

The Social Dynamics of Asceticism and the Ascetic Dynamics of Society:
Kenneth Boulding as Dialogue Partner for (Orthodox) Christian Social Thought

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Introduction

While the Orthodox Christian theological tradition had the beginnings of a body of modern social thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the work of figures such as Vladimir Soloviev, Fr. Sergei Bulgakov, and S. L. Frank,¹ 70 years of communism set the Eastern churches back two generations by comparison to their Western counterparts in the Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions.² Nevertheless, my own work for more than a decade now has focused on remedying this lacuna in Orthodox scholarship, specifically by focusing on the implications and history of asceticism as a social principle comparable to subsidiarity in Roman Catholicism and sphere sovereignty in Neo-Calvinism.³

In the first section of this paper, I will summarize the transformational nature of asceticism, both in terms of personal spiritual development and human flourishing throughout society. Then I will hone in on three motifs of moral motivation found in the ascetic tradition, viz. the slave, the steward, and the son. These three states will then be put into dialogue with the

social analysis of the economist, peace activist, general systems theorist, and Quaker poet Kenneth Boulding.

Largely forgotten since his death in 1993 (with a few notable exceptions⁴), in his lifetime Boulding was nominated for both the Nobel Peace Prize and the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics. He was the second winner of the John Bates Clark medal in 1949. He studied under Lionel Robbins, Frank Knight, and Joseph Schumpeter, among others, and corresponded with many of the major economists of his lifetime, including John Maynard Keynes.⁵ Robert Scott sums up my assessment well in the conclusion to his biography: “Boulding can no longer be a ‘voice crying in the wilderness’ when he still has so much to say.”⁶

One of Boulding’s chief contributions was an attempt to broaden economic analysis to better account for what he termed the “grants economy,” consisting of gifts in integrative relationships and coerced goods in threat-based relationships. He set the grants economy in contrast to the exchange economy on the basis of the latter’s positive-sum core: uncoerced exchange of one good thing for another. On this basis, this paper will argue that Orthodox Christians have good reason to give Boulding a second—or more likely first—look: Boulding’s three social systems—threat, exchange, and integrative—are based on precisely the same three affective motivations of the ascetic moral states noted above: fear, desire, and love.

Thus, the second section of this paper will outline Boulding’s understanding of social dynamics and put it in dialogue with the Orthodox ascetic perspective outlined in the first. Furthermore, in his *Ecodynamics*⁷ Boulding acknowledges, though only in passing, two character patterns that fall within the sphere of asceticism: forbearance and sainthood. Pairing the transformational character of Orthodox asceticism with the dynamics of threat response in Boulding’s work reveals an important and heretofore overlooked role of asceticism in describing

social transition as well as an opportunity for constructive dialogue with Orthodox ascetical theology in terms of moral prescription. The paper concludes by recapitulating the argument and then exploring prospects for future research.

Asceticism

Personal and Social

Unlike Gnosticism, Orthodox Christian asceticism is not based on an ethical dualism between the material and immaterial, body and spirit. Rather, “the logic of asceticism follows a dialectic of awareness—denial—transformation or, in Christian theological terms, life—death—resurrection.”⁸ Through ascetic practices such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, watchfulness (*nepsis*), *memento mori*, silence (*hesychasm*), solitude, stability, chastity, and so on, “just as Christ tramples down death by death, we pattern our whole lives around dying and rising to new life, year after year, week after week, day after day, breath after breath.”⁹ We deny ourselves not as a form of self-punishment or because we think of some aspect of ourselves as irredeemably evil, but rather so that every aspect of our personhood, body and soul, might be transformed, spiritualized, and deified through communion with the love and grace of God in the Cross of Jesus Christ (see 2 Peter 1:2-4). To the extent that repentance (*metanoia*) means the transformation (*meta*) of the mind (*nous*), the constant refocusing of our lives on the Gospel of Jesus Christ through asceticism amounts to an embodiment of divine grace through a lifestyle of continual repentance, which thus serves as the basis of the Orthodox understanding of sainthood. Asceticism cannot be reduced to a few practices or aspects of our lives. It constitutes a new, transfigured mindset (*phronema*), or we might say, “world-and-life-view,” to borrow a term from our Calvinist friends.¹⁰

Asceticism, moreover, is not just an individualistic endeavor. Indeed, it is my conviction that asceticism should be considered “a fundamental, Orthodox principle of human society itself.”¹¹ Why? “There simply is no society in which each person only and always follows the desires of the flesh; such a distortion of society has no existence of itself and cannot exist in an absolute form. It would be the utter negation of society.”¹² Think of the family: we call “dysfunctional” families where there is no discipline, where the members spend no intentional time together, where they do not practice any dietary restraint (such as “no dessert before dinner”), nor do they pray together, or get along well with their neighbors, and so on. Healthy families are ascetic, or they are not healthy at all. Sure, the asceticism of the average family may be light when compared to a monastery, but the difference is only one of degree, not kind. “From the simple asceticism of the average family to the monasteries of Mount Athos, through denying oneself—especially one’s material comforts—for a greater good, a collection of mere individuals is transformed into a community.”¹³ Rightly understood, some degree of asceticism undergirds the culture of all healthy societies.

Max Weber even highlighted the “worldly asceticism” of Protestants in his famous, if contested, account of the origins of modern capitalism.¹⁴ Properly understanding asceticism as both personally and socially constitutive and transformative opens the possibility for the Orthodox ascetic tradition to enrich Christian social thought, if not also modern social science. Pope Pius XI first articulated the Roman Catholic doctrine of subsidiarity on the reasoning that “[t]he supreme authority of the State ought ... to let subordinate groups handle matters and concerns of lesser importance, which would otherwise dissipate Its efforts greatly.”¹⁵ Or, we could say, the state too must practice asceticism, denying itself in order to conserve its resources for what it alone exists to do, thus becoming more fully what it ought to be. Similarly, for

Abraham Kuyper, sphere sovereignty involves acknowledging that only the authority of Jesus Christ can be absolute, and therefore all earthly authorities must limit themselves in order to respect the boundaries of other spheres. “If,” wrote Kuyper, “... it is conceded that authority over man can rest no where originally but in God, and is only imposed by Him upon men with regard to a *particular sphere*, this impulse to continuous extension [of earthly authority] is curbed at once....”¹⁶ Thus, I argue, even non-Orthodox Christians ought to find asceticism to be integral to their own traditions of Christian social thought.

The Slave, the Steward, and the Son

Within the ascetical literature of the Church, a recurring motif has remained remarkably stable for centuries, discoverable in the works of St. John Cassian, St. John Climacus, and St. Nicholas Cabasilas, *inter alia*: viz., the images of the slave, the steward or hireling, and the son or child in terms of motivational dispositions for moral behavior.¹⁷ As Cassian put it, alluding to the parable of the prodigal son,

If then any one is aiming at perfection, from that first stage of fear which we rightly termed servile ... he should by advancing a step mount to the higher path of hope—which is compared not to a slave but to a hireling, because it looks for the payment of its recompense[;] and as if it were free from care concerning absolution of its sins and fear of punishment, and conscious of its own good works, though it seems to look for the promised reward, yet it cannot attain to that love of a son who, trusting in his father’s kindness and liberality, has no doubt that all that the father has is his....¹⁸

The Scriptures tell us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 9:10). Jesus, moreover, exhorted his disciples about almsgiving, “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:1); he later asked them, “what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Matthew 16:26), clearly, in both instances, invoking the motivation of desire for reward or profit. Last, St. John the Theologian reminds readers of his First Epistle that “perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18), and Christ says simply in his Gospel, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (14:15), appealing neither to fear nor desire but to the love that transcends them both.

Saint Paul, furthermore, highlighted the fluidity between these moral motivational states, writing to the Galatians,

The heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Galatians 4:1-5)

Thus, St. Antony the Great, the first Christian monk, would encapsulate this dynamic in a single saying: “Now I do not fear God, but I love him: for love casteth out fear.”¹⁹ Keeping in mind the

fluid dynamic between these three states, we can categorize them based on the foregoing according to their affective motivations, axiological foci, and metaphysical foci (Table 1).

[Insert Table 1 here]

With these distinctions in mind, combined with a proper, Orthodox understanding of the nature of asceticism as a transformational *habitus* and “world-and-life-view,” we can now turn to Kenneth Boulding to see how these states dovetail with the three fundamental social systems he identified across his many works.

Kenneth Boulding

Threat, Exchange, and Integrative Systems

“There are three major classes of social organizers,” wrote Boulding, “the threat relationship, the exchange relationship, and the integrative relationship (‘love’)....” These, moreover, are not limited to small, interpersonal relations. Rather, “Each of them creates a great network in the social fabric of space and time, which we may call the threat system, the exchange system, and the integrative system.”²⁰ In his *Three Faces of Power*,²¹ he gives clear definitions of each in the context of his analysis of social power: “Behavior that is particularly associated with destructive power is threat. Threat originates when A says to B, ‘You do something I want or I will do something you do not want.’”²² As for exchange power, “Exchange begins when A says to B, ‘You do something I want and I will do something you want.’”²³ Last, integrative or love-based power comes about when “A says to B, ‘You do something for me because you love me.’”²⁴ Or, alternatively, we could describe it as when B says to A, “I will do

something good for you and expect nothing in return.” Threat and exchange systems constitute what Boulding termed the “grants economy” of unilateral, materially zero-sum transfers. It should be noted, furthermore, that these systems already have some theological analogues in Protestant and Roman Catholic theology in the work of Brent Waters and Michael Novak, respectively.²⁵

Nothing about any of these systems makes them inherently bad or good, however. For Boulding, these are firstly descriptive categories. Threats may sound bad, but law is a threat system that, if just, is both good and necessary, at least in our world fallen into sin. The goodness of markets, the quintessential exchange system, depends on a host of factors including what goods are exchanged and under what conditions those goods are produced. And as for integrative systems, families, as already noted, may be healthy or dysfunctional. The same is true of religious communities and other integrative institutions. Nevertheless, one commonality with the ascetic schema outlined in the first section of this paper should already be apparent: the affective motivations of fear of punishment, desire for reward, and love. Thus, we may add Boulding’s analysis of these social systems to that schema as depicted in Table 2.

[Insert Table 2 here.]

As a caveat, I must here note that while the ascetic tiers ultimately refer to the Christian’s relationship to God, the states as images derive from interpersonal relations: servants to masters, stewards to employers, and children to parents. Thus, while we risk equivocation with a simple 1:1 application, a legitimate path remains for constructive, analogical application, which is what

I propose. Furthermore, as we will see, the personally and socially transformative nature of asceticism opens additional lines of inquiry following on Boulding's analysis.

Like the ascetic states, Boulding's social systems also involve some fluidity. "None of these categories will be perfectly clear," he wrote. "They are all what the mathematicians call 'fuzzy sets,' for every example of power is in some sense unique, just as every human being is unique."²⁶ In particular, he notes that each social system and the institutions that fit within them actually require elements of all three forms of power, even though one is dominant and definitive, as pictured on Figure 1.1 from *Three Faces of Power*.

[Insert Figure 1.1 here.]

Thus, threats must be viewed as legitimate, and the necessary resources must be available for them to be carried out, in order for them to be effective. Exchanges require the force of law to enforce contracts and require some integrative element of trust between the parties involved. Last, integrative systems still often require structures of authority that deal in punishments and rewards just as much as gifts of love, as any good parent knows.

Forbearance and Sainthood as Ascetic, Transformational Dynamics

In the course of more deeply explaining the core social dynamics of these relationships, Boulding, only in passing, identifies a few character patterns that do not fit neatly into the categories of threat, exchange, or integrative systems. This is illustrated in Table 8A.1.

[Insert Table 8A.1 here.]

Particularly relevant for our discussion of asceticism in this context, Boulding highlights “forbearance” and “sainthood.” I would call these *transformational dynamics*. “X₄Y₃, I will withhold a bad if you give me a bad, might be described as forbearance [sic] or patience,” explains Boulding.²⁷ As the goal of asceticism is to grow in communion with God through virtue by enduring voluntary hardships in ascetic practices, a character pattern of forbearance ought naturally to accompany an ascetic life. As for sainthood, Boulding comments, “X₁Y₃, I will give you a good if you give me a bad, might be described as sainthood. This is Ghandi blessing his murderers.”²⁸ Boulding’s example of Mahatma Gandhi, a noted Hindu ascetic, opens the question to what degree asceticism plays into Boulding’s category of sainthood, as well as what implications this might therefore have for social life.

Beginning with forbearance, then, it seems to be a form of what Boulding calls the defiance response to a threat: “The threatener conveys a message to the threatened: ‘You do A, which I want, or I will do B, which you do not want’; and the threatened party replies: ‘Go jump in a lake.’ That is, ‘I will not do A.’ This then throws the initiative back to the threatener who then has to make a choice between carrying out the threat or not carrying it out.”²⁹ In particular, forbearance seems to fit with the species of defiance in which the threatener believes the threat will be carried out.³⁰ Speaking more generally about the defiance response to a threat, Boulding says that in that case the threatener “has to change his image of the world in some way. In the light of this changed image, he has to decide between carrying out and not carrying out the threat. If he carries it out, this will be costly to him as well as to the other party; if he does not carry it out, this may damage his credibility.”³¹

Notice that, if my analysis holds, the forbearance acquired by the ascetic allows him or her to resist a threat deemed illegitimate, and in so doing requires that the threatener transform his or her vision of the world. In particular, Boulding notes that the threatener now needs to do some economic, cost-benefit calculations in order to decide whether or not to carry out the threat in effort to preserve his or her challenged credibility. Thus, through forbearance, asceticism has the potential to foster peaceful resistance to unjust and illegitimate threats and, in so doing, to potentially transform the preexisting social system. Saint Gennadios Scholarios even commented on this socially transformative potential of forbearance in a homily on Christ's Sermon on the Mount:

Do not repay evil for evil, but, rather, overcome it with good; if one strikes your right cheek, offer him the other as well, unless truth is somehow endangered by your forbearance.... Forbearance ... will free you from every sin which arises out of the defence [sic] of self, will see you crowned by both God and men, and will restore to sound mind those who raise violent hands against you or look on you with anger.³²

Greater still, however, is the transformative potential of what Boulding termed "sainthood."

In the character pattern of sainthood, the threatened party interestingly takes what the threatener perceives as a threat system and instead reconstrues it as an exchange or even a gift: "I will give you a good if you give me a bad."³³ Thus, Jesus taught his disciples, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:10-12). Here Christ exhorts his disciples to count as a “good” the bad that persecutors threaten.

We see this play out beautifully in the Acts of the Apostles. Saint Peter and the other Apostles are arrested at the request of the Jewish authorities. After some discussion, “when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they [the apostles] departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:40-42). Thus, not only does sainthood challenge the legitimacy of immoral threat systems, it renders them counterproductive by transforming the threatened “bad” into a desired “good.” The Jewish authorities beat them and “commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus,” and the result was “they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

This continued throughout the age of persecution in ancient Rome. Maureen A. Tilley illustrates how the ascetic preparation of ancient Christian martyrs successfully undermined the goals of pagan Roman torture.³⁴ Drawing on psychologist Peter Suedfeld, Tilley identifies five goals of torture: information extraction, incrimination of friends and associates, intimidation of other members of the community, isolation, and indoctrination.³⁵ “Torture,” she writes, “attempts to control people who hold as true a vision of reality contrary to that of the torturers. Hence, Suedfeld adds his latter two purposes of torture, isolation and indoctrination.”³⁶

On this basis, historians must answer the question, why didn’t Roman torture “work” on the Christian martyrs? Had it, the martyrs would not have died, and thus would not have been martyrs, and Christianity, instead, would itself have died out. The answer is that through their

ascetic lifestyle and worldview, “The victims were prepared to be victors.”³⁷ Tilley writes that “Tertullian exhorted his readers to prepare for prison, to get used to fasting, lack of water, even the anxiety about eating. They had to enter prison in the same state as most people who were leaving. What they would suffer there would not be any penalty but the *continuation of their discipline*.”³⁸ Note the transformation of the threat system: “What they would suffer ... would not be any penalty....” The entire logic of threat systems depends on the perception of the threat as a bad thing to the threatened party. Instead, because of their ascetic practices, the intended penalty was just more asceticism, which Christians already wanted and practiced. Even the threat of death proved impotent: “Asceticism,” says Tilley, “specifically sexual renunciation, made possible the renunciation of mortal life itself.”³⁹

The culmination of the martyrs’ witness came in the conversion of St. Constantine. Over the long run, we can see this as an instance of what Boulding termed the “integrative response” to a threat system: “The integrative response is that which establishes community between the threatener and the threatened and produces common values and a common interest.”⁴⁰ He elsewhere refers to this as the “disarming response,” describing it as “the ‘soft answer that turns away wrath,’”⁴¹ referencing Proverbs 15:1. As the Christians held fast to their Lord Jesus Christ, the legitimacy of Caesar shattered against the rock of their faith, to the point where a new Caesar recast Rome’s relationship to the Church (for better and worse) as the new source of the empire’s legitimacy.⁴²

Nevertheless, though that age of persecution came to an end, Christians did not stop construing asceticism in martyric terms. After all, as already established, rightly understood Christian asceticism involves continually dying and rising with Jesus Christ. Thus, as just one

example, we can see that this martyric conception continued all the way to the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, once again in the preaching of St. Gennadios Scholarios:

Prepare yourself for coming involuntary trials by choosing to suffer voluntarily—that is, with respect to food, drink, clothing, waking and sleeping, and everything that directs toward humility.... The love of God and the gain that comes from these things will lead you toward voluntary suffering and the humbling of your body when, illumined by grace, you will see the gain that comes from such sorrow and restraint—namely, inexpressible growth and joy of soul, which are known only to those who suffer.⁴³

Notice that, by throwing off the fear of hardship through asceticism, one hereby enters into an exchange, or even an integrative, relationship with God, embracing ascetic discipline for “[t]he love of God and the gain that comes from these things.” Yet as asceticism cannot be restricted to the individual but necessarily has social externalities, we can see that through the very means of our spiritual progress we can and should expect the world around us to become transfigured as well, despite any threats the forces of sin and death may use to corrupt our social systems. As St. Seraphim of Sarov taught, if we acquire the Spirit of peace, thousands around us will be saved.⁴⁴ So should be the goal of Orthodox Christian social thought. Standing on the firm ground of our ascetic heritage and in dialogue with Kenneth Boulding, real headway can be made toward fruitful dialogue with modern economics and economies.⁴⁵

Conclusion

In sum, this paper has outlined the personally and socially transformative nature of Orthodox Christian asceticism as an embodiment of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, dying and rising with him daily. It then detailed the common, three-tiered ascetic schema of moral motivation in the images of the slave, steward, and son, being motivated by fear of punishment, desire for reward, and love for the Father, respectively. These motivations, in turn, dovetail with Kenneth Boulding's analysis of social dynamics in terms of threat, exchange, and integrative systems. Moreover, Boulding highlights, but does not elaborate on, the character patterns of forbearance and sainthood, which through the logic of asceticism transform the logic of threat systems, strongly recommending the value of interdisciplinary work between modern economics and social science, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christian ascetic theology, on the other, for a careful and unique contribution to Christian social thought as a whole.

Appendix

While unfortunately beyond the scope of this paper to venture into great detail, one possible avenue of future research might involve further refining and developing Boulding's categories of social systems, whether the three general categories or specific institutions that fall within—or between—those systems. As one example, despite the foregoing, I would argue that a more analytically complete taxonomy would actually require adding an additional social system: friendship. It is more analytically complete to the extent that Boulding's social systems can be mapped along two criteria: personal or impersonal and zero-sum or positive-sum. This is illustrated in Figure 3:

[Insert Figure 3 here.]

When set against these criteria, we see that the bottom left quadrant has gone unaccounted for by Boulding. This is not to say that he had nothing to say about friendship, however. But he wrote about it only in terms of two-person relationships and did not consider the possibility of its unique social dynamic for its own social system. Boulding does talk about friendship as both egalitarian and productive while nevertheless clearly personal:

Simple friendship is one of the most productive and delightful of human relationships. Here power must be fairly equally divided and perhaps even randomly distributed over time, like the power we have at an intersection controlled by at [sic] a stoplight. When the light in our direction is green, we have the power to use the intersection and we exercise it. When the light is red, we may have the physical power to cross the intersection, but if we are wise we abstain, unless there is absolutely nobody around. It is similar with friendship. If two friends decide to go on a walking tour, decisions as to where to go are usually made by consensus; otherwise the friendship may disintegrate. A friendship in which one of the parties is too dominant is apt to deteriorate.⁴⁶

Moreover, theological reflection on friendship can be found in the Scriptures and the Orthodox ascetic tradition. Exodus tells us that “the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Exodus 33:11). David’s love for his friend Jonathan was such that “he loved him as he loved his own soul” (1 Samuel 20:17). Abraham is called the Lord’s friend (2 Chronicles 20:7). Job’s three friends, despite their ill-conceived words of consolation, nevertheless resolved

“to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him” (Job 2:11). Proverbs has a lot to say about friendship, but perhaps most importantly for distinguishing the love of friendship from the love of the family, “there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24). Relevant for economics, Jesus exhorted his followers to “make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon” (Luke 16:9). Lastly, Christ exalts the love between friends higher than all others and recommends it as a moral motivation, commenting, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:13-15). And for one example from the ascetic tradition, St. John Climacus spoke of “[a] friend of God [as] the one who lives in communion with all that is natural and free from sin.”⁴⁷

For a pop culture example, one might think of the *Popeye* character Wimpy, known for the catchphrase, “I’ll pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today.” That sort of proposition cannot possibly work in impersonal markets like McDonald’s, but if one happens to know a restaurant owner personally, and on the basis of one’s friendship he or she knows one will indeed pay Tuesday for a hamburger today, the proposition is reasonable. Economists, moreover, will recognize this quadrant as the sphere of informal markets. Many entrepreneurial endeavors begin in this realm, exchanging favors between friends, before growing to the point of becoming a viable business in the formal market. Mutual aid societies and social clubs could be an example of institutions that primarily exist in this sector. Thus, this distinction should have obvious relevance to economists and social scientists as well as theologians, and all, I would submit, may have something to learn from the Orthodox Christian ascetic tradition, among other sources, in terms of what makes for healthy and flourishing friendships.

Tables and Figures

Table 1: Three-Tiered Schema

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
State	Slave	Steward	Son
Affective Motivation	Fear of Punishment	Desire for Reward	Love
Axiological Focus	Sin	Justice	Mercy
Metaphysical Focus	Antinatural	Natural	Supranatural

Source: Dylan Pahman, "How is Forgiveness Possible? Toward an Orthodox and Ascetic Answer," in Gregory L. Bock, ed., *The Philosophy of Forgiveness*, vol. 4 (Wilmington, DE; Malaga: Vernon Press, 2018), 159-177.

Table 2: Modified Three-Tiered Schema

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
State	Slave	Steward	Son
Affective Motivation	Fear of Punishment	Desire for Reward	Love
Axiological Focus	Sin	Justice	Mercy
Metaphysical Focus	Antinatural	Natural	Supranatural
Social Dynamics	Threat System	Exchange System	Integrative System
Social Mechanic	Stick	Carrot	Hug
Social Institutions	State; Laws; Military	Markets; Prices	Family; Religion
Social Science	Political Philosophy	Economics	Sociology

TABLE 8A.1
Threat and Exchange Patterns

		X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
		I will give a good if	I will withhold a good if	I will give a bad if	I will withhold a bad if
Y_1	You give a good	Economic Exchange	Grantee	Deviltry	Threat (Bandit) & Submission (Tribute)
Y_2	You withhold a good	Grantor	Economic Exchange	Threat (Bandit) & Submission (Tribute)	Tolerance or Indifference
Y_3	You give a bad	Sainthood	Bribery	Deterrence	Forebearance
Y_4	You withhold a bad	Bribery	Tolerance or Indifference	Spite	Deterrence

Source: Kenneth E. Boulding, *Ecodynamics: A New Theory of Societal Evolution* (Beverly Hills; London: Sage Publications, 1978), 186.

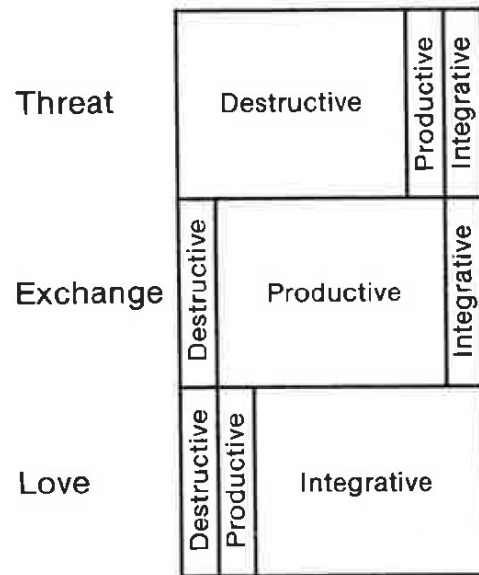


Figure 1.1. Categories of Power: Threat, Exchange, and Love

Source: Kenneth E. Boulding, *Three Faces of Power* (Newbury Park; London; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), 25.

Table 3: Social Systems (Modified)

Social Systems	Personal (high trust)	Impersonal (low trust)	
<i>Grants Economy</i>	<i>Integrative Systems</i>	<i>Threat Systems</i>	
Zero-Sum, Hierarchical	Family, Church, Charity	Law, Security	<i>Only this row: Pre-modern worldview</i>
<i>Exchange Economy</i>	<i>Informal Markets</i>	<i>Formal Markets</i>	
Positive-Sum/ Productive, Egalitarian	Friendships, Mutual Aid, Social Societies, Black Markets	Bank, Supermarket, Online Vendors	<i>Only this row: Economistic worldview</i>
	<i>This column only: Tribalist worldview</i>	<i>This column only: Modernist/Secularist worldview</i>	

Notes

¹ See Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 2nd ed., trans. Natalie Duddington, ed. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 282-311; Sergei Bulgakov, *Karl Marx as a Religious Type: His Relation to the Religion of Anthropotheism of L. Feuerbach*, trans. Luba Barna (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979); idem, "Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia," in Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman, trans. and ed., *Vekhi: Landmarks* (Armonk, NY; London: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 17-50; idem, "The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909)," trans. Krassen Stanchev, *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 157-179; idem, *Philosophy of Economy: The World as Household*, trans. and ed. Catherine Evtuhov (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000); S. L. Frank, *The Spiritual Foundations of Society*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens, OH; London: Ohio University Press, 1987), esp. 172-175; idem, *The Light Shineth in the Darkness*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1989); idem, "The Ethic of Nihilism: A Characterization of the Russian Intelligentsia's Moral Outlook," in *Vekhi*, 131-155.

² For more contributions since their time, of varying quality, see Petr Struve, "The Intelligentsia and Revolution," in *Vekhi*, 115-130; A. N. Tsirintanes, *Towards a Christian Civilization: A Draft Issued by the Christian Union of Professional Men in Greece* (Athens, Greece: The "Damascus" Publications, 1950); Georges Florovsky, "The Social Problem in the Eastern Orthodox Church," in idem, *Christianity and Culture*, The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, vol. 2 (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1974), 131-142; Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos), *Facing the World: Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, trans. Pavlos Gottfried (Crestwood, NY: Vladimir's Theological Seminary, 2003), 179-199; Daniel P. Payne and Christopher Marsh, "Sergei Bulgakov's 'Sophic' Economy: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Christian Economics," *Faith & Economics* 53 (Spring 2009): 35-51; Alfred Kentigern Siewers, "Traditional Christian Marriage as an Expression of Social Justice: Identity and Society in the Writings of Florensky and Bulgakov," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 569-586; Irinej Dobrijević, "The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism: A Case Study on Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbian Orthodox Church," *Serbian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 1-13; Department of External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, 2000, <https://old.mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/>; idem, *The Russian Orthodox Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights*, 2008, <https://old.mospat.ru/en/documents/dignity-freedom-rights/>; Michael

Butler and Andrew Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Environmentalism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2013); Gregory Jensen, *The Cure for Consumerism* (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2015); David Bentley Hart and John Chryssavgis, *For the Life of the World: Toward a Social Ethos of the Orthodox Church* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2020), available at <https://www.goarch.org/social-ethos>; Alexander Schmemmann, *A Voice for our Time: Radio Liberty Talks*, 2 vols. (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2021).

³ See Dylan Pahman, "Transhumanism and *Theosis*: Vladimir Soloviev on Posthumanity and the Kingdom of God," *Rule of Faith Orthodox Journal* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 79-104; idem, "V. S. Soloviev and the Russian Roots of Personalism," *Rule of Faith* 1 (November 2019): 1-10; idem, "How is Forgiveness Possible? Toward an Orthodox and Ascetic Answer," in Gregory L. Bock, ed., *The Philosophy of Forgiveness*, vol. 4 (Wilmington, DE; Malaga: Vernon Press, 2018), 159-177; idem, "Review Essay: The Shadow of Constantine and Our Economic Life," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 20, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 311-323; idem, "Asceticism and Creative Destruction: On Ontology and Economic History," in Sotiris Mitralaxis, ed., *Mustard Seeds in the Public Square: Between and Beyond Theology, Philosophy, and Society* (Wilmington, DE; Malaga: Vernon Press, 2017), 139-163; idem, "Deification and the Dismal Science: On Orthodox Theology and Economics," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 61, no. 3-4 (2016): 31-55; idem, "Alive from the Dead: Asceticism between Athens and Jerusalem, Ancient and Modern, East and West," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2016): 489-504; idem, "The Sweat of Christians is the Seed of Martyrdom: A Paradigm for Modern Orthodox Christian Witness," *International Journal of Orthodox Theology* 6, no. 2 (2015): 99-115; idem, "Markets and Monasticism: A Survey and Appraisal of Eastern Christian Monastic Enterprise," in J. A. McGuckin, ed., *Orthodox Monasticism Past and Present*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 8 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press, 2014), 465-488; idem, "What Makes a Society? An Orthodox Perspective on Asceticism, Marriage, the Family, and Society," in T. Dedon and S. Trostyanskiy, ed., *Love, Marriage and Family in Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 7 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press, 2013), 179-193.

⁴ See Yahya Alshamy and Christopher Coyne, "Kenneth Boulding: An Underappreciated Economist," Working paper (May 10, 2023), available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4444581> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4444581>; Robert Scott, *Kenneth Boulding: A Voice Crying in the Wilderness* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Vladislav Valentinov, "Kenneth Boulding's Theories of Evolutionary Economics

and Organizational Change: A Reconstruction,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 49, no. 1 (March 2015): 71-88; Robert Waters, “What Happened to Boulding’s Evolutionary Economics?” *Journal of Economic Issues* 40, no. 2 (June 2006): 465-472; Anatol Rapoport, “Memories of Kenneth E. Boulding,” *Review of Social Economy* 55, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 416-431; L. Randall Wray, “Kenneth Boulding’s Reconstruction of Macroeconomics,” *Review of Social Economy* 55, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 445-463; Elias L. Khalil, “Kenneth Boulding: Econodynamicist or Evolutionary Economist?” *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* 19, no. 1 (Autumn 1996): 83-100; Pradeep Banerjee, “Challenging Mainline Economics: Contributions of Kenneth Boulding,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 31, no. 30 (July 27, 1996): PE80-PE86; Robert A. Solo, “Kenneth Ewart Boulding: 1910-1993. An Appreciation,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 28, no. 4 (December 1994): 1187-1200; Kurt Dopfer, “Kenneth Boulding: A Founder of Evolutionary Economics,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 28, no. 4 (December 1994): 1201-1204; E. Ray Canterbery, “Boulding’s T, Kaleckian Power, and Minsky’s Fragility Hypothesis,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 28, no. 4 (December 1994): 1227-1247; Michael Szenberg, “Kenneth E. Boulding: 1910-1993: In Memoriam,” *The American Economist* 37, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 3-4. For some scholarship on Boulding’s work before his death in 1993, see L. Randall Wray, “Boulding’s Balloons: A Contribution to Monetary Theory,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 25, no. 1 (1991): 1-20; Warren J. Samuels, “Kenneth Boulding’s Ecodynamics,” *International Social Science Review* 58, no. 1 (Winter 1983): 3-6; G. C. Harcourt, “A Man for All Systems: Talking with Kenneth Boulding,” *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* 6, no. 1 (Autumn 1983): 143-154; Roger M. Troub, “Kenneth Boulding: Economics from a Different Perspective,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 12, no. 2 (June 1978): 501-528; Leonard Silk, “The Economics of Kenneth Boulding,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 12, no. 2 (June 1978): 529-534; Cynthia Kerman, “Kenneth Boulding and the Peace Research Movement,” *American Studies* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1972): 149-165; Monroe Burk, “Mr. Boulding’s Criticism of the Net National Product Concept,” *The American Economic Review* 38, no. 5 (December 1948): 897-898.

⁵ See Kenneth E. Boulding, “My Life Philosophy,” *The American Economist* 29, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 5-14.

⁶ Scott, *Kenneth Boulding*, 187. Nevertheless, I see Boulding as a bit less radical in terms of his specifically economic views than Scott, who regards him as entirely unorthodox.

⁷ See Kenneth E. Boulding, *Ecodynamics: A New Theory of Societal Evolution* (Beverly Hills; London: Sage Publications, 1978).

⁸ Pahman, “Alive from the Dead,” 490-491.

⁹ Pahman, “Asceticism and Creative Destruction,” 147.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2005); Herman Bavinck, *Christian Worldview*, trans. and ed., N. Gray Sutanto, James Eglinton, and Cory C. Brock (Wheaton: Crossway, 2019); Peter S. Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper’s Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1998); Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931).

¹¹ Pahman, “What Makes a Society?” 183.

¹² Pahman, “What Makes a Society?” 188.

¹³ Pahman, “What Makes a Society?” 189.

¹⁴ See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; New York: Routledge, 1992 [1930]). For an Orthodox response to Weber’s comments about Eastern Christian monasticism, see Pahman, “Markets and Monasticism.”

¹⁵ Pope Pius XI, encyclical letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (May 15, 1931), 80, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html.

¹⁶ Abraham Kuyper, *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology: Its Principles*, trans. J. Hendrick De Vries (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1898), 203.

¹⁷ See John Cassian, *Conferences*, in *NPNF²* 11:417; John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Norman Russel, *Western Spiritual Classics* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1982), 76; Nicholas Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, trans. Carmino J. de Catanzaro (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974). See also Maximus the Confessor, “Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice,” in G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, trans. and ed., *The Philokalia*, vol. 2 (London: Faber and Faber, 1981). For a recent application of this motif to environmental issues, see Butler and Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man*.

¹⁸ Cassian, *Conferences*, 417.

¹⁹ *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, in Owen Chadwick, trans. and ed., *Western Asceticism*, *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. 12 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), 181.

²⁰ Boulding, *Ecodynamics*, 140.

²¹ See Kenneth E. Boulding, *Three Faces of Power* (Newbury Park; London; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989).

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- ²² Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 25.
- ²³ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 27.
- ²⁴ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 29.
- ²⁵ Brent Waters, *Just Capitalism: A Christian Ethic of Economic Globalization* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016); Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Touchstone, 1982). For a recent practical application in the context of COVID-19 policy, see Brent Waters, "Vocation, Virtue, and the COVID-19 Virus," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 25, no. 2 (2022): 275-287.
- ²⁶ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 24.
- ²⁷ Boulding, *Ecodynamics*, 187.
- ²⁸ Boulding, *Ecodynamics*, 186.
- ²⁹ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 142-143.
- ³⁰ See Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 143-144.
- ³¹ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 145.
- ³² Gennadios Scholarios, "Concerning the Foremost Worship of God: Or the Evangelical Law in Summary," in idem, *From Ashes and Ruin: Selections from the Writings of St. Gennadios Scholarios*, trans., John Palmer (Columbia, MO: Newrome Press, 2022), 66.
- ³³ Boulding, *Ecodynamics*, 186.
- ³⁴ See Maureen A. Tilley, "The Ascetic Body and the (Un)Making of the World of the Martyr," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 3 (Autumn 1991): 467-480. I have previously drawn on Tilley's work in greater detail in Pahman, "The Sweat of Christians."
- ³⁵ See Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," 468.
- ³⁶ Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," 468.
- ³⁷ Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," 470.
- ³⁸ Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," 471-472, italics original.
- ³⁹ Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," 472.
- ⁴⁰ Kenneth E. Boulding, "Toward a Pure Theory of Threat Systems," *The American Economic Review* 53, no. 2 (May 1963): 430.
- ⁴¹ See Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 27.

⁴² On the sociological dynamics of empire, see Victor Roudometof, *Globalization and Orthodox Christianity: The Transformation of a Religious Tradition* (New York; London: Routledge, 2014).

⁴³ Gennadios Scholarios, “Concerning the Foremost Worship of God,” 77.

⁴⁴ See Seraphim of Sarov, “The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit,” in *Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 1: St. Seraphim of Sarov (Ouzinkie, AK: New Valaam Monastery, 1991), 109-119.

⁴⁵ For greater detail regarding the integration of Orthodox theology and economics, see Pahman, “Deification and the Dismal Science.”

⁴⁶ Boulding, *Three Faces of Power*, 38.

⁴⁷ John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 74.