The fact that this type of communication enters the "Lifeworld" dimension forces patterns on society that prevent other communication. Habermas named this the "communication barrier," since it prevents the appearance of nonutilitarian activity patterns even in dimensions that are not based on economic-exchange relations. It is a confrontation between principles of social integration, whereas the functional-instrumental pattern ignores the rational-independent aspect that exists in the "Lifeworld" (ibid. 366–402). This idea can be clarified by some examples. With the expansion of capitalistic orientation, not only in the economic dimension but also in the moral-normative one, traditional culture ceased to be a source of social legitimation (1971b: 81–122), and many aspects of our lives are determined by the law (1987: 332–73). According to Habermas, the positive implication of this trend is an assurance of social order while minimizing indecisiveness. It enables fulfillment of tasks determined according to the value-normative idea in the society—an idea influenced by capitalist value-normative attitudes. The negative implication, according to Habermas, is that aspects that are part of the "Lifeworld" dimensions are exposed to beaurocratic interference and judicial control, while having an independent foundation. The normative in-

ternal foundation may thus weaken. It is the lack of structural adjustment between administrative actions and cultural tradition that undermines the normative foundation (1973b). This happens because people react differently when facing life patterns in which they were socialized and when facing life patterns whose validity they personally understand (1987: 77–111). It can therefore be concluded that in such cases the Subject's self-understanding plays a smaller role. Since this is an expanding pattern, Habermas fears that society will turn into a mass of Subjects that have lost their uniqueness to "objective" rules, and that the process is also dysfunctional. In order to clarify this dysfunctionality, two of the scholar's assumptions must be mentioned, one dealing with the subjective dimension and the other with the social one. In the subjective dimension, identity, in its internal-unique meaning, is obtained through dialogue between people while the surroundings confirm the subject's unique idea. In the social dimension, symbolic borders of society are shaped according to the internal activity range that people think they have (1979: 95–129). The fact that the Subject's role in constructing social life is diminishing, and that social integration does not occur through institutionalized values but through intersubjective recognition of valid claims used in speech acts (1987: 303–31), introduces one of the internal contradictions of present society. Habermas claims that integration between people is the result of communicative actions acting according to culture/tradition and not according to systematic rules (1987: 119–52). "Lifeworld," which is a common interpretive framework affording basic transparency to events in society, ceases to play its role when outside rules determine activity patterns. In such a situation, the following things that Habermas claims exist do not have their proper status:

1. Subject's autonomy.
2. Culture independence.
3. Communication transparency.

Habermas claims that economic and administrative-rational aspects infiltrate spheres that specialize in culture transformation and social integration. The problem arises because in these action spheres, and in other "Lifeworld" spheres, the integrative mechanism between actions is mutual understanding. The above-mentioned infiltration leads to unidimensional rationalization or reification of daily communication, which disturbs the continuous

activity in spheres responsible for "Lifeworld" reproduction (1987: 303–31).

Social-scientific philosophy should construct the proper conditions of social order (Habermas 1973a: 41–81). However, according to Habermas, examination of social reality indicates that science itself plays a role in the creation of unbalanced relations between the "Lifeworld" and the "System." Understanding the role of science will help in the understanding of Habermas' attitude toward various ideas, their reconstruction [by Habermas], and its meaning.

C. The Role of Science in Creating Unbalanced Relationships between the "Lifeworld" and the "System"

In the reproduction process of the industrial society, the connection between science, technology, industry, and administration exhibits a cyclic process in which congruence exists between the technological and the ethical (Habermas 1971b: 81–122). A connection also exists between theory and praxis (1973a: 253–82) that discloses the role of sciencein the construction of social reality, what Habermas calls the "colonization of the Lifeworld." The congruence between the ethical and the technological emerges because technological consolidation through science has muddled the sense that prevents people from noticing the subjugation that removes aspects of freedom under the pretext of convenience (1971b: 81–122). According to Habermas, the following process can be observed:

1. Technological-scientific progress enables the expansion of production forces.
2. Increases in productivity enables Subjects to live more comfortably.
3. Production forces become the legitimate foundation.
4. The scientific method that led to effective control of nature is also the source of ideas and methods of man's control through the control of nature.
5. The process becomes universal and creates historic totality.

This can be called subjugation, since the real motif is the rationalization of dominance. Technology supplies rationalization for the chained person and introduces the technical impossibility of being autonomous as an integral part of our life. Control has thus lost the mask of exploitation and gained the mask of rationality. Indeed, technocratic consciousness is less ideological than past ide-

ologies. However, an ideology that adores science is hard to resist. It has no mass suppression. It affords criteria for justifying the organization of social life, while the human being becomes a technological term (Habermas 1971b: 81–122). Technology becomes autonomous and also brings its value system to the praxis dimension under the pretext of the value of freedom. It is assumed that decisions relevant to the praxis of life cannot construct an entire social value-normative agreement unless technological instructions are part of them. It is the domination of the technological, under a pretext of objectivity, over the ethical, while constructing a new theoretical direction in which praxis is afforded the secondary role. In today's rules of reproduction, relationships between theory and praxis appear in the context of technological-scientific control over objective processes, and not in the context of clarifying actions—actions with normative-ethical signs (Habermas 1973b: 253–82). Today, Habermas claims, effective social theory does not direct itself to man's consciousness but to manipulative human behavior that lacks a critical perspective, which could contribute to social improvement. In the past, when theory and praxis were connected to each other, society was regarded as a system of conscious actions leading to self-construction through an exchange of communication between people. From the moment that a separation evolved between theory and praxis, confusion arose between action and domination. Exchange relations between people were not established on a conscious communicative foundation, and science turned into a negative factor in the construction of reality.

A connection between technological, ethical, theory and praxis can thus be observed. During the first stage, theory and praxis are located in the same dimension and lead man to an ethical life. The changes that occurred lead to an interlacing of technological aspects in theory, and life turns into something that can be controlled as if it were connections between variables. The emphasis is on the process and not the content, according to the assumption that every rational thing can be presented as a technological connection between variables. This necessarily ensures the normative content of society. The implication of such a tendency is the establishment of ranking—what can and cannot be rationally presented. Thus, the idea of an autonomous value-system is, when all is said and done, an illusion. Previous values and norms have ceased to act as guiding principles and are subject to practical examination. This

is the technological restriction, in whose boundaries social reality appears as a temptation to achieve control over history by means of social administrative improvements. However, rationalization of history cannot continue according to technological control and domination, except by higher reflexivity, which can be reached if restrictions on technocratic domination are removed by communicative actions. Only communication that has no disturbances, so that the Subject can know himself in the other person, will enable human beings to overcome the restrictions of technocratic domination, and also to know nature as a Subject to which man is an equal, unlike the idealistic idea.

Habermas is not pleased with criticism of the negative implications of science in society. The basic principles of his thought, which lead to the exposure of the negative influence of science, also lead him to construct an entire social concept that supposes, from his point of view, that it solves the malaise of present society, some of which has already been presented. The construction of that social concept is a result of ideas that we already know and of Habermas' attitudes toward other theoretical approaches.

D.   Habermas and Other Theoretical Approaches

Habermas rejects every idea that may cause a loss of subjective identity, since man obeys outside rules; this is why he wrote his critique of classical thought in ancient Greece (1971a). The years that have passed since that era did not bring a full conceptual split with the Greek thought pattern, and the evidence, according to Habermas, is found in various scientific fields whose guidelines follow those of the ancient Greeks.

This section presents Habermas' division of science into three fields and his attitude toward each, illustrating it in the context of several directions of thought.

Habermas distinguishes between three scientific fields: empiric-analytic sciences, historical-hermeneutical sciences, and critical sciences (1971a).

Empiric-analytic sciences describe reality according to rules that are accepted by them as being objective, meaning that man acts according to constant external codes. Theoretical connections between variables are considered to have independent existence, and the fundamental motif of things is a technological-epistemological control over processes with the help of these rules. Problems are

presented as relations between variables, enabling us to build a feedback system that actually constructs a closed theoretical model that can describe processes and predict the way things will happen. If reality is subject to this model, social processes can be controlled and constructed according to the theoretical model. From a wider perspective, it can be said that human history can be reduced, because it is subject to deterministic rules.

In *historical-hermeneutical sciences*, as opposed to empiric-analytic sciences, there is no deductive construction of theories. However, the laws of hermeneutic set the possible meaning for claims of validity in the cultural sciences. Hermeneutic knowledge is mediated by the researcher's previous understanding, and Habermas claims that it is wrong, because methodological rules unify interpretation, which is why hermeneutic research brings reality to light in the context of actions aimed at reaching a mutual understanding determined by tradition. This tendency is a practical-epistemological motif, which prevents the relationship from being reflexive, as Habermas would like it to be. Nonetheless, historical-hermeneutic sciences does not deal with changeable aspects from an intention to discover general rules, and there exists a common methodological ground between them and the empiric-analytic sciences: that of describing a constructed reality within the framework of the horizon of theoretical positions. Habermas criticizes hermeneutics because it examines events from the internal to the external, while the critical theory should also be able to analyze things from the outside to the inside, and this aspect does not exist in hermeneutics.

A critical social science wants to adopt different patterns from those that are accepted in the nomological sciences, not just determine when theoretical statements grasp social behavior unchanged and when they express frozen dependent ideological relationships. Accordingly, the aim of the critical sciences is to reach a more accurate understanding of reality, an understanding that does not bind the person, while emancipated epistemological interest determines personal reflexivity. Epistemological interest signifies human interest in autonomy and in responsibility that is not influenced by personal interests.

Man plays an active role in the process of criticism. If not, this criticism, according to Habermas, is meaningless. Only through praxis can criticism become valid (1973a: 195–252). It is not an illusion, since, according to Habermas, that ability has *a priori* roots

in human ability and is what enables emancipation. Habermas dissents from the first two thought patterns and is willing to establish a straight path of scientific-critical reality. This path shows not only the working patterns in science, but also science's role in society. Habermas claims that science took on the role of constructing traditional theory. Unfortunately, science tried, quite successfully from his point of view, to subject life to methodological compulsions. This means that man lost his active and creative role in the construction of human society. This loss is barely noticeable, since it occurs under the cover of an objectivist illusion developed by the nomological sciences. Another aspect of this is identifying reality with objective criteria regarded as having independent internal rules. But an objective dimension, neither during the classic era nor today, cannot establish reality and ego identity. Habermas concludes that the pseudo-objective dimension existed in the past and exists today. In the past it could be seen in the character of the "pure creature," and today it can be found in science. This is the basic idea by which Habermas criticizes modern science, both the empiric-analytic and the historical-hermeneutical. These two thought patterns present an objectivist illusion, since they mask the existence of a guiding interest, which according to Habermas creates a distortion barring man and science from the role they should take. Methodologically, the distortion is created when the above-mentioned sciences claim only one possible framework of knowledge. This is why the critical philosophy of science must uncover these aspects, which might return science and the Subject to the position they deserve. Science that will contribute thinking and an illumination of life will enable better scientific research as well as the creation of a better society. This is the scientific culture preferred by Habermas and reflects the idea that reality cannot be fully described and understood by a single conceptual framework.

Habermas' criticism of various ideas and his construction of the Theory of Communicative Action result from his basic assumptions as presented in section A, as well as in this section. This will be clarified by referring to several thought patterns.

Habermas claims that in the philosophy of history, man is subject to historical processes while being presented as a free agent (1973a: 195–252). According to Habermas, this problem remained unsolved in Kant's idea, while Hegel solved it by saying that man also receives things that are external to him from the historical

process—the dialectic movement as the driving force in history. However, in the end, Hegel presented an ahistoric theory to which man is subject. Marx converted the spirit, which he regarded as subjective, to the material, and from here the way to historical materialism was short. One of Habermas' basic points presents the structural epistemological dimension as independent, necessitating an examination of the Subject's activity as part of the effort to understand reality. Economic-deterministic reductionism is therefore regarded as being unacceptable, since it does not enable us to understand society from within. Habermas also claims that culture is not necessarily bound to economic processes and that historic-moral components must also be examined as independent components, meaning that social reproduction is a process more complicated than Marx's idea. A lack of complete subordination to the economic process can also be found in the political context when Habermas claims that today's politics also have an independent status and that the unique contribution of politics to the preservation of the present situation can be recognized. Politics is not solely a phenomenon of the superstructure.

There is another discrepancy between Marx and Habermas. One conclusion reached from the guidelines of the former is that, theoretically, historical meaning can be known if human beings themselves attempt to make it real and practical. Marx concludes that the willingness to act comes before the ability to know. In this, Marx follows the Hegelian idea that historical meaning is a release from humanity's internal contradictions. This points to another contradiction between Marx and Habermas. Marx stipulates critical thinking by action, while Habermas does not. Habermas also says that criticism should open itself to historical experiences resulting from a concrete "Lifeworld" that precedes every methodological objectivization, which is the only way critical treatment can be legitimized. This is how Habermas claims that the Marxist theory cannot be the driving force, even if the public goes along with the theory.

Changes that occurred in the present society created a new situation that the Marxist theory cannot accurately analyze. According to Habermas, exploitation becomes obscure; since people choose by "free" will what they must choose anyway (1973a: 195–252). Two conclusions, methodological and factual, can be drawn from this: methodological—the original Marxist theory cannot

shed light on the power relations existing in present society; fac-
tual—lack of the development of revolutionary consciousness
among laborers. Habermas concludes that social liberation cannot
appear only in an economic context, since alienation and strange-
ness cannot be understood solely in that context. Another conclu-
sion is that production forces do not have, as Marx assumed, a lib-
erating potential; according to Habermas, potential results from
man and not from independent economic factors.

Habermas's disagreement with Weber can also be understood
from the economic perspective. Weber assumes that the exchange
principle plays a central role in the economic context as well as in
the value-normative context. He therefore presented the thesis of
the loss of meaning and freedom as by-products of the moderniza-
tion process (Habermas 1984: 346–65). This is a continuation of
the idea of rationalization as reification of consciousness originated
by Kant and Hegel and continued by Marx, Weber, and critical the-
ory (Habermas 1987: 204–34). "Lifeworld" is engulfed in the objec-
tive world, since cultural and ethical activities have no self-shaping
ability, and these autonomy components of free will and con-
sciousness will therefore disappear in the "iron cage." Weber pre-
sents a rather pessimistic image when attributing normative con-
structing power to instrumental rationality while other dimensions
of activity result from it. This is a transition from intentional ra-
tionality with a value-rational foundation to roots lacking inten-
tional rationality leading to the loss of meaning in modern society
(ibid. 303–31). Habermas disagrees. Indeed, he thinks that the loss
of meaning results from the "System" dominating the "Lifeworld."
Normative structures also have an independent internal-rational
history that Weber ignored, so that he had to present a pessimistic
image, which Habermas rejects (1973b, 1979: 95–129). Habermas'
dissent from Weber's position—that the secularization process, in
an outlook on the world and structural differentiation, necessarily
has pathological social implications—can now be understood. Eco-
nomic and other interests are similarly important in the construc-
tion of the historical process, and rationality of communication
might prevent society from reaching Weber's dead-end road.

In Talcott Parsons' conception, systematic rules replace eco-
nomic rules, resulting in rather similar criticism. Parsons presents
an analytic chart that necessitates the existence of a harmonic im-
age when claiming that a high degree of complexity is analytically

connected, in an unforced way, to universal forms of social integra-
tion and institutionalization (Habermas 1987: 283–99). Nonethe-
less, Parsons also claims that obligation should be based on ap-
proval. He tries, from Habermas' point of view, to give a sociologi-
cal twist to Kant's idea of freedom as the obedience to a law man
set for himself (ibid. 204–34). Two conclusions can be drawn from
these assumptions. Parsons' theory takes a positivistic turn. This
enables the social sciences to understand themselves if they obey
the methodological demands of empirical-analytic behavioral sci-
ence, and it prevents the understanding of social pathologies. Ac-
cording to Habermas, another defect in Parsons' theory is that the
analytic framework cannot describe the rationalization process in
the "Lifeworld" and the rise of system complexity as separate inter-
active processes that are usually in opposition. "Lifeworld" ration-
alization is thus part of the system differentiation process, and the
structural dimension is the dominant force of various social proc-
esses. The action theory is thus engulfed by the systematic ap-
proach. Habermas aims to avoid that kind of mixture between the
two theories, which is why he tries to point to the rationalization of
social subsystems resulting from the growing complexity of action
systems, aside from the rationalization of "Lifeworld"—changes of
"Lifeworld" structures resulting from an increase in differentiation
between culture, society, and personality (1984: 339–44). The dif-
ferentiation in the relations between society and personality will be
regarded as an expansion of the idea of intersubjective relations.
Thus, a differentiation will be observed in the relations between
culture and personality, since traditional renewal depends on the
Subjects' willingness to criticize and their ability for renewal (1987:
119–52).

Since functionalist analysis views social development from a
perspective of expanding and growing complexity, functionalism
connects between functionalist solutions and systems problems.
Such an attitude moves away from the developmental learning
process, which can itself have an explanatory ability, and also ig-
nores the fact that normative structures have an internal history not
bound to the system and the productive process (Habermas 1979:
95–129). This situation is a result of turning the "role" idea into an
universalistic-historic category leading to a role analysis that ignores
the different and presents historic development based on cyclic
relations. Two methodological problems result from this fact. It is

impossible to have a point of view on the research object and on the discipline, and social life turns into something external to human beings—an overlapping between the technological and the ethical (1973a: 195–252).

Marx's, Weber's, and Parsons' approaches have been presented in order to demonstrate the relationship between them and Habermas, since this affords a better understanding of Habermas' conception. The three can be discussed together because their approaches contradict two of Habermas' original assumptions—an independent developmental dynamic of society, and the existence of epistemological structures that also act independent of historical events.

Habermas' criticism of historical-hermeneutical sciences has a methodological aspect—a description of structured reality within the framework of the theoretical attitude horizon, and examination of events from the external to the internal. It can therefore be stated that there is congruence between Habermas' and hermeneutic approaches in only one of Habermas' research assumptions, the dynamic-developmental character of society. Habermas will accept the need to understand reality from the point of view of society itself, since this is the only way to understand the reason for things. But a scholar must look beyond what he can see, and hermeneutic approaches do not enable one to look outside the cultural borders of the society under study. Habermas disagrees with ethnomethodology, which claims as one of its research assumptions that it is not necessary to examine society from an external point of view. A dispute with "symbolic interaction" is related to the theoretical categories by which the approach tries to analyze social reality. According to Habermas, it is impossible to go outside of the cultural horizon when using these theoretical categories, which critical theory must do.

Aspects that differ between Habermas and the approaches mentioned above enable the presentation of his attitudes toward empiric-analytic and historical-hermeneutic sciences. Since science itself, including both empiric-analytic and historical-hermeneutic sciences, also led to unbalanced relations between the "Lifeworld" and the "System"; a call for change is sounded if science wants to take a positive role in present society. The desirable change, according to Habermas, occurred when the Theory of Communicative Action came into being.

E.   The Meaning of the Development of the
Theory of Communicative Action

It can be said that one of Habermas' aims is to put science back in its proper position. Various ideas presented now indicate that science itself caused the undermining of its status and also played a role in creating a worse human society. The problem can be viewed in two dimensions: methodological and social-practical. A change in the former dimension will lead to a change in the latter, but it must be emphasized that the purpose of the scholar is to develop a model that will act within the framework of the value system and will not try to reduce such a system from the theoretical model of Communicative Action. These facts are important, since a scholar's scientific approach can teach not only about his/her scientific ideas, but also about the way he/she views society and the way it should be (Habermas 1973a: 195–252). At this stage we reach another of Habermas' targets—returning the balance between the "Lifeworld" and the "System."

In conclusion, the development of the Theory of Communicative Action can be understood in two dimensions: a renewed consolidation of the status of science, and a creation of balanced relations between the "Lifeworld" and the "System." These two dimensions intertwine into a general idea from which Habermas' personal view of the world can be learned. I will try to clarify this with regard to the theoretical-scientific and the social dimensions.

The aim of Habermas' theory is to identify and reconstruct worldly conditions of possible understanding (1979: 1–68). The reconstructive science of universal pragmatics enables us to understand the foundation of liberating criticism, the second condition of self-reflexivity, which is not based on arbitrary norms we choose and examine, but is part of structures of interpersonal communication ability—a nonarbitrary normative foundation. Reality is then not bound to a scientific model, a defect that can be found in empirical-analytical sciences, while in the meantime, according to Habermas, we correct the defect that exists in hermeneutic sciences. The conditions that every person who wants to reach an understanding should follow do not mean a diffusion of aimed rationalist action and transformation of the dimensions of communication actions to subsystems of practical rationalist actions. The reference point is the rationalistic potential existing at the foundation of the validity of speech (1984: 339–44). That fact points to a

transition from a philosophy of awareness to linguistic analysis. Habermas' main interest is not in this transition but in questioning the significance of the end of the philosophy of consciousness to the theory of society (1984: 366–402).

Sociology has, since its foundation, dealt with the question of modernization from the point of view of rationalization, and the Theory of Communicative Action goes along that line. However, Habermas' assumptions enable him to change the equation: rationalization as the loss of freedom and meaning = reification = increasing infiltration of exchange and power values into culture, society, and the "Lifeworld." This provides an opportunity for changing the idea of commodification in the capitalist society that characterizes the Weberian idea and also the critical theory of the Frankfurt School in its various contexts—Herbert Marcuse in science, Theodor Adorno and Erich Fromm in psychology and family. The dialogical model enters at this breaking point, and Habermas uses it to present an optimistic approach. The dialogical model means that truth is perceived as the actions of Subjects and not as an adjustment to external "objectivistic" reality. A connection can be observed between interactive competence and consciousness that emerges from communicative action (1979: 69–94). This connection can assist in creating a balance between the "Lifeworld" and the "System." The Subject can thus present his subjective world while simultaneously reconstructing and renewing interpersonal relations as part of the construction of the entire social reality (1984: 273–337) without giving in to negative external compulsions. This idea indicates that Habermas presents both structural and interactionist dimensions in his thought: structural when claiming the existence of structural dimensions that are prior to actual actions, and interactionistic since man is also a social creature whose identity is shaped in exchanged social relations. This is the central position he affords the human creature in his social conception—the Subject is simultaneously autonomic and bound to the social reality of which he is a part.

However, we know that reality does not coincide with that idea, and science and the modern state play an important role in constructing the objectivistic chained framework (Habermas 1971b: 81–122, 1979: 178–205, 1991). On the one hand it leads to increased social justice, but on the other hand it influences economic processes in a way similar to the system—the state system

enforces capitalistic growth when it creates the conditions for its continuous existence. Unique needs, historical traditions, and so on become technical nuisances removed by the political administrations that manage the system. If civil society used to balance itself by the exchange process and the state's role was to enable the internal and external exchange processes, society today acts according to the functionalist terms of industrialization and the state is involved in the "free" market. This involvement can be seen in assuring economic development, production, and the prevention of economic crisis.

Two main spheres can be seen—the objectivistic and the subjectivistic. Habermas tries to create a synthesis between them in order to create a better society. As we know, the relationships between the objective and the subjective, and between the "System" and the "Lifeworld," are not balanced. The Theory of Communicative Action can lead to balance, since it can penetrate the barriers developed by modern society—technologism and instrumental rationalism—that impose dogmatic rules of behavior as a result of the assumption that the main driving force for man is the economic-technological factor. These barriers prevent man from fulfilling himself as a human being, and rather than creating himself he becomes enslaved. Habermas' theory should enable the creation of an emancipating social activity that will enable man to establish his own identity while improving social integration. In such a situation the Subject will be able to deal with negative aspects of modern society, reduce their influence, and create a better society. In trying to improve social integration, an effort is made to achieve a positive combination of the objective and subjective dimensions— not a society characterized by unique opinions, but a society with various points of view from which man can choose independently. This independent process should occurs as a dialogue in which people reach understanding as a result of mutual agreement and not as a result of the enforcement of external objectivistic components. The desirable situation is that cultural reproduction, social integration, and the shaping of personal identity will occur according to acts of communication with the aim of reaching mutual understanding (Habermas 1987: 77–111). Habermas emphasizes that the structure of actions whose aim is reaching mutual understanding is a better model when attempting to learn how culture, society, and personality together establish action paths (ibid. 204–34).

Since social interaction also creates and establishes symbolic structures, and reconstructive understanding is related to symbolic objects characterized and shaped by Subjects (Habermas 1979: 1–68), the Theory of Communicative Action can uncover the positive aspects, and as a result not just stabilize the position of science but also assist in rebalancing relations between the "Lifeworld" and the "System."

3. POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN ROBERT BELLAH'S THEORY OF MODERN RELIGION AND THE THEORETICAL THOUGHT OF JURGEN HABERMAS

A. Introduction

The following section presents the main points of contact between Habermas and Bellah, what I previously defined as "tangential meeting points."
Additional shared aspects can probably be found, as well as contradictory conceptions. Nevertheless, it is important to look at the general theoretical and social conception of each scholar and identify his basic theories in order to point to shared aspects.*

B. Points of Contact

Reading Bellah's concept of modern religion brings to light several major significant arguments that enlighten the scholar's basic assumptions on the Subject and society. The Subject is a

> dynamic multidimensional self capable, within limits, of continual self-transformation and capable, again within limits, of remaking the world, including the very symbolic forms with which he deals with it, even the forms that state the unalterable conditions of his own existence. (Bellah 1970: 42)

This quote describes a social process which indicates that "man … [not only shapes and/or reshapes the social arena, but] is [also] responsible for the choice of his symbolism" (ibid.). It is a dynamic social reality in which "every fixed position has become open to

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* Originally I examined tangential meeting points (points of contact) in each aspect of modern religion separately—symbolic system, religious action, religious organization, and social implication. Here I present a summary of all four. Those interested in further details can find them in: Reiner 1997: 73–105.

question in the process of making sense out of man and his situa-
tion" (ibid.). It is not that we are facing a completely new world,
and Bellah is certainly not pulling in that direction. He simply says
that our social world is more dynamic than before, and social con-
texts in which we act (groups, institutions, etc.) have therefore
turned into dependent and independent factors—the Subject also
thinks and acts independent of its social/religious context. With
this idea in mind I would like to turn to Habermas.

Habermas also describes modern society as an arena in which
we can identify an increase in personal reflexivity and subjective
beliefs (1984: 339–44). More specifically, he claims that groups (i.e.,
people who act within them) conduct reflexive dialogues on vari-
ous aspects of human life (1971b: 50–61). In saying that, Habermas
returns to his idea that even though we live in times of technologi-
cal-scientific control over social and natural processes, we are not
liberated from personal actions (1979: 95–129) that do not solely
follow existing codes.

Indeed, man interprets the nature of his ambitions and feel-
ings according to current normative values. Nevertheless, he/she
can take a reflexive attitude toward these normative values, even if
they are core values—"Lifeworld" shapes the social world but is
simultaneously shaped by us (1984: 75–101). This is a structural
differentiation between the institutional system and personal world-
views (1985, 1987: 119–52). Habermas means that social institu-
tions set a normative context but people are not bound solely to
them. Generally speaking, we can today identify an increase in sub-
jective beliefs and in conscious reflexive mobility (1984: 339–44).
People can therefore place themselves in a reflexive position to-
ward their social world, which due to man's actions can even renew
traditional patterns (1987: 119–52). Modern life can thus be identi-
fied as a time during which everything can be questioned and
through which man can determine the normative-symbolic
boundaries of society (1979: 95–129).

This has a significant symbolic meaning shared by Habermas
and Bellah. We should make its implications explicit, since they
appear in the philosophies of both scholars.

Both scholars describe a dynamic social reality, since the Sub-
ject plays an active role in its social construction. This activism
brings to light a social process that also points to the establishment
of an independent reflexive identity on the personal as well as on

the social level (Bellah 1970: 44) and again emphasizes that previous behavior patterns do not have an unchangeable character according to which human beings are shaped. Therefore, new interpretations can be brought to various aspects of our social life, symbolizing our personal autonomy and personal power to construct social reality (Habermas 1979: 95–129; 1984: 273–337; 1987: 4, 119–52; 1989: 121; 1991a; 1991b: 48, 77–78, 80, 223; Bellah 1970: 39–44). Nevertheless, this autonomy fosters personal responsibility. Bellah mentioned this, saying that the Church is not the only place to search for personal and social meaning, and therefore our actions become more demanding than ever (Bellah 1970: 43). The same goes for Habermas, who claims that while in the past social myth was the source for social legitimation, today its source is man himself (1979: 178–205).

Being the source of social legitimation necessarily makes the Subject responsible for social integration (Habermas 1987: 77–111). This is exactly what Bellah meant when he wrote that our actions have became more demanding than ever, since we are no longer searching for ready-made answers given by the Church, by scientific models, and so on, but rather we feel, think, and act from a different point of view. Religious and scientific organizations are thus conceived as one of various possible sources of meaning for social life. This is what Habermas points to in his conception of critical theory in general and in the Theory of Communicative Action in particular, and Bellah points to in his idea of modern religion.

I have presented several ideas expressed by Habermas and Bellah in order to point out statements and ideas shared by them. However, what is most important to the argument of this book is the "meeting" of their philosophies. Indeed, Bellah points to religion and religious life, while Habermas' focal point does not aim in that direction. However, this should not and will not prevent us from seeing the points of contact between the two, especially the significant position of the Subject in constructing its social reality and the need for multidimensional perspectives in order to reach a better understanding of our social world.

4 ANTHONY GIDDENS
AND ROBERT BELLAH

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The main characteristics of Giddens' theory are followed by a comparison between it and characteristics of Bellah's theory of modern religion. Points of contact between these two scholars are then explored.

The sections presenting Giddens' thought clearly do not present his entire theory, nor do they examine the reliability and validity of the theory he constructed. The sole purpose of these sections is to explore points of contact between the main perspectives of Giddens' social-scientific thought and characteristics of Bellah's theory of modern religion, with special attention to the sociological significance of these findings.

2. ANTHONY GIDDENS' THEORY

A. Basic Assumptions

People today do not tend to treat reality in a rigid manner. They express their personal will in order to affect the nature of their present and future life (Giddens 1971: xi). Giddens' working assumption is that each individual has knowledge of the reproductive conditions of the society he is part of; and even if he is influenced by external factors, he is also an independent Subject (1979: 1–8). Human beings are conceived by Giddens as full partners in the construction of social reality, and an independent ability cannot be attributed solely to external structural components. Giddens specifically claims that the Subject can act differently at every given moment (1979: 49–95). He points to the changeable nature of reality and to the need to examine intersubjective processes. This necessitates a linkage between subjectivity and intersubjectivity, if we seek to understand reality more accurately (1974: 10). This atmosphere can also be observed in Giddens' book *Central Problems in Social Theory*. In his introduction, Giddens writes that a more accu-

rate examination of reality must be included in a theory of the act-
ing Subject (1979: 1–8).

It is a reflexive consciousness that characterizes man and his
actions and enables a dialogical interpretation of events (Giddens
1982b: 197). It therefore comes as no surprise that Giddens regards
action as a continuous flow of conduct and not as various compo-
nents that combine with each other, as is accepted in functionalism,
and that it must be examined as part of a larger theory of the acting
Subject. This can be assumed to be Giddens' reason for his system-
grading. He places mechanistic systems, which are preferred in the
functionalist model, in the last stage. At the second stage are the
feedback systems, and in the first stage reflexive self-control sys-
tems (1979: 49–95). The idea of reflexive self-control systems is
related to two other terms that Giddens presents: practical and dia-
logical consciousness. The former term relates to knowledge the
Subject has of his acts and their reasons; the latter refers to apply-
ing knowledge of individuals involved in social events. Giddens
does not discriminate among people who are part of social events
on the basis of their knowledge. His focal point is the Subject's
influence on specific social events and, as a result, also on general
social events.

Another aspect of Giddens' thought must be considered if we
seek a better understanding of his theory. The individual has a cen-
tral position in Giddens' ideas, and he further claims that social
reality cannot be reduced to criteria that are connected solely to the
Subject.

Giddens also refers to the structure that is perceived as rules
and resources arranged as properties of social systems. He claims
that these are virtually differences of order that are produced and
reproduced during the process of social interaction. This process is
both a social context according to which people act, and a product
of independent social behavior (1979: 3). There is a conceptual
supplement between interaction and structure. Giddens named this
the "duality of structure," meaning that structural components of
social systems are simultaneously a medium and a product of ac-
tions. The fact that structure is created by individuals and also in-
fluences their behavior indicates a connection between structure
and the Subject. This connection is different from the connection
existing between the parts and the whole in the functionalist the-
ory, in which the whole has an objective position with implications

concerning the Subject. According to Giddens, the term "duality of structure" expresses a necessarily cyclic occurrence of social life. In my understanding, it is further evidence of an idea already mentioned: that reality is a continuous flow of activity.

We are dealing with a process in which an occurrence in one dimension influences the other dimension. However, we cannot identify the primary source of action, since what can be accepted as a primary source of action might be influenced by various processes. This is another idea central to Giddens' theory: the structure and the individual are concomitantly dependent and independent components. It again shows the dynamics and complexity of social reality, and the difference between Giddens and functionalists or other researchers who emphasize only the structural factor of the construction of social reality. It can thus be concluded that structure has a double role in Giddens' theory. On the one hand it enables activity, and on the other it confines it (Giddens 1982a). There is no contradiction in this, from Giddens' point of view, since in social theory the ideas of action and structure are *a priori* assumptions of each other. In action there is an *a priori* assumption of structure, and in structure there is an *a priori* assumption of action. These are dialectical relations between action/Subject and structure, and a better understanding of social reality requires analysis of Subject actions as well as of structure. It can be concluded that Giddens points to reflexive relations between structure and action and that the mutual analysis just mentioned makes possible a better understanding of social reality (Giddens 1984: 281–372).

Two other factors prevent structural components from being a restrictive factor: (1) *unintended consequences*, which are part of the reality we live in and are thus part of and a condition for action (1979: 49–95); and (2) *double hermeneutics*—the existence of a necessary intersection of two frameworks of meaning, between the laity and researchers that produce metalanguages. Reality is thus always the result of a double interpretive process (1982b: 1–17). Within double hermeneutics, the "I" is a reflexive procedure located at the heart of that term (1991: 32). The idea on which these terms are based is the dynamic aspect that prevents priority being assigned to any attitude/idea/term. From Giddens' point of view, analyzing and understanding social reality therefore becomes a complicated issue. Every social action is composed of social practices, located in

time-space, organized out of knowledge by social agents, while the agent's knowledge is bound to the unclear epistemological conditions and unintended consequences of action (1981). Understanding the construction of the social system thus necessitates examining the way the system is produced and reproduced.

According to various ideas mentioned so far, it appears that we must deal with the following components: Subject, structure, duality of structure, and unintended consequences. Structure is assumed to be a factor that both enables and confines activity. Social theory must therefore examine these two dimensions—confining and enabling activity—in addition to taking the other components mentioned above into account.

B.   The Theory of Structuration

"Our life passes in transformation [and] this is what I seek to grasp in the theory of structuration" (Giddens 1979: 3). To obtain this goal, Giddens presents several rules that should be part of that theory (ibid.):

1.   Being and Time as philosophical sources for the development of the time-space conception of the construction of social systems.
2.   A linkage between time and space as an integral part of every construction of social interactions.
3.   A separation between structure and system.
4.   Structure as a nonworldly and nonspace factor, but as a virtual order of differences, is produced and reproduced in social interactions.
5.   Social interaction as a medium in which we act while concomitantly being a product of events.
6.   A linkage of all social processes while focusing on practical and changeable consciousness during the reproduction of social activities.

Several ideas mentioned above must be clarified and integrated with other ideas of Giddens' social-scientific idea. Regarding the last idea (no. 6), we must pay attention to two components— practical consciousness and social reproduction. Regarding the consciousness component, we must mention that the acting Subject should be treated in three dimensions: the unconscious, the practical conscious, and the dialogical conscious. Indeed, the unconscious is a necessary aspect of social theory. However, accord-

ing to Giddens it must be examined within the context of the con-
scious, which means avoiding reduction of various social compo-
nents to the unconscious (1979: 49–95). Dialogical consciousness
can be concluded to be a central factor in the theory of structura-
tion. The basic assumptions of the theory are therefore based on
the individual's dialogical consciousness. Giddens' viewpoint is
apparently that reality is composed of continuous activities and not
of separate activities that must be integrated. Regarding social re-
production, the Theory of Structuration does not view social re-
production as an explanatory term, with the exception that repro-
duction should be explained in terms connected to the Subject—
reproduction is examined by actions. Social reality is deduced not
from the transformation of cultural patterns, but from those who
carry out that transformation. From the Theory of Structuration
point of view, norms in social interactions should be reproduced in
social meetings. If a social meeting is simultaneously a medium and
a product of interrelations (point no. 5 above), Giddens claims that
what produces and preserves social reality is the dynamic human
dimension. In Giddens' thought, man apparently plays a central
role in constructing social reality. At this stage we can again notice
the difference between Giddens and the structural approaches in
which social reproduction is an existing or an objective fact, while
Giddens points to the social reproduction process. This fact can be
a reason for the need to separate structure from system (points nos.
3 and 4 above), a separation not made by functionalism or structur-
alism (1979: 47). In order to properly understand points nos. 1 and
2 above, we should refer to Martin Heidegger. In Heidegger's opin-
ion, we do not have to focus on a search for transcendental knowl-
edge but must examine daily experiences. From Giddens' point of
view, the terms "time" and "space" are related to social systems
spreading along these two dimensions—time and space—based on
the mechanism for social and systemic integration. Since being and
time are philosophical sources of time and space, it can be con-
cluded that focusing on man's actions as a thinking and acting crea-
ture will clarify who stands behind the mechanism for social and
systemic integration. When Giddens claims that we must focus on
man as a thinking creature, he does not mean focusing on episte-
mological components—"those working in social theory … should
be concerned first and foremost with reworking conceptions of

human being and human doing, social reproduction and social transformation" (1984: xx).

What we have read until now turns our attention to the human being as an extremely important factor creating the social reality of which he is a part. For that reason, the Theory of Structuration must focus on him. However, Giddens does not turn to subjectivism, since he also claims that structural factors influence social reality. "Duality of structure" is the term that supports this claim, since it means that the individual is not solely a social product that can simultaneously be analyzed socially. The Theory of Structuration does not accept the differentiation between static and dynamic and rejects any parallelization between structure and constraint. It assumes that structure enables and restricts actions, and that a social theory should examine aspects of the social system that control the connection between the two dimensions—enabling and restricting actions—while neither has any priority (Giddens 1991: 35). The theory Giddens wants to construct is a social hermeneutic theory that will be able to deal more accurately with the meaning of unintended consequences and conditions (1982b: 1–17). Needs, intentions, and so on are therefore part of the human being's world and cannot be attributed to the social system (1979: 1–8). If this is the task a theory should carry out, then it must overcome the traditional duality of Subject–Object, create a conceptual framework in which neither has priority, and afford a central position to social action. The last idea includes two terms: "knowledge" and "ability." Knowledge means that every individual has data on the society in which he acts. Ability means that in every social action the individual has the option to act differently if he wants, and ultimately has the ability to change reality (Giddens 1982a: 30).

The six characteristics mentioned at the beginning of this chapter place Giddens in a clear position in the sociological discourse. The importance of presenting Giddens' viewpoint in this discourse stems from the fact that, in my opinion, a full understanding of social theory can only be achieved from a comparable point of view. The following section should therefore be regarded as another step toward a better understanding of Giddens' social-scientific thought.

C. Giddens and Other Theoretical Approaches

The following section does not contain a comprehensive back-ground of sociological development, although the main thought patterns and Giddens' attitude toward each of them can be seen. It is a kind of large-scale map that can show us no more than a gen-eral direction toward the main issue of this book.

There is both agreement and disagreement between Giddens and Marx. According to Giddens' working assumptions mentioned in section A, it appears that he would accept Marx's tendency to examine reality from the actual to the abstract (as opposed to the accepted German philosophical idea that first examines the abstract and then the earthly). Giddens and Marx share a similar attitude toward the human praxis, which regards human beings as neither passive objects nor as completely free Subjects. On the other hand, they differ in the positive human praxis. According to Marx, the sole representatives of the real human interest are the lower class. Giddens rejects such a position (1990a: 154). He uses the term "duality of structure" to mean that the researchers have another common belief—external factors influence social reality. Marx's tendency to entwine the labor market with praxis, as a production of social life and reproduction, is accepted by Giddens (1979: 1–8), who still does not think that we can find independent economic activity solely in the labor market. Giddens thus rejects the eco-nomic reductionism that is a central component of Marx's thought (1987a: 27). In the context of economic reductionism, Giddens does not accept Marxism's idea of continuous development and does not introduce a complete social development. This is partly the result of the unintended consequences that are part of social reality, according to Giddens, but are not part of the Marxist idea. We cannot ignore the fact that changes in production patterns do influence social events. However, the question that can be raised is whether these are independent economic changes. According to Giddens' conceptualization, a completely independent economic factor will be rejected, because focusing solely on materialistic components leads to an avoidance of other components that are part of social reality and also play an active role in its construction. In this context a distinction that Giddens makes between two terms can be introduced: "authorization" and "allocation." The former refers to the ability to give instructions to other people, and the latter to the context of materialistic instructions. Giddens, as

opposed to Marx, views the events of allocation as one possibility in the second term (1979: 96–130).

According to Weber, the individual's place in modern society can be examined through the beaurocratic model. In that model there is a linkage between status and freedom of action: the lower your status, the less freedom you have. From Giddens' criticism of that point of view we can learn about his dispute with Weber not only in the context of organization, but also in a general perspective. Giddens rejects Weber's equation of bureaucracy and lack of freedom of action. Giddens therefore also disagrees with the idea that the lower your status, the less freedom you have. He claims that precisely a rigid environment enables overcoming lack of flexibility, and that Weber attributed too much power to the existence of written rules (1979: 137). In this context, Giddens claims that rules do not interpret themselves, and we can again observe the central position he relegates to the active individual, in this case as an interpreter of rules. Giddens introduces another term, "dialectic of control," which means that those who have less power can still reach power positions during social activity. Those individuals who do not take a minimal part in the dialectic of control cease to be social agents. From my point of view, Giddens supposes, even though he does not state this clearly, that lack of involvement is related more to the Subject himself and less to external circumstances. This is in agreement with other characteristics of his thought that have been mentioned above. It would not be a mistake to say, again from my point of view, that Giddens presented the equation: I act = I exist. "Act" in this sense means to take a stand and influence the way things occur. It is here that we can uncover another difference between Giddens and Weber. Weber introduced the thesis of the loss of meaning and freedom as part of the by-products of modernization, an illustration that presents the iron cage that confines free will, self-consciousness, and other components that characterized human life before the modern era. The confrontation between Giddens and Weber results from the fact that Giddens claims that structural and nonstructural components have equal power. Neither can take full control over reality, and the knowing and active Subject can also be a full partner in the construction of social reality in the present era without becoming a prisoner of the reality he created.

Functionalism locates biological and social systems in the same framework-title. The individual is thus placed in a passive, even marginal, position within the system. Giddens does not ignore the existence of the social system, which he perceives as reproduced relations between Subjects or collectives organized as ordinary social behaviors. According to him, the nature of the social system will necessarily lead us to find social interaction in it, and therefore also the Subject's activities. For this reason Giddens, unlike Parsons, has a less rigid concept of the term "role." Parsons emphasizes the external-structural dimension, whereas Giddens links role concept and independent behavior. According to Giddens, a role is a normative concept and is therefore connected to norms. We should thus view role instructions as normative principles organized in different terms of social identities, meaning that these principles are connected to more general norms. This idea again explains the difference between Giddens and Parsons. In functionalism there is a reduction of the Subject to the role, as if the Subject's personality can be deduced solely from knowing the roles he plays. For Giddens, according to his expression "differentiation of identities," such a situation is impossible, and there is definitely no reduction of any kind. Giddens does not appear to be disturbed by the fact that the term "role" has lost some of its analytical power as a result of some of his basic assumptions, as if he is willing to relinquish some of the analytical power due to the false estimations people reach when accepting a rigid idea of "role." Another difference between Giddens and functionalism can be observed upon examination of the issue of social reproduction. Functionalism views this issue as something that occurs without any connection to the activities of social agents. Parsons' linkage of internalization of values with normative constraints means that he claims that the individual's intentional actions are actually just acceptance of values (Giddens 1976b). Giddens obviously rejects the idea of a lack of independent personal involvement of social agents—the independent Subject. Reproduction, according to Giddens, is not a mysterious achievement attained by social systems through the activities of their members. Change is therefore an integral part of the process of social reproduction (1979: 112). There is thus a need for the examination of processible events and not a specific cemented event, since then, if we seek to understand reality, we will have to combine our separate examinations. The

Theory of Structuration examines reality while focusing on the dimension of process, since it also deals with aspects of time and space, contrary to the Structural approach in which the examination of process is irrelevant since social reproduction is obvious. According to what we know about Giddens up to this stage, we can say that from his point of view social systems are built not on a foundation of rules but rather on reproduced actions, which create a link between the Subject and structure. Parsons claimed the existence of a system of rules that controls society, so that the link between components of a system is not problematic. Giddens also uses the term "social rule," but in a more refined manner. He claims that there are social rules in the social sciences but that they are generalizations of causal aspects, which are a mixture of intended and unintended consequences (1979: 234–59). It can be concluded that rules in the social sciences have a historically changeable nature (1982b: 1–17, 1981), and society can be understood as a differentiated and historically located formation. It is here that we must mention Giddens' claim that man is capable not only of acting according to rules, but also of constructing them. Again we can see the Subject's position from the researcher's point of view, and the existing need for a theory that will take human activities into account. In summary, Giddens' criticism of functionalism is based on the following aspects:

1. A wrong division between static and dynamic, or synchronic and diachronic.
2. The inability to view people as reasoning agents who know what they do.
3. Contentment in identifying systems requirements that do not enable an accurate understanding of social reality.
4. The existence of systems needs other than those proposed by Functionalism.

Giddens rejects Lévi-Strauss' idea of structure, since he claims that structure is not something the researcher invents, nor is structure accepted as structuration—the structuring of social relations across time and space, in light of the duality of structure (1984: 376). From Giddens' point of view, the Theory of Structuration should relate to every kind of social process and reproduction pattern, with reference to unconscious aspects related to practical consciousness. When he writes that Lévi-Strauss does not deal with structuration, Giddens apparently takes a critical stand, since social

structure is not regarded as both definite and changeable. Another criticism concerns the fact that Lévi-Strauss views the construction process as binary frameworks produced by the unconscious, while the Theory of Structuration affords a central position to practical and discoursive consciousness. Giddens apparently criticizes the fact that structuralism does not deal with practical consciousness and the contextuality of action. Understanding human life as a framework of practical action cannot be performed by structuralism or poststructuralism, since human action is not a result of planned impulses (1979: 96–130).

Giddens, by using the terms "unintended consequences" and "structure," rejects deterministic thought patterns. This can be illustrated by reference to evolutionism and progressivism. In evolutionism, previous stages are a necessary source for the next stage, and social events are bound to natural phenomena—history can be written as a series of clear stages of social development. Giddens accepts that there is a chance that historical events will influence present events in society but does not regard these events as a single influential source, since he favors the idea that man makes his history reflexively. In this context, Giddens' claim that social rules have a historical-changeable nature must be mentioned. To be more precise, Giddens also claims the existence of some duality. On the one hand, man, as a physiological creature, is part of nature, so there exists some similarity between them. On the other hand, man has a second nature, so that he cannot be reduced to physical events (1979: 161). Giddens rejects another evolutionary idea that expresses similarity between the developmental stages of societies and individuals, since a unique personal character exists. According to Giddens, the drawbacks of evolutionary approaches cannot be overcome, and history cannot be compressed into the evolutionary scheme. He therefore claims that they should be deconstructed and not reconstructed—social change should have a form that is different from the evolutionary one. There is thus no point in reconstructing them (1984: xxii). From the term "unintended consequences" we can learn that man can also have a negative influence. This possibility positions Giddens in opposition to progressivism, since progressivism claims a positive path of progress.

A positive approach to the dynamic aspect of life can be found not only in Giddens' ideas but also within symbolic interaction, phenomenology, and ethnomethodology. Giddens obviously

does not accept the fact that these last three theoretical approaches ignore the existence of the structural dimension, since he also talks about the duality of structure.

This chapter presents various theoretical perspectives under the same title, which under other circumstances could also be presented separately. Still, its main purpose is to understand Giddens' attitude toward various points of view, in order to understand his conceptualization more accurately. This concept can be found in Giddens' Theory of Structuration. At this stage I would like to discuss the meaning of the theory's development.

D.   The Significance of the Theory of Structuration

There are three main implications to the development of the Theory of Structuration:

1.   The disappearance of society's advantage in structural approaches.
2.   A similar status for Subject and structure.
3.   The acceptance of unintended factors as an integral part of reality.

According to the first and second points above, there exist two methodological foundations—Subject and structure—that are simultaneously dependent and independent (Giddens 1987b). In structural approaches, the objective has priority over the subjective, resulting in only one methodological point of view, since the Subject's actions are influenced by external factors. These approaches do not accept the subject as a knowledgeable factor that can create change, and society has more power than the Subjects that comprise it.

Giddens rejects such a hierarchy because it prevents a more accurate understanding of social reality. Therefore, social constraints are not equivalent to physical ones, and society is not accepted as external to its members. At this point, another criticism can be observed. Giddens claims that Durkheim and Parsons, as well as others who claim society's superiority over its members, did not succeed in accurately describing the "external-objective" nature of societies (1979: 49–95). Giddens tries to overcome this drawback of the Theory of Structuration. He makes an effort to distinguish between the ability to construct reality and the ability to act according to the reality created by man. This enables us to reach a more balanced understanding of reality, since if we accept Giddens' atti-

tude we do not attribute an absolute position to either component of reality, because in social theory the ideas of action and structure are previous assumptions of each other—in action there is an *a priori* assumption of structure, and in structure there is an *a priori* assumption of action. These are dialectical relations requiring a change in the ideas themselves and in the ideas that are related to them for their understanding. We must also take time into consideration, since temporality, in several aspects, is part of our life. Here we can again learn about the Subject's role in Giddens' conceptualization, since changes also result from the Subject's activity. "Human beings, in the Theory of Structuration, are always and everywhere regarded as knowledgeable agents, although acting within historically specific bounds of the unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of their acts" (1982b: 222).

In my opinion, unintended consequences of action do not ignore the Subject's position, but emphasize that man does not have absolute control over his life, which sometimes has its own dynamics. Another criticism of closed theoretical paradigms that claim absolute understanding of social reality can be observed. According to Giddens, there will apparently always be a certain factor that will not be part of the scientific explanation. This may be a reference to our more accurate understanding of the position of science in present society, and we can thus understand Giddens' criticism of positivistic orientations, whose presence in sociology can lead to several drawbacks, so there is room for a reconstruction of that orientation (1976a). In order to emphasize this idea, it can be examined from another perspective. Giddens draws two circles of knowledge, the scientific and the nonscientific, which exist side by side—"Sociological knowledge spirals in and out of the universe of social life, reconstructing both itself and that universe as an integral part of that process" (1990a: 15–16). We can find intended and unintended consequences of action within these two circles of knowledge. Giddens also asserts a discourse between all components of society, both common and scientific, where neither has any epistemological priority (1984: 284). Since unintended consequences are also part of the scientific world, there is no room for a pretentious scientific model that describes and analyzes reality solely according to its criteria. Giddens does not relent and still tries to understand human society with the "assistance" of:

1.   The knowledgeable and active Subject.

2.   Structure and Subject existing side by side as dependent and independent factors.
3.   Unintended consequences.
4.   Double hermeneutics.

A circular movement among the above four dimensions can be identified, and it is therefore impossible to introduce the first source of action. The result of this circular activity is that part of social reality becomes more fixed, the part we have known until now as structure. From Giddens' point of view, a social theory should be a source of ideas about the nature of human activity, since it must enlighten the concrete process of social life (1984: xvii–xviii. One must do this, according to Giddens, while focusing on man and his actions, social reproduction, and social transformation, and not on various epistemological arguments (1984: xx). Understanding the conditions of the reproduction of the system is part of the condition of the reproduction itself (1984: 191), and since understanding is a human activity, Giddens apparently focuses his attention on the thinking and acting man. The Theory of Structuration tries to show which human agents are in the process of constructing society (1984: 220), since only then can we better understand social events. Or, as Giddens claims, we can also understand society through the self-understanding of social agents (1990a: 15). Since social practices lie at the foundation of the construction of the subjective and the social-objective, we should focus on them (1984: xxii). The result of this focus is that history is composed of acting Subjects. It is a kind of power each member of society has and decides if and when to express—"human beings make history [and] human social life is formed and reformed in praxis, in the practical activities carried out in the enactment of everyday life" (1984: 242).

Giddens turns our attention to the Subject and therefore does not bind the Subject inside a rigid theoretical model. This can be observed when Giddens examines the nature of theories and their role in human discourse. He also claims that social theory is not connected to just one discipline (Giddens and Turner 1987: 1) and that truth is not part of one source of knowledge. Social behavior cannot be understood and explained according to a single way of thought. In my opinion, Giddens describes how each discipline should examine its subjects of study and how the scientific discourse should proceed as a result of the absence of a hierarchical

structure of knowledge. Giddens apparently strives for human and scientific reflexivity, as part of a non-arrogant human-scientific endeavor that will lead to a more accurate understanding of man and society that is not pleased with passiveness but includes an opportunity to act and to assume a stand (1979: 234–59). The Theory of Structuration can thus be regarded as a critical theory, not a closed, disconnected model of knowledge that claims to shape society in advance and analyze reality according to that model of knowledge, but a sensitive frame of thought of which man and other components of reality are an integral part.

3.   POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN ROBERT BELLAH'S THEORY OF MODERN RELIGION AND THE THEORETICAL THOUGHT OF ANTHONY GIDDENS

A.   Introduction

The following section presents the major commonalities of Giddens and Bellah, those previously defined as "tangential meeting points."

As mentioned in the chapter comparing Habermas and Bellah, additional commonalities as well as contradictory ideas can no doubt be found.* Nevertheless, each scholar's general theoretical and social ideas must be observed and his basic theories must be identified in order to point to commonalities.

B.   Points of Contact

Reading Bellah's concept of modern religion raises major significant arguments. These arguments illuminate the scholar's basic assumptions on the Subject and society, which were presented in chapter 2 section 6. I would like to remind the reader of these arguments, and those who remember them should feel free to go to the next section.

Analysis of modern religion leads Bellah to the conclusion that the Subject is a "dynamic multidimensional self capable, within

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* Originally I examined tangential meeting points (points of contact)_ in each aspect of modern religion separately—symbolic system, religious action, religious organization, and social implication. Here I present a summary of all four. Those interested in further details can find them in Reiner 1997: 144–210.

limits, of continual self-transformation and capable, again within limits, of remaking the world, including the very symbolic forms with which he deals with it, even the forms that state the unalterable conditions of his own existence" (Bellah 1970: 42). This quote describes a social process which indicates that "man … [not only shapes and/or reshaps the social arena, but] is [also] responsible for the choice of his symbolism" (ibid.). It is a dynamic social reality in which "every fixed position has become open to question in the process of making sense out of man and his situation" (ibid.). This does not mean that we are facing a completely new world, and Bellah is certainly not pulling in that direction. He simply says that our social world is more dynamic than before, and that social contexts in which we act (groups, institutions, etc.) have therefore become dependent and independent factors—the Subject also thinks and acts independent of his/her social/religious context. With that idea in mind I would like to turn to Giddens.

Human beings are full partners in the construction of social reality, and an independent ability cannot be attributed solely to external structural components (Giddens 1979: 49–95). This idea is at the foundation of Giddens' thought, in concepts he coined as well as in the "Theory of Structuration" he established. This theory expresses his viewpoint of the individual, society, and the interrelationships between them clearly and methodically. It is based on the assumption that structural and subjective factors have an equal effect on the construction of social reality. For Giddens, this means that Subject and structure are two methodological sources that are both dependent and independent (1987b). This is in opposition to structural approaches in which the "objective" takes precedence over the subjective. This precedence indicates one methodological viewpoint, since a greater impact is attributed to society than to the Subject comprising this society.

Giddens has reservations concerning this hierarchical structure. In his opinion it is not accurate, since it does not enable us to properly understand social reality and the variety of processes occurring within this reality. Giddens' approach indicates an attempt to distinguish between the ability to build reality—an active aspect—and the behavior dictated by the structured reality—a passive aspect. Such a distinction should enable us to obtain a more accurate picture of social reality, since we cannot attribute an absolute effect to any particular aspect. It should be indicated that ac-

cording to Giddens, in action (active Subject) a prior assumption of structure exists, and in structure there is a prior assumption of an active Subject (1982a). We are therefore affected by structural factors but are simultaneously full partners in a dynamic process of constructing a social reality during which we also imprint our personal stamp (1971: xi).

Giddens adds another term, "unintended consequences," to his theoretical outlook. The idea behind this term is that life sometimes has its own dynamics, which cannot be predicted and whose implications form an integral part of social reality. This assumption led Giddens to emphasize that reality cannot be bound within the framework of a theoretical model. Social theory must therefore clarify the nature of human activity in order to understand the concrete processes of social life (1984: xvii–xviii). He therefore claimed that the Theory of Structuration attempts to understand and demonstrate the role of human agents in the process of shaping society (1984: 220).

This also has a significant symbolic meaning that, as I understand it, is shared by Giddens and Bellah. At this point I would like to emphasize the common denominator between these two scholars as it appears in their philosophies.

Both scholars describe a dynamic social reality, with the Subject taking an active role in its construction (Giddens 1984: xx, 1982b: 1–17; Bellah 1970: 39–44. More specifically, Giddens and Bellah claim that social agents can also act independently in the process of constructing their social reality (Bellah 1970: 42; Giddens 1986: 531). These actions indicate the dynamic nature of our social life and the reflexive relationship of human beings to their social life (Bellah 1970: 42; Giddens 1976b; 1979: 1–8, 9–48, 96–130; 1982a; 1982b: 197–214; 1990a: 15) as they reexamine traditional patterns. This process can end with new social patterns and points to the growing responsibility of the Subject.

> [In modern religion] man takes responsibility for his own fate [and as part of this] every fixed position has become open to question in the process of making sense out of man and his situation. [That is way] I expect traditional religious symbolism to be maintained and developed in new directions, but with growing awareness that man … is responsible for the choice of his symbolism. (Bellah 1970: 42)

There is no room for ready-made answers, and this is one of the reasons why social life today has become more demanding than ever. The Church (as well as scientific models) cannot provide ultimate answers.

This is exactly what Giddens meant when stressing that the Subject is a reasoning agent who creates and preserves social reality and that theoretical/scientific models can propose explanations of various events, with the acknowledgment that they do not provide ultimate answers. This clarifies his call for dialogue between laymen and scientists (1984: 284) and emphasizes the importance he attributes to the Subject, whoever he may be, in his theoretical outlook.

I have presented several ideas expressed by Giddens and Bellah in order to emphasize their common statements and ideas. However, what is most important to the argument of this book is the "meeting" between their philosophies. Indeed, Bellah points to religion and religious life, whereas Giddens does not. Nevertheless, this should not and will not prevent us from seeing the points of contact between the two, especially the significant place of the Subject in constructing his/her social reality and the need for multidimensional perspectives in order to reach a better understanding of our social world.

Similar conclusions were presented at the end of the chapter that compared Bellah and Habermas. It would be wrong to conclude that all three scholars present completely similar ideas, theories, and so on. However, it should be clear by now that in certain aspects Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas share a common idea. At the present stage our main goal is to try to understand the sociological-theoretical meaning of that common idea.

5 THE MEANING OF POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN ROBERT BELLAH'S THEORY OF MODERN RELIGION AND THE THEORETICAL THOUGHT OF HABERMAS AND GIDDENS

1. INTRODUCTION

Each of these three social scientists deals with a different subject. However, a factor common to them can be identified. Bellah (religion), Giddens, and Habermas (science) describe a dynamic social reality where the obvious exists less and less and the human actor also plays an active and creative role in constructing the social reality of which he is a part. The three scholars also claim, each in his own field, that there is no single conceptual thought that can be the source for social legitimation and that can independently and fully analyze and explain social reality. It can therefore be claimed that Bellah, Habermas, and Giddens favor a multidimensional analysis of the social reality in which we live, as part of an effort to reach a more accurate understanding of this reality.

At this stage it is important to understand the meaning of this finding. To do so, a flexible way of thinking should be adopted, something not unfamiliar in sociological discourse. For example, Luke (1990: 13) proposed the examination of events from points of view that are external to theories, and Habermas constructed the Theory of Communicative Action while making changes in a variety of ideas. Castoriadis (1987: 364) called this "social imagination," the purpose of which is to enable a new point of view, which is not available if we use the previous logical framework. This new point of view is connected to the researcher as well to the subject of study. On the one hand the subject of study is perceived as something dynamic; while on the other hand the scholar should work with situational sensitivity. This type of research will undoubtedly

prevent the entrenchment of patterns of thought and will enrich the present discourse (Gastil 1974; Rosenberg 1989). One prerequisite for the evolution of such a situation is the abandonment of thought patterns that must be changed (Tulea and Krausz 1993)— "It may be asserted that by the dismissal of old patterns of thought, a new possibility of creative activity emerged, expressed in the positive enterprise of changing the universe of social discourse" (ibid. 213).

It must be clear that the above words do not call for an all-encompassing abandonment of what we know. It is mostly evidence of a need for flexible thought patterns that will hopefully enrich current sociological discourse, if only to a small extent.

2. THE MEANING OF THE COMMON DENOMINATOR BETWEEN BELLAH, GIDDENS, AND HABERMAS IN A GENERAL THEORETICAL CONTEXT

The characteristics of modern religion (Bellah) and the two types of social-scientific thought (Giddens and Habermas) can be viewed as three theories describing a social order or reality. A connection between these ideas was created through the medium of theoretical discourse. If we accept the assumption that each of the three scholars presents a theory/paradigm of social order/reality, we are led to the following conclusion.

Eisenstadt and Curelaru (1982: 97–98) claim that paradigms contain the following components:

1. Identifying the dynamics of the components of social order—individuals, groups, cultural symbols, etc.
2. Analyzing the mechanisms through which these components integrate into networks of social relations.
3. Understanding and analyzing the rules regulating the action of these mechanisms.

These assumptions indicate, according to Eisenstadt and Curelaru, that when sociologists construct a concept with which they analyze social order, they will take the following aspects into consideration:

1. Whether the behavior is based on personal creativity or is determined *a priori*.
2. Finding institutional foci of personal creativity or determinism.

3. Learning about the nature of human behavior via causal explanations or via explanations founded on a meaning that does not necessarily stem from a causal reason.
4. Investigating the universal versus the local characteristics of social order.
5. Understanding the nature of the social interrelationship activity—whether it is harmonic, stable, or variable.

If we combine these latter five points and the conceptual common denominator between the philosophies of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas—the active and creative role of the human actor in constructing the social reality of which he is part, and a multidimensional analysis of social reality—a social paradigm containing the following components can be presented:

1. Creative human behavior.
2. Explanations of human behavior supported also by the understanding of the meaning of things.
3. Social interaction as being variable.
4. Subjects can also act independently of structural factors.
5. Examination of social reality from several points of view.

We should not reject a theory of social order built on a comparison between theories (Bellah, Habermas, and Giddens), because theory, or theoretical thinking, is one of several ways of expressing life (Robertson and Lechner 1984).

It can also be explained in the following way (Nielsen 1981):

1. Theory is meant to create thoughts that accompany reality.
2. Practices are meant to create reality that accompanies thoughts (theory/theoretical thinking).

Therefore, the common factor between theory and practice is the desire to adjust one dimension to the other—theory with practice and practice with theory. Social systems are therefore collectives of Subjects whose integration and mutual influence can be theorized while they construct a social dimension of space and time (Domingues 1995). Moreover, although this is an abstract issue, it can still be examined empirically (Bergesen 1984).

To be more precise, it can be claimed that a "connection" between the three theories (Bellah, Habermas, and Giddens) can be constructed because the three emphasize the creative role of the Subject and the need for multidimensional analysis of social reality. Thus, two analytic variables—Subject and multidimensional analy-

sis—create the common denominator between these three theo-
rists and the paradigm described above. In this paradigm each of
these analytic variables can stand alone, while also being connected
to the other. It can therefore be concluded that neither of the two
variables is more important than the other; that there are no defi-
nite relations between them; and that specific analytic closures can-
not be identified.

Eisenstadt and Curelaru (1982: 315–16), as well as other
scholars, favor the concept that the absence of analytic closures
does not allow us to place a specific variable in a more important
position. This conceptual orientation permits a better diagnosis and
understanding of the variety of components of social order, an un-
derstanding of the autonomy of each component, while retaining
the ability to understand social order from another theoretical per-
spective. Although such a situation may lead to misunderstandings,
it ultimately makes possible a more accurate understanding of the
social reality or theoretical issue under analysis.

It is also a sign of critical thinking, because a critical study
built on the integration of several thought patterns can result in a
more thorough understanding of these patterns and can point to
new directions for analysis (Luke 1990: 15, 16). Other researchers
also exhibit this attitude (Tulea and Krausz 1993; Attali 1985: 5).
For example, Attali claims that we should listen to the sound of the
unique event without a rigid thought orientation (ibid.). Symboli-
cally, this is a call for an interdisciplinary approach that will enable
us to broaden the spectrum of truth we have arrived at thus far
(Collins 1994: 295). This open analytic orientation points to the
fact that social and cultural reality is also shaped by human activity
(Koslowski 1994), so we are not seeking presocial aspects of hu-
man nature (Eisenstadt and Curelaru 1982: 129). It is a call for a
dialogue that will lead to critical mutual progress (Pfohl and
Gordon 1986). These critical orientations/approaches also under-
mine the dominance of nature as a source for the understanding of
social processes, and the idea of identifying the Subject with institu-
tional adjustment (Groh and Sieferle 1980). We can thus conclude
that a scholar who adopts these assumptions must analyze social
reality by focusing on social relations rather than by searching for
objective influences. Critical approaches also tend to glorify the
reflexive Subject against totality, while protecting human hope,

freedom, and utopian ideas that emerge under new historical circumstances (Bronner 1994: 322).

The main idea of this chapter was to present a theory of social order resulting from the conceptual integration of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas. Two main analytic variables were found to stand at the foundation of the theory: the importance of a multidimensional examination of social reality in order to attain a better understanding of it, and the Subject, who is actively involved in constructing the social reality of which he is part. The fact that such an outlook is found in the thought of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas has symbolic significance in the sociological-theoretical context as well as in the general context. I will begin with the general context.

3.   THE SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF AN ACTIVE SUBJECT IN THE GENERAL CONTEXT

Focusing on the Subject as an active and creative factor affecting social reality indicates a social-cultural outlook that is significant at several levels. At the philosophical level, the way in which the Subject is perceived can be viewed as something symbolizing personal freedom with the individual having some leeway in directing his way (Kirsh 1994). It is an ability to re-examine thoughts and decisions (Tugendhat 1986: xxvi), indicating that man can be a source of various ideas and can examine them reflexively after they emerge. The human being is therefore also responsible for creating the moral codes by which society acts, and we attribute moral responsibility to the human actor (Dupre 1994; Frankfurt 1971). It indicates that there is no normative system independent of social reality, and that people actively participate in everyday life (Nielsen 1981). Some may regard it as a connection between subjectivity and truth (Szakolczai 1994)—ethical and moral concepts derived from the Subject (Farrell 1994: 193). Other scholars may even claim that in the modern era the Subject has become the yardstick by which things are measured (Guerra 1994). The human being has the knowledge and the ability to bring about changes at the personal and the social-general levels (Koslowski 1994). This enables the human being to express his authentic humanity (Luke 1990: 110), by a way of thinking which is part of a trend known as "new humanitarianism" (Taylor 1986), in which the human conscious has a vantage point (Berthold-Bond 1994); that is, when analyzing social reality we should focus on the human role as an active and impor-

tant component and should examine the subjective interpretation of the social interaction (Pfohl and Gordon 1986: S96).

Methodologically, we focus on the diminution of the empirical-objective, claiming that human behavior is subject to external rules while Subjects resemble a passive raw material. In this context it is argued that empiricism cannot expose the entire truth about human beings (Castell 1965: 38). What in previous epochs was accepted as "obvious," which people must obey, is today a component that people treat reflexively (Lash 1990: 259). The idea of self-reflection is based on the right to participate and on the notion that people can value themselves as appraisers. This brings about a chance for positive social change (ibid.), from which we can conclude that people are directly involved in constructing social reality. Since members of society take an active part in social reality, attention should be paid to the Subject because reality is not given but is produced by us—"In more recent sociological theory we came across a new way of thinking which is able to deal with reality not as a given but as something produced" (Tulea and Krausz 1993: 213).

In this context it can be argued that when we regard reality as something manufactured, we adopt a processing point of view that prevents us from accepting social reality as given and also forces us to search for the dynamic component on which this reality is based. Michel Foucault claimed that this is how the historical text that we try to explain was created by intentional human activity (Taylor 1986) that points to an act of objecting to the objective, and of questioning what exists (Farrell 1994: 221). Subject dynamics are what enforce order on social reality (Lash 1990: 128). Attali (1976, 1985: 132) follows the same line of thinking, calling it "the right to compose one's life." Although Attali writes about the economic dimension, we are justified in using his ideas in a general-social context based on Attali's concept of the rights to be different, not to act according to the acceptable, and to create new codes (1985: 143). This activity is a prerequisite for the creation of a new communications network between human beings, a network of which personal and interpersonal meaning is an integral part (1985: 134). A world of discourse—"Culture in traditional societies is structured by a single 'doxa' … [a] universe of doxa … [while modern culture is a] universe of discourse" (Lash 1990: 261).

If we accept the idea that modern culture is a universe of discourse, we agree with Castoriadis that society is not one big family, but rather a network of relations between autonomous adults (Castoriadis 1987: 94). According to Gouldner, parts or subsystems of society will, in this situation, be in a state of functional autonomy, or strive to achieve such a state (Eisenstadt and Curelaru 1982: 298). This functional autonomy is characterized by an independent ability to identify and satisfy needs.

In conclusion, we may say that people can direct themselves through individual activity toward their personal construction and destiny. This idea is part of the German idealism in which a person becomes freer and more connected to himself when personal thoughts are put into practice (Farrell 1994: 221). We can therefore adopt the view that human characteristics are shaped by action, and the more constructed a person is, the more influence he/she will have on future events (ibid.). We encounter this idea in Castoriadis' book *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. Castoriadis believes that human beings have the ability to influence events, that they can act according to this ability, and that the cultural environment enables them to do so (1987: 93). This would not be an arbitrary act, because acts that a Subject decides to take are performed also according to that person's interaction with his/her surroundings (Farrell 1994: 53)—an intersection between individualism and collectivism (Wellmer 1990: 227).

Focusing on the Subject does not neutralize social structure but places it in a more accurate position within the social discourse that is formed (Lash 1990: 94; Castell 1965: 5; Rux 1988).

Yet despite the fact that we can identify a concentration on the Subject, we do not find a tendency toward philosophy of the subject. This is because proponents of this view have not succeeded in demonstrating that all knowledge and meaning derive only from the person himself (Foucault 1993). These philosophers also did not succeed in establishing a philosophy of scientific knowledge that takes the mechanism of meaning and of structures of systems of meaning into account. Destruction of the subjectivistic orientation also resulted from analyses of systems of meaning in linguistics, psychoanalysis, and structural-anthropology. Although it can be concluded that there is no room for a purely subjectivistic orientation, since this would lead to a narrow understanding of reality (Taylor 1989: 511), we can accept the position that subjectiv-

ity is, to a certain extent, a source that creates and reproduces social reality (Farrell 1994: 191).

The active Subject "created" the conceptual common denominator between Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas. This section presented the symbolic meaning of this common denominator in a general context. The value of this meaning to sociology must now be clarified.

4. SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL VISION

It was Bellah himself who claimed that researchers in the social sciences present behavioral steppingstones that people must adopt (Vaughan and Sjoberg 1986: 132). This statement is based on the viewpoint that sociology is a form of moral dialogue (Fuhrman 1986: 78) and that moral direction to social life is anchored in social theories (Vaughan and Sjoberg 1986: 128). The meaningful place afforded to the Subject can thus be regarded as a call to man/woman, wherever he/she may be, to become an active partner in constructing social reality. To a certain extent this is even his duty. It can therefore be concluded that these three thinkers do not adopt a neutral scientific viewpoint. They take a stand and present a direction, which in their understanding social reality should adopt. To be more precise, these researchers present a direction that the Subjects can adopt if they have not yet done so, and those who have adopted it should continue. In this context it is important to emphasize that Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas do this without gliding into dogmatics and out of the realization of the complex structure of social reality as well as in the spirit of analytical openness which I stressed above.

The question we must raise at this point is, What is the significance of the fact that these three theoretical-social approaches call the Subject, by this or that formulation, to serve as a factor directing his life and thus also the society in which he lives? The answer, in my opinion, is that this is an anti-nomological scientific-educative-reflexive narrative, reflecting a vision of the desired face of human society.

In order to clarify why the conceptual common denominator between these three researchers can be viewed as symbolizing an anti-nomological scientific-educative-reflexive narrative, we must try to clarify the current meaning of "education" to some extent.

I realize that this is a loaded, multifaceted term that is interpreted in many ways and with different emphasis. I do not intend, and it would be wrong for me, to present a sweeping definition. Instead, it will be a quick but firm glimpse, which will enable the preliminary foundation of the above-mentioned idea.

Today, education means rejection of total absolute viewpoints of any kind (Zuckerman 1997). In this respect, the age of great narratives perceived as objective and universal is over (Aviram 1997; Offir 1997; Aloni 1997; Bronstein 1999), and there is no absolute certainty. Everything can be criticized, and renewal has turned into an integral part of current human experience (Jiro 1997). Even science cannot present itself as having ultimate ability, or as being the final anchor (Zuckerman 1997; Offir 1997).

This sobering has even led thinkers to an acknowledgement of the importance of the different and the unique (Attali 1976, 1985: 132), in the legitimacy that it can make itself heard and that this will be heard comfortably (Maclaren 1999). Education can be understood to be a call for a rational and pluralistic dialogue, for human fulfillment in the form of involved and critical citizens (Aloni 1997) who raise questions and try to answer them out of the realization that normative-cultural limits are not absolute.

These thinkers break the cyclic structure of: reality → education → adaptive people → reality, and they praise the human potential for breaking limits as well as the personal responsibility we take on ourselves under these conditions. It seems to me that one of the researchers who combined the various above-mentioned educational motifs is Neil Postman in his book *The End of Education* (1998).

According to Postman, the educational narrative has several components, including the existence of mutual responsibility between people—wherever they may be—and the world in which they live; an awareness of the partiality of human knowledge alongside an unending effort to broaden this knowledge; raising questions and unceasing discussion of topics viewed as essential; accepting and preserving the different. I will present some of this thinker's sayings, in order to clarify matters. When referring to the question of the partiality of human knowledge Postman raises the following, among other things:

> The belief that we are like gods, or perfect, is one of the most
> serious sins we are capable of. The Greeks called this *hybris*, the

Christians call it pride, and scientists call it dogmatics. The main subject of the story is that people make mistakes. All the time. [However] we can repair our mistakes if we progress without *hybris*, pride or dogmatics …. When we realize that we cannot know the entire truth, we may move toward it step by step and move everything we know to be false out of our way. We can then see the truth receding, etc. etc. [And science should be regarded not as the absolute truth but as] a moral command within a larger narrative, whose purpose is to afford learning a perspective, balance and habits of humility. (61–62)

The acknowledgement of the partiality of human knowledge and the role of science in this context leads this researcher to an additional characteristic of the educative narrative—the need to unceasingly raise questions on any subject we find fit. This is due to the fact that "no achievement affords the right to excessive pride, everything is fluid and may change, following better arguments resulting from future experiments" (1998: 66).

According to Postman, another aspect contributing to the educative narrative is the acceptance and preservation of differences. He attempts to clarify the danger of fixation and the price we may pay if we are not sufficiently open-minded.

Every time a language or a form of art becomes fixed at a certain time and becomes impenetrable, filled only with itself, it is punished [weakened/becomes extinct]. Wherever there is room for differences, the result is growth and strength. (70)

If we combine the above ideas, a clear picture of social reality forms before our eyes. This reality is characterized by mutual responsibility between the Subjects. It stems from their involvement in the process of constructing social reality, from the acknowledgment of the incompleteness of our knowledge at any point in time alongside the fact that we can expand the range of our knowledge if we wish, from the acknowledgment of the need to maintain a continuous dialogue between ourselves on all subjects, and from the readiness to accept and even preserve the different, since difference also means viability.

Thus Postman's educational viewpoint, similarly to Henri Jiro's, Moshe Zuckerman's, and others', reflects a vision of the desired face of human society—a vision that, in my opinion, is reflected in the conceptual common denominator arising from the writings of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas (or the other way

around). This reflection is what turns this conceptual common de-nominator into evidence for the existence of an anti-nomological scientific-educative-reflexive narrative in their theories.

For the sake of clarity, I will examine several ideas raised by Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas. I will try to point to the similarity between the picture painted by Postman, as well as other thinkers mentioned above, and the conclusions I derived from the common denominator found between Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas.

The central axis of thought is that the activity of the Subject—construction of social reality—has several implications that form the basis for the claim of the social-educative message in the theo-ries of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas.

My first claim is that an active Subject necessarily testifies to personal and mutual responsibility between Subjects, because from the moment a person becomes a participant in the construction of social reality, even if only partially, he has some responsibility for the order of events. As indicated above, this idea is expressed in different ways in the writings of Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas. The fact that Postman called this mutual responsibility and the other three researchers did not do so should not prevent us from accepting the statement that this aspect is a motive common to Bellah, Giddens, Habermas, Postman, and other researchers from the above-mentioned field of education.

This is also the state of affairs when referring to the incom-pletenes of human knowledge and the role of science. Postman claimed that by being human we have partial knowledge and are thus prone to error. Scientists are not endowed with traits that neu-tralize this aspect but are supposed to clarify matters, neutralize arrogance, and encourage constant efforts to broaden our knowl-edge.

It has been mentioned that Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas, each in his own way, claimed that truth belongs to neither religion nor to science. This has also been presented by me as an indicator of analytic openness and is expressed by Bellah when writing that ideas obtain renewed personal interpretation, and that when differ-ent people present different points of view they complement ideas raised by others. Giddens expressed this idea when claiming that reality cannot be compressed into one theoretical model and when coining the term "unintended consequences." With Habermas it can be observed, among other things, from his criticism of the

nomological sciences and from the methodological assumption that the Theory of Communicative Action should expose man's intuitive knowledge.

It appears to me that the conceptual thread intertwined between these researchers is clear. One researcher claims that we have partial knowledge and others claim that one theoretical model is not sufficient for examining social reality, that equal weight should be afforded to different personal interpretations, and that human knowledge is not shaped solely "from the outside to the inside." The wording is different, but the idea is the same.

The need for constant debate on the subjects that build social reality as a condition for the existence of a healthy society is the following idea presented by Postman. The conceptual parallel of the three researchers arises from the fact that they indicate actions of Subjects within a social reality in which not everything is given beforehand. They emphasize that different people raise different ideas, and this obligates people to constantly discuss their way of life as an integral part of their experience. Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas describe a dynamic reality in which human dialogue takes place as part of the ongoing experience. This leads to the additional conclusion that social reality is not homogenous.

This is also the next idea suggested by Postman in his educative outlook; and in light of the above, it will not be unfounded to conclude that Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas also do not support social-conceptual uniformity.

In conclusion, Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas emphasize, whether consciously or unconsciously, several things whose meaning also symbolizes a social-educative vision calling for the encouragement of continual reflexivity, mutual attention, and the personal involvement of the individual in constructing his social reality. This is a scientific narrative striving to direct people in the spirit of the saying "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee"(Postman 1998: 59–60). And this tolling is strong enough to indicate not only the above-mentioned vision, but also a turning point in the separation that has to date been created between the various theoretical streams of sociology.

5. THE THEORETICAL TURNING POINT
SOUNDED BY THE ACTIVIST BELL

The meaning of the theoretical turning point is exposed only when examining the sequence of sociological-theoretical thought from the beginning of the discipline.

The sociological-theoretical dialogue has come a long way from the days of Comte, who is regarded by some as the one who fired the opening shot of the discipline. Comte tried to follow the different social processes under the assumption that laws that are external to man bind collective social facts. This assumption was also at the foundation of the division he created between social static and dynamics and which symbolizes the marginal position of the Subject in constructing social reality. The fact is that the Subject is a dependent factor (Sztompka 1994: 101).

Durkheim adopted Comte's basic assumptions and created a theoretical trend positioned at the heart of sociological thought (Collins 1994). This researcher had reservations regarding the dual concept and therefore turned human society into his sole object of research. Society is an unending driving force for any action by man, and man owes his human existence to society. This is the so-cial-structural context, which according to Durkheim determines the individual's identity, preserves it, and if necessary even changes it.

These sayings have a methodological as well as a symbolic significance. Methodologically, social facts cannot be reduced or analyzed in terms of the individual's behavior. Symbolically, Sub-jects play second fiddle to anything related to their part in con-structing social reality.

Marx also expresses the marginality of the Subject. Indeed, the Subject is the one who creates social change, but this change stems from his position in the production process. It is the embodiment of historical materialism, a term that is at the heart of Marx's politi-cal and social outlook and that clarifies his philosophy of history.

Weber, as opposed to Marx, does not think that universal-deterministic economic rules exist. Instead, he presents a multi-dimensional outlook composed of materialistic and idealistic as-pects. This outlook, as opposed to the previous two founding fa-thers, does not regard the Subject as solely a dependent factor. Re-inforcement for this statement can be found by examining several questions dealt with by Weber—formal and substantive rationality,

the action theory in the center of which is the term "understand-ing" (*Verstehen*) and the charismatic authority.

Weber, in the term "formal rationality," exposes the existence of a calculative-beneficial aspect in man. In contradistinction, in the term "substantive rationality" he exposes aspects of value in which purely economic considerations are not expressed and which affect social processes. These aspects are awarded a more comprehensive discussion in the action theory, a theory that calls for examining the actions of the Subject and their motive/basic value.

Another research field with which Weber dealt and from which one can learn about his attitude toward the Subject is his political writings, which are also known as the Theory of Legiti-mate Domination. Weber presented three patterns of domina-tion—traditional, rational, and charismatic. These three patterns clarify the fact that in social reality, fixed and dynamic aspects exist side by side. However, the dynamics—the charismatic domina-tion—originate in man and not in factors external to him. The charismatic personality can create far-reaching change and even redefine the basic assumptions of social order—"Charisma is also the revolt of the private personality against history and society" (Ronen 1989: 23).

The topics discussed above indicate that the conceptual thread intertwined between them in Weber's theory is that the Subject is both an affecting and an affected factor. However, beyond that, Weber's writings created the possibility for a more profound out-look on the phenomenology of human order (Eisenstadt and Curelaru 1982: 127).

The three founding fathers—Durkheim, Marx, and Weber—laid the conceptual and methodological foundations of Sociology. The sociological discussion that developed as a result drew its in-spiration from these directions of thought. However, some time passed between the stage at which the founding fathers presented their theory and the stage at which a theoretical model that won a central position in sociology was proposed.

For the first time since the founding fathers, the structural-functional model developed a powerful analytic framework whose inspiration is drawn from the theories of Durkheim and Weber (Eisenstadt and Curelaru 1982: 205–6). Supporters of this model claim that its strength stemmed from a comprehensive analytic mapping of the components of social order. This mapping enabled

a comprehensive and methodological analysis of social reality, which soon turned it into the central model of research.

> At a later period [the 1940s and 50s], the effect of the Structural-Functional approach was felt in numerous fields of research, as were the orientations and analytical concepts it entailed. Almost no field of sociological research remained untouched by these developments, because the Structural-Functional approach supplied not only a general perspective, an image or map of the social system for almost all fields of sociology, but also hinted at additional analytical specifications that could become focal points for research. … Numerous research programs and specific paradigms were derived from the general Structural-Functional framework or were related to it. Furthermore, other important fields, such as studies on public opinion and voting habits, which tended to focus on medium-range theories, used concepts developed in the Structural-Functional model, which also served as the foundation for a more general orientation in these fields. This model's effect spread to other disciplines as well … and the increase in the level of intellectuals' expectations [from the model] … was the result of the development of this model itself. (ibid. 213–14)

These lines clarify the extent to which this model influenced sociological research and several related disciplines. It was not perceived as the sole explanatory model, and opposing models were suggested both in the United States and elsewhere. However, its effect was so widespread that many other research directions developed as a result of disagreements with this model (ibid. 219).

Criticism of the Structural model was voiced beginning in the 1950s. Wright Miles and others voiced criticism of this model's methodologies. Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, as well as other sociologists, criticized the model's philosophy. Other aspects of the model were also criticized. It can be concluded that this criticism was directed against the assumptions of the approach, the way in which it observed social order, and the social and human vision of the model. One of the criticisms raised in this context was that in the functional model, man was reduced to fulfilling roles and was activated according to the needs of the social system.

The criticisms aroused attempts to present alternative explanations based on basic assumptions different from the assumptions of functionalism. These alternative explanations rested on both old and new sociological theories, including Conflict Theory, the indi-

vidual-rational trend with affinity to the exchange model, symbolic interaction, and so on. Each model obviously chose weak points in the structural-functional theory in light of the questions it considered essential.

For example, the conflict model concentrated on the shortcomings stemming from functionalism's focus on the normative-value consensus formed by agreement of members. The symbolic interaction model criticized functionalism because it presented man as fulfilling a role and human essence as expressed in fulfilling social roles. This means that the systemic aspect of society builds social reality. In contradistinction, those supporting the symbolic interaction model claim that our human essence is found in the interrelationships we form in our daily lives, in personal and interpersonal definitions of social reality in a reality built from a combination of the definitions of the state of the personality and human awareness. In this respect an institutional structure of society is formed from interpersonal interactions and not as described in the structural-functional model.

This prolonged stage is characterized by the different emphasis of these and other models and the structural-functional model, and therefore the emphasis of conceptual limits distinguishing between the four major streams—functional, conflict, rational-beneficial, and micro-interactionist (Collins 1994).

However, the significant role of the Subject in building social reality, which I stressed before, exposes a change in the theoretical-sociological level.

Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas have a rather similar outlook on the role of the Subject in society. Alvin Gouldner claims that sociologists are interested in subjects that appear real to them. They will try to explain these subjects using commonly accepted terms, and it is not important which scientific philosophy they embrace (Gouldner 1972: 41). This means that for Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas it seems real that the Subject is not solely a passive factor in building social reality. It can therefore be concluded that the fundamental perception of modern religion, according to Bellah, is compatible with the description of reality and the system of analytic concepts crystallized by two central theories in sociology that examine today's society.

This conceptual common denominator exposes a change in the distinction formed between several theoretical trends, when

referring to the theoretical tradition in which each researcher shaped his academic opinions.

Examination of the historic-academic background indicates that each of these three researchers shaped his academic viewpoint within the framework of a different theoretical tradition. Bellah's thoughts are rooted in the functionalistic tradition, Giddens' in the positivistic tradition, and Habermas' in the neo-Kantian tradition. However, all three have a rather similar view of the Subject.

This does not mean that the theoretical dialogue has become a single entity. Instead, it means that in a certain sense the borders between these theoretical trends have become more flexible. This flexibility seemed impossible in earlier periods.

6. FINAL REMARK

The Web of Religion and Science—Bellah, Giddens, and Habermas—is a primary attempt to turn general statements of scholars, that even though religion and science deal with different subjects they also contain some similar aspects, into more specific ones.

We have gone a long way since Henri-Levy's words of the death of God and the torch of a soul restored to itself (Henry-Levi 1980: 88), until "reaching" the flexible borders between sociological-theoretical trends. The general idea of pluralistic theoretical orientation we face today in sociology was apparently reinforced by the analysis of religious and nonreligious contexts. However, we can also regard the conclusions arrived at thus far as relevant not only to the sociological-theoretical discourse, but also to the general context of daily life. Not only because sociology can be grasped as moral orientation to social life, but also because the words symbolize a call for the "old" and the "new" to live side by side as part of an effort to improve life.

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