ESTABLISHMENT VIOLENCE
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WORLD

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Abstract

Violence is about coercing others in a way that social norms do not endorse. Socially unauthorized coercion employed with a view to maintaining, defending, or restoring the status quo is a form of behavior called establishment violence or vigilantism. Such persons prefer things as they are. Not only do they prefer the status quo, but they are quite prepared to vent their vehement antipathies on those espousing significant change, whether it be creative change or restorative change. The gospel story clearly reveals that Jesus' death was the outcome of establishment violence. The purpose of this essay is to draw up a scenario of establishment violence that might be adequate for reading the New Testament, or even books about the New Testament.[1]

Introduction

Reading is a process in which an author of some writing attempts to alter or reinforce the perceptions of the world brought to the reading by some reader/listener. The process is interactive. Considerate authors always take their readers and listeners into account. With documents from another time and culture such as the New Testament

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1. For example, Horsley (1987), who has written an interesting volume on Jesus and the spiral of violence, along with other essays on the topic. His attempt to describe and/or define the concept of violence remains unclear and unfocused in its results. One is hard pressed to know what he is talking about since he allows the term 'violence' to serve as a rubber bag word that applied to any form of attempt to have effect on another at all. To move a child from harm's way would be violence as well as to throw that child in front of a car. With such gummy notions as 'spiritual violence' and such imprecise categories as 'psychological violence,' one can hardly feel any more enlightened than when one started the book. As a rule, physical force, or simply force, seems to be what the author means by violence most of the time. And the question then, is whether the spiral of violence he intends to analyze is really nothing more than a spiral of physical force. Who has to hit whom to get hit back, as in little children starting a fight? The Romans -- like Mediterraneans in general, including Israel -- were fight prone, hence willing to engage in physical conflict at the slightest provocation. For majority peoples, this is simply big-bullyism writ large. And this is what Rome was about in the *oikoumene*, and what Jerusalemites were about in their own sphere of influence. And as Israel's normative story and sacred writings indicate, this is how the God of Israel intends his people to be as well. He directs his chosen people 'to purge the evil from the midst of you' (Deut 13:5; 17:7; 19:19; 22:21, 24; 24:7), even by making a 'holocaust' of those of their cities serving other gods (Deut 13:12-17). People divinely put on the prowl for subversives and deviants will cultivate establishment violence.

documents, the obligation of the reader or listener is to be a considerate reader or listener since the author(s) can no longer be held accountable. If there is any primary 'and fundamental ethical obligation involved in biblical studies, it is the ethical obligation incumbent on the reader to be considerate of the original authors' attempts to make sense (see Malina 1991). This primary ethical requirement to discover what the original author said and intended to say, a requirement often dismissed by literary critics of the Bible, is the specific object of this essay.

To this end, any considerate, ethical reader will outfit herself or himself with appropriate scenarios with which to imagine and understand the events alluded to by New Testament writers. Here I intend to draw up such scenarios that might serve to help a reader to understand and interpret those New Testament incidents often labeled as violence. I begin with a brief overview of those incidents. I then draw up a model of violence from three different social science orientations. With the lenses provided by these orientations, the reader of New Testament descriptions of and allusions to violence should find it easier to understand what was believed to have occurred. In this way the reader should be empowered to develop appreciation and sensitivity for our Christian ancestors in faith who dwelt in the first century Mediterranean.

1. Establishment Violence in the New Testament

The story of Jesus is full of instances of persons, visible and invisible, doing or planning violence toward others in the name of the status quo. These persons ostensibly intend to maintain established values. First, consider the instances of coercion and violence in the Synoptic narratives. In Mark, after his baptism Jesus is *forced* into the wilderness by the spirit (Mark 1:12//Matt 4:11// Luke 4:1). And soon after, Jesus *drives out* an unseen, unclean spirit from a possessed man in the synagogue of Capernaum (Mark 1:25-26//Luke 4:35). The incident implies that unclean and unseen spirits can do violence to humans, and that some humans know how to control them. Then after the healing of the man with the withered hand, 'The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how *to destroy* him' (3:6//Matt 9:14//Luke 6:11). Almost right after that, as crowds gathered so that Jesus and his core group could not even eat, "when his family heard it, they went out *to seize* him, for people were saying, 'He is beside himself.'" (Mark 3:21). Luke, in turn, reports of Jesus' fellow villagers, 'When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And *they rose up and put him out* of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might *throw him down* headlong' (Luke 4:28-29). Herod Antipas could on a whim *seize* John the Baptist (Mark 6:17//Matt 14:3//Luke 3:20), and Jesus himself felt free to trespass over presumably well established social boundaries when 'he entered the temple and began *to drive out those* who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons; and he would not allow any one to carry anything through the temple' (Mark 11:15-16//Matt 21:12//Luke 19:45). Jesus' close followers would retaliate for

shameless inhospitality with fire from heaven (Luke 9:54). Even legitimate authorities (high priests in the Temple area) hold back in face of the possibility of *violence* against themselves, as Mark notes: 'And they tried to arrest him, but feared the multitude, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them; so they left him and went away' (Mark 12:12//Matt 21:46//Luke 20:19). On the other hand, Mark would have us believe that the authorities continued in their resolve: 'And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking *how to arrest* him by stealth, and kill him for they said, *Not during the feast lest there be a tumult of the people*' (Mark 14:1-2//Matt 26:4//Luke 22:2). Finally a crowd came and forcibly *seized* Jesus (Mark 14:43-52//Matt 26:47-56//Luke 22:47-53).

John, too, knows of such establishment violence. It is directed toward 'public sinners,' who are to be *stoned* by command of the Law of Moses (John 8:5), hence against Jesus, deemed to fit the divine requirements of such violence (John 10:31-33; 11:8). We are told early on in the narrative that Jesus' opponents sought to *kill* him (John 5:18). Of course Jesus is well aware of their plans (John 7:19-20; 8:37,40). John's account of Jesus' *arrest, torture* and *crucifixion* are well known (John 18--19). Similarly, the book of Acts is full of such incidents, beginning with the *arrest* of Peter and John (Acts 4:3), *violence* by unseen agents to Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:5.10), the *arrest* of the apostles out of jealousy (Acts 5:18), the council's desire *to kill* them (Acts 6:33), the vigilante treatment of Stephen by a provoked crowd (Acts 7:54-60) and the like. For his part, Paul tells us that his fellow Israelites *lashed* him five times, that he was *beaten* with rods three times, and *stoned* once (2 Cor 11:12).

Finally, when we get to the letter to the Hebrews, we are asked to focus on the blood and gore (Heb 9:7--10:20; 12:4, 24; 13:11-12, 20) so beloved of a society that regales in sacrifice and the endurance of pain that even God is said to use pain as a 'fatherly' device for his sons: 'do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?' (Heb 12:5-7; see Pilch 1993).

By any reading, this was a violent society, with frequent public violence, and unsure and explosive crowd reaction (for the Roman scene, see Brunt 1974). Ordinary persons did not have any rights. There was no universalism in the sense that all human beings were equally human, bearing common human endowments, common human rights independent of individual ethnic origin and social status. Tolerance was an idea whose time would come some seventeen hundred years later! Furthermore, the idea of a plurality of nations endowed with equal rights in the forum of nations was totally absent (perhaps dimly perceived with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648). International law in the sense of Grotius and his colleagues is rather recent (seventeenth century). Neither ancient Israelites, nor ancient Athenians, nor ancient Romans had any idea of juridical relations among nations. In the first century A.D. Roman statesmen dealt with other ethnic groups in terms of good faith based on patron-client relationships. In Roman perception, Rome was a patron, not a holder of an empire; it wanted persons

to behave like clients. To behave otherwise was to be a rebel, an outlaw (see Malina 1992). Neither persons nor nations had rights. What modern readers often interpret as rights is the Mediterranean sense of honor in the political sphere. What I mean is that Roman citizens had preeminence in the *oikoumene*. To dishonor one was to dishonor, hence challenge, Rome itself. Consequently Roman citizens were to be treated honorably by non-citizens; they were not to be flogged publicly, nor were they answerable to any tribunal but that of their own Caesar. Such were the ramifications of the customary values of honor and shame. Now since persons and nations had no rights, any modern reader's perception of oppression in the first century Mediterranean world would be quite anachronistic.

On the other hand, the Mediterranean world was a violent world, and the Israelite tradition hallowed such violence. Philo the Hellenistic philosopher of Alexandria, clearly explains this tradition (see especially Seland 1990):

> But if any members of the nation betray the honor of the One, they should suffer the utmost penalties. . . all who have zeal for virtue should be permitted to exact the penalties offhand and with no delay, without bringing the offender before jury or council, or any kind of magistrate at all, and give full scope to the feelings which possess them, that hatred of evil and love of God which urges them to inflict punishment without mercy on the impious. They should think that the occasion has made them councilors, jurymen, nome governor, members of assembly, accusers, witnesses, laws, people, everything in fact, so that without fear or hindrance they may champion respect for God in full security (*Spec. leg.* I, 54 Loeb VII: 129-30).

Similarly, he further notes:

Further if anyone cloaking himself under the name and guise of a prophet and claiming to be possessed by inspiration lead us on to the worship of the gods recognized in the different cities, we ought not to listen to him and be deceived by the name of prophet. For such a one is no prophet, but an impostor, since his oracles and pronouncement are falsehoods invented by himself. And if a brother or son or daughter or wife or a housemate or a friend however true, of anyone else who seems to be kindly disposed, urge us to a like course, bidding us fraternize with the multitude, resort to their temples and join in their libations and sacrifices, we must punish him as a public and general enemy, taking little thought for the ties which bind us to him; and we must send round a report of his proposals to all lovers of piety, who will rush with a speed which brooks no delay to take vengeance on the unholy man, and deem it a religious duty to seek his death. For we should have one tie of affinity, one accepted sign of goodwill, namely the willingness to serve God and that our every word and deed promotes the cause of piety. But as for these kinships . . . let them all be cast aside if they do not seek earnestly the same goal, namely the honor of God, which is the indissoluble bond of all the affection which makes us one (*Spec. leg.* I, 315-317 Loeb VII: 283; see Raisanen 1986: 287).

Of course he is simply restating the biblical warrant for establishment violence set out in Deuteronomy.[2] The problem for the twentieth century New Testament reader when faced with such passages is how to imagine the meanings of the behavior depicted in these writings. What were the explicit and implicit values and meanings presumed by the original author and his audience in the described interaction?

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2. In the Israelite view, such violence is demanded by God himself, e.g., Deut 13:12-16 relative to a city: 'If you hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God gives you to dwell there, that certain base fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of the city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently; and behold, if it be true and certain that such an abominable thing has been done among you, you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, destroying it utterly, all who are in it and its cattle, with the edge of the sword. You shall gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square, and burn the city and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God; it shall be a heap for ever, it shall not be built again.' .

Deut 17:2-6 relative to persons: 'If there is found among you, within any of your towns which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in transgressing his covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden, and it is told you and you hear of it; then you shall inquire diligently, and if it is true and certain that such an abominable thing has been done in Israel, then you shall bring forth to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones. On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses he that is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.'

The refrain 'to purge evil from your midst' by means of establishment violence is both commanded and therefore warranted in the following cases:

Deut 13:5 concerning false prophets: 'But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to make you leave the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.'

Deut 17:7 concerning idolaters: 'The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.'

Deut 17:12 concerning those who reject lawful decisions: 'The man who acts presumptuously, by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die; so you shall purge the evil from Israel.'

Deut 19:19 concerning a false witness: 'Then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you. '

Deut 21:21 concerning a recalcitrant son: 'Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall purge the evil from your midst; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.'

Deut 22:21 concerning a false virgin: 'Then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has wrought folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.'

Deut 22:22 concerning adulterers: 'If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall purge the evil from Israel.'

Deut 22:24 concerning adulterers #2: 'Then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.'

Deut 24:7 concerning kidnapping: 'If a man is found stealing one of his brethren, the people of Israel, and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.'

The first two behaviors defend God's honor, the rest prevent feuding in society.

2. Establishment Violence: General Overview

To talk about the violence depicted in the Synoptic narrative requires at least some set of definitions so that discussion might fruitfully evolve.

> When individuals or groups identifying with the established order defend that order by resorting to means that violate these formal boundaries, they can be usefully classified as vigilantes. . . . [Vigilantism] consists of acts or threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of an established sociopolitical order which, however, are intended by the violators to defend that order from some form of subversion (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 4).

Vigilantism is establishment violence. The foregoing definition would have us adopt the perspective of the hostile crowd and look upon the object of the crowd's hostility as criminal in some way. In the gospel story, Jesus would be the Galilean offender, while in Paul's story, the apostle would be the Judean malefactor.

The *violence* exerted in establishment violence is socially unendorsed coercion directed by private persons against one another or against the regime. And *coercion* here is behavior intended to harm a person or a person's values.[3] Violence transgresses the limits of acceptable coercion; it is aimed at harming another illegitimately. Sederberg notes that considering coercion as 'intentional harm' makes sense.

> The degree of harm may vary, and a variety of other purposes may be pursued through the use, or threat, of coercion, just as they may be with other forms of power. The distinguishing characteristic of the use of coercion, though, is *intentional* harm. . . . Coercion permeates political life, from mild acts of parental discipline to devastating acts of war. Stable political communities establish and enforce limits on the use of coercion in social relations. Rather than using 'coercion,' 'force,' and 'violence' interchangeably, we might usefully consider the latter two terms as labels for two types of coercion: Acts of coercion that *violate* the limits within a particular community may be termed 'violence,' whereas acceptable coercion may be called 'force.' The notion of acceptable coercion or force implies a dominant consensus that the benefits of the coercive act outweigh the harm done, as when the police use coercion to apprehend a criminal (Sederberg 1989: 13).

From the viewpoint of what society considers valuable, violence may be directed to redistributing valuable resources or to maintaining those valuables. When violence is directed to the redistribution of valuables, it is revolutionary or reactionary violence. But when violence is aimed at the maintenance of what society considers valuable, that is at the maintenance of the status quo, it is vigilantism or establishment violence. From the viewpoint of the object at which the violence is directed, there are three types. In the first place, there is crime-control vigilantism: this is establishment

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3. 'The most widely used contemporary definition of politics' (Stettner 1976: 67) is that of David Easton: politics is 'the authoritative allocation of values for a society' (Easton 1967: 129).

violence that 'is directed against people believed to be committing acts proscribed by the formal legal system' (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 10). Here the object of crowd hostility is some person or persons who flaunt society's laws by disregarding them, by breaking them. Secondly, there is social-control vigilantism: this is 'establishment violence directed against people believed to be competing for or advocating a redistribution of values within the system' (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 12). Now the object of the crowd's hostility is a person or group that seeks to alter generally accepted meanings and/or values. This is a form of group social control. Here illegal coercion is a response by those who feel threatened by some mobile segments of society or by those who appear to advocate significant change in the distribution of values. Finally, there is regime-control vigilantism: this is 'establishment violence intended to alter the regime in order to make the *superstructure* into a more effective guardian of the *base*' (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 17). Focus here is on controlling the people who are in control. Thus regime-control vigilantism is directed against people in the regime believed to be departing from the established status quo: either forsaking tradition or introducing innovations.

Since vigilante actions are of three types, depending on their purpose (crime-control, group-control, and regime-control), and since participants in such actions may be either private or public individuals, a typology of vigilantism would include six types: public crime-control, group-control and regime-control, and private crime-control, group-control, and regime-control. Questions put to Jesus about his role and purpose might fruitfully be analyzed in terms of the social location of the questioner, public or private, as well as the type of control the questioner might have in mind. Consider the following sampling from Mark (note how priests are public as well as private persons):

Purpose

Participants

	Crime Control	Social Control	Regime Control
Private Individuals	Pharisees vs Jesus (3:6)	Judeans vs disciples (13:9)	Priests vs Pilate (15:11ff)
Public Individuals	Priests vs Jesus (14:1)	Priests vs Jesus (12:27-33)	

All of these types concern the use of violence by established groups to preserve the status quo at times when the formal system of rule enforcement is viewed as ineffective or irrelevant.[4]

2.1. Establishment Violence:
The Roman Empire

The foregoing definitions presume that there are indeed formal boundaries of an established social and political order and that there are recognizable procedures and values determining the limits of legitimate coercion. Yet as is well known, such formal boundaries and procedures were more a set of desiderata than the actual state of affairs in the *oikoumene* of the early Roman imperial period. Any discussion of establishment violence in defense of a social order must in Mediterranean imperial conditions make a clear distinction between the fragile, imported values operating within a situation of relative political imbalance and the indigenous traditional values still exercising profound influence on local ethnic behavior.[5]

Scholars generally speaks of the cultural schizophrenia ushered in with Hellenism and its mixture of often conflicting values. On the other hand, the Romans provoked a structural schizophrenia with its universalistic institutional arrangements imposed upon and/or alongside existing social forms. These cultural and structural imports resulted in a situation of porous and fluctuating social boundaries among many annexed ethnic groups (see Malina 1993: 37)

Thus in the Roman empire, the universe of values from the viewpoint of local perception was one of cultural dualism: Hellenistic and localite (e.g., Israelite). Yet from an empire-wide viewpoint, people saw an *oikoumene* of cultural pluralism (e.g., a Roman overlay expressed in Israelite, Athenian, Alexandrian ways). Thus localite

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4. Bailey 1970 offers a rather full model of political interaction into which vigilantism easily fits; Black-Michaud 1980 brings greater focus to specifically Mediterranean societies; Lewellen 1983 offers a sweeping historical view which locates the previous two works.

5. That Judean creoles (= the offspring of immigrants locally born) in the Mediterranean world both practiced and were the object of establishment violence is quite predictable, for immigrant Judeans formed pariah communities throughout the region. A *pariah* community is an ethnic minority which is not indigenous to its host society but has established itself as part of the social system over several generations (von der Mehden 1976: 218). Pariah communities are highly visible minority groups, often with different racial, sumptuary, religious, and customary features. For various reasons, they tended to include an unusually high proportion of the commercial leadership of the respective host communities.

Pariah group members are judged stereotypically as: rich, avaricious, corrupt, politically opportunistic, subversive at worst and apolitical and anti-nationalist at best, and overall, unwilling or disloyal citizens (yet these groups have not been in fact homogeneous, and include individuals of different social rank, customs, loyalties and political opinions). The characteristics of wealth, opportunism, tightly knit, kin (or fictive-kin) based organizations, ambition, opportunism, and cleverness attributed to pariah people have incited jealousy, envy, and fear resulting in violence not only against those who fit the stereotype, but to the whole community.

Judean immigrants entered into commerce in societies where such activities continued to be of low status within the dominant culture. On the other hand, pariah people look on majority culture as composed of people who are lazy, unskilled, not overly bright (further, see von der Mehden 1976: 229-33).

Now since pariah groups are readily singled out as not part of the host society and its establishment values, it is often singled out for both scapegoating as well as for vigilantism.

cultural dualism involved a juxtaposition of local traditions and a Hellenistic world-view; while cosmopolitan cultural pluralism was implicit in the institutional arrangement of the Roman empire as Roman officials, temples, army units appeared alongside local officials, worship forms, and military units. Of course at the local level, the intrusion of Hellenistic values into individual local cultures would be seen as a dualism created and imposed by outsiders (e.g., in Sepphoris, Jerusalem, Tiberias). On the other hand, at the cosmopolite level, the multiplicity of cultures within each Roman province (e.g., Hellenistic cities such as Sebaste, Caesarea, and Scythopolis in Palestine replicated in the other *poleis* of the empire: e.g., Alexandria, Damascus, Antioch) might be seen, as the phenomenon of indigenous pluralism. Thus, to say that the Roman empire was a pluralistic *oikoumene* reveals the cosmopolitan perspective. To comment on how Hellenistic values and Roman social structures had permeated town and village living in Palestine points to a localite perspective. The point is that biblical scholars who comment on the Roman *oikoumene* often adopt the localite perspective for ideological reasons (e.g., the uniqueness of Israel, the distinctiveness of Judaism, formation of formative Judaism) while ignoring the other (see Paul 1993: 110-11).

Treatment of vigilantism in the New Testament requires dealing with violence and values. To do so one must thus look at the problems of creating cultural viability in the Roman provinces, specifically in Syria and Judea. For the violence we read about seems directed at deterrence. Individuals and groups decide to deter those who threaten the status quo, be it local, or imperial, or both. And they do so through traditional and acceptable methods of self-help. To whom were such methods of self-help acceptable, and which sort of potential enemies needed deterring?

Significantly, the ancient Mediterranean world surely consisted of people who counted their enemies (Matt 5:43-44; 6:27; Luke 1:71; 19:27, 43). But how much of an enemy to Judeans was a Samaritan in Palestine? an Egyptian in Egypt? a Greek in Asia Minor? How much of an enemy to the Romans was a Judean? Under what conditions would it be acceptable for a Roman to kill a Judean, for a Judean to kill a Galilean, or an Alexandrian Judean to kill another Alexandrian Judean? How did Mediterranean peoples of the first century define compatriots over against hostile aliens, ingroups from outgroups? Much of the violence found in the region was intimately linked to the tensions of cultural pluralism along with the fragile distinction between fellow ethnic, fellow citizen and alien foe. 'Who is my neighbor?' (Luke 10:29, 36) was hardly a question of religious benevolence and piety! Perhaps the changing contours of ingroup and outgroup boundaries can be glimpsed from the Arabic proverb: 'Me against my brother; me and my brother against our cousin; me, my brother and my cousin against our enemies.'

The difficulties arising from outwardly imposed dualism and inwardly experienced pluralism are further complicated by different definitions of, hence perceptions of, the establishment. For example, which establishment and which status quo were focal in the vigilante actions described in the gospels or in Philo? The establishment in the definition of vigilantism refers to 'people who prefer things as they are and look with

suspicion on any proposal for significant change, whether of a creative or restorative sort' (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b: 266). In first century Palestine at the local level (and its dualism perceived as outwardly imposed) we find at least a two-fold establishment: (1) the native establishment, both visible (local authorities) and invisible (God of Israel, spirits, demons), and (2) the Roman establishment, both visible (prefect, military) and invisible (Roman gods, spirits and demons, including one named 'Legio'). And in any *polis* of the region, from the Judean point of view there were again invariably two establishments: (1) the Judean ethnic establishment replicated in the Judean quarter of the *polis*, and (2) the prevailing political[6] establishment embracing all the citizens of the city.

Of course, in practice, it might be difficult to distinguish which establishments are involved when people do violence on behalf of the status quo. For example, when the people of the tiny hamlet of Nazareth decide to do away with Jesus (Luke 4:29), who was thought to reach above the level of village equality (see Malina 1993), or when people came to stone the betrothed suspected of adultery (John 8:1-11), we might say they were enforcing the authority of the visible, local establishment: villagers or Torah groups bent on eliminating potential trouble. Yet when Philo (cite previously) exhorted his conationals to vigilante activity should God be dishonored by idolatry, or when Jerusalemites practiced vigilante justice on the Hellenistic Judean Stephen on presumably comparable charges of dishonoring God (Acts 7:58), they sought to deter infraction against the unseen establishment.

As is well known, the Roman empire sought to transform the authority of the visible rulers among annexed populations by enforcing local institutions and laws as far as possible. Hellenism, on the other hand, addressed itself to the task of destroying the old authority of the traditional invisible authority and replacing it with the alternative authority of a reasonable invisible Ultimate, or more efficient, helping deities. And yet, on the destructive side, Roman imperialism was more successful than Hellenism. Indigenous institutions of government in the Mediterranean were more or less decisively destroyed, but not indigenous belief and value systems. Roman architectural structures serve as monuments to the destruction of an old system of social and political control, rather than as genuine symbols of a viable, new alternative order. Local *decuriones* struggled to find coherence within the institutional void that the Romans produced. To underscore the positive, it was as bringers of Hellenism

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6. The unseen establishment included the God of Israel, other gods, as well as the dead ancestors of the tradition, the traditions hallowed by age, the mysterious forces of the night, the commanding power of the elements and the living vitality of the forces of nature: angels, spirits, demons. Gallagher notes 'a spectrum of categories ranging from *theos*, the most positive designation, through *anthropos* in the middle, to *magos* and *goes*, the most negative categories. . . The space between *theos* and *anthropos*, for example, quickly becomes populated by sons of god, divine teachers, composite beings, demons, famous men of various stripes, wise men, leaders, generals, etc.' (1983: 70). The authority of the unseen, of God and a host of non visible persons, constitute the Mediterranean's concept of the ultimate. It has a good deal to do with Mediterranean concepts of social causation, of the origins of good and bad fortune, and of the courses of failure and success. For an excellent description of unseen forces, see Wink 1984.

that Romans were praised, not as broadcasters of Roman institutions.[7] Hellenism and Roman philosophical systems on the other hand did not at all destroy older perspectives. The invocation of God and spirits, special rites for the dead, special bonds of kinship (and the fear of violating those bonds), theories of causation based on unseen factors, and systems of punishment and reward (partly based on invisible convictions) have all survived the massive, normative challenges posed by conquering nations: Persian, Greek, Parthian and Roman.

Consequently, while Roman institutions of government were basically a facade to disguise what was fundamentally a political grab bag, Hellenism and its belief systems were a facade to disguise some resilient Mediterranean cultural continuities. Old institutional structures had been well and truly destroyed in much of the Roman empire, but old normative patterns managed to change without dying. And establishment violence was one of these old normative patterns.

2.2. How To Understand Establishment Violence: A Social Science Approach

In Israel's scriptures, God himself commands the ready use of violence to maintain, defend or restore the status quo. Hence in Israel vigilantism or establishment violence was a cultural given. Among Judean ethnics of the first century, the status quo might be identified with God's honor as in Philo, and the infraction of this honor might provoke 'the wrath of God' as in Paul. But most often the status quo is identified with the social position of the agents of vigilantism.

Now there are at least three ways to consider establishment violence.
First, it may be considered as a procedure for maintaining societal equilibrium. This is the 'law and order' view. Establishment violence emerges to maintain the status quo against criminals and sinners. Here laws (including God's revealed laws) are made by those who benefit from the social order in order to maintain their privilege. In this perspective, Jerusalemites would have the criminal Jesus crucified, for example, in order to maintain order in their city and region, for their own benefit. This is the Roman perspective set forth in Luke and John. Thus, Pilate 'finds no crime in this

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7. And so, for example, Philo of Alexandria, when writing of Caesar Augustus' conquests in the Alps and in Illyria, stated how the princeps: 'had healed the disease common to Greeks and barbarians . . .' (*Embassy to Gaius* par. 145, Loeb X: 72-3). What in fact had Augustus done? 'This is he who reclaimed every state (*polis*) to liberty, who led disorder into order, and brought gentle manners and harmony to all unsociable and brutish nations, who enlarges Greece (*Hellas*) with numerous new Greeces and hellenizes (*aphellenisas*) the outside world (*barbaroi*) in its important regions . . .' (par. 147 Loeb X: 74-5). Hence it is not surprising that Paul of Tarsus could write 'to the Romans' yet speak only of 'Judeans and Greeks' with a passing nod to 'Greeks and Barbarians' (Rom 1:14). For 'Judeans and Greeks,' see Rom 1:16; 2:9.10; 3:9; 10:12; see also 1 Cor 1:24 and passim; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11. This perspective is likewise evidenced in the narrative of Acts (Acts 14:1; 18:4; 19:10.17; 20:21). Perhaps the best translation of 'Judeans and Greeks' for Paul and Luke would be 'the Set Apart and the Civilized,' while Greeks and Barbarians meant 'the Civilized and the Uncivilized.' Greek writers in general spoke similarly of 'Greek and Barbarian' (e.g., Strabo, *Geography* 1. 4. 9; Loeb I, 247-9).

man' (Luke 23:4, 22; see John 18:38; 19:4, 6). The Roman official Gallio is equally concerned with crime in Acts (18:14).

Second, establishment violence may be considered as a process by means of which moral entrepreneurs seek to defend their interests by exerting control over those who threaten those interests (= benefit maintenance). In this perspective, establishment violence defends the status quo against deviants and subversives. Thus Jerusalem authorities would have found the deviant Jesus advocating a subversive program that would unsettle their interests: political, kin-group, political religious, and political economic. Of course, they believed their interests were those of the nation. In the name of those interests, they had Jesus removed. This position is voiced in the well-known statement of Caiaphas in John: 'You do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish' (11:50). We are later told that 'It was Caiaphas who had given counsel to the Judeans that it was expedient that one man should die for the people' (John 18:14).

Finally, establishment violence may be considered as a form of communication by means of which people express outrage at what others say in word and deed. This outrage motivates them to try to restore and reaffirm their meaning of life (= proclaiming cultural meanings). Establishment violence is aimed at restoring the status quo against dissidents and heretics. In this view, Jesus would have been perceived as tampering with Israel's normative discourse and the purity lines which that discourse requires. As heretic, Jesus denied the system that provided meaning for most Judeans and Jerusalemites. They were outraged by what he said and did, and therefore, in order to reaffirm the vital meanings Jesus toyed with, they successfully called for his death. Luke expresses this perspective well when he notes: 'So they watched him, and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might take hold of what he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor' (20:20). The various accusations of blasphemy, of injuring God by speech, point to this perspective (see Mark 2:7//Matt 9:3//Luke 5:21; Mark 14:64//Matt 26:25).

Thus depending on one's theoretical perspective, one may view establishment violence as directed against: (1) criminals and sinners; or against (2) deviants and subversives; or against (3) dissidents and heretics. In this essay, I will develop establishment violence scenarios in terms of the three general approaches that define the objects of establishment violence as criminals, deviants, and/or heretics. These are the social scientific approaches called the structural functionalist approach (producing criminals), the conflictual approach (labelling deviants) and the interpretative approach (declaring heretics).

3. The Maintenance of Order:
The Structural-Functionalist Explanation.

Violent behavior meted out by family to family members, by crowds to fellow citizens or aliens, by unendorsed authorities to opponents, by legitimate authorities illegally,

or by unseen persons to unfortunate visible persons, may all be considered as a procedure for maintaining societal equilibrium. Societal equilibrium is commonly termed 'law and order.' To interpret such behavior requires at least two focused looks into the social system in which such behavior makes sense. First of all, a general perspective on establishment violence would serve to situate that behavior within some comparative framework. Then a more specific perspective outfitted with Mediterranean values ought allow for a fuller depiction of the scenario in question.

The fundamental question, though, is why vigilante behavior at all? Why do unauthorized people feel constrained to come forward on behalf of the status quo? A structural functionalist approach cannot really explain this feature so readily. The reason for this is that structural functionalism presumes societies develop authorized structures to maintain their equilibrium (the status quo). Any intrusion on the part of unauthorized persons would be wanton, vicious, and perverse, hence illegitimate, to say the least. Further confirmation of this assessment comes from the survey of Stettner (1976: 64-75). Stettner considers the prevailing range of political theories (from naturism to Marxism) and finds that no extant political theory has explanatory room for vigilante behavior. He explains this point largely by arguing that political theory is ethically inspired (p. 74) and vigilantism is a political sickness (p. 75).[8] While this may be true, I would say that the reason for this is that political theory building is largely a structural-functional enterprise. Furthermore such grand, organic theory derives from hierarchical societies where values and experience usually match (Malina 1986a: 14). They envision systems in which societal values and social experiences generally positively support the expectations of the populace which itself is rather homogeneous. Such systems were not (and are not) characteristic of the circum-Mediterranean culture area. Furthermore, such systems have little if any room for anomalies. Now it is conflict models and interpretative models that are most concerned with such anomalies. They best shed light on life in uncertain social environments.

4. Maintaining One's Interests: The Conflict Approach

Despite their distinctiveness, the controversies in New Testament narratives have many parallels in general, small-group conflicts. The crucial question to be asked in

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8. Stettner concludes: 'Crime-control vigilantism has been shown to differ quite significantly from social-group control vigilantism and regime control vigilantism in that it does not seem limited to arguing for order and the perpetuation of a favorable status quo. Crime-control vigilantism is a practical response to a short run failure of the legal system to operate `properly.' The other types of vigilantism are broader responses meant to supplement or even supplant normal political operations, which may be working too effectively for the tastes of the vigilante group. This is particularly so of social-group control vigilantism. It may be that these phenomena are too diverse to be studied as simply different types of a single kind of political activity. That, at least, would be a possible conclusion to be drawn from looking at vigilantism from the perspectives of political theory' (1976: 75). The point is that in terms the political theory derived from societies where values and experience match, the behavior of those who live in a society where values and experience do not match is deviance. However the behavior typical of societies where values and experience mismatch is fully at home in conflict theory.

evaluating such controversies is not how the conflict between the demands of the theocracy envisioned by Jesus and the Torah-observance espoused by Pharisees or between Paul's being in Christ and Judaism's being in Israel have been resolved. It is rather whether the existing group leadership identified its interests with opposition to particular types of values and value- clusters, especially favoring the imprecise demands of the Kingdom over precise Torah-observance, of vague being 'in Christ' over the precise behaviors required of being 'in Israel.' How much criticism of traditional values did existing leadership believe could be tolerated at the expense of what was defined as traditional orthopraxy?

From the viewpoint of defending group and personal interests, '...vigilantes provided a medium to convey symbolically whose values (those of the propertied) were to prevail in an uncertain social environment' (Little and Sheffield 1983: 806). Thus every act of violence in the gospel story is about whose values are to prevail in a clash of values. It was quite understandable that major value clashes should happen in Jerusalem, especially during festivals which were couple with pilgrimage. This feature seems to be a Johannine theme (John 2:23; 4:45; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2-14, 37; 10:22; 11:56; 12:12; 13:1), although the obviousness of the situation is reported in Matthew: 'Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and took counsel together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, *Not during the feast, lest there be a tumult among the people*' (Matt 26:3-5).[9]

Pilgrimage time is ideal value-conflict time, considering the fact that pilgrims from all parts of the world arrive as relative strangers to each other. The rather varied local population of the capital city, the increasing heterogeneity of the expanded population, and the resulting differentiation of the people 'Israel' in the city for a time all combined to engender uncertainty about community structure and values and about how choices were to be made among opposed normative systems which were recognized as challenging one another for acceptance and/or dominance. Under these circumstances, crowds turned into violent mobs. Further, vigilante groups emerged to serve the function of dramatizing and affirming the behavioral boundaries of the normative city community, defining and clarifying its structure and supporting establishment values. Vigilantism nearly always has the backing of elite claimants to the status quo, if only because elites alone could readily prosecute deviants, and this well into the 19th century.[10] Hence vigilantism will always reveal a conservative orientation. It picks on the weak, the lowly, the unpopular, the people least able to resist or retaliate (Little and Sheffield 1983: 807).

Establishment violence, coalition-building and faction-formation are generally found in societies whose governments are rather ineffective in realizing collective goals.

9. Value clashes were equally common between quarters of ancient cities, whose boundaries were always like frontiers marking off conflicting groups (cf. Philo's *Embassy to Gaius*).

10. It is important to note with Little and Sheffield 1983: 797) that: 'Until well into the nineteenth century, criminal prosecution was, practically speaking, readily available only to the wealthy.' In first-century Mediterranean terms, 'wealthy' would be 'high-status persons,' or the 'elite.'

Those with a vested interest in the status quo of such societies feel to a greater or lesser extent that the formal institutions of boundary- maintenance are ineffective in protecting their interests. The potential for establishment violence on the part of these vested interests is never far below the surface of human interaction: e.g., guerilla bands and war-lordism in first century Palestine (Horsley and Hanson 1985) or 20th century Beirut. In this perspective, establishment violence may be considered as a process by means of which moral entrepreneurs seek to defend boundaries by exerting control over those who threaten those boundaries (= self-help justice and peace-maintenance).

4.1. Labelling Dissidents

Social systems cannot be fully understood without some attention to the critics who emerge from within them. Similarly, systems based on orthopraxy (as the Judean was or as the Islamic is) cannot be fully understood without some attention to the behaviors which are labeled 'deviant' as they emerge in those systems. For example,

> In the abstract, all human societies put some limitations on the exercise of violence. It could even be argued that all human societies regard the act of killing without good cause as immoral. However the definition of what constitutes `good cause' contains an enormous range of variation. Groups that seek to become one political community should learn to narrow that range and incidence of legitimate homicide, if they are to avoid the constant dangers of communal rioting or at least communal tensions. Most countries and societies permit the killing of an `enemy' under certain circumstances (Mazrui 1976:195).

In conflict theory, these circumstances are the areas marked off by the respective interests of various groups. 'Interest' here means the shared desire of any group of political actors which motivates their political activity. Violence within the bosom of one's group is a heinous crime, while the same behavior at the periphery merits congratulations and reward. And group members perceived to have moved to the periphery are the deviants worthy of vigilante activity.

The role of deviance in the development and perception of correct behavior is central. Social systems are most clearly and systematically articulated when they are formed by negation. The boundaries of what (and who) is right, acceptable, and correct are marked out through a systematic identification of what (and who) is wrong, unacceptable, and incorrect. What people are not to do is often more clearly defined than what they are to do, and it is through battles with deviants that correct behavior is most sharply delineated. Obviously for his opponents, Jesus and his group served as the deviant foil underscoring how not to behave, what not to say, who not to be.

In societies such as those of the first century Mediterranean, sacred values and behaviors required perpetual defense from destructive forces. Institutional authorities were charged with carrying out the defense, whatever the cost, but in faction-ridden situations, authorities were often remiss. They were more concerned about their own

interests than those of the society at large. Hence, private individuals had to see to the maintenance of justice. Since situations in which vigilantism arose were situations of anomaly, often those private individuals looking for 'justice for all' were branded as subversive by others (and vice-versa). Since such subversives usually believed themselves to have the interests of the sacred institution and tradition at heart, they played an important role in the formation of orthopraxy. Thus one generation's subversive behavior was frequently the next generation's orthopraxy.

What behavior is marked off as subversive is crucial in the maintenance and transformation of social institutions. Group solidarity is seldom strengthened by anything as much as the existence of a common enemy (note how Herod and Pilate become 'friends' over Jesus in Luke 23:12). The subversive is the wayward insider. The identification of subversives shores up the ranks, enables institutional elites to make demands on their subordinates, and reinforces systems of dominance.

In the language register of ideology, such subversives are called heretics. However it is important to realize that subversion may be part of every social institution, requiring appropriate conflict for its elimination (e.g., in politics there are man-hunts, in religion there are heresy-hunts, in economics there are unfair trader hunts, and in kinship there are feuds and their head-hunts). As a form of ideological subversion, the deviance of heretics may be a wrong idea, wrong behavior, or wrong speech (for wrong speech, see below).

It is important to note that the deviance called 'heresy' is rarely, if ever, created by 'heretics.' Rather heresy is nearly always created by the establishment. Specifically, the heresy creator is a representative of the establishment who plays the role of 'moral entrepreneur.'

> The moral entrepreneur is a person privy to the making and enforcing of societal rules. Rule making is a moral enterprise -- a process of constructing and applying meanings that define persons and their behaviors as morally adequate or not. The moral enterprise is an interpretation of a person, requiring both the making of rules (rule creator) as well as the application of rules to specific persons (rule enforcer). The moral entrepreneur is the person likely to initiate a deviance process and to mobilize the forces necessary to make it successful. All right minded people will be expected to subscribe to the culturally specific and highly emotionally charged goals selected by the entrepreneur. And it is specifically these sorts of goals that the moral entrepreneur espouses. The moral entrepreneur becomes socially unassailable, unless opponents can redefine the situation by neutralizing the constraint unassailability produces. As rule creators moral entrepreneurs and their followers wish to interpret some behavior as deviant for the purpose of obviating, preventing or correcting interferences in their interests. They wish to change, enforce or establish rules to these ends. They do so by defining both certain conditions and those who engage in those conditions as inimical to their values and interests -- personal, group and societal (Malina and Neyrey 1988: 43-44).

Thus the deviance called heresy results from the work of moral entrepreneurs, their following and their organization by means of a process of: (1) diagnosing opposition values as all pervasive, then (2) labelling those who espouse those values as subversive deviants, and eventually (3) articulating a counter-position (= orthodoxy), requiring counter-behavior (orthopraxy) or insisting on counter-speech forms (ortholoquy).

Vigilantism is establishment violence against a person or persons successfully labeled as deviant by some moral entrepreneur in the community, for the purpose of maintaining prevailing values. The moral entrepreneur perceives common values as being impugned (criminal-control vigilantism), rearranged (group-control vigilantism) or ignored by those whose task is to see to their enforcement (regime-control vigilantism). The object of vigilantism is deviant behavior. Deviance theory focuses upon the process by means of which a normal person becomes a deviant, i.e. the labelling process. There are, of course, a number of ways of dealing with deviant persons: ignoring them, tolerating them, applying legitimate coercion and applying illegitimate coercion.

Hierarchically structured societies, that is societies in which value expectations and value capabilities match, normally feature legitimate coercion in face of subversion; all opposition is deviant. But in uncertain social environments typical of societies in which value expectations and value capabilities do not match, usually feature some form of vigilantism; here opposition activity is viewed as depravity, hence as deviance.[11] Vigilante theory focuses upon the one type of coercion applied to dealing with the phenomenon of subversion and/or deviance, i.e. violence ('illegitimate coercion directed by private persons against one another or against the regime may be defined as violence' Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 3-4). Thus legitimate coercion directed by a private person (e.g., the difference between disciplining a child and child-abuse) or legitimate coercion by a public person (e.g., the difference between police coercion and police brutality) are not violence, but simply coercion.

Vigilantism looks to the suppression of subversion by eliminating subversives. Subversion has both an intellectual content, the point at issue, as well as a social dimension, the critic and the criticized (the orthopractical and the deviant). People commit themselves to particular definitions of world-views and symbol systems not

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11. The same point is made by Gurr 1970: 27, as follows: 'The value expectations of a collectivity are the average value positions to which its members believe they are justifiably entitled... The value capabilities of a collectivity are the average value positions its members perceive themselves capable of attaining or maintaining.' Value expectations and value capabilities are the elements of 'grid' in my grid/group model, following M. Douglas (Malina 1986).
'In the special case of vigilante violence, a singular type of deprivation appears to be operative: `decremental deprivation.' This occurs when value expectations of groups remain fairly constant, but perceived value capabilities decline. The more precipitous this decline, the greater potential for violence by the `deprived' group' Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a: 5-6, citing Gurr 1970: 46-50. This description is typically strong group/low grid, with competing groups most often unsuccessfully attempting to maintain what they have inherited and/or acquired.

only because they make sense intellectually but also because those definitions of reality resonate with, or have an affinity with, the interests and life-styles of those choosing them. Both Jesus and his opponents, for example, defined Torah obedience in ways that served their respective interests and then gave to their definitions the aura of objective truth and universality, whether localite or cosmopolitan.

4.2. Labelling Threshold

Institutional responses to subversion derive from the interplay of the social distance between the statuses of subversives and institutional authorities on the one hand, and the ideational distance between the beliefs of subversives and those of elites, on the other.

First consider social distance. Criticism from within a social organization is more intellectually offensive than external criticism. Deviant insiders are more of a direct threat than external critics who are outside agitators and can be defined off the scale of relevant persons and easily dismissed as 'not one of us.' As for ideational distance, the criticisms of internal opponents (subversives) operating on identical internal assumptions are more dangerous to those in power than critiques which operate from extrinsic assumptions.

If these perspectives are on target, then mechanisms of control will be activated by elites only when social distance and ideational distance reach, but do not exceed, a critical level. If either is too high or too low, they may be ignored. In the case of Torah-observers, the question is when to activate the Torah rule: to kill the idolater, stone the adulteress, eliminate the recalcitrant child, do away with the false prophet.

In institutionalized belief systems, those in charge come to define and articulate the values of the system, thereby attaching their interests to those definitions and articulations. Social conflict concerning those values leads to redefinitions and new articulations -- thus the parties to the conflict define their interests in terms of the system. Thus for example, 'Judaism' became the preserve of the high priesthood and the Sanhedrin: the high priesthood and Sanhedrin defined and articulated the values of the system, and thus attached their interests to those definitions and articulations. Eventually the interests and status of Pharisee council members and of the burgeoning scribal bureaucracy of Jerusalem became attached to and associated with the prestige of the high priesthood and the doctrine on which it was based. It was when opposing ideas threatened those interests that the instinct of self preservation in the ruling stratum reacted by attaching the stigma of deviance or subversion. Thus the high priesthood and Sanhedrin members, either scribal bureaucrats or Pharisees, would be quick to affix the stigma of deviance on opponents.

In this context, deviance is the subversion of one who, having been born and claiming membership in a given community or society, continues to behave in a way contrary to the values that one is under obligation of local ethical affiliation to follow in practice. At times this local ethical affiliation is ethnic (all members by birth are

expected to follow it, e.g., Judeans, Romans, Cretans), fictive ethnic (all members by fictive or ritual birth are expected to follow it, e.g., Christians, Stoics, Isis cultists), or political (all members are expected to follow it by law or custom, e.g., Corinthians, Romans, Judeans).

5. Proclaiming the Meaning of Life: The Interpretative Approach

Finally, establishment violence may be considered as a form of communication by means of which people say things about themselves and others, thus expressing the meaning of some significant aspect of life in face of the denial or alteration of that meaning. In the interpretive approach, people do things to mean to others. In the case of violence done to another, such violence requires that the other be redefined as inhuman so that he or she might be treated as such. For example, dissidence has to be viewed as essentially having dehumanized the dissident, who may henceforth be dealt with as non-human. Such redefinition has to do with the lines that constitute the purity system, as well as the exclusive dimensions of those lines that constitutes the sacred. When viewed through the prism of the prevailing purity system, the dissident is seen clearly as outside the realm of what is holy and exclusive to the group. The dissident stands in the area of the hostile. In the area of the hostile, wrong (that is, dissident) ideas, speech and behavior abound; it is the realm of heterodoxy, heteroloquy and heteropraxy, and thus of the choices (*haireseis*) that mark dissidence. Dissidents thus come to serve as a symbolic focus for moral entrepreneurial attack on the subversive forces responsible for the many problems of the group or society to which the moral entrepreneur belongs.

5.1. Dissidence and Speech

From a symbolic viewpoint, what constitutes a dissident? Dissidence can be considered as essentially a semiotic phenomenon, employing either speech or behavior or both, which communicates to and results in cognitive disorientation for 'true' believers. The conflict among Judean groups carried on in the first century Mediterranean was essentially about divine power revealed in political power. This is what political religion, religion embedded in the political institution, is about. In Palestine, embedded political religion was the means used by competing factions 'in Israel' to appropriate the world for their own purposes and gratification, i.e. their own interests. Outside of the Israelite homeland, embedded kinship religion (see Malina 1986b) was the means by which first century immigrant and creole Judean groups sought to appropriate the world into which they and their forebearers migrated for their own purposes and their own gratification, i.e. their own interests. A dissident attempted similar use of available means, but for his own interests. And the chief tools used by such dissidents was speech, communicative acts in a broad sense. They sought to control the discourse (see Zito 1983, on whom this discussion is based).

A dissident is perceived by the establishment to challenge the prevailing monopoly of his group's interpretation of reality. His challenge consists in articulating another interpretation of reality in terms of the same premises shared by the group. Such articulation might be called 'heteroloquy' (after the pattern of heterodoxy and heteropraxy). Heteroloquy is a dissident way of talking about events and processes (after Zito 1983: 123, who calls this heresy). Every social institution as well as each society as a whole may be characterized by or as a specific discourse.

'Discourse' here means any collective activity that orders its concerns through language. Examples of discourse include academic disciplines, national political systems, denominational belief system. As a rule, prevailing discourse tends to be an ideology, a discourse seeking to monopolize ways of speaking about the world. The usual course of social interaction, then, is 'ortholoquy.' Ortholoquy refers to expressing oneself in language (spoken and written) in terms of the institutionalized ideology. It is the received way of speaking and writing about, hence of expressing received views. The set of received views would constitute the prevailing orthodoxy, and behavior based on these views would be the prevailing orthopraxy.

In this perspective, 'heteroloquy' is any way of speaking that upsets, or at least threatens to upset, an institutionalized way of speaking. And since people speak with goods as well as other non-verbal behavior, communications through these means that upset, or at least threaten the institutionalized way of speaking is equally heteroloquy, e.g., giving all one's goods to the poor. Heteroloquy is dissidence; heteroloquy is subversiveness.

Consider the language used in the United States relative to contemporary Israel. Israeli squatters are called 'settlers'; Israel's army of occupation is called a 'defense force'; Israel's theft of Palestinian property is called a 'Return'; Israel's racist anti-Gentilism is called 'Zionism'; and any and all criticism of Israel's master-race behavior is labeled 'anti-Semitism'!

The dissident status of my language in the previous paragraph is determined by the institutionalized legitimation of the discourse within which the dissidence is voiced. In this case the legitimate discourse institutionalized in the United States is the very discourse of Israel itself, as unbelievable as that might be! Dissidence threatens established power relations. Should my discourse prevail, the United States would have to cut funding to Israel on moral grounds, thus appreciably weakening the occupiers of Palestine.

Dissidence, as my statements indicate, is in essence a semiotic phenomenon employing meaningful signs that result in cognitive disorientation of 'true' believers (Zito 1983: 125). Israelis and U.S. Christian fundamentalists find my statements quite disorienting; as a matter of, fact they are sufficient to label me 'an enemy of Israel,' or more derogatorily, 'an anti-Semite.'

Now what is essential to heteroloquy is the cognitive disorientation of true believers. Such cognitive disorientation produces in the faithful a cry of outraged hostility (note

the endless letters to the editor in countless newspapers and journals upon any hint or illusion of tampering with Israel's control of the discourse, such as calling Hizbullah 'freedom fighters'!). It is the outrage provoked by communicative behavior, words and actions, that ultimately counts. Thus, in this perspective, what is worth analyzing in establishment violence is what did the dissident communicate in word and/or deed to provoke the outrage.

> What we recognize in a statement as heretical is its ability to produce in the faithful a cry of outraged hostility. This had led in the past to vindictive persecution of the heretic, who is then literally or figuratively burned at the stake. A collective response is invoked that sometimes leads the community to betray, although always in the name of collective unity, the very principle that is at stake in the first place. The true believers sense that in some way their innermost selves have been violated, their moral values usurped, their very existence as a moral community placed in jeopardy (Zito 1983: 126).

In this regard, if Jesus is accused of dissidence, of heteroloquy, then he must have violated the innermost selves of his opponents as well as of the Jerusalem crowd. Their reaction indicates that he usurped their moral values and placed their existence as a moral community in jeopardy. Zito further notes:

> It may be, of course, that it is the likelihood of some deviant, non-normative activity implied but unstated by the heretic which constitutes the greatest threat: the true believer may be able to project the possible consequences of the heretical statement and be appalled at what he finds. An imaginary deviance may appear more gross and blasphemous than an actual deviance, particularly if the latter is `only words.' Historically this seems to have been the case, as an examination of religious heresies clearly indicates (Zito 1983: 126).

Thus heteroloquy that provokes establishment violence is a dissident way of speaking about the world and its value objects that causes outrage in some hearer(s). Some authoritative moral entrepreneurs enjoying prominence in a community have to label such statements as discordant discourse, as deviant (in my example: as 'anti-Semitic,' the pan-Israeli putdown). In this way the labeled heteroloquy becomes an attack, once veiled now quite open, upon an institutionalized way of speaking about the world. Further the outrage may be caused by what is actually said and done as well as by what is actually not said and not done and by implications perceived as unwholesome consequences. If we admit x, then y and z are sure to follow. If Israel is a racist state, then cuts in U.S. funding and rejection by democratic states would be sure to follow.

However in any case, heteroloquy (heterodoxy, heteropraxy, heresy) are always rooted in and derive from the ideology of the group. Heteroloquy brings out the possible implication for deviance in the shared ideology. For dissident statements are always based upon prevailing discourse, yet they lead to quite different consequences than one's faith has led one to expect. Zito offers the following examples:

Zionism is racism. Feminism is sexism. Equal opportunity is anti-egalitarian. University graduates are not educable. The first mistake of U.S. foreign policy was the American revolution. Marx suffered from false consciousness. Freud had sex problems.

Of course the list may be expanded: The sincere reading of the Bible is the root of fundamentalistic intolerance. Private property causes socialism. Respect for superiors develops authoritarian personalities. Delaying marriage to adulthood causes sexual profligacy. *Das Kapital* is a Marxist-Leninist fetish. And so on.

Each of these statements is, or can be, heteroloquy, and this for the following reasons: First of all, each can be rationally defended in terms of the same ideology that produced its opposite. Secondly, each threatens to disrupt some ideologically vested power position and has possible consequences in terms of action. Thirdly, each is framed for some institutional context. Fourthly, each provokes surprise or outrage among true believers, but laughter or indifference among outsiders. In this, heteroloquy statements are like ethnic jokes, only like ethnic jokes told by outsiders and heard by an ethnic. For among themselves, insiders laugh at ethnic jokes or are indifferent to them.

Among the statements of Jesus in the Gospel story, some are direct challenges: He tells some Pharisees and their scribes: 'You brood of vipers! how can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks' (Matt 12:34). And again he labels them 'an evil and adulterous generation' (Matt 12:39; 16:4; Mark 8:38). For persons who traced their honor to Abraham by pure genealogy, to be called 'snake bastards,' and 'wicked bastards' should provoke irrevocable enmity. The same two categories are the objects of the series in Matt 23:13-29 with the refrain: 'How shameless you are, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!' Then consider the 'woes' leveled at various elites in the population: 'But how shameless you are, you that are rich . . . How shameless are you, you that are full now . . . How shameless are you, you that laugh now . . . How shameless you are, that all men speak well of you' (Luke 6:24-26; translation after K.C. Hanson in *Semeia*, forthcoming).

Such challenges to honor are not heteroloquy. They really do not disturb the prevailing ideology. However such is not the case with a statement such as 'Your sins are forgiven,' with its intimation of knowledge of God's activity (Mark 2:9//Matt 9:2//Luke 5:20; 7:48). Similarly, statements such as 'how honorable are the [you] poor' (Matt 5:3; Luke 6:20) would displace divine approval from the elites to the socially dishonored, resulting in quite a tear in the prevailing discourse. And a statement such as 'But many that are first will be last, and the last first' (Mark 10:31; Matt 19:30) would overturn the social fabric, if taken seriously. Likewise to advise that social reconciliation has primacy over Temple sacrifice as in: 'Leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift' (Matt 5:24) is to tamper with prevailing ideology. And the same holds

for the statement: 'What comes out of a man is what defiles a man' (Mark 7:20; Matt 15:18).

A final point to observe concerns the difference between heretics and apostates. Heretical dissidents speak the same language used in prevailing discourse. They can be and are understood. Jesus could be and was understood by his contemporaries, but hardly by ours. For this reason heresy is a type of heteroloquy. On the other hand, apostate dissidents speak a language different from prevailing discourse; they simply cannot be understood, hence best ignored (perhaps those speaking the language of John's gospel belong here). To be creditable, a dissident must always appeal to those same values that enable the prevailing ortholoquy to maintain its monopoly, extending these values to itself. When the guardians of ortholoquy are remiss in their duty, establishment violence will emerge to restore cognitive certitude and to assuage outrage.

5.2. Characteristics of Deviant Dissidents

People in a given society view subversives and dissidents as standing for the intimate union of inside and outside, of within and without, of nearness and remoteness (see Kurtz 1983, on these characteristics). Jesus and disciples, for example, were open to 'sinners' and non-sinners alike. Similarly, Paul and his 'in Christ' group members welcomed Israelite and foreigner alike. Such openness utterly confuses commitment or loyalty or solidarity boundaries. If only for this reason, subversives must be obliterated and eliminated. They are within the group, circle, or institution, and therefore close enough to be threatening, but distant enough to be considered wrong, unacceptable, incorrect, evil. The heretic then is always a wayward insider (only insiders or those in covenant or kin relations can be tempted, tested, and the like). Subversives are traitors in the camp, people without commitment to those other fellow humans who form the society of the subversive's birth or legal birth. Subversive behavior always bears a close resemblance to orthopraxy. Jesus could pass for 'John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the prophets (see Mark 8:28), even though in the end he was judged to be subversive. It is developed within the framework of orthopraxy and is claimed by its proponents to be truly correct, acceptable and proper. Like the subversive, subversion itself is both near and remote at the same time.

A second characteristic of subversive behavior is that its meaning derives from interpretations developed in the course of conflict. The interests or duties (they are identical) of conflicting parties become attached either to a defense of alleged subversion or to the condemnation of it. These interests or duties encode the values of the moral entrepreneurs who come forth against the subversion and the values of those accused of subversion -- themselves moral entrepreneurs in favor of questioning the boundaries marked off by the existing value set. The problem of subversion, therefore, is essentially a problem of legitimating peripheral or supporting values in terms of a commonly shared set of core values.

Subversion has social consequences, often of a positive sort. It is not only disruptive, but can be used for the creation of intragroup solidarity and for social control. Through the dissidence process, moral entrepreneurs as public professors of institutional values, can rally support for their positions through battle with a common enemy. Note how Barabbas and his cause get accepted by the chief priests and the Jerusalemite crowd thanks to the envy of the elites in their opposition to Jesus (Mark 15:6-14).

Often, then, institutional elites, as moral entrepreneurs, are actually involved in the formation of subversive movement groups. They do so, first of all, by beginning to portray a trend of behavior in a particular way, defining it as having a form, substance and consistency that it might not have had until suggested by the elites. For example, in the Markan story line, Jesus heals: he exorcises, restores health, and assures people that God forgives them; the fact that Pharisees and monarchist Herodians decide Jesus has to be killed (Mark 3:6) indicates that his behavior was interpreted as an assertion of power over the polity, a Messianic ploy. Then, adherents of questionable views may be driven together to form a movement for their common defense against an attack on their views by institutional elites. For example, again in Mark, the Pharisees and Herodians, often at odds, joined forces to kill Jesus in Mark 3:6, only to be egged on and, of course, co-opted by the Temple authorities in Mark 12:12-13.

The process of labelling subversion has both ideological as well as behavioral consequences. The articulation of orthopraxy is formulated in the heat of conflict, often through explicit disagreement with a position held by subversives, at times at the expense and at times for the benefit of the social system in question. In the Synoptic story line, the authors underscore increasing disagreement between Jesus and the defenders of orthopraxy, from the beginning to end (Mark 2:16-17 -- 11:27-33). As positions polarize and people choose sides, it becomes increasingly difficult to be tolerant and allow choices among positions that have conflicting political implications. So in the end, the Jerusalem authorities 'tried to arrest him, but feared the crowd' (Mark 12:12), so they awaited for a more favorable opportunity. Thus to understand and interpret orthopraxy and orthodoxy, the historical contexts in which they were formed and the types of subversives which arose in opposition to them must be understood.

Moreover, the process of defining and denouncing subversion and subversives as deviant is a ritual (Malina and Neyrey 1988). Most rituals serve to relieve anxiety, and so too the suppression of subversion.

> Rituals serve to relieve social and psychological tensions and to focus anxiety on that which is controllable. Anxiety over the weather is channeled into anxiety over the proper performance of weather-oriented rituals such as the rain dance. Anxiety over longevity can be translated into concern over keeping certain religious commandments ('That it may go well with thee and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth' [Deut 4:40])' (Kurtz 1983: 1090-91).

As with the rain dance, it is not clear that the denunciation of subversion is effective in fulfilling the explicit purpose of the ritual. Nonetheless, such denunciations provide ritual occasion for authorities to do something about the difficulties the social group is facing. In the gospels, the ritual of status degradation to which Jesus is subject simply underscores the difficulties faced by elite Judean corporate groups -- Sadducees, Pharisees, and Herodians -- in face of Roman institutional dominance.

So vigilantism as ritual points to anxieties and or difficulties that group members are facing at the boundaries of their ingroup. The ritual rationalizes hate, underscores differences, and celebrates the commitment or loyalty which vigilante group members feel for and owe each other. As for who will be singled out by vigilante moral entrepreneurs for their rituals, we might note with Kurtz (1983:1091) that 'there is also a certain negative aspect of affinities between ideas and interests in that certain foes are ideal foes.' Thus new prophets and their messages were the ideal subversives for the Judean establishment to attack, and those disobedient to old prophecy were the ideal foes for the opponents. Similarly, Judean particularism, replicated in the henotheism of the *Shema* ('Your God' Deut 6:4), a 'Chosen People' ideology, and separationist 'kosher' practices, was the ideal deviance for non-Judeans to attack, while idolatry, replicating Hellenistic pluralism and 'catholicism,' was the ideal foe for Judeans.

Conclusion

Establishment violence is always a concern for maintaining the social situation the way it is. Those who participate in establishment violence are called vigilantes. Vigilantes have firm commitment to the status quo and wish to keep it untouched and inviolate.

Like patronage, clientelism, coalition-building and faction-formation, establishment violence too is generally found in societies with uncertain social environments. Governments are rather ineffective in realizing collective goals on behalf of the general populace. Violence by established groups to preserve the status quo emerges at times when the formal system of rule enforcement is viewed as ineffective or irrelevant. Life in such a society is characterized by deception, uncertainty, precariousness. Hence, anything seemingly threatening to the status quo of elites will catch the attention of moral entrepreneurs. Persons responsible for the threat will be labeled criminals, subversives, or dissidents, and made the ready target of establishment violence. Such in sum was the world of the New Testament.

So long as Jesus confined his work to Galilee and so long as the Galilean crowds supported him, he had nothing to fear from elites, it seems. This is because a low profile, along with admiration by a large enough outgroup, would prevent a presumably deviant person or group from becoming the target of violence. But should the person's or group's profile become too prominent or should they lose admiration in the eyes of the broader outgroup, vigilante 'justice' would be only a matter of time

and occasion. So once Jesus' Galilean success spilled over into Judea, and once the Jerusalemite crowds withdrew their support, elites could restore the status quo by eliminating Jesus. In sum, we can say that sporadic conflict in the ancient Mediterranean (often labeled anti-Judaism or persecution of Christians) was typical. That this conflict emerged as establishment violence was predictable. Only time and occasion were unknown. The fate of Jesus and Paul were normal, given the social context.

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