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## The Continuing Anglican Metamorphosis: Introducing The Adapted Integrated Model

John L'Hommedieu  
*University of Central Florida*



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THE CONTINUING ANGLICAN METAMORPHOSIS:  
INTRODUCING THE ADAPTED INTEGRATED MODEL

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Sociology  
in the College of Sciences  
at the University of Central Florida  
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2012

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this thesis is to develop and test the Advanced Integrated Model, a typological model in the tradition of Weber's interpretive sociology, as an asset in explaining recent transformations in American Episcopal-Anglican organizations. The study includes an assessment of the church-sect tradition in the sociology of religion and a summary overview of Weber's interpretive sociology with special emphasis on the nature and construction of ideal-types and their use in analysis. To illustrate the effectiveness of the model a number of institutional rivalries confronting contemporary Episcopal-Anglican organizations are identified and shown to be explainable only from a sociological perspective and not simply as "in house" institutional problems. The present work sheds light on parent-child conflicts in religious organizations and reopens discussion about the theoretical value of ideal-types in general, and church-sect typologies in particular, when utilized from a comparative-historical perspective.

This thesis is dedicated to Dr. David W. Virtue, the first person to call me a sociologist (I shall endeavor one day to return the compliment in an appropriate manner); to Dr. David Gay, who encouraged me with openness and enthusiasm when he could not have foreseen any significant result; to Dean Tony Clark and the staff and people of the Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Orlando, for suffering me to be physically and emotionally absent at times throughout these past three years of exploration and study; and to my wife Judi, who has shown me her love and patience through a long and often bewildering process. God willing, and in His good time, this effort will begin to repay many debts.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Practical Interest .....	2
Methodological Interest.....	3
The Historical Context of the Present Research .....	4
The Unit of Measure: Mode of Interaction.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	10
Making a Case for a Minority Position.....	11
The Formative Writers as Interpretive Sociologists .....	12
Interpretive Sociology as Interest Driven .....	14
The Later Church-Sect Tradition: From Particular to General Interests .....	18
CHAPTER THREE: INTERPRETIVE METHOD .....	21
The Methodological Distinctiveness of Weber’s Ideal Types.....	22
Sociology as Historical Science .....	22
The “Ideal” Nature of Ideal-Types .....	23
Ideal-Types As Predictions .....	25
The Integrated Model and Its Ideal-Types.....	26
The IM at a Glance.....	26
Operationalizing Organization for Universe Maintenance.....	27
Swatos’ Adapted Church-Sect Types.....	30

The Adapted Integrated Model (AIM) and Its Ideal-Types.....	34
The Church-Sect Ideal-Types in their Modes of Interaction.....	37
Conclusion of the Interpretive Method .....	42
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
Introduction .....	44
How AIM Works.....	45
Organizational Profiles as Data.....	45
Organizational Profiles .....	46
The Episcopal Church (TEC).....	46
The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC).....	51
The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) .....	53
The Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA).....	56
Conclusion of Present Section.....	59
Case One: Denomination-Versus-Denomination .....	60
Practical Question .....	60
Establishing the Mode of Interaction (MOI).....	61
Denomination-Versus-Denomination: General Comment.....	63
Case Two: Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect .....	64
Practical Question .....	64
Establishing the MOI .....	66
Case Three: Explaining the Exceptions to Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect .....	69
Practical Question .....	69
Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect: Two Apparent Exceptions .....	69
The Diocese of Central Florida .....	70
The Diocese of South Carolina .....	71

Case Three: General Conclusions .....	73
Case Four: Dynamic-Sect-Versus... What? .....	75
Practical Question .....	75
Establishing the MOI .....	76
Case Five: Outside the Circle of Interaction—Becoming an Established Sect .....	78
Practical Question .....	78
Establishing the Mode of Interaction (MOI) .....	79
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>82</b>
Parallel Research Program.....	83
Theory Rising to the Surface.....	85
This “Particular” Moment of the Anglican Metamorphosis .....	86
In the Ownership of Meaning, What Is It We Are Seeking to Own?.....	86
The Ownership of Meaning and the Ownership of Property .....	88
Winners and Losers: The Future of the Anglican Metamorphosis in the US.....	90
Generalization from the Anglican Metamorphosis: A Theory of Conflict and Its Resolution.....	93
Conclusion: AIM Contributions to Sociological Theory.....	95
Afterword .....	97
<b>APPENDIX: ENDNOTES</b> .....	<b>99</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>106</b>



## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1 - The Integrated Model (Swatos 1979).....	27
Figure 2 - The Adapted Integrated Model (AIM).....	35

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1 - The Integrated Model in table form..... 30

Table 2 - The Adapted Integrated Model in table form ..... 38

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACNA .....	Anglican Church in North America
AIM.....	Adapted Integrated Model
AMiA .....	Anglican Mission in the Americas
GAFCON .....	Global Anglican Future Conference
IM.....	Integrated Model
MOI.....	Mode of Interaction
PECUSA .....	Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America
PCUSA.....	Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
REC.....	Reformed Episcopal Church
TEC.....	The Episcopal Church
UK.....	United Kingdom
US .....	United States

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this thesis is to develop and test the Advanced Integrated Model, a typological model in the tradition of Weber's interpretive sociology, as an asset in explaining recent transformations in American Episcopal-Anglican organizations. The study includes an assessment of the church-sect tradition in the sociology of religion and a summary overview of Weber's interpretive sociology with special emphasis on the nature and construction of ideal-types and their use in analysis. To illustrate the effectiveness of the model a number of institutional rivalries confronting contemporary Episcopal-Anglican organizations are identified and shown to be explainable only from a sociological perspective and not simply as "in house" institutional problems. The present work sheds light on parent-child conflicts in religious organizations and reopens discussion about the theoretical value of ideal-types in general, and church-sect typologies in particular, when utilized from a comparative-historical perspective.

The purpose of the present study is twofold, proceeding from (1) an initial practical and professional concern that led directly to (2) the search for and development of a method appropriate to its solution. The pages that follow argue for the appropriateness of the method (Chapters Two and Three) and illustrate its effectiveness for answering the initial concern through the analysis of empirical cases (Chapter Four). As I shall argue at the conclusion (Chapter Five), both concerns are met through the exposition and analysis. Thus two distinct research interests, one practical and one methodological, run in parallel course throughout the following pages.

### *The Practical Interest*

First, I intend to interpret and explain social interactions within, and especially between, Episcopal-Anglican *parent* and *child* organizations<sup>1</sup> in the United States. The *parent* organization, the Episcopal Church USA (TEC), is the one group officially recognized by, or *in communion with*,<sup>2</sup> the Archbishop of Canterbury and the thirty-seven autonomous Anglican Provinces throughout the world. To put it colloquially, TEC owns rights to the Anglican franchise in the US, a right which has been hotly contested in recent years by certain of TEC's rival *children*—those aspiring denomination-like organizations that broke away from TEC beginning in 1873 but chiefly after 1976, a time of widespread social upheaval throughout the US affecting both secular and religious institutions.

In the course of analysis I do not attempt to classify all such Anglican *child* organizations in an exhaustive taxonomy of American Anglicanism. As I hope to make clear in my review of literature and explanation of methods (Chapters Two and Three), I shall examine interactions between Anglican groups selected specifically to explain “particular” (Weber 2011; Becker 1940) historical questions that have arisen within the American theater of Anglicanism in recent years. Given the unsatisfactory quality of “stock” responses from ecclesiastical documents and policy statements, comparable to those encountered by Troeltsch and Niebuhr in their own professional life as churchmen (see Chapters Two and Three below), these informal “in house” questions quickly shift to “historical” or “cultural” interests (Weber 2011: 81) calling for sociological explanation and analysis.

### ***Methodological Interest***

Second, I propose to illustrate the effectiveness of a new model adapted from earlier research by William H. Swatos Jr. (see Swatos 1975, 1979, 1981, 1998), whose practical and theoretical interests are similar to mine. My Adapted Integrated Model (AIM), adapted from Swatos' Integrated Model (IM), necessitated reopening a whole tradition of sociological research known as the church-sect tradition (abbreviated here as "church-sect"). Church-sect has had a long and fruitful but also a problematic history in the sociology of religion, and its value for ongoing research is still debated. Several detailed histories of the church-sect research tradition exist, and I shall summarize this history briefly in Chapter Two.

At the heart of the tradition and the conflict surrounding it is an enduring debate on the scientific appropriateness of Max Weber's methodological use of typology or *ideal-types* for sociological research (see especially Bainbridge and Stark 1979). Weber's premature death precluded the mature formulation of a step-by-step procedure for applying the typological method associated with him. Without access to a canonized formula researchers have had to "reconstruct" their "Weberian method" from a vast and multidisciplinary corpus of writings. The quality of such reconstructions for sociology has only added to ongoing debate.

Swatos' IM is one such reconstruction adapted explicitly for the purpose of *explaining* (in the limited interpretive sociological sense; see Eister 1967) a particular history—or, more technically, a specific *historical particularity* (see Becker 1940)—namely, the "metamorphosis" of Anglican-Episcopal institutions in England and the early American states from established church-like organizations to modern denominations (Swatos 1979). In keeping with Weber's stated methodological intention (Weber 2011) the IM seeks to explain the significant sociological patterns of action that explain the unique historical turn taken by these institutions:

why did they become what we recognize today as mainline denominations rather than obscure sects? Swatos' research interest, unlike Johnson's, is not to "sharpen the path by which... accepted definitions of Church and Sect... may be integrated into a general sociology of religion" (Johnson 1957: 88), but rather to demonstrate the usefulness of Weber's comparative-historical method, including the intentional use of ideal-types, to account for a given historical *moment*, and only then to form general hypotheses about religious institutions (Swatos 1979; Weber 2011) for the benefit of "a general sociology."

My interest in developing Swatos' model further has drawn me to form conclusions on the appropriateness of ideal-types for sociological research based upon their "explanatory power" (Watkins 1952; Blasi 1981) relative to the history that prompted my initial research—what I have identified as a "continuing metamorphosis" of Anglican-Episcopal organizations. I shall conclude the present chapter by giving more detail on the particular history that frames the present research problem and calls for explanation and analysis. Supplementary historical data will be added in subsequent chapters to inform the context of analysis and discussion.

### ***The Historical Context of the Present Research***

The American Episcopal Church has seen a long history of schism culminating in the recent rise of rival Anglican<sup>3</sup> mini-denominational structures forming throughout North America. While the more recent "continuing"<sup>4</sup> or "breakaway"<sup>5</sup> jurisdictions cite the increasing liberalism of the Episcopal Church as the basis for their departure from the mother Church, the first such departure precedes the now familiar liberal-conservative divide by a full century. The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) founded in 1873, traces its flashpoint issue to the high church versus low church<sup>6</sup> battle for control of American Anglicanism's identity in the New World. While the

fact that such a theologically conservative stand would place them on the conservative side of the present liberal-conservative cultural debate is not surprising, it is not self-evident and calls for sociological explanation in terms of socio-demographic factors (age, education, income, ethnicity, location of individual congregations, jurisdictions and leading personalities, etc.). It would make an interesting study to trace the social continuity between the conflict in views on ritual and doctrine in the 1870s and that between views on human sexuality in the 1970s and beyond.

In his 1979 monograph *Into Denominationalism: The Anglican Metamorphosis* William H. Swatos Jr. drew on Max Weber's comparative-historical or interpretive sociology to answer a single research question: "how it is that the most rigid of the post-Reformation churches"—the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA<sup>7</sup>—"became one of the most liberal modern denominations" (Swatos 1979: vii). To answer this question Swatos created his Integrated Model based on his own adaptation of the church-sect typology. Unlike a number of early church-sect researchers who sought to create a system for classifying religious institutions, Swatos designed his model for analyzing socio-historical processes directed to his research question. The IM placed religious organizations within quadrants formed by two variable axes: *monopolism-pluralism* for the "social organization for universe-maintenance"<sup>8</sup> at the level of the sociocultural system," and *acceptance-rejection* to capture the dynamics of "universe-maintenance" in relation to the "dominant culture" as typically discussed in the church-sect literature (Swatos 1979: 9).

It is important to cite Swatos' comment on his adaptation of Weber's method: "This is *typology*, not *taxonomy*" (Swatos 1979: 14, emphasis added). The distinction between these two terms, often blurred by researchers, shows his awareness of the precarious state of church-sect theorizing in sociology. Throughout his work he moves carefully and deliberately, determined to



utilize a method traceable to Weber within a strict focus on the limits (and hence the distinct focus) of that method. He makes no attempt to do what church-sect theory has historically failed to do—provide an exhaustive classification (taxonomy) of modern religious institutions based on the cumulative refinement of empirical definitions by researchers. Unlike many of his colleagues Swatos sees value in the traditional church-sect conceptualization and purports to contribute toward its continued use.

Swatos' 1979 treatment of the Anglican “metamorphosis” on both sides of the Atlantic, from monopolistic church-like into competitive denomination-like<sup>9</sup> structures typical of modern democratic societies, shows a parallel research design similar to my own as described above. First, he answers the historical question posed in his preface (Swatos 1979: vii) explaining how a formerly monopolistic religious organization, engaged in a dialectical interaction within a pluralistic sociocultural system, turned into a competitive denominational structure. The “liberal turn” of the Church of England’s mission in the New World, the Episcopal Church, could be traceable to the particular form of “competition” in which that organization engaged amidst the particular social “constellation” (Weber 2011: 166) in which she found herself. From a Weberian methodological standpoint, the special history of these empirical cases gives rise to sociological generalizations applicable to other religious and non-religious<sup>10</sup> organizations, depending on how these latter “compare” with the ideal-typical structures and empirical conditions underlying Swatos’ study.

The second focus of Swatos’ research is to make a case for the continuing development of church-sect theory, to inquire into its “possibility” and demonstrate its “value” (Swatos 1979: 1, 87) when Weber’s historical emphasis on rationality-rationalization is “restored.” Such a “Weberian restoration” is what Swatos claims to have achieved through his Integrated Model

(Swatos 1976: 142). From the beginning, then, Swatos' research agenda is directed in parallel fashion with questions of both history and method.

In the present work I build on Swatos' Integrated Model with a similar parallel research interest. Sharing his professional interest as an active Episcopal clergyman, my focus in the conceptualization of religious organizations shifts from a "retrospective" to a "prospective" one (Becker 1968: 112n, 285-290; also see *intra*, p. 25). Swatos developed his typology to conceptualize organizational shifts in the past—in the centuries immediately following the Reformation when the "metamorphosis" from a religious monopoly by the Church of England to the competitive religious marketplace typical of contemporary democratic societies was in full display. My adapted typology analyzes these same organizations in their more recent transformations in an advanced phase of the same development.

In contemporary democratic societies the monopolistic control of "universe-maintenance" even as an ideal-type (see Chapter Three) has become an anachronism except for unique interactions between groups. Characteristic of an expanding pluralistic society there is no single "universe" of values and cultural meanings, religious or otherwise, that can claim a following as normative. Nonetheless the battle for the control of what I call *the ownership of meaning*—who gets to influence the identity and action of a group—continues to characterize interactions within and between social collectivities. When such "old world" conflicts appear, they demonstrate a variety of structured interactions similar to the classic church-sect typology.

For example, on the one hand, the monopolistic *church* or *parent* institution confronts a schismatic sectarian *child* and weighs the practical cost of enforcing compliance with the parent's rightful authority in regard to the institution's cultural "meaning"—those forces within an organization which motivate constituents to identify with and participate in the institution. In

the present conflicts involving the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), to take a single example, the question literally comes down to a matter of who “owns” title in the US to the historic designation “Anglican” and all that the title signifies.

Meanwhile the sectarian organization has a decided advantage, even if it turns out to be short-lived: her interactions with the parent are characterized by an *ethical* rather than a *practical* form of “rationality” (citing Kalberg 1980 and 1994). She has a deeper motivation and access to richer psychological “premiums” than do those whose motivation for social action is determined through pure “means-end” calculations (Kalberg 1980).

### ***The Unit of Measure: Mode of Interaction***

In the Integrated Model (IM) the unit of measure is the organizational type—the church- or sect-like organization that interacts with the broader society in an ongoing *dialectic of religious-social change* (Swatos 1979: 89). In the Adapted Integrated Model (AIM) developed in the present work, the unit of measure shifts to the *mode of interaction* between types as *paired opposites: church and entrenched sect* in an adversarial or *parent-child/unequal* mode, or *denomination and dynamic sect* or other *denomination* in a friendly or *sibling-sibling/equal* mode.

In the following pages I shall examine the relationship between the Episcopal Church and several of her runaway “children,” those smaller schismatic sect-like institutions formed in recent decades in response to the decidedly liberal—and, in some cases, *quasi-sectarian*—turn of TEC after 1976. During the 1970’s, in a sect-like defiance of a perceived “dominant culture,” the ascendant leadership of TEC summoned sufficient “ethical rationality” to motivate a break with the traditional status quo of a very traditional mainline denomination (Kalberg 1980; Weber

2011). TEC now persists in her accustomed counter-cultural *sect-like* identity in relation to the purported “dominant culture,” and yet pivots seamlessly into her traditional *church-like* role as custodian of the Anglican identity as she defends her property interests in litigations with schismatic groups seeking to depart from her fold taking “their” property with them.

On the other hand, TEC is quite content to be an “equal player” on the level playing field of American denominationalism alongside her historic mainline denominational peers. Characteristic of today’s denomination-like organizations competition is equal and more or less friendly. The present study explains why TEC relates to these competitors differently than she does to her rebellious children, each of which purports to become “just another” American denomination—i.e, an equal and friendly competitor in the religious market place. Based upon the present research I shall explain why even such a modest hope can be predicted to fail.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the present chapter I make a case for revisiting the church-sect typology as the appropriate method for answering the practical historical question at the heart of my research. That question is appropriately posed in terms of the specific typology used in William Swatos' Integrated Model<sup>1</sup> (IM) (Swatos 1975, 1979, and 1998) as follows:

How is it that the Episcopal Church (TEC), a modern mainline denomination, interacts with its “sibling” institutions—other mainline Protestant denominations—in one *mode* of patterned responses and interactions—i.e., as *denomination-like*—whereas it interacts with its own schismatic “child” institutions (ACNA, REC, AMiA, etc.)<sup>2</sup> in an observably different *type* of patterned action<sup>3</sup>—i.e., as *church-like*? Similarly, how is it that the “child” institutions respond to each other and to other denominational groups in *denomination-like* patterns of action but in distinctly *sect-like* patterns when relating to TEC, the “parent” organization? How do we explain these varied *modes of interaction* in terms of causal hypotheses?

These questions quickly run aground if our research objective is to construct an all-inclusive system of religious organizational classification or *taxonomy*, which has been the standardized achievement of the church-sect tradition (for a summary, see Swatos 1976; Roberts and Yamane 2012: 164 ff.). My question put to church-sect theory understood as a taxonomy of American religious institutions would be rephrased initially as something like this: of TEC, ACNA, or REC etc.—*which is it*, a church, sect, denomination, or something else? Or more likely, *where* is this or that organization in the developmental continuum from sect to church—or, more properly, from sect to denomination, since our modern democratic society no longer gives rise to *churches* as

the church-sect typology has classically defined them (Coleman 1968)—and once we discern all that, what does it tell us?

This second, more general emphasis focuses on the religious organization as a *reified* structure with its own natural life cycle. Even while no one forgets that the organization is comprised first and last of real people, the organizational logic predisposes the aforementioned reification and a resulting “lost synthesis” (Abbott 1991) between the historical particularity of the empirical subject and the “scientifically ‘essential’ aspect of reality” (Weber 2011: 72) that sociology as science rightfully draws from it.

### ***Making a Case for a Minority Position***

The decision to create a new model based on Swatos’ IM, itself a familiar instrument in the church-sect tradition, raises the usually unstated question of sociological research: how well does the instrument suit the present explanatory task? Given the history of the church-sect literature, one fraught with criticism and debate, the unstated question requires special scrutiny: does Swatos’ instrument, itself dated, explain anything of importance from a sociological point of view and thus contribute to the life of the discipline? Put more pointedly: apart from a basic classification system for the already best known and most thoroughly researched American religious institutions, can a variant of the church-sect tradition offer us anything new and worthwhile about the social forces affecting the interactions between religious groups?

To paraphrase still another tradition: After all these years with their theoretical twists and turns, can anything good still come out of the church-sect tradition and its typological method (John 1:46)?

In an essay entitled “Beyond Church and Sect: Dynamics and Stability in Religious Economics” Stark and Finke begin with reference to “Niebuhr’s (1929) theory of the transformation of sects to churches as one of [their] starting points” (in Stark and Finke 2002: 31) for an “expanded model” of religious organizational change (2002: 53). This passing reference tells us two things right away about the sociological tradition known as church-sect theory: first, that its history as a whole is equated with the one theory that attracted the most attention—Niebuhr’s sect-to-church theory of religious organizational change; and, second, that even Niebuhr’s theory, while providing a useful “starting point,” is generally regarded as spent as a creative source of sociological theories and is acknowledged almost as an anachronism, if not a cliché.

I agree with Stark and Finke that Niebuhr’s theory—or, as Swatos puts it (representing the “minority” position) the *reification* of that theory by researchers after Niebuhr (Swatos 1977: 110)—represents the research interest of the majority of sociologists of religion, and further that this majority position has probably given rise to as many new theories for a sociology of religion as it can. As a general rule it is safe to say that most sociologists in the field are looking to move “beyond church and sect.”

### ***The Formative Writers as Interpretive Sociologists***

I wish to point out here that there is a minority position in the church-sect tradition, one that has been relatively short-lived, but whose chief advocates include those I call the formative writers of the tradition: Weber, Troeltsch, Becker, and even Niebuhr.

These formative writers illustrate, if not an explicit methodology, then a methodical style of sociological writing utilizing what Weber codified late in his career as “the methodology of

the social sciences” (Weber 2011). Swatos takes up Weber’s method in constructing his IM and writes as an advocate of a “return to Weber” strand within the church-sect tradition. His use of the IM rooted in Weber’s method generated the interpretive explanation of a first “Anglican metamorphosis” that convinced me to develop and adapt the same method for an interpretive explanation of the “recent break-away groups from the Episcopal church” (Swatos 1979: 90) that comprise a “continuing Anglican metamorphosis.” I refer to the new model as the Adapted Integrated Model (AIM).

The minority position in church-sect literature attempts not so much a return to as a reconstruction of Weber’s method (see Kalberg 1994b) and probably a partial one at that, since Weber died before his method could be detailed in sequence. Thus there is no ready-made “Weberian method” or technique that can be put to immediate use as one would apply, for example, a multiple regression analysis.

Of the many writers who have contributed to the church-sect tradition in sociology, a relative handful make up a “core curriculum” of the tradition and are commonly cited by subsequent contributors. I will offer representative samples from that latter core in the course of the review that follows.

Of that core of early contributors an even smaller number are regularly cited as the formative<sup>4</sup> writers of the tradition: Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch, H. Richard Niebuhr, and (though less frequently) Howard Becker. Either Weber or Troeltsch is credited with the origin of the original church-sect typology. Becker developed Weber’s ideal-types and the theory underlying them to their now widely recognized equivalent, known as *constructed types* (see Becker and von Wiese 1932 and Becker 1940; also McKinney 1966). Niebuhr is universally acknowledged as the pivotal figure in the shift of church-sect from a primitive, more-or-less



Weberian typology to the now recognized standard as a theory of organizational development for predicting the routine socialization of religious organizations from small sect-like groups to large church-like denominations.

Whether as an implicit style of writing or an explicit method of research all of the formative writers demonstrate the effective use of what has become codified as *comparative-interpretive sociology*. All knew themselves to be engaged in a species of *historical science* (as distinct from *natural science*), driven by specific values and interests surrounding specific questions calling for explanation (Weber 2011: 85; see Chapter Three of the present work).

### ***Interpretive Sociology as Interest Driven***

Weber's sociology is an obvious place to start for purposes of illustration. According to William Swatos, Weber's sociology as a unified "overarching" project was driven by a single question, "why the universal-historical rationalization-disenchantment process had come to fruition most completely in the Anglo-American spirit of capitalism" (Swatos 1998: 90). In a 1922 essay Ernst Troeltsch, Weber's friend and colleague, paints in even broader strokes but poses the same basic question: "How is the profound difference between the Christian West and the rest of the world to be accounted for?" (Troeltsch 1991: 211). Weber's original coinage of the church-sect typology was intended to play a role within this overall research interest as a conceptual means to enable the formation of subsequent hypotheses. As Swatos comments:

"Church" and "sect" were introduced as two idealized types of arrangement of a single element in the organization of the religious institution—that is, the mode of membership. By this dichotomous distinction, Weber was able to draw some conclusions about the movements of certain currents within Christianity that seemed to interact with the rationalization process to mutually reinforce each other (Swatos 1976: 132).

Howard Becker is especially pointed in relating his church-sect interest to a specific research interest. His church-sect typology was constructed in response to an explicit question arising out of a study of history: “How is it possible collectively to gratify religious needs?” (Becker and von Wiese 1932: 613). Becker termed the problem underlying his question “the dilemma of the church.”

Two distinct and irreconcilable sets of values are present, and the values of one type can be realized only by the extinction of values of the other (Becker von Wiese 1932: 617).

The *ideal-typical* character of such “irreconcilable sets of values” is implicit in Becker’s reference to their *mutual exclusivity* (see Stout 2010: 512). They cannot exist in “pure” form in empirical cases. The comparative task of sociology will be to “explain” the causes of the unique admixtures of these pure types that occur across the landscape of history.

Becker constructs four church-sect types (up from Weber’s two and Troeltsch’s three) to explain a particular dilemma playing out in organizational settings in a variety of cultures and not to classify every conceivable conflict influencing the socialization of religious believers and their institutions. Becker’s research *interest*—in Weber’s terms, that which *orders* his selection and conceptualization of data (Weber 2011: 152)—is to bring into causal detail the unique circumstances and organizational structures that have formed as people have sought, however partially, to embody two mutually exclusive complexes of ideas traceable throughout Christian history and socialized in institutions more or less equivalent to his four ideal-types.

It is worth noting that Becker’s interest is almost precisely the same as Troeltsch’s in the defining work, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*. Like Becker, Troeltsch frames his research, including his church-sect typology (Troeltsch 1992: 328 ff.) in response to a single question: “What is the basis of the social teaching of the churches?” (Troeltsch 1992: 24). The

historical question about religious doctrines expressly formulated in scattered statements throughout history quickly becomes a sociological question about the hitherto unspecified interior life of Christian communities, taking into account the conflicted manner of diverse people's responses in varying circumstances and social settings to two conflicting mandates of the one faith. At the heart of the conflict Troeltsch cites the same irreconcilable values captured above in Becker's formula:

...From the very beginning the social doctrines of the Christian Church had a dualistic tendency which caused them to flow into two channels. The strict law of the Scriptures, and the radical Law of Nature, monasticism, and the theological theory of the Primitive State there revealed themselves as motives and expressions of a second radical tendency which accompanied the compromise of the Church (Troeltsch 1992: 329).

The bitter subject of religious compromise within the vicissitudes of natural human socialization, the same tension captured by Becker and Troeltsch in their typological studies in response to related questions, prompted H. Richard Niebuhr, to express a similar research interest in his landmark study, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*:

The evil of denominationalism lies in the conditions which make the rise of sects desirable and necessary: in the failure of the churches to transcend the social conditions which fashion them into caste-organizations, to sublimate their loyalties to standards and institutions only remotely relevant if not contradictory to the Christian ideal, to resist the temptation of making their own self-preservation and extension the primary object of their endeavor (Niebuhr 1929: 21).

Niebuhr's admittedly non-specialist work in sociology arose from his frustration at the "artless and fruitless procedure" of discerning the basis for the churches' denominational captivity from published doctrinal statements and treatises (Niebuhr 1929: vii). His research interest—that which, from a Weberian standpoint, *orders* his research (Weber 2011: 78)—is to account for the "evil of denominationalism," the modern form of an inherent schismatic tendency of Christian communities as they undergo such moral compromises as may facilitate their

institutional survival. His book, which set off an explosion of interest based on the utility of the famed *sect-to-church theory*, began as an attempt to explain the sociological causes of a recurring situation: the unvarying neglect of the “church of the poor” within the normal processes of religious organizational development. Niebuhr compares this ideal-typical “church,” which is as “fictitious” and “utopian” as any “pure type” (Weber 2011:90, 101), with the empirical samples that most nearly resembled the *type* throughout history. Based on these comparisons Niebuhr offers causal explanations, ethical commentary, and even a set of hypotheses for reversing the churches’ natural tendency toward schism and neglect of their prophetic calling. *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929) competes with Niebuhr’s later *Christ and Culture* (Niebuhr 1951) as the most enduring of his hypothetical contributions to religio-social research.

In each of the four formative writers we see similar and yet quite distinct research interests, and we see how those interests frame the collection and interpretation of their data. We also see the methodical use of ideal-types arranged as logical polarities for the purpose of accentuating individual variable concepts. The initial questions raised by these writers serve to explain a wide variety of historical circumstances and lead to still further questions. None of their conceptualizations is part of an all-inclusive sociology of religion. My purpose in drawing attention to these cases is to illustrate the effectiveness of ideal-types as “limiting concepts” (Weber 2011: 93) for the interpretive sociology in which they are systematically used.

While Weber and Becker knew they were engaged in interpretive sociology, it is not certain that Troeltsch or Niebuhr would have named their method by this now familiar term. It is possible that they had no such name for their method. Both Troeltsch and Niebuhr were professional theologians in search of a method to suit the unique problems of real religious

groups, problems deeply rooted in history. Both realized that they were not studying history merely to construct a narrative but to discern the subterranean *sociological* factors that accounted for the ebb and flow of circumstances and the fabric of institutions.

Even Weber's method was "developed" largely in hindsight. As is frequently pointed out, his methodological writings represent his maturity and look back upon the "substantive" (Kalberg 1994a) writings of his earlier career. It could be that much of what he later called his "method" was a more systematic form of a refined professional common sense. Perhaps the essential distinction between a disciplined common sense and Weber's famed *verstehende soziologie* cannot be precisely stated.

### ***The Later Church-Sect Tradition: From Particular to General Interests***

The literature of the church-sect tradition has been chronicled (Coleman 1968; Dittes 1971; Swatos 1975, 1976, 1979, 1998), critiqued (Johnson 1957; Eister 1967), even lampooned ("unideal types" in Bainbridge and Stark 1979:121). From early on there have been calls for revival (Johnson 1963; Swatos 1976) and reconstruction (Swatos 1976, 1998; Kalberg 1980, 1994) as well as rebuttal (Stark and Bainbridge 1979).

The tradition is fraught not only with an air of controversy but also with a sense of irony. Chief among the church-sect ironies is the fact that, as Coleman observed, "there are no 'churches' to fit Weber's historical model in the United States" (1968: 58). The solution for this has been to adjust the original typology with a substitute concept, one thought to be a near equivalent. Martin (1962) along with Coleman (among others) adds "denomination" to the typology, and Wilson identifies "denominationalizing tendencies" (1959: 14).

This “seamless” substitution of “denomination” for “church” in what is still called the “church-sect” literature means two things. First, it indicates the normalization of one of the “church-sect” theories and the method associated with it: specifically, the “sect-to-church theory” of religious organizational development associated with the work of Niebuhr. In the post-Niebuhr sociology of religion when writers refer to “sect-to-church theory” they invariably mean “sect-to-denomination,”<sup>5</sup> because (a) now there are no churches and hence (b) whatever religious function the church once fulfilled in a prior social epoch is assumed to be fulfilled by the denomination in the present.

The second meaning attributable to this near sleight-of-hand—where the familiar term “church” is retained for convenience but is understood to mean “denomination”—is that the peculiar distinctiveness of the interpretive-comparative method demonstrated by Weber, Troeltsch, and Niebuhr has been replaced by an “ahistorical decontextualization and concomitant reification” (Swatos 1977: 110) of the original concepts. Sociologists of religion are no longer responding to specific questions regarding the uniqueness of circumstances and institutions but rather building up a storehouse of conceptual material for general use by other sociologists. Individual writers sought to “improve” or “expand” the concept of denomination (Martin 1972) or move on “beyond church and sect” altogether (Eister 1967; Stark and Finke 2002). From this time forward in the history of the literature “church-sect theory was in trouble” (Swatos 1977: 110).

Ironically, the strand of the tradition that has survived criticism and is now equated with the tradition as a whole (Stark and Finke 2002; Roberts and Yamane 2012) is the one most firmly rooted in what is widely acknowledged as church-sect’s fatal error—abandoning Weber and/or Troeltsch and mainstreaming a one-sided reading of Niebuhr (Eister 1967; Swatos 1976

and 1977). This fateful turn reopens the question of the value and effectiveness of Weber's comparative-interpretive sociology. It is important to add that, while the question may be reopened, it is not therefore settled. Weber's interpretive sociology needs to be tested by its effectiveness in explaining new *historical particularities* (Becker 1940) and generating hypotheses for research.

The work of William Swatos (especially Swatos 1979) stands out as persisting in the Weberian tradition of church-sect conceptualization and method. His Integrated Model and his explanation of the "first Anglican metamorphosis" from church-like to denomination-like institutions show a heightened awareness of the contextual rootedness of these overly familiar concepts. His work gives rise to predictions of future metamorphoses of religious organizations and even a new version of his model. The adapted AIM is not a *reified* version of the former IM but a new model adapted to address a new historical context.

In Chapter Three I review Weber's methodological use of ideal-types and review in detail the Integrated Method (IM), both to introduce the Adapted Integrated Method (AIM), the instrument for the analysis that follows in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER THREE: INTERPRETIVE METHOD

So far I have made a case for a minority tradition of research within the broader sociological tradition known as church-sect theory. In the last chapter I explained the special suitability of Weber's interpretive sociology—the method demonstrated (whether by intention or intuition) by each of four formative writers in the tradition—for answering specific historical questions and “explaining”<sup>1</sup> their sociological dimension. I have mentioned repeatedly the parallel emphasis of my own research (a) to investigate the effectiveness of Weber's method as an important tool for sociological research in general, but specifically (b) to demonstrate its effectiveness in the sociological analysis of a new set of historical questions.

In the last chapter I introduced William Swatos' Integrated Model (IM) as demonstrating the continued use of the church-sect tradition through his analysis of the “metamorphosis” of Anglican religious institutions in the UK and US during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the present chapter I shall analyze the IM in detail in order to introduce my *adapted* version of that model, the AIM, for explaining a “continuing metamorphosis” of Anglican organizations in the US after the 1970s.

In the present chapter I present an overview of the methodological distinctiveness of Weber's ideal-types (of which the church-sect typology is a single example), followed by a detailed overview of the IM and its typology. Finally I introduce the AIM as an adaptation of the IM to demonstrate its special appropriateness for a new historical context.



## *The Methodological Distinctiveness of Weber's Ideal Types*

### *Sociology as Historical Science*

If sociology... means anything at all, it means the ability to say wherein the society in question is like other societies and wherein it differs from them (Becker 1940: 40).

Here Howard Becker summarizes the tendency (intentional or intuitive?) of social scientists to practice comparative or interpretive sociology, if not as finished “method” then as an exercise of what Mills famously called “the sociological imagination”<sup>2</sup> (Mills 1959). Margaret Stout observes the same inductive process in her description of Weber's ideal-types *as method* in her 2010 article, “Revisiting the (Lost) Art of Ideal-Typing in Public Administration.”

...The ideal-type method uses the *logic of discovery* rather than the *logic of proof* to formulate theoretical constructs that will be useful to future research (Stout 2010: 502, emphasis added).

Stout appears to place a methodology involving ideal-types on a *qualitative*, as opposed to a *quantitative*, end of a continuum. Weber makes that placement explicit:

Whereas in astronomy, the heavenly bodies are of interest to us only in their *quantitative* and exact aspects, the *qualitative* aspect of phenomena concerns us in the social sciences (Weber 2011: 74, emphasis in original).

According to Dawson, citing Weber,

the value of an ideal type resides with its capacity to reveal concrete cultural phenomena “in their interdependence, their causal conditions and their significance” (Dawson 1997: 370; Weber 2011: 92).

Becker echoes Weber's language (Weber 2011) in describing the methodological use of the ideal-type as “historical science”:

The ideal type is a device made of *the particularity of history*, shaped in such a way that this particularity becomes comparable and, in some instances, widely generalizable. (Becker 1968: 163, emphasis added).

In order to make sound use of the method Stout observes the need for a constant *adaptation* of typological constructions from one historical setting to the next:

...Because of their cultural specificity, ideal-types must be recreated across time and place” (Stout 2010: 492).

Here, then, is a kind of sociological investigation geared toward the sociology of a given moment as prior to subsequent generalizations, one that has receded in recent decades in spite of its honored beginnings, even if we are assured of “a worldwide renaissance of interest” in this approach in recent literature (Kalberg 1994a).

This is a different concept of “ordering” than that declared by Stark and Bainbridge (1979) as requisite to sociological theory—the quantitative “ordering” of institutions relative to each other in a general sociology of religion, as opposed to the qualitative “ordering” of the “chaos” of “countless individual events” that comprise any given moment.

Order is brought into this chaos on the condition that in every case only a *part* of concrete reality is interesting and *significant* to us, because only it is related to the *cultural values* with which we approach reality (Weber 2011: 78).

Thus it is crucial that sociologists remember that in Weber’s interpretive sociology the terms “order” and “significance” carry a *qualitative* connotation, whereas in *quantitative* studies the same terms draw their accustomed meaning from the sciences of probability.

### *The “Ideal” Nature of Ideal-Types*

In order to explicate Swatos’ IM it is essential to keep the *ideal* character of ideal-type<sup>3</sup> in mind. The ideal-type is “ideal” insofar as it is “posed as a ‘hypothetical individual’ created for comparative purposes” (Swatos 1979: 3). Weber explains at some length:

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided *accentuation* of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent *concrete individual* phenomena, which are arranged according to

those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified *analytical* construct (Weber 2011: 90, emphasis in original).

Swatos reminds the reader that Weber introduced “church” and “sect” “as two idealized types of arrangement of a single element in the organization of the religious institution, that is, *the mode of membership*” (Swatos 1979: 3; emphasis added).

Weber was trying to understand the [rational] processes by which Christianity (religion) and the larger social system interacted to bring about the pluralizing and secularizing of the Western world—how it happened that ascetic Protestantism and rational capitalism grew simultaneously and reciprocally into the clearly dominant position that appeared to be theirs as he was writing (Swatos 1976: 132).

Thus Weber introduced his ideal-types as conceptual devices oriented toward “discovering” or “revealing” “the particularity” (Becker 1968: 163) or “cultural significance” (Weber 2011: 92; Stout 2010: 495 ff.)—not of all moments leading to a general sociology of religion or economics—but of a specific historical development and of the particular reasoning process or complex of “meanings” that explains why people acted in one way rather than in some other. As Eister (1967) reminds us, this was an explicit methodological operation toward revealing an analytical *understanding*<sup>4</sup> of that history.

The ideal-type, as Weber fashioned it, was designed as an operation in *verstehen*—to give an understanding “inside look” into the reasoning and motivations of “typical actors” in “typical situations” and, *in this limited sense*, an “explanation” for specific kinds of action (Eister 1967: 87, emphasis added).

Hence, the goal of typological research is not the exhaustive “ordering” of social institutions in relation to each other on a numeric or ordinal scale prior to theorizing (against Stark and Bainbridge 1979), but the formation of explanatory hypotheses based on empirical data that are potentially adaptable for future analysis and generalization.

The construction of [ideal-] types should always be oriented toward a clear-cut hypothesis; *the type of the highest usefulness is not merely classificatory* (Becker 1968: 218, emphasis added).

Weber's commentary on method is more pointed:

The attempts to determine the “real” and the “true” meaning of historical concepts always reappear and never succeed in reaching their goal (Weber 2011: 104,105).

For the continued *adaptation* of typological models Weber has the following comment:

... There are sciences to which eternal youth is granted, and the historical disciplines are among them—all those to which the eternally onward flowing stream of culture perpetually brings new problems. At the very heart of their task lies not only the transiency of *all* ideal types *but* also at the same time the inevitability of *new* ones (Weber 2011: 104, emphasis in original).

### *Ideal-Types As Predictions*

In analyzing the metamorphosis of Anglican organizations from established church-like into modern denominational structures William Swatos demonstrates a Weberian technique which Becker calls “retrospective prediction” (Becker 1940: 49) based on ideal-types—that is, reconstructing or “predicting” historical patterns based on the analysis of past events and institutions.

In other words, we may verify or refute our hypotheses and constructs by searching the record of the past for setups in which the “if and when” proviso is fulfilled. Verification or refutation of predictions may come from events that have already occurred. (Becker 1940: 49, n.6)

The reader may recall Weber's encyclopedic collections of analytical concepts distilled from empirical researches of diverse times and cultures collected in his “substantive writings” (Kalberg 1994a), most notably his *Economy and Society* (Weber 1947 and 1978). Concepts such as the *rational*, *traditional* and *charismatic* bases of legitimate authority (Weber 1947: 328) “predict” the ordering of social action in verifiable empirical situations already on record. Such concepts are themselves ideal-types distilled from numerous analyses of discreet empirical cases and retained for their *explanatory* power—the “if and when” proviso mentioned by Becker. The

constructed ideal-types now form the basis for *prospective* predictions, that is, for forming hypotheses based on comparative analysis and applied to future circumstances.

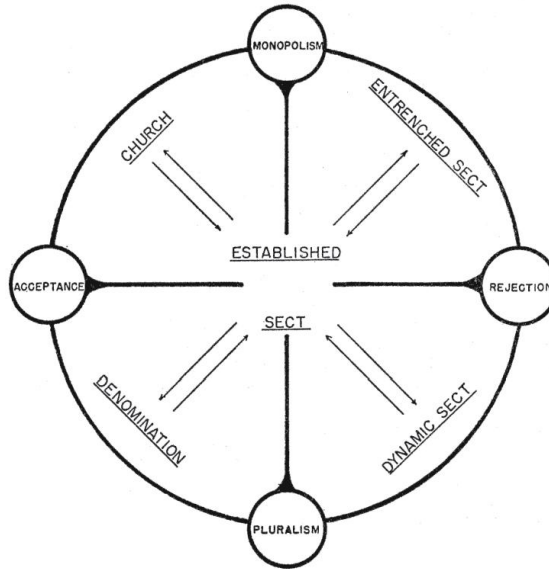
For the purpose of the present work I cannot overemphasize that Weber's "fundamental concepts,"<sup>5</sup> and those of others who follow his method, are not primarily classificatory but theoretical and analytical. In Swatos' words, placed as a refrain: "This is typology, not taxonomy" (Swatos 1975: 183; 1979: 14). The ideal-types are based on explicit questions posed to historical circumstances and intended for the formation of hypotheses based on the unique cultural significance revealed by analysis.

### ***The Integrated Model and Its Ideal-Types***

#### *The IM at a Glance*

The IM (see Figure 1 below), created by William H. Swatos Jr., "is illustrated from an analysis of the religious situations in England and America during the controversies that surrounded the quest for an Anglican episcopate in America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (Swatos 1975: 174). The typology that forms the heart of the model tracks the Anglican metamorphosis into denominationalism (Swatos 1979), or what I call for convenience "the first Anglican metamorphosis." The model consists of five church-sect types—one in each of four intersecting quadrants formed by two polar axes or continua, each bounded by ideal-types capturing the dichotomous "universal variable properties" by which the *organization for universe maintenance* is operationalized. I shall begin with an analysis of the "universal variable properties," the *monopolism-pluralism* and *acceptance-rejection* polarities, intended to "conceptualize the orientation of a society's organization for universe maintenance (and thus its

central value system)” (Swatos 1979: 8), and subsequently summarize the already familiar church-sect types but with special emphasis on their “utopian” or ideal-typical character.



**Figure 1 - The Integrated Model (Swatos 1979)**

### *Operationalizing Organization for Universe Maintenance*

The power of the IM comes from the integration of the two complementary variables set as analytical polarities and forming quadrants inhabited by four church-sect types, with a fifth “transitional anomic type located at the intersection of the continua” (Swatos 1975: 174). The first variable is captured by the *acceptance-rejection* polarity based on the work of Benton Johnson (1957, 1963, 1971). In the IM it is intended to

[provide] a sound basis for analyzing the “internal” religion component of religio-social interaction (Swatos 1975: 175).

The second variable formed by the *monopolism-pluralism* polarity is based on the work of Berger and Luckman (Berger and Luckman 1967; Berger 1969) and is intended to conceptualize

the orientation of a society's organization for universe-maintenance (and thus its central value system) (Swatos 1975: 175).

The two axes together provide

a linkage between the "internal" religion component of religio-social interaction and a more general theory of social conditions external to, but interacting with, the religious organization (Swatos 1979: 9).

While the graphic rendering of the model recalls Niebuhr's (1929) sect-to-church hypothesis, Swatos' model does not track predicted group movements according to a theory of organizational development.

No claim is made... that a religious group necessarily begins as an entrenched sect and then *must* move through a series of stages ending as a church or else cease to exist. Rather, a group may initially be classified comparatively in *any* of the five types depending upon the external social conditions (Swatos 1979: 10).

The methodological basis for the comparative use of polar continua precludes identifying the model as the summary illustration of an already formed hypothesis. In reference to ideal-types formed in polar axes Stout observes,

assessment of [a given] ideal-type model must refer back to Weber's criteria of mutual exclusivity, logical coherency, and empirical plausibility (Stout 2010: 512).

For now let us consider the principle of mutual exclusivity and the logical coherency that follows from it in the case of Swatos' two variable axes.

The continua formed by the axial types do not imply a specific hypothesis locating individual organizations on a scale or predicting stages in organizational development.

*Acceptance* and *rejection* are *pure types*—pure fictions, in fact, describing circumstances that are observed perhaps occasionally in concrete settings and then only by coincidence. One searches in vain for, and can scarcely imagine, a society in which every member has acquiesced in accepting every single value judgment of its leading authorities; or, for that matter, in which every member without exception has rebelled against such stated values. The former is conceivable only in

laboratory conditions; the latter is a simple contradiction in terms: if every last soul is a committed rebel, then there can be no system of values against which to rebel because absolutely no one holds it! These ideal-types are crafted explicitly as logical antitheses *accentuating* the single principle which the researcher has identified as revealing the *essence* of the type (Weber 2011: 86): in the present case, the variable of the religious organization's interaction with the external society is operationalized as *essentially* one measured by the acceptance or rejection of its dominant system of values by "typical actors in typical situations" (Eister 1967).

The mutually exclusive logic of the *monopolism-pluralism* axis is as evident as that of the *acceptance-rejection* axis. Swatos gives the ideal-typical character of the monopolistic type as follows:

In a monopolistic society all facets of life are pervaded and controlled by a single system of ultimate meanings and values. ... There is but one religion, and it is inseparable from the socio-political power structure. ... In a situation of religio-cultural pluralism, voluntarism is the key principle.... ... There are both competing religious groups, and competition between "religion" and other discrete institutions for the time, money, and affection of individuals and groups (Swatos 1979:9).

A society in which "all facets of life are pervaded and controlled by a single system of ultimate meanings and values," and in which the partnership between "church and state" is utterly seamless, "has appeared in its pure form only rarely" (Kalberg 1994a: 26), to put it mildly. Just as there is no pure sample of a monopolistic society, neither is there a pure sample of a pluralistic society in which voluntary action guides individuals and groups at every turn.

Most societies demonstrate a rich mixture of these two types based on an infinite "chaos" (Weber 2011: 78) of events and circumstances. The *pure types* incline us to identify the differences between a given society and its ideal-type and to explain those differences—not only the differences between an empirical sample and its ideal-type but between the various samples



and each other with the ideal-type as a “yardstick” (Kalberg 1994a: 87) by which to measure their differences. Such reflections draw us to the historical uniqueness or “cultural significance” of each case—in the Weberian formula, why *this* way and not *that* (Weber 2011).

In concluding his introduction to the IM polar ideal-types for operationalizing universe maintenance, Swatos reminds the reader of his intention to return to Weber’s original intention for the church-sect types:

These two continua... restore the original Weberian use of “church-sect” as a tool for investigating the interacting social forces that have contributed to the rationalization-disenchantment process (Swatos 1979: 9).

I shall now give a summary analysis of Swatos’ church-sect types. As with the polarities capturing universe maintenance, I shall use the language of hyperbole to highlight the ideal-typical character of the types and to avoid the regrettable tendency of interpretive sociologists to confuse readers who may not know when they are referring to the type and when to the empirical case. I hope to avoid all such confusing comparisons.

*Swatos’ Adapted Church-Sect Types*

Swatos’ church-sect typology includes five ideal-types, which exceed the number of cells called for by two variable axes bounded by their ideal-types. The natural “cellular” arrangement of the typology appears in Table 1.

**Table 1 - The Integrated Model in table form**

		<u>Relationship to social environment</u>	
		<b>Acceptance</b>	<b>Rejection</b>
<u>Orientation for universe maintenance</u>			
<b>Monopolism</b>	Church	Entrenched Sect	
<b>Pluralism</b>	Denomination	Dynamic Sect	

The four model types can be listed as follows: under the monopolism orientation, *church* (MA), and *entrenched sect* (MR); and under the pluralism orientation, *denomination* (PA), and *dynamic sect* (PR). Missing from the table rendering is the *established sect*, which Swatos includes as a “typological grey area” and places at the intersection of the lines defining the four quadrants in the graphic rendering of the model, effectively depicting a “crossroads” position capturing any of the various organizational types as it transitions from one quadrant to another. The value of the table rendering is that it constructs the church-sect types more clearly as variables formed by analytical polarities highlighting the Weberian logic of mutual exclusivity in the construction of the ideal-types, thus further distinguishing their analytical function from that of taxonomic classification.

I shall now summarize Swatos’ definitions of the five IM church-sect ideal-types and point out their “utopian” or ideal-typical structure in relation to the variables indicated in their polarities.

**Church** (MA). “The church... is the norm for religious organization in a monopolistic society” (Swatos 1979: 12). The reader will observe that Swatos is speaking the language of hyperbole. There is no empirical sample in history of a purely monopolistic society or, for that matter, of a religious organization as a “life-encompassing organizational structure that includes both corporately and individually the whole of society within its membership...” and that is “inseparably intertwined” with the state, where the values of both church and state are “identical” (Swatos 1979: 12). Various churches throughout history (perhaps most) have aspired to such a “utopian” degree of control, and their clergy and members may fondly have imagined that they had achieved it, but a quick comparative analysis of a given case with the type would prove the contrary and suggest hypotheses as to why the ideal did not appear in such a

circumstance, and why *this* organizational configuration appeared in its place instead of *that* one. Swatos' church-type is clearly an adaptation of Weber's insofar as church members are born into the organization and do not need to qualify for membership as in Weber's sect-type.

**Entrenched Sect (MR).** The logical and analytical opposite of the *church* ideal-type is the *entrenched sect*, which Swatos calls the church's ideal-typical "nemesis" and "a determined minority" (Swatos 1979: 13). The entrenched sect is the logical opposite of the church specifically in terms of the variable of *relationship to the social environment*, as Table 1 indicates, and has nothing in common with its ideal-typical counterpart. The all-inclusive church and the righteously indignant entrenched sect provide a continuum along which we would expect to locate all the empirical cases in a given analysis. Note that while all such cases will necessarily manifest characteristics of both ideal-types, that does not indicate that they are in some predetermined transition from one type to the other, as in the sect-to-church theory attributed to Niebuhr (Niebuhr 1929; Roberts and Yamane 2012).<sup>6</sup>

**Denomination (PA).** "The denomination... is for pluralism, as the church is for monopolism, the norm of religious organization" (Swatos 1979: 13). The denomination is the church of pluralism insofar as its members were at one time born into it and did not need to "qualify" (Tonnie et al 1973: 141) to benefit from its services or to maintain their status as active members. Denomination-like organizations are equal competitors on a level playing field. In the period of the first Anglican metamorphosis the denomination could expect as its constituency a closed group of immigrants who were Anglicans or nonconformists when they left England and remained Episcopalians or Congregationalists when they arrived in the new world. Today those closed ethnic circles have disappeared and "denomination" means something different in colloquial usage. In the AIM, I retain the denomination ideal-type but describe it in

terms of the open competitiveness of denominations rather than their separate-closed-but-equal characteristics of an earlier time.

**Dynamic Sect (PR).** Swatos does not use this type for the comparative-interpretive analysis of empirical cases in “the Anglican metamorphosis,” calling that “one of the weaknesses of the current presentation” (Swatos 1979: 90). That confession could have been averted if he had described the dynamic sect simply in terms of its logical relationship to the denomination as an ideal-type and left it at that. The description that he gives of this ideal-type is especially relevant for the continuing Anglican metamorphosis because it accounts for the “church-like wannabes” of the orthodox revivals in the latter half of the twentieth century.

In a different sense from the denomination [the dynamic sect] is the “church” of pluralism. Its claims sound churchly. All are to be included, but it is not to be a church. It sets itself against the central value system of the dominant culture in a way that is explicitly defined and articulated (Swatos 1979: 14).

Swatos was almost prophetic in indicating that the dynamic sect would be especially appropriate for the analysis of “recent break-away groups in the Episcopal Church” and “may provide for future applicability of this type even in an Anglican context” (Swatos 1979: 90). As he predicted, I will indeed have occasion to revisit the dynamic sect-type in the AIM.

**Established Sect.** The reader will note that the established sect has no parenthetical reference to the variable axes of universe maintenance and relation to social environment. In one sense it is not part of the IM but is added as an afterthought as an “anomic” type of religious organization prevalent in a time when religio-societal norms are in upheaval (Swatos 1979: 12). It is difficult to grasp this organizational type as an ideal-type because, as a type of “internal disorientation” it seems not to describe anything. Swatos adapts Yinger’s (1957: 151) concept as a way of characterizing religious groups that are transitioning from one ideal-type to another

without specifying any “order” in the “movement” from one type to another. I will make special use of this type to capture interactions of organizations between conceptual norms.

I shall now give a brief description of the Adapted Integrated Model and its ideal-types.

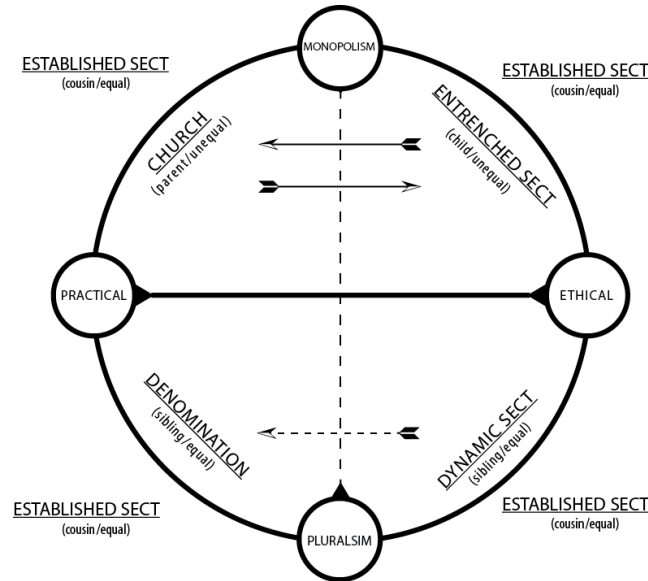
### ***The Adapted Integrated Model (AIM) and Its Ideal-Types***

If church-sect theory is to make the transition to maturity that the development of our discipline demands, then it is to *actual human interactions, social interrelationships, and institutional interdependencies* that we must turn as the keys to understanding the wide variety of phenomena that have fallen under this umbrella in the past (Swatos 1975: 175, emphasis added).

William Swatos developed the IM at an important moment in the history of the church-sect tradition when a renewed focus on the methodological distinctiveness of Weber’s ideal-types promised to reveal insight into the dynamic nature of social phenomena. The familiar terms—“church,” “sect,” “denomination,” etc.—were no longer fused with classifications for institutional structures set in a given period but, seen as ideal-types, were recognized as historically *particular* terms for generic social phenomena that appeared in various forms in various times and places. Swatos revitalized the tradition to examine the “dialectic of religio-social change” in a specific time and place (Swatos 1979: 89) and in response to particular questions about religious organizations in England and the United States in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Similarly, I created the AIM to explain a particular historical question having to do with the predictable competitiveness between the American Episcopal Church (TEC) and rival Anglican organizations in the United States. The AIM seeks to respond to the question, how does *the mode of interaction* between these organizations shift from one identifiable type to another?

Specific empirical examples based on relations from the growing list of such rival organizations will form the subject of the analysis in Chapter Four.



**Figure 2 - The Adapted Integrated Model (AIM)**

The Adapted Integrated Model (see Figure 2) explains the pattern of interaction that occurs between paired types of religious organizations based on the following assumptions: (a) that an organization “has” no predetermined structure that predisposes it to a uniform pattern of social action, but (b) that the “patterned action” (Kalberg 1994a) of each member group in a paired interaction is determined by the competitive relationship between the two groups.

The AIM retains much of the distinctive structure and logic of the IM on which it is based, including two variable continua formed by ideal-typical polarities into quadrants inhabited by the four major church-sect ideal-types. The AIM keeps the *monopolism-pluralism* polarity from the IM but uses it as a variable measuring *the ownership of meaning*, and combines it with a new variable, *type of rationality*. The integrating axes in the AIM shift the chronological focus of the model from early modernity—a time of manifest transition from a monolithic to gradually

diversifying organization of cultures—to post-modernity—a period of a rapidly accelerating pluralistic society in which former monopolistic patterns of interaction are replicated not in a monolithic “dominant” culture versus an occasional nonconformist or anomalous group but in competing factions in a given culture struggling to control what it means to be part of the culture.

While the IM and AIM have much in common, they have important differences as well. Even though the IM does not intend primarily to “order” transitioning organizations along a developmental path, it does theorize regarding the circumstances under which any one type of organization might transition to any other depending on a *dialectic of religio-social change* (Swatos 1979: 89). The AIM by contrast captures organizational types in static moments or *modes* of interaction between paired opposites. The organizations are not theorized as “moving” along a predictable “path,” as in the familiar sect-to-denomination-to-church model.

As the AIM demonstrates, religious organizations in the present era evoke the more ancient church-versus-sect dynamic only when certain social characteristics are in place. For this reason the AIM includes ideal-type *descriptors* drawn from the profiles of the AIM church-sect types. The descriptors facilitate the initial classification of empirical cases according to ideal-types relative to a paired opposite. For example, if we are analyzing the relationship between TEC and any one of the recent schismatic groups, we notice right away that this is a *parent-child* institutional relationship and manifests an organizational competitiveness we could describe as *unequal*, since TEC “owns” the historic relationship with the Church of England that validates TEC as historically “Anglican,” whereas the schismatic groups have at best an uncertain relation with historic Anglican institutions. The reader will note that the descriptors themselves are not ideal-types but part of the profile or definition of the adapted church-sect types. The descriptors enable the classification of empirical cases for comparative analysis according to the AIM ideal-

types. Thus the TEC-ACNA pairing, which readily manifests both the *parent-child* relationship and the *unequal* competition between the two in an otherwise equal pan-denominational religious market, indicates a classic church-entrenched sect rivalry or *mode of interaction*.

The AIM captures the mode of interaction of one organization with its paired opposite across the dotted *monopolism-pluralism* polarity in either the top or bottom semi-circle formed by the solid line of the *practical-ethical* axis. In contrast with the IM, there is never any relationship between either of the quadrants in the upper half with either in the lower half, for these two are separate *modes* of action. *Church-versus-sect* captures the conflicted interaction between organizations specifically where claim to the ownership of meaning between types is unequal—that is, in the *monopolistic* half of the continuum. *Denomination-versus-dynamic sect* is a special case that reveals an important element of organizational interactions in the *pluralistic* half, as I shall describe below.

Notice that the metaphorical “arrows” in the IM (Figure 1, page 26 above) indicating potential movement to or from any quadrant via the transitional *established sect-type* in the center have been replaced and that the *established sect-type* has been moved. The AIM shows three of the quadrant-types poised in an adversarial posture toward a paired opposite indicated by a literal arrow—that is, by a weapon aimed at an adversary. The adversarial interaction is based on the unequal or contested claim to rightful control or “ownership” of what it means to belong to the organization.

### *The Church-Sect Ideal-Types in their Modes of Interaction*

In the review that follows I shall present the adapted church-sect typology as “mutually exclusive” paired opposites. The reader is reminded that the axes or “continua” do not imply



empirical hypotheses predicting the development of religious organizations. The axes bounded by mutually exclusive ideal-types form cells capturing the principle variables of the AIM (see Table 2 below). The vertical axis, *monopolism-pluralism*, captures the *ownership of meaning* in a given interaction, whereas the horizontal axis, *practical-ethical*, captures the patterned *type of rationality*. Together these variables conceptualize the *mode of interaction* of generic paired opposites in social settings where conflicts arise regarding who controls the forces determining what it means to belong to the organization or, more simply, *the ownership of meaning*.

**Table 2 - The Adapted Integrated Model in table form**

			<u>TYPE OF RATIONALITY</u> (PAIRED WITH PARENT-CHILD TYPE)	
			Practical (parent)	Ethical (child)
<u>OWNERSHIP OF MEANING</u> (PAIRED WITH COMPETITIVE TYPE)				
Monopolism (unequal)		Church		Entrenched Sect
Pluralism (equal)		Denomination		Dynamic Sect

**Church (MPr) versus Entrenched Sect (ME).** In the AIM the classic church-type is classified as *monopolistic* (M) and *practical* (Pr). Here “church” is a generic form of an organization that historically has controlled those aspects of the organization that ultimately supply the *meaning* that members and observers, both friendly and not, attach to the organization. In a religious organization this would include the defining doctrines of the faith and the manner in which those doctrines are interpreted and translated into personal and interpersonal actions as well as organizational policies.

The AIM retains the *church* ideal-type because of its historic relationship with its paired opposite, the *entrenched sect* as named in the IM. The entrenched sect is described here as the *child* in this organizational relationship since it was “born” out of the parent organization usually by schism. The entrenched sect is classified as *monopolistic* (M) in reference to the ownership of meaning but *ethical* (E) in reference to the type of rationality that characterizes this ideal-type in radical contrast with its MPr paired opposite. While the church-type organization is typically preoccupied with *practical* concerns—such as administering a complex organization and dealing with typical institutional problems, even weighing the cost of settling disputes with sectarian challengers—the entrenched sect has the psychological advantage of being motivated by *ethical* or *value-based* concerns, which tend to be more powerful motivators than the more mundane concerns of staid institutions (Kalberg 1980).

These two ideal-types share the same description in relation to *competitive* type: they relate to each other with *unequal* claims to the control or *ownership* of those forces that determine what it means to belong to the organization. In their relations with each other each group’s actions express that group’s presumed right to define the meaning of the organization. In religious circles each group claims to be the “faithful remnant” representing the group’s most cherished traditions. These two contenders are depicted as having arrows, if not daggers, pointed at each other signifying the more-or-less adversarial *mode of the interaction* that inevitably occurs between them.

**Denomination (PI-Pr) versus dynamic sect (PI-E).** The world of religious pluralism calls for an introductory note prior to defining the AIM ideal-types in the lower half of the model (see Figure 2, page 38 above).

In terms of a religious marketplace the American religious scene could be described offhand as *pan-denominational*, composed exclusively of equal competitors in a free exchange of religious meanings. All religious groups equally demonstrate *practical* motives for action based on an open religious market, in which struggles for control of meaning are ideal-typically absent. In the AIM the *denomination* is the default type, since for the purposes of the present analysis all religious organizations are equally *denomination-like*—that is, voluntary and inclusive.

In the pan-denominational world there are certain groups that retain as their ideological self-understanding an adversarial posture toward what they perceive as a hostile world outside their institutional boundaries. This is the role of the *dynamic sect* in the AIM—almost identical to that in the IM but perhaps more fully elaborated in its ideal-typical definition. This group is particularly relevant to the continuing Anglican metamorphosis, as Swatos (1979: 90) noted earlier when Anglican dynamic sect-like organizations were first becoming commonplace on the American religious landscape.

While retaining the names and graphic placement of the *denomination* and *dynamic sect* types from the IM, the AIM is careful in detailing the “mutual exclusivity” that reveals their logical distinction. The *denomination-type* opposes no group, for in the pluralistic world of modern denominations all organizations are equal competitors on a level playing field. Thus all denominations are “siblings,” to carry the parent-child metaphor into the pluralistic end of the continuum for *ownership of meaning*, even in their relations with those groups that self-identify as dynamic sects. Hence the dynamic sect is portrayed in Figure 2 with the same descriptors as the denomination type and in most empirical cases passes as a “small denomination” or an “independent” congregation.

The distinguishing or “exclusive” logic of the dynamic sect ideal-type in the AIM is clear from its placement in the *ethical* half of the *type of rationality* continuum. The dynamic sect-like organization is a self-contained universe of meaning (Swatos 1979: 14) living in a “splendid isolation” apart from its denominational sibling. The dynamic sect historically identifies itself by its opposition to a named value system, and its early history includes a narrative of the revolution that caused the rupture between the former parent organization and the now distant child who carries on in the pluralistic world as the dynamic sect. Unlike the entrenched sect-type the dynamic sect pays no real price for its historic opposition to the presumed monopolistic culture, except where it expends energy “methodically” (Kalberg 1980) to maintain its nonconformist identity when it could just as easily drift into the *practical* denominational world of means-ends maintenance. In Figure 2 the arrow composed of dashed lines signifies a “faux” adversarial posture relative to the denomination-type, the primary function of which is to maintain the former revolutionary identity of the dynamic sect-like organization for the edification of its present constituency.

**The special role of the established sect.** The AIM retains all five of the church-sect ideal-types from the IM with minimal change in their ideal-profile definitions. Because the AIM analyzes modes of interaction between paired groups, it eliminates the “transitional” function of the *established sect* type in the IM, placing that type outside the four quadrants that comprise the “circle of interaction.” As the AIM makes clear there is a sense in which all American religious organizations in the present pluralistic epoch can be seen as *denomination-like*—that is, as equal competitors in the religious marketplace—and yet at the same time as *established sect-like*, since all religious groups in an advanced pluralistic social setting struggle with the “anomic” quality of the *established sect* ideal-type.

In the present model the *denomination* is placed inside the circle of interaction, whereas the *established sect* is depicted as outside. Prior to potential challenges between parent and child organizations and their predetermined mode of interaction, the denomination and the established sect are identical. The established sect is the denomination considered alone on the vast anomic landscape of modern pluralistic society and is given the convenient description as *cousin* to maintain the familial metaphor throughout the AIM. Moving into the circle of interaction, the denomination appears at least potentially in relation to some other type of organization—either another denomination or its partnered “opposite,” the dynamic sect.

#### *Conclusion of the Interpretive Method*

I remind the reader once again that the adapted church-sect ideal-types are just that: abstract concepts stated in the language of hyperbole intended to highlight structured patterns of action in organizational conflicts that occur in a specific historic moment. The present study is about a so-called “metamorphosis” of American Anglican organizations extending back several decades but presently under way in full force and calling for explanation. While this particular historical moment should provide insight into a variety of organizational conflicts in related settings (both religious and not), such generalizations are not the main task of the present work.

The present study revisits Weber’s interpretive sociology as it appeared in a well-known Integrated Model based on an even more familiar, and some would say overused, tradition in sociology of religion based on the church-sect typology. The present Adapted Integrated Model seeks to inquire as to the potential effectiveness both of the interpretive sociology and of the church-sect types for providing explanations (1) to religious professionals who, like Troeltsch and Niebuhr in a previous generation, find the official doctrinal and policy definitions of their

organizations to be insufficient because, as it turns out, the real questions vexing their institutions are not theological or even religious but *sociological*; and (2) to sociologists who can further refine these tools for revealing the historical uniqueness of particular social interactions leading to a richer understanding of human communities in general.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

### *Introduction*

In Chapter One I presented a parallel research program consisting of a practical and a methodological interest. The practical interest is a professional response to the transformation of Episcopal-Anglican religious organizations in the United States since the 1970s. The methodological interest seeks an appropriate model for the analysis of data pertaining to a history that is recorded chiefly in popular narratives and “blogs.” Furthermore, it is a history that continues to develop as I write these pages, thus precluding any appearance as a whole account or a distinct unit for retrospective analysis. In Chapter Two, I identified Weber's interpretive sociology as the general method appropriate for revealing the sociological *particularity* of such a history, and the church-sect tradition within sociology as a tool capable of adaptation for the interpretive-comparative analysis of interactions between contemporary Episcopal-Anglican organizations. In Chapter Three, I presented an original model, the Adapted Integrated Model (AIM), based on the earlier Integrated Model (IM) created by William H. Swatos, Jr. (1975, 1979, 1998), and I specified the variable continua used in the model and their ideal-types. What remains is to test the model by its effectiveness in answering real questions arising out of the experience of the organizations in question—that is, in “explaining” the particularities of a history in the limited sense appropriate to interpretive sociology (see Eister 1967; also Chapter Three, note 1, below).

In the present chapter I provide samples of such “real questions” in order to test the effectiveness of the AIM in uncovering the sociological uniqueness<sup>1</sup> of given cases. Thus I hope to complete the present research program in each of its parallel aspects.

### *How AIM Works*

The purpose of the AIM is to facilitate the comparative-interpretive analysis of religious organizations in ideal-typical paired opposites<sup>2</sup> called *modes of interaction* (MOI). The pairing of ideal-types is the initial response to cases from actual or “typical”<sup>3</sup> questions arising out of the present history of the Episcopal Church (TEC) and rival Anglican groups presently interacting in the American religious marketplace. The cases are arranged as practical questions regarding the relations between paired organizations, and analysis proceeds based on a preliminary MOI. The process of classifying paired organizations as ideal-typical MOI, and then “explaining” empirical samples according to types, proceeds as follows:

1. *Variables* (ownership of meaning, types of rationality) and *descriptors* (parent-child-sibling, equal-unequal) facilitate the placement of paired organizations into typical *modes of interaction* (MOI) between paired opposites of church-sect types.
2. A general or “ideal” exposition illustrates the theoretical relationship between the named organizations paired within the AIM conceptual framework.
3. A preliminary comparative analysis highlights the distinctions between the idealized MOI and the “exceptions” that necessarily occur in individual cases.
4. *Predictions* are made according to the *significance*—that is, the sociological uniqueness—of each particular case, a product of comparing the ideal-typical MOI with the historic specificity of the given interaction.

### *Organizational Profiles as Data*

For the purpose of interpretive analysis I collected data in the form of an “organizational profile” for each group examined. The profiles are based on written historical monographs, organizations’ own public relations literature (usually from those organizations’ web sites), or a combination. The purpose was to capture as reliably as possible what it *means* to belong to each of these groups, that is to say, to ascertain “the average or approximate meaning attributable to a given plurality of actors” (Weber 1947: 89). I assumed that the groups themselves presented the



closest representation obtainable of what it means to belong to their organization—at least to them—and I took it as axiomatic that each organization had an interest in doing so.

The empirical data used in constructing organizational profiles was collected with the following objectives in mind:

1. To supply a rudimentary historical background of the organization including any defining “moment” or “crisis” that continues to determine the *meaning* of belonging.
2. To include a basic demographic overview of the organization especially in relation to its size,<sup>4</sup> insofar as demographic records are available.
3. To provide a brief summary of the historic conflict that appears to define the given interaction of paired organizations.

### ***Organizational Profiles***

In the present section I supply cursory profiles for the organizations I examine later in the chapter. A profile is considered complete when it provides a coherent “average or approximate meaning” of what it *means* to belong to the organization from the viewpoint of the “typical”<sup>5</sup> member. The profile contains also the basic context for interpretive analysis based on the *mode of interaction* (MOI) of paired groups. Further contextual details are supplied as each individual case of paired organizations is presented.

#### *The Episcopal Church (TEC)*

**Historical Background.** In its section on Denominational Profiles the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) compiles the following concise description of the Episcopal Church:

The Episcopal Church continues the mission established by the Church of England in the American Colonies in the seventeenth century. Becoming independent after the American Revolution, the church was known for many years as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (“Episcopal Church”).

*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* defines the Episcopal Church even more succinctly as “the Church in the United States of America in communion with the see of Canterbury” (Cross 2005: 557).<sup>6</sup> Both definitions place TEC in its historic lineage with the Church of England. The second highlights the historical principle underlying TEC’s claim of legitimacy as the “local franchise” of that worldwide “family” of ecclesiastical provinces known as the Anglican Communion.

TEC places this same historic definition in the preamble to its Constitution making it the legal definition of TEC as a corporation as well as a statement of its identity:

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, otherwise known as The Episcopal Church [TEC] (which name is hereby recognized as also designating the Church), is a constituent member of the Anglican Communion, a Fellowship within the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury, upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer (Episcopal Church 2009: 1).

According to the Anglican Communion website,

The Anglican Episcopal family consists of an estimated 80 million Christians who are members of 44 different churches. These make up 34 provinces, 4 United Churches, and 6 other churches, spread across the globe (“Provincial Directory”).

The Episcopal Church, then, is the province headquartered in the United States<sup>7</sup> of a worldwide “communion” of national or regional ecclesiastical jurisdictions that began as mission bases of the Church of England and were recognized as indigenous missions, if not yet autonomous jurisdictions, in the second half of the nineteenth century (Booty et al 1998; Chapman 2006). The term “province” is especially pointed when considering TEC’s relationship with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), which aspires to be “an emerging province in the Anglican Communion” by virtue of its recognition by a number of Anglican

provinces though, significantly, not by the Archbishop (or “see”) of Canterbury (“About the Anglican Church in North America”).

**The Radical Turn.** TEC understands itself more recently, and is equally recognized by others, by what I have called the “radical” or “liberal turn” of its policies and statements about its beliefs. The radical or liberal “turn” of TEC in the latter half of the twentieth century, and accelerating since the 1970s, is documented chiefly in partisan works either sympathetic with or hostile to the changing consensus of the Church<sup>8</sup>. Cross gives a neutral description of the developments since 1976:

Opposition to the decision of the General Convention in 1976 to permit the ordination of women to the priesthood, and to a lesser degree to the new Prayer Book, led to the formation of several small schismatic bodies. The consecration early in 1989 of the first woman to become a bishop in the Anglican Communion (as suffragan in the diocese of Massachusetts) aroused further controversy. Nevertheless, a woman was elected as diocesan bishop in Vermont in 1993. The generally liberal social programmes established by recent General Conventions have also provoked strong opposition (Cross 2005: 558).

Badertscher (1998), while not unbiased in his research interest, offers a description of the relations between fellow Episcopalians in the chaotic period of the recent metamorphosis of American Anglicanism.

From the glory of the 1950’s and early 1960’s, when it stood at the peak of its social influence, the Church has come to a place where its members seem almost literally at each other’s throats. The same stresses which affected all mainstream American Protestant churches in the 1960’s and 1970’s did their work on ECUSA as well (Badertscher 1998: 16).

Hein and Shattuck (2004) offer the same summary description of the “turn” in socio-political affairs that gripped American culture in the concluding decades of the last century:

The last third of the twentieth century was an era of rapid social change that affected Episcopalians as much as all Americans (Hein and Shattuck 2004: 154).

Cross reporting in 2005 does not mention among the “liberal social programmes” of the 1970s the crescendo of radical self-definition that took place in 2003 in the election and subsequent ordination of Gene Robinson, “a divorcee in a same sex relationship” (Chapman 2006: 140), as the Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire and the first openly gay bishop in the Anglican Communion.

The “continuing metamorphosis” of American Anglican-Episcopal organizations reached its own crescendo pitch in an epidemic of secessions by congregations and whole dioceses through the first decade of the new millennium. Writing in 2006 conservative scholar Peter Toon referred to “the formation of a new orthodox Province of the Anglican Communion in the USA or North America,” calling such formation “possible, but improbable” (Toon 2006: 64). That “improbability” and the “unlikely” interactions that have become commonplace along the American denominational landscape, provide the background for the continuing metamorphosis of American Anglicanism.

**Numeric Decline.** Regardless of interpretation in terms of cause, the fact of a manifest numeric decline in TEC’s membership and attendance figures, along with those of many of the mainline American denominations, is one of the unarguable facts to emerge from the recent period.

Membership of the [Episcopal] Church declined markedly between 1966 and 2000. In the latter year there were about 2.4 million members (nearly 3.5 million in 1966) (Cross 2005: 558).

Researchers sympathetic with the dissenting conservative wing of the Church might report different figures depending partly on their presuppositions regarding the causes of decline, but partly also on the widely divergent understanding among researchers of what constitutes “real numbers” for church membership—reported membership or average Sunday attendance

(ASA)—and how recently membership rolls have been updated to reflect actual presence and committed participation of congregational members. Thus Bess (2006), while obviously reporting from a different set of figures, is not necessarily biased or overstating the case when he reports “the 3.4 million Episcopalians in 1960 had dwindled to 1.6 million by 1994 (Bess 2006: 19).

TEC’s own figures present anything but a varnished description both of the wide discrepancy between membership and ASA and of the bottom end figure for both, signifying the extent of TEC’s numeric decline in recent years. In 2010 TEC’s website listed active baptized members at 1,951,907 with ASA at 657,831, with the proportion of Sunday attenders to total members at approximately one third. For that year the same source lists Ten Year % Change in ASA at -23%, a dramatic decline by any reckoning and one calling for in depth analysis (“Episcopal Domestic Fast Facts Trends”).

While it is not the purpose of the present profile to interpret membership trends in TEC or any of the Anglican organizations, it is worth noting that losses in mainline denominational groups do not simply correlate with the “turn” in political preferences of constituents since the 1960s or with any single event or observed tendency. Finke and Stark (2006) put it rather neatly:

Since at least 1776 the [newer] upstart sects [Methodists, Baptists, etc.] have grown as the mainline American denominations [i.e., the first religious groups to settle in the colonies, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists] have declined. And this trend continues unabated, as new upstarts continue to push to the fore (Finke and Stark 2006: 235).

For constituents and non-constituents alike the meaning of the precipitous decline in religious organizations since the second half of the last century, including an accelerated decline since the start of the new millennium, is part of a much larger picture and awaits definitive analysis and explanation. As far as the subjective meaning of the observable decline, some TEC insiders

interpret it as problematic while others see it as the necessary outcome of taking a “prophetic” stance on the issues facing today’s world.

**Profile Summary.** To summarize the profile of the Episcopal Church for the purposes of the present research: TEC is a socially prominent American denomination-like organization with around two million members “on the books,” tracing its pedigree as a mission of the Church of England and presently that Church’s representative as an official province of the Anglican Communion. It is generally remembered as one of the founding mainline denominations in the United States. In recent decades it has entered a period of marked numeric decline—“marked” partly because the long gradual decline that goes back to its founding is now painfully noticeable and appears to be gathering momentum, and also because old and aging members are not being replaced either by growing Episcopalian households or by new members converting from other faiths. TEC has been characterized in recent decades by acrimonious debates that closely parallel the “culture war” in American society at large, and the extent to which this cultural change within the organization has contributed to the decline is widely debated.

#### *The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC)*

**Historical Background.** The REC is the first organizational “child” to become estranged and break away from TEC more than a century and a quarter ago. ARDA gives only the most basic historical description of the founding circumstances of REC:

The Reformed Episcopal Church is an independent Anglican jurisdiction founded in 1873 by Right Reverend George David Cummins and former members of the evangelical wing of the Episcopal Church (“Reformed Episcopal Church”).

As ARDA’s accompanying diagram indicates, “Anglican” here is taken to refer to chronological descent and not to any legal or “sacramental” relation with the see of Canterbury.<sup>9</sup>

**The Turning Point.** In his frequently cited *A History of the Episcopal Church* Prichard gives passing reference to the formation of the REC and places its departure from TEC in the setting of the “lost prestige” of southern evangelical Episcopalians after the Civil War (Prichard 1999: 148). This may represent the telling of history by the “winners” who retain ownership of the franchise. From the standpoint of the “losers,” REC recalls the history of its formation on its denominational website in the context of its historic break with TEC, the “parent” institution, as the outcome of the century long disagreement on both sides of the Atlantic between evangelical “low church” Episcopalians and their more formal “high church” counterparts.

A long debate over the excessive ritualism and exclusive attitude of the Protestant Episcopal Church toward other denominations lay behind the separation. The immediate cause of the division lay in the participation of Bishop George David Cummins, Assistant Bishop of Kentucky, at a Communion Service held in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. In the face of criticism and with the conviction that the evangelical and catholic nature and mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church were being lost, Bishop Cummins resigned as Assistant Bishop of Kentucky and transferred his Episcopal oversight to a new jurisdiction called the Reformed Episcopal Church (“History Overview of the REC”).

Regardless of the veracity or bias of Pritchard’s comment, the enduring memory of the REC, and that which comprises its present *meaning*, is that of a self-consciously “protestant” (hence “reformed”) faction within the Anglican community on both sides of the Atlantic. As the ecumenical movement within TEC began to favor a more “catholic” understanding of theology and mission during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly following the worldwide Anglican bishops’ endorsement of American “high churchman” William Reed Huntington’s Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral in 1888,<sup>10</sup> TEC’s first “continuing” or “breakaway church”<sup>11</sup> came into being.

**Recent Expansion.** The REC understands its formative vocation within protestant ecumenism as keeping with Article XIX, “Of the Church,” of The Articles of Religion (see BCP/REC 2003: 615).<sup>12</sup> In contrast with TEC’s purportedly “exclusive attitude toward other

denominations,” the REC actively “includes” new members both by receiving independent protestant/evangelical congregations into her denominational fold and by planting new REC congregations. Since 1980 the REC has more than doubled in size in terms of the number of congregations and by over two and one half times in terms of total members (“Reformed Episcopal Church”).

REC is “in fellowship with” other “continuing” Anglican organizations in both the US and the UK and identifies itself on its website as “a founding jurisdiction” of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) (“History Overview of the REC”).

**Summary.** In summary, REC is a “smaller” American denominational group of around 15,000 members<sup>13</sup> that maintains its identity with the Protestant Reformation of centuries past and at present with American evangelicalism as a historic response to the compromising tendency of modern American denominations towards the secular culture and its values. REC has been consistent in maintaining conservative standards of faith and morals and consciously resists ecumenical pressures to reduce her doctrinal commitments to a lowest common denominator. Central to the REC mission is gathering likeminded unaffiliated organizations into the fold of the broader Anglican tradition with its connection to Christian antiquity coupled with the historic witness of the Reformation. At the same time she has enacted legal measures through her General Council to safeguard her identity as an autonomous organization.<sup>14</sup>

#### *The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)*

The data on ACNA is either self-generated by the ACNA office in Pittsburgh or recorded in news articles and opinion pieces on the Internet.<sup>15, 16</sup> The portrait ACNA paints of herself on her official website agrees with these secondary sources and for the present purpose can be taken



at face value as capturing what it means to belong to this organization, which has been formally in existence only since 2009.<sup>17</sup>

**Demographics.** According to the general welcome section on the ACNA website,

The Anglican Church in North America unites some 100,000 Anglicans in nearly 1,000 congregations across the United States and Canada into a single Church. It is an emerging Province in the global Anglican Communion (“About the Anglican Church in North America”).

Two terms in this brief summary description are especially relevant in discerning the sociological significance and historical particularity of this organization.

Described as “a single Church” consisting of as many as 1,000 congregations, ACNA clearly identifies herself as the type of organization which sociology calls *church*, or *church-like* in the present usage, which in the AIM defaults to *denomination* in an advanced pluralistic setting. ACNA understands her mission as uniting a long list of former Episcopal affiliates and constituents, thus elevating numerous (what I would call) *dynamic-sect-like* groups into a single denomination or province.

**Historical Background.** The historic secession from TEC, whether by individuals or groups, is universally understood to be the “cause” of ACNA’s formation. This is spelled out in detail in another of ACNA’s promotional documents, a short paper entitled “Our Genesis” and downloadable from the website.

Within the last decades, the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada have increasingly accommodated and incorporated un-Biblical, un-Anglican practices and teaching. In the context of this widening theological gap, the existing geography-based organizational model of the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada became problematic for orthodox Anglicans. Orthodox parishes, clergy and dioceses that upheld Biblical authority and historic Anglican practice became isolated within their existing structures (“Our Genesis”).

As a summary statement of what it means to be part of ACNA “Our Genesis” includes the following statement:

[T]he ACNA... represents the reuniting of orthodox Anglicans who have been squeezed out of the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada by successive changes to historic Christian teaching and Anglican practice.

The “successive changes” are generally those liberalizing changes in doctrine and morals that have occurred since the 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>18</sup> The exception to this recent exodus of conservative Episcopalians is the REC, the first TEC “child,” founded in 1873 and now a founding member of ACNA, and is noted later in the same summary.

In her welcoming message ACNA describes herself, significantly, as “an emerging *Province* in the global Anglican Communion” (emphasis added), referring to the historic Global Anglican Futures Conference (GAFCON) in Jerusalem in 2008 which endorsed the future ACNA, which at that time was known as the Common Cause Partnership. Again “Our Genesis” speaks pointedly to the meaning of this event:

[I]n June 2008, Anglican leaders from around the world gathered at the Global Anglican Future conference and, among other decisions, determined that the North American Anglican groups under their care and united in the Common Cause Partnership should form a united Anglican body and *seek recognition as a province in the Anglican Communion* (“Our Genesis”).

Attendance at GAFCON included 7 Primates<sup>19</sup> of the Anglican Communion, that is, leaders of regional Provinces. Their endorsement and subsequent recognition of this new Anglican entity carries with it the assumption of *communio*, or official recognition, if not by all 37 Primates then by a sufficient number to form a new criterion for the legitimation of Anglican identity apart from its historic understanding of formal recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

These are of necessity fighting words, even if they are intended as irenic, descriptive, and inviting. The declaration of a new Anglican Province in North America is an implicit reference

to TEC, the historic Province of the Anglican Communion in the United States. ACNA as a North American Province of the Anglican Communion is by her own definition the conservative or “orthodox” alternative to the “other” North American Province, TEC.<sup>20</sup>

Thus is the secession from TEC, the parent organization, recognized as essential to the institutional identity of ACNA. The question will come up in the upcoming analysis, can ACNA survive as an organization without the recollection of its conflicted past? Can she form a positive identity based on who and what she is or will she be dependent upon a sense of who and what she is *not*, namely, the *other* North American Province?

**Profile Summary.** At least at present, then, the “revolution” is a defining moment for what it *means* to belong to ACNA. As later analysis will demonstrate, the extent to which this particular historic moment is necessary to ACNA’s ongoing identity will partly determine whether she can transition to the status of an equal denominational competitor in the American religious marketplace or whether she eventually retires into the relative seclusion of a dynamic sect-like organization.

#### *The Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA)*

Much of the description of ACNA could be repeated for AMiA, which emerged out of the same “revolution” as ACNA and even predates the latter, listing itself (like the REC) as one of its founding organizations. Its present status as a “missionary society” makes it a sociological anomaly, which is the reason why I include an analysis of AMiA according to the conceptual apparatus of AIM.

**Historical Background.** According to Emmanuel Kolini, recently retired Archbishop of the Anglican Province of Rwanda, the Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA, or the Anglican Mission” was formed in 2000 as

a missionary outreach of the Province of Rwanda... following passage of a formal resolution in the Rwandan House of Bishops in January [2000] calling for the consecration of missionary bishops to be sent to the United States, and to serve in a mission field within that country that presently comprises an estimated 130 million unchurched people (“Anglican Mission's Story”).

According to Ross Lindsay (2011) the Anglican Mission was part of a larger plan to form a new North American Anglican province, one that would be fully in communion with at least a majority of Anglican Provinces worldwide.

The Anglican Mission [formed in 2000] represented the “outside strategy” for reaching out to ...orthodox Episcopalians, while the Network [ACNA, formed in 2009] represented the “inside strategy” (Lindsay 2011: 60, 61).

**The “Anomic” Turn.** While it was surely not intentional nor was it apparent at the outset, AMiA began with a certain institutional incoherence indicated by her listings in two separate organizations: as “founding organizations of the ACNA” (Lindsay 2011: 103), while also legally a “mission” under the Province of Rwanda.

However, following ACNA’s first “Assembly” ...in December 2009, a review of the canons [ecclesiastical laws] of the Anglican Church of Rwanda ...revealed that The Anglican Mission could not be canonically resident in both the Anglican Church of Rwanda and in ACNA. Therefore, in early 2010, The Anglican Mission opted to remain a missionary outreach of, and canonically resident in, the Anglican Church of Rwanda. The Anglican Mission remained a “ministry partner” with ACNA, but it was no longer a voting member of the new church (Lindsay 2011: 103).

In December 2011 “amid a dispute over authority” AMiA voted to withdraw from Rwanda (Ross 2011). The following February at their annual winter conference Bishop Murphy entered into negotiations with representatives of the Anglican Province of Congo in an attempt to remain in communion with an Anglican Province and thus keep itself credibly “Anglican.” These

initial overtures were not authorized by the Congolese Archbishop, who formerly rescinded any offers made in his name by a lower bishop of that Province (Virtue 2012).

At about the same time AMiA was cutting itself from its moorings in ACNA as well. Now its role within both an “inside” and an “outside” strategy were confused at best, leaving her as a single organization but in no defining relation with others.

In an article published in February, 2012, a leading AMiA cleric chronicled that organization’s departure first from Rwanda and later from ACNA, quoted below at length.

At first, many in the AMiA assumed . . .that we would “fold in” as it were to this new [ACNA] province and gradually unfurl our ties to Rwanda; that is until the ACNA actually began to develop. Almost immediately, the leadership of the AMiA saw that the aspirations of the ACNA were not the same as ours. We were a Mission, ACNA was a province (a structured church). We wanted to do mission—only, the ACNA wanted (and needed) to build structures (diocese, canons, hierarchy, etc.). The AMiA wanted loose structures, the ACNA needed tight structures. So, the AMiA decided to take a step back from the ACNA. When we did this, we assured the ACNA leadership (and the world) that we had no break in fellowship with our ACNA friends, but that we felt we had a particular vocation in North America and it was not to build a province. “Provinces are good and necessary,” we agreed. “We just don't want to go about doing that work. We only want to do mission.” In other words, the AMiA began to see our distinctive role in North America becoming clearer and clearer: “We are a Mission; nothing more, nothing less” (“The AMiA Leaves Rwanda”).

The author’s language makes clear reference to ACNA as a denomination-like “structure,” and in a remarkable “snapshot” captures the interaction between this denomination-like organization and a formerly denomination-like structure, the AMiA, prior to its “step back” into some form of “loose” structure. The concept of a “mission society,” said to be part of AMiA’s “original DNA”<sup>21</sup>, is here, as elsewhere, in the process of being formalized.

In the summer of 2012 AMiA’s leading bishop, Chuck Murphy III, published a scholarly “apologia” for the new organizational “structure” (“The Anglican Mission”), tracing its historic “currents” through the universal church and especially the church in the British Isles. The

apologia serves an important ideological function in supplying meaning for its current members, but in future interactions with other organizations the apologia supplies cover for an organization in an “anomic” phase of its development.

**Profile Summary.** The same disclaimers can be given for data sources on the AMiA as previously given for ACNA. The criterion for reliability extends only so far as the present research objective to establish a profile or concept of *meaning*. Since the AMiA, constituted in 2000 by the Rwandan House of Bishops (“Anglican Mission’s Story”), is a new organization, there is no long memory, real or embellished, of what it means to be part of it. The recent transitioning of AMiA in and out of ACNA, and more recently out of the founding jurisdiction of the Province of Rwanda, make identity and meaning especially problematic both internally to leaders and members and externally to institutional peers and critics. This writer’s sense of a scholarly need to interpret the sociological meaning of this organization in this “particular” moment derives from the observation that AMiA is in a real sense *between meanings*. The AIM will facilitate approaching this group with a special eye to capturing the sociology of organizations “in between” defining norms.

#### *Conclusion of Present Section.*

AIM classifies the MOI of interacting pairs based on a preliminary classification according to church-sect types. Familial (*parent-child-sibling*) and competitive (*equal-unequal*) *descriptors* facilitate a cursory or “at a glance” classification. Right away one knows if one of the groups in question “came from” another as the result of organizational schism, whether remote or recent in time. The dichotomous ideal-types (*monopolism-pluralism* and *practical-ethical*) of the AIM axial variables (*ownership of meaning* and *type of rationality*) serve a further

descriptive function in placing the interacting pair in appropriate “quadrants” according to church-sect types.

The profiles for the organizations that will be paired for analysis are complete, except for additional details that will be given to place the paired interactions in sharper relief in light of recent conflicts or other relations. The remainder of the present chapter will consist of five sample cases, starting from actual practical questions that have been paraphrased or “averaged” for analytical purposes.

### *Case One: Denomination-Versus-Denomination*

#### *Practical Question*

“Why does TEC relate differently to other mainline denominations than she does to non-Episcopal Anglican groups in the United States? Why is she friendly toward the former and hostile toward the latter?”

**Context.** This question is the generic form of a series of related questions frequently posed rhetorically and in flustered tones by Episcopalians, new Anglicans, and observers alike: “Why can’t TEC simply say Godspeed to her breakaway Anglican children and wish them well, recognizing that they share a common mission—to represent Jesus Christ as each group understands Him and to serve the world in His Name? Why does TEC defrock her clergy who leave TEC for the newer conservative groups and not just bid them good riddance! Why does TEC sue congregations that withdraw from the Episcopal fold with the property they themselves built and paid for, especially when TEC can afford neither protracted legal battles nor the maintenance of empty churches?” These direct practical concerns underlying the initial question will be taken up in Case Two below.

The initial question, then, is a hypothetical one that puts the related questions in perspective: what's the real difference between these two mainline populations (Episcopal and Anglican) that accounts for the present likelihood of conflict between respective organizations? Both derive their constituencies from the same demographic<sup>22</sup>—the historic American mainline, middle to upper-middle class, mostly well educated, mostly affluent and mostly white.<sup>23</sup> Other than bad blood, hard feelings, a thirst for getting even or proving a point, what explains the apparent necessity for a conflicted relationship between Episcopal-Anglican denominational groups when there is no such necessity between Episcopalians and (say) Presbyterians?

More to the present point: what are the *sociological* forces that shape and direct the interactions between such contrasting pairs of similar organizations?

#### *Establishing the Mode of Interaction (MOI)*

The pairing of TEC and the Presbyterian Church USA<sup>24</sup> (PCUSA) will suffice as a suitable example for answering the practical question posed in Case One.

**AIM Descriptors.** TEC and PCUSA have no recent *familial* (parent-child etc.) relation as American organizations even if they do going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century in England and Scotland.<sup>25</sup> As contemporary American religious organizations they are *equal* competitors for new members from religious consumers and maintain their present constituents with a watchful but friendly eye to their denominational counterparts who are, nonetheless, their competitors.

**AIM Variable Descriptors.** Now we introduce the AIM variables for further classificatory purposes. There is no rivalry between TEC and PCUSA over what it *means* to belong to their respective organizations, since they interact in an advanced *pluralistic* social context.<sup>26</sup> These two organizations comprise different brands of the same product that happen to



be on the market at the same time in more or less the same place, even if leaders and members alike differ strenuously on their purported similarity.<sup>27</sup> AIM facilitates the recognition that the American religious marketplace places these two distinct historic entities on an equal footing relative to each other based on the variable of *ownership of meaning*. There is no competition between them that will effect what it means for members to be one or the other. We can safely predict that Presbyterians will not argue with Episcopalians over what it means to be Presbyterian, and vice versa, even if they engage one another in occasional debates about what it means to be Christian or American, conservative or liberal, or any other form of identity that they share equally, even if they discuss the historic differences that violently separated them half a millennium ago resulting in differences that technically divide them to this day.

The “easy peace” of the two friendly organizations is consistent with the AIM conceptualization of *practical rationality* that characterizes these two groups, leaders and members alike, as they go about issues primarily of institutional maintenance. In spite of the differences in their organizations’ stated doctrine and present status or placement in the life of the wider community, they are identical in the manner in which they pursue their distinct historical interests. When Episcopalians attend lectures in the parish hall on the peculiar history of Henry VIII or *The Book of Common Prayer* or recent TEC missionary efforts in Latin America, the type of institutional reflection that characterizes these activities is identical to that of their Presbyterian neighbors who gather to study the Westminster Confession and hear colorful tales of Oliver Cromwell or John Knox or even to discuss more radical contemporary “issues” such as civil rights or gay marriage. Any organizational distinctions are historical and occasionally theological but not sociological in terms of their significance. Certainly none of

these *particular* differences has any likelihood of setting Episcopalians and Presbyterians at odds with each other.<sup>28</sup>

**MOI Type.** The type of mode of interaction (MOI) in the present case between TEC and PCUSA is that of *denomination-versus-denomination*: equal players on a level competitive field—that is, *sibling* organizations—with no rivalry over ownership of meaning of their respective organizations, interacting collegially in a *pluralistic* market setting.

**MOI Prediction.** As equal pluralistic sibling organizations TEC and its mainline peers (PCUSA selected arbitrarily as an example) can continue in their respective means-end or practical concerns without anticipating serious conflict, even if their special local histories vary widely in detail: e.g., one becomes more liberal-conservative than another or pursues a public persona which another finds distasteful or unpopular, or one or the other is more or less popular or influential in a given city based on a long local rivalry.

#### *Denomination-Versus-Denomination: General Comment*

The present case illustrates the reality of what I called the pan-denominational religious market (see page 37 above). AIM demonstrates the sociological significance of what appears as a commonplace in American society. It explains the easy coexistence of religious organizations whose more distant history tells a story that is at most bewildering to modern ears, where the forebears of the same groups confronted each other in heresy trials, burnings, and the violent overthrow of kingdoms.

The reader is here reminded that the MOI in AIM is an ideal-type. The analysis in TEC-versus-PCUSA projects two historic organizations into the analytical logic of the AIM without a detailed look at their respective local or empirical histories. Only snippets from their respective

“institutional biographies” are mentioned to give life to the analytical exposition. Nonetheless the model, even utilizing an ideal comparison, is sufficient to explain the fundamental reality of these two historic groups as they are “typically” paired together, which is the object of the initial practical question.

Further comparative analysis would take individual instances of Episcopal or Presbyterian communities and explain how and why empirical cases vary from the logical predictions detailed in the previous analysis. Based on the AIM conceptualization the researcher would expect individual cases to resemble the ideal case closely in most instances and would expect also to have sufficient basis to explain any differences between ideal and concrete cases.

### ***Case Two: Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect***

#### *Practical Question*

“Why can’t TEC and ACNA recognize a common tradition and a common mission and just wish each other well and go about their day to day business (that is, like TEC and one of the other mainline denominations)?”

As mentioned earlier, the hypothetical question in Case One arises from this question based on the prior observation that TEC and the newer Anglican breakaway groups appear locked in an adversarial relation, whereas TEC and PCUSA seem free to pursue business as usual. Since these groups all derive from the same socio-demographic profile (see Chapter Two, note 22 below), the question quickly asserts itself no longer as simply practical but sociological. Specifically: what is the sociological difference between TEC and the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA, to cite the present example) that accounts for the conflict? How do we

understand the forces that determine the meaning of belonging to these respective groups and subsequently shape the patterned actions of those who belong?

**Context.** The reasons for an adversarial relationship between the two groups seem obvious. For example, in Virginia several lawsuits recently concluded between historic Episcopal parishes that broke away in the mid-2000s and affiliated with the larger umbrella organization that is now ACNA. The seceding congregations, most of them among the most successful local congregations in that diocese, believed that they were entitled to retain ownership of church properties after leaving TEC, since the older properties predated the Episcopal Church as an American corporation and the newer ones were designed, constructed, and maintained by a majority of the current membership now electing to secede.

In 1979 TEC added to its Constitution and Canons a resolution redefining the ownership of local church properties as holding them “in trust” for TEC, the national denomination, even those properties whose titles predate the founding of the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1789. After 1979 should a congregation or even a whole diocese elect to withdraw from TEC, all real properties and assets revert to “the national Church,” and locally to a legal entity set up to replace the departing one, whether a single congregation or a whole diocese. Hence the former Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh (for example) is now the Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh, and a new Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh has been created by the TEC executive offices in New York laying claim to the property and assets of the former Episcopal Diocese. There have been dozens, if not hundreds, of disputes, including back-and-forth appeals, regarding the rightful ownership of church properties around the US, and in the great majority of cases the courts have sided with TEC. (See Lindsay 2011: 113 ff.)

Apart from a definitive decision by the courts the ownership of real property is not self-evident. An “obvious” reason, then, for TEC and ACNA to regard each other as adversaries is the very real and ongoing battle over who owns church properties.

Not so obvious is the fact that TEC is spending tens of millions of dollars<sup>29</sup> on litigation in a budget that is supported by a rapidly shrinking financial base, and hence cases decided in TEC’s favor make up a Pyrrhic victory at best. TEC does not have thriving congregations to replace the departing Anglicans. Most cases end up in a lose-lose situation: TEC wins back “its” property under the law, appoints a new pastor and board to serve a now aided parish consisting of a minority of the former congregation (generally those who dissented from the initial schism), while a larger, younger and more enthusiastic congregation meets for worship and fellowship in a neighboring church building or some other commercial or municipal space. Many of the former parishes lie empty and simply drain diocesan coffers.<sup>30</sup>

There are occasional exceptions to the “lose-lose” scenario described in Virginia. In the Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida based in Orlando a number of local parishes voted to depart from TEC, and the TEC bishop managed friendly settlements with each of them without recourse to litigation and without disciplining local clergy. The exceptional case in Central Florida will be examined in Case Three below.

### *Establishing the MOI*

AIM analyzes modes of interaction (MOIs) between paired units—large, collective meaning-bearing organizations (such as a denomination or a diocese) as distinguished from local organizations (such as individual congregations) that happen to belong to the larger umbrella organization. These latter are understood to be representatives of the hierarchical organization to

which they belong. The AIM conceptualization assumes the organizational “brand” to be a major determinant of what it *means* to belong the local franchise. This assumption is confirmed in the present example when scattered local Anglican parishes (congregations and withdrawing dioceses) respond in a uniform fashion to controversial actions taken by TEC at the national or executive level and by TEC’s response both to individual congregations and larger aggregates.

It is important to point out that the new Anglicans use the name “Anglican” precisely to support a claim that their particular faith position has or ought to have a church-like status. Such is the classic sectarian impulse in Christian organizations. In the present example ACNA claims that its faith position is more true to historic Anglicanism than that of TEC in its recent development. Furthermore, most of the Anglican breakaway communities carry the endorsement and serve as missionary organizations of Anglican Provinces outside the United States. Since these Provinces stand in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury and are hence officially “recognized” as Anglican, now the new American Anglicans themselves have a credible claim to be “real” Anglicans. It is the exception and not the rule in the newer “breakaway” churches when a formerly Episcopal congregation withdraws independently from TEC apart from affiliating with an existing Anglican Province, thus retaining some legal association with Canterbury.

**AIM Descriptors.** While Truro Church in Fairfax, Virginia (for example) can truly claim to be in communion with the Province of Nigeria prior to becoming a member congregation in an ACNA diocese, as an organization she is nonetheless a *child* of TEC, from whom she departed in 2006 (see Lindsay 2011). It is the *parent-child* interaction that accounts for the abiding conflict with TEC. Even if the respective parties would like to feel they have moved on from the initial controversy that carried over into schism, Truro (representing ACNA by extension) and TEC compete as adversaries in the religious marketplace with disputed or *unequal* claims upon what it

means to represent “true” membership in the Anglican Communion and, for that matter, upon who rightfully lays claim to the title of Truro’s real property.

**AIM Variable Descriptors.** Even if Truro Church thinks she has “moved on” and is now some new kind of Anglican, she continues to interact in a religious setting in which TEC holds a *monopoly* on the Anglican institutional brand. It is precisely the claim over what that brand *means* that is, for the first time, subject to dispute. The common frustration of the new claimants to the title “Anglican” is that there is no “external” court of appeal to validate their claim apart from the traditional one, the See of Canterbury.

**MOI Type.** The type of MOI in the case of TEC versus ACNA (or one of her member congregations or dioceses) is that of the classic *church-versus-entrenched sect* interaction: unequal competitors locked in an adversarial *parent-child* relation, competing to *monopolize* or control the meaning of belonging to a single organization, as much as it might appear that the one organization has split simply because two separate legal entities have been created. Unlike the previous Case where TEC was classified as denomination-like relative to another denomination-like entity, in the present interaction TEC is classified as *church-like* and ACNA as *entrenched sect-like*.

**MOI Prediction.** AIM predicts in the long term that one of these two organizations will ultimately win the battle for “ownership” of the Anglican brand in the US and the other will retreat and become an increasingly isolated mini-denomination or dynamic sect-like organization. TEC is presently winning in the courts and losing in the replacement of her present membership, to say nothing of members departing to new jurisdictions. Regardless of which group wins, for the short term, and in response the practical question, AIM predicts that ACNA cannot simply coexist with TEC as “just another” American denomination.

### *Case Three: Explaining the Exceptions to Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect*

#### *Practical Question*

“What’s the difference (if any) between the way conservative dioceses remaining in TEC deal with dissenting organizations and the way liberal dioceses do?”

Case Two above, an analysis of TEC versus ACNA, is a preliminary comparison of the AIM ideal-types with the organizational names “plugged in” to demonstrate the logic of the AIM conceptualization. The predictions at the end of the analysis are general, as they must be since TEC and ACNA, collectivities of two million and one hundred thousand respectively, can only be conceptualized as units for analysis in general or ideal terms. The distinct details of the MOI predictions are projections based on the profiles of the two organizations.

AIM goes a step further in the comparative analysis of empirical examples that would appear to challenge broad generalizations. AIM must demonstrate that the same logic that explains the general rules (or “laws”; Weber 2011: 72 ff.) also explains the exceptions. This is the heart of comparative-historical sociology, where generalizations distilled from empirical examples explain the *particularity* of given exceptions. The reader is reminded that ideal-typical analysis acknowledges empirical “exceptions” as the practical norm, “as if anything other than exceptions could be found” (Becker 1932: 144) in actual experience.

#### *Church-Versus-Entrenched Sect: Two Apparent Exceptions*

Two apparent exceptions to the AIM church-versus-entrenched sect MOI occur in the neighboring TEC Dioceses of South Carolina, headquartered in Charleston, and Central Florida, headquartered in Orlando. Both Dioceses recently settled property disputes with dissenting congregations seeking to withdraw from TEC, either to join one of the new breakaway Anglican



jurisdictions or to an form independent unaffiliated congregation, perhaps putting off the question of affiliation for the moment. Both Dioceses are known to insiders and outsiders alike as among the few remaining defenders of moral and theological conservatism within the American Episcopal Church. In both cases the diocesan bishops are known worldwide as leaders of the conservative minority within TEC based on their longstanding reputations as accomplished parish clergy and national church leaders.<sup>31</sup>

### *The Diocese of Central Florida*

The case of Central Florida is cited as an exception to the AIM prediction of “adversarial” interactions between dissenting groups within its jurisdiction and the Diocesan leadership. In 2004 one and then in 2007 nine local Episcopal congregations expressed to their bishop the decision by substantial congregational majorities to disaffiliate from TEC and hence its local representative, the Diocese of Central Florida. The irony in the present scenario is based upon Central Florida’s long reputation as a conservative “holdout” within TEC. Speculation had long been expressed both within and without as to whether Central Florida’s bishop, the Rt. Rev. John W. Howe, would himself elect to disaffiliate from TEC, bringing his diocese with him.<sup>32</sup>

In 2008 Bishop Howe announced to the annual Diocesan Convention of lay and clergy delegates the results of painstaking negotiations with the recent wave of disaffiliating congregations, recalling also the outcome of the first such negotiation in 2004:

There are those who simply *have to leave* The Episcopal Church for conscience sake. I understand that. I don’t agree, but I don’t believe we should punish them. We shouldn’t sue them. We shouldn’t depose the clergy. ...Our brokenness is a tragedy. The litigation that is going on in so many places is a travesty. ...One year ago I stood before you and said, “This is my promise: *if there are those who decide to leave I will be more fair-minded and generous to them than any policy that could possibly be established.*” And I don’t have to ask you to believe that; I’ve proven it. ...As I

promised we would, we have said to those leaving, “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord” (“The Bishop’s Address” ).

Howe’s concluding comment appears in contradiction to the practical question raised in Case Two, but only on the surface. Based on the logic of AIM as an analytical system, the colloquial meaning of “adversarial” comes to light as “utopian” hyperbole (Weber 2011: 90). The AIM descriptor “unequal” in this case of church-versus-entrenched sect shifts the competitive focus in the present interaction to the question of property in its relation to identity. While the two groups, here a conservative TEC and its conservative disaffiliating “child” organization, remain “friendly” in an affective or psychological sense, they nonetheless separate into organizations with opposite bases for institutional meaning and thus “adversarial” from a strictly analytical standpoint. At the national or “macro” level these latter bases of meaning remain adversarial, both psychologically and analytically, and even at the micro level the awareness of a real separation between the two groups of “friends” is now palpable.

The fact that the opposing organizations were able to resolve their differences out of court explains their psychologically “non-adversarial” character. Had there been challenges by any of the disaffiliating groups to the ownership of former TEC properties, the resulting interactions would have been *unequal* and *adversarial* in the colloquial sense of the latter term, in spite of the ideological sympathies of both sides, which remained unchanged.

### *The Diocese of South Carolina*

The question of the role of real property in determining organizational meaning is even clearer in the second exceptional case to the AIM MOI types involving the legal dispute between All Saints Church, Waccamaw (Pawley’s Island), and the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina.

All Saints Church was an Episcopal congregation pastored by the Rev. Chuck Murphy III, a distinguished conservative leader within TEC, who in 2000 was consecrated as one of two new bishops in what would become the Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA). The consecrations took place in Singapore and were performed by the Archbishops (leading bishops) of the Anglican Provinces of Southeast Asia and Rwanda, along with two retired TEC bishops, one serving bishop from the Church of England and one lower bishop from the Anglican Church of Rwanda. These two American clerics were selected as “missionary bishops” to disaffected Episcopalians in the United States, some of whom had already disaffiliated from TEC. Many others, both in and out of TEC, stood by in anticipation of a new Anglican “ecclesiastical structure” to be formed in North America.

The reaction of South Carolina’s bishop, the Rt. Rev. Edward Salmon, to the Singapore consecrations was at first positive and sympathetic: “A new baby is being born within the Anglican Communion” (Lindsay 2011: 111). Later that year Bishop Salmons took All Saints Church to court claiming that the parish, established before the American Revolution and the subsequent incorporation of TEC in 1789, nonetheless “is held in trust for the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and The Episcopal Church” (Lindsay 2011: 116). The case was finally settled by the South Carolina Supreme Court in a 2010 ruling in favor of All Saints Church, the only case among dozens in the past decade where individual dissenting congregations have been awarded properties in disputes with “hierarchical” authorities.

According to Ross Lindsay (2011), a real estate attorney and credentialed canon (ecclesiastical) lawyer as well as a member of All Saints and personal associate of Bishop Murphy:

The case was unique because the Diocese of South Carolina was orthodox, as was the leadership of All Saints Church. Therefore, two theologically conservative factions were suing each other, unlike the other TEC property litigation that involved orthodox parishes and liberal, revisionist bishops (Lindsay 2011: 120).

Lindsay accounts here for the “irony” of conservative TEC versus conservative new Anglican, just as Bishop John Howe did in a backhanded manner in his “non-adversarial” interactions with departing Anglicans in Central Florida. What both these exceptional cases illustrate is the sociological fact of real property having “a life of its own” in the determination of *meaning* in these organizations.

Observers in South Carolina have speculated that Bishop Edward Salmons was pressured by TEC officials to comply with national denominational interests in pursuing title to All Saints’ property, and it is a matter of the public record that such interests were at work in this case. The TEC Presiding Bishop’s chancellor (attorney) David Booth Beers participated in the earliest deposition of witnesses in the case (Lindsay 2011: 117) and guided the ongoing representation of TEC’s case from his offices in New York.

On the other hand, Salmons could have been expressing any number of personal or local interests in taking action against All Saints Church in its effort to depart. Among the most obvious could be the comparative difference in mean property values between Pawley’s Island and the rest of South Carolina—nearly three to one in the year 2000. All Saints was a “plumb” parish, to put it mildly, and a longstanding source both of influence and revenue for the Diocese of South Carolina.

### *Case Three: General Conclusions*

The obvious conflicts, especially in their varying force as noted in the two above “exceptional” cases, points to the recognition of what Durkheim famously called a “social fact”:

A social fact is identifiable through the power of external coercion which it exerts or is capable of exerting on individuals (Durkheim 1982: 56).

Apart from the manner of “coercion” that may or may not be implied in the “pressure” upon a diocesan bishop to act in the interests of an external and even hostile bureaucratic structure (“the national Church”), and regardless of a religious CEO’s unwillingness to give up one of his most successful and lucrative local franchises, the AIM comparative analysis highlights a significant relationship between the concept of organizational real property and organizational *meaning*. To put it another way, property is shown to be a real part of what it means to belong to an organization, even if members and observers alike insist that it’s “only bricks and mortar.”

The AIM comparative analysis reveals a sociological basis for real properties as constituting a dimension of organizational meaning and identity. While negotiations between opposing parties can be genuinely friendly on a personal level, the rift between separating friends shows itself nonetheless as a social reality. Opposing sides in a property dispute may agree on everything except the rightful ownership of a given property, but after the property is settled, the respective parties interact with each other and with the general public as new social beings. In the case of Central Florida and its Episcopal and now Anglican clergy, these former colleagues, who often remain close personal friends, sense there is “something different” about their new relationship. Something new and very real has come between them changing the meaning of who they are.

### *Case Four: Dynamic-Sect-Versus... What?*

#### *Practical Question*

“Do the older ‘continuing churches’ have anything to lose in throwing in their lot with ACNA, the new umbrella denomination?”

The above question is a slightly revised form of a comment I heard in a personal conversation with a REC leader in Bedford, Texas, on the occasion of the official launch of ACNA in June, 2009. Amidst the festive air of gathered dignitaries<sup>33</sup> and the usual pomp of Anglican prelates, the ripple of private conversation revealed an underlying anxiety. Representatives of AMiA, for example, were reportedly fuming at the prospect of rescinding the admission of women to the ranks of the priesthood in order to accede to demands of Anglo-Catholic “purists.” More staid “broad church” Anglicans, in turn, were wary of AMiA’s signature “charismatic” worship style being foisted upon the new denomination as an obligatory stereotype. Rumors further “abounded” (“From My Ear to Yours”) that the present pomp and circumstance were an almost playful diversion from an impending coup by Ft. Worth Bishop Jack Iker, the host bishop, who (it was darkly opined) planned at any moment to announce the departure of his whole diocese out of Anglicanism altogether to be received into the Roman Catholic Church.

Stated less anxiously the question would appear to be, what happens when a small organization is absorbed by a larger one? In the context of the present research this last question is too simple, since it only touches on the “obvious” tensions of the meeting I described. The AIM conceptualization of “paired” interactions providing the basis for organizational *meaning*—and hence for subsequent *meaningful action*—shifts the question to something more technical. In

the present case it becomes: what is the sociological effect of a dynamic sect-like organization affiliating with a would-be denomination? AIM breaks down this technical question as follows.

The denomination with which REC would affiliate is ACNA, which in its early life carries with it the memory of its recent separation from TEC, a mainline denomination by usual reckoning but in relation to ACNA a “parent” organization charged with the stewardship of an historic religious *monopoly* with all the trappings of *meaning* that entails.

### *Establishing the MOI*

**AIM Descriptors.** For starters, AIM must answer the following: which is the REC, a dynamic sect or a (small) denomination? Already AIM reminds us of the precariousness of classifying religious organizations as self-contained historic entities in abstract isolation from other organizations rather than in the context of concrete interaction.

How does AIM facilitate a preliminary classification? REC is historically the first departing “child” organization from TEC (1873), which unwittingly became a “parent” at the appearance of REC as a rival denomination. Over time the two organizations grew apart and did not interfere with or challenge each other.<sup>34</sup> TEC was the recognized mainline institution it had been from the earliest years of the American colonies. REC existed in a separate circle of interaction with smaller evangelical and other independent organizations. While REC recalled and promoted her “low church” Anglican heritage, she posed no public challenge to TEC as the official Anglican representative in the US. Whatever challenge she represented to TEC and the mainline churches was mostly symbolic and added to REC’s sacred memory identifying her with the Reformation and its revolt against a compromising religious establishment.

**AIM Variable Descriptors.** REC could be classified as a small denomination, and for the most part she enjoys equal access to the competitive religious marketplace. Because she has no frequent interaction with TEC, the old adversarial or sectarian relations have become irrelevant. REC has been no threat to TEC as the recognized owner of the Anglican franchise in the US, even if REC herself publically disparages TEC’s official status. Her withholding recognition of TEC is strictly an internal affair and accounts only for the *ethical* rationality that adds to the present *meaning* of belonging.

**MOI Type.** According to AIM, as an equal competitor on the American denominational playing field and in marked non-relation to TEC, REC has maintained her religious identity as a force for reforming Christianity in a (potential) conflict, blunted and made “safe” over time, as a *dynamic sect-versus-denomination* MOI.

**MOI Prediction.** As long as REC retains her present “splendid isolation” as a dynamic sect relative to TEC—now embroiled in an all-out battle for control of the Anglican monopoly—REC can interact as a small denomination with other “sibling” groups. She will maintain her distinct Anglican heritage as the basis for her internal meaning but not as a basis to declare the “real” meaning of that heritage in the expectation that it be recognized externally. She can even keep her name on the ACNA letterhead as a founding member as long as she continues to interact locally as a small “independent Anglican” organization, to recall the ARDA definition. As mentioned, she has safeguarded her autonomy through her own conciliar legislation and can return to it at any time.

Once ACNA picks up momentum as a serious rival to TEC for the Anglican brand, REC will have to decide whether or not to continue as part of the new would-be province. As mentioned earlier, ACNA’s identity as an “emerging province” is another word for “rival to TEC



for ownership of the local Anglican franchise.” REC’s decision to remain would indicate a conscious decision to enter an open conflict. It would be an *ethical* decision, referring not to morality so much as the form of *rationality* defining such a decision. Whether or not REC is absorbed more fully in the near future by a rising ACNA, by casting in her lot with them she surely will be absorbed into the TEC-versus-ACNA MOI, or *church-versus-entrenched sect*.

REC’s decision to step away from the TEC-versus-ACNA conflict, thus opting out of ACNA—and out of *church-versus-entrenched sect*—would be a purely *practical* decision in terms of the type of rationality, typical of her return to her previous *dynamic sect-versus-denomination* MOI relative to TEC. This is a relation of equals (or at least of non-rivals), however they think of their more distant relations in the past.

#### ***Case Five: Outside the Circle of Interaction—Becoming an Established Sect***

##### *Practical Question*

“What is the meaning of AMiA’s recent disaffiliation from ACNA, and what does the AMiA mean by its recent redefinition of itself as a ‘missionary society’?”

I pose this hypothetical question to draw on the AIM conceptualization to give shape to religious organizations “in formation,” in the present case the Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA), the earliest of the “breakaway” Anglican denomination-like or sect-like groups. A brief summary or profile of the AMiA appears on page 56 in the present chapter. The present analysis is intended to provide a “snapshot” of an organization between conceptual norms.

To provide the context for a transition from a denomination-like to an established sect-like organization, I supply the following background.

### *Establishing the Mode of Interaction (MOI)*

The classification and analysis of a loose structure in its ongoing interactions with other more tightly structured, more defined organizations lies behind the practical question in the present case. Actual empirical histories of interactions between AMiA and other organizations since the formal adoption of its new status as a “missionary society” do not exist apart from news articles published online. Rumors abound regarding the “power struggles” between Bishops Murphy of AMiA and Duncan of ACNA, and psychological profiles of the two leading Anglican spokesmen are plentiful.

The purpose of the AIM analysis in this case is to make basic predictions based on ideal-types that conceptualize the *meaning* of belonging to the organizations in question. In the present case AMiA is considered in relation to (or interaction with) ACNA in the general sense detailed in earlier case analyses.

**AIM Descriptors.** While both AMiA and ACNA are equally “children” of TEC, in their interactions with each other they are equals. And while AMiA did withdraw from ACNA as a province (=denomination), she does not thereby enter into a parent-child relation with ACNA, thus precipitating a church-versus-entrenched sect MOI. AMiA will still relate to TEC in the classic church-versus-entrenched sect MOI, since there remains much unresolved business between AMiA and the parent institution especially in the courts, and because future TEC dissenters will doubtless come through AMiA’s loose “transdenominational” (Roberts and Yamane 2012: 192) mission structure en route to the “tight structure” of a more conventional denominational organization, such as ACNA or some other Protestant group.

**AIM Variable Descriptors.** While AMiA and ACNA interact as equals, it is not yet apparent what sort of equals they are. On what ground are they equal? It is clear that they do not

relate to each other, say, as Methodists and Lutherans do—in a denomination-versus-denomination MOI. While each group competes equally in the religious marketplace, this economic equality does not generate the patterned *meaning* of belonging to these groups as they interact.

AMiA appears not to fit within the AIM conceptualization. It does seem to fit, however, as something on the outside looking in.

**MOI Type.** It is the amorphous interrelation between AMiA and ACNA, and now her conscious identity as a social anomaly, that brings to light the unique *unstructured* interaction of *established-sect-versus-denomination*. According to the AIM conceptualization AMiA and ACNA are equals each in their awareness of themselves glancing across the “circle of interaction” at each other: they are equals as mutually acknowledged non-rivals. Thus AIM does not *explain* the interaction between the two groups so much as account for it. The AMiA as “missionary society” has become a would-be-permanent transitional organization. The AIM conceptualization adds the following crucial point: that this now articulated identity—that of a semi-permanent transitional organization—constitutes the meaning of belonging and determines the observable patterned actions of the organization.

**MOI Predictions.** With Yinger (1970), Swatos (1979), and Johnstone (1997) the AIM predicts that an established or “institutionalized” (Johnstone 1997: 100) sect-like organization will either turn into something or into nothing—depending on the organizational continuum upon which the given typology is based. In the present case the AIM predicts that the AMiA will either return to ACNA (or future equivalent) as part of a province-denomination or become an isolated dynamic sect-like group, whether a “continuing” Anglican mini-denomination or an independent non-denominational group. Much depends on how important the designation

“Anglican” is to the meaning of this constituency. It may transition into a contemporary “parachurch” agency specializing in local religious revivals or consulting in “church growth” matters, thus retaining the “missionary DNA” heralded on its web site home page. It will be possible to retain the Anglican identity only as part of a larger group that has become “recognized” or as a self-contained small group, such as the dynamic sect.

As suggested earlier, the designation “missionary society” was probably intended, whether consciously or not, to provide cover for an organization whose allegiances had suddenly dropped into oblivion. While not intending to be an independent organization, AMiA suddenly found independence thrust upon her, whether by coincidence—when the Rwanda bishops suddenly realized AMiA could not belong simultaneously to two organizations—or as a result of inter-personal conflicts. The reasons do not matter sociologically except insofar as they contribute to members’ subjective sense of what it *means* to belong, which in turn determines group action in a manner that can be observed.

What appears as a present object for observation is an organization seeking to place its institutional past within a consciously constructed sacred memory (see “The Anglican Mission”). Meanwhile it stays carefully aloof from other organizations, even its nearest confederates, while it confronts an open future. AMiA is waiting for her identity—what it *means* to belong to her organization—to be revealed.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In his seminal article critiquing the church-sect tradition in sociology Allan Eister (1967) warned about the precarious tendency of researchers to attempt “explanations” of empirical reality based on descriptive typologies (Eister 1967: 89). Further, he questioned

whether the distinctions drawn between church and sect in typological terms have led to important new insights or to knowledge which would not have been gotten otherwise (Eister 1967: 85).

The precise focus of Eister’s professional indignation throughout his critique remains unclear to me, except that he concurs that the ideal-type “as Weber conceived it” (Eister 1967: 87, n. 2) has mostly vanished from the literature.<sup>1</sup> Nor is it clear to me how “knowledge which would have been gotten otherwise” diminishes or invalidates the same knowledge when it is presented “in typological terms.”

As I suggested in Chapter Two, much of the disarray of the church-sect literature seems to be rooted in the indecision of researchers as to what they hoped to accomplish by their method, and, further, in the methodological shift from interpretive sociology’s historical focus to the relatively recent concerns of a “general sociology of religion” (Johnson 1957: 88).

In the present chapter I shall summarize “important new insights” I believe have been conveyed through this most recent venture into church-sect typologizing and make comments for future research. I shall here be mindful of Professor Eister’s challenge: what knowledge has been gained here that might not have been gotten otherwise?

To put it more pointedly in the terms of the present study: how much of the descriptive language in the analysis (Chapter Four) is necessitated by the model (AIM) and how much is basically what I would have said anyway?

I will have no final and definitive answer to this last perplexing question, which could be simply an echo of the scholarly conscience (“after all this, have I really said anything at all?”) The present study is an experimental foray into interpretive sociology, which is always open to the potential criticism of being “mere description” rather than “rigorous science” (Stark and Bainbridge 1979; Bainbridge and Stark 1980). Of course, it is possible that even scientific “rigor” must sometimes, or at some point, reside in the eye of the beholder.

### ***Parallel Research Program***

At the outset of the study I detailed a parallel research program initiated as a practical interest in interpreting changes in Episcopal-Anglican organizations in the United States in recent decades up to and including the present moment. This practical interest soon combined with a methodological interest following my discovery of a text expressing nearly identical concerns, *Into Denominationalism: The Anglican Metamorphosis* by William H. Swatos, Jr. (Swatos 1979).

At the heart of that research was an Integrated Model based on an adaptation of the familiar church-sect typology, specifically crafted to interpret the historical *particularity* (Becker 1950, 1968) of the transition by religious organizations in the UK and the US from established state churches to modern competitive denominations. Swatos’ method was a self-conscious<sup>2</sup> attempt to develop Weber’s methodological use of *ideal-types* with implicit implications for sociological theory and not simply as a device classifying religious organizations or “rank ordering” (Bainbridge and Stark 1980) them along the predictable path from sect to “church,” by which sociologists have trained themselves to mean sect to denomination, as if the two terms are now interchangeable. Swatos’ intention was to interpret the *significance* of an historical moment

by uncovering the sociological forces that underlay that moment and which alone explain why the institutions under study turned out (paraphrasing Weber) one way rather than another (Swatos 1979; Weber 2011). At the same time his intention was to vindicate church-sect theory interpreted from the methodological standpoint of Weber's ideal-types (Swatos 1976 and 1979) as a viable and, indeed, creative springboard for "future applicability" in the sociology of religious institutions (Swatos 1979: 90).

The present thesis represents one such "future application."

I adopted Swatos' research program wholesale in terms of both practical and methodological interests. My practical interest is to explain the significance of the present moment in the evolution of Anglican institutions in the US, which is itself the culmination of developments in the Episcopal Church (TEC) since 1976. I adjusted Swatos' Integrated Model for use in a strictly pluralistic social context by shifting the "unit of measure" from individual church-sect types to types of paired interactions—or *modes of interaction*—between given Episcopal-Anglican organizations. Thus, while the Adapted Integrated Model (AIM) owes its inspiration to Swatos' IM and its typology, it is a new model in terms of the structure and focus of its conceptualization, and from the standpoint of its application to very different historical circumstances. Unlike a previous "epoch" (Weber 2011: 82, 160) of social interaction, monopolies of cultural meaning no longer exist at the macro or societal level but are replicated in local closed circles of interaction and are especially noticeable when conflicts arise over the control or ownership of a local monopoly, such as a religious denomination.

AIM was not at first designed as a contribution to "general sociology" but as a means to "explain" the uniqueness of a given moment—"unique" in terms of the special sociological forces that shaped it one way instead of another. Nonetheless, a number of generalizations based

upon the cases detailed in Chapter Four are listed following the analyses, and I commend their further use and development to future sociologists and students of religious organizations. Other general comments will appear below. Above all I enthusiastically commend the disciplined construction of the typology “as Weber conceived it” as an instrument for the sociology of history and especially a history in which the researcher presently participates and which necessarily precludes quantifiable data.

### *Theory Rising to the Surface*

In saying that AIM represents the “wholesale” adaptation of the IM research program I mean that I assumed the theory implicit in IM. For much of the present study the theoretical implications of the new model remained below the surface. As the exposition of AIM unfolded, further implications for organizational theory—religious and other—became explicit. I shall summarize these in this concluding chapter.

The methodological interest of this project has been largely experimental—to see if the model developed in these pages does the work of interpretation called for by the initial practical concern. The experiment tests the AIM to see

1. how well it explains the “Anglican metamorphosis” presently unfolding in the US, and
2. whether or not further sociological research is merited by similar methods utilizing Weber’s ideal-types, and church-sect theory in particular.

I believe the analysis in Chapter Four demonstrates that both research interests have been met by the exposition of AIM and its application to empirical cases. I also believe that a quantitative model of the AIM could be developed with a “fit index” for “assessing profile similarity” (see Doty and Glick 1994: 236 ff.) that would enhance similar studies or open new



horizons for the comparative sociology particularly of religious organizations undergoing change.

In the next section I summarize how the present study has facilitated the identification and interpretation of the “particular moment” in the life of Episcopal-Anglican organizations in the US.

### *This “Particular” Moment of the Anglican Metamorphosis*

What does the analysis based on the AIM model tell us about the religious organizations in question that we would not otherwise have known? To put it another way: how does AIM point to the *particular* moment in the history of Anglican communities and institutions? Why are American Episcopal-Anglican organizations developing (unraveling?) the way they are rather than some other way?

#### *In the Ownership of Meaning, What Is It We Are Seeking to Own?*

The question as to what the Episcopal-Anglican infighting is all about is usually answered in terms of the national culture war—the division of American society into liberal versus conservative (Badertscher 1998; Hein and Shattuck 2004; Cross 2005). As I observed frequently throughout the analysis, this is the “obvious” answer and must therefore be followed by another question: what is the sociology underlying the “obvious” division? The answer implicit in the AIM is not liberal-versus-conservative but *parent-versus-child*. Liberal and conservative, the “particulars” of the present rivalry, must be understood generically if interpretive sociology is to give rise to hypotheses and generalizations.

In the present model TEC (understood typically as liberal) and ACNA (understood typically as conservative) face a confrontation over the question of organizational control,

conceptualized in the present study as *ownership of meaning*. The parent is the one presently in control, and the child is the one poised to challenge that control. The question becomes, which of these two concrete communities will assume control of what it means to belong to that religious tradition known as Anglicanism in the US?

According to the generic logic of parent-child, the focus of control in the present religious conflict may be not so much Anglican, or even religious, institutions, but American institutions that happen to be Anglican and religious. This same logic allows an alternate interpretation: that the culture war of TEC versus the breakaway churches could be a “proxy war” for the broader American culture war. Local religious organizations or individual members, frustrated at their inability to impact the wider culture directly, can confront their denominational neighbors in a safer form of confrontation, and they can withdraw when the conflict becomes, by whatever reckoning, too costly. While this certainly makes for an interesting theoretical question, it is at the same time an important historical question for Episcopalians-Anglicans embroiled in the present struggle. One wonders if such a question can be answered apart from the values of the one performing the research.

Regarding the present moment, then: there is something about it that is not necessarily Anglican or religious. Recognition of this fact is of crucial importance to those Episcopalians-Anglicans who might be contemplating forming a “new” Anglican organization. Frustrated conservatives may part company with their liberal counterparts, but never with the reality that some one or some group controls what it means to belong to their organization and that some others, probably a majority, do not. Struggles for control are endemic to groups and at some level take on an “adversarial” aspect, regardless of whether they are liberal or conservative, secular or religious.

## *The Ownership of Meaning and the Ownership of Property*

AIM points to the *ownership of meaning* as the focus of actual and potential conflicts between Episcopal-Anglican organizations in the US at the present time. Particularly in the relation between ideological kindred spirits—between conservative TEC in Central Florida and South Carolina and conservative breakaway Anglicans in the same region—the model insists that social forces separate these kindred organizations that none of them at the moment recognizes. Property disputes between outwardly hostile TEC and ACNA organizations are easily discernible apart from comprehending a sociological basis.

The AIM analysis introduces the following new insight: when the mode of interaction between ideological friends shifts to *church-versus-entrenched sect*, it becomes evident that a new social reality is in place. The property disputes that follow are not simply “about” the property; they are “about” this new reality. A social barrier comes into play based upon the inequality of the two contenders in regard to the meaning of their organizations. In spite of the long and continuing friendship of the new contenders, it is nonetheless now a “typical” interaction between TEC and a breakaway challenger. The matter-of-fact quality of this new barrier is the surprise introduced by AIM.

The question could be asked, “How do you know such a palpable barrier exists? Have you polled Episcopalians and Anglicans in Central Florida or their neighbors in South Carolina to ask them if they felt any such thing?”

A suitable questionnaire would be useful to supplement the present research or to pursue a study in religious psychology. My present point is that the initial observation derives entirely from the AIM system. The empirical data taken into account are the actions of two bishops in relation to very different constituencies—one departing without a claim to property and the other

with such a claim. While the latter case is “obvious”—it is adversarial in the psychological sense and centers quite clearly on a fight over properties—the former case demonstrates that the good feeling prevailing was not a function entirely of charitable motives and actions (which were doubtless present) but of the absence of a challenge to the ownership of church properties.

In South Carolina conservative ideology proved to be secondary in determining the *meaning* of belonging to a local religious organization that was also ideologically conservative. The unwitting adversaries had found themselves on a new ground that superseded their previous ideological commonality and now defined their interaction. Conservative TEC, like its liberal counterpart, drew the line at the ownership of institutional properties. Conservative AMiA wasn't just shifting its administrative affiliation; it was breaking away from “just another” TEC bishop and his administration. To say that the conservative bishop legally “had to” draw such a line is simply another way of saying the same thing. The psychology accompanying the bishop's decision, including his purported sincerity or the lack thereof in upholding conservative theological values, does not define the social reality observed in this action.

AIM does not *prove* that real estate constitutes a determining factor in organizational meaning and identity. I doubt such a conclusion could be definitively proven. More exacting scientific methods might determine that such an interpretation was “consistent with” such an interpretation, but such a claim is still a long way from proof. I state it here as an explanation for an observable pattern of action by groups and their representatives. Further, it appears to explain how separate circumstances in Central Florida and South Carolina are similar in some ways and yet different in others—how Central Florida went this way and South Carolina went that, and yet both in response to the same reality suggesting that institutional real estate determines organizational meaning and defines social boundaries.

Further study would raise the question as to the difference between religious and nonreligious groups in conflicts over the ownership of real property.

As to assessing the “particular” Anglican moment: whether or not property “should” matter when old ideological friends part company, the law in regard to properties determines that it will; but further, this legal reality is the expression, and not the underlying cause, of a new social reality that has come into being.

*Winners and Losers: The Future of the Anglican Metamorphosis in the US*

In Case Two I predicted that either TEC or ACNA (or future equivalent) must gain control of the Anglican franchise in the United States. Such a prognosis is frequently made by observers of the Anglican culture war based on hunches, appearances, mood swings, and the range of indefinable forces comprising the “obvious.” My prediction is based entirely upon the AIM conceptualization that insists that the parent-child confrontation cannot continue indefinitely. While the psychological premiums of an ethical rationality are the sort that buttresses efforts of a determined minority in overcoming a perceived oppressor, they are not for that reason without limit. One or the other of these two contenders will shift into a practical mode of rationality and cherish its Anglican identity in the shelter of a dynamic-sect.

One of the strengths of the AIM is that it resists reducing an organization to an isolated abstraction for the purposes of classification, even in spite of making preliminary analyses in general or ideal terms. Unlike other typologies (often indistinguishable from taxonomies) AIM assumes that an organization is identifiable in relation to some other. Even when AIM predictions are made in a preliminary and ideal fashion, they are less liable to the *reification* that

hounds typological analysis (Swatos 1977: 110)—where the abstract formulation of a group is taken as a real thing.

Classic sect-to-church theory posits that a sect will either grow into a church-like entity or else dwindle if not cease altogether. While the AIM presupposition draws similar conclusions in some cases, its perspective is entirely different. AIM does not theorize about the normal socialization of an isolated organization except insofar as it is paired with its opposite. The typical church-versus-entrenched sect interaction presupposes one type of “normal socialization”—namely, a struggle that will have a necessary end—but this end is not the formation of “just another” religious denomination. Even if, as in the present Episcopal-Anglican conflict, another religious jurisdiction is formed and becomes a typical competitor in the American religious marketplace, it will no longer be engaged in the historical struggle for the control of what it means to be Anglican in the US. As in the case of the dynamic sect-like group, it may withdraw into a closed circle and retain its Anglican brand in some limited sense, but it will have ceased to be recognized by the worldwide community of Anglican Provinces, even those that share its ideology and values.

The classic sect-to-church “socialization” is itself an abstract socialization and does not admit the sociological nuances that define the historic uniqueness—that is, the real *significance*—of the social reality in question.

The particular meaning of the present moment within the Anglican metamorphosis is that one group must win and the other must lose the battle for organizational control, including (or especially) the control of what it means to belong. The present standoff cannot be permanent. There cannot be two Anglican “truths” aligned with one historic mission out of Canterbury. These two can become separate visions and assume normal patterns of organizational

socialization, and in religious circles, yes, this would be moving along a natural continuum toward denominationalism.

Sect-to-church is a pattern for a general sociology of religion. In its general theory it must overlook the minute details that make up the “normal” socialization of each particular case from sect to church. The Anglican metamorphosis now under way is a particular historical reality. Even its most minute details manifest unique sociological gradations, all subject to explanation (and potential quantification—see page 85 above). For those engaged in the conflict the specificity of detail becomes a value that shapes questions and drives research.

AIM has no basis to predict winners and losers except in generic terms. Here now is the Weberian transition from the particular and unique to the generic and the generalizable. The “winner” in a conflict such as the one between TEC and ACNA will be the organization that is generally recognized as directing the monopoly of “meaning” for the religious tradition that crossed the Atlantic in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. “Winning” is another name for achieving institutional critical mass.

“Recognition” implies legitimation determined by an outside source. (Indeed, internal or self-generated recognition could be a formula for sectarianism.) While recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury used to be the sole criterion for legitimation in the Anglican Communion, the ascendancy of conservative Anglican Provinces in the Global South,<sup>3</sup> comprising a numeric majority of Anglicans worldwide, will automatically call into question the traditional “colonial” conception of institutional legitimacy.

There is no “objective” basis for “validating” claims of legitimation by competing factions when it comes to the declaring the “real” meaning of belonging. At some point the circle is closed and recognition becomes circular.

“Critical mass,” a metaphor from physics, needs to be translated into a metaphor more suitable for sociology. AIM facilitates such translation as follows: the religious organization that has achieved organizational “critical mass,” thus “legitimately” demanding recognition, is the one which, by whatever means, has evolved into the more *church-like* institution, whose *monopolistic* control of the forces shaping organizational *meaning* can be readily observed to motivate the actions of the “typical” or “average” (Weber 2011: 89) member. In the pan-denominational world of advanced cultural pluralism, the “winner” in a local church-versus-entrenched sect challenge will be recognized as “one of us,” whereas the “loser,” now demoted to sectarian status relative to the denominations, will carry a certain “wrong side of the tracks” stigma and will limit association to groups of its “own kind.”

Regarding the Anglican moment: as I said earlier, ACNA Bishop Duncan may refer to his “emerging Anglican province” with a winsome smile and genuine good will, but “them’s fightin’ words” nonetheless (see page 55 above).

***Generalization from the Anglican Metamorphosis:  
A Theory of Conflict and Its Resolution***

Organizations as competitive equals interact on an equal basis or “ground” even when they rehearse their fundamental differences, those ideas and events that mark the occasion of a violent disagreement in a distant past. In a modern pluralistic setting the common ground that overrides past divisions is the former contenders’ equal standing in an open competitive marketplace. The *meaning* that accounts for their present good will and overrides past recollections of animosity is really a *complex* of meanings. It is not the symbolic or narrative “meaning” attached to events and even acknowledged by actors and observers, but the intricate reality perceived by a plurality of actors who indicate their perceptions by their actions, which in



turn form observable objects for analysis. In a hierarchy of meanings, the present meaning of participating in a democratic exchange precedes the now incidental differences of history and ideology.

This theoretical point is generalizable to other groups, religious and not, where a comparable parent-child shift has occurred between the organization of origin (parent) and one that derives immediately from it (child). Insofar as the division does not threaten the parent's "ownership" of its product—the control of how the product is marketed and distributed—the relation of the new competitors is considered *equal*. One may outcompete another in a "friendly" competition, but this is "just business."

A challenge to the control of ownership by a child organization to the parent is comparable to a *hostile takeover* of one private corporation by another or by a faction within the first. This is the confrontation in the classic case of church-versus-entrenched sect in AIM. The interaction between actors may or may not be accompanied by psychological affectations of hostility, but it is an *adversarial* interaction in a generic and analytical sense. It is *unequal* in the sense that each side asserts its own claim to control as being in some quantitative or qualitative sense "greater" than that of the other.

Even when former adversaries are "friendly" in a personal sense, a barrier between them necessarily arises on the basis of their unequal relation. In order for that barrier to be removed some new "ground" must be found on which they see themselves as equals, as in the above case of former religious enemies (English Anglicans and Presbyterians) finding themselves on an equal footing in a completely new historical and economic setting.

### ***Conclusion: AIM Contributions to Sociological Theory***

According to Doty and Glick:

A theory... is a series of logical arguments that specifies a set of relationships among concepts, constructs, or variables (Doty and Glick 1994: 231; paraphrasing Bacharach 1989: 498).

Throughout the study I referred to the “logic” of AIM. I did not refer to it as a theory or set of theories, whether of religion or of institutions. Rather I drew on the “implicit” theoretical integrity of IM and its typology, of which AIM is an adaption. The relationships between the IM “concepts, constructs, and variables” constituted the implicit logic of IM as a system.

In the course of expounding the new model the AIM theoretical underpinnings became increasingly explicit. I referred to these in the course of the analysis, particularly in summary comments at the end of cases and in the short essay at the conclusion of the last section.

At the conclusion of this study it becomes increasingly clear what the theoretical power of the AIM model appears to be. First of all, the methodology based in ideal-types has proven to deliver insights regarding the interactions between Episcopal-Anglican organizations—even some, I daresay, that “would not have been gotten otherwise” (Eister 1967: 85). The method is well suited to the study of new organizations in their relations with each other and for which demographic and other “hard data” are in short supply. The MOI types provide “snapshots” of complex interactions of demonstrated quality for subsequent analysis. The AIM axial variables provide a powerful conceptual apparatus for explanatory purposes. The success of the model in generating “new insights” commends it to further use. The AIM predictions, of course, will provide proof of the ultimate strength or weakness of the model. Such “proof” would become part of the emerging dataset of Anglican religious organizations.

The model could be put to further use and further development. It seemed clear early on that the conventional church-sect typology could be dropped altogether and the familial descriptors—parent-child-sibling—substituted as the system types. The variables *ownership of meaning* and *types of rationality* could be retained for a related study or modified to suit a different subject matter and historical context.

I should add that parent-child is not a suitable generic substitute for church-sect, because not all church-sect interactions begin in schism by a child from a parent organization. Parent-child conceptualizes the unique interactions that occur in an organization formed by an internal challenge to the control of the organization, or schism.

I should add also that the more conventional church-sect typology was not suitable for the analysis of the Anglican metamorphosis but only a specially adapted version of it. Both the IM and the AIM are adapted typological constructs designed to analyze particular historical circumstances and organizational relationships. Neither is suited for “a general sociology of religion” prior to the analysis for which they were created. It is the analysis that supplies theoretical insights generalizable to comparable situations and provides robust concepts for further adaptation.

Here in summary are the main theoretical insights that became explicit in the course of the present study based on the AIM and its logic—parent-child as a theory of organizational conflict, apart from variable descriptors supplementing the AIM typology; the connection between organizational property and identity, and based upon this an awareness of the social boundaries that come into play in conflicts over property, apart from the actions and motivations of individuals; parent-child, again, as manifesting a generic conflict between social adversaries, where the focus of the conflict could be displaced from one field of interaction and projected

onto another (the “proxy war”); the concept of organizational “critical mass” as determining access to internal control and external recognition; and finally, the simple generic fact that in conflicts one side must win, or at least the present conflict must resolve itself and the conflict must cease.

### *Afterword*

The world outside the nearest window is a riddle to be solved. Appearances fail.

In the present work I developed a research program that grew out of the practical questions of a working parish priest perplexed at the complex interactions of organizations with which he was involved on a daily basis. These practical questions quickly proved to be deeper than the usual shoptalk of professional clergy or lay church professionals and volunteers. The changes affecting local religious institutions seemed related to changes convulsing the surrounding communities and, indeed, the world at large. Professional shoptalk had an “in house” character that confined the questions “indoors,” forming the specialized language of a “religious” sphere of discourse, one unsuited to a postmodern social reality with its innumerable and interpenetrating spheres of meaning and action.

The development and demonstration of the Advanced Integrated Model enabled the priest to “decode” certain of the complex mysteries of his everyday professional life. The world outside the parish window comes more sharply into focus. “Religious” discourse, formerly closed and circular, takes on a deeper character unfolding in rich constructions of meaning. Ancient narratives come more alive. Tradition, any tradition, is no longer simply a recollection but a structured reality, a living organism conveying a community’s life over generations.

I hope I have born witness to the creative vitality of an intellectual tradition—interpretive sociology—and to one of its methods, Weber’s ideal-types—thought by some to be overused, by others sorely neglected. The conceptualization of types in reference to the world of society has been an intellectual exercise often yielding to contemplation.

I commend the present study and reflections to my old friends in professional ministry and to new friends in new circles of meaning.

## **APPENDIX: ENDNOTES**

## ENDNOTES

### CHAPTER ONE

<sup>1</sup> I first came across the *parent-child* designation for *church* versus schismatic *sect* in Wilson (1959: 7). The terms are used in the present work, as in Wilson's and elsewhere, as a recognizable colloquialism that serves as a handy metaphor in describing organizational relationships. While I make use of family metaphors throughout the present work, I do not use them as concepts but as *descriptors* in service of the conceptual apparatus of the AIM typology.

<sup>2</sup> The closest thing to a definition of what it means for an ecclesiastical jurisdiction to be *Anglican* is to be recognized by or *in communion with* the titular head of the Church of England, the Archbishop of the metropolitan Diocese of Canterbury, the most ancient and historic ecclesiastical jurisdiction in England. (See Cross 2005.)

<sup>3</sup> I will use *Anglican* mainly in a generic sense to include all those denomination-like entities that are or at one time were part of the Church of England or its American mission, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (PECUSA)—or, as it is has been called since 1976, The Episcopal Church (TEC). Hence, for example, I will refer to both TEC and the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), which came into being in 2009 to form one large denomination out of a number of “breakaway” mini-denominations. By that I do not mean to take a position on whether the newer denominations are “really” Anglican or, for that matter, whether TEC after 1976 or 2003 is “truly” Anglican, which is the basis of the present struggle between TEC and her estranged “child” organizations over “the ownership of meaning.”

<sup>4</sup> The “continuing churches” within the present “metamorphosis” of American Anglicans are those congregations and small denominational groups that broke away from TEC following the TEC's 1976 General Convention. They identify chiefly with the two major legislative achievements of that Convention: the approval of women to be admitted to all levels of ordained ministry, and the approval of a new and very contemporary *Book of Common Prayer*. See Bess 2002.

<sup>5</sup> The “breakaway churches” are those similar groups which formed after 2000 in a more gradual and strategic response to changes in biblical interpretation of fundamental creedal doctrines (e.g., the divinity of Christ, the historical facticity of the resurrection, the literal importance of Christ's death as an atonement, etc.) and in what has been interpreted more generally as a wholesale accommodation of current American cultural values particularly in regard to sexual morality. See Lindsay 2011.

<sup>6</sup> “High church” refers to the tendency of local Episcopal or Anglican congregations to favor a “catholic” understanding of church, ritual, and theology, following the Oxford Movement or “catholic revival” in England and the United States with its renewed interest in the theological and ritualistic emphases of medieval Christendom. “Low church” Anglicans identified with the self-consciously “protestant” emphases of the Reformation churches, with their “low” emphasis on the role of the institutional church and the historic sacraments as instruments of salvation. “Low church” congregants typically favored a Reformed or Calvinist emphasis on personal salvation and were suspicious of ritualistic worship as tending toward idolatry.

<sup>7</sup> The actual legal name of this Church is the Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, for most of its history contracted to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA (PECUSA). In the first approved edition of the 1979 revision of its Book of Common Prayer the Church's General Convention, siding with the rising “high church” faction, gave its official name as The Episcopal Church (TEC).

<sup>8</sup> The term “universe maintenance” is taken from Berger (1969).

<sup>9</sup> I make use of the suffix “-like” throughout the present work to signify the empirical case that resembles an ideal type. For example, “church” as an ideal type is a theoretical “fictitious” (Weber 2011) institution that has rarely existed in “pure” typical form: a coherent “universe” of meaning acknowledged by at least most of its subjects, thus controlling all aspects of the dominant social narrative that translate into “meaning,” with no “wall of separation” between it and the administration of state. While such a “pure type” has rarely been in evidence throughout history,

it is certainly obvious that many “church-like” organizations have existed and do exist as empirical cases, such as the Roman Catholic Church of the high middle ages and the several national churches in the centuries following the Reformation.

<sup>10</sup> For a generic comparison of the historic church-sect conflict among religious organizations and the conflict between Western medicine and a group of modern Florida midwives, see Murphy-Geiss et al 2010.

## CHAPTER TWO

<sup>1</sup> An adapted version of the IM, the AIM, forms the analytical instrument developed in the present work. It is detailed in Chapters Three and Four.

<sup>2</sup> All such “child” institutions protest vehemently against the designation “schismatic,” which in one context embodies a value judgment by the “parent” group, thus diminishing at the outset any claim for legitimacy by the sect-like “child.” The term “sect” carries this same moralistic, minimalistic connotation and appears to take up the claim for legitimacy of the parent group. I use both “schismatic” and “sect” in the purely sociological sense and attempt to minimize the value connotation with the generic dichotomous terms parent-child. The church- or denomination-like organization is generally the founding or source institution from which the sect-like groups “break” or “tear away,” which is the literal meaning of schism. I imply no value judgment in the use of these terms nor any hierarchical scale of validity. Indeed, the present study proceeds from the observation that specific groups (such as TEC) can perform the organizational role of more than a single type and cannot be equated to “be” one or the other. The types are *ideal-types* of organizational structures that embody theories about the interrelations between the human groups “housed” in the organizations.

<sup>3</sup> “Patterned action” is Kalberg’s preferred equivalent to Weber’s “social action” in “Max Weber's Analysis of the Rise of Monotheism: A Reconstruction” (Kalberg 1994b).

<sup>4</sup> Although “formative” is my term, I stand by my claim that sociologists in the tradition defer to the same writers as constituting a primacy of authority within the tradition.

<sup>5</sup> A partial list of writers who utilize this now standard misnomer, in alphabetical order, includes the following: Dawson 1997; Dittes 1971; Eister 1967 and in Glock and Hammond 1973; Finke and Stark 2001; Johnson 1957; Lu and Lang 2006; Lewis 2004; Miller 2002; Park and Reimer 2002; Swatos 1977 and 1981; Wilson 1959.

## CHAPTER THREE

<sup>1</sup> I place “explaining” in quotes to alert the reader that I attach a technical meaning to “explanation” in interpretive sociology. See the reference to Eister (1967: 87) on page 24.

<sup>2</sup> “The very shaping of history now outpaces the ability of men to orient themselves in accordance with cherished values.... What they need, and what they feel they need, is a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves. It is this quality... that journalists and scholars, artists and publics, scientists and editors are coming to expect of what may be called *the sociological imagination*” (Mills 1959:4, 5, emphasis added).

<sup>3</sup> Writers use the three descriptors, “ideal,” “abstract,” and “constructed,” interchangeably in reference to the role of typology as a methodological instrument in comparative-historical sociology. Sometimes “constructed” is taken as an improvement on “ideal,” since all *types* are “constructed,” and philosophy’s ample lexicon of “idealisms” has confused researchers in guiding the use of typologies. Those who utilize the typology at the heart of their method generally acknowledge their debt to Weber and in some cases call for a “return” to his emphasis on its “ideal” character. See McKinney 1950 & 1966, Becker 1968, Swatos 1976, Stout 2010.

<sup>4</sup> The literature on this central concept in Weber’s sociology is vast, though any number of working definitions can be helpful and adequate in facilitating a grasp of Weber’s interpretive sociology: such as Susan Hekman’s definition of *verstehen* as “explanatory understanding,” that is, “understanding which refers to motives [and] involves placing the subjective meaning of an action in its specific context” (Hekman 1983:127).



<sup>5</sup> “Fundamental concepts” are those outlined in the first section of *Economy and Society* along with *Methodology of the Social Sciences*, which some writers define as part of Weber’s “methodological writings,” as distinct from his “substantive writings.” A prime example of the latter is *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

<sup>6</sup> We could say that Niebuhr’s theory of organizational development was a plausible hypothesis that he proposed after his ideal-typical study of churches and sects across history and following the conclusion to his question: why does the radical sect of the poor invariably give way to the compromises of the no-longer-poor?

## CHAPTER FOUR

<sup>1</sup> “Sociological uniqueness” here does not refer to a final conclusion based on concrete data in support of a hypothesis, but more in the preliminary sense of isolating the sociological “particulars” of the case prior to forming hypotheses.

<sup>2</sup> These pairs are logical, analytical or even comparative opposites, not necessarily empirical samples located on the opposite end of a continuum. For example, in the present chapter Case One and Case Three represent the most well known confrontation of “opposites” in the conflicted church-versus-entrenched sect MOI. Case Two, on the other hand, places two organizations in “opposite” places in denomination-versus-dynamic sect which could be seen alternatively as denomination-versus-denomination. The logical “opposition” makes possible the comparison between the two groups in question. The AIM variables are placed as polar opposites, but the individual organizations that make up the Cases are not.

<sup>3</sup> By “typical” questions I mean the sort of questions by lay or clerical colleagues that I have heard in repeated conversations or read in news journals. A “typical” question is a representative expression of several related questions distilled into the present “typical” form. See references in note 5 below.

<sup>4</sup> Size is of paramount importance rather than race (for example) for two reasons: (1) racial demographics of the groups in question are essentially well known; and (2) size pertains to the theoretical concept of critical mass, which emerges from the analysis of Case Two.

<sup>5</sup> “Typical” here in Weber’s sense of either “average” or “ideal-typical,” and not based on a numeric mean, even if one were available. (See Eister 1967: 87; Weber 1967: 89; 2011: 90, 101.) While it might be possible to compute what such an “average” Episcopalian would believe, how he/she would respond to questions about “issues,” etc., it is equally plausible that no such single individual would be found in empirical cases. The “average Episcopalian,” like that of any “typical” constituent, is an abstraction or an ideal. Of course, “average” members of the other groups could not be calculated. The closest thing to an computing an “average” American Anglican would be to revert to the average Episcopalian, as does the Pew Forum (see note 21NN below.).

<sup>6</sup> Cross (2005: 1489) defines “see” as follows: “Properly, the official ‘seat’ (*sedes*) or ‘throne’ (*cathedra*) of a bishop. This seat, which is the earliest of the bishop’s insignia, normally stands in the cathedral of the diocese; hence the town or place where the cathedral is located is also itself known as the bishop’s see.”

<sup>7</sup> To call the Episcopal Church the province of the Anglican Communion in the United States is no longer accurate and more recently has become controversial. According to TEC’s website, “The Episcopal Church has members in the United States, as well as in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Haiti, Honduras, Micronesia, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, Venezuela, and the Virgin Islands.” In recent public gatherings TEC leaders have tended to emphasize TEC’s identity as a multinational Church. Critics refer to TEC as a “mini-communion” potentially in competition with the Anglican Communion in the event that she should become isolated following possible disciplinary actions taken at the insistence of certain of the conservative African, Asian and Latin American provinces.

<sup>8</sup> “First-hand information on the movement is available in relatively great abundance from the various [schismatic] denominations themselves, but is often of uneven quality, and truly scholarly material is rare” (Badertscher 2006: 11). The author here describes the special challenges of studying what is known in the (scarce) literature as the Continuing Church Movement, referring to the proliferation of small dynamic-sect-like groups in the years immediately following TEC’s 1976 General Convention through the early 1990s. The same lack of “truly scholarly material” is equally evident in researching the later Breakaway Anglican Churches, the more recent schismatic developments beginning in 2000 and culminating in the formation in 2008 of ACNA (see Lindsay 2011). With the

exception of the REC these latter “breakaway” churches make up the present focus of what I am calling “the continuing Anglican metamorphosis.” The Continuing churches do not raise pressing questions for sociological analysis because, according to the AIM, for the most part they exist in the “splendid isolation” characteristic of the dynamic-sect type. Putting it another way, none of the Continuing churches poses any threat to TEC’s claim as the legitimate “owner” of the Anglican franchise nor has any standing as a credible rival.

<sup>9</sup> The reader should take note that ARDA’s descriptive designation “independent Anglican” is within most Anglican circles considered a contradiction in terms. According to TEC and the Anglican Church in Canada (among others), “Anglican” means to be in some sense “dependent” on the Church of England and in particular the Archbishop of Canterbury, even if this “dependency” is symbolic and not juridical. Symbolic or not, the individual churches’ relationship with Canterbury remains the primary basis for establishing the legitimacy of Anglican organizations. As I shall point out in Chapter Five, Anglicanism within the convulsions of history is becoming something of a riddle.

<sup>10</sup> “Lambeth Quadrilateral (1888), sometimes called the ‘Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral’. A slightly revised edition of the four Articles agreed upon at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America in Chicago 1886. These were initially inspired by the work of William Reed Huntington. In the revised form the Articles were approved by the Lambeth Conference of 1888 as stating from the Anglican standpoint the essentials for a reunited Christian Church. The text of the Articles is as follows:

- A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as “containing all things necessary to salvation”, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- B. The Apostles’ Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.
- C. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailling use of Christ’s Words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.
- D. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church” (Cross 2005: 951).

<sup>11</sup> The terms “continuing church” and “breakaway church” are used synonymously by American Anglicans-Episcopalians, though in the emerging literature they appear to carry a technical distinction. See note 18 below.

<sup>12</sup> “*Of the Church*. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

“As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith (BCP/REC 2003: 615).

<sup>13</sup> ARDA lists membership totals for 2008 at 15,573 with 149 congregations. It is worth noting that while REC identifies as a North American organization, she lists congregations and missionary affiliates in South America, Africa, and Europe.

<sup>14</sup> This last fact is based on a personal telephone interview I conducted with a seminary professor from the Reformed Episcopal Seminary, Philadelphia, PA, September 19, 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Among the many Internet news sources and “blog” sites, VirtueOnline.org, an orthodox Anglican website, is recognized and cited by Google as a news source. VirtueOnline.org has whole sections of news articles and commentary regarding the events in Anglican organizations around the world over the past 15 years, including the GAFCON Conference in Jerusalem, in which ACNA received the endorsement of a number of Anglican Provincial leaders (archbishops or primates), and the ACNA Inaugural Assembly 2009, in Bedford, Texas, where ACNA was legally constituted (see “Reformation: A Church Is Born”).

<sup>16</sup> A single monograph, *Out of Africa: The Breakaway Anglican Churches*, appeared in 2011 that narrates events leading up to the formation particularly of the AMiA. While the author does not hide his partisan sympathies in this book, it remains a valuable record of the chronology of events that saw the formation of the newer Breakaway movement. (See Lindsay 2011.)

<sup>17</sup> As with the rest of the analyses in the present work, the reliability of the data comprising each organizational portrait is ultimately based on the success or failure of the predictions included with the analysis.

<sup>18</sup> This later date of Episcopal secessions—post 1976—is based on the common recognition that the primary cause of the earlier secessions was the admission of women to all three Holy Orders and the modernizing of *The Book of Common Prayer*, both of which were approved in TEC’s triennial General Convention in 1976. The rapid exodus of conservative Episcopalians after 1976, mostly self-designated “Anglo-Catholics,” comprises most of the Continuing Anglican Movement (see Badertscher 1998; Bess 2002). Most, but by no means all, of the newer Breakaway Anglicans have accepted both female clergy and contemporary liturgies. Thus ACNA represents the reuniting of some, but not all, of the Continuing Anglican organizations and most, but not all, of the post-2000 Breakaway Anglicans. The AMiA, for example, withdrew from full membership with the ACNA in 2010 and is listed as a “Missionary Partner” in ACNA’s 2011 Parochial Report.

<sup>19</sup> The following Anglican Provinces were represented at GAFCON by the attendance of their Archbishops, that is, the executive metropolitan bishops known more recently as Primates: Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Southern Cone, West Africa, and Rwanda.

<sup>20</sup> TEC of course is not the only historic Anglican Province in North America but shares that designation with her counterpart to the north, the Anglican Church of Canada.

<sup>21</sup> From the AMiA home page: “We retain our original DNA, continuing to celebrate a pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit as well as a passionate and unapologetic embrace of the three streams of the church experience that flow together to form one river of Christian life and worship—the Scripture, the Sacramental Life and the Holy Spirit. We are also committed to improving the nature of our coaching and support for new church plants as well as existing congregations who may be experiencing a plateau” (<http://www.theamia.org/identity/>; Retrieved October 6, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> While one could argue that the case has not been made that “both” TEC and the newer groups “derive from the same demographic,” the argument is moot since the data especially for the latter do not exist.

The Pew Forum lists “Anglican/Episcopal, Mainline Trad.” as a single category of “Mainline Protestant Churches.” That category is further divided into four subcategories: “Episcopal Church in the USA, Anglican Church (Church of England), Other Anglican/Episcopal denomination in the Mainline Tradition, and Anglican/Episcopal in the Mainline Tradition, not further specified” (Pew Forum, “Affiliations.” <http://religions.pewforum.org/affiliations>. Retrieved September 30, 2012.) For the purposes of demographic comparisons Pew lists all Mainline Churches, including the Anglican/Episcopal denominations, as a single category. To put it another way, Pew researchers assume that all Mainline Churches “derive their constituencies from the same demographic.” (See “U.S. Religious Landscapes Survey.”)

The researcher would have to “construct” demographic subpopulations from available datasets (such as GSS) drawing on organizational experts or “insiders,” probably “using only a single key informant” (Doty, Glick, and Huber 1993: 1210), “usually a pastor or priest” (Perl and Olson 2000: 18). It is the opinion of this “key informant” that the statement “[TEC and the newer Anglican breakaway groups] derive their constituencies from the same demographic” is sufficiently reliable for the purpose of the present interpretive analysis. As I said earlier in the present chapter and shall repeat in Chapter Five, the AIM predictions call for more precise methods of research and analysis and, even more importantly, a great deal more time before their accuracy can be considered established.

<sup>23</sup> The Episcopal Church, which promotes itself as the Church of “radical inclusion,” lists the following racial-ethnic demographics in a 2010 report: Non-Hispanic White, 86.7%; Black or African American, 6.4%; Hispanic/Latino, 3.5%; Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.4%; Multi-Racial, 1.2%; Native American, 0.8% (“Episcopal Congregations Overview”). Contrasting values given by the US Census for the population as a whole are the following: White/Non-Hispanic, 65.6%; Black, 12.8%; Hispanic/Latino, 15.4%; Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.7%; Native American, 1.7% (see “The Statistical Meaning of Diversity”).

<sup>24</sup> “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the largest of several Presbyterian churches in America, was founded in 1983 as a merger of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States” (“Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”). It is now counted as one of the American Mainline Churches by Pew Forum (“U.S. Religious Landscape Survey”).

<sup>25</sup> In a much broader context the present pairing of TEC and PCUSA shows the ancient schism of the first English Presbyterian Churches from the (Anglican) Church of England at the time of the English Civil Wars (ca. 1640-1660) is sociologically irrelevant for analyzing the present interactions between these two very contemporary and very

American mainline denominations. By the same token, both the AIM and the IM on which it is based provide ample conceptual material for “retrospective predictions” (Becker 1968) in the interpretive analysis of that earlier period.

<sup>26</sup> Too quick a characterization would identify the time in which we live as *pluralistic*, but it is not the *time* or “epoch” (Weber 2011) that ultimately reveals organizational conflict but the *context* in which conflicting interests come to the fore. A hasty reading of Swatos (1979) could lead to such confusion. Since his analysis (Swatos 1979) focuses on an earlier period characterized by institutions that enjoyed real monopolies, the observation could be made that the early modern era tended to “be” one of widespread institutional monopolism. Part of the importance of the present study is to isolate the generic nature of monopolism-pluralism, which is contextual and not epochal or chronological.

<sup>27</sup> From a sociological perspective the differences between the two groups pertains mostly to the particularity of their institutional biographies, which, notably, define the significance of the present *particular* moment in the fact that historic differences make no present sociological difference.

<sup>28</sup> More recent debates about homosexuality have in fact divided American denominational groups. For example, Eastern Orthodox Churches have broken off ecumenical discussions with TEC on this issue, whereas earlier discussions were strained but not completely broken based on the difference in these two religious groups on the issue of female priests. In both cases the conflict is not based on differences over the meaning of Episcopalianism or Orthodoxy but over the meaning of something greater that the two share: what it means to be Christian.

<sup>29</sup> D. Virtue, personal communication October 1, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> “[Pennsylvania Bishop Charles] Bennison [recently] admitted that an empty church costs the diocese \$55,000 a year to maintain [and] they now have to pay taxes on empty buildings... [T]he diocese [now] has 10 of them” (D. Virtue, personal communication October 1, 2012). Virtue’s comment refers to the expense of maintaining an empty consecrated building in a major metropolitan area, whether that building was left behind by departing Anglicans or simply went vacant after years of decline.

<sup>31</sup> Lindsay (2011) lists Central Florida and South Carolina among nine conservative or “orthodox” dioceses in TEC, which in turn lists “109 dioceses and three regional areas in 16 nations” (“About Us”). The nine orthodox dioceses listed when Lindsay went to press are the Dioceses of Albany, Central Florida, Dallas, Fort Worth, Pittsburgh Rio Grande, San Joaquin (California), South Carolina, and Springfield (Illinois) (Lindsay 2011: 167). Since Lindsay’s book was released Fort Worth, Pittsburgh, and San Joaquin departed TEC leaving “rump” or “shadow” dioceses behind carrying the TEC brand and ministering to a minority of former constituents.

<sup>32</sup> Howe’s ideological sympathies with dissenting conservatives are a matter of long record. In a recent annual report at the Central Florida Diocesan Convention he stated, “If the time comes when it will no longer be possible to be both Episcopalian and Anglican, I will choose Anglican” (in an email to diocesan clergy and lay leaders, October 5, 2007). That comment led to speculations that Howe was planning to leave TEC. He retired as head of his diocese in March, 2012, and in good standing as a member of TEC’s House of Bishops.

<sup>33</sup> Pastor Rick Warren, “one of America’s ‘most influential people’ and founder of the Saddleback Church, home to over 22,000 Christians” (Heidt 2009), headed the list of star appearances at this event.

<sup>34</sup> REC can be compared to PCUSA in Case One above, whose earliest history in relation with TEC had become irrelevant by the mere passage of time.

## CHAPTER FIVE

<sup>1</sup> This same point is emphasized by Coleman (1968) and of course by Swatos (1976 and 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, Swatos (1979: 102) cites Eister (1967) as one of the ghosts gazing over his shoulders as he detailed the first Anglican metamorphosis.

<sup>3</sup> The Anglican Global South is generally understood to include those provinces in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

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