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CRIMES Defined as violations of law, religious crimes vary according to societies' positions on church-state relations in addition to the general expectations about civil behavior. In democracies, religious belief remains unregulated, but religious action can be criminal. (For example, late-nineteenth-century American Mormons realized that they risked prosecution if they acted on their polygamous beliefs.) Authorities in repressive regimes, however, likely will criminalize any religious beliefs or activities that they fear will undermine the control of the state.

Paralleling what occurs in the political realm, crime in a religious context takes multiple forms. First, *crimes against religions* involve individuals or groups committing criminal acts against religious organizations for personal or ideological gain. Examples include theft of organizational funds or anti-Semitic slogans painted on synagogue walls. Second, *religious crimes* or *crimes for religions* involve acts performed in accordance with groups' operational goals. These crimes may be against (1) other religions (e.g., Islamic extremist group FUQRA's probable involvement in bombings against Hare Krishna temples); (2) governments (i.e., the Church of Scientology of Toronto's 1992 conviction on breach of trust charges resulting from its spy operations

against police forces); (3) employees (the Tony and Susan Alamo Foundation refusing to pay its workers minimum wage and overtime compensation); (4) congregants (e.g., clerical child abuse and the conviction of former PTL Ministries' Jim Bakker for conspiring to defraud his flock by overselling lifetime partnerships in his Heritage Grand Towers hotel); or (5) the public (e.g., Rajneeshees' poisoning of approximately 750 citizens, possibly as a test of plans to influence an upcoming election).

Finally, *criminal religious organizations* have basic goals or purposes that require the perpetration of illegal acts. Evidence is mounting, for example, that Japan's Aum Shinri Kyo religious sect will classify as such a criminal religious organization because of its probable poison gas murders along with criminal investigations into confinement, kidnapping, manslaughter, theft, counterfeiting and using stamped documents, wiretapping, and agricultural land law violations.

—Stephen A. Kent

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