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NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND RITUAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE MODERN SELF

June Macklin,* Víctor Acevedo Martínez** and Elizabeth Gonzalez Torres**¹

Summary: We propose that (1) two dominant, contrasting models of the self have been constructed by philosophers and social scientists, each appropriate to the two different kinds of “imagined” communities by which each is assumed to have been produced. We propose further that (2) each model, reified in both contemporary anthropological and folk discourse, is a *modern* construct. The first, an “*occidentalized*” version, describes an individuated, independent, ego-centric, competitive, autonomous “Western” self. The second offers an “*orientalized*,” romanticized notion of a sharing, caring, ecologically savvy, socially-connected and defined, non-Western, “traditional,” “indigenous,” self. Our data suggest the latter model is preferred by those—regardless of nationality—who explore new religious movements, which provide spiritualities ‘of’ and ‘for’ modernity. Based on their “indigenous” founders’ constructions of a *homogenized* Amerindian past, the religions we examine here permit their “detraditionalized” followers to participate in *polyphonic* rituals through which they transform, rename, and embody more acceptable, but thoroughly modern, selves. Finally, (3) we propose that the *message* the “indigenous, traditional elders” offer is less important to followers than *who* the messenger is. Data come from Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay.

Introduction

“*Homo sapiens* is the only species that invents symbols in which to invest passion and authority, and then forgets that symbols are inventions.”

(Joyce Carol Oates, 1999)

“Yo soy un indigena.”²— “I am an indigenous man,” intoned the speaker in clear, carefully enunciated, Mexican Spanish. An audible, awed gasp rippled across the audience of about 100 casually, but well-dressed North American listeners, gathered in the large assembly hall located in suburban Boston, Massachusetts. Short, compact, and bronzed, his gray, shoulder-length hair pinioned by a vivid, woven cotton headband, his goatee and mustache neat, his brown eyes

alert, Francisco Jimenez Sanchez, a confident septuagenarian³ began to speak. Wearing in a plaid sports shirt, blue jeans and Nike running shoes, “Tlakaelel”—the Nahuatl title by which this “Man of Medicine” is called—explained how his difficult, demanding, “sacred mission” had been conferred upon him at birth by the “traditional grandfathers.” He quietly told the hushed, attentive group that he was of “Aztec-Toltec”⁴ descent; his spirit protector is a “tigre”: He is, therefore, a “jaguar man,” or “Tlaka ozelotl” (Tlakaelel et al, 1992: 43), which implies a shape-shifting, powerful, satanic, priestly, or chiefly figure in many societies of Latin America. (Cf. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975). His mission was to corroborate the oral history which “describes the unity of all the land between Nicaragua and the North Pole, the eagle

symbolizing that unity.” He added that the “Confederation of Tawantinsuyo, (what we now call the Inka—centered in Cuzco, Peru, the other ‘navel’ and second cultural capital of the world, completes that unity from Nicaragua to the South Pole, the condor being its unifying symbol. We used to speak of one continent, one culture, the eagle and the condor; but now we speak of one world, one culture.” He also speaks of earth changes which are coming, and says we must prepare ourselves and our Mother Earth.

He has traveled and worked repeatedly in the United States, where he has participated in various Native American (Lakota-derived, that group having become the archetypal Indian in the American imagination, including both Indian and non-Indians) rituals from time to time. He has followers not only in the United States, but also in England, Holland, and Spain, has visited the pyramids in Egypt, and has dedicated a cultural center in Fiji.

The 16th century invasions by “Europeans” suspended the evolution of these “traditional” peoples, he tells his audience. He asserts that Tenochtitlan (ancient Mexico City), “the cultural capital of the human species,” is a copy of Atlantis,⁵ but since the Europeans took “our destiny into their hands, indigenous peoples around the world are the servants, those who clean the bathrooms, the employees, the workers, the poor people,” and hopes that his message will reach the young before their “minds become dirtied with the idea of money or power” (kalpulli-sponsored talk presented in a small town in Pennsylvania on 10 October 1999).

He vehemently rejects what he refers to as “official” history, a discourse based on the

“lies” of the conquerors and Catholic priests, who burned indigenous books containing the “real” records.⁶ He reserves the same scorn for some anthropologists and archaeologists who, he believes, are influenced to perpetuate these lies by their respective governments.

Ultimately, he says that his mother tongue is Nahuatl—and speaks a few words in the language, which the translator repeats verbatim. His dictated autobiography is replete with Nahuatl words and most of his followers—all of his North American devotees on whom we have data—believe it to be his native language. He reveals that he is a descendant “of a Mexica (Aztec) family that governed Mexico: ‘I form part of the tradition, and I am conserving that tradition.’” He asserts that the Mother Earth is a “living being” [This idea is parallel to that of Gaia, goddess of all life for Homeric Greece⁷], and adds that “the life of animals, plants, and minerals are as important as that of human beings. Man is cosmic, and connected to everything; we are a family of intelligent energies.” He also says that he can affect the forces of nature. His explanations regularly refer to “energy,” and “magnetism,” which he says are ancient, indigenous concepts. They send their “message of power in the moment of conception; they concentrate incommensurate quantities of cosmic energy, organized by universal principles which determine the genetic code of the new being, a code which decides the color of the eyes, hair, skin, stature, character and aptitudes. At the same time, one’s destiny is created, and creates the mission which one has to carry out on earth. The genetic code and destiny are indivisible, they complement each other, and form a unity (Tlakaheel 1992: 43; also restated in many of his talks). Ten-dollar

“donations” were being collected at the entrance of the hall, but most people contributed at least twice that much. Copies of Tlakaheel’s dictated autobiography, in both Spanish and English, were on sale, along with Mexican crafts, and tee-shirts stamped with his likeness, or colorful, stylized patterns taken from classic Mexican designs.

Since he joined “tribal elders” from divers countries in 1997 at the Karma Ling monastery in France, a gathering over which the highly-revered Dalai Lama presided, Tlakaheel speaks of the formation of the Circle of United Traditions, which comprises “traditional” peoples of all continents of the globe. World peace and how to effect it has become one of his major themes.

His performance, his life, and the content of his talk may be taken as paradigmatic of the 22 founders of such movements on which we have data⁸, although historical and other contextual variations create differences among them.

On taking new religious movements seriously: authenticity and authority

The failure to take seriously those popular and indigenous religions whose beliefs and practices are based on gnosis, and knowledge gained through altered states of consciousness, is a part of the rationalist legacy bequeathed Western scholars by the Age of Enlightenment. Embarrassed by ideas and practices they judged to be irrational and superstitious, scholars simply excised such subjects from the “mainstream of European mental equipment,” and pushed them into a “discredited existence underground” (Yates 1972:25). Because much creative imagining

goes into these ideologies, many people dismiss them as if they represent only artificial worlds of “copies without originals” Jean Baudrillard. For us, there are at least three compelling reasons for such studies: (a) They address the two fundamental questions confronting twenty-first century humans, one social, the other personal, namely, “how to turn our nascent world society into a *world community*, on a group level; and on the personal level, *how to find meaning in modern life*.” (W. C. Smith 1962:8). (b) Theoretically, they epitomize and therefore help us to understand “central features of modernity” (Hellas, 1996). (c) We see in these movements the power of ideas and images to cross national boundaries.

Many indigenous and non-indigenous people alike (including many scholars) have labeled such changing traditions, beliefs and practices “inauthentic.” But the notion that the “authentically traditional” is something “static and isolated can only be sustained is one abjures all interest in history (Wolf 1987:585).” We take the position that change normal in *all* sociocultural systems, and that *both* individuals and collectivities must be “fabricating pasts (Berger 1973),” and “inventing traditions” (Hobsbawm 1983) constantly, as they go about their identity work

When knowledge is based on gnosis, divisiveness and fissioning is inherent within the group, as disciples become competent to challenge their maestro. One vision (dream, spirit visitation, etc.) is as valid as the next. Perhaps even more important, each is *incontestable*. This lead to a curious paradox: many self-identified “authentic” natives not only scoff at the idea that any non-indigenous academic observer could ever “get it right,”

but they also seem to feel obligated to denounce indigenous views of the “real” Native experience when these differ from their own. Pejorative labels abound, such as “urban mixed-bloods,” “plastic medicine men and women,” “opportunistic academics,” “entrepreneurs,” “born-again Indians,” or New Agers. But that which is “authentic” becomes an elusive, a moving target. Sometimes it means a “full-blooded” member of the group, an *essentialist* view that knowledge comes with the genetic package; sometimes it means having grown up on a reservation, or in an integrated, homogeneous indigenous community. And always, knowledge, feigned or actual, of an indigenous language can be an important marker of one’s authenticity.

Curiously, the same individual can be dismissed or praised, depending on the critic. For example, one Native America writer denigrates Gerald Vizenor and Wendy Rose as being “self-described “urban mixed-bloods” who have “nothing useful to say about” being Indian in “tribal America.” (Cook-Lynn 1998:124), while another, in the same volume, praises the work of “Ojibway” scholar Gerald Vizenor, as well as that of “Hopi” Wendy Rose (Whitt 1988:142). Vine Deloria, Jr., lawyer and professor, who most effectively carves up academic conceits with both scalpel and rapier, always is identified (and self-identified) as a Standing Rock Sioux, although his great grandfather was part French, his grandfather Philip and father Vine both were ordained ministers, and both were Freemasons (Philip in 1911, and Vine, Sr. in 1934), the significance of which we discuss briefly below. His father’s sister, Ella Deloria, was a well-known anthropologist, educated at Colombia. But his Sioux genes appear to

have determined his remarkable abilities more than any other influence.

Bucko also mentions that authenticity is important both within and outside anthropological circles, authenticity is important. He notes that a “key contemporary criterion for the non-Lakota is that of genetic authority” (essentialism) and adds that “on this basis... the *Lame Deer* texts have avoided the scrutiny of scholarship for some time....The *sine que non* of authenticity is a biological rather than a historical link to that cultural group. (1998:25-26) .

Paraphrasing Christopher Steiner’s comment on non-Western art, we argue that by tying the definition of authenticity of these religious movements to a preindustrial past, one “denies their place in modernity.” All religions, including those world religions based on sacred texts, must adapt to constantly changing social, political, and economic conditions. As the distinguished historian of religion, Wilfred C. Smith, concludes, “What have been called man’s religions... are involved in *history*, ... in change, in imperfection, in the hurly-burly of the mundane. Yet also...they involve the transcendent—the abiding, the ideal” (Smith 1962:8).

We do not judge any individuals, their cultures, or religions to be either pathological or damaged; the altered states of consciousness which occasionally accompany the transformative rituals are simply other ways of knowing. We hold that every human culture is accessible to those who make the effort to inhabit another world—and do not presume to judge the authenticity of what it means to those who live there (cf. Y. Gonzalez Torres 1999; S. Rostas 1998).

Discourses

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, the new movements do *not* represent a break with the immediate, rationalized, industrialized past in any country. But because of “their pursuit of scientific methodology, historians [nowadays]...tend to ignore the vogue that spiritualism enjoyed not only in the lands to the south of the Rio Grande but in most parts of the Western world...before peaking anew as the counter-culture in the 1960s,”¹⁰ historian Fredrick Pike tells us. But in using the term “spiritualism,” he means “such matters as the quest for ‘wholeness’ between the ‘microcosm’ and ‘macrocosm; and the rediscovery of an ‘ancient wisdom’ that reveals, purportedly, how to assert the powers of mind and spirit over matter.” He adds that “Latin American interest in the extra-rational arises in part out of indigenous sources extending back through the centuries... [including] the animism and shamanism of native and Afro-Americans. Iberian mysticism, as well as Latin American folk Catholicism, both had absorbed Jewish and Islamic ingredients.” The discourse of which Pike speaks was global, for he adds: “[T]here was a virtual explosion of interest in the esoteric wisdom that occurred in fin-de-siecle England, Western Europe, Russia and also in the United States and Canada. This was a period when, even in “advanced societies,” occult thought—old and new—gained acceptance in many quarters as the “common intellectual coin” (Pike 1986: 6-7).

Nor can the 18th and 19th century global impact of esoteric Freemasonry be underestimated. As Albanese points out, idealism needs “sociological embodiment in a community and ceremonial expression in

public setting.” Freemasonry’s lodges provided an international, fraternal web for these ideas and “mediated the scientific culture of the Newtonian world, and with it, a religion of nature that ...provided a model for the new democratic impulse within the body politic” of the United States (1990:55). From the early 18th century forward—and important to our argument—many Native American leaders became masonic “brothers,” including the famous Joseph Brant (1777), and the aforementioned Delorias. Many North and Latin American lodges bore Indian names. And if the Enlightenment arrived in Latin America, Richard Morse once commented, it came through the medium of Freemasonry (1982).

Freemasonry’s organization and esoteric ideas helped to prepare the milieu among the social and political elites in which these new religions could germinate. Suffice it to say here that Freemasonry was directly related to the founding of Mormonism (1830s), North American Spiritualism (1848), Mexican espiritismo (1850s and 1860s), and espiritismo, as well as the Gran Fraternidad Universal, whose founder, the French Count Serge Raynaud de la Ferriere, was a 33rd degree Mason. And of course, the Grand Universal Brotherhood was the crucible which melded many of the ideas of Venezuelan Domingo Diaz Porta (“Titolopotchli”).

Anthropologists and archaeologists have worked during the last century and a half to provide a scientific discourse for the understanding the origins, development, and ethnography of “traditional,” “tribal” peoples. But as early as the 1920s - 1930s, a discourse which spoke to goals of cultural identity and political strategies emerged in

the Americas. This discourse employed indigenous, or Indian, “symbolism, derived from a millennialist archetype,... to create new order out of those humans who had traditionally been the most truly dispossessed and shoved to the margins of society” (Pike 1986: 126-7). It continues to be very effective today among those seeking a new order (Cf. Vargas Llosa 1996).

By the late 1960s and 1970s, a neo-indigenous discourse, separated from and began to attack the academic discourse, homing in on the inevitable differences of opinion endemic to scientific discussions. Their respective ways of knowing differ strikingly. The movements’ leaders rely largely on gnosis, knowledge which comes to them in dreams, visions, trance, from spirits, spirit guides, creatures in nature, including *some* stones, and the oral tradition (cf. Macklin 1997; cf. Macklin 1974a and b). For example, based on these sources of knowledge, Tlakaelel asserts that pre-hispanic communities were egalitarian, they were ecologically harmonic, there was never an empire, only peaceful, co-existing confederations, and they practiced neither human sacrifice nor cannibalism, views also at odds with that of many archaeologists and ethnohistorians, Mexican and North American alike. Finally, he avers that the status of women was high, and that all are equal within his contemporary movement.

In summary, the discourses synthesized by these transnational, “traditional” religions must, perforce, resonate with many of the central assumptions and values of modernity. They complement and exemplify aspects of mainstream culture, such as the fall of public man, the construction of the expressivist self, the internalization and privatization of religion. Participants do not have to handle a

yawning cultural gulf “between what they already know or expect and at least some of the things which the new religions have to offer.” (Hellas 1996:153)

Traditionalists: The Lakota, Don Juan Matus, and The Dalai Lama

We discuss two specific movements: (1) the Movimiento de la Mexikayotl (la Mexicanidad), founded by the aforementioned “Tlakaelel” Francisco Jimenez Sanchez; and that of (2) Manicomunidad de la America India Solar, or M. A. I. S., established by “Titolopochtli” Domingo Diaz Porta . We draw on the admirable papers of Dr. Teresa Porzecanski (1992; 1998) as well, whose discussion of the “neo-indigenistas” in Uruguay permits us to extend and reinforce our generalizations. All were founded and flourishing between the late 1940s and 1970s. Now modified by the exigencies of the last 30 years, they have become globalized, more homogenized ideologically, their adherents more international.

These movements can best be understood as presenting variations within the broad intellectual, socio-economic, and political discourses (cf. Urban 1991; Phillips and Steiner 1999; Steiner 1999) sketched above. In addition, three pivotal sources have been adapted creatively by the founders to shape specific discourses of the movements, viz., (1) The images and rituals of the Lakota (or Sioux, North American Plains Indians), which have been feared, revered and imitated since the 1890s by the indigenous and non-indigenous in both Americas, as well as by many Europeans¹². (2) A critique of the scientific vs. the gnostic, “traditional” way of knowing, based on the books and vi-

deo tapes published by Carlos Castaneda from 1968 to the present. The “wisdom” of his famous (or infamously created) mentor, whom he presents as the Yaqui shaman Don Juan Matus, figures prominently—explicitly and implicitly—in the ideology of all of the groups we are discussing. Ostensibly the teachings of Don Juan, they combine sources from secular modern Zen Buddhism, ethnomethodologists, surrealists, phenomenologists, and John Cage’s not-music and not-saying. Now in 1998, Castaneda finally claims that Don Juan had knowledge from “Chinese,” “Oriental,” and “European” learning (1998:1; 30 -31), even as many academics had pointed out early on. (3) But of all of the new global “warrior-elders,” the guide who trumps them all, the most revered, emulated and cited, is Tibet’s charismatic Buddhist 14th Dalai Lama in exile. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, and a strong proponent of interreligious dialogue (he cites Mahatma Gandhi and the Dr. Martin Luther as exemplars of his political philosophy), he travels the world, has published several volumes of his thoughts, appears on television programs frequently, cooperates with the production of video tapes to spread his ecumenical message. His influence figures prominently in most of the “new” spiritual movements.

Ethnographic Data

“Tlakaheel” Francisco Jimenez Sanchez, whose comments introduced this paper, was one of the founders of the Movimiento de la Mexikayotl, or Movimiento de la Mexicanidad. (Mexican-ness Movement). Although some of the groups related to the Movement have varying goals, they all agree

with his desire to reintroduce what they think of as pre-hispanic ancestral values, and so create a new, more satisfactory reality (Acevedo M. and E. Gonzales T.1999a; 1999b; cf. Odena Guemes 1984) in which human beings can exist fully, and in which the Mexican can be himself, and not “an imitation of foreign models.”

Tlakaheel has established several kalpultin (pl. for kalpulli), which is the Nahuatl term for kin-territorial-community based groups in ancient Mexica (Aztec) society. Each is autonomous, sets its own agendas, and has fluid boundaries, but all are inspired by frequent visits from Tlakaheel. There are 4 or 5, most of which have come from his original Kalpulli Koakalko, which is near Mexico City, and 9 in the United States, but there are many more in both countries not necessarily connected to Tlakaheel himself. So adaptive is the notion of such a community that the Catholic Church organized a kalpulli in California in an effort to attract and hold Mexican and Chicano parishioners (Rodriguez 1997:191-221).

In 1970, Tlakaheel established El Kalpulli Koakalko, in Coacalco, near Mexico City, which he has named a Center of Anthropological Studies and Social Communication with Indigenous People, a self-conscious attempt to claim the prestige of the academic discourse, while at the same time controlling its content. Almost without exception, the many spokesmen for the indigenous point of view argue either that science supports what they say, or if not, it will “soon catch up.”¹³

Many leaders of the Mexikayotl movement have emerged from his kalpulli. In 1995, he also founded and registered as a religious association, “In Kaltonal,” or “La Casa del Sol,” a Spiritual Institution of

Cosmic Man.” Space does not allow us to discuss the details of the philosophy of Mexikayotl, but we shall outline some of the salient goals of the Movement: (1) the Kalpulli are organized as it is thought the pre-hispanic Mexica organized their government; (2) Kalpultin should be formed to promote the cultural independence of the people of Mexico, to teach and disseminate the culture of Anauak (ancient Mexico), and to push for the teaching of Nahuatl in the primary schools. (3) Although affiliated groups vary in the rituals they perform, many are those that separate them primarily from Catholicism, and in some cases, the national discourse as well (Galeana. 1996)

All groups offer “naming” ceremonies, which can be conferred on one in several different ways. The name always carries symbolic significance, and may affect one’s life, both directly and indirectly. One young man who regularly experienced difficulty in breaking his flesh free during the Sun Dance believed that his name made it difficult for him to do so. On ritual occasions, many people print their indigenous names on a tag, and attach it to their garments, while others prefer to contemplate its significance more privately. Tlakaheel (and millions of others nowadays) celebrate the advent of the solstices, the Mexica New Year, and has introduced the Lakota Sun Dance ritual. He adopted Lakota version because he decided it was “free of all external influences, especially of white culture. (Compare with the historical discussions of Jorgenson, Bucko 1998, DeMallie 1984; DeMallie and Parks 1987, etc., who trace its recency, and the many adaptive changes it has undergone. Acevedo and Gonzalez, 1999:69)¹². Other borrowed Lakota rituals include the sweat lodge, or temazcal (so called because it is

similar to those used in ancient Mexico); individual vision quests, and the sacred pipe rituals. He and his followers also commemorate the notable Noche Triste, the 1520s defeat of the Spaniards, a Pyrrhic victory: the Spaniards won the war (Tenochtitlan); the death of Cuauhatemoc, who symbolizes resistance to the conquest, at the cost of his life; the birthday, of the 19th century full-blooded Oaxacan Indian president, Benito Juarez, who is both an ethnic and a national hero.

As Acevedo M. and E. Gonzalez T. note, since 1970 many groups in Mexico, the United States and South America have come up with the idea of recuperating or perpetuating *the* pre-hispanic past. Although it is not an integrated movement, they consider those who look to the Mexikayotl doctrine as the basis of their actions to be a part of the movement. Tlakaheel communicates regularly with his followers in the U. S. and other countries by e-mail, telephone, and through a Confederation of Kalpultin website. All of these leaders have had to adapt their messages to accommodate the mass media. Two of Tlakaheel’s North American kalpultin administrators travel widely with him, e. g., from Texas, Arizona, California, Illinois, Michigan, Connecticut, Maine, Canada, England, Bali, Egypt, and the highly-touted trip to France, and photograph him constantly, using both still and video cameras. They began to collect tapes in the early 1980s. He permits amateur followers to photograph him also, appears frequently on local television programs, and is aware always of the active camera.

(2) As we mentioned above, the French Count Serge Reynaud de la Ferriere, a 33rd degree mason, founded la Gran Fraternidad

Universal which attracted followers in both Latin America and the United States during the 1940s, when astronomical signs initiated the Age of Acuario. His messages were synthesized from “ancestral and contemporaneous” religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Theosophy, espiritismo, and the ideology of Freemasonry. After a hostile split within that organization, the once Elder Brother in the organization, Venezuelan “Titolopochtli” Domingo Diaz Porta, founded in 1977 a new civil organization which he called the Manicomunidad de la America India Solar (better known by its acronym, M. A. I. S. or the Ancestral Community of Indian America). This name, Diaz Porta told reporter and follower Mexican Diana Gonzalez, “symbolically recaptured the ancient traditions of the culture of corn, in order to transmit them to contemporaneous societies, and to promote the resurgence of their own values, with respect to these autochthonous cultures, having separated from their ancestral roots, as a cultural interchange with all of the peoples.” Diaz Porta, Gonzalez tells us, “has been recognized by the autochthonous as a guide of a very elevated spiritual level. He has established personal contact with a “multitude” of ethnic groups, the length and breath of America, tying them to each other, and helping in the preservation of ancient traditions incarnated in the wise, the guardians, and the old (“ancianos”) of each autochthonous nations.” With the others, he lambasts “inhuman, materialistic superpowers, which spend a fortune every day to arm themselves in order to sustain their privileges, while hundreds of thousands of children are dying daily on all continents... Materialism dominates the world, the automobile owns the cities, and the child is

a prisoner, an exile in the home [which is used] only for eating and sleeping. The family has been made unproductive and even sterile—quite different from the Indian American family” (1992:35).

In cities, he says, “I don’t have time” is a common excuse, which disguises the lack of interior harmony, the individualism, the vital fatigue, the fear of committing oneself over to an ideal. Meanwhile, the vender of illusions, power and cheap promises, and the peddler of hatreds succeeds in buying consciences, and exciting superficial emotionality.... In such transcendental times, the spiritual guides of Indian America work intensely to rescue people from their drowsiness, and ... to correct and complete the history written by the ‘winners’” (Gonzalez 1992: 52)

Diaz Porta also holds an essentialist view of cultural identity, but also connects it with territory, and tailors it to modern technological analogies. He agrees with Tlakaheel that “cosmic man” is integrated with Nature and the universe. But, he asks, How is “a German or a Chinese person going to live here in Mexico? He can’t, because his nature is different, as are his education and history...Therefore, the mestizo should “play” the indigenous “cassette” —which is recorded in the genetic code of his blood, in his ancestral memory. If he wants to play a “white” cassette, then he has to go to that continent; if one wants to activate the black (*Negro*) cassette, he has to go to Africa.” In this 1996 interview, he says that “Every race is mixed, but true cultures are authentic, not mixed, ...and they don’t import mysticisms from India, or philosophy from Europe. No culture ever came out of that, or has one such ever succeeded in history.”

This latter is a curious, contradictory

insistence, given Domingo Diaz Porta's past and continuing interest in the Great Universal Brotherhood (Gran Fraternidad Universal), his 1987 trip with Jose Arguellos and Alberto Ruz Buenfil (1991:245) to participate in the Harmonic Convergence in Mexico. In 1998, he was celebrating Buddhist Kumba Mela IV, in Bolivia, conducting rituals to open the chakra of Tiawanaku, because as Raynaud de La Ferriere explained in his volume, and Diaz Porta echoes, the magnetic teluric shift has been made from Tibet to the Americas, and the rituals are necessary to effect a smooth transition.

Further, in the *Manual*, he not only quotes Carlos Castaneda's Yaqui shamanic mentor, Don Juan Mathus (sic), but also describes the joy of reaching an ecstatic state, that "of Samadhi, of Nirvana, of happiness without conditions! We will be Incas or Sons of the Sun, Mayas or Conquerors of Illusion, and Travelers in Time, Druids, Esseni-ans,...Christos (Cristicos) or Sons of God, Boddhisattvas (sic), Liberated ones, free of every limitation (1997:86)." Here he has no hesitation to borrow from occidentalized Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as early esoteric sources. Ruz Buenfil also reports on the meeting both had with the Dalai Lama in Mexico in the late 1980s. (1972:275)

Although the dates differ somewhat, Porzecanski (1998) relates that the "first discursive moment" in Uruguay culminated in 1831 when that country's remaining indigenous people, the Charruas, were "exterminated." The second such moment ("the academic-scientific" discourse) came at the end of Uruguay's dictatorship, in the 1970s, with archaeological finds and the establishment of a university career in anthropology. The unanticipated conse-

quence of these anthropological and archaeological investigations of the past was that many began to regard Uruguay as much more indigenous than before. The idea that there were survivors of the 1831 "extermination," was coupled with the hypothesis that the country was "much more Guarani than Charrua," and then was separated from the "scientific requisites" in which the discourse had originated. By the 1980s, Porzecanski tells us, one finds a "neo-indigenista" moment, with elaborations of the imagined indigenous communities by the press, essayists, and theater productions. The members of a newly established Association of the Descendants of the Charrua Nation declared their objectives included "manifesting our pride in being mestizos, collaborating with scientific investigations, defend our environment and protect our patrimony, along with natural resources, and bring up to date school text-books," initiatives which parallel those of the manifestos of both the other groups discussed. (Cf. Kelly; Tello 1996; Vargas Llosa 1996). As with both of the groups discussed above, the 1992 celebration of the fateful "invasion" of 1492 served to engender more concern with an indigenous past and present. Uruguayans formed other associations of self-nominated descendants, one of which attempted to install a family of Guarani Indians on an island in the Uruguay River—but they had to import the family from Paraguay. Porzecanski remarks dryly that the press was "disproportionately euphoric," given the short duration of the "settlement," and its prompt failure.

The neo-indigenista discourse is very familiar in both Americas: the Charruas had once comprised at least a hundred thousand people (the scientific data report no more than 5,000),

they were agriculturalists of great and sophisticated knowledge (not the hunters and gatherers, which the archaeological data show); they lived in a democratic society based on a political system in which there was liberty for both individuals and communities, in which women's roles were essential, and their participation in making decisions prominent; their spiritual systems—which were of the “highest order, were clearly influenced by this situation of feminine predominance.” Important also for our argument, the Charruas were now presented as having a culture not only respectful of the environment, but one in which they had created very sophisticated ecosystems. (Porzecanski 1998)

Although the messages of the burgeoning native “elders” vary in some specifics, it is clear that they and their followers share much content. They offer gentle, even smiling, explanations of why things are as they are, accompanied by humorous but scathing reproach. Their non-indigenous listeners nod in agreement, and chuckle guiltily at their own iniquities.

Among the striking differences between the West and the “Traditional” is that between the kinds of self each type of society produces.

Contrasting Models of the self

David Murray's illuminating analysis paper asks: “Why do we forget the multiplicity of selves and philosophical perspectives that are contained within, and constitute “the West”? (Murray 1993:16; cf. Ewing 1990; 1991) We adapt Murray's useful insights only slightly, following his suggestion that one consider the self as a “nested set of statements.” On the first level

there is a Self, the ethnographic accounting of how one's self is either experienced or represented by the individual himself, whether “Western” or “traditional.” At the next level, Self would include accounts of how the “Western²” or “traditional” selves have been modeled (“the cultural ideology of selfhood”). Finally, at the third level, S is the academic discourse, which analyses what philosophers and scientists have to say about level S.

The ²model of the self reputedly produced by the quintessential “West” is dynamic and progressive, the result of fragmented, impersonal, human relations which are driven by economic concerns. This self is said to be appropriate to industrialized, modern, secularized, and profane societies, which share in the global capitalist system. Competitive, this self reputedly rationalizes its acts in terms of gains and losses, emphasizes individual rights, identifies itself with his/her material possessions, and seeks immediate gratification. These selves have little commitment to others or to the public good: they are ego-centered, lonely, isolated, and alienated. The whining mantra of such a self is “Yes, but what about *ME?* *What about MY needs?*” Like the self-made man, this might be labeled the “self-made self.” It is model of self and society which all “traditional” spokesmen effectively denigrate with swingeing sarcasm. Their “Western” and “traditional” followers—all literate, and interested in understanding themselves and their societies—agree with this negative description, which fits both Murray's S and S. They also imbibe this model from all ²of the mass media to which they subject themselves.

By contrast, this imagined, *occidentalized* ¹⁴ “West,” confronts a second, and equally chimerical, quintessential, *orientalized* ¹⁴

“Rest,” which comprises “traditional,” ecologically-concerned communities, each glossed as holistic, homogeneous, egalitarian, static, isolated, and bounded; all life is assumed to be organized around a sacred, magico-religious center. Here we find, supposedly, one people, inhabiting one society, continuous since time immemorial; all learning and wisdom is gnostic, legitimated by having been transmitted by means of an ancestral oral tradition, dreams, visions, spirits, or intuition.

Paradoxically, as we have shown, much of the content for this “traditional” way of life is drawn not only from the sources mentioned above, but is based on knowledge of the largest, most complex, comparatively recent *stratified* societies of the 15th and early 16th American societies, the Aztec, the Inca, and sometimes the Maya. The hunting and gathering peoples and the horticulturalists of the Americas are mentioned occasionally, but only in passing. The self appropriate to these “traditional” societies is said to be “relational,” the product of family and kinship interactions, anchored in community rights and obligations, socio-centric and ready to sacrifice “my needs” to those of the group¹⁵.

The relational “traditional” self, which attracted most adherents to new religious movements, is for them the SELF, the SELF they wish to experience, and describe to themselves as being the “real” me. The transforming rituals which they can undergo with Tlakaheel, Domingo Diaz Porta, and the plethora of other masters now emerging, permit them to do just that. We suggest a modified model of the self is necessary which acknowledges that each self is also an active agent. Surely, humans are products of socially and culturally constituted realities,

and just as surely we all are constrained by the “blueprints” by which we orient ourselves and which have been transmitted and imposed upon us through socialization, (Hallowell 1955; Durkheim (1922); Berger 1962; Berger, Berger, and Kellner 1973) But neither the self nor its society is static. Specifically, we see that both the leaders and followers from diverse socioeconomic, religious, national, and linguistic backgrounds can manipulate the same collective symbols, as they choose. Now they can find spaces to “re-describe themselves, creating their social and cultural worlds anew” (Hellas 1996:129) Further, they are aterritorial, and so must be imagined spatially as well: they are “communities without the constraints of society.” (Brown 1997:183) Of the followers on whom we have data, a “community without society,” connections without the dogma and rules of established religion is appealing. Brown infers that this “asocial view of history” bespeaks a deep ambivalence about society. He adds the interesting interpretation that the current globalized search for “spirituality” is motivated less by contemporary “angst” than by the fact that it remains one of the few areas of our lives that have escaped increasing bureaucratized control (1997: 184) We propose that this latter model of an idealized and romanticized traditional society and self motivates many to seek out new religious movements, or “spiritualities,” in their attempts to escape what they see as corrupt, narrow, materialistic, individualism. Although folk and academic models of the self promulgate these polar opposites, our data show that in the *rituals offered by the new religious movements meet both the personal and the social needs of the individual.*

Analysis and Conclusions

All communities are to some that extent imagined (Anderson's important insight 1983:15), we suggest that these mid-to-late 20th century visions of spiritual, eco-communities are intentional and "especially heavily imagined." (Conklin and Graham 1995:697) Thus, each follower is free create an identity which is located nowhere in particular. This freedom is reflected in the attitude many have toward the specific content of the messages offered by the charismatic leaders. It is much less important than what his listeners hear him say. Consider audience reactions to the Dalai Lama: He assures a highly diverse audience in Central Park, New York City, that spiritual development is not necessarily linked to religious faith and he encourages the crowd to "weave the practice of meditation into their own religious traditions." His followers respond with comments such as "I come to purify my negativities." (Tibetan who recently had flown into New York from Minnesota to hear the talk). Another of the celebrating participants sighed blissfully of the Dalai Lama's presentation: "He just brings me amazing happiness" (Waldman 1999).

The transformations effected by the *embodiment* of the rituals are striking. In each (especially that of the sweat lodge, vision quest, and dramatically, that of the Sun Dance) ritual clothing separates ones self from whatever the other self was. For example, in celebrating the summer solstice of the Kumba Mela in 1998 Bolivian rituals, each participant was asked to bring and wear the "traditional" dress of the native group living nearest to us in our home areas.

Although there is much variation in how individual elders conduct the rituals, they all effect the *embodiment* of the learning taking place. In the sweat lodge, heat, the sweat, and again the gender marking by clothing worn (women in skirts), embodies the sacrifice and suffering, but one does it for others, as well as oneself. Prayers are always offered asking help for all, and peace in the world. Participants learn new ways of expressing themselves, and embody (Csordas 1990) "Indianness" when they repeat, "All our relations," when entering and leaving the sweat lodge. Many touch their faces, and kiss the earth, expressing a physical connection with this sacred symbol. They also learn some few Nahuatl words (e. g. Ometeol, the Nahuatl god of duality); and some few words of Spanish, such as "Fuerza!" ("strength!") to encourage companions suffering during rituals.

The sweat lodge offers therapeutic support of each for the others sharing its womb-like warmth and anonymity. The physical suffering during the Sun Dance is much more intense and sustained for the individual, but many participants report visions in which they are one with the universe, with others, and are convinced not only that they have "found myself," but have suffered to "heal" others and their "Mother Earth." Here the embodiment publicly of one's sacrifice for oneself, others, and the world is so clear: the cicatrices on the chest or back, and on each woman's upper arm are there for all to see what has been sacrificed.

So a community is created and served, but the self as an agent in control of both his or her daily life becomes very clear. The locus of power has now shifted from the shaman, the indigenous leader himself, to the God

within. Now followers feel empowered to take control of their own life-worlds. They themselves can make that problem-solving journey, “their own shamanic journeys to non-ordinary reality, where they personally obtain direct spiritual wisdom and guidance in answer to the question most important in their lives” (Harner 1988:79). No longer helpless, they can understand and identify with Tlakaelel’s statement that his highest ambition had been able to *see* the divine presence, the force of which he was always so aware, conscious or unconscious. And it came. He saw a “beautiful being, wearing a red band, and an indigenous cape, with the face of an Indigenous Person. He said to me: ‘Look at me! I am your creator!’ I was transfixed in ecstasy when I realized suddenly that he was myself. It was a great experience for me which taught me that the Creator, Teotl, the Great Spririt and I are the one and same. Each one of us, and the sum of all of us.” This very nirvana-like experience, which the rituals bring to many, is both highly individual, and suffused with love for the Other.¹⁶

Our subject is fraught with paradoxes, so we conclude with another. In their attempts to assure the restoration and survival of *the* “Indian America” past, both leaders and followers contribute to the homogenization of a newly-invented tradition, little related to any specific archaeological or ethnohistorical indigenous past, and as such, leave those pasts to be interpreted in the “context of no context.”

Notes

1. Prof. Macklin (M. A., University of Chicago, PhD. University of

Pennsylvania, both in anthropology) has published studies on traditional medicine and popular religion in Latin America as well as among Latinos in the United States. She came to know Francisco Jimenez Sanchez (Tlakaelel) in 1994 in Connecticut, USA; traveled in 1998 in Bolivia with nearly 250 adherents of Domingo Diaz Porta (Titolopochtli), where she was able to interview followers from Mexico, Spain, and several South American countries. She has participated in Kalpulli Chaplin in Connecticut since 1995, and observed the annual Sun Dance ritual in 1997 and 1998.

Lic. Victor Acevedo Martinez, born in Mexico City, whose four grandparents are Mixteco, came to know Kalpulli Koakalko in 1989 from which date he assisted in the Sun Dance. He was initiated into the Sun Dance in 1993, and also has continued to participate in various capacities in Kalpulli Koakalko. He was invited to participate in the Wampanoag (Massachusetts, USA) Sun Dance in 1994, and was named head of Tlakaelel’s Sun Dancers in 1997. He earned the licenciatura in Social Anthropology in the Escuela Nacional de Antropologia in 1999.

Lic. Elizabeth Gonzalez Torres, also born in Mexico City, came to know Kalpulli Koakalko in 1995, and has assisted in the Sun Dances since that time. She earned the licenciatura in Social Anthropology at the Escuela Nacional de Antropologia in 1999, where she and Acevedo Martinez collaborated on their thesis, *El Movimiento de la Mexicanidad, Un Movimiento Social*

2. Politically correct terms vary from continent to continent, and group to group, a delicate subject. In the United States the terms “indigenous” or “traditional people” are seldom, if ever heard among “Native Americans;” many of the latter refer to themselves as “Indian,” aware of the complications attendant to that term. The English word “Indian” never took on quite the same pejorative connotations of “indio,” or “indito” in Spanish. “Tribe” is used by both insiders and outsiders, and there are “tribal” roles to prove one’s membership. Most non-indigenous participants in the movements discussed carefully use “traditional,” or “indigenous.” “Autochthonous” appears to be even more neutral, but less known. We have attempted to use the vocabulary most used by the members of the respective groups we are discussing. Among other semantic changes is the relevant point made by Richard Morse who tells us that “the word “conquest” and “conquista” are derives from the Latin *conqueror*, which means “to seek out,” or “to bring together,” without the intimation of aggrandizement (1982).”
3. Francisco Jimenez Sanchez, born in Mexico City, celebrated his 80th birthday on 17 of February 2000; he says, however, he has two birth certificates because his actual birthday was not recorded officially at the time of his birth; one declares him to have been born in 1920, the other 1930. He reports that his grandmother spoke to him in Nahuatl and he answered her in Spanish.
4. Most members of the Movimiento Mexikyotal, as well as South Americans interested in “indigenous” movements replace the “c” of Spanish orthography to reflect more closely what they believe to be the original native “American” pronunciations.
5. Many of the 22 “indigenous elders” discussed fit the concept of Atlantis into their explanations of cultural diffusion, and most know that it have been attributed to Plato. They simply say that it is a concept found in the “ancient” oral traditions which happens to coincides with that of Plato because both are very ancient ideas.
6. This is a very common phenomenon, for the “winners” do write (or “invent”) the official histories. The contemporary Tlakaheel never mentions that the historical, 15th century Tlacaheel is guilty precisely the same act for the same reasons. Leon-Portilla, a leading Mexican scholar of the Aztec past, opines the work of that “extraordinary Aztec personage, Tlacaheel,” advisor to the Mexica rulers, was fundamental in creating the way of life which came to be a characteristic of the supremacy of the Aztecs. Having conquered the Tepanecas, Tlacaheel and the other Mexica leaders “determined to burn the codices and books of pictures of the conquered, and even those of the mexicas, because in these books the image of the Aztec people lacked importance. They have conceived of the idea of imposing a new version of their history (Leon-Portilla 1956 [1997]:251-52). This according to the informants

of Bernardo de Sahagun. This act of inventing tradition, including the re-writing of their own texts is of particular interest because it illustrates a self-consciousness of how one controls the past, for these are the books known today. Important, also, in understanding present-day Tlakaheel's view of himself, is the fact that in the new version of their history, the Mexicas frequently presented themselves as having kinship with Toltec nobility, and claimed that their culture was an extension of that much-admired people, who had disappeared by . The documentation now also spelled out a warlike, mystical world view for the Mexica, in which one of their major divinities, Huitzilopochtli, had the mission of subduing ("someter") all the nations of the earth and to make them captives, for their blood would conserve the life of the Morning Star." Leon-Portilla continues: "The new version of Mexica history, [created] after the burning of the codices, was the road by which the ideas of Tlakaheel were to be inculcated in the people." (Leon-Portilla 1956 [1997]:252. The contemporary Tlakaheel is very familiar with the work of the historical Tlakaheel.

7. This concept is wide-spread among all current new era conservationist concerns. See Fiel 1995:59 extraordinary syntheses of all of the ideas discussed in this paper, and more, is, we were told by the manager of a major esoterica bookshop in Quito, the best-seller among both urban and Amazonian "chamanes." Fiel is a

Spanish acquaintance of both Ruz Buenfil and Diaz Porta, See Ruz Buenfil. (1991)

8. Our data come from personal contact with six of these "spiritual guides;" for the other 16 we draw on their personal published testimonies. Particularly relevant is the volume of Diana Gonzalez.

Whose indigenous Purepecha name, "Phunguari Charhapiti," was conferred on her by the late Raymundo "Tigre" Perez, of Purepecha heritage, and means Pluma Roja in Spanish, or Red Feather in English. It symbolizes her status as a writer—"pluma" also (Red Feather, (1992:44; also, personal interview with J. Macklin, 1997). Gonzalez's volume provides vignettes of 8 different spiritual leaders, representing indigenous groups in Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

9. Dr. Yolotl Gonzalez Torres deems to the New Age as "eclectic" (which we would argue, all religions have been), and "apocryphal." She claims while the search of the New Agers is for a universal significance, it is an "essentially American perception" of what is 'universal' and what ought to be 'transcended.' She denounces the search as open 'spiritual imperialism,'" opines Dr. Gonzalez, "a hegemony of meaning" being forced on minority, ethnic, and tribal peoples.(Y. Gonzalez Torres, 1999) Rostas reports that the Concheros she has studied think "Aztec" dancers related to the Mexicanness movement are all "show," and practice little proper ritual.

10. Mexican writer Jose Agustin agrees. Describing the main square (zocalo) of the up-scale community of Coyoacan, he says that “among adults of the middle class, spirituality disseminated by the New Age includes yoga, meditation, esoterica, I ching, the magical passes (tensigridad) of Carlos Castaneda, the Aztec Tibetism of Velasco Pina, rituals for everybody, the intervention of angels, along with the addiction to diets, vitamins, melatonin, naturalism, high technology, and other fashions [ondas] (1996: 124).” See also the penetrating study of Roberto Bosca, 1996, on the wide impact of the New Age in Latin America, which he calls the “religious utopia” of the fin-de-siecle.”
11. Albanese points out that, with the exception of Benedict Arnold, all American generals during the Revolutionary War of Independence from England, the majority of the members of the continental Congress, and most of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were mason. The impact of masonry in Latin American to the present day is strong (cf. Arciniegas, 1965.)
12. Incredibly, one important volume funneled the now widely-accepted view of Lakota spirituality to all of these areas, viz., that describing the visionary mysticism of Nicholas Black Elk. Interpreted to millions of people by the poet John Neihardt in his 1932 *Black Elk Speaks*, this book has become a “North American bible of all tribes,” according to the influential part-Sioux writer and Indian spokesman, Vine Deloria, Jr., “a ubiquitous source book for spiritual guidance, sociological identity, and political insight” (cited in Bordewich 1996:225-26).” Nick Black Elk’s symbolic interpretations of both the Sacred Pipe and sweat lodge rituals are followed by many today. (cf. Bordewich 1996; Bucko 1998; Mails 1971; DeMallie 1984; DeMallie and Parks, eds. 1987; Steltenkamp 1993. Nowhere does Neihardt’s famous volume mention that Black Elk was a Catholic catechist, and nowhere does Black Elk refer to the Black Hills as the sacred land of the Lakotas, although most current Native American spokesmen and lay folk alike attribute the claim to him. *Black Elk Speaks* has been published in German, Flemish, Dutch, Italian, Danish, Serbo-Croatian, Swedish, and Spanish. Wallace Black Elk, in no way related to Nicholas, published a 1990 volume and video tape, also entitled *Black Elk*, which lends it specious authority. Consequently, many viewers and readers confuse the work of this modern-day shaman with that of Nicholas, believing Wallace’s work to represent the spiritual legacy of Nicholas. The family of the original Nicholas Black Elk vehemently deny such a suggestion. See Steltenkamp 1993:187). Academic Native Americans refer to many high-profile, but also highly controversial, “medicine people” as “born-again” Indians. These include Mary Thunder, Wallace Black Elk, and Leonard Crow Dog, all of whom are considered to be the Lakota “spiritual guides” by many,

including Tlakael. Sun Bear and Wallace Black Elk accompany cruises to perform ceremonies. All “run workshops,” give “week-end seminars,” produce video tapes, travel widely, and have a largely non-Indian clientele. Many are quite pricey, others, including those of Tlakael try to cover costs only, but are offered free to those who cannot afford a “donation,” thanks to the generosity of his North America supporter. Of interest on who is “in” and who is “not” is the case of Luis Espinoza (“Chamalu”) Yet another “elder,” Luis Espinoza or “Chamalu,” established the movimiento Pachama Universal, as well an “authentically ecological spiritual, shamanic community and school,” Janajpacha (“Heaven, or superior reality.”), thirty minutes away from Cochabamba. He has dedicated one of his several small books to Diaz Porta, “the Master.” He says that “our indigenous essence guarantees simplicity and innocence.” (1996:95) He, too, says that the esoteric “teachings linked to Andean indigenous spirituality remained in absolute hermeticism”...destined for indigenous beings, carefully chosen, in order to preserve the hierarchy of the teaching, the profound quality to germinate in the hearts of future warriors of Love, superior beings charged with carrying the sacred knowledge and destined for those who need it (1996:) He, too, claims to have “traveled the streets of modern man, absent love;...the people there do not sing or dance; they do not embrace not give gifts; they do damage to each other, and also to themselves and the Mother Earth” (1993:32).

13. Most want the respectability and panache of the academic world, but want to apply it to their own interpretations.
14. The *orientalist* discourse is consequently a remarkably persistent framework of analysis which .creates a “typology of characters, organized around the contrast between the rational Westerner and the lazy Oriental... The task of *orientalism* was to reduce the endless complexity of the East into a definite order of types, characters and constitutions.” It represents the exotic Orient as “a typical cultural product of occidental dominance.” In Said’s (cited in Turner)1978 analysis of orientalism, “the crucial ‘fact’ about the orientalist discourse was that we know and talk about Orientals, while they neither comprehend themselves nor talk about us...orientalism set out to explain the progressive features of the Occident and the social stationariness of the Orient” (Turner 1994:21-22)
We propose that the endless complexity of the “West” has been “*occidentalized*,” and equally reduced to a definite order of types in terms of which people think and act.
15. Escalante Gonzalbo, looking at the myriad political uses indigenism (indigenismo) notes, sourly, that “To criticize this imagined history, the power associated with it, or the victims of the terrible history is to locate oneself on the side of the oppressors...In the fantasized national history the indigenes are, in a definitive and emblematic manner, the conquered, and

for this reason they come out as irremediably good,” (1998) which we might call the triumph of the “Noble Savage.”

See also (Conklin and Graham 1995:696) who remark that eco-politics “idealizes the virtues of New World native cultures as a foil to criticize European social institutions.” Cf. Berkhofer’s trenchant discussion of the primitivist ideal of “people dwelling in nature according to nature, existing free of history’s burden and the social complexity felt by Europeans in the modern period” (Berkhofer 1988:523) Cf. Shepard Krech III nicely nuanced, in-depth discussion of *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*.

16. Many, many, popular self-help books, written by North Americans and Latin Americans alike extol this insight, from Shirley MacLaine’s well-known ecstatic claim, “I am God, I am God, I am God!,” to that of Ablerto Ruz Buenfil, who, discussing the coming of the Age of Aquarius, more quietly says that “This time, the messiah is ourselves.” In *Los Guerreros del Arco iris*. (The Warriors of the Rainbow.)

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ecológicamente seguro, socialmente conectado y definido como tradicional y no occidental, es el ser indígena. Nuestros datos sugieren que el último modelo es preferido por quienes no tienen en cuenta las nacionalidades, quienes exploran en los nuevos movimientos religiosos, que proveen espiritualidades de y por la modernidad. Basados sobre sus construcciones de un pasado Amerindio homogeneizado referido como los fundadores indígenas, las religiones que examinamos aquí facilitan la “destradicionalización” de sus seguidores y así participar en rituales polifónicos, a través de los cuales ellos transforman, redennominan, e incorporan de modo más aceptable modernas ideas del ser. Finalmente, proponemos que 3) los mensajes de las antiguas tradiciones indígenas son menos importantes para los seguidores que la identidad del mensajero. Los materiales fueron recogidos en Bolivia, Colombia, México y Uruguay.

Resumen

En esta presentación proponemos que 1) los filósofos y científicos sociales han construido dos modelos contrastantes sobre el ser, que son dominantes hoy en día, cada uno de ellos es apropiado para una clase diferente de comunidad “imaginada”. Nosotros sostenemos que 2) cada modelo, reificado tanto en la antropología contemporánea como en el discurso popular, es una construcción teórica moderna. El primero, es una versión occidentalizada, describe un individuo, independiente, egocéntrico, competitivo, un autónomo ser occidental. El segundo es una versión orientalizada y romántica de nociones como compartir, cuidado,

New religious movement, any relatively new religion characterized by innovative responses to modern conditions, perceived counterculturalism, eclecticism and syncretism, and charismatic and sometimes authoritarian leadership. New religious movements are sometimes pejoratively referred to as "cults." These religions are, by definition, "new"; they offer innovative religious responses to the conditions of the modern world, despite the fact that most NRMs represent themselves as rooted in ancient traditions. NRMs are also usually regarded as "countercultural"; that is, they are perceived (by others and by themselves) to be alternatives to the mainstream religions of Western society, especially Christianity in its normative forms. A new religious movement (NRM), also known as a new religion or alternative spirituality, is a religious or spiritual group that has modern origins and is peripheral to its society's dominant religious culture. NRMs can be novel in origin or part of a wider religion, in which case they are distinct from pre-existing denominations. Some NRMs deal with the challenges posed by the modernizing world by embracing individualism, whereas others seek tightly knit collective means. Scholars have estimated that Religious 7 fundamentalist movements: from the Iranian Revolution to the "Arab Spring" to ISIS. Women's emancipation movement. Modern Social Conflict I. Neo-functionalism: The new liberal program by R. Dahrendorf. imperatively coordinated associations. The power and authority as the main sources of conflict and social change. The legitimation and conflict: from quasi-groups to the conflict-groups. Modern social conflict: the dialectic of entitlements and provisions. Functions of conflict by L. Coser. Modern Social Conflict II. J. Habermas: structural transformation of the public sphere, the criticism of positivism, "the system" and the "life-world", the types of contemporary crises and conflicts. Postmodern perspective on social conflict: Knowledge, power and. 7.