

As a religion is a way of seeing and living in cosmos/world/nature/society/history, without remainder [i.e., leaving nothing seeable unseen, nothing of human need unaddressed], a religion must, and can, distinguish itself from being religion *itself* only as it's up against another or other religions. In such Kulturkampf, a religion may (1) try to assimilate the other religion(s), as Yahwism assimilated Baalism and the Olympians assimilated the Erinyes, with or without force; (2) claim that the realities in cultic competition with it are not really religions, but something else (i.e., occult rites, or philosophies, or ideologies); (3) gnosticize itself (i.e., interpret its heart as the key for understanding the other religion[s]); (4) claim to be, because rooted in the primordial, *prima inter pares*, i.e. one of many religion, but the root one); (5) assimilate itself into the other religion[s], e.g. by culture-translation; or (6) translate itself strategically into a "science" for which public domain and common discourse is claimed. One further possibility remains: (7) evolving out of itself a new religion more appropriate to the new situation: a new, separate *identity*.

This thinksheet concerns itself with the question *Are there objective criteria for determining when the umbilical cord has been cut and so a new religion born?* In connection with the Maharishi's federal trial, some others and I persuaded the court that TM is cryptoHinduism and therefore, as a specific praxis of a specific religion, should (1) not have access to public monies, nor (2) be permitted to be taught in public schools (and, as we won, the Maharishi has left the USA and is reported last seen trying to take over the public school system of Switzerland). In the opening paragraph of this thinksheet, TM is in Class #6.

As a case study in the question, let's take the Unification Church [called "Moonism," a term as offensive to the Moonies as "Mohammedanism" is to the Mohammedans, but with less reason]. My #480, written after being with Moon at the Waldorf 17Sept74, calls it a "contemporary syncretistic sect of Christianity," similar in some regards to Mormonism, not least in its the-family-takes-care-of-itself tribalism. Moonism touches Classes 1, 3, 4, 6, and [I argue below] 7. Thinksheet #480 calls it a brew of degenerate Calvinism, the basic Sinic mentality, and post-WWII messianic USA foreign policy. ..."God's aseity denied," for God's within the Sinic circularity of "the divine principle" of love-complementarity, the ethical principle of unselfishness (each "for" the next and thus for all) exalted to the religious-cosmothetic process-and-structure of reality: as I heard him say on that occasion, salvation will be "by knowing God and his principle" [NB: not, as in Jesus, by the "coming" of God's "kingdom"]....Since then, I've become convinced that Moonism should be viewed by Christians--as Jews came to view Christians 19cs. ago--no longer as sect of the old religion but as a new religion. As a Christian theologian, I offer this as the burden of this thinksheet, viz. to inform my fellow Christians that in Moonism we face a new religion, not (a) a new denomination of Christianity or (b) a new catholicism uniting all Christian denominations. I adduce the following to explain my shift:

1. I read 1,000pp. of "Pentagon papers" xeroxed sub rosa at the Unification Seminary--papers purporting to be used there in instruction. In this material, I counted 37 instances of the claim that DIVINE PRINCIPLE will ultimately replace the Bible as central sacred literature. The point of my #701 is that when this shift occurs (e.g., when OT is read through NT, or Bible through Qoran or Book of Mormon), we have a new religion....
2. The Korean/American chauvinism in Moonism, worse than in Mormonism (for related to a foreign country, as in the recent Korea/Washington smells), has become more blatant since Moon in my presence said "Am. shall become champion in the Kingdom of God," with Korea at its center and Korean as the world language and Moon as "Universal Father" [47NYT19Sept74], a self-ordained oustee from the Presb.Ch. of Korea [ibid.]!....3. Participation in a forum at U.N.Ch. Center....4. Shepherding an NYU PhD thesis (Wm. O' Byrne, 516.941.3670) on Sun Moon's use of the Bible: in DIVINE PRINCIPLE, of the 960 reff. to the Bible, the interpretation corresponds to traditional evangelical hermeneutics only 5.6%--worse than the Qoran!