

ACTIVENESS/PASSIVENESS

As a value preference, “being” is favored over “doing” by people in the Bible, and living in harmony with or being in subjection to nature is preferred to seeking to master it. Consequently, it is no surprise to find that the group oriented (see **GROUP ORIENTATION**), dyadic personalities (see **DYADISM**) who people the pages of the Bible tend to deal with problem situations as follows: activeness is generally favored as a characteristic of affairs among human beings, whereas passiveness is favored in affairs having to do with God. Understood in this way, activeness and passiveness are secondary values since they are peculiar to specific arenas of human interaction.

Humanity: The people of Israel have the obligation to uphold the divinely instituted law and cultural traditions which govern their affairs. In this way, the holiness of Israel is assured (Exod 24:7–8; Deut 5:28–33). In the culture known to the Bible’s authors, the ideally energetic pursuit of holiness demands constant vigilance in observing the law (Ps 119), avoiding impurity and pollution (Leviticus), and adhering to the requirements of one’s social status (Sir 7:1–17). Considerable social energy is expended in the effort to keep boundaries (legal, religious, societal) obvious and to make crossing them dangerous (Lev 18; 20). Thus, the culture’s resources are marshalled to maintain a relatively static equilibrium. This can be achieved only with the full and active cooperation of a society convinced of the rightness of its way of life (Ps 115).

God: God demands vigorous observance of the law and enthusiastic endorsement of the tradition from his people (Josh 24), but in his presence, i.e., in the face of his proclamations or great works, passiveness born of worship, i.e., awe and “fear of the Lord” (the *mysterium tremendum*), are the only legitimate responses (Ps 46:11; Isa 41:1, 47:5; Zech 2:17; Mark 16:8).

Indeed, the two attitudes, activeness and passiveness, are integrally interconnected and reciprocal—the first flowing from the second. That is, the self-revelation of God to Israel is the foundation of Israel's self-understanding as the people of the Covenant. Therefore, the law and the traditions which maintain the people's holiness as God's own must be upheld (activeness) lest God remove his presence, abrogate the covenant, and shatter the peace and security (passiveness) his presence affords (1 Sam 15:22–23; Ezek 10–11; 1 Cor 11:17–30).

In modern Western culture, ideas of activeness/passiveness are conceived along different lines. The relative autonomy of individuals is assumed, their obligations to the group are limited, and responsibilities to the self may legitimately transcend the group's demands. Furthermore, activeness in virtually every sphere of life (including the religious) is more generally favored in our culture than passiveness. (According to the model of value preferences presented in the Introduction, Western culture in general holds “doing” as a primary value, while “being,” an occasionally more passive stance, is generally the third preference.) A pluralistic, technocratic society like the United States's encourages change, consciously tolerates a wide variety of religious and political expression, and prizes social mobility. In contrast, Mediterranean culture's stress on maintaining the status quo seems to a modern Western observer overbearing in its control of individual persons, overconfident of its knowledge of God's will, resistant to social evolution, and hence, outmoded. (Mark McVann)

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AGONISTIC SOCIETY—SEE POWER**AGRARIAN SOCIETY**

The term “agrarian” does not refer simply to agriculture, for the agrarian world is not simply a world of farming and farmers. The term refers to the societies in which mass agriculture, made possible by the invention of the plow, wheel, and sail, the discovery of metallurgy, and the domestication of animals, replaced the small-scale hoe agriculture of earlier periods. The result was a rapid increase in agricultural production that created relatively large-scale economic surpluses for the first time in history, enabling an administrative category of persons to live off the surplus. The ripple effect produced coinage, alphabetic writing, standing armies, the spread of the pre-industrial city and the empire state. It was a world in which both city dweller and peasant farmer shared an outlook that was sharply different from that common in the industrial world.

The world of the New Testament was an agrarian world. It differed from modern society in ways that are easily overlooked. A random list can serve to remind us how great the transformation wrought by the industrial revolution really was:

1. In agrarian societies, 90 percent of the population was rural. In industrial societies 90 percent is urban.
2. In agrarian societies 90–95 percent of the population was engaged in so-called “primary” industries: farming and extracting raw materials. In the United States it is currently 4.9 percent.
3. In agrarian societies 2–3 percent of the population was literate. In industrial societies 2–3 percent are not.
4. The birthrate in agrarian societies was about 40 per thousand per year. In the U.S. it is less than half of that. Yet death rates have dropped even more dramatically than birthrates. We thus have the curious phenomenon of far fewer births and rising population.
5. Life expectancy in Rome in the first century BCE was 20 years at birth. If the perilous years of infancy were survived, it rose to

about 40 years—one-half of present expectations in the industrial world.

6. The U.S. Department of Labor lists in excess of 20,000 different occupations in this country, and hundreds are added annually. In an agrarian society for which we have records, the picture is somewhat different: the tax rolls for medieval (1313 CE) Paris list 157.

7. In agrarian societies 1–3 percent of the population usually owns one- to two-thirds of the arable land.

8. The size of the federal bureaucracy in the U.S. in 1816 (the period of transition to the industrial era) was 5, 000 employees. By 1971 it was 2,852,000 and still growing.

9. More than one-half of all families in agrarian societies were broken during the child-bearing and child-rearing years by the death of one or both parents. In India at the turn of the twentieth century it was 71 percent. Widows and orphans were thus an extremely widespread phenomenon.

10. In agrarian societies the family was the unit of production as well as consumption. Since the industrial revolution, family enterprise has nearly disappeared, and the individual has become the unit of production. The productive capacity of most industrial societies exceeds that of the most advanced agrarian societies by more than one hundredfold.

11. The largest “factories” in Roman antiquity did not exceed 50 workers; in the records of medieval London (pop. 35,000) the largest employed 18. The industrial corporation, a modern invention, did not exist in any agrarian society.

12. In 1850 the “prime movers” in the U.S. (i.e., steam engines in factories, sailing vessels, work animals, etc.) had a combined capacity of 8.5 million horsepower. By 1970 this had risen to 20 billion horsepower.

13. The cost of moving one ton of goods one mile (measured in U.S. dollars in China at the beginning of the industrial revolution) was:

Steamboat	2.4	Wheelbarrow	20.0
Rail	2.7	Pack donkey	24.0
Junk	12.0	Pack horse	30.0
Animal-drawn cart	13.0	Carrying by pole	48.0
Pack mule	17.0		

Obviously, land-based trade in agrarian societies was sharply limited in both distance and quantity.

14. Given the shock and consternation caused by the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the forced resignation of Richard M. Nixon, we sometimes forget that this sort of internal political upheaval is nothing like what it was in the agrarian world. Of the 79 Roman emperors, 31 were murdered, 6 were driven to suicide and 4 were deposed by force. Moreover, such upheavals in antiquity were frequently accompanied by civil war and the enslavement of thousands.

This list could extend much longer. Moreover, this list of information is random in nature. It may provide a feel, however, for the kind of change that has occurred as a result of the industrial revolution. It may also serve to alert the reader of the Bible to the fact that values in agrarian societies were sharply different from anything we know today.

For example, agrarian peasants favored a present orientation over future planning and subjection to or harmony with nature rather than attempts at controlling it. Peasants (the elite were a different matter) focused on “being” and surviving within a social system rather than on “doing,” achieving, amassing surplus and hoarding it.

Such examples as these remind us that the outlook and value system of most persons living in the modern, industrialized, and information-oriented society is literally worlds apart from that of the agrarian society of the Bible. They make clear the need to reflect upon agrarian society and its values in order to empathize with the first audiences of the biblical books. (Richard Rohrbaugh)

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ALMSGIVING—SEE ALTRUISM

ALLEGIANCE (PERSONAL AND GROUP)—SEE TRUST

ALTRUISM (ALMSGIVING)

This value urges those who have surplus goods or services to give to those who have little or nothing at all. It is part of the pattern of adaptation to the environment typical of subsistence societies, that is, societies which consume nearly all that they produce. Altruism is eminently interpersonal and invariably group specific. The “others” with whom one shares one’s surplus, the “others” from whom one can ask for alms, are nearly always members of one’s kinship group or ethnic group. The neighbor whom one is to love as oneself in Lev 19:18 is one’s fellow Israelite. Altruism in antiquity never takes on universal scope, except perhaps in the ideal state envisioned by Stoic philosophers with their “Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of males.”

“Ask and you shall receive” (Matt 7:7) is a cultural truism in such a context because altruism is an inescapable obligation incumbent upon more fortunate group members in a society which believes that all goods are limited in supply and already distributed (see **LIMITED GOOD**). Anyone with a personal surplus will normally feel shame and/or be considered greedy (Luke 12:15) or rapacious if that surplus is not shared with less fortunate

“neighbors” (Luke 11:41). In Jesus’ parable, the rich landowner who intended to hoard his bumper crop rather than share it with less fortunate fellow citizens is called a “fool” by God (Luke 12:13–21).

The same value of altruism prompts a powerful person sometimes to forgo rights to goods so as to appear magnanimous. The king who forgave his peasant-servant exemplifies this altruism which nevertheless failed to impress that same peasant. When faced with a very similar challenge, this peasant was unable to see beyond his meager subsistence level of existence and was unwilling to forgive in kind (Matt 18:23–35).

In the final analysis, altruism is a means value that facilitates the realization of the core value of maintaining honor and avoiding shame. As such it is a key way of obtaining approval in the community, earning its respect, and increasing one’s own self-respect. The Baptist urged his fellow Israelite with two coats or surplus food to share with the one who had none (Luke 3:11). Jesus proposed lending to one’s fellow Israelite and expecting nothing in return (Luke 6:35) and inviting to the banquet those unable to reciprocate (Luke 14:13–14).

In mainstream United States culture, altruism (alms-giving) takes the form of impersonal and universally oriented generosity that operates in a highly organized context. Examples include riding a bus to a predetermined meeting place 200 miles from one’s hometown to “hold hands across America” and pledge money to help the invisible and distant poor; dropping contributions to Jerry Lewis’s Labor Day Telethon into a fishbowl located curbside at the local radio or television station without having to step out of the car; etc. All the while the economically poor are actually visible all around these “altruistic” people but are ignored or unobserved by them. (John J. Pilch)

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ASSERTIVENESS

The term embodies qualities related to boldness, openness, frankness, and self-confidence in speaking (Greek: *parrhēsia*). In classical and hellenistic Greek societies, assertiveness was practiced in political life which itself was limited to citizens: they alone had authority and responsibility to speak their mind and pursue their rights. Such liberty to speak was a right that enabled a citizen to proclaim truth before his fellows without fear. In the sphere of personal relations, assertiveness was the moral freedom manifested especially toward friends who valued openness in mutual dealings. It was the golden mean that preserved one from being impudent before equals and from fawning before superiors.

This quality appears in biblical writings only in those parts of Scripture written or translated under the influence of hellenistic Judaic writers and in the New Testament. The translator of Job states that the repentant sinner can pray before God with freedom to speak his mind (Job 22:26–27). Later, an unknown sage proclaimed that the just person will abide with God forever in self-confidence (Wis 5:1, 5). This quality therefore is a means value that assists or helps a person to maintain and preserve honor, the core value common to the entire Mediterranean world.

In the Synoptic Gospels Jesus' speech is designated as having assertiveness only once, when he boldly predicts to his disciples that he will be betrayed by the relig-

ious authorities (Mark 8:32). In contrast, frankness is a quality associated with the way Jesus speaks and acts in the Fourth Gospel both toward enemies (John 7:26; 18:20) and with his disciples (John 11:1–14; 16:25, 29). The crowd also demands openness of Jesus in asking him to reveal whether he is the Messiah (John 10:24).

Assertiveness emerges as a characteristic of believers. When Jesus is revealed as judge, his disciples will enjoy this freedom (1 John 2:28; 4:17). Yet they already have this freedom in that, even if their hearts trouble them, believers pray and function as totally open to God, who accepts them as gifted with the Holy Spirit and the love that casts out fear (1 John 3:19–21; 4:18; 5:14; Heb 10:19). The book of Acts esteems assertiveness as a value for Christian preachers. Peter, Paul, and other evangelists employ this freedom in the way they give public witness to the good news, thanks to the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27–28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31).

The Pauline corpus also employs assertiveness to describe the apostle's style of witness (2 Cor 3:12; 7:4; Eph 3:12; 6:19; Phil 1:20; 1 Thess 2:2; Phlm 8). Jesus displayed this freedom in his triumph over the principalities and powers at his resurrection (Col 2:15). The letter to the Hebrews reminds the recipients that they too have this freedom and urges them not to lose it (Heb 3:6; 4:16; 10:19, 35).

Parrhēsia was the mark of full participation in a free society in honest speech and courageous action. It was a means of pursuing the goals of that free society, and thus it is a means value. Christians, with their sense of being set apart from both Judaic and Roman agendas, applied this value to the exercise of their heavenly citizenship in proclamation, witness, and prayer. Martyrdom was and is the final witness of Christian assertiveness. The treason of apostasy meant betrayal of this quality.

Citizens of modern democracies value assertiveness as one of their most important rights. They do not look

upon it as a guardian of traditional values but as a value that must be cultivated with creative vigilance. Contemporary Americans are committed to imaginative styles as the key to leadership in political, economic, and social spheres. Politicians sell their programs by assertiveness. But the intense competitiveness fostered by prevailing social standards drives a wedge between freedom of speech and honesty of action. Hence, liberal self-interest is different from the candor of truth. (†James M. Reese)

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ATTACHMENT (PERSONAL AND GROUP)—SEE LOVE

**AUTHORITARIANISM—SEE ALSO DOMINATION
ORIENTATION; POWER**

This is a value-set rather than a simple, single value. The cluster of values that comprise authoritarianism is rooted in the social experience of authority nearly always sanctioned by force. "Authority" refers to the socially recognized and approved ability to control the behavior of others. For example, parents have authority over their minor children, the police have authority over the citizenry in disorderly or problem situations, physicians over persons committed to hospitals, and the like. Authority is common to all human societies. But what is not common is the nature of sanction(s) involved for not complying with the directions or commands of authority. Such sanctions can be fines, property confiscation, public service, required study, return to parents or family, beatings, imprisonment, and the like. When the prevailing, if not exclusive, sanction is *force* (i.e., physical arrest and

imprisonment, the inflicting of physical and psychophysical pain ranging from beating and bombing to torture and death), there is good reason to believe that the society in question is authoritarian.

Authoritarian societies repeat and reinforce the focus on force as sanction with a number of values. These values include the expectation of: (1) total submissiveness (see **O**BEDIENCE) to authority; (2) the tendency to exercise power for its own sake (see **P**OWER); (3) admiration for the application of physical force (see **P**ARENTING); and (4) high regard for a person's ability to endure pain. Further, these force-related values are often clustered with the following features: (5) a tendency to be very conventional (see **C**OMPLIANCE); (6) great sensitivity to group pressure (see **G**ROUP ORIENTATION); (7) anti-introspective personality; (8) a preference for thinking in terms of either/or, black or white; (9) a tendency to shift responsibility from the individual onto outside forces, human and non-human, and to project one's unacceptable impulses onto others, particularly "out-groups"; and (10) a preference for stereotypical thinking.

It would seem that the whole of the ancient Mediterranean world was a world of authoritarianism, characterized by the foregoing features. Any perusal of the Bible will readily reveal how the God of Israel requires total submissiveness. The *Shema* requires total and unvarying attachment to God alone to the exclusion of all other deities (see **L**OVE): "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul and all your might" (Deut 6:5, author's trans.; see Mark 12:30 and parallels). This God is essentially a powerful and mighty God. Aside from the awesome power involved in creation, after the expulsion of the first couple, "the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way" (Gen 3:24) henceforth keep humans out of the garden. The story of God's freeing a people to serve him begins with God's sending all his plagues that all may know "there is none like me in all the earth" (Exod 9:14). Such acts of power result in

God's receiving "glory over Pharaoh and all his host" (Exod 14:4). The Deuteronomistic theologian, for example, saw all of this as the work of God's power and "outstretched arm" (Deut 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8; 1 Kgs 8:42; 2 Kgs 17:36; 2 Chron 6:32; Ps 136:12; Jer 27:5; Ezek 20:33, 34). The point is clearly expressed by Jeremiah: "Ah Lord GOD! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. . . . You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror" (Jer 32:17, 21, NRSV). The point is that God essentially wields Power, and in the tradition of Israel everyone is subject to God's Power. In fact, "Power" is even another name for God (Mark 14:62; Matt 26:64; Luke 22:69 has "power of God"). His word of command is power. He speaks and it is done. He does not attempt to convince or argue; he does not offer promises or rewards apart from not employing his power negatively. The same is true with kings; their essential glory was to command total submissiveness (consult the ideal picture of regal power in 1 Sam 8:11–18).

On the other hand, God also wields "steadfast love" (see **STEADFAST LOVE**) or "mercy" (see **GRACE/FAVOR; GRATITUDE; STEADFAST LOVE**) toward those with whom he is in covenant. He is one "who shows steadfast love to thousands, but requites the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and mighty God whose name is the LORD of hosts" (Jer 32:18, RSV adapted). "Steadfast love" is a technical term referring to the debt of interpersonal obligation one has due to having entered a covenant; it is a form of solidarity between covenant members. The "hosts" of which God is Lord are heavenly armies numbering countless warriors (Matt 26:53 mentions an immediately available force of "twelve legions of angels"; the title "Lord of hosts" occurs 248 times beginning with 1 Sam 1 and following). This warrior Lord is in solidarity

with his own, yet uses force as sanction against them as well as outsiders.

Such focus on power and its sanction, force, moves attention as well to those who have to bear such sanction, specifically those who suffer punishment and torture. The classic biblical example of such a person, of course, is Job. The cultural question is not *why* Job suffers, but *how*, the style in which he endures. The ability to endure harsh pain without uttering a sound is considered quite admirable. For example, take the heroic person described in the songs of Isaiah: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” (Isa 53:7). Similarly, the centurion, observing how Jesus suffered the horrendous Roman torture of crucifixion in silence from the third hour to the ninth hour before he shrieked and died, was prompted to exclaim: “Truly, this man was a son of God!” (Mark 15:39, NEB; Matt 27:54; see also the pain-witness in 2 Macc 6:28–31; 7:1–42). High interest in enjoying the death struggle of living beings, in bull-fighting, animal sacrifice, gladiatorial combat, torture, crucifixion, and the like, all point to the authoritarian personality. Thus, the ability to wield force, to inflict pain, and to endure it are part of the value cluster called authoritarianism (see also **PARENTING**).

Another value in the authoritarian cluster is anti-introspection. Persons who are not at all psychologically minded interact in standardized and conventional ways almost all the time. Such behavioral interaction is replicated linguistically in the use of proverbs and clichés as explanatory devices: “No prophet is acceptable in his own country” (Luke 4:24; also Matt 13:57; Mark 6:4; John 4:44); “Do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself” (Matt 6:34); “Let the day’s own trouble be sufficient for the day” (Matt 6:34); “A disciple is not above his teacher” (Matt 10:24); The “first will be last and the last first” (Matt 19:30; see

20:16). There are countless proverbs of this sort in the gospel story alone. Similarly, the use of Scriptural quotations as standardized and conventional ways of explaining indicates the same anti-introspective approach (e.g., “Scripture says . . . [followed by a quote]” in Matt 4:4, 7, 10; 11:10; 21:13, 42; 22:29; 26:24, 31, 54, 56; similarly in Mark and Luke–Acts; even more frequently in John and in Paul, e.g., Rom 1:17; 2:24; 3:4, 10; 4:3, 17, 23; 8:36; 9:13, 17, 33; 10:5, 11, 15; 11:2, 8, 26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3, 9, 21; 16:26).

There is constant concern about what outsiders might think and do. Jesus’ concern with “who do people say that I am” (Mark 8:27; Matt 16:13; Luke 9:18) is echoed in early Christian writings. Even though God is to judge outsiders (1 Cor 5:12–13), Paul tells Christians to behave properly “so that you are seen to be respectable by those outside the church” (1 Thess 4:12). Hence, Christians must “be tactful to those who are outside” (Col 4:5). In their choice of community leaders, “It is also necessary that people outside the church should speak well of him” (1 Tim 3:7).

Authoritarianism is further indicated by total concern with orthopraxy (proper behavior) and full absorption with questions of the dimensions of orthopraxy. Such a personality will develop a view of orthodoxy (proper belief) that is unambiguous, rigid, and clear. We find evidence of this value in the Roman proverb: “*Dura lex, sed lex*” (It is a severe law, but it is the law) and well known Roman legalism (e.g., see Acts 25:24–27 of Festus dealing with Paul). All the accusations put against Jesus in the gospel story are about orthopraxy: sabbath observance several times, fasting, eating with “sinners,” eating with unwashed hands, authorization to teach in the temple area, and the like. The reason for this is that authoritarian personalities, being anti-introspective, fear the very existence of their individual, own, internal self. They take their life’s cues from the outside rather than from within themselves. There are human persons and

non-human spirits to blame for the evil that befalls them. They wish these external cues to be clear enough and loud enough for the message to ring through and dominate the inner psyche. Concrete behavior which deviates from their own causes dissonance. And it is the dissonance among the various factions in the “house of Israel” (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, John the Baptist’s group, Jesus’ group) that required greater group adherence; hence the need to define “neighbor” as “the sons of your own people” (Lev 19:18). Jesus’ message was for “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and this explicitly excluded Samaritans and non-Israelites (Matt 10:5–6); yet in the end, “all nations” are included (Matt 28:19). Similarly, in Luke, Samaritans are included (Luke 10:33), while in Acts God brings in Gentiles as well (Acts 10:34–35). Yet obviously the Christian groups of the first century remained extremely small and were confined to a group of “brothers,” the main term for Christian group members (e.g., Matt 5:22, 23, 24, 47 etc., especially Matt 18:15, 21, 35; and frequently in early Christian letters; the title indicates that they considered themselves a fictive kinship group over against other such groups).

The preference for thinking in terms of either/or is clear in the common proverb found throughout the gospel narrative in various forms: “For he that is not against us is for us” (Mark 9:40); “For he that is not against you is for you” (Luke 9:50); “He who is not with me is against me and he who does not gather with me scatters” (Matt 12:30; Luke 11:23). There are either blessings (Deut 33:2–29) or curses (Deut 27:15–26); blesseds (“truly honorable or esteemed” Matt 5:3–11) or woes (“truly shameful” Matt 23:13–34); left hand and right hand, sheep and goats (Matt 25:31–46). There is no room for a compromising middle ground, for as the oracle in Revelation declares: “So because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth” (Rev 3:16). (See also **EMOTION/DEMONSTRATION OF FEELINGS.**)

Authoritarian persons seem to be highly controlled personality types, quite suspicious and fearful of those who do not belong to their groups. Every group possesses negative information concerning people who are not of their group, even those never met before. Of course such information is group-specific and stereotypical rather than individualistic and psychological. As a rule, other ethnic groups are characterized by their own geographical location, that allows for geographically rooted ethnic stereotypes. For example, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46); Tiberians have “a passion for war” (Josephus, *Life* 352); Scythians “delight in murdering people and are little better than wild beasts” (Josephus, *Against Apion* 269); “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons” (Titus 1:12); in “the seamanship of its people . . . the Phoenicians in general have been superior to all peoples of all times” (Strabo, *Geography* 16. 2. 23); “this is a trait common to all the Arabian kings” that they do “not care much about public affairs and particularly military affairs” (Strabo, *Geography* 16. 4. 24).

In the prevailing culture of the United States, authoritarianism is a second order value, that is, it occurs only in certain social locations (the military, the practice of medicine, some parts of the corporate business world) and in certain circumstances (war, medical emergencies). The primary value orientation is egalitarianism which accompanies the high value placed on individualism. In the United States, even parents are eager to move their offspring away from levels of authoritarian-style discipline to a discipline rooted in respect for individual freedom, mutual dialogue and persuasion. Such outlooks also characterize the political and religious spheres. The clear, primary preference is for the values of democracy and congregationalism and a rejection of authoritarianism and hierarchic structures. (Bruce J. Malina)

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BELIEF—SEE FAITH/FAITHFULNESS

CHANGE/NOVELTY ORIENTATION

The seeking of change or novelty is normally disapproved of throughout the Bible. Indeed, the general orientation is precisely to the opposite, i.e., to stability and constancy (Deut 6:4–9; Ps 105:44–45). Because cultural and religious traditions provide the grounds for social values and the standards against which anything new is measured, change and novelty are usually met with hostility: change is fraught with fear of the unknown, bringing pollution and chaos in its wake; novelty doubts the value of tradition by manifesting disloyalty toward it (1 Sam 8, cf. Hos 8:1–4; 9:15; 1 Kgs 14:7–16; Ps 119:9–10, 35–37; Prov 28:9; Sir 1:21–24 Jer 6:18–21, 11:1–13; Mark 3:23–24, 13:21–23; 2 Cor 11:1–5; Gal 5:7–12).

Change or novelty in traditional religion or religious doctrine and practice meet with especially violent rejection. In situations where the tradition and its values are believed to be seriously at risk, compromise is categorically rejected, and a struggle is waged to reassert the ascendancy of, or to remain faithful to, the tradition, no matter the personal or social cost (1 Macc 2; 2 Macc 6:18–7:41; Ezra 10:9–14, 44, cf. Neh 13:23–31; Matt 5:10–12; Mark 13:9–13; 2 Cor 11:22–31, 12:10, cf. Acts 19:23–40). In Mediterranean culture, therefore, change or novelty is a means value which serves to innovate or subvert core and secondary values.

An example related to the disapproval of change and novelty may be found in the cultural and religious

tradition's ancient and unambiguous definition of the role of women: they are subject to men (Exod 20:14, 17, 21:7–11; Sir 7:26, 9:2). Attempts to change the role of women or to introduce novelty into established roles are spurned (Eccl 7:26–29; Sir 25:12–26:18; 1 Cor 11:2–16; Eph 5:22–24).

Religious doctrine and practice as well as the role of women are regarded as having been divinely mandated. Therefore, tampering with them is tantamount to a rejection of God and an expression of contempt for the people who belong to him (Lev 24:10–16; John 4:27).

As is the case with curiosity (see **CURIOSITY**), however, there is a biblically advocated form of change: conversion, which is always a call to return wholeheartedly to the demands of the covenant, and therefore, to a right relationship with God (Jer 7:1–7; Hos 14:2–10; Matt 3:7–12, 4:17). Indeed, it is axiomatic that right relationship to God is the foundation and source of all good (Deut 6:1–3; Matt 6:9–13), and sin (i.e., rejection of God) is the foundation and source of all evil (Deut 6:12–15; Rom 6:12–14). Consequently, change and novelty assessed in this covenantal light, the only authentic one (Hos 5:6–7; Mark 7:6–13), are means values that would support the core value of honor as defined in this specific context.

Conformity to the requirements of God's changeless law upon which biblical society believes itself to be erected is at the core of its resistance to change and disapproval of novelty (Deut 32–33, cf. Sir 8:9; Matt 24:35). It must be stressed, therefore, that the theological proposition of rightness of relationship to God is not a weightless idea to which merely intellectual assent is given in biblical culture. On the contrary, it is concretely embedded in cultural ideology and societal structure as loyalty to tradition and is embodied by keeping the law (Exod 22:17–19; Ps 119).

Loyalty to the tradition and law is supposed to make life uncomplicated and straightforward: the pious are praised, sinners shunned (Sir 10:20–22), assertive women

ridiculed (Prov 11:22), devoted wife and mother extolled (Prov 31:10–31); rebellious son castigated, obedient lauded (e.g., Sir 3:1–16); lawbreakers reviled, upholders of the law revered (Ps 37), covenanted people (Jews and Christians) have light; outsiders live in darkness (e.g., Mark 4:11), etc. Even so, life is very hard (especially for the wicked: Sir 40:1–11), and much about it is painfully unintelligible or deeply mysterious (Jer 12:1–4; Job 38–42:6; 1 Cor 1:26–28). God alone is the master of life and the world, and he is utterly beyond human understanding (Isa 40:13–14, 55:8–9; Wis 9:13; Mark 10:27). Since this is the case, curiosity is either frivolous or perilous because it questions the time-tested communal wisdom which rejects it.

Clearly, we in the modern Western world do not share this view of change and novelty. While we acknowledge the painfulness of change, it is so much a fact of modern Western life and popular culture, and its benefits are so often believed to be abundantly obvious (especially scientific, medical, technological, and economic “advances”), that hostility to change is regarded as more dangerous than change itself. The same is true of novelty: not only are we extremely tolerant of it, but we seek it out on a consistent basis. This is why change and novelty are indeed salient characteristics of contemporary Western culture. (Mark McVann)

Gulick, J. 1976. “The Ethos of Insecurity of Middle Eastern Culture.” In *Responses to Change: Society, Culture, and Personality*. Ed. G. DeVos. New York: Van Nostrand.

CHARITY—SEE LOVE

CLOTHING

Ancient Israelites ordinarily wore a linen tunic over some form of underwear, a woolen cloak, a belt around the chest, and sandals. Felt made of goats’ hair was used for hats and socks. For special occasions they wore festal