The Defiant Legacy: Southern Clergy and a Rhetoric of Redemption for the Reconstruction South.

Hal W. Fulmer

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/4052

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or “target” for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is “Missing Page(s)”. If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of “sectioning” the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.

University Microfilms International
300 N. Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
Fulmer, Hal W.

THE DEFIANT LEGACY: SOUTHERN CLERGY AND A RHETORIC OF REDEMPTION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col. Ph.D. 1985

University Microfilms International 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106
THE DEFIANT LEGACY:
SOUTHERN CLERGY AND A RHETORIC OF REDEMPTION
FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of
Speech Communication, Theatre, and Communicative Disorders

by

Hal W. Fulmer
A.A., Albany Junior College, 1979
B.S., Georgia Southern College, 1981
M.A., University of Georgia, 1982
May 1985
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most scholarly work is rarely the single effort of one person, and this dissertation is no exception. I would like to thank the members of my committee: Mary Frances HopKins, Harold Mixon, and Owen Peterson. My special thanks go to three of the committee: John Patton, who instructed me in the ways of rhetorical theory and criticism; Tom Carleton, who guided me through the maze of history; and Kaylene Long, who directed the project and served as mentor, counselor, and friend.

I would like to thank my family for their unending support and encouragement; to my Father for introducing me to southern battlefields and war heroes while I was young, and to my Mother for challenging me to see the South for all it is and love it for all it can be. Thanks, too, to my Mother and sister, Karen, for proof-reading the entire dissertation.

My appreciation also goes to John and Kathy Beasley, southern friends, "without whom not..."; and to Cal Logue, rhetorician, who suggested this research topic one warm June morning in Athens, Georgia.

Thanks to the graduate students and professors at L.S.U. and to my students for their special kind of patience and tolerance as I worked out my thoughts in their presence. Of this group, a special acknowledgement to Waldo Braden, Chuck Yarbrough, and Ron Capps.
Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to three special people, all of whom have left their beloved Southland and passed over on to the other shore: to Katie DeEllen and H.V., for being proud grandparents; and to Ralph P. Forman, for being uncle, story-teller, poker-player, and friend.

From all these individuals, I have benefitted and taken far more than I have given. The praise for this work is shared collectively by all of them. Any blame I accept as mine, but like the southern clergy of Reconstruction, I look forward to refinement of thought and scholarly redemption.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One:  
**RECONSTRUCTION AND THE SOUTHERN PROTESTANT CHURCH**  
- Introduction 1  
- The South and Evangelical Protestantism 4  
- Purpose and Significance of the Study 9  
- Procedure and Overview 15  
- Survey of the Literature 20  
- Conclusion and Transition 27  
- Notes 28

Chapter Two:  
**THE SOUTHERN PROTESTANT CHURCH DURING RECONSTRUCTION: A SYSTEMS APPROACH**  
- Introduction 33  
- Expectations 37  
- The Churches as Church: A Situational Perspective 38  
- The Southern Protestant Church: A Systems Approach 43  
- Implications 46  
- Notes 51

Chapter Three:  
**A RHETORIC OF DEFINITION AND DEFENSE:**  
**SOUTHERN CLERGY AND OLD SOUTH PRINCIPLES**  
- Introduction 55  
- A Note on Method 57  
- The Power of the Word 57  
- A Definition of the Old South: Its Principles as Essence 60  
- The War and Defeat: A Superiority of Principles 64  
- The Salvation of the South: A Return to Principles 70  
- Conclusions and Implications 76  
- Notes 86
ABSTRACT

This study investigated the rhetorical activities of the unreconstructed southern Protestant clergy during the Reconstruction period of 1865-1877. These years were marked by great social, psychological, and economic chaos with a variety of southern spokesmen attempting to re-establish a sense of order for the people of the region.

The clergy were an active and dominating force in the region following the Great Awakenings. These clerics were strong supporters of slavery and secession in the antebellum South. Using a theoretical approach from organization communication, this dissertation suggests that the various southern Reconstruction denominations may be understood as a single Southern Protestant Church in its political views. With such a framework, the denominational rhetoric of this period becomes important elements in sustaining the Southern Protestant Church's role as guardian of order and chief representative of God.

The clergy consistently turned to the past in their efforts to create order. From the definitions and defenses of certain integral aspects of the Old South, audiences were given a hope of cultural redemption to replace the political nationalism which ended at Appomattox.
Specifically, the clergy defined the essence of the Old South as its principles, an ambiguous term around which they clustered distinctly southern images and ideas. These principles endured the military loss and promised to lead the Reconstruction South out of chaos.

The clergy also defended the South's racial policies. Clerical rhetoric offered a temporal vision of order, which defined antebellum slavery and postbellum segregation as reflective of God's will for the region.

Clerics used the death of Robert E. Lee to comment on the Reconstruction period as well. From the mythic images presented in the Lee eulogies, the entire region was sacralized and collectively redeemed.

This research suggests an impact of such clerical rhetoric was profound. The clergy kept alive rhetorically the Old South even in the midst of its political demise. Further, this rhetoric carried strong potential for creating a distinct culture—the sacred South. Such a southern culture, it is argued, extended well into the twentieth century. Therefore, an understanding of the contemporary South must take into account the clerical activities during Reconstruction.
RECONSTRUCTION AND THE SOUTHERN PROTESTANT CHURCH

"The soil of the South is just as dear to us, as the cause which has sanctified it with blood."
(B. M. Palmer to Thomas Carter, 1868) ¹

The War for Southern Independence did not end in 1865 at a Virginia courthouse. Appomattox signaled the transformation of the civil conflict from battlefield to attitude. The era of Reconstruction was characterized by a continued southern drive for sectional identity. The Old South's desire for self-preservation had led the region to secession and war. Political independence squelched, the Confederation nation—that-was sought a cultural freedom during the century which followed Lee's surrender.

This transformation of conflict from Civil War to the years known as Reconstruction began amid the greatest social, economic, and political chaos in America's history. Merton Coulter opened his volume on this period with the cryptic statement, "The Civil War was not worth its cost."² Most other historians also introduce the era by recounting the desolate conditions of the region.³ A quarter million young men had died; countless others were wounded, handicapped, and diseased. The physical terrain of much of the region was destroyed from the hundreds of battles and skirmishes fought

¹

²

³
on southern soil.

Writing in the May, 1866 edition of DeBow's Review, A. Greene of Montgomery noted, "In fact, in almost every part of the South the march of hostile armies, the deadly carnage of fiercely contested battles, and all the horrors and devastations of ruthless war may be traced in ruins, blood, and new-made graves." 4

There were virtually no transportation facilities in the region. Two-thirds of the railroads had been destroyed by advancing northern troops. The southern society suffered a profound lack of mobility. John Ezell, in The South Since 1865, suggested that "Roads were impassable or nonexistent, and bridges were destroyed or washed away." 5

The southern economy was in shambles with Confederate dollars all but worthless. Industry, fledgling at the outbreak of war, now seemed stillborn. With the loss of slave labor and spring plantings, agriculture was equally pitiful. Everyone, Ezell noted, "was impoverished." 6 Coulter cited the letter of a Mississippi man who complained, "Our fields everywhere lie untilled. Naked chimneys, and charred ruins all over the land mark the spots where happy homes ... once stood." 7

Violence from scavengers of both armies plagued the populace. Southern governments were often instituted, ousted, and re-instituted within weeks. The court and police systems had collapsed. Churches and schools, pillars of sacred and secular education, were in ruins. Of this South, W. J. Cash
wrote: "And the land was stripped and bled white--made indeed, a frontier once more."\textsuperscript{8}

The physical devastation was matched by the emotional despair. Coulter noted this condition, but also suggested that this shock gave birth to a particularly defiant attitude in the region. "The greatest loss that a people can suffer," Coulter wrote, "greater than any material destruction, is their spirit. Some Southerners so suffered, but in the end the mass surmounted their deep despair, and in so doing, the South won its greatest victory."\textsuperscript{9} Such a triumph may have eventually occurred; indeed, this study argues that the clergy in the South made a significant contribution to this emotional victory. Thomas Connelly, however, observed that the despair in April, 1865, resulted because the South was "spiritually unprepared for Appomattox."\textsuperscript{10}

In addition to the physical and emotional destruction, there were now several million former slaves, freed from the bonds of slavery but not from ignorance, poverty, or persecution. Many of the newly freed wandered the countryside or settled in "contraband camps." Ezell painted a depressing picture of these freedmen's pathetic plight: "Epidemics swept through them unchecked; smallpox and tuberculosis were rampant. Without proper food, clothing, shelter, or medical care the death toll from starvation, disease, and violence reached the tens of thousands."\textsuperscript{11}

The uncertainty of social roles between white and black contributed to the confusion. The slaves were free, but to
most of their former owners, the southern defeat would never justify political and social equality for the inferior black. These unclear social positions were complicated by the invasion of northern carpetbaggers, missionaries, and reformers.

Finally, perhaps as a portent of the violence to come, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated just as Reconstruction began. The short tenure of Andrew Johnson's presidency was marked by constant legislative war between Johnson and the Radical Congress. The culmination of such conflict was his impeachment and near conviction.

In general, any view of Reconstruction suggests great social, political, and economic chaos. Even as he attempted to strip away the many falsehoods surrounding the period, Kenneth Stampp noted that revisionists still recognize "the corruption was real, the failures obvious, the tragedy undeniable." Revisionists have shed much-needed light on these years of turbulence. The dominance of chaos suggested by Stampp, Coulter, Ezell, and Cash remains unchallenged.

The South and Evangelical Protestantism

The chaos of Reconstruction was one force at work in the defeated South. There was another active and opposing force in the region as well--Evangelical Protestantism.

The dramatic rise of the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians in the South had been heralded by the intense and equally dramatic Great Awakenings. The foundation of this
emotional revival was a doctrine of salvation available to all people. This religious wildfire swept through the region twice, in the late eighteenth century along the eastern seaboard, and again in the early nineteenth century in the frontiers like Kentucky. The greatest impact of this revival fell upon the middle and lower classes.

Several excellent works document the significant role of Protestant religion in the Old South. Almost from their inception in the region, the Evangelical clergy were involved in political affairs. At times, these issues concerned temperance and general social reform. Early in the nineteenth century, the southern clergy had even decried the necessary evil of slavery in the region. There were growing efforts to Christianize both slave and master in an attempt to improve the sinful state of southern society.

By the 1830s, however, Protestant clergy increasingly defended the worth of a slave system, suggesting that slavery represented the best of all possible societies. When faced with choosing between Southland and denominational unity, the southern clergy threw their support behind the Old South. Foreshadowing the impending crisis, the Baptist and Methodist churches split into sectional factions in the 1840s over the issue of slavery. The Presbyterians formally divided before Fort Sumter, and the Episcopals also suffered from sectional divisiveness among their leading clergy.

The southern clergy were central figures in the ante-bellum society as "educators, guardians of the collective
life, and models of the good life for the privileged. The
impact and influence of the southern churches cannot be dis­
missed. More influential than literature or the press, the
southern religion was foremost in molding the minds of the
region's white inhabitants. Southern pastors in the critical
decade before Fort Sumter were key catalysts for continued
slavery and the need to secede. The primary accomplishment
of the prewar churches, as Samuel Hill noted, was the "form­
atation of denominational solidarity, even regional separate­
ness" for the leading proponents of Evangelical Protestantism
in the South. As Emory Thomas reminded the critic of the
era, the glue for southern nationalism was religion: "Perhaps
Southern Churches are the best place to look for the origins
of cultural nationalism in the Old South." In these efforts, the southern clergy linked the cause
of the region to the cause of God himself. William Warren
Sweet observed that the "Civil War was considered by Church
people in both North and South as primarily a moral and relig­
ious struggle, and it appealed more strongly to religious zeal
than any war in modern times." The significant theme of a
common religious ground between North and South was a troubled
one by the end of the 1850s. John Ezell noted that by the
outbreak of war, "the average Southern church member had long
since ceased to feel a common religious tie with his fellow
Northern Christian." For the southerner, the North had be­
come a "land of heresies, infidelities, and superstitions." As the South readied itself for war, urged on by its
clergy, the southerners became convinced of their Godly call to duty and victory. George Cary Eggleston of the era later recollected, "We persuaded ourselves that a people battling for the right could not fail in the end."  

With the spring of 1865, the southerner found his region cast in the role of the vanquished, not of victor. Because of their fiery prewar rhetoric, this loss placed specific burdens on the clergy to explain the southern defeat. A chief task of the southern churches during Reconstruction was restoring the cognitive balance of the southern mind. As C. R. Wilson concluded, "With defeat, southern clergymen assumed the responsibility for explaining the South's defeat in what they claimed had been a holy war."  

A major effort of the Reconstruction churches was defending the Southern Way of Life, and the intensity of the cleric concerns promoted a strong sense of regional distinctiveness. In his volume on the Origins of the New South, C. Vann Woodward recorded that "clerical championship of the Southern cause" in the immediate postwar period transformed the churches into "centers of resistance" and left the Protestant clergy in an "unchallenged" position of authority. Joseph Fichter and George Maddox noted that Protestant clergy "remained vocal proponents of the Confederate cause even after the defection of its secular defenders." The sociologists found that the southern churches became "centers of conservative political sentiments and of resistance both to the invasion of northern culture and to the doctrine of the New South."
This fear of northern churches had carried over from the pre-war years. In a letter to Thomas Smyth, a pastor named W. A. Scott complained that the unity of northern churches was "for the purpose of consolidating votes to control elections in order to Puritanize our Constitution and all our laws; so as to make America'a New England, a la Connecticut 'of long ago.'"28

By the time of Reconstruction, the southern Protestant churches had been established as the guardians of morality and order for over thirty years. At a most basic level in society, religion serves to define the sacred and the profane and guides that society toward a proper relationship with the holy. Religion also maintains order, preserving particular cultural world views through an established set of beliefs and rituals. Ultimately, society and religion are fused.

Randall Collins, in his discussion of Emile Durkheim, noted, "But there is one reality that does have all the characteristics that people attribute to the divine. . . . It is society itself. . . . God is a symbol of society."29 Collins further offered that this "feeling of our dependence upon society--exists simultaneously outside and inside ourselves. In religions there is always a connection between the sacred world beyond us and something sacred inside us."30

An analysis of this sacred fusion between religion and society can be quite revealing. Collings suggested that the "key to religion is not its beliefs but the social rituals that its members perform." Religion in society creates "both
moral feelings and symbolic ideas. . . . It helps us to explain politics and political ideologies, and the dynamics of solidarity that make conflicts possible among social groups.31

This final revelation concerning politics is one major justification for examining the rhetorical activities of the southern churches during Reconstruction. These institutions had already created an image of morality and order through their actions of the preceding three decades. The social and political chaos after the war was, in a Durkheimian sense, an indication of a chaotic southern religion. Clerical attempts to resolve these social conflicts would, of necessity, lead them back into the political arena.

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the rhetorical activities and strategies of the unreconstructed southern Protestant churches and clergy from 1865 to 1877. The general hypothesis was that the rhetorical responses by the southern clergy became sacred legitimation for a cultural way of life. One way of understanding the South as a distinct culture is to focus on the role of the clergy during the critical years immediately after the war. These responses by the clergy likely affected the South long after President Hayes removed the northern troops from the region in 1877, bringing an end to Reconstruction.

There are several aspects of this study which warrant
justification. Initially, there is the time period of 1865 to 1877. A military Reconstruction began in some states as early as 1863. Other states had Reconstruction governments for only a brief time. The term "Reconstruction," however, has generally meant the years from the end of the war to the removal of the northern troops from the South in 1877.

That time frame was helpful for this study as well. The war was over in 1865 and "Reconstruction" assumes a tone of finality it did not possess before Appomattox. The starting point for analyzing the defeated South and its clergy is with the war's end. Although rebel states were entering the Union individually for several years, 1877 marks a clearly recognized end of Reconstruction. With the election of Hayes, the northern troops were recalled, and the South "redeemed." The rhetorical implications of such a term should not be overlooked. Prior to 1877, the southern states—as a collectivity and as a region—were not entirely free from northern control. After 1877, the entire South enjoyed this freedom. This time frame of 1865 to 1877 is justified by recognizing the significance in the South of a collective war loss and collective redemption.

A second justification concerns the analysis of Protestant rhetoric and the exclusion of other faiths, particularly Catholicism. With the exception of southern Louisiana (and especially New Orleans), Catholic church-goers were a marked minority in the region. The South has been historically dominated by three Evangelical denominations: Baptist, Methodist,
and Presbyterian. These three groups had a distinctly Southern outlook as well; the trio of denominations split from their northern brethren before the war over the issue of the South's slavery. The Catholic Church did not experience such an obvious and formal division. Hence, the defenders of a southern region and a southern faith would be most likely found in the ranks of the Evangelicals.\textsuperscript{32}

Another justification concerns the decision to analyze the unreconstructed southern clergy. This term reflects pre-war, pro-South, sectionalist attitudes. The implications of other studies suggest that the southern churches, taken as a collectivity, did not strongly favor reconciliation during the Reconstruction years. There is no evidence to suggest strong nationalist sentiment from a majority of the clergy. The southern churches were ardent defenders of the Old South and active in secession movements prior to the war. A shift on their part toward postwar reconciliation should be obvious in surveying the history of the period. If such a shift did occur, it has not been noted by historians.

Finally, this study seeks to understand the impact of the southern churches in maintaining and furthering sectional sentiment in the region. These sentiments would rest with the unreconstructed clergy. No one has argued conclusively that the southern clergy played a passive role during the Reconstruction years. It appears that the churches actively responded to the environment of this time period. These aggressive efforts are the focal point of this study.
A final justification for this proposal concerns the various rhetorical documents which were analyzed. This analysis extended beyond the clergy's spoken words in their sermons, speeches, and public invocations. Other sources for significant rhetoric included denominational decrees, books, religious journals, and religious newspapers. The southern clergy were mainstream Evangelicals, widely-known and well-respected. Their journals and newspapers enjoyed large readerships and were well-established. This clerical rhetoric was an accepted, as well as significant, part of the southern society. In his study of the state of Alabama during these years, J. M. Weiner found that "the ministers not only had an extensive audience in their Sunday congregations, but were able to spread the traditionalist, reactionary message through the publications of the church presses."  

There are also several significant reasons for pursuing this study. Initially, there is a distinct gap in our critical analysis of Reconstruction rhetoric. While other works have examined the political persuasion for this time frame, sacred rhetoric has been passed by. Reconstruction was a critical period for the entire nation and especially for the defeated South. The southern churches played an active and vital role in summoning the region to war. The activities of these important regional institutions during such a volatile era deserve the attention of rhetorical criticism. Both historical and rhetorical critics have studied the southern clergy of the antebellum period (1830-1860) and the New
South years (1880-1920). Examination of the dozen years between the war's end and the end of Reconstruction will help complete our picture of the nineteenth century southern Protestant churches.

This study will further our understanding of Reconstruction in general and southern rhetoric in particular. Both areas continue to warrant scholarly attention. To better understand the South historically as well as contemporarily, the critic cannot escape the significance of a southern defeat and the ensuing years of conflict over reconstructing the region. The responses by the clergy to this environment, captured in their rhetoric, reveal much about the South, its churches, and Reconstruction.

Only recently have historians begun to sweep away the misconceptions of the Reconstruction era. The critical study of southern oratory is also chronologically young. In the best volume to date on the rhetoric of the postwar South (Waldo Braden, The Oratory of the New South), only one essay focused directly on the Reconstruction years and is concerned with political oratory. Two other essays within this volume skirt the period by examining the decade of the 1880s. None of these otherwise excellent studies concern southern churches. This study of clerical rhetoric should broaden our knowledge of ways a significant institution in the South expressed its understanding of, and coping with, defeat.

This research also gives us a better understanding of the way religion functions in society and how religious
institutions cope with significant change. Religion serves a chief purpose in preserving order in society. With the extreme social upheaval and chaos, the southern churches were forced to devise rhetorical strategies remedying this lack of order. Examining these strategies contributes to our body of knowledge in the way sacred elements of society assert themselves in secular affairs to preserve and extend a particular culture.

Any major social upheaval calls for a response by the religious institutions. The Reconstruction period offers an extended time frame of great social disturbance, highlighting these sacred-secular confrontations. This study suggests how a distinct Southern Way of Life was shaped and reinforced during a time of confusion. Understanding this creation and support of a southern world view during the Reconstruction years aids in clarifying the actions of the region in the postwar period.

Further, the rhetorical efforts of the clergy may have borne fruit at a later time. For example, research indicates the southern clergy were strong supporters of the Jim Crow laws passed at the close of the nineteenth century. Perhaps these clerical attitudes find their clearest origins in the years of two decades earlier. To understand the segregationist and sectionalist attitudes of the 1890s, the critic might look closely at the formation of clerical arguments in the 1860s and 1870s.

Research also indicates the southern clergy were very
active in the various Confederate veteran and memorial assos- iations of the 1880s and 1890s, often calling for distinct sectional attitudes. Studies have shown further that the clergy were fully involved in political affairs from the 1830s through the war's end. The twelve years of Reconstruction and the southern churches remain to be thoroughly investigated. These years, however, stand as a potential germination period for the transplanting of Old South ideology into the New South.

Such a period deserves illumination for these reasons. This study offers critical insights into the Reconstruction years by increasing the rhetorical and historical knowledge of this period. As a significant extension of these findings, this study increases the critical knowledge of the southern culture, past and present, which was greatly affected by the Reconstruction era.

**Procedure and Overview**

Five substantive chapters form the basis of this study, as outlined below.

In the first chapter, contemporary theories from organizational communication and Lloyd Bitzer's "Rhetorical Situation" were used to develop a hypothesis for explaining the reactions of southern churches to the conditions of Reconstruction. Specifically, the writings of Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn on "Systems Theory" suggest that the various regional churches may be appropriately considered as a single
Southern Protestant Church. The efforts of the clergy were designed to protect and maintain the image which the churches had developed in the prewar years. The chief task of the Reconstruction Church was overcoming the dominant regional exigence of social and psychological chaos.

The second chapter discusses the clerical legitimation of the Civil War and southern secession. Specifically, the clergy developed a definition of what constituted the essence of the Old South—its principles. These principles were then used to justify the war and to suggest that the conflict was not over but merely transformed. A variety of sources emerges as potential areas where southern churches entered into these political affairs. In particular, there are the texts of sermons, speeches, and books by southern clergy as well as religious journals and newspapers. Much of this analysis sought to expose the particular terministic choices made by the clergy as they attempted to confront these issues. These clerical choices revealed the extent to which the clergy entered the political arena in order to sustain a particular cultural system. The use of principles further created the hope of cultural redemption for the Reconstruction South. Audiences were told that adherence to such ideals could, in fact, alleviate the social chaos.

The writings of two contemporary rhetorical theorists were helpful in evaluating the significance of these clerical choices. Richard Weaver in his essay on "Ultimate Terms" suggested the inherent power of language to shape our responses
to objects and ideas. Kenneth Burke in his essay entitled "Terministic Screens" is also sensitive to the power inherent in naming and the impact of word choices. Language reveals attitudes (and ultimately actions) toward the object or idea under consideration.

The third substantive chapter examines the relationship between the Southern Protestant Church and the freed slaves during Reconstruction. A brief historical description of the clergy's involvement with slavery before the Civil War introduces the research. The clerical rhetoric on race became a three-part vision of order: the orderly Old South, the chaotic Reconstruction South, and the uncertain future. For the clergy, a return to the Old South order in the form of segregation was necessary to redeem the region from confusion. In addition to the stock arguments that slavery and segregation were God's will, the clergy also developed rhetorical threats to prevent social equality between whites and blacks. The clergy also used the racial issue to denounce the northern churches, focusing on the essential differences between the Church, South and North.

In his book, A Rhetoric of Motives, Kenneth Burke noted the significance of social hierarchy and the way this order may be achieved rhetorically. Given the conditions of the Reconstruction years, a fitting response by the clergy would include some attempt at restoring cognitive and emotional, if not political, order to the white southern world. The churches were the guardians and propagators of morality and
orderliness. Burke argued that certain moral rhetoric, intent upon order, effectively stifles debate and encourages only a single course of action. Clerical rhetoric concerning race emerged in this fashion, calling for specific acts by the white population.

The fourth substantive chapter concerns the clergy's role in creating and articulating the myth of the Lost Cause. C. R. Wilson in *Baptized in Blood* observed that this myth became a sectional civil religion.

According to Richard Weaver in *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, the initial use of the phrase "Lost Cause" came from the newspaper editors and literary figures. What this fourth chapter examines are the theological origins of this myth that Wilson finds so prevalent in the post-Reconstruction era. This analysis focused on the clerical responses to the death of Robert E. Lee in 1870. The primary rhetorical documents were the memorial addresses and eulogies offered by the clergy at the time of Lee's death. According to Thomas Connelly in *The Marble Man*, Lee's death became a moment of definition for southern speakers to explain the worth of the South and its inspired efforts in the war. Connelly examined Lee's evolution from sectional to national heroic figure. This chapter sought the ways the clergy used the occasion to shape their particular societal view of the region's relationship to God, justifying the South's participation and defeat in the war. These addresses also revealed the clerical use of Lee's character in calling for a return to the Old South. In particular, the audiences were asked to emulate the attitudes and
actions of the general who was described as a sacred figure.

This chapter examined how the mythic principles of intensification and unification were effective persuasion in the hands of the clergy. Of particular theoretical aid on this clerical myth-making were the works of Ernst Cassirer (especially *Language and Myth* and *The Myth of the State*) and Mircea Eliade (*Cosmos and History; The Sacred and the Profane*). Both of these scholars discussed how contemporary rhetoric may contain persuasive mythic images and how these myths create world views. Waldo Eraden also noted this important relationship between myth and rhetoric in his two essays: "'Repining Over an Irrevocable Past': The Ceremonial Orator in a Defeated Society, 1865-1900" and "Myths in Rhetorical Context."

The final chapter explores the potential impact of these postwar clerical responses to secession, slavery, segregation, and Lee. This chapter focused on the role of the southern religion as it attempted to shape a particular identity for the region during Reconstruction. The conclusions of this analysis of religion-region confrontation were that the South from the 1880s to the mid-twentieth century must be understood through the clerical actions of Reconstruction.

The clerical rhetoric of Reconstruction was designed to sustain particular images of the Evangelical Protestant entry into prewar political affairs and to suggest rhetorically a sense of order for the region. These clerical responses served as potential legitimations for a distinct cultural worldview. This sacralization of the southern society by the
clergy was offered as an explanation for the rigid sectionalism which lasted in the South from the 1880s until at least the late 1960s. Through their defense of an Old South Way of Life, the southern clergy during Reconstruction presented their audiences with a vision of a sacred South, distinct, holy, and unchanging. From this sacred South came a potential for the formulation of a distinctly southern culture.

**Survey of Literature**

This section discusses relevant literature on this research topic. Specifically, this survey analyzes historical and rhetorical studies as well as useful methodologies.

**Historical Works**

The historical studies might be classified as primary documents and as secondary histories of the period. A detailed listing of specific primary sources appears in the bibliography section of this research project. As to secondary histories, they are legion. The historiography of Reconstruction runs the continuum from excellent to fantasy. A good analysis of the problems associated with reading the history of Reconstruction is found in Vernon L. Wharton's essay, "Reconstruction," in the book, *Writing Southern History*, edited by Arthur Link and Rembert Patrick.

Early studies of the period, in the Dunning school, are
fraught with racist biases. Indeed, the "Myth of the Reconstruction South" described by Kenneth Stampp finds its roots in these writings. Paul Buck's *The Road to Reunion* and W. J. Cash's *The Mind of the South* provide interesting information, but the critic must carefully screen these authors to extract useful knowledge. Even a widely-revered scholar like Merton Coulter is suspect for his mythification at times. His work, *The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877*, is a useful and comprehensive volume and stands as the best of the pre-revisionist interpretations of the era.

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, revisionists began to strip away many of historical falsehoods generated by their predecessors. His book, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877*, published in 1965, established Kenneth Stampp as one of the leaders of the revisionist movement. This particular book sparked a fresh critical interest in the period. Stampp also worked with Leon F. Litwack to co-edit *Reconstruction: An Anthology of Revisionist Writings* in 1969. These essays discussed the policies of Lincoln and Johnson; the efforts of the Radical Republicans; the new role of the freedman; and the eventual collapse of Reconstruction in the South.

Other recent works of a general nature include John S. Ezell, *The South Since 1865*; William Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction*; and Otto Olsen, ed., *Reconstruction and Redemption in the South*.

The activities of the southern churches are occasionally mentioned in these histories, but research has not uncovered
a single Reconstruction monograph that deals specifically with the white southern Protestant clergy and their churches. One interpretation of the black churches during these years was offered by Kenneth Bailey in his essay, "The Post-Civil War Racial Separations in Southern Protestantism: Another Look." Merton Coulter discussed "Schools and Churches" as a chapter in his volume on Reconstruction. Perhaps the best treatment of the postwar churches is Shelton Smith's *In His Image, But Racism in Southern Religion, 1790-1910*. Smith documented the aggressive attitude of Reconstruction clergy toward social integration and civil rights for the freedmen. Although Smith primarily described the southern churches and their sectional attitudes, his book provides many sources from the period and attempted to show the impact of religion on race relations.

Several works deal with specific denominations for this time period. These include John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists*; Hunter D. Farish, *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*; and Ernest T. Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*.

One of the greatest of southern historians, C. Vann Woodward, has dealt with Reconstruction in several works. In *Reunion and Reaction*, he described the removal of northern troops and Republican governments from the South in 1877. His *Origins of the New South* provides useful commentary for the latter part of Reconstruction as well. Insightful information on the region, its people, and their distinct culture
are found in Woodward's *The Burden of Southern History*.

To fully understand the image of the southern churches during Reconstruction, one must also examine the Protestant faith in the Old South. Several works provide excellent information. Anne Loveland in *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860* traced the rise of Evangelical power from its inception in the South during the Second Great Awakening. She followed the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians through their confrontation of social issues (especially slavery) in 1860. Donald Mathews' oft-cited *Religion in the Old South* is another very good source for understanding the social force of Evangelical Protestantism. This thesis is also documented quite well in Rhys Issac's *The Transformation Of Virginia*.

Clement Eaton included a detailed chapter on southern religion in *The Mind of the Old South* and Richard Weaver argued for the South's "Older Religiousness" in his *The Southern Tradition at Bay*. More general surveys of southern religion include W. W. Sweet's *The Story of Religion in America*; and Joseph Fichter and George Maddox's "Religion in the South, Old and New," in *The South in Continuity and Change*.

Several sources documented the actions of southern clergy as they pushed for secession and sectional independence. Two of the better essays are found in DeWitte Holland, ed., *Preaching in American History*: Hubert V. Taylor, "Preaching on Slavery, 1831-1861" and Charles Stewart, "Civil War Preaching." James W. Silver provided an excellent account of southern
clerical involvement with political issues leading to armed conflict. From these prewar actions, the churches created an image and certain expectations which they were forced to sustain in the postwar years.

Rhetorical Studies

Rhetorical criticism of Reconstruction rhetoric is sadly lacking. Waldo Braden's definitive volume on *Oratory in the New South* included only tangential comments about these years. Of particular interest for this study are several essays from this volume: Waldo Braden, "Repining Over an Irrevocable Past: The Ceremonial Orator in a Defeated Society, 1865-1900"; Cal M. Logue, "Restoration Strategies in Georgia, 1865-1880"; Stuart Towns, "Ceremonial Orators and National Reconciliation"; and Howard Dorgan, "Rhetoric of the United Confederate Veterans: A Lost Cause Mythology in the Making."

Braden also offered a useful essay on the relationship between southern rhetoric and southern mythology in "Myths in A Rhetorical Context" in *The Oral Tradition in the South*. Cal Logue documented the rhetorical strategies of blacks and whites in his essays, "The Rhetorical Appeals of Whites to Blacks During Reconstruction" and "Rhetorical Ridicule of Reconstruction Blacks." Logue focused on the political arena; southern Protestant churches were not a part of his study.

Charles R. Wilson compared the Lost Cause mythology to a southern civil religion in *Baptized in Blood: The*
Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920. His efforts tended to examine the southern clergy in the post-Reconstruction years, but he did provide some insights into the role of southern religion after the war. In similar fashion, Richard Weaver in The Southern Tradition at Bay and Thomas Connelly in The Marble Man examined the Lost Cause as the mythology emerged from its literary and theological roots. Reconstruction is given slight attention by these scholars, suggesting the need for further studies to support their arguments.

Methodological Studies

Several works provide useful commentary for guiding this study in its method of analysis. For understanding the southern churches as part of a single system, Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn offered valuable commentary in The Social Psychology of Organizations. The various responses to the climate of Reconstruction may be viewed as efforts to sustain this religious system by considering the rhetorical environment of these years. Lloyd Bitzer's "The Rhetorical Situation" was vital in this consideration. Kathleen Jamieson argued quite persuasively for the impact of prior rhetoric and images in her essay, "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint."

Richard Weaver discussed the impact of god-terms and devil-terms in his essay, "Ultimate Terms in Contemporary Rhetoric." Kenneth Burke suggested a similar importance for the way surroundings are labeled by the rhetor in "Terministic
Burke also discussed the significance of scapegoating in Attitudes Toward History. In A Rhetoric of Motives, he explored social hierarchies, moral rhetoric, and the import of the concept of identification.

Three writers are especially important for understanding the role and function of myth in modern society. Stephen C. Ausband in Myth and Meaning, Myth and Order looked at American attempts to forge and maintain a national mythology. Part of his discussion concerned the significance of social order. Ernst Cassirer provided the greatest aid for a methodology of myth in his works, Language and Myth; The Myth of the State; and Mythical Thought. In all of these works, Cassirer was most concerned with the growth and maintenance of myths and how particular narratives may become foundational supports for a society's various symbolic forms. Mircea Eliade also examined the place of myth in contemporary society in such works as Myth and Reality; Cosmos and History; and The Sacred and the Profane. Eliade was chiefly concerned with the relationship between social rituals and myth-making.

There are a variety of methodological works which deal with the role of religion in society. Emile Durkheim helped pioneer the sociology of religion with The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life in 1915. This work argued that all religions serve to define the sacred and the profane and prescribe rites to guide societies toward a proper relationship with the sacred. Peter Berger in The Sacred Canopy explored the role of religion and its institutions in society.
For a discussion of southern religion from a methodological vantage point, Samuel S. Hill, Jr. offered valuable information in a variety of works. These include The South and the North in American Religion and Religion and the Solid South. For an understanding of the effect of religion in preserving the historical culture of a society, Howard Becker's "Sacred and Secular Societies" was very helpful. Becker argued that "sacred" societies are those groups which aggressively resist change. The efforts of the southern Protestant churches and clergy to preserve an Old South ideology and rhetorically create a sense of order from this devotion to an unchanging past would certainly parallel Becker's thesis.

Conclusion and Transition

The southern Protestant clergy played an active and vital role in shaping the mind of the Reconstruction South. Their rhetorical responses to the chaos of these years and their reaction as a single Southern Protestant Church are discussed in the chapter which follows.
NOTES


4 Quoted in Ezell 26.

5 Ezell 27.

6 Ezell 28.

7 Coulter 16.

8 Cash 105.

9 Coulter 16.


11 Ezell 30.


For an excellent account of these views, see Loveland 187-218.


19 Hill, Religion and the Solid South 39.


22 Ezell 341-2.

23 Cited in Connelly and Bellows 15. For an analysis of how Louisiana divines took their state out of the Union, see Avery O. Craven, The Growth of Southern Nationalism, 1848-1861 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1953) 374-5.

24 The prewar and war-time rhetoric of the Southern clergy was discussed by Merton Coulter, The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1950) 521ff.


28 W. A. Scott, "To Thomas Smyth," 4 December 1867, Thomas Smyth, Autobiographical Notes, Letters, and Reflections, ed. Louisa Cheeves Stoney (Charleston: Walker, Evans, and
Cogswell, 1914) 681.


30 Collins 35.

31 Collins 32.

32 Coulter, Confederate States 521, discussed the Catholics in the South who did take a partisan view of the struggle. These Catholics, however, remained a numerical minority in the South as a whole.


36 Wilson, Baptized in Blood; Thomas Connelly, The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society (Baton
Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1977) especially 27-61; and
The drive toward order has been a strong and active force in the history of civilization. From earliest times, people have tried to understand themselves and their places in a larger context of events. It is the nature of individuals to seek a purpose in their existence, and this quest is usually toward a sense of order for their lives.

Kenneth Burke found that a spirit of hierarchy and order was "all about us, forever goading us." For Burke, order and divinity were one. In hierarchy, he suggested, "reside the conditions of the 'divine,' the goadings of 'mystery.'" The notion of order, for Burke, was a vital part of social redemption. Humans experience "guilt" over a change in or a loss of order; redemption becomes a re-ordering of the worlds of these who have "fallen."

Myths, legends, folktales—all serve as ordering devices for people. Indeed, much recorded rhetoric reveals serious attempts to create order for the audiences through a variety of means. Seemingly real chaotic events are described or defined as occurring in larger, more transcendent, chains or hierarchy. The various religions offer ways of coping with and ultimately overcoming the confusion and chaos, as well as
the uncertainty, of the everyday world. A religion is important because it provides an orderly vision and interpretation of daily events. The notion of sacred is inherently tied to order; the antithesis of this cosmic view of the world is chaos and disorder. The task of religion is to shield its followers from the confusion or anomie which is a normal part of life. As Clifford Geertz noted, citing Max Weber, religion seeks "to construct an image of reality in which ... 'events are not just there and happen, but they have a meaning and happen because of that meaning.'" The need for order, for a transcendent understanding of everyday reality, is necessary for a society's psychological survival.

The antebellum South was no different in its quest for order. The southern Protestant clergy of the Old South provided legitimation for the region's actions, claiming slavery and eventually secession were justified as "the will of God." Hierarchy, structure, and order are keystones for understanding the Old South's religious beliefs. As Richard Weaver indicated in his analysis of the region's religion, society found specific purpose at the hand of God. Noting the attitude of the antebellum South, Weaver wrote: "Society is not a product of the flux of history, but of design, and hence one's position in it must be determined by his virtue ... through the teachings of religion." Thomas Smyth, an active defender of the Old South, captured best this southern devotion to a cosmic interpretation of events. "God is a God of order," Smyth wrote. "Order is heaven's
first law,' and the principle of all law. It pervades the universe." Smyth also defined the essential and close relationship between the region and this larger order:

God himself being a God of order, every thing that is must be established with certain relations, consequences, and if capable of them, rights and obligations. . . . We are therefore required to observe this order, and to act in accordance with these relations, subject to inevitable retribution.  

By the time of Fort Sumter, southerners had been assured by their clergy that the South was the last vestige of order and Christianity. In her discussion of antebellum religion, Anne Loveland noted that southern evangelicals perceived their roles as "guardians of the religious and moral purity of the Southern people." These clerics believed they had a "duty to concern themselves—even, in some cases, to the point of engaging in political action—with issues and problems relating to the social order."  

The antebellum southern pastors were a respected group because of their ability to translate the everyday world into an orderly understanding of the South's relationship to an all-powerful Being. Southern clergy were, in Durkheim's terms, the definers of the sacred for their society.  

Whether their discussion foraged into the political realm or remained in the spiritual, the clerics spoke for the divine. Concerning southern attitudes toward religion for this period, W. J. Cash observed that "the voice of their ministers" was "literally
the voice of God." Later, in the postwar years, Cash found this clerical role of divine spokesman especially crucial in the South's perception of its clergy: "What the ministers proclaimed as the divine desire must be obeyed without question and without hesitancy, lest the hour of God's deliverance be fatally postponed."12

This chapter offers a particular theoretical framework for examining the southern Protestant churches during the Reconstruction period. As such, this chapter provides an overview to the specific rhetorical responses of the clergy which are discussed in detail in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. This chapter suggests a rationale for why the Reconstruction churches reacted as they did and the impact of this reaction. Ultimately, this section of the study offers insights into the critical relationship between the southern clergy, the southern mind, and the rhetorical creation of order during Reconstruction.

There are three hypotheses which underpin this relationship between the churches and Reconstruction. First, southerners had certain expectations about the roles and activities of their churches. Second, through an application of Lloyd Bitzer's concept of a "Rhetorical Situation," the collective southern Protestant churches may be viewed accurately as a singular institution. Third, by viewing the churches as a single Church, current systems theory reveals critical information about the Church-Reconstruction relationship. Each of these hypotheses are briefly examined in the sections which follow, with a
concluding note on the implications of such a theoretical construction.

Expectations

As previous research on southern religion and Evangelical Protestantism suggests, the southern Protestant churches were generally perceived as the dominant moral institution for the three decades prior to Reconstruction. This perception is not uncommon; religious institutions for most cultures enjoy this image. However, what is significant for this study were the expectations of the southern Protestants about the churches after the Civil War. These people, it should be presumed, anticipated particular messages from their clergy. The clerical rhetoric from the 1830s through the war created an anticipation of what would be stated after the war. Kathleen H. Jamieson in her essay "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint" effectively argued that past rhetoric can greatly affect and often shapes present rhetorical choices. The institutions would be expected to oppose actively the perceived immorality and disorderliness of Reconstruction. Further, the clergy's previous active involvement with political issues (specifically slavery and secession) would create a condition during the Reconstruction years which demanded their involvement once again. In the face of these expectations, the churches had little choice but to respond to Reconstruction with particular messages. The reactions of the churches to the Reconstruction
period were, no doubt, greatly affected, if not shaped, by the southern society's previously established images of their religion.

The Churches as Church: A Situational Perspective

The second hypothesis is that the southern Protestant churches may be viewed accurately as a single collectivity of the various denominations—in effect, as an organization.

There are several advantages by viewing clergy and churches as a single institution. At this level, individual denominational (theological) differences are blurred while important political similarities are illuminated, and the role of the southern churches during Reconstruction can be better understood by focusing on what united them politically, rather than what divided them theologically. For instance, two clerics, one Baptist and the other Methodist, might differ on the proper amount of water necessary for baptism, but both would agree on the positive attributes of slavery.

These similarities leading to a single organization may be observed by applying Bitzer's theory of a "Rhetorical Situation" to this time period. Professor Bitzer suggested that rhetorical activities occur within certain climates, environments, or situations: "What characteristics, then, are implied when one refers to 'the rhetorical situation'—the context in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse?" Bitzer, in an effort to understand the situation,
described its three chief components: exigence, audience, and constraints. An exigence is an "imperfection marked by an urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing other than it should be." Audiences were not just hearers or readers; rather, "a rhetorical audience consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change." Finally, Bitzer defined constraints as those "persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence." According to Bitzer, standard constraints will include beliefs, attitudes, traditions, and interests.

Bitzer also described two important characteristics of the rhetorical situation. The first is that the rhetorical discourse "is called into existence by the situation; the situation which the rhetor perceives amounts to an invitation to create and present discourse." Second, not just any kind of response is appropriate. "Thus, the second characteristic of a rhetorical situation is that it invites a fitting response, a response that fits the situation."

These calls for certain appropriate responses have already been suggested in the discussion of the southern populace's expectations of their clergy. What heightens these expectations and allows a view of the various institutions as a singular organization are the similar and recurrent rhetorical situations faced by the clerics. Despite differing local conditions, the general exigence of Reconstruction was similar throughout the
South. The chaos and destruction described by the historians was widespread. The stigma of defeat affected the seceded Confederate states and those border areas with large groups of Southern sympathizers. The rhetorical challenges for the southern churches were similar at this regional level—comfort the mourners and combat the social changes.

The dominant exigence of Reconstruction was the loss of political, social, and psychological order. The Reconstruction years were, perhaps, the most chaotic in America's history. Sacred and secular rhetors assured the southern population that their region was God's Chosen and their actions constituted his Divine will. The defeat in battle, the demolition of an economic labor system, and the political dismantlement of the Old South created an overwhelming array of chaos and anomie. The vision of an orderly Old South beckoned the Reconstruction audiences to an Eden-like paradise. Charles R. Wilson noted that the clerical response to Reconstruction was to portray idyllic versions of the nation-that-was. According to these clerics, "the Lost Cause vision of the good society was paternalistic, moralistic, well ordered, and hierarchial." 18

Samuel Hill found that the role of the Reconstruction Church was to help the region cope with "social-psychological disequilibrium." 19 To this end, the clergy were forced to confront this exigence of chaos.

Despite the loss of certain civil rights for particular groups, the general white population in the South could react to Reconstruction with ballot and bullet. The clerical rhetoric,
fits Bitzer's definition of a "rhetorical audience," and was aimed at a population actively confronting social change. The clergy faced audiences who were capable of responding to this exigence and who were in desperate need of an explanation of why the South had lost. Cash noted that the southern audiences during Reconstruction responded to their conditions by creating a tribalized God. He became, for the South, a "Calvinized Jehovah, master of all the living and the dead and resistless orderer of all things from the sparrow's flight to the stately pacing of the stars." 20

These audiences, though varied, also shared many common values and attitudes. Even when they disagreed ideologically, their actions of secession and the conditions of the war gave them a unifying core. Further, few, if any, of the southern populace escaped the physical conditions of Reconstruction. Few also escaped the feeling of confusion and uncertainty.

Joseph Stratton, in an 1868 sermon entitled "Incomprehensible Things," voiced his concern over the chaos: "Sometimes God's doings baffle us utterly. Sometimes they seem to contradict diametrically our ideas of rectitude and benevolence." 21 In other words, the conditions of Reconstruction could not be ordered easily; the social chaos made little sense to the South.

This fear of the uncertainty over Reconstruction can also be found in a letter from Reverend W. A. Scott to Thomas Smyth in 1867. Scott worried:

I hope the darkness is about to break and will soon pass away, but I am a poor blind watchman. I am not
asleep, nor even drowsy—I have not trouble in keeping awake, but with all the power of vision I can command, I cannot see thro' the darkness.\textsuperscript{22}

For Scott, the disorder \textit{enveloped} him and the region.

The political and judicial uncertainties of the South were added constraints. Certain actions by the audiences would likely result in certain reactions by the northern-supported Reconstruction governments. The clergy were not exempt from the consequences of their rhetoric. Bishop Richard Wilmer, an Episcopal from Alabama, refused to say prayers for the President of the United States. The Federal commander forbade him to "practice divine service" until the prayers were restored. The church stayed closed for a year.\textsuperscript{23}

The audiences were similar in that they constituted a people, once enobled by the clergy as God's Chosen, then, following their clergy, were embattled, and unexpectedly found themselves vanquished. The various clergy and churches responded to a people who shared common problems and who had shared similar attitudes, if not actions. Hence, at this level, the churches faced recurrent constraints in the people's needs and political reactions by the North.

In summary, these similar rhetorical situations recurred throughout the South for the clergy. By focusing on these similar exigences, audiences, and constraints, the various southern Protestant churches may be understood as a \textit{single} Southern Protestant Church in its attempt to provide a "fitting response" to these recurrent situations. The dominant exigence
of social and psychological chaos demanded a clerical creation of order. The implications of this view of churches as Church are explored in the following section.

The Southern Protestant Church: A Systems Approach

Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn documented the significance of a systems theory for institutions in their book, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*. Briefly stated by these two writers, "System theory is basically concerned with the problems of relationships, of structure, and of interdependence rather than with the constant attributes of objects." A systems view attempts to see the organization wholistically, comprised of various subgroups that contribute to the general functionalism of the organization.

Further, a systems approach examines an organization's interaction with its environment. This theory seeks to understand how the various components of an organization may work together while confronting particular environments. Robert Duncan defined these environments as "the totality of physical and social factors that are taken into account in the decision making behaviors of individuals in the system." These factors seem closely bound to Bitzer's notion of an all-encompassing situation.

Edgar Huse and James Bowditch offered four main defining characteristics of an organizational system:

1. Composed of a number of subsystems, all of which
are interdependent and interrelated:

2. Open and dynamic, having inputs, outputs, operations, feedback, and boundaries

3. Striving for balance through positive and negative feedback

4. With a multiplicity of purposes, functions, and objectives, some of which are in conflict, which the administrator strives to balance.27

Several key terms, warranting clarification, emerge from these theories. Subsystems, according to Hodge and Anthony, are "a group of functioning elements within a larger system. They are systems within larger systems."28 The system receives various inputs from its interaction with the environment. As Gerald Goldhaber noted, "By definition, an organization as an open system needs natural and human resources from its environment in order to maintain itself. These resources are called system input."29

Upon receiving these inputs, the organization transforms them into output, the "product or service which the system exports into its environment."30 The transformation process reveals to what extent an organization is successfully interacting with its environment. A closed system is one where the organization does not maintain close contact with its environment. An open system maintains an active interaction. From this interaction with its surroundings, information about the output is fed back into the system as new input. Huse and Bowditch explained:
Since open systems are never completely closed off from the outside world, they are affected by the environment and, in turn, have an effect on the environment through output information which, in turn, is fed back into the system as an input to guide and control the operation of the system.\textsuperscript{31}

Katz and Kahn also noted the significance of this cyclic nature of systems: "The product exported into the environment furnishes the sources of energy for the repetition of the cycle of activities."\textsuperscript{32} This feedback, however, is often interpreted in rather unique ways. Katz and Kahn noted that no system can absorb all its feedback from the environment. Consequently, the system must pass the new input through particular lenses, fitting the new information into already accepted categories. This selective process where input is rejected or accepted into the system is called "coding." Katz and Kahn wrote that "Through the coding process, the 'blooming buzzing confusion' of the world is simplified into a few meaningful and simplified categories for a given system."\textsuperscript{33} The coding is, in effect, a rhetorical method of ordering the feedback which returns to the system.

The system must constantly acquire fresh input and successfully transform these into desired output or the organization will suffer entropy. Katz and Kahn noted: "The entropic process is a universal law of nature in which all forms of organization move toward disorganization or death."\textsuperscript{34} To forestall this condition of entropy, systems seek an equilibrium between
input and output, achieving what Katz and Kahn called "the steady state." They observed: "There is a continuous inflow of energy from the external environment and continuous export of the products of the system, but the character of the system ... remains the same." 

A system will strive to acquire this steady state. "In adapting to their environment," Katz and Kahn wrote, "systems will attempt to cope with external forces by ingesting them or acquiring control over them." The steady state, however, may experience growth over time. The writers noted that the "steady state which at the simple level is one of homeostasis over time, at more complex levels becomes one of preserving the character of the system through growth and expansion." 

In summary, a system interacts with its surroundings, is susceptible to feedback which it often distorts to fit into prior belief patterns, and strives to maintain its general character in the face of entropy. If this character is preserved through the proper input-output transformation and proper coding, then the system will likely experience growth over time.

Implications

The Southern Protestant Church possessed singular organizational tendencies and functioned as a system. The various denominational churches and clergy served as supporting subsystems. Under this proposal, the input was the perceived needs and expectations of the Southern populace. The outputs were
the various rhetorical choices articulated by the clergy. The critical transformation portion of this model became the Church's efforts to anticipate correctly a fitting response to those needs and expectations. The environment faced by this system was multi-level. The political and social chaos of these years formed one significant part. The southern people, placed in the uncertainty of Reconstruction, were another critical aspect of the system's surroundings. The North, and in particular, the northern Army, became a third element in the environment.

As a system, the Southern Protestant Church interacted with this complex environment of Reconstruction, which served as the clergy's rhetorical situation. Failing to confront this environment would have created an entropic condition, effectively "killing" the Church in the region. Its history of political involvement and its concern for the people's moral and spiritual well-being precluded any type of a closed system. The churches and clergy had to confront their congregations' needs and the prevailing socio-political conditions.

The systems approach allows a significant hypothesis to be made for the Church during this time period. An analysis of the Church's activities should reveal an organization trying to sustain itself, attempting to avoid entropy by transforming needs and expectations into fitting rhetoric. The advantage of this theoretical framework is that it reveals the varied rhetorical activities of the Church as choices designed to support, reinforce, and reinstitute the position held by the churches from their emergence in the region through the Civil
War. Failure to reassert its position of leadership in the critical areas of morality and order would have failed to sustain the perceptions of the populace. In effect, the output would not have reflected the input's feedback, and the system would have suffered dramatically.

Further complexities would have resulted from the political constraints inherent in the Reconstruction environment. The Church's efforts at meeting expectations would have also been forced to confront the conditions of a defeated people, living under the threat, if not the reality, of Army rule. Referring to the fourth point in Huse and Bowditch's list of system characteristics, one function of the southern clerics would have been to manage effectively these various conflicts in the environment. The task they faced included asserting the import of a Southern Way of Life without provoking the wrath of the victors who governed the region.

The key effort of the Southern Protestant Church as a system was its attempts to battle the dominant exigence of chaos and its attempts to establish order for the southern audiences. The clerics agreed that the inherent order of the Old South was gone. The author of "The State of Nature" in 1868 observed that Liberty and Order were valuable and consistent ideals. For the region, however, these two concepts had been removed: "But despotism is not Order, any more than license is Liberty." The author concluded: "If Liberty departs, the body politic decays; if Order be dissolved, Liberty takes her flight, and anarchy reigns." For the clergy, such was
the condition of the Reconstruction South, deprived of Order as well as Liberty.

All was not lost, however. This order was indeed a very precious commodity, one which the southern clergy could use as a rallying point for their readers and listeners. Robert L. Dabney argued in *A Defense of Virginia* that southern convictions were righteous ones because they embraced this ideal of order. From this rallying point around order came the perception of a return to order, an explanation of events, for the region. Dabney offered that the "anti-scriptural, infidel, and radical grounds upon which our assailants have placed themselves, make our cause practically the cause of truth and order." For Dabney and the other unreconstructed clergy, the cause of the South was to restore this ideal of order to its proper place in the troubled region. Only the South could accomplish this feat; the region alone possessed and retained the righteous qualities which allowed for an orderly society.

In summary, the rhetorical activities of the various southern churches and clergy reflect a desire to sustain some particular perceptions of the Church's role in secular society. Reacting to the particular political and social environments produced certain rhetorical responses, revealing an effort to articulate the populace's expectations and thereby sustain the established system. Ultimately, these rhetorical responses possessed the potential to shape a distinct cultural world view by legitimizing the expectations of the people.

The Southern Protestant Church sought to establish a
rhetorical order for the southern population. This vision offered understanding to the confusion and chaos in the defeated region. The clerical response to Reconstruction was to create order in the only manner possible—through the definitions and descriptions of what constituted the South. Through their rhetoric, the clergy offered a hope, a measure of redemption, a sense of order, for the region's future.

A critical analysis of specific clerical responses— to the war, to slavery, and to the death of Lee—and the ways in which these responses served as ordering devices for the region constitute the following three chapters of this study.
NOTES


4 Serious attention needs to be given to the study of deliberative rhetoric as possessor of mythic principles. Rhetorical discourse in political settings may be drawing power from appeals to various mythic themes (such as order), but the discourse may not be typical of mythical narrative, and hence, the appeals may be overlooked by the critic. See Hal W. Fulmer, "The Implications for Order in a Rhetoric of Mythic Redemption: Henry Grattan, 1800," unpublished paper, Western Speech Communication Association annual meeting,


16 Bitzer 2-4.

17 Bitzer 5.


20 Cash 135.


22 W. A. Scott, "Letter to Thomas Smyth," 4 December 1867, Thomas Smyth, *Autobiographical Notes, Letters, and Reflections*, ed. Louisa Cheeves Stoney (Charleston: Walker, Evans, and Cogswell, 1914) 680. For a similar commentary on the disorder, see the review of Benjamin Morgan Palmer's *Sermons in the Southern Review* 27 (1876) 194. The review read in part, quoting Palmer: "Many a dispensation of God towards us is dark and inexplicable until God lifts us up by the hand and brings us into higher views of Himself and of His grace."


25 Katz and Kahn 18.


27 Edgar Huse and James Bowditch, *Behavior in Organizations* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1973); cited in Goldhaber 50.


29 Goldhaber 52.

30 Goldhaber 52.

31 cited in Goldhaber 51.

32 Katz and Kahn 20.

33 Katz and Kahn 22.

34 Katz and Kahn 21.

35 Katz and Kahn 23.

36 Katz and Kahn 24.


Unreconstructed southern clergy continued to take their stand for Dixie during the Reconstruction years. In this era, clerics argued that slavery and secession were both blessed by the Constitution and the Holy Scriptures, continuing a rhetorical posture which they had developed in the decades prior to Fort Sumter.¹

Paul Buck, in *The Road to Reunion*, found that the churches during Reconstruction remained "sectional bodies, an antagonistic element in the integration of national life."² In his discussion of the Southern Baptists, Rufus Spain concluded the denomination "seemed to have contributed as much to keeping sectionalism alive as they did to allaying ill feeling."³ John Lee Eighmy, noting a recurrent attitude among Southern Baptists, wrote: "Devotion to evangelical religion did not preclude an interest among Southern Baptists in the more secular interests of the nineteenth century. Churchmen felt obliged to address the problems of secession, war, and the status of the emancipated Negro."⁴

This clerical rhetoric attempted to defend a particular way of life popularly associated with the Old South. Clement Eaton saw no real changes between the Southern Church of 1860
and 1865, despite the war which fell between these years. "They preserved intact the Old South's religious faith," he said of the churches, as well as "its hatred of Yankess, its strong conservative spirit, and its belief in the superiority of the Southern people and their way of life." Samuel Hill defined the primary purpose of the Reconstruction Church as this legitimation attempt:

What was most fundamental to the experience of the people was Southernness, nor religious faith, truth, or integrity as such. Everything, the unfinished business of the society, the primary issue in their shared memory, the matters of most vital concern, focused upon the legitimation of a Way of Life.

Generally, scholars of this period have seemed content to find the clergy "defending the Old South," without paying specific attention to how this defense was offered. As such, their findings describe the clerical posture but fail to probe more deeply into the particular strategies used by the clergy. The purpose of this chapter is to reveal some of the Old South defenses used by the Southern Church by applying rhetorical theory to the various discourse.

This process discloses why these defenses were potentially most persuasive when received by the southern audiences. The clerical rhetoric also suggests one partial reason for the region's devotion to its past. Although not alone in their defense of the Old South, the unreconstructed clergy offered a pastoral vindication of the antebellum years. This
powerful blessing fell upon the Old South culture and political existence. Further, this clerical blessing, originating from the guardians of morality and order in the region, had no equal in the mind of the Reconstruction South.

Specifically, this chapter focuses on the clerical response to the Civil War, examining the recurrent themes and arguments espoused by the clergy concerning the nature and outcome of the conflict. For the region, the War for Southern Independence was the Old South's ultimate act of defense in a conflict over ways of life. The defense of the war was one of the major rhetorical stands taken by the clergy in their vindication of the Old South. The particular ways the clerics carried out their defenses emerge as strategies for justifying and maintaining a cultural world view.

Especially critical to this analysis are specific recurring terms used by the clergy as foundations for their rhetoric. The clerical response to the war became a series of rhetorical definitions which served as justifications and interpretations of the Old South.

A Note on Method: The Power of the Word

A repeated characteristic of the clergy's rhetoric was their attempt to defend the Old South by offering definitions of its lifestyle. As such, close attention should be paid to the word choices made by the clerics, asking "What are the significant features of the language and what are the key
terms of the discourse?"

The principle of naming is an important one in rhetorical theory. How a situation, idea, or individual is "named" or labeled through specific terms reveals insights into the mind of the speaker or writer. These terms also reflect a "call to action," defining a particular response from the hearer or reader. The study of language as symbolic action reveals the power of words; the choices of particular terms should be noted as deliberate and revealing.

Kenneth Burke, the leading figure in the study of language as symbolic action, opened The Philosophy of Literary Form by noting the significance between word choices and the situation faced by the language-user. Rhetorical works are "answers to questions posed by the situation in which they arose. They are not merely answers, they are stylized answers, strategic answers." These responses "size up the situations . . . and name them in a way that contains an attitude toward them."^9

Richard Weaver, another scholar of language-choices, noted that "it cannot be denied that single names set up expectancies of propositional embodiment. . . . In sum, single terms have their potencies, this being part of the phenomenon of names."^10

Burke suggested that the selections of particular words create "terministic screens" which shape the world views of the rhetor and audience. In his volume, Language As Symbolic Action, he wrote:
The nature of our terms affect the nature of our observations, in the sense that the terms direct the attention to one field rather than to another . . . . In brief, much that we take as observations about 'reality' may be but the spinning out of possibilities implicit in our particular choice of terms.\textsuperscript{11}

In short, what one perceives to be real is likely the result of the terms he or she uses to describe the phenomenon around the individual. Burke concluded that "We must use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms: whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen. . . ."\textsuperscript{12}

In the remainder of this chapter, the clerical rhetoric is examined for its key terms and their implications for creating certain attitudes, actions, and expectations in the southern audiences. This may be accomplished by focusing on the clerics' "ultimate terms." Weaver defined this word as "that expression about which all other expressions are ranked as subordinate and serving dominations and powers."\textsuperscript{13} The chapter specifically argues that the image of the Old South was justified through clerical definitions of 1) the essence of the Old South; 2) the war and its outcome; and 3) the future redemption for the region.
A Definition of the Old South: Its Principles as Essence

A survey of the clergy's rhetoric reveals a recurring term: *principles*. The term was rarely defined by the clergy but served instead as a word around which the clerics clustered particular images and ideas of the Old South. The term was broadly employed by the clerics, appearing in a variety of contexts. As an author contended late in the Reconstruction period, the Southern Church sought "to establish sound principles. We protest we only desire to discover right principles and are not prejudiced against truth." Concerning northern reaction to such a stand on principles, the writer questioned whether the North would "be able to subject the action of those [northern] churches to these right principles, when the wave of excitement has gone over them. . . ."\(^{14}\)

This lack of the term's clarity, but retention of its power, was noted by Weaver. He classified such words as terms of charisma; "It is the nature of the charismatic term to have a power which is not derived, but which is in some mysterious way given. . . . In effect, they are rhetorical by common consent, or by 'charisma.'" The number of these terms, he concluded, "is small in any one period, but they are perhaps the most efficacious terms of all."\(^{15}\)

The clergy made deliberate attempts to use the term as a guiding force in the lives of their audiences. *Principles* was used metaphorically to represent the essence or definition of the region.\(^{16}\) Through this screen, the clerics called
attention to what they considered the most important aspect of the Old South. What is especially interesting to this clerical choice is Burke's definition of essence as either co-operative or competitive. By choosing principles as the defining essence of the South, the clergy placed the region in competition with the North. The clergy noted that the South and North were dissimilar in the most critical of ways, that of principle.

The writer of an 1876 essay on "The Disruption of the Northern Methodist Church" observed that the members of the Northern and Southern Methodist Churches "ought to comprehend thoroughly the facts and principles underlying their separation and alienation." In an 1867 essay on the "Church and Politics," one clerical writer claimed that "some of us are desirous also to establish true and just principles for their own sakes. Nay, more," he concluded, "we do sincerely believe the churches of the South are controlled by such persons."

The Southern Presbyterian clergy at their 1870 convention declared that the North had lost its principles, leaving only the South as possessor of the term: "Of those falling testimonies, we are now the sole surviving heir, which we must lift from the dust and bear to the generations after us." These Presbyterians at the same conference decided that the differences between the two Churches and regions "involve grave and fundamental principles," which the South would not compromise.

Principles were used in close association with an orderly
picture of society based on the twin foundations of Constitution and Bible. Albert Taylor Bledsoe in an 1869 essay described the "great principles of free government involved in the Constitution of the United States," while B. M. Palmer linked the phrase to "law and order" in 1873. In 1870, Palmer also found the term extended from Constitution to Bible and that "All the great truths of Christianity" were "potent­ial and operative principles." For Palmer and his fellow clergy, principles could emanate from both documents and served as a bridge between the two sacred texts of Constitution and Bible. Both helped secure an orderly society, defended the institution of slavery, and preserved intact the integrity of Liberty for the whites in the region.

The Southern Presbyterian Review in 1870 noted this use of principles both as a bridge between the two texts and as a possession of the South alone:

The people of the South, whilst submitting humbly to the terrible rebukes of a holy God for their sins, do not thereby surrender their well-established views and principles, political and moral: the first supported by the Constitution of the country; the last protected by the Scriptures of eternal truth.

In summary, what distinguished South from North were important, but often ambiguous, principles. In the eyes of the southern clergy, the North had lost its claims on these important ideals, becoming, as historian John Ezell noted, a
land of heresies, subversive of "established tenets respecting religion, law, morality, property, and government." Southern clergy claimed that these distinctions over principle would not remain static, but served instead as a constant source of conflict. Northern attacks on the South would continue, for one writer, "Until we renounce with the heart our independence in matters of religion; until we take into our systems false principles of morbid growth." These attacks on the essence of the Old South were not new. According to the Southern Presbyterian Review:

> It is as much a part of the common law of the land that justice shall not be done to the South, nor to its cause, nor to its leaders, nor to its armies, nor to its principles, nor to its battles, as it was before the war that the Bible was forced to be an anti-slavery Bible, the Constitution an anti-slavery Constitution, and God, an anti-slavery God.

In this passage, southern principles as well as a southern interpretation of God, the Bible, and the Constitution were brought together into a denunciation of northern aggression against the region. These perceived attacks on southern principles were, for the clergy, clear indications that the South was the sole possessor in its principles of whatever inherent value the term represented. Whatever principles might exist, they belonged for the moment of Reconstruction to the southern people.
The use of principles as the distinctive trait of the region established the moral tone of the clerical defense of the Old South. By choosing to direct attention toward this term, the clergy were directing attention away from lesser defining essentials, such as slavery, the plantation system, or agrarianism. Choosing principles as a battleground allowed the clergy to offer particular defenses and make high moral claims for the region. These defenses are explored in the sections which follow.

The War and Defeat: A Superiority of Principles

The clergy did not confine the term principle to a mere description revealing differences between South and North. The southern clerics also interpreted the Civil War through this terministic screen. Weaver noted that the all-inclusive actions of World War Two were for the "war effort." In a similar fashion, the clerical rhetoric established that the region's secession occurred to defend principles.

Bledsoe flatly stated that the conflict was a "contest between principle and brute force," leaving little doubt the South possessed the former quality. William Bennett saw the war as a battle for principles "essential to the well-being of the American people and to the perpetuity of a republican form of government." The unreconstructed Robert Dabney denounced claims that the War for Southern Independence might have been fought for the black man: "It was not the
circumstance of slavery for which we contended, but the principle—the great cause of moral right, justice, and regulated freedom."^30

The use of principles to defend secession justified the clerical involvement in calling for war. Presbyterian Thomas Smyth was eulogized in 1873 as a "whole-soul Patriot, when patriotism involves the spirit of loyalty, or the principles of true Republicanism and a readiness to defend them at any sacrifice." Smyth's active espousal of secession was "because he believed she was contending for these very principles of civil liberty and free government."^31

Moses Drury Hoge, in his oration at the unveiling of the Stonewall Jackson monument in 1875, used the occasion to defend the South's entry into the conflict. "The people of the South," he argued, "maintained, as their fathers maintained before them, that certain principles were essential to the perpetuation of the Union according to its original constitution. Rather than surrender their convictions, they took up arms to defend them."^32

Hoge never clearly delineated these "essential principles," but his association of them with the Constitution of 1787 was clear. The South had been taught that the great conflict with the North which resulted in southern secession focused on the differing interpretations of that Constitution. Bledsoe claimed that southern agitation in Constitutional disputes (1798, 1828, 1861) resulted because "underlying these causes were the great principles of Free Government
and Constitutional Liberty."\(^{33}\)

Appomattox signaled the demise of the Constitution of 1787; Hoge conceded "it is idle to shut our eyes to the fact that this consolidated empire of states [the country in 1875] is not the Union established by our fathers."\(^{34}\) The author of "Southern Views" was more adamant:

The North, by the aid of foreign mercenaries, triumphed—and triumphed, not only over the South, but over herself, over the Constitution, over liberty, honor, interest, truth, justice, right! The spirit of republicanism is extinct, and the spirit of despotism reigns in its stead.\(^{35}\)

Indeed, for many southerners, the Constitution of their fathers was dead, but its principles remained a potentially active force in the defeated South. The tumult of Reconstruction could not destroy these ideals or those who placed their faith in the power of this term. In October, 1873, the Southern Review offered praise to the Southern Presbyterians with a call to defiance. "The Presbyterian Church has produced a Stonewall Jackson," the Review suggested, "and many other stonewalls beside who stand by their principles as firmly in defeat and disaster as in the hours of triumph, refusing to melt away under the fires of affliction, or the storms of persecution."\(^{36}\) Implied, but nonetheless clear in this praise, was a call for continued adherence to "southern principles" in the manner of the mighty Stonewall, the chief representative of a southern Holy Warrior.
Principles possessed an immortal quality, enduring the changes in governmental policy and public opinion. The idea of certain principles and the term itself took on a divine nature. The clerics made effective use of Evangelical Protestant theology in describing the eternal attributes of the word. Southern Methodist Bledsoe argued in July, 1869: "A principle can be abandoned in practice, or may be prevented from being in operation, but cannot die." Six years later, Presbyterian cleric Hoge would echo an almost identical phrase in his speech on Jackson, claiming that the beliefs and acts of the South remained beyond reproach despite defeat. A form of government, he said, "may change, a policy may perish, but a principle can never die. . . . The conditions of society may be so altered as to make it idle to contend for a principle which no longer has any practical force." These changed conditions, however, "have not annihilated one original truth." For Hoge, the enduring quality of southern principles included an eternal essence of the Old South. The loss in battle could not completely sever the bonds of an Old South and a South in the midst of Reconstruction.

Dabney was equally defiant. Stonewall Jackson's former chief of staff claimed that his Oath of Allegiance did not conflict with his defense of southern ideals. That oath "did not bind me to think or say the principles on which I had acted were erroneous; but to abstain, in future, from the assertion of them by force of arms." For Dabney, the war, in a different form, could conceivably continue indefinitely
Principles of the Old South, righteous and eternal, might endure, but the clergy could not ignore the obvious changes in the southern society as a result of the lost war. Historians have noted the various attempts by Reconstruction rhetors to vindicate the South and the defeat of "God's Chosen People." These defenses usually claimed that success did not guarantee a righteous cause and that the loss was God's manner of increasing the faith of the southern people. The southern clergy used this line of reasoning as part of their justification of key principles. A reviewer in the 1868 edition of the *Southern Presbyterian Review* dismissed the idea of defeat as temporary. "But the highest and grandest principles are ever slowest in their development," the writer observed, and noted that the South had had the honor of contending for "great truths" in the war.

Maintaining their use of this particular terministic screen, the southern clergy placed their hope in a future vindication of the region which had sought to defend these precious ideals. John Girardeau in 1866 posited his belief that Confederate principles would "in another day, in some golden age, sung by poets, sages, and prophets, come forth in the resurrection of buried principles and live to bless mankind." Here, Girardeau noted the enduring power of the principles over time, as well as their interrelationship with the defeated Confederacy. The implications of Evangelical theology were that such a power would bring about an "Easter morn" and keep
the Old South from suffering complete decay.

The Southern Presbyterian Review used the occasion of its 1868 review of the Life of Jefferson Davis to look forward in time for a rebirth and vindication of the Old South. "Someday in the time to come," the writer prophesized, "the world will justly appreciate him and the principles he and the people who loved him well strove to uphold; and the lost cause of 1865 will be won for another generation and in other forms."\(^{42}\) Comments such as these say no real end to the conflict of 1861. The "future" vindication was indeed vague, but nonetheless a central part of the discourse. The Confederate principles might be forced into hibernation, but like the Evangelical celebration of Easter, these ideals would rise again. The conflict would not go away, but merely changed forms.

Four years after Appomattox, Bledsoe suggested that despite the loss, the South would someday receive a just recognition both "in the great principles of free government and in the achievements in the field of battle."\(^{43}\) In the same essay, Bledsoe built a complex rhetorical structure which focused on the relationship between southern principles and southern liberty and which called for renewed defiance. If the South's love of liberty, he claimed, "and their appreciation of government which alone can secure it, cannot be intimidated into inactivity, or corrupted by material prosperity, the end is not yet. It is hardly begun."\(^{44}\) For Bledsoe, as well as the other defiant clergy, Appomattox signaled no end to the battle for principles.
The Salvation of the Old South: A Return to Principles

However much the clergy defended the eternal nature of southern principles and the Old South, their rhetoric also contained sharp warnings about the need to protect these ideals. According to the clergy, these principles, though enduring, might be lost by the South through certain actions. Consequently, there were calls to protect and maintain these vague images of the essence of the region. Eventually, the call to preserve southern principles became a call for the salvation of a distinct heritage—the Old South.

Hoge acknowledged the demise of the 1787 Constitution. However, certain inherent aspects of that document (strong state and individual liberties) had to be salvaged. He argued: "And if history teaches any lesson, it is this, that a nation cannot long survive when the fundamental principles which gave it life, originally, are subverted." For Hoge, since the South alone retained these "original principles," it was her duty to protect and maintain them for the sake of the region and the entire nation.

Palmer was equally concerned over losing these precious ideals. Again, in almost identical language, he argued that "no people has long kept its place in history after transversing the fundamental principles upon which the national character has been formed." Like Hoge, these comments were delivered to a southern audience, but directed at a northern one. The transversal of principles were attacks on northern
policies and calls for southern audiences to stay entrenched in their beliefs. To change amid the pressure of Reconstruction would be to yield the South's principles and their hope of a heritage redeemed.

Palmer, perhaps the most dominant clerical figure of the Reconstruction era, was also a driving force in preventing the reunification of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches. His efforts to stay this reunion are important for two reasons. First, they reveal a way in which the defense of southern principles was effectively employed to keep sectionalism alive in the Church. Second, the Presbyterians were the last of the three dominant Evangelical groups to divide along ideological-regional lines. The lack of reunion reveals the continued dominance of unreconstructed attitudes in southern religion. These attitudes helped keep a "Solid South" in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches below the Mason-Dixon line.

Palmer chaired the committee in 1870 which recommended no "correspondence" with the northern churches. In a letter drafted by Palmer to explain the committee's actions, he wrote: "It was incumbent upon us to watch narrowly, lest in the very opening of negotiations to correspond, we might incautiously surrender the principles we hold, which, slipping from our grasp, we might never be able to recover." Perhaps there was a fear here as well of losing the distinctive identity of a Southern Presbyterian Church which clung to the values of an Old South.
In a letter to another leading Presbyterian cleric, John Adger, Palmer offered further defenses of his actions. If, as some members had wanted, a committee to study reunion had been created, the Southern Presbyterian Church "would have yielded the whole case upon its principles." All that the Southern Presbyterians possessed to preserve a Way of Life—at least rhetorically—was their tenacious hold on southern principles. What is interesting is the fear that even the forming of a committee to study possible reunion was damage enough to wrest the principles from the Southland. Principles, as employed by Palmer, became representative of some kind of jealous tribal god, demanding isolation and purification. Any taint of "sin" was cause for the region to lose its potential vindication or "salvation."

Not surprisingly, in the face of such a rhetorical vision, the 1870 convention of the Southern Presbyterians decided that it "would be a serious compromise of this sacred trust to enter into public and official fellowship" with a Northern Church which had lost its principles. The association with the Northern Church, like a leprosy, would contaminate the southerners, strip them of their principles, and deny the region any hope for the future.

In addition to zealously protecting against the loss of their principles, southern clergy urged their audiences to maintain them by holding fast to an Old South lifestyle and regional identity. Writing in praise of Irish rebel Robert Emmett and the South, the Southern Review claimed that "To
the eye of faith, no sacrifice seems insignificant which was for the sake of principle." The Southern Presbyterian Review understood. The principles themselves demanded a resurrection through the ensuing generations. "It is due to the pure principles," the Review assured its readers, battled for in vain by a confederation now no more, that the history of that struggle should be kept ever fresh in the hearts of those whose fathers urged it, and that those principles should be again and again reasserted in the telling of their first fate.

These beliefs in the preservation of certain ideas took on a holy duty for Palmer, who wrote to his fellow southerners: "Our hearts are penetrated with the majesty of the principles which we are called to maintain." His desire was that "you should feel yourself consecrated by the high purpose to assert them with us before the world." The actions of the southern audiences, according to this strongly religious rhetoric, were guided by a Higher Duty. Such language is loaded with potential for shaping the views and visions of the listeners and readers.

For the clergy, this maintenance of the principles was necessary for the redemption of more than the region. The audiences's obedience to their high calling provided relief for the entire nation. The task, for Dabney, transcended the region and embodied patriotism:

The wisest, kindest, most patriotic thing which any man can do for his country, amidst such
calamities, is to aid in preserving and reinstating the tottering principles of his countrymen; to reach them while they give place to inexorable force, to abate nothing of righteous convictions, and of self-respect.54

This partisan venture, according to Dabney, "is really a benefactor of the conquerers as of the conquered." The one who preserves these principles "aids in preserving the precious seed of men, who are men of principle, and not of expediency." For Dabney, only these individuals would be able to "reconstruct society, after the tumult of faction shall have spent its rage upon the foundations of truth and justice."55 Once again, principles was used to describe an enduring set of beliefs which aided South and North. Because the South alone now possessed these principles, the presumption was that the region was actually morally superior to the militarily victorious northern forces. This rhetoric of Dabney also reveals the dominant dialectic in the southern attempt to be both southerners and Americans. With this particular use of principles, the term represented a set of national beliefs, abandoned by the North but retained by the South. From this remnant, the region might be able to save itself as well as the whole country from the chaos of Reconstruction.56

Hoge perceived this chaos as emanating from a loss of Constitutional and Scriptural authority and offered as a solution "a voluntary return to the fundamental principles upon which our republic was originally founded." Moments later,
he supported this call for a return to a nation of the past through his use of Jackson's principles:

\[ \text{It is our interest, our duty, and determination to maintain the Union, and to make every possible contribution to its prosperity and glory, if all the states which compose it will be united in making it such a Union as our fathers framed, and in enthroning above it, not a Caesar, but the Constitution in its old supremacy.} \]

Hoge's desire was found at the conclusion of this passage—a return to what had been supposedly repudiated by the defeat of the South. This "supreme" Constitution was one defended by John Calhoun in the 1840s and his followers in the 1850s and 1860s. It was this interpretation of the document that allowed for the acts of nullification and secession. A return to this Constitution was a return to a time dominated by the southern forces in Congress. For Hoge, and other clergy, the answer to the problems of Reconstruction lay in the past.

The preservation of these essential principles came from a retention of Old South images and ideas. For the clergy, if the region loosened its grip on the past amid the crucible of Reconstruction, the South would abandon its most essential characteristic. A Constitutionally legal secession had been tried and defeated, but the underlying principles must not be forgotten. Adherence to the southern principles (such as a "Constitutional Government" and "Civil Liberty") functioned as calls for continued sectionalism, rather than as specific
political ideologies. What principles represented, first and foremost, was the South. The characteristics of these principles (immortality, resurrection, redemption) were labels for the Old South and those individuals, living during Reconstruction, who would cling to an Old South past.

Conclusions and Implications

The thesis of this chapter was that the critic can gain revealing insights into a society by studying how its spokesmen establish key terms. What emerges from a study of clerical rhetoric during Reconstruction is a consistent use, in various ways, of the term principles. From vague associations with pro-South Constitutional and Biblical interpretations, this term was used to defend the actions of the seceded region. The South was offered a future vindication due to the eternal quality of their principles, and was warned sharply that this redemption rested, in part, on a preservation of their ideals through continued sectional isolation and a sectional worldview.

From the standpoint of rhetorical theory, the clerics' choice of this terministic screen reveals several critical implications. First, the close association between the Old South and the term resulted in an interesting synecdoche. As John Genung noted in The Working Principles of Rhetoric, the power of synecdoche "lets some striking part of an object stand for the whole." The result is that synecdoche reduces
"an idea to its focus and centre" revealing the essential aspect of the structure.59

In Metaphors We Live By, Lakoff and Johnson described the role of synecdoche as that of "providing understanding." Because a single part is used to represent the whole, the "part we pick out determines which aspect of the whole we are focusing on." The clergy equated the Old South with this term which generated an easily defensible image of the worth and enduringness of the Old South.60 Principles are a metaphysical, mystical concept at best. Their manifestation in some society's actions did not limit them or threaten their existence. Rather, as the clergy developed this term, principles endured. The people of a society may accept or reject them, but the ideals cannot be destroyed.

Principles, therefore, was a shrewd choice for the sacred rhetors in their defense of the Old South.61 These concepts might be clung to tenaciously even when no physical manifestation existed to prove their existence. In fact, the clerical rhetoric called for the region to hold tightest to its past because no physical evidence was represented.

In short, offering this synecdoche relationship of the region as its principles called for particular responses by the audiences. Principles were divine images which demanded devotion and promised eventual redemption through their enduring nature. The clerical rhetoric was shaped by this synecdoche which they offered to the southern audiences.

Synecdoche is an important part of myth-making, also.
Clearly, the clerical devotion to principles made use of, as well as extended, the popular mythic images of the Old South. In *Language and Myth*, Ernst Cassirer noted what he called the "law of the leveling and extinction of specific differences." Every part of the whole, he wrote, "is the whole itself; every specimen is equivalent to the entire species. The part does not merely represent the whole . . . because they are identical with the totality to which they belong." These parts serve as "genuine presences which actually contain the power, significance, and efficacy of the whole." The whole, therefore, need not be discussed in full detail. What is necessary is that some essential part of the whole be identified as most significant.

Through the clerical rhetoric, the principles they denoted became representations of the entire region, particularly of an Old South Way of Life. What emerges from this rhetoric is that the principles accurately described the South as a whole. Through the use of principles, southerners were told that their society was significant, worthy, divine, and enduring. The demise of a separate political nation did not extend to this very essential core of ideals. The essence of the Old South, for the clergy, was its defense of and devotion to principles. These images had not gone to defeat with Lee's army at Appomattox. In similar fashion, the southern society had been spared total destruction.

Samuel Hill claimed that southern Reconstruction religion served several purposes: coping with the strains of chaos,
assuring superiority of the white population, easing the guilt from the loss, and legitimizing a Southern Way of Life.\textsuperscript{63} Certainly, one method for accomplishing these goals was to represent the South by focusing attention on unchanging and undefeatable principles which the region possessed. Of particular note is the manner in which the clergy associated the term principles with the war and the ensuing defeat. The word focused attention away from other potential causes of the conflict, especially slavery. Once this was accomplished, the clerics could maintain a line of rhetoric consistent with their efforts to defend the institution and their call for secession prior to 1861.

The war retained the holy quality the clergy assigned to it prior to Fort Sumter because it was fought for certain principles which they described with divine attributes. The loss on the battlefield did not prove the South was wrong to maintain slavery or to attempt a Constitutional secession. In fact, the use of principles to describe the conflict suggests how a holy war might appear to be lost. The battle for principles did not end with Appomattox; hence, the conflict merely changed arenas--from military to cultural.

Because of the enduring quality of these principles, and the potential for a future vindication, the loss was re-defined into something other than a defeat. Without the apparent loss, the Southern Way of Life was protected from decay and could look forward to a redemption. The use of the term by the clergy transformed the military defeat into a temporary
setback not capable of destroying the essence of the region.

Second, the use of principles placed the entire context of Reconstruction into a much larger temporality. The clergy focused their audiences' attentions on the distant past, already mythic, of the Old South, and on a redemption in the distant future. The present was left alone, insignificant when placed against the broader context of time. Scholars of myth and comparative religion refer to this temporal condition as "sacred time." Ernst Cassirer in his volume on Mythical Thought described the effects of this rhetoric focused on the distant past: "By being thrust back into temporal distance, by being situated in the depths of the past, a particular content is not only established as sacred, as mythically and religiously significant, but also justified as such." Time, he noted, "is the first original form of this spiritual justification." 

The clerical use of principles suggests an attempt on their part to create or invoke a "sacred time." These principles emerged from a distant past, were embodied in the present South, and promised to survive into, and even vindicate, the future. The close association between the term and Old South images (Liberty, the 1787 Constitution, the Bible) created a timelessness for the audiences. The South of 1787, the South of 1860, and the South of Reconstruction were essentially the same in their adherence to and belief in principles. As Palmer noted in his famous address at Washington and Lee College: "I solemnly declare that the principles of our
Fathers are our principles to-day." The times and conditions changed; for the clergy, their principles did not. Mircea Eliade noted that people actively seek a sacred time: "In Christian terms, it could be called a nostalgia for paradise." In the rhetoric of the Reconstruction clergy, this paradise was to be found in the popular symbols of the Old South.

One significant aspect of the clergy's sacred time was the preservation of southern principles. To maintain this continuity between a chaotic Reconstruction world and the safe refuges of an orderly Old South, the audiences were advised to continue their belief in these principles. These distinctly southern images were to be kept alive in the continual mythification of the Old South and the Confederacy. The loss of principles resulting from a loss of sectional identity would effectively destroy the sacred time. As long as the principles were expounded, the Reconstruction South and the Old South were one. The hope for the future lay in a devotion to the past. What this devotion created was a fear of change, entrenching a rigid desire for a former Way of Life to become a current state.

Third, the term principles was sufficiently ambiguous to be attached to a variety of images and ideas already present and significant in the southern mind. Principles not only represented the essence of the Old South but were associated with patriotism, liberty, freedom, morality, and order. As discussed in Chapter Two of this study, these ideas were critical to the Old South. The use of principles, then,
evoked a series of other terms, equally blurry, but decidedly "southern" in the minds of the hearers and readers. The term, principles, fell upon ears and eyes which had been conditioned for decades to respond positively to the concepts of Liberty and Order.69

The broad nature of these principles also allowed the clergy to associate the term with both the Constitution and the Bible. At times in their rhetoric, principles was the bridge between the two works, representing the defining characteristic of these sacred documents. Reverend W. T. Hall in 1867 noted that the war was fought because southerners felt "the very authority of God's word was at issue."70 Bledsoe contended in 1869 that the "religion of the Bible . . . is pretty nearly obsolete at the North."71 Similar objections were made by the southern pastors against the North's destruction of the 1787 Constitution.72

By identifying the term with the Constitution and the Bible, the clerics were able to maintain the image that the principles they denoted were southern ones, since the North had abandoned or defiled both documents. Further, the clergy had offered Constitutional and Scriptural defenses of slavery and secession from the 1830s. Linking principles with these two documents helped the clergy sustain a consistent rhetoric urging a particular Old South lifestyle from the 1830s until the 1880s, despite the failure of secession and the demise of slavery. The Constitution and the Bible, through principles, remained two dominant justifications for the institutions and actions of the Old South long after Appomattox.73
Finally, the clerical use of principles suggests an effort to create a rhetorical hierarchy which would translate into a similar social and political order. This clerical attempt is similar to what Kenneth Burke detailed as an ultimate rhetorical position. The use of principles by the clergy defined a set of particular responses by the audiences. The term was a powerful one with all its images and associations. An ordering of social action resulted when the word was adopted by the audiences. The idea of what these sacred principles represented was inherent in the term and did not have to be fully developed each time the word was used.

Burke's "ultimate terms" stifle debate and discussion, calling for action, not compromise. Burke noted in A Rhetoric of Motives: "The ultimate order would place the competing voices themselves in a hierarchy, or sequence, or evaluative series." With the ultimate term, "there would be a 'guiding idea' or 'unitary principle' behind the diversity of voices." Certainly, the clergy did not call for a discussion of the significant strength of these principles. Rather, they presumed the timelessness and sacredness of these images. The use of the term defined certain actions, chiefly the maintenance of an Old South mentality, by recognizing that the essence of southern history and identity lay in its principles.

The role of the white southerner during Reconstruction was established through this terministic screen offered by the clergy. The choice of principles with its myriad associations and images suggested a certain hierarchy, especially
considerate of Old South ideas. The clerical rhetoric further suggested that this hierarchy be adopted in the political and social worlds where "southern principles" would be the guiding force. The calls to action seemed to indicate a sincere desire on the clergy's part to return to a strict interpretation of the Constitution and to a decentralized federal government.

The use of the term blurred any potential differences between white southerners and offered a single key idea upon which "true southerners" could agree. The "diversity of voices" in Reconstruction could be ordered through an acceptance of the significance of southern principles.

The clerical use of principles suggests one effort by a group of rhetors to deal with the uncertainties and chaos of Reconstruction. The clerical attempt to create order began with a rhetoric itself ordered by the term principles which became a call to perpetuate a particular world view. Through their use of principles, the clergy defined the enduring essence of the Old South. This definition possessed the potential for defending the Old South and the Confederacy. At its broadest implication, the use of principles was a call to maintain a strong sectional identity which would adhere to the mythic interpretations of a southern society no longer visible.

Their choice of principles, then, provided a terministic framework for the clergy to defend and to propagate an Old South Way of Life. The clergy also defended their culture
in the discussion of the relationships between whites and blacks during Reconstruction. An analysis of this rhetoric of race is examined in the following chapter.

2 Buck 66.

3 Spain 66.

4 Eighmy x.


7 Among other sources, I used three major journals for the rhetoric of this chapter. These three were the Southern Review (1867-1879); the New Eclectic which became the Southern Magazine in 1871 (1868-1875); and the Southern Presbyterian Review (1861-1885). The Southern Review was edited by Albert Taylor Bledsoe and served as an "official organ" of the Southern Methodist Church. The New Eclectic/Southern Magazine was a literary journal primarily but was guided by such Lost Cause ministers as Moses Drury Hoge. The Southern Magazine contained a generous amount of rhetoric written by Southern clerical leaders. The Southern Presbyterian Review was edited by "an association of ministers" in Columbia, South Carolina. This journal was among the first denominational magazines to call for secession before the war. A dominant figure for the SPR was James Henley Thornwell until his death during the Civil War. After the war, Thomas Smyth was a driving force at the Review.

All three journals were widely read and were three of the few to emerge immediately after the war. Many of the sectional journals came out in the late Reconstruction period. These journals are among the most frequently cited in the secondary sources concerning this period.

8 Weaver 177-230.


10 Richard M. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago:
Regnery/Gateway, 1953) 211.


12 Burke, Symbolic Action 47. In A Grammar of Motives (1945; Berkeley: U of California P, 1969) 57, Burke suggested that "in stating the character of the object . . . at the same time contains an implicit program with regard to the object, thus serving as motive."

13 Weaver, Ethics 212.


15 Weaver, Ethics 227-8.

16 For a discussion of the significance of essence or substance, see Burke, Grammar 21-58.


19 "Church and Politics": 247.

20 "Proceedings of 1870, on Correspondence with the Northern Assembly," The Distinctive Principles of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 3rd ed. (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, n.d.) 95, 93.

For further information on these two figures, who were two of the most dominant clerical figures of the period, see Richard M. Weaver, "Albert Taylor Bledsoe," *Sewanee Review* 52 (1944): 34-45. Bledsoe himself recounted his personal life and adventures in "The Southern Review," *Southern Review* 8 (1870): 419-445. The New Orleans *Christian Advocate* gave a short account when Bledsoe became an "official" Southern Methodist Church member and commented on the sermon he preached upon his confirmation. See the 17 December 1870 edition: 5.

Palmer was perhaps the most dominant of all Southern clergy for this time period. He preached and spoke on a variety of subjects, both in New Orleans at the First Presbyterian Church and throughout the South, from 1856 until his death in 1902. Prior to locating in New Orleans, Palmer preached in Columbia, South Carolina, and taught at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary there. His "Thanksgiving Sermon" in 1860 calling for secession earned him the title of "Thomas Paine" from historian James W. Silver. Likely, Palmer's efforts on behalf of secession helped push Louisiana into the war. He served as presiding officer in Southern Presbyterian Assemblies and first president of the Southern Historical Society (1876), a "Lost Cause" organization. For information on Palmer, see the Johnson biography and Wayne C. Eubank, "Benjamin Morgan Palmer, A Southern Divine," diss. Louisiana State U, 1943; and Doralyn Joanne Hickery, "Benjamin Morgan Palmer: Churchman of the Old South," diss. Duke U, 1962. Margaret Burr DesChamps discussed Palmer's Thanksgiving Sermon in "Benjamin Morgan Palmer,

22 Johnson, *Palmer* 326.

23 Weaver, *Tradition* 98-111.


25 Ezell 342.


27 This was reprinted as "Authorship at the South,"


28 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southerns": 104.


Dabney was perhaps the most unreconstructed of all the Reconstruction clergy. *A Defense of Virginia* is a lengthy book defending slavery on Constitutional and Scriptural grounds—one of the few to be written after the war. Dabney was Stonewall Jackson's chaplain and later served the general as chief of staff. A fiery Presbyterian, Dabney wrote and spoke extensively in defense of his general, his state (Virginia) and the South. For more information on Dabney, see Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903). In *Presbyterians in the South, Volume Two: 1861-1890* (Richmond: John Knox, 1973) Ernest T. Thompson wrote of Dabney during Reconstruction: "He remained
unreconciled and unreconciliable, finding it hard to forgive or to forget; the iron had entered his soul and was never exorcised." (113)


Hoge was the third member of a trio of Presbyterians who dominated the Reconstruction era (Palmer and Dabney, the other two). The Jackson speech was perhaps the finest he gave although Hoge continued to speak on a variety of subjects until his death in the 1890s. For an account of his life, see Peyton H. Hoge, Moses Drury Hoge: Life and Letters (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1899).

33 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southerns": 113.

34 Hoge "Jackson Oration": 716.

35 "Southern Views": 83.

36 Rev. of Presbyterianism, With the Modern Improvents, Southern Review 14 (1873): 500.

37 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southerns": 121.

38 Hoge, "Jackson Oration": 715-6.


40 For a discussion of this rhetoric, see Charles Wilson, Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause: 1865-1920

41 Rev. of *The Life of Jefferson Davis*, *Southern Presbyterian Review* 19(1868): 462.

42 The Girardeau quotation was cited in Wilson 74; the commentary on Davis came from Rev. of *The Life of Jefferson Davis*: 463. For a similar view of these two quotations, see "Southern Views": 62.

43 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southrons": 124.

44 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southrons": 124.

45 Hoge, "Jackson Oration": 716.

46 Johnson, Palmer 354. Palmer also expressed this thought in his eulogy of Lee; see Johnson, Palmer 351.


48 As late as 1876, the Southern Presbyterian Church Assembly noted that "domestic servitude is of Divine appointment." Cited in Wilson 103.


52 Rev. of *The Life of Jefferson Davis* 461.

53 Johnson, Palmer 326.

54 Dabney, *Defense* 7.


56 The idea of the South's moral superiority as an argument
against the North's military superiority was discussed by Thomas Connelly, *The Marble Man* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1977) 93-4. Connelly did not specifically note the use of principles but offered a good overview of the argument as it developed in the South. The idea of the Southerner's constant tension to be both Southerner and American was noted by David Potter, *The South and the Sectional Conflict* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1968) 30-1, 78.

57 Hoge, "Jackson Oration": 717.

58 The question of a legal Constitutional secession was the subject of Bledsoe's *Is Davis a Traitor?* (Baltimore: Innes, 1866). Similar arguments ran through "Church and Politics": especially 381.


63 Hill, *Religion and the Solid South* 43.


Eliade, *Sacred and Profane* 92.

Such a devotion to a series of past Southern principles might be offered as a reason for the Lost Cause fear of New South doctrines. See Wilson 79-99.

For a brief comment on these twin ideas as they fused just prior to the Civil War, see William J. Cooper, Jr., *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* (New York: A. Knopf, 1983): 282-285.

Cited in Weaver, *Tradition* 208.

Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southrons": 110.

For one example, see "Southern Views": 81.

The best example of these justifications are found in Dabney, *A Defense of Virginia*.


THE SOUTHERN CLERGY AND RACE:
A VISION OF OLD SOUTH ORDER

Dr. Robert Dabney, summarizing his Defense of Virginia and the South in 1867, concluded:

It has been shown in previous chapters, that the destruction of African slavery among us was vital to us, because emancipation by such means would be destructive of the very framework of society, and of our fundamental rights and interests.¹

Appomattox was more than an end to southern nationalism. An economic system and way of life was altered by the introduction of a new persona into the region—the freedman. Former slaves, numbering in the millions, claimed their freedom following the war's end, and a dominating exigence for the clergy became the definition and articulation of a new relationship between former master and former bondsman.

In his social history of the Southern Baptists, Rufus B. Spain noted that the denomination accepted the inevitability of the emancipation, but "resisted all changes in their customary treatment of Negroes." Spain suggested that "No presidential proclamation, no constitutional amendments, nor a fratricidal war, nor even religious creed could effect any sweeping changes in the Southern mind." Spain concluded that
"Except for recognizing the personal freedom of the Negroes, Southern churches exhibited no appreciable change of attitude as a result of emancipation."²

This chapter examines the clerical rhetoric which focused on relationships between whites and blacks in the Reconstruction South. Historians have noted that the southern clergy generally continued to defend slavery in the postwar era, eventually reflecting and contributing to the region's strong segregationist policies.³ This chapter analyzes such rhetoric against the background of a need for social order. Kenneth Burke wrote that people are "Goaded by the spirit of hierarchy," a phrase he defined as "Moved by a sense of order."⁴ For Burke, people are driven toward some sense of hierarchy, the idea of an orderly arrangement of reality.⁵ Stephen Ausband observed that "Man's desire for order, his absolute and dogged insistence on order, is the foundation of his humanity." He concluded that "The most pressing human need may indeed not be the need for food but the need for order."⁶

Religious oracles are significant contributors to the rhetorical creation of a social order. Peter Berger noted that "Religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established." This cosmos is portrayed as transcending the potential confusions of the everyday world. Berger concluded: "The sacred cosmos emerges out of chaos and continues to confront the latter as its terrible contrary. . . . The sacred cosmos, which transcends and includes man in its ordering of reality, thus provides man's ultimate shield
against the terror of anomy." Such a "cosmos" was the rhetorical creation of the unreconstructed clergy in their effort to provide a sense of order for the people. As clerics, they would be expected to offer a "divine" interpretation of the social chaos and suggest ways of overcoming the confusion.

Specifically, this chapter seeks to understand the cleric confrontation with emancipation and the manner in which this perceived social disorder was absorbed into a clerical vision of a transcendent "sacred cosmos" for the Reconstruction South. A brief discussion of the clergy and slavery before the Civil War introduces the remainder of this chapter.

The Clerical Defense of Slavery in the Old South

Southern clergy during Reconstruction were compelled to respond to the exigence of emancipation. The upheaval of an entire labor system itself demanded responses by all leading spokesmen, secular and sacred. More critical, however, was the clerical involvement with this peculiar institution prior to the Civil War.

Clerics initially condemned the practice of slavery or tolerated the institution as a necessary evil. By the 1850s, however, the southern religious leaders were suggesting that slavery provided the basis for the best society, strongly supporting the practice and its expansion. In his famous defense of the institution and call for secession, B. M. Palmer claimed that the South of 1860 had a "duty to ourselves,
our slaves, to the world, and to almighty God" to continue "our existing system of domestic servitude . . . wherever Providence and nature may carry it." The bondage of the black man was identified by pastors in the Old South with the divine authority of God. Fred Ross, Presbyterian minister in Huntsville, Alabama, used such an identification: Slavery is of God, and to continue for the good of the slave, the good of the master, and the good of the whole American family, until another and better destiny may be unfolded."

James H. Thornwell, a leading defender of slavery and active secessionist, declared that opposition to the institution was opposition to God and association with the Great Unholies:

The parties in this conflict are not merely abolitionists and slaveholders—they are atheists, socialists, communists, red republicans, jacobins on the one side, and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. In one word, the world is the battleground—Christianity and atheism the combatants, and the progress of humanity the stake.

By Fort Sumter, the southern clergy had developed consistent arguments defending slavery as a divine institution, bearing a sanction as God's Word. In his study of Old South religion, Donald Mathews noted that "It was in the pulpit, rather than the tract or book, that the ideology of southern paternalism was born." By the Civil War, religious historian W. W. Sweet succinctly charged, the southern churches "had
become the bulwark of American slavery."  

Slavery offered a distinct sectional identity for the antebellum South. These bonds of sectionalism were quite strong. When confronted with a choice between denominational or regional unity, the southern branches of the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians sided with the Southland and its institutions. The splitting of these institutions (the Baptists and Methodists in the 1840s; the Presbyterians in 1860) foreshadowed the coming national crisis over slavery.  

In his final speech before the Senate, John C. Calhoun expressed his concern over the denominational separations: "The ties which held each denomination together formed a strong cord to hold the whole Union together, but, powerful as they were, they have not been able to resist the explosive effect of slavery agitation."  

For Calhoun, the snapping of denominational unity was a portend of the Union dissolved.

For the antebellum clergy, a defense of slavery was tantamount to a defense of the South and ultimately an apologia for the cause of God. From the pulpit, southerners were told that their region alone possessed the principles of Christianity and order. This notion of order became a dominant theme of the prewar Protestant Church and a vindication of slavery. Richard Weaver in his cultural history of the period described the rationale of the slavery-supporters: "Those who fall below the established level of virtue and reason have to be restrained and any degree of restraint is righteous that conducts to a righteous end."  

Slavery provided such an end.
With the spring of 1865, however, such a "righteous restraint" was removed. One great calamity for the defeated region was the intensity of social chaos resulting from this emancipation of the region's blacks. Rhetorically, the clergy created a three-fold vision of a southern sacred cosmos to overcome this confusion. The first element of this vision was a discussion of an orderly antebellum past. The second part of this rhetorical order concerned the reasons for the tumultuous present of Reconstruction. The final aspect of this vision was the future of the South and what the southern populace must do to return to a sense of order. These three parts of this rhetorical order are examined in the sections which follow.

The Southern Past: Slavery and Order

The clerics argued that their region's past was an Old South dominated by order, a social condition stemming directly from slavery. For all three parts of their vision of order, the clergy turned to a definition of white-black relationships. These social relationships became the prism through which the clerics focused their understanding of the region's past, its present, and the future. The significance of the institution of slavery for the postbellum South was noted by Dabney: "Instead, therefore, of regarding the discussion of African slavery as henceforth antiquated, we believe that it assumes, at this era, a new and wider importance."
An author in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* claimed that slavery as an issue could not pass from the scene. "A relation," he observed, "which God has surrounded with stringent laws, and which he made beneficial to the subordinated by defining the duty of the superior can never become a 'dead issue' while his revelation is authoritative."\(^{19}\) As Presbyterian John Adger concluded, the religious principles underlying slavery "cannot die."\(^{20}\)

According to the clergy, slavery had been beneficial to the slaves by extending them Christianity and civilization. God had revealed his grace towards blacks through the institution of slavery: "His grace and wisdom are also manifest in the providence that placed the negro in a condition to receive this gospel and be Christianized by it."\(^{21}\) The essay suggested that "no peasantry on the face of the earth ... was so thoroughly Christianized as the slaves prior to the termination of the war."\(^{22}\)

Slavery was salvation for the blacks, according to an 1869 essay in the *Southern Review* entitled "Liberty?" The author argued that "By 'personal slavery,' or servitude, the Africans brought to this country were, indeed, delivered from a bondage infinitely more frightful than any the New World has ever seen--from a bondage to 'the flesh and the devil.'"\(^{23}\) This notion that slavery promoted social order through its Christianizing process crept into the defense offered for Thomas Smyth, a leading pro-slavery minister. Smyth's eulogist, quoting the deceased, noted that the pastor "held that
'it [slavery] had been employed by unerring wisdom and an over­
ruling Providence, as an instrument for the preservation, elevation, and conversion of millions who would have lived and died in heathen ignorance, superstitution, and cruelty."24 These last conditions, which the Christian slave avoided, were obvious detriments to a proper social order.

Slavery provided a complementary counterpart to Christian­ity through its civilizing process. The Southern Presbyterian Review contended that Virginia blacks differed from Africans because the former group was "civilized." The essay concluded that "slavery accomplished this wonderful, beneficient work." The same essay attempted to define certain requirements for this civilizing process and settled on three necessitiess: discipline, enforced labor, and religion. The Old South had supplied all three ingredients and had aided their slaves in the quest for civilization. The Southern Presbyterian Review concluded that the South possessed no exhibits worthy of re­cognition at the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876; however, had the region been able to contrast the differences in the Africans and former slaves, then an award would have been forthcoming for "the act itself of civilising . . . to the converting of hopeless barbarians into citizens."25

The author of "Liberty?" concurred:

Slavery had, it must be admitted, achieved much for the African race. . . . In America, we have seen some four millions of the same race under the con­trol of humane and Christian master, advocating
continually, from barbarism and bondage toward the goal of civilization and freedom. 26

Slavery, according to these arguments, had served an important social good through the transformation of a barbaric people into civilized Christians. These postwar defenses of slavery did more than parrot an Old South apologia or echo a rhetorical position which was established decades earlier. This defense of slavery after Appomattox rhetorically envisioned an idyllic past, supported by hierarchy and order. The Old South was good and Godly because the Old South had an ordered relationship between whites and blacks. In addition to the Christianity and civilization which the antebellum South had provided blacks, the clergy also extended this vision of order to include a series of other "benefits." These advantages included proving the authority of God's Word, generating a condition of loyalty in the slaves, creating a healthy labor atmosphere for the slaves, and revealing the Christian nature of slave-owners. 27

In brief summary, the clerical rhetoric concerning the white-black relations looked first to the past, citing a defense of slavery and the Old South. This southern past was a society of hierarchy and order with these conditions created through the positive aspects of the institution of slavery.

As noted in the previous chapter, the southern clergy did not say slavery had caused the Civil War. By not making this concession and through repeated defenses for the practice, the clerics sought to avoid any taint for the Old South social
order. In effect, the clergy argued that the white-black relationships of the antebellum period were still the best of all possible alternatives.

In conclusion, then, the clerical defense of slavery was yet another part of their larger *apologia* for an Old South Way of Life. The clerical defense of slavery in these years suggests an unwillingness to criticize the Old South and its social relations. Further, the Old South society was sacralized through its institution of slavery, which was given by God to bring about order. As the clergy continued to defend this past, they celebrated and described a superior social order. Peter Berger noted that this legitimation process establishes a strong transcendent link between current society and an ultimate sacred cosmos. Berger wrote:

> Probably the most ancient form of this legitimation is the conception of the institutional order as directly reflecting or manifesting the divine structure of the cosmos, that is, the conception of the relationship between society and cosmos as one between microcosm and macrocosm. . . . By participating in the institutional order, men, *ipso facto*, participate in the divine cosmos.\(^{28}\)

For the clergy, the Old South and its social relationships reflected a "proper" order and accurately mirrored a sacred version of the world designed by an all-powerful God. Such a condition existed in the South until the war's end.
Despite their longing for a past made clear through a divine order, the southern clergy could not escape the obvious changes created by their region's defeat. In sharp contrast to their rhetoric celebrating the Old South, the clerics painted a dismal scene of social chaos and disorder for the Reconstruction period. The antebellum years were described as a time of "subordination, submission, reverence, and authority" while the current South was plagued by "conflicts of races, animosity and distrust, jealousy of capital, suffrage without sense, religion without morals, service without reverence."  

The Southern Baptists in South Carolina placed the blame for the social unrest at the altar of Emancipation. In their convention of 1866, they recorded:

The churches of our State, as well as of the whole South, find themselves unexpectedly in the midst of one of the greatest social changes which the history of the world presents. . . . In our land, the fearful experiment of emancipation has been made on the broadest scale, and with the suddenness and violence of an earthquake.  

Again, the clerical understanding of the social order was refracted through their perceptions of the relationship between whites and blacks. The second part of the clerical vision of order described the chaos of Reconstruction, citing
reasons for the turmoil. These explanations became attacks of Reconstruction, allowing the clergy to shift from a defense of the Old South to an aggressive assault of the status quo. Their chief reasons for the social turmoil centered on the inferiority of blacks and the actions of the northern churches.

Black Inferiority

Clerical rhetoric on the nature of the freedmen suffered inconsistencies as the rhetors moved from a celebration of the past to an explanation of the present. The positive functions of slavery did not seem to endure once the institution was removed. Christian, civilized, loyal, and healthy slaves were depicted in an entirely different way after they were freed. Without slavery, according to the clergy, freedmen would soon lose their religiosity, a condition reflected in social confusion.

The Southern Presbyterian Review described one condition of the freedmen as a "very common inclination among them to reject those religious teachings to which they have hitherto been accustomed." Of the Africans, the Southern Review wrote: "We cannot dignify them with name or idolatry or atheism. The terms ignorance and superstition would indeed, be exceedingly weak."

This "fall from grace" was a concern for southern whites, who feared the loss of civilization in one element of society
would spread to the rest of the society. The author of "The Future of the Freedman" wrote:

The religious status of these children of heathen progenitors /the ex-slaves/ was and is an absorbing source of anxiety to multitudes of God-fearing and highly cultivated white men, who never regarded slavery as an evil or a curse.\textsuperscript{33}

The "thin varnish of civilization"\textsuperscript{34} evaporated as well, causing the freedmen to return to a state of barbarism. Such a condition was obviously a threat to the social order of the southern whites. The \textit{Southern Presbyterian Review} observed that certain strains of animalism were inherent in the blacks' character. The \textit{Review} cast a gloomy prediction on the future of a southern society exposed to such a race. The journal argued: "Docile and manageable as this people has ever been under the wise and beneficient government of the white race, it is still certain that there is a latent ferocity in the African character, which generations of civilization cannot destroy." More frightening for the \textit{Review} was that this aspect of the former slaves' character "is now being awakened, cultivated, and encouraged. Woe to the land when the reaping-time comes!"\textsuperscript{35}

This regression from civilization was evidenced by a lack of "progress" from the blacks. The \textit{New Eclectic} concluded that "we must believe that he is but performing the part which his Creator has assigned to him. . . . Centuries will roll on and find the African negro still a barbarian."\textsuperscript{36}
Freedom for the slaves also meant the introduction of poverty to the race. The "mass of them," wrote one author, "are manifestly poorer, worse clad, worse fed, and in all their material circumstances, sufferers by the change." Two related consequences of freedom, according to this essay were insanity ("They begin to taste care and anxiety," the author noted) and a general decline in the birth rate, leading to the ultimate extinction of the race.37

The freedmen were described as inherently inferior despite the training slavery had supplied. The Southern Presbyterian Review offered this description of the race: "They are naturally indolent, unstable, dependent, dull, and without the capacity to receive instruction in any high degree."38 Concurring with their Presbyterian brethren, the Methodist Southern Review suggested that "Indians, negroes, and mongrels, can never become the representatives of civilization."39 Dabney, in a major speech on "Ecclesiastical Equality," argued that blacks were a "subservient race . . . made to follow and not to lead." For Dabney, there was no future for the freedman, who was "untrustworthy as a depository of power."40

Albert Taylor Bledsoe in his essay on "Chivalrous Southerners" contended that race and character were indisputably interrelated. He contrasted the white "who has ever been at head of all arts, civilisation, and science; and to whom the Ten Commandments and the religion of Christ has been revealed" with the black "who is incapable of originating a written
language. These historical justifications were irrefutable. The contrast of achievements, however unfair, furnished Bledsoe and his fellow clergy with a never-ending source of proof.

The clerical attacks on freedmen and their "new" condition resulting from Emancipation were less-than-subtle defenses for the Old South and the institution of slavery. By defining the current chaos as a result of freedom, the clergy contrasted the disorder of Reconstruction with the orderly vision they presented of the antebellum days. Slavery helped shape an orderly society through the positive changes it wrought on the lowest members in the social hierarchy. This clerical rhetoric included the idea that what affected one part of the society carried the potential for aiding the whole of society. In his defense of the practice, Dabney incorporated this notion of transcendence, claiming "slavery proved itself at once, not only lawful, but eminently promotive of the well-being of the Africans, of the interests of the whole government, and of publick wealth." The author of "Ecclesiastical Relations" foresaw this spread of problems from the black race to southern society clearly: "We are persuaded it would issue alike in damage to themselves, to the Church, and to society at large."

The Northern Church

The clergy focused on black inferiority as one part of Reconstruction's chaos. This view served as a defense of Old
South slavery recast into the postbellum era. The inherent black inferiority did not draw the sharpest criticism from the southern clergy. The clerics seemed to accept this condition (though lamentably) as a result of emancipation.

The clerics' sharpest attacks were reserved for their brethren in the Northern Church. This body, because of its active involvement on behalf of the blacks, served as a "perfect" scapegoat for the chaos and confusion of Reconstruction. In Kenneth Burke's "Ritual of Redemption," he described the significance of scapegoating as a means of "purification by sacrifice, a vicarious atonement, unburdening of guilt within by transference to chosen vessels without." Through rhetoric, a person or group is "charged" with certain sins and then either excommunicated or exterminated, so that the rest of the population may be purified or redeemed. The southern clergy "charged" the Northern Church with certain "crimes," thus establishing the northerners as scapegoats. The southern clerics then defended their own Church as free from these "sins" of the North. Finally, the southern religious leaders called for a separation from the Northern Church, in effect, banishing the "sinful" body and providing a redemption for the South.

The southern clergy used a multitude of attacks on the Northern Church, employing a multi-faceted battle strategy which would have probably pleased the likes of Stonewall Jackson and Nathan Bedford Forrest. First, the clerics accused the Northern Church of starting the Civil War. Such
rhetoric was to counter charges that the South, and in particular, its clergy, had caused the fighting. Secession became a defensive strategy because of the Northern Church's actions. The author of "The Northern Church" tried to show that this body was responsible for the Civil War and sought "to hold the nominally religious influences of that section to some just degree of responsibility for the ruin which, by their agency, in no small measure, has been wrought upon the country." The essay contended that the "Church of the North" was "more guilty too of the late outbreaks against the Constitution and the Union than were the leaders of the late Confederacy." Continuing this theme of the Church's disregard for the Constitution, the author claimed that the Northern Church had united "in hostility to the Federal Constitution, the source and guarantor of their freedom; to the point of resistance to it, and to its final overthrow." 45

Second, the Northern Church failed to play the role of "generous victor" towards the defeated South. Southern clerics railed against the "Tests of Communion" established by some northern churches which called for southern members to repudiate slavery and secession. The author of "Church and Politics" argued: "Our defence against those who openly call upon us to repent of the sins of slaveholding and rebellion, is, that in making these charges against us, the churches of the North are out of the sphere in which they legitimately belong." 47

One major "sin" of the Northern Church and a third area of attack for the southern clergy was this "politicalization"
of the churches to the North. For the southern clerics, the Northern Church had violated its sacred mission by becoming involved in politics and affairs of the state. Such an attack actually served two goals: accuse the North of another sin, and by extension, reveal the Southern Church as the only remaining vestige of Christianity (and hence, redeemable). Palmer declared that the Northern Presbyterian Church's activities were in the "sphere of the State": "Thus, with entire consistency, the Northern Assembly follows the established precedents of its previous legislation, and stamps its own character as rather a political than an ecclesiastical body." 48

The author of "The Future of the Freedman" also attacked the political nature of the Northern Church. He challenged the ministers of this Church were "simply political emissaries, figuring more prominently than any other class in all the Reconstruction conventions, loyal leagues, and other political gatherings." 49

The religious newspapers kept up a constant attack on the "political" Northern Church. Concerning northern missionaries, the New Orleans Christian Advocate argued: "By an open and shocking prostitution to political partisanship, they have found a doubtful foothold among some who are ready to use a church or any other instrument for the furtherance of their purpose." 50

The Methodist Southern Christian Advocate feared "the Northern Methodist Church is of a political character, intended to build up a Northern party in the South." 51 The political
nature of the northern missionaries was an obvious threat to the southern clerics' vision of order. The Northern Church, according to the South, had supposedly come to Dixie to "save" the freedmen. Such actions actually disguised more sinister motives in the view of the southern clergy. What seemed to be happening was that the Northern Church was effectively fusing the sacred and secular realms in their activities. This kind of fusion was also a process which the Southern Church seemed to engage in, at least part of the time. What the Northern Church actually threatened was the southern clerics' rhetorical order by offering a competing "vision" of the sacred and secular worlds.

The remaining attacks by the southern clergy concerned a variety of topics. The clerics maintained that the Northern Church did not actually care for the ex-slaves, but were only misusing them to further destroy the South. The southern clergy further accused their northern counterparts of interfering with social order between blacks and whites in the South. The Christian Index in Atlanta blamed northern teachers for coming South "to engender strife and disaffection, to encourage the negro in insolent assumption, and to fan the flames to open hostility between the races."  

A final attack on the Northern Church came in the form of a southern clerical call for separation between northern and southern religions. If the Northern Church was corrupt as the southern clergy contended, and the Southern Church had retained its purity of mission, then the two Churches must
not be re-united. The result of such unification would be the pollution of the Southern Church and a loss of purpose. Further, if the social chaos was to be resolved, the answer could not be found in any form of compromise with those who initiated the problems in the first place. The Methodist Advocate was blunt in its call for sectional identity between the two groups:

Any fraternity between Southern and Northern Methodists would be a humbug and a delusion. It is well enough for citizens to fraternize, but what has the Southern Church to do with the imposters who brought the country to grief, and who were most appropriately named the 'hell-hounds of Zion.'

Obviously, this rhetoric may seem to allow "fraternizing," but the message was clear. Those who called themselves Southern Methodists were urged to cast their lots with the defeated region.

Dabney pointed out that the problem of the Northern Church was abolitionism, a condition not cured by the war of emancipation. For the Presbyterian, abolitionism was a part of the Northern Church and "is more rampant and mischievous than ever as infidelity; for this is its true nature. Therefore, the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ dare not cease to oppose it and unmask it." For Dabney, these "faithful servants" were the members of the Southern Church.

The efforts of the Northern Church to divide the southern congregations through racial strife would fail because of
the South's united front. Compromise through reconciliation with the North would endanger this solidarity. Palmer noted that the failure of this northern division of the South "was due to the wonderful unanimity of our own people, presenting so few fissures in which to drive the wedge of division and strife." 57

According to the Southern Review, the southern churches would "lose nothing by keeping themselves pure from all unhallowed associations, and in all ways sustaining their fidelity to their Master." 58 Purity could only be maintained, for the southern clergy, through religious sectional separation.

In summary, the clergy located the chaos of Reconstruction in the demise of slavery and the interference of the Northern Church. Both spheres contributed to a defense of the Old South and served as calls for continued sectionalism. The Northern Church, in particular, served as scapegoat in the clerical rhetoric, allowing the clergy to blame the region's problems on this group.

The southern churches were absolved of any potential guilt for their part in the conflict. Further, the southern audiences were reminded that they, alone, remained the only "true friend" of the blacks and the only keepers of a pure religion.

This rhetoric described the current disorder as emanating from "outside" forces--freedmen outside the bonds of slavery and churches outside the South. In short, this clerical rhetoric was a renewed call to southern white superiority
and, more importantly, to southern white unity. This rhetoric of unification emerged clearly in the clerics' discussion of the future.

The Southern Future: A Return to Order

In addition to defending an orderly past and describing a chaotic present, the southern clergy also rhetorically created a view of the future for their region. This vision sought to establish the best way for dispelling the current chaos. Again, the clergy focused their efforts on explaining a proper relationship between former master and slave. This final vision of order for the clergy was the redemption of their society through an understanding of these relationships.

The first obligation was for the white audiences to recognize their "duty" toward the freedman. Cal Logue noted that a distinctive characteristic of secular Reconstruction rhetoric was the admonition for audiences to "tell the truth" to blacks in an effort to counter the rhetoric offered by northerners-come-South. This duty was noted by the clergy as well, offering the southern audiences a united sacred-secular front on the racial issue. The Southern Presbyterian Review offered that "no higher duty can challenge the earnest attention of the American people than the duty of saving this decaying race." A significant part of this salvation was by noting a "southern" interpretation of the role of Reconstruction blacks.
The Southern Christian Advocate saw the need for southerners to educate blacks to prevent northern teachers from alienating former master from former slave. The Advocate considered such an educator a patriot: "The Southern teacher of the humblest Negro school is doing more for his country than many noisy politicians are doing, or can do."\textsuperscript{61}

This duty to "talk the truth" to the blacks especially concerned the freedmen's religious nature. The Nashville Christian Advocate suggested that religion "will cleanse the Negro agitators of those dangerous forms of ambition and insolence which impel some of them to seek the establishment of Negro governments that they may rule over them of southern whites."\textsuperscript{62} This use of a "southern" religion to maintain a certain social order was a hold-over from antebellum days. Arguing that only the South had been involved in the Christianization of its slaves before the war, the clergy advocated that the South alone had the responsibility to continue its evangelical efforts.

The Southern Baptists in 1866 declared that "it is our decided conviction, from our knowledge of the character of these people of the freedmen, and of the feelings of our citizens, that this work of religious training must be done mainly by ourselves."\textsuperscript{63} The original mission of the Southern Church had not changed, despite emancipation. According to the author of "Ecclesiastical Relations," the South had been "prepared by long experience in the work of instructing them, to go forward, still in the discharge of the same beneficial
office."64

The Southern Presbyterian Review issued a call for the South to preach a "proper" Gospel to the ex-slaves. "There never was a time," the Review suggested, stressing the urgency of the moment, "when the freedmen more needed than now, to be taught by wise and judicious men prepared by careful training for the work of preaching, and fortified against the danger of being infected by radical and fanatical influences."65 Such a Gospel would doubtlessly call for a return to the religion of the Old South--strongly ordered by superior whites and subordinate blacks recognizing their places in the social spectra. For the clergy, the Old South religion could overcome even the false teachings of the Northern Church and the chaos of black freedom. The southern whites, clerical and lay, were encouraged to "preach" to the freedmen.

A second obligation of the white audiences was to recognize the divine separation of the races. The Southern Presbyterian Review concluded that "the elevation of the black people to a positive and social equality with the whites is simply an impossibility. Vain must be every effort to resist the decrees of God." The author contended that "God has so constituted the two races as to make their equality forever impossible."66

Recognizing this divine separation of the races created a unified white population. The Religious Herald issued a call for this "Solid South":

If there is anything on which the white Southerner
is resolved, it is to maintain, at all hazards, and through all changes, the purity and the social elevation of his race; and to this course he is impelled alike by his natural instincts, by a sound policy, and by the unmistakable indications of the will of the Supreme Ruler. 67

For the Herald, God's order for the South now included segregation, just as His will had once sanctioned slavery.

In "The Future of the Freedman," the author noted that it would be "nothing short of the miraculous interposition of God" that could "make the social and political equality of the races possible." 68 As divine interpreters of God's will for the region, the clergy could speak with assurity that such a "miracle" would not come to pass.

This belief in social inequality through a separation of the races was not in conflict with the clerics' call for messages of salvation to be taken to the blacks. "Ecclesiastical Relations" maintained that "the unity of believers is spiritual" and did not conflict with "civil differences . . . which are the result of providential ordination." Such differences did not disturb the idea of one true Evangelical redemption. This salvation, of a religious nature, was "a unity which may co-exist with political, civil, and social distinctions." 69

In addition to recognizing a divine separation of the races, southern whites were also urged by their clergy to leave the solution of racial equality to Providence and Time. In effect, the clergy were justifying their belief that social
equality was an impossibility both in the present and in the foreseeable future. The actions of Providence and Time were not given to radical changes from the past. In his famous speech on "The Present Crisis and Its Issues," Palmer observed that the racial problems between white and black "must be patiently wrought out in the shape which an infinitely wise Providence shall direct—and it needs the element of time, with its silent but supreme assimilating and conciliatory influence." Palmer believed that any differences between the races could be solved through the "gradual changes of time" with "practical Anglo-Saxon sense" and "under the direction of a wise Providence." This rhetoric sought no answer to the divinely sanctioned separate races; any differences or problems from this segregation were to be given over to a Providence or to the distant future. In either case, the southern audiences were assured no real changes in the sacred sanction of separation were forthcoming.

The southern clergy were especially concerned about the integration of public institutions. Shelton Smith in his study of southern religion found that the clergy were vehemently opposed to desegregated schools, favoring no public education at all to an integrated one. Palmer called for separate social grades, schools, ecclesiastical organizations, teachers, and guides. Dabney bemoaned the integration of churches in Virginia, observing that in these sacred institutions, "There, at least, Virginians may meet and act without the disgust of negro politics, and the stain of negro domination."
To the religious leaders, desegregation was in conflict with the divine sanction of separation. When the grand jury in New Orleans included ex-slaves, the editor of the Christian Advocate complained bitterly that "the administration of justice has been placed in the hands of the Africans! a race . . . incapable of science, arts, literature, or government." The segregated social institutions were yet another way of defending a distinctly southern lifestyle and served to attack the efforts of northerners who advocated social and political equity for the former slaves in the South.

For the clergy, the recapturing of the social order, then, emanated from continued paternalism and segregation. The southern audiences were expected to take active roles in reminding the freedmen and their allies of the necessity for a separated society which, in many ways, resembled the Old South. Segregation brought a social and a spiritual order because of its divine nature. The clerical call for a separation of the races sought to re-establish the white-black relationship of the antebellum years, but currently lacking during Reconstruction. The clergy seemed particularly concerned that the disorder of the blacks' freedom did not "infect" the rest of southern society. Hence, a "quarantine" of the blacks through a separation of the races.

What is interesting to note about this clerical vision of order for the future were the rhetorical threats it employed. The clergy did not call for segregation merely on the grounds that such a separation was God's will for the region.
The clerics created two distinct threats to assure their listeners' recognition of the need to establish social order through segregation. These threats indicate a clerical reluctance to rely on the people's religiosity ("God's will") as sole support for segregation.

The first threat was that social equality of the races meant the loss of virtue and purity for the white southerners. Logue found that secular orators developed an argument which suggested that white associations with "immoral" blacks would create a similar immorality in the white race. Clergy also contended that a separation of the races was necessary for the preservation of "noble" Anglo-Saxon blood. The Religious Herald urged its readers to consider the consequences of social equality and the resulting intermixing of bloods: "Let us hold in just abhorrence the miscegenationist, who, warring against the law of the Creator, would degrade our noble Saxon race--the race of Newton, Milton, and Washington--to a race of degenerate mongrels."

Dabney was even more defiant and forecast a grim future if the races were allowed to mix. At the Presbyterian Synod in 1867, he predicted:

Yes, sir, these tyrants know that if they can mix the race of Washington and Lee and Jackson with this base herd which they brought from the pens of Africa . . . the adulterous current will never again swell a Virginian's heart with a throb noble enough to make a despot tremble. But they will
have, for all time, a race supple and groveling enough for all the purposes of oppression.\(^7\)

For individuals in the midst of Reconstruction, such a threat of oppression, by whatever means, was doubtlessly a very real and frightening entity. Further, Dabney took aim with such rhetoric, accusing northerners who urged social equality of trying to crush forever the South.

In his *Defense of Virginia*, Dabney labeled the intermixing of the two races a "hybrid," incapable of "civilization and glory as an independent race. And this apparently is the destiny which our conquerers have in view."\(^7\)

Again, the threat is very clear—social integration results in mixed bloods which creates an inferior southern white race. This inferiority would prevent southern whites from ever regaining control of their homeland from the freedmen and northerners.

The clergy provided a proper response for their audiences who heard and read of this threat. According to the clerics, the Anglo-Saxon race must be preserved at all costs. The *Religious Herald* in Richmond created a major rhetorical appeal toward keeping the races separate. In its September 17, 1874 issue, the *Herald* called the preservation of the Anglo-Saxon purity a "solemn, sacred duty." Laws which called for social equality and racial mixing were a "war upon civilization and outrage against humanity, and disloyalty to the Supreme Ruler." The article contrasted the achievements of the white race with a people that never "made any progress in civilization, except in a state of slavery." There are rights of nature, pertaining
to the Anglo-Saxon race, the article continued, "that cannot be invaded, without the stern uprising of all that is true, and noble, and heroic in humanity, to resist the outrage."\textsuperscript{80}

Such rhetoric tended toward an obvious call to action—the uprising of white southerners to protect the divine separation of races and to avoid any rule by inferior blacks. The essay concluded by issuing an appeal to stop the threat of amalgamation: "\textit{Let the independence and the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race be maintained; and, at all hazards, and every sacrifice, let its purity and its social instincts and respectability be preserved.}"\textsuperscript{81}

In another issue, the \textit{Religious Herald} would offer a similar argument for racial separation. "\textit{We owe it to our race,}" the \textit{Herald} wrote, "our history, and our prosperity and to civilization, to maintain the purity of our blood, and to perpetuate the distinctions which have their foundation in nature."\textsuperscript{82} This rhetoric is quite consistent with the clerical arguments that the two races were divinely or naturally separated through their differences. Further, the actions of whites in the present were the only guarantee that future generations of white southerners would retain their distinctiveness. The actions were also suggested as the only assurance of a future southern control of the South. This rhetoric also reveals the southern clerics' fondness for transcendence; the duty of maintaining separate races results not just from the immediate audience, but from their devotion to the past and concern for the future. Ultimately, the actions of the
southern audiences were supposed to affect all of civilization, South and North.

The first threat, then, was that social equality led eventually to a loss of Anglo-Saxon purity. For the defeated South, perhaps this image of "nobility" or "purity" was a measure of superiority to replace the obvious defeats in the war. A second threat, even more ominous, was that social equality would eventually result in a conflict between the two races. This conflict was rhetorically extended to include the threat of race wars as well. For the audiences living in the midst of social chaos, the threat of even more disorder was likely strong proof for maintaining racial separations. Interestingly, the calls to prevent these race wars often intimated the need for violence. For the clergy, the ultimate in social disorder was major conflict between the races. All actions, even violent ones, were justified if they forestalled this threat of extreme social anomie.

Shelton Smith noted that civil rights for the blacks were viewed as leading to inevitable conflict between the races in the eyes of southern clerics. For the Southern Presbyterian Review, extending civil rights, especially the franchise, to freedmen "would be a rash and dangerous experiment. . . . Humanly speaking, nothing can be more certain then that a persistence in these efforts will result disasterously, and the proximate efforts are already apparent." For the Review, this threat of violence was very real; indeed, the violence was already beginning. In his typical defiant transcendence,
Dabney argued that every hope of existence of the Church, State, and Civilization "hangs on our ardous effort to defeat the doctrine of negro suffrage." 86

The author of "Colored Man" in 1877 believed that a race war was a distinct possibility because of efforts to grant the former slaves full citizenship. He predicted a disastrous outcome for the freedmen: "Such a war would be fatal to the black man; and should it occur, will be due to enfranchise-ment." 87 The Religious Herald captured the Southern Baptist fear of racial conflict; giving the vote to blacks "would lead to an inevitable conflict between the white and colored races, and in many places the subjugation of the former to the latter class." 88

This threat of racial violence was more than a call to maintain southern white purity at all costs. The clergy also used the opportunity to place the blame for such potential violence on the group most responsible for black civil rights—the Northern Church. Dabney defined the northerners as possessed by the "greedy lust of power" and noted that their efforts would "result in one of two things, either a war of races, in which the whites and blacks would be, one or the other, exterminated; or amalgamation." 89 This scapegoating of the potential violence onto the Northern Church served to justify the actions of the southern whites. If violence occurred as the whites tried to prevent social equality, then the southerners were not to be blamed. True guilt would rest with the Great Enemy to the North. The Southern Presbyterians
acknowledged such a condition and warned their congregations about the potential conflict and its source. "Peculiar circumstances," the Pastoral Letter of 1865 read, "make it our plain duty to put you on your guard against attempts to disturb and divide your congregations." Implied in such a "duty" was the message of preserving the unity of the congregations—racially and sectionally.

This second threat put the whites and blacks at odds, a condition far different from the harmonious relationship the two races enjoyed under slavery. With this rhetorical threat, extreme violence was likely if whites permitted social and political equality. White southerners were urged to guard against this violence by preventing the interrelations of the races. The South was offered justification for any violent measures the region employed in this process because their efforts were a "divine" duty and because the Northern Church, not the South, was the root source of the racial conflict.

Both of these rhetorical threats carried an important assumption. The potential order established through a separation of the races could not only be lost, but a social condition of chaos, greater than already existed, could result. These threats of even greater disorder, through the extinction of the white race by amalgamation or war, were strong rationales for supporting the clerical call for a divinely ordered segregation.
Conclusions

Clerical rhetoric which focused on social order established its boundaries by defining a proper relationship between the two southern races. The South's position toward the Northern Church as well as the various other aspects of Reconstruction were all filtered through the prism of white-black relations. The clergy created a temporal vision of order which defended the Old South past and condemned the present efforts of the northern missionaries and freedmen. Within this vision, the clergy defined the importance of slavery, the duties of southern whites, the inferiority of blacks, and the evils of the North. The resulting rhetorical hierarchy placed the Old South Way of Life in a position of supremacy as an example of a civil, Christian, orderly society.

By defending the Old South race relationships, the clerics were calling for a return to the past. For them, the re-creation of the past was the best way for establishing social order. Such a devotion to the past kept alive a cultural ideology and prevented any real changes in the social hierarchy. Emancipation and Appomattox failed to disturb the clergy's tenacious hold on an idealized account of what-was. The clerical description of a present offered no hope, save that which was found in a southern heritage. Their look to the orderly future was a vision of a supposedly ideal past. This past, which emerges as a type of Berger's sacred cosmos, aided the clergy in their maintenance of a sectional identity. The
audiences were reminded that the restoration of order to their region came from an antagonism toward change. The clerical rhetoric offered the promise that the Reconstruction South could be redeemed through a return to the idealized (or mythic) version of the Old South. Once this link was established between order and the Old South, the audiences were given strong justifications for retaining a particular way of life.

This defense of the Old South also allowed the clergy to maintain a consistent rhetorical posture from the 1830s through the Reconstruction period. The arguments set forth by the clerics were not new. What the clergy did was to continue a line of reasoning past the end of the Civil War and the end of the political Old South. Slavery was defended despite its demise. The war brought no positive changes to the character of the blacks and northerners, only further magnification of their flaws. In effect, this consistent posture helped maintain a rhetorical Old South even in the midst of its destruction.

A second significant implication of the clerical quest for order focuses on their call for segregation. The separation of the races was tantamount to a return to order. The clergy's rhetorical threats further argued that any weakening on this issue of segregation would have disastrous results. Such calls for segregation both reflected and reinforced similar secular rhetoric. Efforts to bring about civil rights for the freedmen faced stiff opposition from a variety of sacred and secular southern rhetors. On this issue of black
rights, the region was a **rhetorically** Solid South.

Clerical support for segregation is significant for two reasons. First, the clergy tied this separation to social order. With the desire for order already established as a guiding force in the region, the separation of the races took on both justification and expediency. Second, the clerical rhetoric offered moral and spiritual support for segregation and efforts to prevent a "mingling" of the races. Just as they had served as sacred legitimizers for slavery in the ante-bellum South, the Reconstruction clergy gave the Church's blessing on the practice of racial separation. Segregation, like slavery, became sacralized because of its divine ability to maintain a proper social hierarchy. The practice of segregation also carried the weight of "God's will" as interpreted by the southern clergy. Opponents to the way of life suggested by the clergy were, according to this line of reasoning, opposed to God and social order, in a manner similar to "red republicans and jacobins" described by Thornwell a decade earlier.

In conclusion, the southern clergy extended the issue of race relations to include a defense of the Old South and a call to return to Old South principles via segregation and sectional identity. This rhetoric established strong sacred arguments for opposing change during the volatile years of Reconstruction. Certainly, it would seem, such rhetoric possessed great potential for continued racial and sectional separation beyond the years of Reconstruction.
And so the clergy defended their region's entry into armed conflict and praised the God-sent order of antebellum slavery. How the clergy sought to transform the southern people themselves is discussed in the following chapter.
NOTES


3 Eighmy and Spain both noted this Southern Baptist stand on turn-of-the-century racism. See Eighmy 39ff.


8 For a discussion of these attitudes and the clerical


13 Mathews 245.


15 Loveland discussed these denominational splits; see 186-218; 257-265.


17 Richard M. Weaver, *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, eds. George Core and A. M. Bradford (New Rochelle, New York:
18 Dabney, Defense 20.


22 "The Future of the Freedman": 269-70.


26 "Liberty?": 263.


28 Berger, Sacred Canopy 34.


32. "Liberty?": 261.


37. "The Future of the Freedman": 271. See also, "The Southern Labor Problem": 258, where the author confidently predicted that "the Negro . . . must retrograde."


40. R. L. Dabney, "Ecclesiastical Relations of Negroes," Address in the Synod of Virginia, 9 November 1867 (Richmond, 1868) 6. For a similar statement, see Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Benjamin Morgan Palmer* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1906). In his speech at Washington and Lee College in 1872, Palmer spoke to a black race not in the audience and said: "If you have no power of
development from within, you lack the first quality of a historic race, and must, sooner or later, go to the wall." (356)

41 Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southrons": 100. See also Bledsoe, "The African in the United States": 152, where Bledsoe argued that black leadership "would bring ruin to himself, and to his people, and to his cause, as well as others. . . ."

42 Dabney, Defense 350.


44 This idea of a "Redemption" can be found in a variety of Burke's works. For Burke's explanation, see "On Human Behavior Considered 'Dramatically,'" Permanence and Change, 3rd ed. (1935; Berkeley: U of California P, 1984) 274-294. This particular quotation is taken from William H. Rueckert, Kenneth Burke and the Drama of Human Relations, 2nd ed. (1963; Berkeley: U of California P, 1982) 146.

45 "The Northern Church": 326, 354, 320.


47 "The Church and Politics": 246.

48 cited in Johnson, Palmer 333.

49 "The Future of the Freedman": 278, 272.


51 Southern Christian Advocate, 12 April 1867; cited in Farish, Rider 156.

52 For examples of this argument, see "The Future of the
Freedman": 276, 277, 289; "Ecclesiastical Relations": 6; and
"The Northern Church": 323-4.

53 Atlanta Christian Index, 17 June 1869: 93. Cited in
Spain, Zion 87. For other discourse on this subject, see
Dabney, "Ecclesiastical Equality" 7; "Notices, Books," Southern
Review 7 (1870): 502-3; Bledsoe, "Chivalrous Southerns": 98;
Religious Herald, 3 September 1874: 3; "The Northern Church":
322; "The Future of the Freedman": 272; New Orleans Christian
Advocate, 5 December 1872; and "Yulee's Address," Southern
Review 5 (1869): 486.

54 This idea that the Southern Church retained its
mission while the Northern brethren had sold their souls to
politics was discussed by Palmer; see Johnson, Palmer 323-4.
Also see "Pastoral Letter--1870," The Distinctive Principles
of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 3rd ed.

55 Methodist Advocate, 13 June 1877; cited in Farish,
Rider 91.

56 Dabney, Defense 6.

57 Johnson, Palmer 331.

58 "The Northern Church": 355.

59 Cal M. Logue, "The Rhetorical Appeals of Whites to
Blacks During Reconstruction," Communication Monographs 44

60 "The Future of the Freedman": 292.

61 Southern Christian Advocate, 24 May 1867; cited in
Farish, Rider 183-4.
62 Nashville Christian Advocate, 10 October 1879; cited in Farish, Rider 231.
63 Southern Baptist Convention Proceedings, 1866 86; cited in Spain, Zion 54.
64 "Ecclesiastical Relations": 5.
65 "Ecclesiastical Relations": 11-12.
66 "The Future of the Freedman": 279.
67 Religious Herald, 26 November 1874: 2; cited in Spain, Zion 100.
68 "The Future of the Freedman": 281.
69 "Ecclesiastical Relations": 3; see also "The Future of the Freedman": 279-80.
70 Johnson, Palmer 355-6.
71 Smith, Image 255.
72 Johnson, Palmer 356.
73 Dabney, "Ecclesiastical Equality" 7. On this idea of mixed schools and churches, see the Richmond Religious Herald, 19 August 1869: 1; and Religious Herald, 8 January 1874: 2.
74 New Orleans Christian Advocate, 19 October 1867.
75 The idea of "amalgamation through integration" was noted by Smith, Image 208-257. The notion of a "race war" from race mixing has not been discussed by historians to any great detail. The point of interest for this chapter about these two threats is their rhetorical nature. The clergy created and used these threats as "lines of reasoning" or persuasive proof of the need for segregation. The possibility of the threat constituted a frightening consequence—the demise of the white
race. The clerical choice for threats was a powerful and effective effort at persuasion.

77 Religious Herald, 28 June 1866: 2; cited in Spain, Zion 119.
78 cited in Wilson, Baptized in Blood 107.
79 Dabney, Defense 353.
80 Religious Herald, 17 September 1874: 2.
81 Religious Herald, 17 September 1874: 2; cited in Spain, Zion 122.
82 Religious Herald, 19 March 1868: 2; cited in Spain, Zion 119.
83 For a discussion of this theme, see Wilson, Baptized in Blood 58-78.
84 Smith, Image 253.
86 Dabney, "Ecclesiastical Equality" 7.
87 "Colored Man": 99-100.
88 Religious Herald, 14 November 1867: 2; cited in Spain, Zion 79.
89 Dabney, Defense 352.
91 This idea is developed in Chapter Three of this study, also. The significance of this consistency seems to lie in the notion of a rhetorically Solid South which predated the politically solid one. The order suggested by the Reconstruction
clergy is first and foremost a rhetorical one. The audience was asked to adopt a world view which was in sharp contrast to everyday reality, existing in the words of the clergy only.

SOUTHERN CLERICS AND THE PASSING OF LEE:
TRANSFORMATION AND REDEMPTION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH

Ninety years after the death of Robert E. Lee, biographer Marshall Fishwick assessed the impact of Lee on the southern mind and concluded, "The North had the victory, but the South had Robert E. Lee. He became, instantaneously, the symbol of all the South had been, and the North could never be."¹ For the century following his death in 1870, Lee remained the quintessential southerner. Stonewall Jackson, as Holy Warrior, thundered through the Shennandoah Valley and into the imagination of the region. Jefferson Davis, maligned as President of the Confederacy, emerged from a northern prison after the war as the South's martyr. But in the southern mind, Lee, as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, transcended these figures into a heroic kingdom shared only with Jesus Christ and George Washington.²

The popular image of Lee is widely known.³ A devout Christian and dutiful Virginian, he would not draw his sword against his native state in the secession crisis of 1861 despite being offered command of the Union forces. In the face of overwhelming odds, Lee won battle after battle through his superior leadership and the devotion he inspired in his troops. Only through the sheer numbers of northern troops was Grant

141
able to force the surrender at Appomattox in 1865. A gentleman in war, Lee epitomized southern chivalry in peace. He spurned lucrative financial offers and returned to his beloved Virginia, accepted a position at tiny Washington College, and set about the task of rebuilding his homeland through the education of its youth. Death robbed the South of its greatest asset with his passing in October 1870 at age 63.

This image of chivalric, devout, dutiful Lee developed in the years following his death and is well documented by Thomas Connelly. In his book, *The Marble Man*, Connelly contended that the mythic image of Lee emerged, in part, to justify the southern loss. Connelly concluded that "the exaggerated image of Lee . . . provided needed rationales for a defeated South."  

This image of Lee served several functions, according to Connelly. First, Lee was established as a military leader without equal, the image staking claim to the South's superiority of leadership. Lee was also portrayed as a symbol of defeat, "an object lesson that right does not always prevail and that success was no test of virtue." This argument suggested any society capable of producing a man of Lee's great character must be a people of merit. A third aspect of Lee's image was its close association with another Virginian, George Washington. The efforts of Lee and the South in 1861 were tied to those of Washington in 1776 as a way of justifying secession. A final part of the image deified Lee's character through a Christ metaphor. According to Fishwick, Lee was
the supreme religious symbol for the defeated South. Orators and writers noted the many similarities between the two men, Christ and Lee. Appomattox, for instance, became a second Gethsemane.

Spearheading this development of the image of Lee were a variety of secular and sacred rhetors. Image-makers included relatives (General Fitzhugh Lee), fellow officers (General Jubal Early) and pastors (J. William Jones and William Nelson Pendleton). By the time of the Civil War Centennial, Lee had been transformed from a Confederate general to the epitome of an American hero.

The purpose of this chapter is to focus on one part of this mythic image of Lee. Keeping with the general quest of this study, the chapter seeks to understand how and why this image is effective, accepting as valid the descriptions of it offered by Thomas Connelly, Charles R. Wilson, and others. This chapter asks: what were the mythic elements of the Lee image which empowered the rhetoric concerning the general? This chapter seeks to understand how the image of Lee was able to function as mythic rhetoric. In effect, what were the structural supports for the image and how did this mythic view of Lee exert a persuasive power on the southern mind?

To understand the power of a myth, one must grapple with the constituent elements of the narrative, the mythic principles which underlie and support the image. These principles, specifically intensification and unification, explain how mythic rhetoric is able to transform an audience and meet
the psychological needs of the listeners and readers. Through an understanding of mythic principles, one should be able to chart these recurring elements of a particular myth over time. What is critical to the myth's function are these principles which explain how and why the stories and legends of a mythic image survive and serve their important purposes.

To examine these particular structural principles of the Lee image, this chapter examines the various memorial sermons offered by the clergy throughout the South at the time of his death. These eulogies are a significant part of the Lee myth but have been virtually overlooked by the scholars. Connelly found much of the development of the Lee image occurring after the funeral period (October 1870). Wilson cited some of the eulogies but paid no attention to them as a separate group of rhetoric apart from the much later speeches and writings. A reading of the eulogies, however, indicates that later myth-making used similar themes, suggesting that the origin of the Lee image may be justifiably located in the memorial sermons. The eulogies were the earliest pieces of significant Lee image-building, hence their timeliness as discourse which reveals an initial response to the significance of Lee.

The eulogies also provide a bountiful source of clerical speech-making for the Reconstruction period. The ceremonial address, or epideictic oration, flourishishes when the deliberative and forensic avenues have been closed. The postwar South, according to Waldo Braden, provided a climate best suited for
epideictic rhetoric, a genre given to legends, myths, and heroes. Some of Lee's praise upon his death came from secular figures. Many of the immediate speeches, however, were offered by the clergy. As religious leaders, the clerics were guardians of the afterlife and their role as eulogists was not unnatural. In keeping with the overall prospect for this study, this chapter seeks the clerical reaction to Lee's death and their part in devising a mythic response. The epideictic occasion of Lee's death provided the clergy with a speaking opportunity which they had not previously possessed.

The passing of Lee was a significant event throughout the South. Merton Coulter observed that when Lee died, "the South creped itself in mourning and held memorial exercises in all the principle cities." The death of Lee provoked a widespread response.

The memorial discourse also reveal a unified response by the rhetors. Research indicates that southern eulogies possess recurring similarities over time. What is especially interesting about the Lee discourse are the recurrent themes occurring at practically the same time. Later speakers and writers had a foundation of tribute to use as source material for their rhetorical efforts. The clerical rhetoric of October 1870 did not have this advantage. The striking similarities of the discourse suggests they emanated from similar southern perceptions and needs.

Finally, the eulogies are significant as a moment of definition for the clerics. The death of Lee brought an
outpouring of defenses for the general, the war, and the region. The later memorial addresses also discussed these themes, but the first defenses came with Lee's passing. Rollin Osterweis in his study of the Lost Cause argued that Lee's death "had an immediate therapeutic effect upon the southern mind." He concluded: "Into the mood of mingled despair and bitterness crept a positive note when the world acknowledged the South's hero as a symbol of the worthy qualities of its antebellum civilization." For Osterweis, Lee's death "became the symbolic act in the resurrection of the Southern Old South myth." Osterweis offered no further development of this key term, resurrection. The remainder of this chapter focuses on two key mythic principles found within the eulogistic discourse. A concluding section re-examines the significance of a resurrection through the Lee myth.

Mythic Intensification: The Sacralization of Lee

Within mythic narrative, a key principle is that of intensification. In his study of Language and Myth, Ernst Cassirer wrote: "The ego is spending all its energy on this single object, lives in it, loses itself in it. . . . This focusing of all forces on a single point is the prerequisite for all mythical thinking and mythical formulation." Intensification is necessary for myth to function effectively, demanding that the audience members place their full attention on a single object or term. Most often, the mythic intensity
creates a particular image. Cassirer noted that myth "cannot be described as bare emotion because it is the expression of emotion... Myth is emotion turned into an image." Cassirer observed that such an intense narrowing of all linguistic choices in the development of an image produces a condition where the word and its object are no longer metaphor-ic entities but a single entity. "At this point," Cassirer wrote, "the word which denotes the thought content is not a mere conventional symbol, but is merged with its object in an indissoluble unity." Briefly stated, the principle of intensification draws attention to a single overarching idea, object, or term as the key image or focal point in the myth. This principle dissolves the metaphoric bridge between the terms for our images and the images themselves.

The dominant image denoted by the clergy was the sacred nature of the dead general. With almost total consistency, the clergy focused their rhetorical efforts on developing a deified character for Lee. They accomplished this sacralization process through the image of immortality. While noting the metaphors of Christ and Washington, Connelly and Wilson failed to see the significance of these figures as sacred and immortal symbols for the southern populace. Through the eulogies, Lee was transformed into a similar heroic figure. Through the use of Christ and Washington, as well as the methods described below, Lee emerged from the rhetoric as a sacred symbol because of his immortality.

This intensification toward immortality took several
forms besides the obvious comparisons to Christ and Washington. First, Lee's name was given immortal status and by synecdoche representation, so was the general. Cassirer noted that the name is usually the most critical part in a mythic narrative: "Often it is the name of the deity, rather than the god himself, that seems to be the real source of efficacy." Lee's eulogists were careful to observe that the name of Lee would survive indefinitely. Bishop J. P. B. Wilmer began his address at the University of the South memorial service by suggesting "His presence is lost to us; but not his heroic virtues and the brilliant deeds which have given his name to history.”

For B. M. Palmer at a service in New Orleans, the "only name in all the annals of history that can be named" with America's First President was "Robert E. Lee--the second Washington." E. A. Holland at the Kentucky Military Institute concluded his eulogy with a full-blown embellishment of the immortality of Lee's name. Holland described History carving "for the highest niche in her Pantheon a statue to represent manhood apotheosized by its own glory." Beneath the statue would be "a name which the very design of the statue speaks aloud--the immortal name of Lee."

The eulogists did not assert the immortality of Lee's name without supporting evidence for their claims. The name would be everlasting because of Lee's character. W. H. Felton in Cartersville, Georgia, noted that "Such a character is indestructible and undying." For W. H. Platt in Louisville,
Lee "seemed to the Southern troops and people as more than mortal. . . . What he did or advised he felt to be for the best, and what he failed to accomplish no human power need attempt." E. T. Winkler in Charleston suggested that only the war could be lost: "Yet the great character is immortal, and the great lesson remains." The "lesson" was the life of Lee which empowered and resurrected the precious principles for which the South had fought. In Lexington, a Reverend Henderson found a link between the Lost Cause and the character of Lee:

He was an example of a man, who, though branded because of defeat, still, by his exalted character, gave a dignity and nobility to a cause which, doubtless, is forever dead, yet still is rendered immortal by the achievements of Robert E. Lee's sword and character.

No parts of Lee's life were viewed as mortal or falling short of some perfect mark. This perfection separated Lee from the mortal audiences and rhetorically moved his image toward the realm of the sacred.

Lee's character was without blemish despite the demanding role he was compelled to portray while a military general. A third aspect of Lee's immortality was his perfect fusion of Christian virtue with warfare. Felton sharply contrasted the orderly advance and retreat of Lee into Pennsylvania with Sherman's soldiers who "did the 'work of hell' from dark to sunrise" in Columbia, South Carolina. Felton concluded
that Lee's war record was without blame by using a narrative easily identified by his southern listeners:

Enemies investigate his character. Records are searched—prisoners are interrogated on oath. His companions in arms are cross-examined. Every device is employed to find something condemnatory of his official acts, and yet the verdict of his prosecutors is, 'We find no fault with this man.' 36

For religious southerners, this final comment could recall Pontius Pilate's conclusion at the trial of Christ.

Henderson determined that the leader of the Confederate forces was able to transcend partisan bitterness in his battles with the northern troops. The pastor suggested: "History will challenge the world to produce a single instance in which this great man ever wantonly inflicted a blow, or ever wilfully imposed punishment upon any of his captives, or ever pushed his victory upon an enemy to gain unnecessary results. . . ." 37

For these reasons, Henderson concluded, the character of Lee would lose none of its luster in future historical accounts.

A fourth description of Lee's sacredness came from his ability to overcome defeat. The loss at Appomattox was not allowed to vanquish him to the realm of ordinary individuals. Often without clarity, but always with a sense of force, the orators redefined the loss, using it to reveal the essence of Lee's immortality.

In Nashville, T. V. Moore offered this interpretation of the war: "It was his sublime preeminence to conquer defeat,
and transform it into the grandest triumph." For Moore, the defeat "developed the unselfish nobleness" of Lee's character. Palmer suggested that "There is grandeur in misfortune, when that misfortune is borne by a noble heart with the strength of will to endure, and endure without complaining or breaking."  

Lee's eulogists created a sacred image of Lee by suggesting the immortality of his name, character, and actions. Even the loss in war could not dim Lee's greatness. This intensification toward the sacred was not discussed by Connelly or Wilson despite the latter's efforts to understand the Lost Cause as a civil religion. This mythic principle focused the audience's attention on the clear division between Lee and the living. Lee was set apart, sacralized, through this discussion of his character and actions. The image of Lee presented the audiences with a view of the sacred and profane worlds. Lee stood in the former with the listeners left in the latter. The power of this mythic image is that such a division of reality into these two categories captured the essence of all religions.

The clergy offered a clear division of the world into sacred and profane realms with Lee as the chief representative of the former. The power of the Lee image was not so much that the general was compared to Christ and Washington, but instead, that he was immortalized into a comparable figure.

The clerical attempts to immortalize Lee produced a sacred symbol for the region. Clifford Geertz noted that "Sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos--the tone,
character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style--and their world-view." These symbols become the "picture the people have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order." Lee emerged from the rhetoric as the chief representative of the best of southern qualities. Reverend Platt offered this view in his eulogy:

Henceforth, whatever material progress other sections may boast, the people of the South may point to the more than imperial renown of their Washington, their LEE, and say these are ours, of our race and of our own blood and of our own color. No remapping of states, no spirit of government, no inevitable change of institutions can rob us of these glories--forever and forever they are ours and the world's.

Holland rejoiced that such a character as Lee represented the South:

I rejoice, young gentlemen, that I can find an embodiment of this sublime integrity of character in a hero--not of the past, but of the present--not of some distant realm, but of your own suffering land--not of foreign birth, but of blood brother to that which in your veins leaps with enthusiasm at the mention of his name.

The image of Lee offered to the South a picture of southern power, of one able to overcome and to survive despite the tumultuous era of Reconstruction. The mythic principle of
intensification directed Lee toward immortality and celebrated an enduring sacred symbol for the region.

Mythic Unification: The Sacralization of the South

The eulogists did more than offer Lee as an isolated sacred symbol for the defeated South. The speakers called for an emulation of Lee's virtues, resulting in a unification of attitudes and actions. This unity of feeling is a second significant principle of mythification. The power of myth, Cassirer wrote, results from "an objectification of man's social experience, not his individual experience." The myth scholar also noted: "It is the deep and ardent desire of the individuals to identify themselves with the life of the community. . . . Here the individuals are melted into one shape, into an undistinguishable whole." According to Cassirer, myth-making creates this fusion of individuals by establishing a sense of consubstantiality among the hearers. In his volume on *Mythical Thought*, Cassirer concluded:

Myth itself is one of those spiritual syntheses through which a bond between 'I' and 'thou' is made possible, through a definite unity and a definite contrast, a relation of kinship and a relation of tension, are created between the individuals and the community.50

What these comments suggest is the need for unification among those who are exposed to the myth. Lee's eulogists
accomplished this need for unity in two ways. First, the clerics called for a recognition of the unifying force of the occasion. The death of Lee produced a community of feeling, according to the clergy. Palmer best articulated this unification for his New Orleans listeners:

But there is another unity when you throw these grapes into the wine press, and the feet of those that bruise these grapes trample them almost profanely beneath their feet together in the communion of pure wine: and such is the union and communion of hearts that have been fused by tribulation and sorrow, and that meet together in the true feeling of an honest grief to express the homage of their affection. . . . 51

For Palmer, the South's grief at the loss of Lee could only transform the region through its unity of members.

Other clergy were perhaps less eloquent than Palmer, but the message was clear: there was unity in the death of Lee because there was unity of sorrow and grief. As Henderson stated, "Some public calamity is required to bring us into one great brotherhood. . . . In that common sympathy which we all feel, we are mourners together at the bier of departed worth." 52

A second, more significant, unification was a call to embody the virtues of Lee. The eulogists' use of Lee as an exemplar for action helped create a rhetorical unity among the audiences. The discussion of Lee's sacred nature was not
a static one; listeners were implored to imitate the life of their general. The praise of Lee's various virtues served dual purposes: to praise (and sacralize) the dead and to guide the living. Summarizing his sermon on Lee as a "great man," Felton suggested, "These 'great men' seem to be given for our guidance. They are blazing monuments, by which the multitude may direct their aspirations and their actions."\textsuperscript{53}

Holland agreed, reminding his listeners in Kentucky, "I rejoice that we possess a model of manhood" in the person of Lee.\textsuperscript{54} With regard to Lee's life, Winkler urged his listeners to "revere that last legacy" of character, "so simple, as coming from the war-worn soldier."\textsuperscript{55}

There were specific discussions of Lee's virtues which became calls to action for the living. The life of Lee was a map for the audiences. In their analysis of epideictic speech, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca observed: "The speaker tries to establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience. . . . In epideictic oratory, the speaker turns educator."\textsuperscript{56} In this educational process, the speaker offers certain values as the most critical for the society in its efforts to function properly. The "values" suggested by the orators were to be found in Lee's life.

The strongest calls for imitation concerned the after-life. Audiences were urged to receive the assurance of everlasting life provided, in Evangelical theology, by Christ's sacrifice. In his prayer at the memorial service in Atlanta,
W. T. Brantley empowered his rhetoric by calling forth the voice of Lee, urging those listening "hear him saying to us, 'Cultivate the virtues I have recommended; choose the Saviour I have chosen.'"\textsuperscript{57}

Reverend Perkins also found the public prayer as a useful form for impressing Lee's Christianity upon the audience at Louisville: "We earnestly beseech thee, most gracious God, that thou wilt bless us, that we may learn from his exalted character and Christian deportment to put our trust in thee, and to submit ourselves entirely to they ordering."\textsuperscript{58} Bishop Wilmer suggested that "This life is hastening to its end. . . . We cannot prolong the bright morning of our days, but we can make it productive in permanent results."\textsuperscript{59} Such productivity resulted from embracing the Christian faith.

As religious leaders, it is not surprising that these speakers would voice concern for their audiences' preparation for the afterlife. The use of Lee as an exemplar, however, offered the clergy a strong example for showing the worthiness of a commitment to Evangelical Christianity. What is especially interesting is that the clergy did not offer any denominational salvation to the listeners. Lee was an Episcopalian, but the various pastors who preached his eulogies noted only Lee's Christianity. In the South, this suggests the blending of denominational differences in the face of some icon such as Lee. What seems essential here is that Lee's life offered a good interpretation of southern Christianity, not one particular denomination. The stronghold of Evangelical Protestantism on the region is exemplified by these clergy who found
the occasion of Lee's passing as an excellent time to discuss the need for salvation. Their use of Lee certainly provided strong rationales for obtaining this security of the afterlife.

There were other values as well which the clergy held up for audience emulation. These virtues were, on the surface, more political, and hence, more worldly. By including them in their discussion of Lee, the clergy seemed to transform these virtues into sacred values. One such value was duty. In the conclusion of his sermon in Nashville, Moore observed: "It was with all this heroic sense of duty that General Lee tendered his services first to his own State, and then to the Confederacy. . . ." The notion of duty for Lee was almost unanimously used in connection with his refusal to fight against Virginia in 1861. Turning from prayer to sermon, Brantley said: "He has often been censured for identifying his fortunes with the South; but, with his convictions of duty, he could not have done otherwise." In Palmer's view, duty was "the only ensign" Lee could follow.

This discussion of duty carried strong implications for the living to maintain their sectional identity. If Lee would not abandon his principles in 1861, the audiences were surely expected to maintain theirs, out of a sense of duty, in 1870. Duty, as a term is difficult to challenge, and suggests an appeal to some Higher Authority.

Closely aligned to their discussion of duty was the clerical embellishment of a second virtue, patriotism. Brantley
suggested that Lee "has been called a 'subjugated rebel,'" but that the general was actually "a patriot of the highest type." Brantley also noted that Lee brought to war "a pure self-sacrificing patriotism."\(^{64}\) Winkler suggested that Lee's association with Lexington brought the town to the forefront as "the capital . . . of a harmonious and beautiful patriotism."\(^{65}\)

The sacralization of duty and patriotism by the clergy served as absolution for the actions of the South in 1861. The South had a patriotic duty, exemplified in their beloved Lee, to "draw the sword and throw away the scabbard"\(^ {66}\) in their conflict with the North. The defenses of these two terms (because Lee possessed them) easily served as defenses of the Old South and the Confederacy for the audiences.

A third value celebrated by the clergy was the ability of Lee to accept defeat without foregoing his sense of principles. Winkler issued the strongest call for the preservation of Old South ideals in the face of social change. He called upon his listeners to "Take care of your institutions of learning. Esteem education, mental, moral, and religious, as the only bulwark of the republic."\(^ {67}\) Within the context of his remarks, these institutions were to be preserved because Lee had believed in them. Retaining southern institutions negated the consequences of defeat. Palmer found Lee an excellent example of "an attitude of quiet submission to the conquering power, and of obedience to all exactions--but without resiling from those great principles which were em­balmed in the struggle."\(^ {68}\) Lee after the war, according to
Platt, was an exhibition to the role of "failure without dis-honor, submission without abjectness, and dignity without os- tentation." The actions of Lee following Appomattox were held up for emulation--cessation from the physical struggle and a recogni-
tion that the military war was over. Such statements as the ones by Palmer, however, suggest a rhetoric of defiance. Lee accepted defeat, according to the eulogists, but did not surrender his southern views. The struggle was transformed from one battleground (Appomattox) to another (the mind). A southern culture was offered in the stead of the defunct southern nationalism.

The recognition of these social values and their adoption by the listeners provided a strong sense of a southern commu-

The power of the Lee myth was that it unified the hear-
ers in these two ways: through the occasion of his death and through a discussion of his life. This community would only be heightened by the subtle defenses which the clerics offered for the region before and after Appomattox.

This principle of unification provided a very interesting and significant result. Through an adoption of Lee's values and a recognition of the resulting unity of beliefs, the audiences were invited to enter into Lee's sacred world. The story of Lee's life told by the eulogists became the narrative of the South. The audiences were given the outline for what had happened and what would happen. This result brings the full power of the Lee myth to work on the listeners. Eliade
noted that myth was a sacred history, "is exemplary, paradigmatic: not only does it relate how things came to be; it also lays the foundation for all human behavior and all social and cultural institutions." As the audiences embodied Lee's qualities, they were given the foundation for future actions: Christianity, duty, patriotism, and adherence to southern principles. Further, these terms "explained" how the South came to be involved in the sectional conflict ("how things came to be").

The implications of this sacralization of the South through Lee is discussed in the section which follows.

The Lee Eulogies: Transformation and Redemption of the South

As the audiences embodied Lee's qualities, the members were rhetorically transformed into individuals like Lee. Through the principles of intensification and unification, the mythic rhetoric of the eulogies had the power to move the listeners from the profane world to the realm of the sacred. Connelly wrote that the Lee myth brought comfort and order to the trauma of the Reconstruction South. Connelly and Wilson were less clear about the use of Lee as a vehicle for sacralizing the region. An analysis of the eulogies suggests that the image of Lee alone did not justify the region. It was through the sacralization process that the region justified itself as the populace embraced those values characteristic of their dead general.
There is powerful incentive to join the sacred world, to transcend the confusion and chaos of the everyday world. The sacred world is a world of order. The Lee image presented by the eulogists brought order to the southern audiences because it transformed the listeners into heroic figures like Lee as the listeners accepted and imitated his values. Eliade noted this attraction of the sacred: "The sacred is equivalent to power, and in the last analysis to reality. . . . Sacred power means reality and at the same time enduringness and efficacity." Eliade also suggested that this sacred world offers a strong sense of the Cosmos and an orderly view for the participant in the myth. He observed: "It is the experience of the sacred . . . which gives birth to the idea that something really exists, that hence there are absolute values capable of guiding man and giving meaning to human existence." The life of Lee which emerged from the eulogies presented the audiences with these values.

Through the Lee image developed in the eulogies, the Reconstruction South was offered various redemptions. One was clearly an Evangelical Protestant salvation through Christ's sacrifice. However, there was another redemption for the confusion and chaos of a people who thought themselves God's Chosen but who had suffered defeat. Geertz suggested that sacred symbols will often be developed to combat the perceived disorder in a culture. He noted that there will often be "the formulation, by means of symbols, of an image of such a genuine order of the world which will account for, and even
celebrate, the perceived ambiguities, puzzles, and paradoxes in human experience.\textsuperscript{73} The image of Lee offered an explanation of the South's lack of order.\textsuperscript{74} The Lee myth of the eulogies became a symbolic order which the listeners can participate in through their response to the clerical call for emulation. With Lee as a guiding example, the hearers could themselves overcome the military defeat and social confusion. The idea of a "victorious defeat" is an ambiguity to modern minds, but the Lee image celebrated this seeming contradiction for the people. Lee, as sacred symbol, could transcend, in mysterious fashion, the contradictions of the everyday world. Through Lee, so could the listeners.

The admonition by the clergy that Lee accepted the loss without surrendering his beliefs in the cause could also serve to justify a continued adherence to an Old South Way of Life. The loss did not change Lee; he, through his sacred nature, transcended the defeat. Similarly, the southern people might also rise above the Reconstruction through their emulation of Lee. The rhetoric suggests that this transcendence would be a return to the Old South.

In brief, a major implication of the eulogies was the apparent effort to call the listeners from the profane world to the realm of the sacred through the principles of intensification and unification.

A second implication of these memorial services was the foundation they provided for later image-building and myth-making. Connelly's analysis of the post-Reconstruction Lee
image suggested strong similarities to what was said immediately following Lee's death. Durkheim noted that the recognition of what is sacred and what is profane creates a strongly united moral community. In *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, the French sociologist wrote:

A society whose members are united by the fact that they think in the same way in regard to the sacred world and its relations with the profane world, and by the fact that they translate these common ideas into common practices is what is called a Church.\(^7\)

What these eulogies did was establish the boundaries of the two realms—sacred and profane—for later myth-makers. Later audiences were already predisposed to regard Lee as a sacred symbol, capable of transforming and redeeming the general populace. The eulogies rhetorically created a sacred emblem in Lee. This mythic image identified the sacred and united the listeners in their beliefs and actions, thus empowering the Myth of Lee for all who invoked it at later times. This sacred emblem of Lee became a common denominator for the region, offering an immediate identification among all southerners who believed in and participated in the Lee myth. Durkheim noted: "A clan is essentially a reunion of individuals who bear the same name and rally around the same sign."\(^8\)

The later Lee myth-makers already enjoyed a condition where Lee was sacralized, and the region was unified in their perception of him as a "rallying point" for redemption.

The success of the Lee myth cannot be attributed solely
to the rhetorical efforts of the immediate eulogists. Lee certainly possessed admirable qualities for praise. What these first myth-makers did, however, was establish certain foundations for those who followed. Further, as religious leaders, the southern clergy were already recognized as the "keepers of the sacred." Their use of these ideas which revolved around the world of the sacred would have been in complete harmony with the audiences' perceptions of the clerics. More than any other group, the southern clergy could interpret the image of Lee in these ideas of sacralization, transformation, and redemption. Other myth-makers faced audiences who had been exposed to this clerical rhetoric.

Thus the power of the Lee myth, which endures even until today, is two-fold. First, the clergy offered a powerful and immediate sacred emblem in Lee for later speakers. In an interesting synecdoche, Lee and his values represented the South, and the image of Lee developed in the eulogies showed the region what it might obtain in the way of redemptive order through an imitation of Lee's values. Second, the clerics accomplished their task of building a powerful mythic image of Lee through the principles of intensification and unification. This focus on the sacred nature of Lee and its power to unify the listeners served as structural support for the persuasive rhetoric of the general's image. To paraphrase Fishwick, indeed, the South had Robert E. Lee—and through him, a vision of some transcendent, victorious, redemptive order.
NOTES


2 For the "rise" of Robert E. Lee, see Thomas L. Connelly, The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1977) 62-99. While several southern generals continued to fight after Appomattox, the southern mind accepts Lee's surrender as the "end" of the Civil War. Another symbolic statement about Lee's significance is the carving on Stone Mountain, Georgia, which depicts Lee, Davis, and Jackson. Lee is readily identifiable as the dominant figure in the carving.


4 Connelly, The Marble Man 91.
5 Connelly, The Marble Man 90-8.
6 cited in Connelly, The Marble Man 95.
7 Wilson noted this particular example in Baptized in Blood 48.
8 These figures are discussed by Connelly in his chapter, "The Image Molders," The Marble Man 29-61.
9 Connelly, The Marble Man 141-162.
10 Connelly especially offered what the myth did for the southern populace in The Marble Man 90-8. There is a distinction, although often blurred, between myth and image. The image of Lee was the picture his eulogists presented of his life, character, values, and beliefs. The distortion, embellishment, and amplification of this image from reality becomes the myth of Lee's life. This mythic distortion, however, served important purposes which are discussed in this chapter.
11 For a good, brief discussion of myth, see Wilson, Baptized in Blood 38-9.
12 I examined thirteen different speeches of praise


19 Osterweis 10.


22 Cassirer, *Language and Myth* 58.

23 Other scholars of language have dealt with this idea of the power of single terms or images. See Kenneth Burke,

Both Connelly and Wilson see the obvious metaphors between Christ/Washington and Lee, but their discussions do not find this to be a sacralizing process. Connelly saw Lee as "almost deified" (The Marble Man 95), but there seems to be a difference between metaphor and the fusion of image-with-term described by Cassirer. Neither Connelly nor Wilson understood Lee as "immortal" despite the connections to the South's other two figures of this plane.

For an excellent discussion of the heroic figure in mythic narrative, see Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949; Princeton, UP, 1972).

Cassirer, Language and Myth 48. This "name" can result in a terministic screen. See the section on this Burkeian concept in Chapter Three of this study.

Wilmer 245.

Palmer 348. It seems that Connelly and the others have missed a critical point in their discussion of Lee-as-Washington. Perhaps the use of the First President was a way of reasserting the South's place in a National Covenant, which would have been threatened by the act of secession. The idea needs research: exactly how did the South explain the National Destiny in terms of Fort Sumter? The persona of Washington in Lee may be an answer. For a discussion of the national

29 Holland 473. See also Moore 478.
30 Felton 3.
31 Platt 42.
32 Winkler 434.
33 Henderson 560. See also Holland 473.
34 This was necessary to maintain the "heroic" imagery or immortality of Lee. For an interesting discussion of this perfection theme in myth, see Campbell 172-192.
35 Felton 10. Lee at Gettysburg was a favorite theme; see Moore 474 for another similar story.
36 Felton 7.
37 Henderson 559. See also Moore 474; and Platt 42.
38 Moore 240, 475.
39 Palmer 351-2. See also Platt 39; and Winkler 434.
40 Again, the redefinition of the loss does more than offer solace to the region as Connelly claimed. The "victory in defeat" allowed Lee to retain a heroic image and further preserved the immortality his rhetors were creating for him. Lee could have hardly been offered as a sacred symbol had there not been some way to transcend Appomattox.
41 Wilson, Baptized in Blood 37-57. On page 57, Wilson comes closest to discussing the South's heroic figures as sacred individuals. But he seemed to find their worth in revealing "moral lessons for southerners on the acceptance of death and defeat." This chapter's conclusions about the sacred
emblems are that they tended toward Life (redemption) rather
than as examples of defeat.

42 Again, Connelly and Wilson noted the use of Christ and
Washington, but did not find these figures serving as chief
representatives of the Sacred-Profane division.

43 For a discussion of the sacred and profane, see Emile
Joseph Ward Swain (1915; New York: The Free Press, 1965) 51-
57. On page 52, Durkheim made an interesting observation that
seems revelant to the discussion of Lee as representative of
the sacred: "All beliefs, myths, dogmas, and legends . . .
express the nature of sacred things, the virtues, and powers
which are attributed to them, or their relations with each
other and with profane things."

44 Cassirer noted a similar division of the world into
two mystical and opposing forces, Mana and Taboo (Language
and Myth 63ff). Lee was certainly placed as a possessor of
Mana in the eulogies.

45 Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System,"
The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973)
89.

46 Geertz 89.
47 Platt 43.
48 Holland 472.
49
Connelly discussed this notion of Lee as a "victory"
symbol in The Marble Man 92-3. It appears that Connelly was
referring to Lee's military victories, not "character victories"
which he achieved as a military leader.


51 Palmer 352.

52 Henderson 559; see also Felton 4-5; Perkins 8; and Brantley, "Sermon" 481.

53 Felton 12.

54 Holland 472-3.

55 Winkler 435.


57 Brantley, "Prayer" 1.

58 Perkins 7.

59 Wilmer 249-50. See also Moore 477; and Platt 44.

60 Moore 473.

61 Brantley, "Sermon" 479.

62 Palmer 350. See also Felton 8; and Wilmer 246-7.

63 See Weaver, "Ultimate Terms," especially his discussion of charismatic terms. The word duty seems an ultimate term for Burke as well. It is interesting to note that the word is a vital one for Palmer before the war as a call to secession. See his Thanksgiving Sermon of 1860.

64 Brantley, "Sermon" 479.

65 Winkler 434.

66 In the spring of 1861, just prior to the secession of
Virginia, the cadets at the Virginia Military Institute were marched out on the parade grounds for a lengthy roll call. Following the roll call, a professor of mathematics, Thomas Jonathan Jackson made a short speech. "Young men," the usually taciturn teacher said, "of all wars, civil war is most to be dreaded, but if it must come, we draw the sword and throw away the scabbard." My great-uncle's father, William B. Foreman, was on the plain that day at V. M. I. and heard his professor make these remarks. He later recounted this event and the war in a letter to his sister dated 19 January 1902. It is interesting to note that the attitude of defiance was still strong thirty-seven years after Appomattox for Foreman. He concluded his letter with the strongly symbolic statement: "I brought my sword home with me." We can only assume scabbardless.

67 Winkler 435.
68 Palmer 351.
69 Platt 40.

72 Wendell C. Beane and William G. Doty, eds., *Myths,
Connelly noted this role for the Lee image in *The Marble Man* 91ff. I'm not sure that Connelly would agree with Lee as the embodiment of the paradox of a "victorious defeat." He wants Lee's image to restore order. My contention is that Lee's immortal nature transcends chaos but that the audience members restore order to their own lives through their imitation of Lee (or at least, their belief that their imitation of Lee will make them like the general).

An important follow-up study would compare the sacralization offered by the clergy with the efforts by the secular speakers to "do" something with Lee's image. At the very least, the clergy had the advantage of a collective ethos as "guardians of the afterlife."
A RHETORIC OF REDEMPTION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION SOUTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SACRED SOUTHERN CULTURE

Standing before a South Carolina crowd in 1871, Presbyterian minister John L. Girardeau surveyed the first years of Reconstruction. "Old institutions, customs, and sentiments are breaking up as by the upheaval of a deluge," he concluded. The critical question for Girardeau was "what order, what type of thought, opinions, and practices" would ultimately prevail in his region. The cleric found that order lay in "scrupulously adhering to the phraseology of the past--for making it the vehicle for transmitting to our prosperity ideas which once true are true forever."¹ For Girardeau and other unreconstructed clergy, the dominant rhetorical effort of the period became explaining the chaotic present by defining and defending an orderly past. The region's future, in the century following the immediate post-Reconstruction years, was significantly affected by the clerical effort of "scrupulously adhering" to the past.

This chapter has three purposes. First, a brief summary of this research project is offered. Second, several specific effects, emanating from this clerical rhetoric, are discussed. Third, significant implications for these effects on the southern region in the post-Reconstruction years are suggested.
Within the Reconstruction South, there operated a group of clergy who were Evangelical Protestants theologically and Old South loyalists politically. While various other voices suggested ways for dealing with the problems of Reconstruction, the unreconstructed clergy were significant for at least two reasons. First, these individuals were generally the same figures who had defended the institution of slavery and called for secession in the years leading to Fort Sumter. As such, these clerics were an established rhetorical force in the region prior to Reconstruction. Second, these rhetors were clergymen, respected and revered throughout the region as "messengers of God." The clergy offered a religious interpretation of events because of their specific offices as preachers and theologians. As a result of their role, the Reconstruction South became a stronghold of the Evangelical Protestant interpretation of Christianity.

These clerical figures were actively involved in the affairs of Reconstruction. Their postwar attitudes concerning the Church's role was very similar to their view prior to the conflict. The Church and its clergy were the guardians of morality, order, and Christianity, and as such, the clerics spent much of their time carrying a theological message of sin and salvation to the people. However, these views of morality and order were often passed through a filter of sectionalism, and the Church was often concerned with the political
issues of secession, slavery, and segregation. The messages of these clergy were concerned with the right standing of their people before God. Religious leaders would almost always claim that any "political" involvement by the Southern Church was done in the interest of a need for some improvement in the region's "spiritual morality."

The Southern Protestant Church during Reconstruction was active as well in the variety of ways its clergy expressed their views. The southern denominations could be found defending the Old South or railing against the northern missionaries in sermons, speeches, public prayers, denominational journals and newspapers, and the secular press.

This clerical rhetoric offered definitions and defenses of a way of life commonly associated with the Old South. The clergy specifically attempted to negate the impact of the military defeat by re-defining the conflict into one for "principles"—ideals which represented the essence of the Old South and which possessed the ability to survive the stigma of Appomattox.

The issue of race also called for clerical attention. The immediate freedom of eight million slaves provided the most obvious physical manifestation of the disorder of Reconstruction and the demise of the Old South. As the clergy had defended the institution of slavery before the war, Reconstruction found the clerics involved in the problems of a biracial society once more. The religious leaders defended the Old South's slavery and defined continued separation of the
races through segregation as a proper vision of a sacred Cosmos and God's will for the region.

The death of Robert E. Lee also created a rhetorical situation, demanding a fitting response by the clergy. The clerics offered a defense of the region's past by rhetorically sacralizing the persona of Lee. The general emerged from the various memorial sermons as a prototype individual of a superior and sacred region. The definition of Lee became, in the clerical rhetoric, a defense of the southern people. Both definition and apology found their strength in an Old South Way of Life.

At its broadest level, the clerical rhetoric became an effort to maintain a particular system which found the clergy as guardians of morality for the region. The clerics' responses were concerted attempts to sustain a role which they had assumed as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Also at a broad level, the clerical rhetoric was an effort to provide an answer to the dominant exigence of Reconstruction—social, psychological, political, and cultural chaos. The definitions and defenses of the Old South—the war, race, and Lee—were all affected by this attempt to create rhetorically a sense of order for the region. Finding and communicating this order seemed to underlie each of the specific issues. Consequently, the clergy offered a rhetorically unified response to Reconstruction. Each denomination, though theologically different, gave similar definitions and defenses of the Old South and offered similar criticisms of Reconstruction.
Equally important, each of the various issues—the war, race, and Lee—became vehicles (to use Girardeau's term) for describing a proper relationship between order and chaos. Each of these issues ultimately suggested a way of overcoming the confusion of Reconstruction. With few exceptions, this vision of order from all of these issues was a picture of an Old South past.

**Effects**

What were the effects of this clerical rhetoric characterized by its defense of the past? There were, it appears, at least three significant ones.

First, the unreconstructed clergy offered a cultural redemption for the region. The clerics kept the Old South alive rhetorically through their defenses of its key features. The ideas associated with the antebellum South were justified despite the defeat of the southern nation through war. A leading aspect of this cultural redemption was the precept that the Old South represented, in microcosm, the divine will of God. For the clergy, the Old South mirrored a transcendent Cosmos and existed in a harmonious relationship with this macrocosm.²

This cultural redemption was more than the justification of a part of the South's past. This southern past possessed a redeeming potential for the Reconstruction South as well. The chaos of Reconstruction created an intolerable condition
of anomie. Meredith McGuire, in her study of religion, suggested that anomie or extensive social chaos forces "a new basis of order and a new meaning." One alternative cited by McGuire was the "rearrangement and reaffirmation of old meanings." To counter the confusion of the present, the clergy turned to the past, offering the Old South culture as a salvation for the region's future. This cultural redemption occurred as the region accepted the clerical call to return to the principles and ideas of the Old South. If the antebellum years represented a microcosm of God's will, then the Reconstruction South might also enjoy this relationship as the region returned to and imitated a way of life from its past.

In Kenneth Burke's "Ritual of Redemption," the Old South became the catalyst for restoring order to the region and re-establishing a clear hierarchy for the populace. The guilt and confusion of war and Reconstruction were confronted by the clerical defenses of the Old South; the chaos was removed rhetorically and an image of antebellum order leading to redemption was offered to the audiences.

The clergy provided a cultural rebirth by creating a sense of order for the southern audiences. The Old South was first justified as a culture and then offered as a redeeming exemplar for the Reconstruction South.

A second significant effect of this clergy's rhetoric was their creation of a sacred South. There are two essentially similar but differing sociological interpretations of this idea of sacred which warrant discussion. As noted in
Chapter Five, Emile Durkheim suggested that religion might be divided into the two realms of the sacred and profane. Durkheim noted the absolute polarity between these two worlds and located the sacred at the pinnacle of any society's hierarchy. The clerical rhetoric as discussed in this study attempted to establish the South as a culture entirely distinct from the North. Because of the region's relationship with an ultimate divine will, the southern culture possessed holy qualities and was to be revered by the people. There is little doubt that the clergy's rhetoric placed the Old South and its potential for order at the top of the region's hierarchy.

A further example of the sacred as described by Durkheim also can be found in the clerical definitions and defenses. According to Durkheim, the difference between sacred and profane is one of essence, of integral, substantive identities. The clerical rhetoric, especially that concerned with establishing principles, strongly suggested that the differences between North and South emanated from differing essences. The clerics offered this view of a sacralized South in distinct opposition to an unholy and profane North.

Sacred has also been interpreted by American sociologist Howard Becker who contrasted the term with the image of secular. Becker defined a sacred society as one with a "high degree of resistance to change, particularly in the social order." He expanded this definition, noting that: "A sacred society is one that elicits from or imparts to its members, by means of sociation, an unwillingness and/or inability to
respond to the culturally new as the new is defined by those members in terms of the society's existing culture." The secular society, by contrast, "endows its members with readiness and/or capacity to change."5

The clerical rhetoric, with its glorification of an Old South, obviously did not provide a social climate conducive to change. Quite to the contrary, the clergy abandoned the volatile conditions of Reconstruction to retreat rhetorically into the past and strongly urged their audiences to do the same. As the clergy developed their vision of a cultural redemption, the salvation for the region came from avoiding the potential and actual changes wrought by Reconstruction. Any "phraseology of the past" rejects change and embodies traditions, myths, and legends of the time before. The southern clerical defenses of war, race relations, and Lee reminded the southern populace of the need to remain distinctly sectional in their beliefs.

One particular subtype of the sacred society, the prescribed—sacred seems especially descriptive of the clergy's efforts. Becker observed that the clearest examples of this subtype are where "A definite body of dogma calls forth, sets up, or maintains a totalitarian kind of social structure."6 The totalitarian image describes an effort to propagate a singular view of reality and demand adherence and devotion to that particular interpretation. The clerical rhetoric, aimed at defending the Old South and redeeming the Reconstruction South, would seem to qualify as a body of dogma. The
clergy were clear that the redemption of the region and restoration of order depended on a singular action by their people: return to the past and the Old South Way of Life. The clerical efforts to dictate a single hope for the problems of Reconstruction were a prescription for resisting change and maintaining a sacred status.

The southern clergy, therefore, attempted to sacralize the South by preventing any real changes in the social conditions. Hence, the clergy offered a continuing battle despite Appomattox and a continuing policy of racial separation despite Emancipation.

This creation of a sacred South involved the clergy in a legitimation of the Old South Way of Life. These legitimations, in the forms of defending such practices as secession, slavery, and segregation were critical in generation a particular world view for the region. Samuel Hill, in his analysis of the region's religion, suggested that what dominated the postwar mind of the South was a legitimation of their way of life. The clerical rhetoric attempted to legitimize the South's culture through a sacralizing of the region's past. According to Peter Berger, legitimation is a process that "serves to explain and justify the social order." The difficult of the Reconstruction clerics was offering a suitable response to the obvious social chaos. Part of their explanation was to defend certain central images associated with the Old South, and according to the clergy, capable of providing order to the current tumult. These defenses became
legitimations for the actions of the past and served as suasory
devices for resisting any changes from that prior way of view­
ing the world.

Berger noted the manner in which religion can legitimize
the actions of a society. With this study's focus on the
clergy, Berger's notion of legitimation is especially helpful.
He wrote:

Religion legitimates social institutions by bestow­
ing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status,
that is, by locating them within a sacred and cosmic
frame of reference. . . . Probably the most ancient
form of this legitimation is the conception of the
institutional order as directly reflecting or mani­
festing the divine structure of the cosmos, that is,
the conception of the relationship between society
and cosmos as one between microcosm and macrocosm.9

The institutions described by Berger could be identified easi­
ly with the clerical definition of the war, secession, slavery,
segregation, and Robert E. Lee.

From the clerical definitions of these distinct features
of the Old South, the region was offered a transcendent and
enduring picture of its past. The clerical rhetoric also serv­
ed to defend the region as the Old South was defined as a
sacred history. This sacred nature helped counter the chaos
of Reconstruction and offered a rhetorical vision of a cosmic
and powerful order. Ultimately, these definitions and defenses
led to legitimations for a particular way of life, suggesting
certain ways of "seeing" the events of Reconstruction. The years of Reconstruction were interpreted through an Old South mind.

For the clergy, their efforts at legitimizing the Old South allowed the Reconstruction South to locate enduring and powerful principles and images within its past. These legitimations of the war, race, and Lee set apart the South as a distinct, holy, and unchanging society.

A third significant effect of the clerical rhetoric was its role in the creation of a southern culture. According to anthropologist Clifford Geertz, culture "denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." A culture is the long term result of a group's efforts to understand itself and its world through a rhetoric of symbols from the group's past. The clerical rhetoric not only sacralized the region, but in the process, this legitimation helped establish a particular way for the region to view itself.

Defining a culture is perhaps easier than determining what type of culture a group possesses. Scholars have differed on the specific essential element which would best characterize the southern culture. Historian Ulrich B. Phillips was among the first to declare that the essence of southern culture was the efforts of white southerners to preserve and perpetuate biracialism. The twelve southerners who collectively declared *I'll Take My Stand* in 1930 determined that an
agrarian lifestyle best described the "true" South.  

It seems that each new generation has produced a "new" version of how to categorize a distinctly southern culture. Some of these offerings have been blessed with the work of careful scholarship and deserve mention. David Potter described the South as essentially a folk culture. C. Vann Woodward located the essence of southernness in the region's historical experiences and the ways in which this history differed from the national experience. Wilbur J. Cash suggested an ethnic heritage, one particularly Scotch-Irish, created and sustained the southern culture. George Brown Tindall, as a more sophisticated historical scholar than the journalist Cash, also emphasized the idea of ethnicity as well as that of mythology in characterizing the region.

From a religious vantage point, Samuel Hill described two southern cultural systems—one governed by God, the extensional Being, and the other dominated by "God," the southern society. "Southernness," according to Hill, "has been the ultimate social good news." In the South, Hill claimed, the southern society has graced the throne more often than the extensional Being. For Hill, southern culture has been defined by this schizophrenia of two cultures and has been marked by the region's efforts to preserve and integrate them into a coherent whole.

Concurrent with this effort to discern the key feature of a southern culture has been the discussion surrounding its potential or actual demise. Hill was concerned that a declining
interest in southernness would adversely affect the region's religion, severely damaging both cultural systems. He ended his essay on "The South's Two Cultures" by pondering:

What is not clear at this juncture is whether the churches can tie their attractiveness to other features of life than the reinforcement and legitimation of the traditional (white) Southern Way of Life and thereby preserve for their ministry a constructive role in the society. 15

This kinship between Church and culture was especially critical during the Reconstruction years, and as Hill's essay (1972) suggested, the relationship between "Gods" continued well beyond the removal of Federal troops from the South in 1877.

William Balthrop in an essay in Communication Monographs also speculated on the demise of a southern culture. Balthrop contended that decreasing ideological defenses of racism have marked the end of a distinctive southern section of the nation. Because of these declining defenses, Balthrop bluntly concluded, "There is, I would submit, no longer any distinctly southern culture." 16 Such a conclusion is quite clearly subject to criticism. Balthrop needed to account for differing interpretations of what constitutes the southern culture (Woodward, Potter, Cash, and Tindall) rather than accepting the Phillips' version as the only explanation. A far more serious problem is the lack of evidence to support his claims. He failed to produce rhetorical discourse which substantiates the demise of a racial ideology in the South. Balthrop is
far too content to reside within the realm of the theoretical; his essay needed an application of contemporary southern rhetoric to prove his thesis. The southern culture might be a bit more resilient than Balthrop has considered.

The southern clergy and their Reconstruction rhetoric contribute to this critical issue of what constitutes a southern culture. The emphasis the clergy placed upon sacralizing the region through the legitimation of its past offers another "essential" characteristic of the region's culture. These clergy provided order, justified a way of life, and established a southern culture through their rhetorical generation of a sacred South. The defining characteristic of this culture is the view that the region is a sacred place in the terminologies of Durkheim and Becker. What constitutes a southern culture was the perception that the region was holy (a micro-cosm of the divine will) and set apart through its unwillingness to alter the course of tradition.

The clergy certainly contributed to this perception in the prewar years. Because of their special office as religious leaders, the clergy were granted the opportunity to discuss the key features of the region in sacred terminology. The clerical efforts during Reconstruction perhaps were more critical than the prewar rhetoric in the development of a sacred South. As this study has shown, the problems of Reconstruction were confronted by a clerical rhetoric which continued to praise the divinity of the Old South and which recommended no break in the region's way of life from its
antebellum past. In the midst of Reconstruction, with the potential for cultural upheaval, the clergy not only called for a return to past values but also empowered these traditions with a sacred quality.

For the clergy, the defense of racism (as Phillips, Bal­throp, and others have contended) was not the structural de­finition of the culture. Rather, the defenses of secession, slavery, and segregation were manifestations of an underlying rhetoric which created a sacred South. These defenses were not only aspects of the southern culture as the clergy envis­ioned it, but also were vehicles for the idea of sacralization. The problems of war and the racial questions served the purpose of revealing the South as a sacred culture.18

In summary, the clerical contribution to a southern cul­ture during Reconstruction stresses another interpretation of what constitutes the essence of that culture. The clerical rhetoric also reveals how the clergy maintained a consistent rhetorical posture from the early 1800s through the Reconstruc­tion period seventy years later. This consistency found the clergy developing and advocating a particular image of their region as holy and unchanging. The clerical creation of a sacred southern culture to generate order exposes their impact on the region during the crisis years and implies the potency of their rhetoric in the decades which followed Reconstruction.
Implications

The unreconstructed clergy left their region a defiant legacy. Two key examples illustrate this point. Charles R. Wilson documented the development of a southern civil religion by the region's clergy in the postwar years. Much of Wilson's effort examined the role of the clergy in such Lost Cause organizations as the United Confederate Veterans and the Southern Historical Society. This civil religion attempted to sacralize the region and legitimize its institutions. The Reconstruction clergy, in the immediate postwar years, developed a similar rhetoric which justifiably could be viewed as the forerunner to the later Lost Cause efforts. The idea of a sacred South was well defined and defended by the time of the U. C. V. in 1889. The success of the clergy in generating a southern civil religion might be traced to the clerical efforts of Reconstruction when the idea of a sacred South became an ordering device for the population.

A second example of this legacy specifically concerns the defense of segregation. According to scholars, the enactment of legal segregation in the late 1800s received clerical support in the South. John Lee Eighmy concluded that the Southern Baptists "gave moral support to the whole Jim Crow system of discrimination that became part of Southern law at the close of the century." The unreconstructed clergy had propagated such views forty years earlier. Concerning this issue of race, the clerical rhetoric possessed two important
implications. First, the clerical call to separate races, especially their creation of rhetorical threats, were strong persuasion for maintaining white superiority in the region. By the end of the nineteenth century, the southern population had been exposed to a rhetoric, delivered by individuals who represented God, which embraced a Jim Crow system. Thus, the segregation's legalization by the end of the century had been prepared by a clerical legitimation of such a practice. Second, in light of the systems theory discussed in Chapter Two, the clergy supported legal segregation in the 1890s because they were constrained by the rhetoric of their predecessors. The unreconstructed clergy had been calling for racial separation for close to four decades; a defense of Jim Crow by the clergy was to be anticipated and expected by the region.

These two examples reveal the significance of Reconstruction as a germination period for the transformation of Old South ideas into the postbellum period. Many of the "distinctive" features of the postwar region, such as the Lost Cause organizations and legal segregation, appear late in the century but represented a lifestyle of the antebellum past. The dozen years between war's end and the return of home rule to the South were a critical time in the formulation of a response to the end of political nationalism. The unreconstructed clerical rhetoric defended, preserved, and even celebrated a way of life which should have ended with Appomattox. This celebration aided in the transformation of political nationalism into cultural nationalism. A distinct southern culture
based upon the idea of a sacred South was established to provide social and psychological order. The power of this cultural world view, as indicated by the two examples above, did not suddenly cease with the end of Reconstruction.

The unreconstructed clergy embodied the images of an Old South through their rhetoric. Kenneth Burke wrote that such a person "represents the charismatic vessel of some 'absolute' substance." In such a case, where the rhetor and the transcendent images are joined, the person "is then the representative not of himself but of the family or class substance with which he is identified. In this respect, he becomes divine." This divinity was more than a celebration of the past and opposition to change. The image of the Old South could culturally redeem the region from the hell of Reconstruction just as the Evangelical Christ could theologically redeem the lost sinner. The critical point here, it seems, was the clergy, as representatives both of the Old South and the New Testament, offered this cultural redemption. This group was recognized as being primarily concerned with redemption, salvation, and the afterlife. What the clergy offered the individual sinner was expanded to include an entire region. The Messiah figure of Christ became a mythic Way of Life associated with the Old South. In the clerical call to cultural redemption, embracing the Old South images and ideas brought an enduring, powerful order to the region. Such an order could survive Emancipation, Appomattox, carpetbaggers, and northern occupation.
In the clerical rhetoric, the Old South re-emerges from the vortex of Reconstruction freed from the constraints of political nationalism and surviving as a special, sacred, and powerful culture. This culture possessed the potential for restoring order, and hence, redemption, to the war-torn region.

Reconstruction certainly presented the opportunities for sweeping social changes. The period ended, however, with the South even more firmly entrenched in sectionalism. The rhetoric of the clergy was significant in suggesting this distinctiveness as a by-product of its definitions and defenses of the Old South. To secure order for the region, the clergy urged their followers to look to the past—often a static, myth-encrusted, view of events. This past did not allow easily for changes in the social order. The resistance of the region to social changes, from Reconstruction through the 1960s, is indicative perhaps of the clerical call to sacralization. For the clergy, changes encouraged further chaos and disorder, effectively preventing any release from the confusion. What the clerical audiences did was cling to their past fervently, creating an identifiable southern culture for at least a century following Appomattox.

This defiant legacy of the Reconstruction clergy offered justifications for holding to the past and interpreting contemporary events through an Old South world view. The legacy of the clergy was that a distinct southern culture was not allowed to vanish despite the war and despite the turmoil of Reconstruction. Instead, the Old South was re-born from the
rhetoric of this socially important group of sacred spokesmen.

Postscript

Perhaps the defiant Robert Crozier summarized best this clerical drive toward cultural redemption. In May of 1865, only one month after the guns of war were silenced, this Southern Methodist surveyed the desolation in Mississippi brought about by the civil conflict and emphatically declared, "If we cannot gain our political, let us establish, at least, our mental independence." 

This study has suggested specific ways in which the southern clergy rhetorically created this cultural distinctiveness and independence.
NOTES

1 John L. Girardeau, "Address Delivered on Confederate Memorial Day at Charleston, South Carolina, on the Occasion of the Reinterment of the Carolina Dead from Gettysburg" (Charleston, 1871) 18; cited in Ernest T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, Volume Two: 1861-1890 (Richmond: John Knox, 1973) 114.

2 This relationship was revealed best by the clerical arguments defending slavery and segregation. For a detailed explanation of the microcosm-macrocosm dialectic, see Eric Voegelin, Israel and Revelation (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1956) 1-110.


6 Becker 364. This idea of a "totalitarian" state during Reconstruction was discussed by Joseph L. Brent and Perry H. Howard, "Toward a Sociological History of the American South," unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of the American


9 Berger 33-4.


12 Twelve Southerners, I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition (1930; Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1980).


14 Hill 46. In many ways, Hill seems consistent with the idea of an ethnic Southern culture after Cash and Tindall; the concept of a socially perceived "Southernness" points Hill toward this group.
15 Hill 54.


17 A particular example was the way the institution of slavery was translated by the clergy into God's will for the region. See the introductory section to Chapter Four.

18 As a postscript that extends beyond the boundaries of this study, perhaps the "demise" of the southern culture has resulted from a de-sacralization of the society and a loss of holy and/or unchanging status in the perceptions of the region's inhabitants.


22 I am reminded of how Wilson began his book, Baptized in Blood, trying to describe the relationship between southern clergy and the postwar South: "This is a study of the afterlife of a Redeemer Nation that died. The nation was never resurrected, but it survived as a sacred presence, a holy ghost haunting the spirit and actions of post-Civil War Southerners." The clerical involvement in the creation of this "sacred presence" was an important one.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

I. Journals and Newspapers

Christian Index. Atlanta, Georgia. 1865-1877.
New Eclectic (Southern Magazine). Richmond, Virginia. 1868-1875.
Southern Review. Baltimore, Maryland. 1867-1877.

II. Addresses and Essays

"Authorship at the South." New Eclectic 5 (1869): 77-95.


Dabney, Robert L. "The Ecclesiastical Equality of Negro Preachers in Our Church, and Their Right to Rule Over White Christians." Speech to the Synod of Virginia, 9 November 1867. Richmond, 1868. 3-16.


"Thoughts Suggested by Recent Events." Southern Review 9 (1871): 460-469.


III. Minutes and Proceedings

Minutes. Southern Baptist Church. Richmond, 1865-1877.


Minutes. Methodist Episcopal Church, South. 1865-1877.

General Assembly Minutes. Southern Presbyterian Church. 1865-1877.


IV. Books


Garner, James W. *Reconstruction in Mississippi.* 1902. 

Richmond, n.d.


________. *The Army of Northern Virginia Memorial Volume.* Richmond, 1880.


Mell, Patrick Hues, Jr. *Life of Patrick Hues Mell.* Louisville, 1895.


________. *Why Do I Live?* New York, n.d.

Secondary Sources

I. Books and Articles


Fleming, Walter L. *A Documentary History of Reconstruction*.


Manheim, Ralph, trans. The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.
Volume Two: Mythical Thought. By Ernst Cassirer.
Olsen, Otto, ed. Reconstruction and Redemption in the South.
Osterweis, Rollin G. The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865-1900.
Silver, James W. Confederate Morale and Church Propaganda.


__________. The Ethics of Rhetoric. South Bend: Regnery, 1953.


Hal W. Fulmer was born in Ocala, Florida, in 1959. With his family, he moved to Albany, Georgia, in 1968 and attended Deerfield School, graduating summa cum laude in 1977. While at Deerfield, he was a member of the Georgia state championship debate team for 1976 and 1977. He received an Associate degree from Albany Junior College in 1979 and was graduated magna cum laude in public relations from Georgia Southern College in 1981. In 1982, Fulmer was awarded the Master of the Arts degree from the University of Georgia with his thesis entitled, "On the Other Shore: The Southern Eulogy as Rhetorical Genre." He began his doctoral studies at Louisiana State University in the Fall of 1982 and was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy in Rhetoric and Public Address at the Spring commencement, 1985. He has accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi, for the Fall semester, 1985.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Hal W. Fulmer

Major Field: Rhetoric and Public Address

Title of Dissertation: The Defiant Legacy: Southern Clergy and a Rhetoric of Redemption for the Reconstruction South.

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

April 24, 1985