

Scientology: Religion or racket?

Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi

The name Scientology (a copyrighted and registered trademark) brings to mind a wide array of claims, observations, impressions, findings, and documents, reflecting a complex and controversial history. The religion/not religion debate over various groups and organizations, prominent in the Western media over the past thirty years, has usually presented the public and politicians with a religion versus "sect" or "cult" dichotomy. The classification issue in this article is framed differently. Hopkins (1969) offered us the terms of the debate in the bluntest and most direct way when he asked in the title of an article in *Christianity Today* more than thirty years ago "Scientology: Religion or racket?" Read today, the Hopkins article sounds naive and charitable, but this question still stands before us, and yet deserves an answer.

The question of whether any particular organization matches our definition of religion is not raised very often, and this is true for both old and new religions (cf. Beit-Hallahmi, 1989; Beit-Hallahmi, 1998; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997). That is because there is no shortage of religious behaviors and groups whose authenticity is never in doubt, but in some rare cases, authenticity and sincerity are put into question.

Regarding Scientology, we have two competing claims before us. The first, espoused by most NRM scholars, as well as some legal and administrative decisions, asserts that Scientology is a religion, perhaps misunderstood and innovative, but a religion nevertheless, thus worthy of our scholarly attention. The second, found in most media reports, some government documents in various countries, and many legal and administrative decisions, states that Scientology is a business, often given to criminal acts, and sometimes masquerading as a religion. Let us start our examination of the issue with a piece of recent history, reported in a newspaper article, which is reproduced here in its entirety.

'Mental health' hotline a blind lead: The televised blurb offered mental health assistance dealing with the attacks. Callers reached Scientologists.

By Deborah O'Neil (c) St. Petersburg Times, published September 15, 2001

Television viewers who turned to Fox News on Friday for coverage of the terrorist attack also saw a message scrolling across the bottom of their screens -- National Mental Health Assistance: 800-FOR-TRUTH. Unknown to the cable news channel, the phone number connects to a Church of Scientology center in Los Angeles, where Scientologists were manning the phones. Scientology officials said the number is a hotline offering referrals to other agencies, as well as emotional support. "It was entirely a good-faith attempt to help people," said Ben Shaw, a Clearwater Scientology official. Church spokesman Kurt Weiland in Los Angeles said the phrase "National Mental Health Assistance" must have come from Fox. "I can assure you it didn't come from us," he said. Scientology firmly opposes psychiatry, and church members campaign to eliminate psychiatric practices in mental health. Fox News spokesman Robert Zimmerman said the station received an e-mail about the hotline and aired the number without checking it. The e-mail, which Zimmerman faxed to the Times, reads, "National Mental Health Assistance crisis hot line now open. Call 1-800-FOR-TRUTH." It makes no reference to Scientology.

"The bottom line is we (messed) up," Zimmerman said. "Unfortunately, it didn't get vetted. We apologize." The hotline information ran for several hours -- once appearing below the image of President Bush and his wife, Laura, at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance in Washington. The news channel yanked the information Friday after learning of the Scientology connection, Zimmerman said. Michael Faenza, president and chief executive of the National Mental Health Association, called the hotline number outrageous" and said Scientology "is the last organization" emotionally vulnerable people should call. "They just leave a wake of destruction in the realm of mental health," he said. The mental health association, based in Virginia, is the country's oldest and largest nonprofit organization addressing all aspects of mental health and mental illness.

"This is a very important and sensitive time," Faenza said. "I'd urge the Church of Scientology to stay out of the mental health side of what happens in the country now."

Church officials said no one was being recruited on the hotline and it did not attempt to disguise Scientology's involvement. "There's no attempt to hide anything," Weiland said. "Given the circumstances, it's more or less irrelevant because no one even talks about Scientology when they call." In some cases, callers were referred by the four Scientologists answering the phones to agencies compiling information about missing people. In other cases, callers were directed to agencies taking collections, Weiland said. If people called crying and upset, he said, they were told they could visit a Scientology center. "These people are grief-stricken," Weiland said. "Our people are working with

them to provide help through assistance methods we have in the church to relieve spiritual suffering." When a reporter called, a volunteer said free copies of a booklet, *Solutions for a Dangerous Environment*, were available to callers. The booklet is a Scientology publication based on the works of L. Ron Hubbard, although that was not mentioned in the phone call. The Church of Scientology has 450 volunteers assisting cleanup and rescue efforts in New York, Weiland said.

This text can serve as a journalism textbook example of asking all sides tell their versions, and then letting the readers reach their own conclusions. What shall we make of this recent event?

THE ISSUE IN SCHOLARLY WRITINGS

Bryan Wilson (1970, p. 143) stated that "...in Scientology, though perhaps only for reasons of expedience, the style of 'church' and the simulation of religious forms has [sic] been adopted". Wilson later stated that in some religious movements "...activity that can be called worship or devotions is often very limited in time and scope (as in the cases of Christian Science, Scientology, and the Jehovah's Witnesses)" (1982, p. 110). Such an assertion reflects an apparent lack of familiarity with the actual practices of these groups. There is simply no comparison between the absence of worship or devotions in the lives of most Scientology operatives and clients and the significant presence of such acts among followers of Christian Science or Jehovah's Witnesses.

Eight years later Wilson calls Scientology "A secularized religion" (1990, p. 267) and starts his discussion of organization with a reference to the financial value of the religion label. We must note that Wilson has never mentioned finances when discussing Christian Science, the Disciples of Christ, the Salvation Army, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, the Unification Church, or the Christadelphians (Wilson 1970, 1990). Moreover, the term "secularized religion" must strike most of us as an oxymoron, no more meaningful than "religious secularity".

Subsequently, Wilson (1990) compares Scientologists to Quakers, and also makes the quite startling claim that "early Christianity began with therapeutic practice and acquired its doctrinal rationale only subsequently" (1990, p. 283). Wilson (1990, p. 282-283) meets the question of classification and motivation head on and states that "even if it could be conclusively shown that Scientology took the title of 'church' specifically to secure protection at law as a religion, that would say nothing about the status of the belief-system". He then proceeds to test this particular belief-system by introducing a "probabilistic inventory" of 20 items against which he checks Scientology beliefs. His conclusion (p. 288) is that Scientology is a "congruous

religious orientation for modern society", which sounds less like a definition and more like a promotional statement.

That Scientology should perhaps be put together with other secular self-improvement schemes was suggested by Richardson (1983): "Apparently because of considerable interest in techniques for self-improvement there is a very large market for groups like Scientology, est, TM, Silva Mind Control, and other such groups that offer courses for a fee" (Richardson, 1983, p. 73). Here Scientology is listed with est and Silva Mind Control, two groups that have never sought the religion label, as well as TM, which has actively resisted this label. Similarly, Passas (1994) classifies Scientology as offering self-improvement and self-enhancement, grouping it again together with est.

Bainbridge & Stark (1981) called Scientology a "vast psychotherapy cult" (p. 128) and ridiculed its claims about the "Clear" process and its outcome. They state that the "role demands of Clear" consist of "a confident acceptance of impossible ideas with a consequent willingness to make statements which outsiders would find incredible" (p. 131). While this assessment could easily be made about adherents to all religions, old and new, it is unheard of in the scholarly literature. One must wonder why the authors have used these mocking terms which they certainly would not use in discussing any recognized religious group, such as Jews, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses or Roman Catholics. Bainbridge & Stark also state that the "Clear" process "... is a therapy in which patients rapidly are taught to keep silent about their dissatisfactions, and to perceive satisfaction in the silence of other members" (p. 133), which constitutes "pluralistic ignorance" (p. 132). Moreover, Bainbridge & Stark (1981, p. 132) use the occasion of their article about Scientology to remind their readers that "some quite successful contemporary cult leaders are conscious frauds".

Bednarowski (1995) cites the classification of Scientology as a racket by the media and legal scholars, and then (1995, p. 390) expresses her hope that "Scientology might choose to solicit the kind of outside critique that is essential for any religious movement to curb its own excessive traits". One must wonder whether such hopes have been expressed in any scholarly writings about any old or new religion. Can you imagine a scholar hoping that Christian Science, the Branch Davidians, or Jews for Jesus would "curb their excessive traits"?

Robbins (1988) quite clearly described the profit-oriented nature of Scientology activities, while Bromley & Bracey (1998), following Greil & Rudy (1990), called it a quasi-religion. "Quasi religions may be defined as collectives in which organizational and ideological tension and ambiguity regarding the group's worldview, perspective, and regimen are profitably used to facilitate affiliation as well as commitment" (Bromley & Bracey, 1998, p. 141; Greil & Rudy, 1990, p. 221). The use of the term 'quasi' in this context does not sound like a compliment, especially with the use of

"profitably" in the same sentence. After all, Scientology demands and expects full recognition as the real thing, authentic and genuine, and not just "quasi". Bromley & Bracey (1998) also state that "ethics violations" in Scientology are actions which reduce profitability and productivity, but despite their use of 'quasi', Bromley & Bracey not only give the organization their seal of approval, but wax positively hagiographic about its "prophetic founder". Later on they refer to "prophetic revelations", "spiritual discoveries", and "theology", terms never used by Scientology itself.

Wallis (1977), in the best-known academic study of the organization, describes a long history of fraudulent activities and deceptive fronts, but still believes it is a religion. Thus, in writing about the history of the organization in the early 1950s, Wallis (1979, p. 29) claims that "...there were certainly strong arguments for declaring Scientology a religion broadly conceived".

The terms of the religion versus racket debate are framed indirectly by Eileen Barker when she states: "Unlike the Unification Church or the Hare Krishna, the Church of Scientology is not unambiguously a religion. There are, however, considerable economic advantages to be gained from being defined as a religion. Scientology has fought and, indeed, won court cases ... to the effect that it is a religion and, therefore, eligible for tax concessions"(Barker, 1994, p. 105).

SCIENTOLOGY IN COURT

Looking at the legal literature, including published court decisions, we discover that while scholars have been uniquely sympathetic to Scientology, the organization received much less sympathy from members of the legal profession. Of course, some lawyers have been generous in their praise, especially if they were being paid by Scientology. But presiding judges and jurists on commissions of inquiry worldwide have been definitely harsh and suspicious. This is not reflected in the total litigation record, where Scientology has scored some victories, but in cases where the definition of Scientology as an organization was at stake. What is significant is that courts in the United States have been even more decisive in rejecting Scientology's claim to be a religion than courts elsewhere.

If you ask legal scholars to classify Scientology, the consensus judgment is quite clear, and numerous legal scholars as well as judges clearly feel that there is something illicit and sinister about it. They are not just skeptical about its claims, but make decisive judgment calls and remain decidedly unconvinced that it is entitled to the religion label. John J. Foster, a British jurist charged with investigating it (1971), gave us the definitive study of Scientology, based solely on the organization's own writings,

and nothing else. His conclusions, which seem to have been ignored by NRM scholars, were that Scientology can only claim to offer a system of psychotherapy, and as such should be regulated. Its only aim, he found, was to produce profits. Any claims of Scientology to be a religion were ridiculed, and many of its fraudulent acts were exposed in this report.

In two well-known cases, judges who encountered Scientology through cases before them volunteered a decisive diagnosis. In a 1984 ruling in London, Justice Latey: "Scientology is both immoral and socially obnoxious...it is corrupt, sinister and dangerous. It is corrupt because it is based on lies and deceit and has as its real objective money and power for Mr. Hubbard, his wife and those close to him at the top" (see <http://www.demon.co.uk/castle/>). And in the same year in Los Angeles, Superior Court Judge Paul G. Breckenridge, Jr., called Scientology "a vast enterprise to extract the maximum amount of money from its adepts by pseudo-scientific theories ... The organization clearly is schizophrenic and paranoid, and this bizarre combination seems to be a reflection of its founder, L. Ron Hubbard" (Superior Court, Los Angeles County, June 22, 1984, Church of Scientology of California v. Gerald Armstrong, Case No. C420143). Such statements are truly unique in litigation involving religious organizations.

Burkholder (1974, p. 44) concluded that court decisions had only proven the "ambiguous religious status" of Scientology. Friedland (1985, p. 589) classified Scientology among the "numerous tax-motivated religions that are frequently before the courts" and suggested that the motivation of its founder was to avoid legal and tax interference in his business (cf. Heins, 1981; Schwarz, 1976)). Passas & Castillo (1992, p. 115) stated that it was a "deviant business... its deviance is its life blood". Reviewing the legal literature in the United States, Senn (1990) presents Scientology as a prime example of religious fraud. These scholars have not found Scientology "controversial", or having any "excessive traits". They have just asserted that it is a criminal fraud.

The treatment of Scientology in United States courts has been unique for an organization claiming the religion label. If we compare the case of Scientology to the case of the Universal Life Church, we discover that the latter (a mail-order ordination business treated by scholars as such, see Melton, 1999) easily won over the IRS and received a tax-exempt status, while Scientology lost every time it tried to gain this status, and received no sympathy from the courts (Friedland, 1985; Schwarz, 1976). Court decisions since the 1960s have held that Scientology practices were secular and fraudulent (See *United States v. Article or Device, Etc.*, 333 F. Supp. 357 (D.D.C. 1971)) and over the twenty-five years between 1967 and 1993, courts in the United States supported all IRS rulings against the organization, denying it tax-exempt status.

The Supreme Court of the United States ruled (*Hernandez v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue*, 1989) that payments for "auditing" were not tax-deductible.

THE MEDIA ON SCIENTOLOGY

Not only judges, but several investigative journalists issued judgments which were diametrically opposed to that of NRM scholars. In 1991, *Time* magazine published a cover story on Scientology, authored by Richard Behar, a reporter who has specialized in writing on business and organized crime and had investigated Scientology in the 1980s (Behar, 1986). *Time* described the organization as "a hugely profitable global racket that survives by intimidating members and critics in a Mafia-like manner" (Behar, 1991, p. 52). The 1991 *Time* expose was preceded by a series of articles by Sappell & Welkos (1990), which drew attention to some of the same matters. Behar's 1991 expose won several awards, including the Gerald Loeb Award for Distinguished Business and Financial Journalism and a Conscience-in-Media Award from the Society of Journalists and Authors.

The Behar article, as summarized in one court decision, asserted "that Scientology, rather than being a bona fide religion, is in fact organized for the purposes of making money by means legitimate and illegitimate. The Article details various alleged schemes that the church allegedly uses to increase its revenues, including charging ever increasing fees to members, deceiving non-members through the use of front groups, manipulating securities and currency markets through the use of inside information, and evading taxes... These statements were either not challenged by plaintiff [the Scientology organization] or held to be non-actionable by the Court on the grounds that no reasonable jury could find that they were published with actual malice. The sole statement still at issue in the case ("one source of funds for the Los Angeles-based church is the notorious, self-regulated stock exchange in Vancouver, British Columbia, often called the scam capital of the world") merely implies that the same view which this Court has held to be non-actionable as not made with actual malice: that Scientology's purpose is making money by means legitimate and illegitimate. Accordingly, the claim based on this statement must be dismissed as subsidiary to a non-actionable view expressed in the article" (US District Court, Southern District of New York, 92 Civ. 3024 (PKL) see www.planetkc.com/sloth/sci/decis.time.html).

The treatment of Scientology in the media is highly unusual. *Time* magazine has been described as a true representation of US culture (cf. Fox, 1971). It has been formed in the image of its founder Henry Luce, born to missionary parents in China who became a devout believer in conservative Republicanism, and has served as a gatekeeper to mainstream legitimacy. The magazine has never in its history denied the religion label

to any other groups, however controversial. Time did not call Scientology 'controversial', it did not refer to it as 'unorthodox', as many NRMs have been described. It called it a racket and a scam.

The way The New York Times has treated Scientology is quite similar. Frantz (1997a, 1997b) exposed Scientology's secular strategies and litigation tactics, while Rich (1997) ridiculed Scientology's claims about its persecution by Nazi-like governments, and expressed serious suspicions about the way it won its tax-exempt status, in a surprising and total surrender by the IRS, under circumstances that could only be described as highly mysterious. How IRS Commissioner Herb Goldberg, Jr. was suddenly converted by the organization has never been fully investigated.

26 REASONS FOR RE-EXAMINING THE CONSENSUS

If we want to produce not just heat, but also some light in this debate, a re-assessment of the consensus is called for, and for this re-assessment more observations are needed. We should not listen to jurists, legal scholars, law school professors, or accept the judgment of some journalists. We should not even accept the judgment of our colleagues without looking at more evidence. The public record, available and easily accessible, provides us with some additional materials, which, though far from hidden, rather oddly seem to have escaped proper and adequate notice. We find that some aspects of Scientology's operations have been overlooked, and their absence from the scholarly record is troubling.

In the process of observing the organization in action, we will examine both current practices and the organization's history. These observations, anchored in authentic documents, reflect significant, representative, and symptomatic behaviors, not marginal events. The documents cited are authentic, unassailable and unchallenged. Most of them are now accessible on the Internet. In every case, I am urging you to read the original documents in their entirety and reach your own understanding of their meaning.

SECULAR OPERATIONS AND SELF-PRESENTATION

1. Self-Presentation at Recruitment: The "Oxford Capacity Analysis".

Let me introduce the concept of recruitment discourse, which refers to written and oral presentations directed at potential members as part of recruitment efforts. Groups and businesses, while attempting to recruit clients or members, use recruitment discourse or rhetoric, which defines what they claim to offer. One well-known component of the recruitment process in Scientology is the so-called "Oxford Capacity Analysis" (OCA), which is presented to the public as a "free personality test". "Your personality has everything to do with your income, your future, your personal relationships, and your life. A test of this kind would normally cost you \$500.00 and up. It is offered to you here free of charge as a public service" (see <http://www.scientology.org/oca.html>).

The claim about cost or value of the test happens to be false, because the "test" is totally worthless. The "Oxford Capacity Analysis" has nothing to do with Oxford, capacity, or analysis. No matter how you respond to this "personality test", its interpretation will lead to only one recommendation: an immediate registration in one of Scientology's "communication courses"(Foster, 1971). What is clear from observing the OCA and the way it has been used by Scientology, is that this fictitious "test" is a purely secular dissimulation, designed to attract the unsuspecting with promises of secular self-improvement. In addition to the fraudulent nature of the presentation, what is significant is that the OCA and all claims about it are purely and totally secular (Foster, 1971).

2. Self-Presentation at Recruitment: Dianetics.

Another concept used in recruitment discourse has been Dianetics, defined as "the science of thought" and as "The Modern Science of Mental Health". "It can, in the realm of the individual, prevent or alleviate insanity, neurosis, compulsions, and obsessions and it can bring about physical well-being, removing the basic cause of some seventy percent of man's illnesses" (<http://www.dianetics.org/what/index.htm>).

Over the years, Dianetics has been claimed as a cure for cancer, polio, arthritis, migraines, "radiation sickness", bronchitis, myopia, and asthma. In addition, Hubbard claimed that Dianetics was "the total antidote for the eradication of brainwashing"[sic] (HCOB No. 19, December 1955). There is reportedly one case where a child was raised from the dead through "auditing". Whatever Dianetics is and does, if anything, it is always presented as a purely secular way to self-improvement, one of countless similar schemes on the market.

3. Self-Presentation at Recruitment: Cyberspace Testimonials.

Cyberspace is being inundated by Scientology testimonials, all prepared by the organization and designed to sound sincere, personal and genuine. These texts use an extremely limited vocabulary and grossly deficient syntax. They might have been produced by an intellectually-challenged computer that ate some Dale Carnegie books, and uses the words "amazed" and "wonderful" too often. Read for example <http://www.our-home.org/davidtidman/myself.htm>, where David Tidman, who has been an employee of the Scientology organization for 18 years, and now has a "field Auditing Practice", tells us about himself and his success in Scientology.

Often the testimonials are quite brief and can be reproduced in their entirety, preserving their original level of (il)literacy: "Hello, my name is Dr. George Springer, and here is a little bit about myself. I am a physician for 15 years turned inventor and entrepreneur. I have been in Scientology since 1986 and with this cleverness grew and my inventions is reach around the world...With my success in Scientology being so large its hard to encapsulate it with just a few words. Overall I would say that much of what I have gained is a vastly increased awareness about life and livingness and the ability to create and expand in life" (see <http://www.our-home.org/drgeorgespringer>). On further inspection, "Dr." Springer, the successful Scientologist, turns out to be an impostor, who has never been a physician, and his inventions turn out to be typical rejuvenation scams (see http://www.sptimes.com/News/080600/news_pf/NorthPinellas/FDA_Risks_may_lurk_bsh).

While testimonials by scholars (see <http://www.religion2000.de/ENG/index.html>)

emphasize the religious nature of Scientology, cyberspace personal statements emphasize purely secular success, with no hint of religion. All testimonials are by Scientology employees and franchisees who certainly owe their material success to the organization (see <http://www.myhomepage.org/richardfisco/index.htm>)

What we should be concerned about when reading the cyberspace testimonials is not literary quality or financial interests, but religious content. In these testimonials, Scientology's carefully selected representatives are supposedly proselytizing, i.e. teaching the faith, and we can ask what that faith is. There is simply nothing remotely religious in any of the messages.

4. Secular products and activities.

When we examine whether an activity could be construed as religious, the question to ask is if there could be a religious context or logic to it. Does it relate to any specific belief? Is it a ritual?

"The average man is up against problems. He's asking himself, how can I make more money? How can I make my wife faithful to me? ...in Scientology processing he resolves these questions"(Hubbard, 1970, cited in Passas & Castillo, 1992, p. 105). Are these humanity's two main religious concerns? I will remind you that Bromley and Bracey (1998) consider this "processing" a religious ritual, and seem to be ignorant of the fact that this religious ritual was designed by its creator to help the faithful with making more money and with avoiding wifely infidelity.

The majority of activities conducted by Scientology and its many fronts and subsidiaries involve the marketing of secular products such as the "Clear" program, Sterling Management Systems executive training, and self-improvement in scholastics. The "Clear" sales pitch is totally secular: "On the Clearing Course you will smoothly achieve the stable state of Clear with Good Memory, Raised I.Q., Strong Will Power, Magnetic Personality, Amazing Vitality, Creative Imagination" (Bainbridge & Stark, 1981, p. 128).

Another case in point is the Purification Rundown, marketed by Scientology all over the world. "The Purification Rundown is a detoxification program which enables an individual to rid himself of drugs, toxins and other chemicals...a major breakthrough by L. Ron Hubbard that has enabled hundreds of thousands to be freed from the harmful effects of drugs and toxins" (see faq.scientology.org/puri.htm). We do know that the "Purification Rundown" includes sauna and vitamins, both offered at exorbitant prices (\$1200). Officially, the Purification Rundown is a "religious program" (Mallia, 1998c), which every scientologist is required to take as the first step on the "Bridge to Total Freedom". What could be its religious context? The purification scam is similar to many products being offered all over the world by various quacks and crooks, with no claims to religion. Heber C. Jentsch claims that he was cured of radiation sickness through the Purification Rundown, which means that it is indeed an amazing medical breakthrough, still purely secular (Mallia, 1998c).

In other cases, the same Scientology product is defined as "religious" in one setting and secular in another. Study Technology is claimed to be a religious practice, sold at a price of \$600 as part of the "church" program. The same Study Tech is taught in schools and there is claimed to be secular (Mallia, 1998b).

5. The Secular "Way To Happiness".

Scientology has been offering the public a document titled *The Way to Happiness*, described as "a non-religious moral code, based entirely on common sense, which is having profound effects around the world". It was authored by L. Ron Hubbard and distributed by Scientology front organizations, protected by copyrights and trademarks (see <http://www.thewaytohappiness.org/index.htm>). The Way to Happiness Foundation is a front organization, created to operate within United States public and government-supported institutions, and so claims to be specifically nonreligious. In recent years, the Way to Happiness has been offered in other countries. In early 2003, hundreds of thousands of copies of its Hebrew version were distributed in Israel.

6. Self-Presentation as a Secular Movement.

Some Scientology representatives state that the so-called church is not a religion. When a Scientology branch opened in Japan in 1985, it was careful to present itself as a 'philosophy' and not a religion (Kent, 1999). In the United States, an article in a Maine newspaper that solicited thoughts about the "new millennium" from local church leaders reports that "Barbara Fisco, mission holder of the Church of Scientology in Brunswick, said that Scientology is not a religion and therefore not subject to the religious implications of the Year 2000" (Smith, 1999\www.timesrecord.com/main/79c6.html_).

The case of Scientology in Israel is quite instructive. In various organizational forms, Scientology has been active among Israelis for more than thirty years, but those in charge not only never claimed the religion label, but resisted any such suggestion or implication. It has always presented itself as a secular, self-improvement, tax-paying business. Otherwise, they offered the familiar products and deceptions, from the Oxford Capacity Analysis to Dianetics and Purification. The current Israeli franchise-holder told me rather proudly that he pays all required taxes. In its history as a commercial venture, the organization still got into legal trouble, and was charged with tax evasion at least once.

7. The Anti-Psychiatry Campaign.

Scientology has attracted much attention through its propaganda effort against what it calls psychiatry. This has involved great expense and organizational effort, carried out through a variety of fronts. If the book *Psychiatrists: The Men Behind Hitler* (Roder, Kubillus, & Burwell, 1995) is a representative example, and I believe it is, it proves decisively that the campaign is rooted in total paranoia and pathetic ignorance.

Reading this book, and I will urge you not to waste too much time doing it, makes clear that the authors simply have no idea what psychiatry is. But that is the least of their problems.

What I would definitely urge you to read is a brief statement by Hubbard, titled "Constitutional Destruction" (<http://freedom.ironhubbard.org>).

In it you will find the rationale (if such a word can be used here) for the anti-psychiatry campaign. You will discover that the World Federation of Mental Health represents a conspiracy, directed by Communists, to destroy "the West". You will also discover that "Electric shock and brain operations to depersonalize dissident elements were developed by Hitler...The turmoil of schools and universities [the statement is dated June 9, 1969, and reflects events in the 1960s] trace back [sic] to the agents of these groups and their advice to corrupt puppet politicians...But all of these groups, whose control is uniform over the world and whose lines go straight to Russia, may be in for a terrible surprise. Since Scientology became aware of them they have lost seven of their top dozen leaders". The last sentence is puzzling, and implies physical liquidation and physical threat. This 1969 document is still presented by Scientology on its Internet sites (an earlier version is Appendix III in Wallis, 1977). Foster (1971) quotes the "Address by Beria to American Students at Lenin University", which was obviously authored by Hubbard and purports to demonstrate how "Mental Health campaigns" are run from the Kremlin. What hasn't been noticed by Scientology is that the Soviet Union has disappeared, while the worldwide "mental health" industry is still going strong.

Most of Hubbard's writings, still presented on Scientology's web sites, carry the flavor of the 1950s, or earlier. His writings about psychiatry as the handmaiden of Communism show him to be a classical 1950s right-wing paranoid. We know that The John Birch Society held the same views, and attacked the "mental health racket", run by Communists (Westin, 1963).

In 1956, in an obvious reference to the 1954 Supreme Court decision to outlaw school segregation, he attacked the "... Supreme Court Justice who does not recognize the rights of the majority, but who stresses the rights of the minority and who uses psychology textbooks written by Communists to enforce an unpopular opinion" (Wallis, 1977, p. 199). The *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, handed down on May 17, 1954 enraged white supremacists like Hubbard. The Court considered as evidence findings of research done by Kenneth Clark (1955), an African-American psychologist, which further enraged those supporting segregation. We know that later on, Hubbard supported the apartheid regime in South Africa.

In 1957 Hubbard started the National Academy of American Psychology, which offered its own 'loyalty oath' to "prevent the teaching of only foreign psychology in public schools and universities" (Wallis, 1977, p. 200). Hubbard obviously does not know what psychology is, and sounds like a classical nativist (Higham, 1970), seeking to drive out foreign influences. He refers to psychotherapy in the US as "Euro-Russian" (Wallis, 1977, p. 200), and plans to introduce red-blooded American psychotherapy to replace it. Hubbard clearly did not know anything about the historical origins of twentieth-century psychotherapy, which had nothing to do with Russia, and much to do with German-speaking Central Europe. What is interesting is that "psychiatry", in Scientology's world, is accused of being connected to both Nazism and Communism

At a conference organized by CESNUR and others in 1991 and held in California, Heber C. Jentzsch was invited to present a history lesson. Among his many original discoveries were the composition of the participants in the Wannsee Conference, where on January 20, 1942 fifteen Nazi officials met to discuss the Final Solution (they were all psychiatrists, according to Jentzsch. For the record: no psychiatrists were present)

and the origin of electroconvulsive therapy (developed in "Nazi death camps", according to Jentzsch). The assembled participants rewarded Jentzsch with a warm applause.

Ideas about the connections between psychiatrists and the Nazis can be heard every day from hospitalized schizophrenics all over the world. Jentzsch's history lessons were not the rantings and ravings of a paranoid schizophrenic. They were the crude lies of a cynic using the memory of the Nazis and the Holocaust for profit. Here we are not dealing with psychotic delusions but with cold-blooded propaganda, seeking to take advantage of our natural reaction of horror. In this case, as in others, Scientology will exploit any human sentiments to generate more profits.

Two years later, in 1993, a gathering of NRM scholars at the London School of Economics, organized by CESNUR and INFORM, was again treated to a history lesson by Jentzsch. This time the topic was the historical similarity between Germany in the 1930s and Germany in the 1990s. The way the German government was allegedly treating Scientology was said to be identical to the way Nazi Germany treated Jews. This time the audience reacted with thunderous applause.

The anti-psychiatry campaign, as far as can be told, started with a bit of reality, and then became delusional. When Hubbard first introduced his "Dianetics, The Modern Science of Mental Health", he was in apparent competition with psychotherapy, which, because of ignorance, Hubbard regarded as identical with psychiatry. The next

step is the delusion that his "mental health" system would be superior to other ones, and would be perceived as a threat or competition by other "mental health" providers. That those providers were Communists and directed from "Russia" is a nice cold-war paranoid touch. The notion that Scientology has ever been a threat to psychotherapy or "psychiatry" is purely illusory. Most psychiatrists and psychotherapists in this world have never heard of Scientology, and its impact on the worldwide "mental health" or psychotherapy industry (Beit-Hallahmi, 1992) has been non-existent.

What is significant for our discussion is that this particular case of paranoia (cf. Meissner, 1978; Robins & Post, 1997), so central to Scientology's identity and public activities, is totally secular. It clearly overlaps with some of the claims made by Lyndon LaRouche, again in the framework of a totally secular paranoia (King, 1990). Despite his opposition to psychiatry, an autopsy reportedly showed that Hubbard was a user of psychiatric prescription drugs, as well as a regular user of the popular CNS suppressor ethanol, available without prescription in liquid form.

8. Challenges to the Religion Label.

Among all organizations claiming to be new religions, only Scientology's claim has so often been put into question. Most NRMs have never had to face such challenges anywhere. Since the 1960s, courts and governments have ruled that Scientology is a secular, profit-making organization, and should be treated as such. Thus, the tax-exempt status of the organization in France was revoked in 1985, after it had been determined that its aim was profit-making. Later on, Spain, Greece, Germany, and Denmark decided to treat it as a for-profit organization.

9. Solicitation of imprimatur.

Since the 1970s, in an obvious response to the challenges to its claim to be a religion, Scientology has solicited, and received, testimonials about its religious nature from recognized religion scholars. Scientology is unique in this respect.

Office of Special Affairs (OSA, earlier known as Dept. 20 or Guardian's Office) is the division within Scientology which is "responsible for interfacing with the society at large, including legal affairs, public relations, and community" (see faq.scientology.org/osa.htm). Among other things, this division is charged with intelligence and with taking care of Scientology "enemies". Scientology at some point decided to cultivate contacts with NRM scholars, and this has taken place through the OSA. Its members have registered as participants at meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. Most recently, scholars have been invited to visit the organization's headquarters in Los Angeles, with all their expenses paid.

10. Self-presentation as a Research Enterprise.

Unlike all known religions, and very much like some secular psychotherapy systems, Scientology's claims have been couched not only in the language of self-improvement, but of research and discovery, rather than the language of revelation, prophecy, or salvation (contra Bromley & Bracey, 1998). This is the case not only in its recruitment texts, but in all publications. Hubbard first attracted public attention with Dianetics, which he himself dubbed a "Modern Science of Mental Health". In 1956, Hubbard claimed that Scientology "improves the health, intelligence, ability, behavior, skill and appearance of people. It is a precise and exact science, designed for an age of exact science" (Hubbard, 1956/1983, p. 8).

Later, Hubbard claimed that Scientology "is today the only validated psychotherapy in the world... Scientology is a precision science...the first precision science in the field of the humanities... The first science to put the cost of psychotherapy within the range of any person's pocketbook... The first science to contain the exact technology to routinely alleviate physical illness with predictable success" (The Hubbard Information Letter of April 14, 1962).

When J.L. Simmons, a well-known sociologist then acting as the spokesman for the organization, gave the official Scientology response to the Wallis (1977) study, he used terms such as "discoveries" (p. 266) and "scientifically objective" (p. 269). Not a word on revelation, divine inspiration, or theology.

COMMERCIAL NATURE OF OPERATIONS

11. Recruitment Style and Goals.

Throughout Scientology's history, recruitment has been known as "procurement actions", and handling potential clients has been driven by a sales orientation. Potential customers have always been known as "raw meat", and the goal is "to get the meat off the street". "The operative terms here are 'toughness', 'effectiveness', 'getting the job done'. There are no compunctions about hard-sell, no embarrassment about instrumental values or bureaucratic rationality" (Straus, 1986, p. 80). In the words of the founder, "...promote until the floors cave in because of the number of people?and don't even take notice of that" (Hubbard, in Foster, 1971, p. 69).

12. Non-exclusive Membership.

Unique to the recruitment rhetoric is the official claim by Scientology that members of other religions can join its ranks, with no implications for either commitment. "It

insists that membership in Scientology is not incompatible with being a Catholic, Protestant, or Jew and goes so far as to encourage dual membership" (Bednarowski, 1995, p. 389).

13. Self Presentation as a Business: Trademarks and Trade Secrets.

A trademark is legally defined as "any word, name, symbol, or device or any combination thereof, adopted and used by a manufacturer or merchant to identify its goods and distinguish them from those manufactured or sold by others" (15 U.S.C. , article 1121). Examples of trademark are Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, or Big Mac. The Scientology organization owns more trademarks than McDonald's, Disney, Microsoft, and probably the world's leading 100 corporations combined. Moreover, Scientology has claimed to own not only trademarks, but trade secrets as well (see <http://www.theta.com/copyright/index.htm>).

The Uniform Trade Secrets Act (1985) defined trade secrets as "information, including a formula, pattern, compilation, program device, method, technique that derives economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use". Another definition states: "A trade secret is any information that can be used in the operation of a business or other enterprise and is sufficiently valuable and secret to afford an actual or potential economic advantage over others" (Restatement, Unfair Competition, article 39). We realize that a business engages in trade, and relies on trade secrets. Why would a religion do that?

14. Operation as a Business: Franchising.

"A franchise is a business arrangement where the developer/owner (the franchisor) of a business concept grants others (the franchisees) the licensed right to own and operate businesses based on the business concept, using the trademark associated with the business concept" (<http://www.franchiseconnections.com/def1.html>). The Arthur Murray Dance Studios, McDonald's, and Burger King are well-known global businesses that operate by franchising. Scientology branches (or sales outlets) are operated by franchise, just like McDonald's, with the organization receiving licensing fees, as well as a stipulated percentage of earnings. In addition, recruiters, known as "body routers", are paid commissions of 10 to 35 percent for signing up new clients (Mallia, 1998a; Passas & Castillo, 1992).

15. Operation as a Business: Profit as the Goal.

Passas & Castillo (1992) state that Scientology is "an ordinary profit-making enterprise". Wallis (1977, p. 138) reports that "Hubbard has 'sold his name' to the Church", which is a peculiar way of describing the transmission of religious authority, but consistent with the way a for-profit operation is run. Wallis (1979, p. 29) also asserts that the motives for major changes in Scientology's history were financial. The move to England in 1959 came about because "...the success of the Church of Scientology of Washington came to the attention of tax authorities concerned about the three-quarters of a million dollars earned during this period [1955-1959] by the tax-exempt Church". Findings in *Church of Scientology of California v. Commissioner* (1984) showed that the organization operated only for profit, siphoning off its earnings to Swiss bank accounts controlled by Hubbard and his associates.

In the words of its founder, Scientology's governing financial policy is

"A. MAKE MONEY...

.....

J. MAKE MONEY

K. MAKE MORE MONEY

L. MAKE OTHER PEOPLE PRODUCE SO AS TO MAKE MORE MONEY
(Hubbard, 1972, cited in Senn, 1990, p. 345).

Hubbard's practical advice on tax matters follows:

"Now as to TAX, why this is anybody's game of what is PROFIT. The thing to do is to assign a significance to the figures before the government can...So I normally think of a better significance than the government can. I always put enough errors on a return to satisfy their blood-sucking appetite and STILL come out zero. The game of accounting is

just a game of assigning significance to figures. The man with the most imagination wins...Income does not mean profit. One can and should make all the INCOME one possibly can. But when one makes INCOME be sure it is accounted for as to its source and that one covers it with expenses and debts. Handling taxation is as simple as that" (*Church of Scientology of California V. Commissioner.*, 83 T.C., p. 430). These statements by Hubbard, are according to Bromley & Bracey (1998), and to

Hadden (<http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/jkh8x/soc257/nrms/scientology.html>), part of sacred scriptures.

Hubbard's financial ideals may have something to do with his estate, reportedly worth \$640 million (Mallia, 1998a). They are also well reflected in the prices Scientology clients are charged, where \$376,000 is the cost of reaching "total freedom" (Mallia, 1998d). Documents made public over the years show staggering profits from the operation (Behar, 1991; Passas & Castillo, 1992). Richardson (1983) reported that the estimated annual income of the Scientology organization in the US alone was \$100 million. In 1993, the last time Scientology had to report, it had \$398 million in assets and \$300 million in annual income (Mallia, 1998a). We can safely assume that if these are the reported figures, the real figures were even higher, as taxpayers are given to underreporting (see Hubbard's advice above). According to David Miscavige, Scientology's CEO, winning a US tax-exemption in 1993 saved Scientology from a tax bill that could have reached \$ 1 billion (Frantz, 1997b).

16. Operation as a Business: Membership and Economic Interests.

The record shows that most of the loyal members of the organization, those who are willing to identify themselves in public as "Scientologists", are actually employees or entrepreneurs working with and for the organization, and whose livelihood depends on the survival of Scientology. As Wilson (1970, p. 165) put it "... the esoteric doctrines become not so much an aid to leading a normal life as a means of making a new livelihood". There may be a small minority of heavily invested clients who also identify strongly with the organization. This lopsided division of labor is very much in evidence in the well-publicized cases of litigation involving "ex-Scientologists". In the vast majority of cases, the individuals involved have been employees of the organization.

Thus, loyalty to the organization is connected to economic ties. Membership is created by either a heavy investment through fees paid (a minority of cases) or by substantial earnings (a majority). This membership pattern seems unique and unusual.

17. Operation as a Business: The 1982 Mission Holders Conference.

This document, consisting of the official minutes of a meeting between Scientology's top management and its franchise holders, is consistent with other documents and observations (see http://www.freezone.de/english/reports/e_mhcsf.htm). The occasion can be compared to a meeting between McDonald's corporate managers and its franchisees or a gathering of Buick dealers, an annual event where the retailers get

a picture of company strategy and a pep talk It could be a meeting of Coca Cola bottlers, except that I imagine the atmosphere there to be much nicer.

(Steve Marlowe:"On this team you're playing with the winning team...It's tough, it's ruthless"). We can see here some (and just some) of the internal workings of post-Hubbard Scientology (Hubbard was then alive, but in hiding from law enforcement agencies).

The internal world of Scientology as revealed here shows us an unattractive corporate culture, with management displaying no trust, and using threats and intimidation to keep the money coming in. Wendell Reynolds is introduced as "International Finance Dictator". He introduces the "International Finance Police" and warns "So if I hear one person in this room who is not coughing up 5% as a minimum you've got an investigation coming your way because you got other crimes in your mission. Questions on that?". This is a world of quotas and "stats", by which activities are measured. Guillaume Leserve: "Now you've got to double those quotas...Just take those quotas, double them for this week!". David Miscavige: "We are winning legally. We are winning statistically. And Scientology is going up". Statistically here means financially.

What is clear is that there is money to be made in Scientology, and lots of it. The atmosphere of threats, fear, and intimidation focuses on MAKE MORE MONEY, as cited above, and not on transgressions of any religious or moral codes. But there is something else in the air, something which could only be described as criminality. When describing the misdeeds of those breaking Scientology discipline and their fate, Ray Mithoff states, when he wants to express extreme disdain: "I think the only thing lower would probably be an FBI agent". This reference to the FBI and another one to the IRS express open hostility to the law. We cannot imagine such references at the Buick or Coca Cola events. These frank expressions are most damning, and could only reflect criminal intent.

The meeting deals with trademarks and their legal meaning (with a warning by an attorney!), organizational charts, and licensing. Lyman Spurlock says: "This new corporate paper are [sic] designed to make the whole structure impregnable, especially as regards the IRS. Have any of you read the religious language in these corporate papers? Before we came along and did this overhaul you couldn't tell whether you were dealing with a 7 Eleven store or Church of Scientology from corporate papers...The scriptures being defined as the recorded and written words of L. Ron Hubbard with regard to the technology of Dianetics and Scientology and the organizations". So we realize that in 1982 the Scientology Mission Holders, supposedly members of a religious organization, had to be told for the first time that they are in the business of selling scriptures, something which they could never have

guessed. Other than the reference to "scriptures" there are no expressions of anything remotely resembling religious sentiments or rituals and no references to faith.

Norman Starkey mentions "a judicial statement that Scientology is a bona fide religion entitled to the protection of the free enterprise clause". This is an interesting and revealing slip, which could serve as a perfect example for Sigmund Freud's theory of parapraxes (Freud, 1915/1916). A "Freudian slip" reveals hidden intentions and thoughts, not necessarily unconscious. Whoever was taking down the minutes possibly did not know what the free exercise clause was, but clearly knew about free enterprise. That this error has not been noticed by anybody until today offers added proof of the authenticity of the document.

SCIENTOLOGY'S HISTORY AND CREDIBILITY

18. Early History: Two Stages and the Conversion to Religion.

Scientology's early history is quite well known (Foster, 1971; Malko, 1970; Miller, 1987; Passas & Castillo, 1992; Wallis, 1977; Wilson, 1970). There is universal agreement that the Church of Scientology was preceded by a "pre-religion" stage, during which first Dianetics and then Scientology were presented to the world as secular self-improvement schemes, specifically and explicitly based on "science", not religion.

Scientology itself appeared as an improvement over Dianetics, and only later did it adopt the "Church" identity. "Scientology emerged originally as a form of lay psychotherapy" (Wallis, 1979, p. 30). The year 1953 was, according to most accounts, the year of identity transformation, the transition from secular Scientology to a religion and a Church. What was the motivation for this sudden conversion? During the years 1950-1953, before the Great Conversion, Hubbard was experiencing ups and downs, mostly downs, and was desperately seeking to re-organize and relocate his operations. The years 1952-1953 are marked by extreme stress and despair. Then, in 1953, the decision to seek the religion label was made.

In a letter written from England to Helen O'Brien, who was managing his US business at the time, on April 10, 1953, Hubbard wrote: "We don't want a clinic. We want one in operation but not in name. Perhaps we could call it a Spiritual Guidance Center. Think up its name, will you...It is a problem of practical business. I await your reaction on the religion angle... A religion charter could be necessary in Pennsylvania on NJ to make it stick. But I sure could make it stick". This letter (see <http://bible.ca/scientology-hubbard-1953-clinic-letter.htm>; Miller, 1987) makes clear that Hubbard was only concerned with making "real money" through "practical

business", and that the "religion angle" seemed useful for that. Choosing the religion cover was clearly a "practical business" consideration. It was more profitable to appear as a religion, thus avoiding taxes and other kinds of interference or scrutiny.

And so, on December 18, 1953, the Church of Scientology, the Church of Spiritual Engineering, and the Church of American Science were all incorporated in Camden, New Jersey by L. Ron Hubbard, Sr., L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., Henrietta Hubbard, John Galusha, Barbara Bryan, and Verna Greenough. Appointed as administrators of the three churches were L. Ron Hubbard, Mary Sue Hubbard, and John Galusha. The official history of the organization states that the first "Scientology church" was founded on February 14, 1954 in Los Angeles. This California outfit ordained ministers, and offered doctoral degrees in Scientology and theology, as well as certification as "Freudian psychoanalyst". It was also paying a 20% "tax" to the Church of American Science.

The 1953 conversion was apparently short-lived, because on June 12, 1954, we find the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International (HAS) writing to the Phoenix, Arizona Better Business Bureau, and presenting itself as a business "of good repute" with a "gross of about \$10,000 a month". John Galusha, an administrator for the three Hubbard churches, gives a fictitious biography of Hubbard (trained in "nuclear physics and "psycho-analysis", served with distinction in the navy, etc.), goes on to tell a bizarre tale of Hubbard's misadventures since 1950, and then states: "Awakening recently to the fact that many of its interested people were ministers, the HAS has assisted them to form churches such as the Church of American Science and the Church of Scientology. Also, ...Hubbard helped finance the organization of the Freudian Foundation of America...In the latter and in the churches, the HAS has no further control or interest" (see www.xenu.net/archives/FBI/fbi-124.html).

Then, in the summer of 1954, Hubbard decided that he was after all in the religion business. Some of his associates were apparently quite upset over this zigzagging, and so in August 1954, in an article titled 'Why Doctor of Theology', Hubbard wrote: " For a few this may seem like a [sic] sheer opportunism, for a few it may appear Scientology is only making itself unassailable in the eyes of the law, and for still others it may appear any association with religion would be a reduction of the ethics and goals of Scientology itself". Around the same time, Hubbard claimed to have discovered an Asian religion known as Dharma. One follower of that religion was named by Hubbard as Gautama Skyamuni. Later, Hubbard discovered Scientology's ties to Veda, "Gnosis", Tao, Buddhism, and Christianity. As we can see, a frantic search for a flag of convenience occupied Hubbard for most of the early 1950s. This search ended with the choice of religion as a the best cover.

In 1962 Hubbard made clear again his motivation for seeking the religion label: "Scientology 1970 is being planned on a religious organization basis throughout the world. This will not upset in any way the usual activities of any organization. It is entirely a matter for accountants and solicitors" (Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter, HCOPL, 29 October 1962).

According to Bromley and Bracey (1998) Hubbard had a conversion after discovering the reality of the human spirit, and this led from "the religion angle" to a transformed "prophetic founder". Wilson (1970, p. 163) stated that the change occurred "when mystical and metaphysical legitimation could be provided for what had previously been a pseudo-scientific orientation". Wallis (1979, p. 33), speaking of Hubbard and Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, wrote: "Transcendentalization permitted the founders to claim the doctrine as a direct personal revelation". However, that's exactly what Hubbard did not do.

When dealing with what seems to Bromley and Bracey (1998) like a religious idea, Hubbard claimed that his was a discovery, not a revelation: "Probably the greatest discovery of Scientology and its most forceful contribution to mankind has been the isolation, description and handling of the human spirit, accomplished in July, 1951, in Phoenix Arizona. I established, along scientific rather than religious or humanitarian lines that the thing which is the person, the personality, is separate from the body and the mind at will and without causing bodily death or derangement" (Hubbard, 1956/1983, p. 55). Hubbard expresses himself clearly and does not regard the religion label as a blessing or a great honor. Bromley and Bracey (1998) apparently are not aware of this document, and do not realize that their "quasi- religion"'s own official scriptures deny the religion label and mock its defenders.

The scholarly literature contains specific discussions of the reasons for the conversion from secular psychotherapy to a religion (Bainbridge & Stark, 1981; Wallis, 1977). There seems to be a consensus on the secular reasons for this transformation: "The switch to a religion, however, can be regarded as a managerial decision, as it was better able to retain its "clientele" and compete" (Passas & Castillo, 1992, p. 105). As Wallis (1977, 1979) shows, Hubbard used only one way of measuring his success: financial liquidity and solvency. This is the only motive and the only consideration mentioned by Wallis as Hubbard keeps changing organizations and moves across the USA from New Jersey to Arizona and back to New Jersey.

It took many years for the transformation into a "Church" to take hold, as we can see in the minutes of the 1982 Mission Holders Conference. Religious terms, such as 'scripture', 'fixed donations' instead of fees, and 'mission' instead of franchise first appeared in 1967. In 1969, Hubbard wrote: "Visual evidences [sic] that Scientology is

a religion are mandatory ...Stationary is to reflect the fact that orgs are churches" (Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter, HCOPL, February 12, 1969).

19. Early History and Motivation: Hubbard's World

Scientology is L. Ron Hubbard's personal enterprise and legacy and any explanations of its nature and development must start with that fact. The key to understanding this organization is its biography, starting with the early years and the early developments, which defined its style and operations. A group's history and the biography of its founder seem to be a key or the key to its later development and Hubbard (1911-1986) indeed created Scientology in his own image and in the image of his own paranoia (cf. Wallis, 1984).

Hubbard consistently lied about every aspect of his life. He claimed to have had a distinguished military career and decorations, which he never had. He claimed an education in engineering and physics which he never had, and so on. His failures in higher education and the navy were turned into fantasied success stories. "The evidence portrays a man who has been virtually a pathological liar when it comes to his history, background, and achievements. The writings and documents in evidence additionally reflect his egoism, greed, avarice, lust for power" (Judge Paul G. Breckenridge, Jr., Superior Court, Los Angeles County, June 22, 1984, *Church of Scientology of California v. Gerald Armstrong*, Case No. C420143).

But beyond that, Hubbard's actions reflected a kind of criminal megalomania, a morality of those who see themselves as above conventional moral edicts. What he consistently displayed were the components of what has been called psychopathy: selfishness, deceitfulness, and callousness. The psychopath may seem poised and articulate, but actually lies with ease to serve his own needs. Thanks to his well-developed social skills and undeveloped conscience, he can easily con others, and feels no guilt or remorse (Cleckley, 1976).

Hubbard's basic assumption was that humanity was divided into hustlers and suckers, and he was going to be one of the former. Those gullible enough and stupid to believe his claims deserved to be exploited. Identifying potential customers meant looking for hardships and vulnerability in people and preying, in Hubbard's own words on "the bereaved or injured" (Wallis, 1977, p. 158). The predatory nature of the organization is revealed in this early stage, with Hubbard searching for weaknesses and suffering in others, and using them for profit. In the polio victims story what we see is a criminal mind and a sadistic imagination at work, showing the facility with which he makes up new ploys and con games. This is Hubbard's version of Barnum's Law, which is also his Sermon on the Mount. Blessed are the polio victims, for theirs is the right to build

Hubbard's empire with their money. There are millions of suckers out there, the bereaved and injured, just waiting to be exploited. Only one motive can be detected in this story, and that is profit. The basic motive is not malevolence, but profit. The commercial exploitation of suffering and despair is the Bridge to Total Freedom. Hubbard wanted very much to live beyond the reach of the law or the tax collector. This may be a common fantasy, but only a few try to turn it into reality. An illegal business wants and needs protection from any legal interference, but Hubbard wanted not just protection, but real immunity, and the religion label could give you this kind of immunity.

Hubbard's motives are apparently revealed in his fiction as well. A film based on by Hubbard's novel *Battlefield Earth* was produced in the late 1990s. It has won in seven out of nine categories of the Golden Raspberry Award for 2000, including the worst film category, and its lead actor, John Travolta, was nominated for the worst actor. (The film also won first place in a list of the 100 worst films in history). Bryant (2000) reports that in this film "Terl, played by John Travolta, is chief of security of the Psychlos?an alien species driven by greed" (p. 65) and that Terl "hails from a corporation whose moral compass is set only to profitability"(p. 64). Does life imitate art, or vice versa?

During the first stage in the organization's history, Hubbard decided that he was founding a secular, "scientific", enterprise, and rejected any possibility of identification with or as a religion. Then, in a dramatic turnaround, he changed his mind and decided to found not one church, but three! In documents from the years 1950-1953 (Wallis, 1977), Hubbard emerges as a man in crisis, an ideal candidate for religious conversion (James, 1902; Beit-Hallahmi, 1992; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997) but his crisis is practical, not spiritual. He wants and needs money and power, in that order. In the early 1950s, the Dianetics organizations Hubbard set up twice collapsed in bankruptcy, and so he was a man in search of solvency, first and foremost. Some would have us believe that there occurred a great and sudden illumination, a great transformation, a resurrection and redemption, all in one day. Other evidence shows a con man groping for new gimmicks.

The simplest explanation is the most plausible. Its early history does explain the nature of Scientology. Hubbard was a creative paranoid liar, like the founders of many groups, religious and secular, but his particular paranoia was essentially secular. Scientology started as a psychotherapy system, one among thousands. It might have been more bizarre simply because of the personality of its creator, but his unique personality, leadership, creativity, and paranoia made it into a profitable global enterprise.

The religion label was sought as a cynical ploy, like many others. Hubbard was an effective and diligent con man, possibly "the greatest con man of the century" (Gardner, 1957, p. 263) who left behind a highly successful super-scam, which still embodies his spirit.

20. Litigation, Harassment, and Deception

Scientology has become known for its aggressive way of treating anyone perceived as a critic. The strategy has been called "an ultra-aggressive use of investigators and the courts" (Frantz, 1997a). Scientology's annual legal bill amounts to \$20 million or more (Behar, 1991) and it is constantly involved in aggressive litigation. This litigation strategy has been less than fully successful, and Scientology has paid out millions over the years to many plaintiffs (Horne, 1992). While a few successful litigation cases are easily remembered, in others the outcome has been traumatic, far from an easy triumph. Actually, at any given moment, Scientology is involved in scores of ongoing legal battles in the United States and elsewhere. Court proceedings in many of these cases are quite revealing, and what they reveal reminds us again that we may be dealing with a corporation characterized by both profit-making and criminality, rather than a religious movement. What has been revealed in the course of litigation included documents and acts which prove criminal intent and deception (cf. Wilson, 1990 on the unexpected costs of litigation).

Litigation is one part of the intimidation strategy, which includes harassment by various means. Most media reports on Scientology have led to harassment campaigns with journalists and jurists as targets. Richard Behar was harassed by a team of 10 lawyers and 6 private investigators (Horne, 1992; MacLaughlin & Gully, 1998). A California judge was severely harassed (Horne, 1992). Description of Scientology pressure tactics have appeared not just in the mass media, but have been noted in scholarly writings: "Scientology, for instance, employs techniques of harassment against critics" (Cole, 1998, p. 234). That threats are being directed against researchers has also been noted (Ayella, 1990). Wallis (1979) gave a detailed account of Scientology pressures and dirty tricks directed at him. Scientology wants to instill fear, and it does, all over the world. Its operations turn truly malevolent only when threatened, i.e. when profits are in danger.

Scientology's aggressive litigation strategy, which is regularly applied together with the use of private investigators to uncover hidden crimes, is also a projection of Hubbard's own objective situation of invented biography, constant lying, and many cover-ups. This objective situation has led to subjective fears and obsessions. We may call that the "skeletons in the closet" projection.

"And we have this technical fact?those who oppose us have crimes to hide...Try this on your next critic. Like everything else in Scientology, it works.

Sample dialogue:

George: Gwen, if you don't drop Scientology I'm going to leave you.

Gwen: (savagely) George! What have you been doing?

George: What do you mean?

Gwen: Out with it. Women? Theft? Murder? What crime have you committed?

George: (weakly) Oh, nothing like that.

Gwen: What then?

George: I've been holding back on my pay...

Never discuss Scientology with the critic. Just discuss his or her crimes, known and unknown. And act completely confident that those crimes exist. Because they do" (Hubbard, in Foster, 1971, p. 147).

Hubbard assumed that we all lie about our past, present, and future. This may be true for the likes of him, but not for everybody. Most of us clearly do not have as much to hide as Hubbard did when he was alive, and as his brainchild still has.

21. The Scientology Criminal Record.

Floyd Abrams, the well-known First Amendment lawyer, once said that Scientology is "libel proof" because it has been so often held to commit evil and despicable acts (Horne, 1992). Any way you look at it, the record of Scientology involvements in what may euphemistically be called "legal difficulties" all over the world (i.e. wherever the corporation decides to open an outlet) is indeed extraordinary. It includes not just hundreds of cases of litigation and official inquiries, but scores of convictions for such crimes as burglary; forgery; obstruction of justice, and fraud (Friedland, 1985). Wilson (1970, p. 166) states that Hubbard's move to England in 1959 took place because the organization "risked prosecution in the United States in using the American mails for material and propaganda that might be deemed fraudulent".

Scientology's best known criminal case in the United States came to a legal conclusion in 1980, after 11 Scientology leaders, including Mary Sue Hubbard, were convicted of burglarizing the offices of the IRS and the Justice Department, among other targets, and went to prison. Later court decisions found that the organization burglarized IRS offices, stole government documents, and manufactured and falsified records to be presented to the IRS (USA v. Mary Sue Hubbard, 1984). Contrary to what Passas and Castillo (1992) claim, these are not "white collar" crimes.

22. Criminal Intentions and Policies.

A Scientology document dated March 25, 1977 (see <http://www.holysmoke.org/cos/latey.htm>) lists "Red Box Data", which should be kept in separate containers and be ready for removal. They include:

- "a) Proof that a Scientologist is involved in criminal activities.
- b) Anything illegal that implicates MSH [Mary Sue Hubbard], LRH [L.Ron Hubbard].
- c) Large amounts of non - FOI [Freedom of Information Act] docs.
- d) Operations against any government group or persons.
- e) All operations that contain illegal activities.

Evidence of incriminating activities

- g) Names and details of confidential financial accounts."

This document gives us an idea about the origins of the Scientology criminal record. In legal language, it constitutes clear evidence of an attempted obstruction of justice. Article c) above refers to large numbers of government documents, obtained illegally and not through the Freedom Of Information Act.

As we know, a massive destruction of documents (requiring the work of 200 individuals) did take place at least once (Sappell & Welkos, 1990). "In January 1980, fearing a raid by law enforcement agencies, Hubbard's representatives ordered the shredding of all documents showing that Hubbard controlled Scientology organizations... In a two week period, approximately one million pages were shredded" (California Appellate Court, 2nd District, 3rd Division, July 29, 1991, B025920 & B038975, Super Ct. No. C 420153). We also know that Hubbard spent the last six years of his life, 1980-1986, as a fugitive from justice, hiding in California

under a false name, with the full knowledge and support of the organization (Sappell & Welkos, 1990).

23. Criminal Strategies: Infiltration

Wallis (1977) described the use of fronts and the infiltration of legitimate organizations and groups as two major Scientology strategies, and compared them to Communist Party operations. According to Wallis (1977), the infiltration of both civil society groups and government agencies was outlined by Hubbard in the 1960 document known as 'Special Zone Plan'. Legitimate organizations targeted for infiltration included the IRS and the FBI, as well as the news media. In the United States, Scientology successfully infiltrated the IRS in the 1970s (Friedland, 1985), as well as the Justice Department, and probably other government agencies and non-government organizations and corporations. We also know that Scientology had planned to plant its agents in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the US Export-Import Bank (Behar, 1991). Media reports suggested that there has been successful infiltration of law-enforcement agencies in Canada.

24. Deception as Policy: Strategies of Masquerading.

In US politics, the use of fronts is common, but covers are easily blown. You may choose an attractive name, but you don't expect your financial backing to remain secret. We know that Citizens for Better Medicare is financed by drug companies, seeking to protect their profits, and that The Coalition to Protect Americans Now is financed by some big defense contractors, just as Americans for Job Security is a front for huge corporations acting to eliminate the rights of workers. In politics we take such actions in stride, but religions are not in the business of setting up fronts.

Scientology's use of fronts is unique in both quantity and quality, and it has been a matter of policy since its inception. This use of fronts has been a major part of the organization's activities, and it indicates an acknowledgement of having something (or more than just something) to hide. Have you ever heard of the Jewish Coalition for Religious Freedom? Will you be surprised to learn that it is a Scientology front? Scientology has operated the Alliance for the Preservation of Religious Liberty, Narconon, Crimonon, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), the Committee on Public Health and Safety (COPHS), American Citizens for Honesty in Government, the Committee for a Safe Environment, the National Commission on Law Enforcement and Social Justice, Concerned Businessmen's Association of America (CBAA), the Association for Better Living and Education (ABLE), the Religious Research Foundation (RRF), Applied Scholastics International, The Way to Happiness Foundation (TWTH), Social Coordination International, and World

Institute of Scientology Enterprises (WISE). In Britain, Scientology started the Citizens' Press Association and the Association for Health Development and Aid, among other fronts (Wallis, 1977).

A Scientology document dated 9 March 1970 presents some ideas about the uses of fake identity card policy: "Invent letterhead of some organization that is spurious, i.e. have it printed up and use it to make queries ... Examples "Ford Foto Features" or "Council for Human Relations in Industry". If you have a letterhead of any sort you will get answers to your questions most of the time. Of these using a phoney News Agency is the most successful" (see <http://www.holysmoke.org/cos/latey.htm>)

This creation of fronts started early. Reading the history of early Hubbard fronts, as described by Wallis (1977) one is impressed by both the creativity and the deceit involved in this huge effort. Before 1960, Hubbard had such fronts as the American Society for Disaster Relief, The Society of Consulting Ministers, and the Constitutional Administration Party (Wallis, 1977).

One of the first fronts was The Freudian Foundation of America, set up in early 1954. It offered certification as "psychoanalyst" or "Freudian analyst" (Wallis, 1977). The letter from the Hubbard Association of Scientologists to the Better Business Bureau of Phoenix, Arizona, dated June 12, 1954, and cited above, claimed an inspiration from the "Freudian Institute in Vienna". There has never been such an institute.

We must wonder why someone starting a religion would want to adopt the guise of anything "Freudian". Sigmund Freud, as we all know, was an atheist, and the psychoanalytic interpretation of religious beliefs has not made him popular among religionists (Beit-Hallahmi, 1996). Moreover, Freud was the icon and the embodiment of "Euro-Russian" psychotherapy and of the whole "mental health" establishment, which was a major target of Hubbard's hostility. This attempted "Freudian" connection reflected both real ignorance and a desperate search for marketable products. More recently, Scientology has changed its mind about Sigmund Freud, as you can see in <http://www.nopsychns.org/FRF.html> where "Psycho-Analysis, the forerunner to psychiatry" is soundly denounced for its atheistic nature.

The Freudian Foundation story is pretty much the model for many Scientology operations since the early days. It is clear that for Hubbard inventing a new label, identity, guise, or disguise was a practical matter approached without any hesitation or doubt. The cynicism, speed and facility with which covers were adopted and then dropped reflect the true motivation behind them. Labels, identities, and guises were changed and adopted at will; they were all treated as gimmicks, useful at the moment and possibly dropped by the wayside soon afterwards. Just like the nuclear physicist

identity of "Dr. Hubbard". The founder and his disciples would come up with any deceptions necessary to promote their business.

This is the corporate survival strategy at work since the early 1950s. Over the past fifty years, hundreds of front organizations were started and mostly dropped. Only a few have survived for long, and those have proven some usefulness. That is why the Freudian Foundation, started in 1954, and the National Academy of American Psychology, started in 1957, are no longer with us.

For Scientology, using fronts is one way of obtaining funds from government and charity sources (Mallia, 1998c). The World Literacy Crusade is an extremely profitable front, gaining US government grants, as well as grants from private donors and school systems. The so-called drug rehabilitation program known as Narconon has been an incredibly profitable front through federal grants and corporate donations (Mallia, 1998c). Fronts may help one another look respectable and make more money. Thus, the Association for Better Living and Education (ABLE) may come out in support of Narconon or the World Literacy Crusade (Behar, 1991). The Foundation for Advancement in Science and Education (FASE) is another example of a profitable Scientology front, earning federal money as well as donations from large corporations such as IBM and McDonald's.

The extensive use of front organizations reflects the scope of Scientology's ambitions and its desire to hide those ambitions through the use of fake calling cards. Some fronts reflect "a totalitarian ideology with world-dominating aspirations" (Kent, 1999, p. 158), but any real achievements in terms of political influence have been limited to the United States. The world is not moving any closer to Hubbard's utopia. It should be pointed out again and again that beyond their clearly deceptive and often sinister nature, Scientology fronts are totally secular in definition and action.

25. Deception Strategies: Fake Calling Cards and Vulnerable Targets.

Since the 1950s, the fake calling card strategy has been used to identify and attract potential clients. Identifying sales potential meant looking for hardships and vulnerabilities in people and preying, in Hubbard's own words, on "the bereaved or injured" (Wallis, 1977, p. 158). Specific groups of vulnerable individuals have been identified and targeted. In the early days of Dianetics, Hubbard advertised in the following way: "Polio victims. A research foundation, investigating polio, desires volunteers suffering from the after effects of that illness" (Wallis, 1977, p. 158). We cannot imagine that too many polio victims actually came to the Dianetics outlets, but what is significant is the vision behind this particular sales gimmick. This took place in

the early 1950s, but we have evidence showing that this strategy has remained a major part of the Scientology deception repertoire.

The New CAN affair in the late 1990s can serve as a definitive illustration. The old CAN (Cult Awareness Network) was a notorious "anti-cult" group. One of the few good things we can say about the old CAN was that it did not hide its true identity or aims, immediately revealed by the name Cult Awareness Network. Following a vicious litigation campaign by Scientology, the old CAN went bankrupt in 1996 (Hansen, 1997). But this was not the end of its history. It did almost immediately come back to life as a Scientology front, under the name of the New Cult Awareness Network (New CAN). The New CAN "provides factual information on the dangers of cults". It uses the same logo, letterhead, and phone number as the old CAN. (see Russell, 1999, or www.newtimesla.com/issues/1999-0909/feature_p.html). The New CAN even advertises itself as having a phone number and address in Illinois, just like the old CAN, but even that is not true. If you dial (773)267-7777, someone in California will answer.

The New CAN represents what is known in intelligence parlance as a "false flag" operation, one of the more sophisticated things any intelligence service can be proud of. In this kind of approach to a potential agent, an intelligence officer presents himself as belonging to an ally rather than a hostile power (Polmar & Allen, 1996). Here we are not dealing with intelligence services, so what is the goal of the operation?

One must wonder why this particular act of masquerading has been designed in this way. If the old CAN was so disreputable, why use its name, logo, and phone number? If the old CAN was so notorious, and had such a bad reputation, why keep its hateful old name? The logic of this particular scam is that there are people out there looking for information on "cults", and this is a population Scientology would like to know about and penetrate. Individuals looking for information on "dangerous cults" may be among those described by Hubbard as the "bereaved and injured". To reach them, the whole facade of the "anti-cult" group is kept, and the mere use of the term 'cult' would betray immediately a deceptive intent. Why would an organization accused of being a "cult" keep alive that pejorative term? Targeting individuals who are attracted by the idea of "dangerous cults" is done by keeping all the old CAN trappings. Otherwise these trappings would have been dropped. We have no way of knowing how successful this particular deception scheme has been, and how many callers have approached the New CAN. Scientology operatives have claimed it as a great success (see www.newtimesla.com/issues/1999-0909/feature_p.html). We cannot imagine that New CAN has been deluged with calls, but what counts is the thought, and what is

important is the idea, the fantasy, the design, behind New CAN. The design, reminiscent of the "polio research" idea, is one of targeting vulnerable individuals.

26. The Training Routine for Lying.

Scientology has its own Training Routine for Lying (TR-L), used in the preparation of its staff.

"Intelligence Specialist Training Routine-TR-L

Purpose: To train the student to give a false statement...To train the student to outflow false data effectively....

Commands:... "Tell me a lie"...

Training Stress: In Part 1 coach gives command, student originates a falsehood... In Part 2 coach asks questions of the student on his background or a subject. Student gives untrue data of a plausible sort that the student backs up with further explanatory data upon the coach further questions...The coach flunks... for student fumbling on question answers..." (see <http://www.holysmoke.org/cos/latey.htm>)

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE

The first finding to emerge from our observations is the remarkable degree of continuity over the past fifty years. As Wallis (1977, 1979) has pointed out, the development of bureaucratic structures has created an organization that not only survived, but has been marked by relative stability in strategies and policies. It seems that we can pick up any segment of the organization's behavior, or any document, at any point in time over fifty years, and immediately tap the essential spirit of Scientology.

Our documentary base of evidence is especially solid and thorough. Relying on Scientology's own documents seems both fair and reliable (cf. Foster, 1971). My goals in reading them has been to determine motivations and look for religious content. Most of these documents are, according to NRM scholars, genuine parts of the sacred scriptures, coming from the "prophetic founder" (Bromley & Bracey, 1998). Hubbard, and some of his followers, are our very cooperative informants.

TAKING THE RELIGION LABEL SERIOUSLY

Bryan Wilson, arguably one of the most brilliant minds in the study of new religious movements, establishes the notion of a minimal definition of religion, which will justify according the religion label to Scientology (Wilson, 1990). What he clearly argues is that in deciding on the correct classification for Scientology we need to look at its beliefs and nothing else. The motivation for the creation of this belief system, or any other context, are irrelevant. Let me repeat what Wilson (1990, p. 282-283) states: "even if it could be conclusively shown that Scientology took the title of 'church' specifically to secure protection at law as a religion, that would say nothing about the status of the belief-system".

Wilson's (1990) position on the centrality of belief is something I wholeheartedly share (see Beit-Hallahmi, 1989; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997), but his examination of Scientology beliefs chooses to ignore the history and context of those beliefs, and there can be no real interpretation without establishing a context. Some have argued that it is the attitude of current followers, rather than the original intentions of the founder, that determine the status of a group as a religion. This is what Wilson has argued, but it can be easily countered with the following example:

Let's assume that somebody managed to copy the genuine minting technology so effectively that he printed a \$100 bill that looks like the one produced by the United States Engraving Office. Our social constructionist colleagues would then say that a \$100 bill is genuine if its users believe it to be. Its history and the motivations of its makers would lead us to call what looks like an authentic bill a successful counterfeit. The issue before us is indeed the issue of intent and motivation. The motivation of the United States Engraving Office is not identical, or in any way similar, to that of the counterfeiter, even though the respective products may look the same to us. Our social constructionist colleagues would rightly remind us that the United States Engraving Office represents orthodoxy, monopoly, and hegemony, and is extremely sensitive to threats by competitors. The motivations which created the two products in question are distinct, and they start with an idea. Religions, of course, are not issued by the mint. A religious movement starts with an idea, taking the form of various claims on our trust and credence. How can religious motives be assessed?

CONTEXTUALIZING BELIEFS: THE ACTION CONTEXT

The belief system argument used by Wilson (1990), should be tested. Belief must be embedded and situated in an actual context. It is quite clear that traditional notions of the sacred (Otto, 1923/1950; Eliade, 1959), so central to the study of religion, are totally irrelevant to our discussion. The beliefs examined by Wilson (1990) may be "religious", but their role in the life of the organization remains unclear. Are they truly the defining feature of Scientology? We could find out who actually follows this belief system. Why would anybody express disembodied beliefs, without any corresponding behavior? We need to find actual believers who proclaim these beliefs and live them out in religious activities. Beyond the texts that propound the beliefs, do we have any other indications that anybody actually follows them? Beliefs and ideas have behavioral consequences only when they are embodied and acted upon. Has anybody ever had a conversion to Scientology? As I have noted earlier, even Scientology delusions (about "psychiatry") are secular.

What is needed for a real belief system to operate is not just the existence of a text presenting some beliefs, but a social and behavioral action context. In a genuine religion, we find beliefs in the context of ritual and the creation of a community of believers (Beit-Hallahmi, 1989). Wallace (1966) listed what he called "the minimal categories of religious behavior", which included prayer, music, physiological exercises, exhortation, reciting the code, simulation, mana, taboo, feasts, sacrifice, congregation, inspiration, and symbolism. This list is obviously irrelevant to any analysis of Scientology, because none of the behaviors covered in these categories has ever been observed within the organization. What we clearly don't have in Scientology is the religious activity context, which would include rituals, worship, and believers expressing their faith in many ways, such as individual artistic creations.

What percentage of the organization's activities reflect, specifically address, or express, its "religious" beliefs in any way? This should be compared to the percentage of activities where relevant religious beliefs are reflected, specifically addressed, or expressed in the case of Methodists, Mormons, Roman Catholics or Christian Scientists. Is there a hard core of believers in the Scientology leadership? The 1982 Mission Holders Conference minutes, reported above, show that the upper echelon of the organization is completely cynical about its operations. What about the clients? As Wilson himself pointed out (1970), what potential clients are interested in is self-improvement, and not religion, and later (Wilson, 1990, p. 273) stated that "the appeal is rather the promise of personal therapy", and so Scientology operates by promising self-improvement. That is why the first encounter with the organization is through the "Oxford Capacity Analysis", or through Dianetics, "The Modern Science of Mental

Health". Do any of the clients hold and express religious beliefs? We have seen no evidence of that.

CONTEXTUALIZING BELIEFS: THE DECEPTION CONTEXT

While we find it hard to discover the religious activity context of Scientology's stated beliefs, what we do discover rather easily is the deception context, which must have a bearing on the issue of motivation. The use of fake calling cards not just in the operation of fronts, but in the core of the organization itself, as it approaches the public, is significant. The way a person or an organization introduces itself is always telling. What does a totally deceptive introduction mean?

That act by itself tells us something important. Anybody using a fake calling card has something to hide. Why should recruitment rhetoric be based on fraud? And why should it be based on a secular fraud if the organization offering it is supposed to be a religion? The obvious goal of recruitment rhetoric is to get the customers into the store. Another important aim of Scientology recruitment rhetoric is screening for vulnerability and gullibility. Those taking seriously the claims about the "Oxford Capacity Analysis" or the "Purification Rundown" are obvious candidates for purchasing other (fake) products.

Is the criminal record of Scientology relevant to its classification? In defining religion, the moral dimension is often ignored, and rightly so (Wilson, 1990), because the main criterion (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997) is belief in the context of action, but criminality should have a bearing on judgments of beliefs. Evidence of a consistent pattern of fraud is relevant to judgment. A criminal record by itself should have no bearing on judging a belief system to be religious or secular, but it does have a bearing when self-serving claims create the context of such a system.

In addition to the findings around the actual motivation for seeking the religion label and re-organizing Scientology as a church in 1953-1954, the record contains much evidence regarding a consistent pattern of deception in the form of official lying, the use of fronts and fake calling cards, and various illegal acts. Hubbard's compulsive documentation, which was part of his bureaucracy-building effort (Wallis, 1977, 1979), necessitated issuing written directives. What we are facing is a *modus operandi*, an operational style encountered repeatedly. As we have observed above, almost every single activity and every single Scientology operation involves a deliberate fraud. We find a consistent pattern of deception, so that it's hard to find any assertion, claim or document presented by Scientology which is not a false claim. Other groups may be just as deceptive, but we do not have the same documentation

for them. It is this body of evidence that is largely ignored by Bromley & Bracey (1998) and by Wilson (1990).

A genuine religion may be involved in serious crimes, as the case of Aum Shinrikyo so well illustrates. Deception by itself is not always criminal or illegal; it is always immoral. In the cases where deception is not strictly illegal, it still reflects a clear intent and a choice to cheat, hide, and misrepresent what the perpetrators themselves believe to be the truth. Its history of criminality and deception should affect our judgment of Scientology rhetoric. The context of deception is the most relevant to our discussion. Scientology has operated under a cloud of suspicion since its very beginnings, and this cloud of suspicion is likely to remain hanging over it because of its use of deception in every aspect of its activities.

CONTROL CASES AND THE ISSUE OF MOTIVATION

As we have seen, Scientology boasts a two-stage history, with a transition from secular psychotherapy to religion. We need a comparative framework, and the comparative method has been applied by Wallis (1977, 1979) and Wilson (1990) when they mentioned Christian Science as a similar case. Wallis (1979) and Wilson (1970) suggested a similarity between the early history of Scientology and the early history of Christian Science. This comparison is interesting and intriguing, but ignores the historical context, the characters of the founders, the recruitment rhetoric, and the nature of the membership (England, 1954). Anybody taking this comparison seriously for more than two minutes should visit the nearest Christian Science Reading Room.

What is further needed are true control groups, including more cases with differing outcomes. How can we find control cases in this kind of study? What we can find are natural groups, developing under similar conditions, and reaching different outcomes. This is not a laboratory experimental study, but an experiment of nature. What could we learn from control cases?

When does a psychotherapy movement become a religion? Has this ever happened before, or since? The first thing to realize is that every year, thousands of individuals invent self-improvement schemes and make extravagant claims about them. In modern society one encounters a great variety of private salvation and self-improvement methods ranging from psychoanalytic institutes to "voice therapy", numerous "healing" methods, various meditation techniques, Tai Chi, "Color Therapy", etc. Most of the individuals who market these schemes, like the rest of us, do not like either public scrutiny or taxation. But very few among the inventors of psychotherapy systems acted like Hubbard in his chameleon-like ability to change labels and disguises, all designed to evade scrutiny and taxes. Most private salvation

groups operate as businesses. They may try to avoid taxes in practice, but not as a matter of stated principle. No psychotherapy movement that we know of has ever been transformed into an NRM.

Well, one could say, Scientology isn't just any psychotherapy system. At some point it became not any kind of psychotherapy, but a 'psychotherapy with a soul', and then it became a religion. Well, when and how often does a 'psychotherapy with a soul' become a religion? The best control case for Scientology would be a psychotherapy technique which includes a component of belief in an eternal soul which migrates from one body to another over time. Fortunately, we do have such a perfect control case.

Scientology's main "spiritual discovery", according to Bromley & Bracey (1998), is the existence of "immaterial, immortal, spiritual entities...called thetans" (p. 144). Because every human being is also the incarnation of a thetan, every human being is a "being of infinite creative potential" (p. 144). We do know about hundreds of psychotherapy systems which assume the existence of "immaterial, immortal spiritual entities", just like Scientology. This is exactly what is being claimed by thousands of psychotherapists, except they all still pay their taxes (or at least don't claim an exemption).

In Scientology, the alleged discovery of the soul occurred only after the psychotherapy method had been in place for a while. In the control cases we have before us now, the idea of the soul has either been part of the system since its inception, or is a matter of some dramatic discovery (Weiss, 1988). There have been thousands of individuals over the past fifty years (and before) offering the world psychotherapy systems based on the notion of past lives. Actually, these have become more visible and more popular over the past 30 years. But none of them ever claimed that he was starting a new religion (cf. Wilson, 1990).

Wilson does not seem to know about the burgeoning industry, all over the First World, of individuals offering some variety of psychotherapy based on the notion that traumas accumulated in past lives are the cause of present difficulties. This is known as past lives therapy, past life regression, regression therapy, soul memory retrieval, hypnotic regression, holotropic therapy, or reincarnation therapy (Weiss, 1988; Woolger, 1987). Quite logically, some practitioners now offer future life progressions, or progression therapy, for cases where problems are caused by traumas in future lives. The claims made about the success of these methods are similar to those we hear about in connection with Scientology or with some other psychotherapy techniques. Success stories illustrate cures of many difficult and persistent complaints. Claims have been made about the cure of phobias, post-traumatic stress disorders,

depression, eating disorders, multiple personality disorders (MPD), arthritis, diabetes, addictions, and cancer. One of the more obscene aspects of this industry is the use of individuals' fantasies about the Holocaust as an essential part of "past lives".

The practitioners claim various identities and labels, such as psychotherapist, hypnotherapist, "healer", "psychospiritual counselor", "teacher of ancient wisdom", "transpersonal counselor", "transpersonal clinical hypnotherapist", "transpersonal psychotherapist", or medium. All these labels, and some others, are being used, but no one claiming any of them has decided to become the founder of a religion.

The connection to common religious ideas of the soul is quite obvious, and often troubling to followers of major religions (see <http://www.pcts.org/soulcomb.html>). Weiss (1988) claims to have received, through his work on past lives, messages from "the Masters" entities that told him about the nature of "the universe and the soul". Woolger (1987, p. 253) speaks of "unfinished karmic business". Morris Netherton, a former probation officer with Los Angeles County, is one of the global leaders of past-life therapy (Netherton, 1978), and runs The Association for the Alignment of Past Life Experience (AAPLE). "The Association encourages the integration of one's personal religious beliefs with [its] techniques and procedures ... It is the Association's belief that an expression of the religious self is both a right and a privilege inherent in the exercising of our freedom of expression and in our efforts to gain greater knowledge of ourselves"(<http://www.aapple.com/aapple/>). Netherton could have decided at some point that what he was running a religion, but he hasn't done that.

If motivation does not count, then maybe some of these entrepreneurs have unwittingly created NRMs, and maybe we should let them know, and include them in our NRM research. They should at least have the status of quasi-religions. As we recall, quasi religions may be defined as "collectives in which organizational and ideological tension and ambiguity regarding the group's worldview, perspective, and regimen are profitably used to facilitate affiliation as well as commitment" (Bromley & Bracey, 1998, p. 141). Why is it that so many individuals who can easily take advantage of the quasi-religion option do not utilize it? They could have easily fit into that niche, but they clearly are not interested in doing that. So we have to conclude that in this case it is the motivation, and not the content of beliefs, that counts and makes the difference between religion, quasi-religion, and non-religion.

SCINETOLOGY AND THE NRM SCHOLARS

There is a clear skew, superficiality, or selectivity, in the way Scientology has been looked at by NRM scholars (e.g. Bromley & Bracey, 1998; Wilson, 1990). Assertions by NRM scholars may be questioned because they have consistently ignored some highly significant behaviors. If these scholars indeed do not know about these activities then the state of NRM research is pretty bad; if they do, and choose not to report, it's even worse. Have they decided that such activities are irrelevant? Then we should know about the criteria for judgment in this case

Reading the scholarly literature one would rarely realize that Scientology is run by franchise, that it uses hundreds of secular fronts, that it offers a "free personality test" to recruit clients, that it markets such a secular scam as the Purification Rundown, that it uses hundreds of trademarks and claims trade secrets, or that it has an extraordinary criminal record. The fronts business is a major activity and a major source of income for Scientology, but is totally ignored by most NRM scholars (e.g. Wilson, 1970, 1990) or presented as humanitarian activity. This is how Scientology's fraudulent fronts are described by one scholarly source: "Another set of organizations has as its primary objective delivering Hubbard's technology, so that conventional social institutions may benefit from Scientology's knowledge" (Bromley and Bracey, 1998, p. 148). These authors also call the fronts "non-profit". One wonders whether a Scientology press release would have been worded differently.

The organization we read about in the scholarly literature is not the Scientology we know, or could get to know by simply stepping into one of its many sales outlets around the world. Wilson (1990), for example, reports in great detail on what he regards as its religious beliefs and mentions the doubts about Hubbard's 1953 conversion from secular psychotherapy to religion, but ignores most other aspects of the organization's activities.

Documents uncovered during litigation involving Scientology have impressed judges and the media. They have had no effect on scholars. What has shocked judges is of no interest to scholars, as shown by one reaction of a scholar to a judge. Wilson (1990, p. 247) criticizes "Mr. Justice Latey who, gratuitously, gave an open court judgment, following a private hearing, in which he declared Scientology to be 'corrupt, sinister and dangerous'. Wilson cites as his source The Times of 24 July 1984. Quite clearly, Wilson has not read the full text of Latey's decision, and relies on media reports.

I would urge you to read the actual text (<http://www.holysmoke.org/cos/latey.htm>) and then you will realize that Justice Latey was first, a) careful in preserving the privacy of

the parties involved, b) extremely kind and positive in his comments about the individual members of the family, Scientologists included, and c) critical in his comments about the

Scientology organization, which he encountered on that occasion for the first time ever. To back up his criticism, Justice Latey appended several authentic Scientology documents to his decision, which are cited in above. We can only assume that Wilson, and other NRM scholars, have chosen not to read the decision or the documents. While Wilson seems to get his information from The Times, and does not realize what so horrified Justice Latey, we can read the 1982 Mission Holders Conference and the TR-L document. We all know these documents by now, and if we don't, then we just haven't done our basic homework.

Our first conclusion must be that research reports which ignore such significant aspects of a phenomenon under review should not be taken too seriously, but there may be even more serious conclusions. What we see here is a strange case of professional negligence, or professional malpractice. In professional medical malpractice, misdiagnosis logically leads to the wrong treatment. We are still looking at the diagnosis, or rather the misdiagnosis stage. Let us take, for example the 1982 Mission Holders Conference. This document was made public in 1984, not very recently. It provides us with an unusual opportunity to observe the Scientology organization, but no one in the NRM research business seems to have read it. Another relevant document oddly ignored is TR-L, reviewed above. We must assume that any scholar who has ever done any research on Scientology must have noticed the Oxford Capacity Analysis (OCA). The implications in the case of the OCA, which are straightforward, have been ignored. And NRM scholars

such as Bromley and Bracey (1998) seem to be totally unaware of the extensive and exceptional criminal record of this organization. NRM scholars need to be told that the use of fronts is not universal or even common among religions. In reality, it is extremely unusual. We should also recall that most NRMs or even most old religions have no criminal record.

In addition to the scholarly writings reviewed above, we know that some NRM scholars jumped with both feet into the world of action, with total mobilization in the service of the Scientology organization. They have served as character witnesses and providing covers and alibis. Their actions have been public and political.

There are situations when a public figures and organizations urgently needs an alibi. If you are Jorg Haider, of the Austrian Freedom Party, and you are being accused of neo-

Nazi or proto-fascist leanings or sympathies, one way of getting yourself an alibi is to get a Jew to work for you. Jorg Haider found his Jew. He was Peter Sichrovsky, a well-known, bright, and articulate Austrian journalist of Jewish descent, who was serving for a while as secretary-general and representative in the European Parliament for the Austrian Freedom Party. How is this related to Scientology?

On April 19, 1999 a conference was held at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, under the heading of "The Role of Religious Pluralism in Contemporary Society". The conference was sponsored by The "International Commission on Freedom of Conscience" and hosted by H. Newton Malony. It was organized by Scientology, if you haven't guessed already, and one of the speakers at this affair was none other than the same Peter Sichrovsky, who is very concerned, like all of us, about "religious pluralism in contemporary society".

This conference was one small event, part of the far-ranging operation designed to create an aura of normality and respectability around Scientology. The aim is to build a wall of legitimacy which will serve to exonerate and exculpate Scientology when the need arises. Of course, any scholarly research on Scientology within the framework of the study of religion gives it a powerful alibi, but very few NRM scholars have actually done that.

If we look a little closer at the way Scientology has been treated by scholars we encounter two kinds of texts. In addition to scholarly books and articles, we find a second kind, made up of a variety of statements solicited by Scientology for various public uses, including legal proceedings.

These testimonials are rarely cited in the academic literature, and probably do not appear on a CV list of publications. These two kinds of texts contain two different viewpoints. While the first group of texts, published as academic works, emphasizes the organization's uniqueness, and any comparisons made refer to NRMs, the second group emphasizes its similarity to a variety of historically well-known religions, some quite ancient.

The testimonial literature supporting Scientology's claim to the religion label is unique and unprecedented. The texts are written in the form of legal depositions, stating first the author's qualifications as an academic and sometimes as a member of the mainstream Protestant clergy. Some of them cite classical sources in the fields of sociology and history, but most of those giving these statements have not published scholarly research on Scientology. When scholars address their colleagues, they express the level of doubt and reflect the level of complexity or ambiguity we expect from scholarship. Freed from the shackles of scholarship (or so they imagine) NRM

experts are ready to throw all caution to the winds. In contrast to the formal academic works, which sometimes raise doubts about Scientology's authenticity as a religion and its credibility as an organization, the testimonials often sound like official press releases. They are seamless, glossy, products, and one has to search hard for nuances or discrepancies. The seal of approval is given in a clear, certain voice, with no doubts, hesitation, or ambiguity.

In this collection of statements, the question of the religion label is addressed directly. The discussion is in terms of the substantive definition of religion, and the answer is in the affirmative on substantive grounds, i.e. the content of beliefs and practices. Scientology maintains an Internet site (www.religion2000.de/ENG/index.html) where some testimonials can be found. The site includes statements by such leading academics as James A. Beckford (1981), Alan W. Black (1996), Gary D. Bouma (1979), Irving Hexham (1978), J. Gordon Melton (1981), and Geoffrey Parrinder (1977). Parrinder and Melton are presented as ordained Methodist ministers.

Melton (1981) says that Scientology is "...a religion in the fullest sense of the word. It has a well thought-out doctrine, including a belief in a Supreme Being ...a system of worship and liturgy, an extensive pastoral counseling program...Its beliefs, worship and relationship to God as a Supreme Being is further evidenced in the Church's program of pastoral care, group worship, its community life and program of spiritual growth...regularly holds Sunday worship services" (see <http://www.neuereligion.de/ENG/melton/page01.htm>). The famous 1983 decision which granted Scientology tax exemption in Australia stated: "The essence of Scientology is a belief in reincarnation and concern with the passage of 'thetan' or the spirit or soul of man through eight 'dynamics' and the ultimate release of the 'thetan' from the bondage of the body"(High Court of Australia, 1983, p. 58). Not a word about "God as a Supreme Being". Melton's statement clearly runs counter to most reports in the scholarly literature (e.g. Bromley & Bracey, 1998; Wilson, 1970, 1990), but there are other things to wonder about in this web site. Alan W. Black compares Scientology to the Unitarian Church, Melton compares it to the Methodist Church, and Parrinder is reminded of ancient Egyptian religion, Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and even Freemasonry.

As indicated above, scholars offering their imprimatur to Scientology emphasize its commonality with well-known historical religions. The commonality discourse becomes the first line of defense, as the experts tell us with a straight face that what looks like a deviation from the norms of established religions and common decency is actually the norm, and Methodists (Jews, Roman Catholics) are just as bad, only hiding their sins more effectively. Bromely (1994, see www.scientology.org/copyright/bromley.htm) finds a great deal of commonality

between Scientology and many religions, old and new, such as Catholicism, Christian Science, Mormonism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Rosicrucianism, and Theosophy. When it comes to financial procedures, Bromley finds a commonality with Buddhist temples, Jewish synagogues, Protestant denominations, and Catholic priests (see www.scientology.org/copyright/bromley.htm). He would have us believe that Scientology is just like Buddhism, Judaism and Catholicism in asking for fees. "In some parts of the Jewish tradition an annual fee is paid for synagogue membership". The tiny difference, which Bromley apparently has not noticed, is that in Scientology there can be no participation in any activities without a fee, unlike Judaism or Catholicism. In many real religions there are services that entail a fee, but some contacts and services are free. Does Scientology provide any services without a fee? While the practice of fee-for-service in the case of rites of passage is common in many religions, in Scientology nothing is free, and gaining membership is defined by financial contracts and payments only.

Bryan Wilson (1994, <http://www.scientology.org/copyright/wilson.htm>) compared Scientology to Christianity, "Gnosticism" (which probably never existed), Christian Science, LDS, Pentecostal groups, Judaism, and Buddhism (cf. Wilson, 1990). In his testimonial, Wilson goes on to suggest that Scientology's esoteric texts could be compared to the Jewish Kabbala tradition. Such claims are absurd, and indicate total ignorance (or wilfull deception) because Kabbala texts have never been claimed as "trade secrets", and were never offered by franchise.

When Jeffrey Hadden (1994) was asked to defend Scientology, he waxed mystical and produced some esoteric knowledge of his own. In his affidavit he stated that "Moses learned the secret name of God on Mount Sinai and that knowledge has been shouldered orally [sic] through the ages by a few Jewish mystics who are able faithfully to discern the Kabbalah. Christ preached to the masses, but it was to a select group of disciples that he disclosed secrets of the kingdom" (see www.scientology.org/copyright/hadden.htm).

We see that Wilson, Bromley and Hadden make the jump from esoteric knowledge to trade secrets. While esoteric knowledge is found in many religions, the "trade secrets" has never been made about them.

As mentioned above, Bromley (see www.theta.com/copyright/bromley.htm), Wilson (1994, www.theta.com/copyright/wilson.htm), and Hadden (see www.scientology.org/copyright/hadden.htm), are among the NRM scholars who have defended Scientology's interests by offering legal depositions. We now know that other scholars have either testified in court or submitted documents in support of the organization's claims to legitimacy.

I had an opportunity to appreciate how intimate the contacts between the OSA and NRM scholars were at the SSSR meeting in Montreal in 1998. The OSA sometimes sends its operatives to scholarly conferences, and I recognized two men as OSA operatives, because they were in the conference exhibit area handing out glossy Scientology literature. Later on they attended sessions and took part in discussions, identifying themselves clearly. At some point, passing through the exhibit area, I could see these two men exchanging warm hugs with a well-published NRM scholar. This was done in public, not behind closed doors, and reflected solidarity and camaraderie. What is remarkable is that the scholar involved has never publicly collaborated with Scientology in any way, such as giving expert testimony or supporting a front. Neither has this scholar published any research on the organization.

NRM scholars have supported Scientology fronts at least since the 1980s. The American Conference on Religious Movements, a Scientology front, is mentioned in the December 1989 memo by Jeffrey K. Hadden reporting on collaboration with NRMs (Hadden, 1989). Some of the names on the New CAN list of accomplices can be found in a publication issued by the Friends of Freedom, a Scientology front started by George Robertson around 1990. These Friends of Freedom were Gordon Melton, Eileen Barker, David Bromley, Jeffrey Haddon (sic), James Richardson, and Anson Shupe. Friends of Freedom soon disappeared from the scene, and later George Robertson had a role in the founding of AWARE in 1992 (Beit-Hallahmi, 2001). Scientology was actively involved in the preparation of *From The Ashes* (Lewis, 1994), published by AWARE.

The New CAN affair, reported above, where the identity of an "anti-cult" organization was taken over by Scientology, then offering information about "dangerous cults", brings out in all of us a reaction of revulsion, shock, and horror. This is the common reaction, but it is uncommon among NRM scholars. As it turns out, the New CAN advertises itself as having in its service a list of "professional referral sources". And these "professional referrals" include NRM scholars Dick Anthony, William Bainbridge, Eileen Barker, David Bromley, Jeffrey Hadden, Newton Malony, James Richardson, John Saliba, and Stewart Wright (check the cultawarenessnetwork.org site). Newton Malony is more than just a "professional referral source". He acts as a spokesman for Scientology when he quite naturally "sees the new CAN as doing positive work" (see www.newtimesla.com/issues/1999-0909/feature_p.html). The New CAN affair is a play in the theater of cruelty and sadism, and it takes a large measure of cruelty to take part in it.

THE SCHOLARLY POSITION ON DECEPTION

Wallis (1984, p. 129) referred to something called 'heavenly deceit', allegedly used by Scientology "to secure funds or recruits, or to defend the movement" (p. 129). The description (or justification) offered by Wallis is broad enough to cover all of Scientology's activities. "To secure funds or recruits, or to defend the movement" covers everything that has ever been done in the name of Scientology.

What is Heavenly Deceit? What is it supposed to mean or explain? What is 'heavenly' about it? The operational definition of 'heavenly deceit' seems to be that in order to promote a religious message, specific acts of deceit must be carried out. The end sanctifies the means, and the end in this case is the survival of a religious message. This is the 'heavenly' part. What about the 'deceit' part ?

The 'heavenly deceit' notion means that we should not use the normal criterion of truthfulness for certain observations and statements. Let us leave aside for the moment the question of common decency, and just focus on logic. Does anybody know when a Scientology statement or action is or isn't 'heavenly deceit'? In this specific case, can we ask when does Scientology engage or not engage in 'heavenly deceit', and how can you tell? Any 'heavenly deceit' is still deceit, and no amount of heavenliness will change that. Is there something that distinguishes 'heavenly deceit' from simple criminality? Apparently, it takes an extremely sophisticated scholar to tell where 'heavenly deceit' ends and 'earthly deceit' begins. Does Scientology engage in heavenly deceit when it presents us with the so-called Oxford Capacity Analysis, Dianetics, "auditing", or the New CAN? When do Scientologists do anything which is not 'heavenly deceit'?

Should we take Scientology seriously when it offers information on "dangerous cults"? When and why should we take seriously anything coming from Scientology? When are they telling the truth? How do they decide when to tell the truth? Do we know when they are not lying? When they are not presenting a false front? Are we ever going to catch them telling the truth? The unsophisticated targets of deceit don't care if it is heavenly or earthly. It's just their money, and their lives, at stake.

Scholars want to play a role in the authentication process, which can be compared to the authentication of works of art, but they seem unwilling to challenge any group's claim for the religion label, thus creating in practice a universal scholarly imprimatur. Here NRM scholars seem to follow the self-definition or self-determination principle, a truly commendable modernist and post-modernist ideal. In the fuzzy and unregulated domain of private salvation, including religion and psychotherapy, only the identities chosen by individuals should count. This implies that we

should listen to Scientology's representatives and earnestly accept what they say about themselves, suspending our tendency to doubt and analyze.

In this case, if we have to take the religion claim at face value, then we should also take at face value claims about being Freudian and about doing polio research. We know that Hubbard once claimed expertise in nuclear physics, so is he part of the history of that field too? When Hubbard was operating a Freudian Foundation, was Scientology (it was then already Scientology) part of psychoanalysis? When Hubbard called Dianetics "The Modern Science of Mental Health" (as the organization still does, fifty years later), was Dianetics part of any known science? Or of "mental health"?

We can trust what Scientology says about its religious nature as much as we can trust what it says about the "Oxford Capacity Analysis" or "Clear" or the "Purification Rundown", or the New CAN. When Scientology operatives are talking about tenets of faith (Wilson, 1990) or applied religious philosophy, or religious technology, are they speaking truthfully or "outflowing false data effectively"? Wilson (1990), of course, is happily unaware of the Oxford Capacity Analysis or the Purification Rundown, or the New CAN.

The "secular version" operation, where The Way To Happiness is offered as a secular belief system, is another Scientology original. We have looked far and wide in the history of religions, from the Antoinistes (Dericquebourg, 1993) to the Zoroastrians, and

Still not find one single case in which a religion was publicly propagating a secular version of its ethical system. If you know of any religion that offers "secular versions" of its moral creed, please let me know. Do we know any religion that tries to promote "a non-religious moral code, based entirely on common sense"? How about a secular, improved version of the Ten Commandments?

SCIENTOLOGY CLASSIFIED: REACHING A DECISION

As Greil (1996, p. 49) suggested, being considered a religious movement is "a cultural resource over which competing interest groups may vie..." giving "privileges associated in a given society with the religious label". Moreover, "the right to the religious label is a valuable commodity" (Greil, 1996, p. 52). Barker once suggested that the public religion/not religion debate, outside the ivory tower, is part of normal social discourse, and we should study it, not interfere with it: "It is not the task of social science to draw the boundaries that society will use" (Barker, 1994, p. 108). For Passas (1994), the concern about civil liberties is cause enough to give automatic immunity to any group claiming the religion label. That would be morally and intellectually irresponsible. We are not the government or the police. We do not enforce the law, but what do we tell ourselves and our colleagues?

Going back to the September 2001 deception case, we discover that questions we can raise about it are the same we have discussed all through this article. Why would a religious organization offering "to relieve spiritual suffering" use a "mental health" front?

The Scientology masquerading strategy uses two main covers. The "Mental Health" cover is more common; the religion covers much less so. Some scholars treat the masquerading strategy as merely a matter of marketing, a facade, behind which hides the true essence of the organization, which is somehow religious. I see no logical (or other) reason to privilege that interpretation. We can just as safely assume that behind the marketing facade there is just more marketing. Scientology lies about everything. Why should we assume that it is possessed by truthfulness attack when it comes to the profitable label of religion?

Using the "mental health" cover raises another question. Scientology CEO David Miscavige stated on television in 1992 that "there are a group of people on this planet who find us to be a threat to their existence, and they will do everything in their power to stop us. And that is the mental health field" (Passas, 1994, p. 227). If "mental health" is the enemy, why utilize its trademark? Moreover, this historical pattern of masquerading runs counter to another major effort on the part of the organization. At least since the 1960s, Scientology has invested money and energy in a huge campaign designed to win official recognition in its claims to be a religion. The most important victory in this campaign was won in 1993, when, quite mysteriously, the United States Internal Revenue

Service Commissioner, Herb Goldberg, Jr. suddenly changed his mind and granted it tax exemption. We would expect the organization from that point on to celebrate this

victory by dropping its secular masks and presenting itself everywhere as engaging in religious activities. This has not happened.

What we have discovered is that the September 2001 incident was not isolated but rather embedded in a consistent and unmistakable historical pattern. It demonstrated again that the Scientology organization is motivated and driven solely by sales and marketing considerations. What has been experienced by all of us as a global nightmare was viewed by Scientology only as a great marketing opportunity. The pathetic lies offered by Scientology once it has been exposed were true to character.

Passas (1994) rightly advises caution when it comes to judging claims to the religion label: "...the resort to profitable endeavors and even illegal methods of financing do not ipso facto justify the rejection of religious status...By no means do I purport to defend sophisticated offenders who set up a self-proclaimed "religion" simply to flout the law. Whenever good faith can be shown to be absent, religious and other types of fraud ought to be persecuted. Bad faith must be shown, however, and not assumed" (p. 218).

What we have observed is a fifty-year history of bad faith, in which a huge amount of energy and imagination has been invested in hundreds of operations aimed at deception. This is a consistent and unmistakable historical pattern. In addition to hundreds of fronts, we have observed numerous ways of masquerading. There can be no doubt that all this has been a matter of policy and strategy. When addressing the outside world, the Scientology organization has been making various claims, presenting itself most often as engaged in the promotion of "mental health", sometimes offering prosperity and self-improvement, and only rarely claiming the religion label.

The September 2001 incident is not only a truly representative and reliable sample of Scientology behavior. It is the emblematic story of Scientology, just like the New CAN affair and the polio affair of the 1950s. It is the same sadistic and cynical attempt to exploit vulnerability and gullibility, to get "the bereaved and injured"(Wallis, 1977, p. 158). We can only quote what Hannah Arendt had to say about the leaders of some totalitarian regimes: "Their moral cynicism, their belief that everything is permitted, rests on the solid conviction that everything is possible" (Arendt, 1963, p. 387).

Scientology's own documents show an organization which is blatantly commercial, blatantly secular and blatantly predatory, as well as blatantly fraudulent. As Hubbard himself said in 1962, the religion label "is entirely a matter for accountants and solicitors" (Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter, HCOPL, 29 October

1962). Scientology will use the religion label when it is convenient, and a secular label when it suits better. It will use the cross (as it has done in publications and displays on buildings) just like it has used Sigmund Freud's name.

The preponderance of the evidence indicates that the religion claim is merely a tax-evasion ruse and a fig leaf for a hugely profitable enterprise, where the logic of profitability and profit-making dictates all actions. Scientology is in reality a holding company, a business empire earning profits from a variety of subsidiaries. It is guided by considerations of economic consequences and benefits, a strict business strategy.

The assertion that Scientology is a misunderstood religion seems less tenable than the competing assertion, that it is a front for a variety of profit-making schemes, most of

which are totally fraudulent. The question is only whether Scientology is "an ordinary profit-making enterprise", as Passas & Castillo (1992) suggest or whether "Scientology's purpose is making money by means legitimate and illegitimate" (US District Court, Southern District of New York, 92 Civ. 3024 (PKL) see www.planetkc.com/sloth/sci/decis.time.html). The most charitable interpretation would be that it is a profit making organization; a less charitable one that it is a criminal organization. The evidence for an explicit policy of deception makes it harder and harder to show any degree of charity.

The story of Hubbard and his brainchild deserves treatment by those who have written on famous impostors and great con men (Maurer, 1940/1999). Similar cases include the phenomenon of "psychic surgeons" in the Philippines, who prey on terminal cancer patients from the West, or the Dominion of Melchizedek (a cyberspace scam, self-described as a "recognized ecclesiastical and constitutional sovereignty, inspired by the Melchizedek Bible"). In the context of United States cultural history, Hubbard seems like a combination of the best-known qualities of Roy Cohn (Von Hoffman, 1988) and Lyndon LaRouche (King, 1990). The similarity between Scientology and the LaRouche organization in terms of ideology and activities seems far from trivial, but has never been noted.

Some of the scholars claiming that Scientology is some kind of a religion have put their statements to an empirical test. Both Bainbridge & Stark (1981) and Passas & Castillo (1992) did suggest that Scientology would become more religious in the future, just because its claims of efficacy were absurd and unprovable. More than two decades later (for Bainbridge & Stark, 1981) and more than a decade later (for Passas & Castillo, 1992) these predictions have turned out to be totally wrong. Scientology has not become more religious in any discernible way since 1981 or 1992. It is as much a religion today as it has ever been, and as it will ever be.

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