

ON THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE

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The paired up terms of sacred and profane constitute a twin concept we are likely to encounter in not a few studies in the sociology of religion. Implying an opposition between a certain qualification of religiosity and its absence, this double concept will reflect the user's conception of religion revealing „a certain degree” of opposition or another way of relationship between the two implied aspects. In other words, its particular use will reflect how religion is seen to extend into the field of everyday reality, how both religion and everyday reality relate to each other. This evidently is an important theological and sociological question.

In the following, then, I will review how this pair concept is treated in some literature on religion and discuss or comment mainly on its sociological bearings. Especially we will see how it is utilized by Durkheim, Malinowski and Eliade to all of whom it is of central concern. Let us start with Durkheim.

Emile Durkheim

Durkheim's monograph on primitive religion is a very extensive study aiming at the high goal of nothing less than discovering the origin of religion and delineating its final meaning. Durkheim wants

to reach this goal, first, by pinpointing the elementary forms or the common elements of all religious life and, second, by investigating the circumstances in which these elements come into being. This will allow him to discover the sources and causes of their beginning from which their ultimate meaning can be deduced. The easiest way to realize this objective, Durkheim asserts, is to study the most primitive religion, where the distance between cause and effect is easier to cover than in the case of differentiated, historical religions¹⁾.

After having discarded the views that religion cannot be primarily concerned with the ideas of the supernatural or with beliefs in spiritual beings, Durkheim establishes a preliminary definition of religion. Religion consists, he says, of two fundamental categories, beliefs and rites, in other words, states of mind and specific ways of behavior. Because it is beliefs that determine the objective of the practices, beliefs have to be defined first. It is mentioned that one, common characteristic of all beliefs is that they assume a classification of all things, real and spiritual into two opposed categories : the profane and the sacred. Beliefs as expressed in myths and the like are also important for other reasons. They determine not only what objects will be considered as sacred, but also the specific nature, characteristics, virtues etc., of these objects²⁾.

The nature of sacred things is rather complex. All sacred things, not all of the same quality, are thought to be superior to things profane and radically opposed to the latter. Most sacred are the totemic animals and plants, also the *churinga*, which are objects made from wood or stone into which figures are carved or engraved, representing the totemic animal or plant. Every clan named after a totem, has its own *churinga* or even a collection of such sacred emblems. They are kept in a sacred place and are the center of religious ceremonies. The word *churinga* itself means „sacred”. *It is in connection with the religious character of these objects that all things are classified as sacred and profane* (p. 167).

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The radical opposition between the sacred and the profane is revealed in the cult and in other experiences with various sacred things in daily life. The cult itself is of a double nature, positive and negative³), says Durkheim. The positive part of the cult, found in the tribal ceremonies and held at the sacred places, is of a sacrificial kind, featuring mainly the ritual consumption of the totemic animal or plant. More important for the understanding of the sacred, however, is the negative cult, a body of prohibitions and taboos intended to ascertain the separation between the sacred and the profane—sacred things, according to Durkheim, are by definition separated from others—There is prohibition of physical contact, for instance, eating and watching the totem, also talking about it in daily, profane circumstances. These rules, however, are not absolute. They do not apply after purification or during celebrations. Also, they are different for the various categories of people, men, women, initiated, etc. This difference is explained by the belief that people partake in the sacredness of the totem but not all in the same way.

The reason for the separation of both realities is found in the fluidity or *contagiousness* of the sacred objects. Sacredness is apt to diffuse, because it is a kind of energy that has penetrated the objects from the outside and may leave them again.

A related characteristic is the *ambiguousness* of the sacred which is recorded especially in the case of funeral rites and other public expiatory ceremonies⁴). That is, the religious forces are of a double nature, pure or impure. They may be benefactory or dangerous and harmful. Though both are object of separation vis-a-vis profane things, and though at the same time antagonistic to each other, they are in some way related. They are even reversible in many cases. For example, the totemic animal is the most sacred being but it will cause death when eaten except in religious ceremonies. Also, human corpses are treated with fear. They are object of avoidance at first when death has occurred. Later they become the object of respect and veneration.

Many similar examples show the ambiguity of the sacred, which means after all that both pure and impure kinds have the same nature.

The two main sociological problems of totemism, and indeed of all religion, according to Durkheim, are to explain what human forces have been able to inspire those strong religious sentiments, and to explain what has caused man to see two heterogeneous and incompatible worlds as the sacred and the profane where nothing in common experience seems to suggest this radical duality⁵⁾. Durkheim relates these two problematic aspects respectively to the social functions of totemism and its religious significance⁶⁾.

Concerning the social function of totemism Durkheim argues that the use of names, emblems, in other words, the extensive use of symbolism is a necessary condition for the viability of social life. The totem and its symbolism also have an important cognitive function in relating man to nature and inculcating that awareness. The yielded knowledge does not differ fundamentally from scientific thought. Any explanation of any phenomenon even today has to concentrate on the relationships of the various elements of the reality that is to be explained. In relating animals and plants to the human society, primitive people only have combined what we would separate and vice-versa. In their social system they have integrated elements from nature, and in their view of nature they made enter human elements. Religion, in this way, as a system of social and religious thought, has been the beginning of science and philosophy. However, Durkheim continues. religion has been able to play this role because of its social and collective nature. *In order to create a world of ideas by which the world of observed realities appeared to be transformed, an over-stimulation of intellectual forces was needed. This is possible only in and through society* (p. 340). It is this intellectual over-stimulation or effervescence that lies at the origin of religion, which, together with the moral authority of society is responsible for arousing those strong religious sentiments.

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Durkheim's argumentation concerning the religious function of totemism is basically the same. He explains how the natives in their ritual behavior identify with their totem by imitating its way of being or behavior. These ceremonial performances are intended to ascertain the reproduction of the totem, because it is believed that the fertility of the totem needs the help of man. Man's existence, in turn, depends on that fertility. Durkheim, then, explains the way of thinking behind the totemic practices as a primitive understanding of the principle of causality, which can be summarized in the proposition that "*the similar produces the similar*".

This way of thinking, according to Durkheim, is clearly dominated by the social conditions of primitive existence, ultimately by the moral authority of the group. For Durkheim, again, it is social forces that are at work, rather than religious forces. He, therefore, can reduce religion to the workings of society. This is Durkheim's main contention concerning religion.

An early example of how Durkheim short-circuits the social and religious sphere is found in his deduction of the totemic principle, *mana*, from the functioning of society⁷⁾. The social origin of the *mana*-energy is a conclusion from the insignificance of the totemic animal or plant and its representations. Because they are insignificant, they cannot be the real object of the cult. The object of veneration is the common principle that is present in the mediums. It is some kind of impersonal, anonymous force, some kind of energy that has been trapped in all those heterogeneous objects and beings. How is this energy experienced and where does it come from? Sometimes it is thought of by the natives as a physical force, but to Durkheim its moral character is much more in evidence. He relates it e. g., to the fact that the natives strictly observe their religious practices because of their obligation to their ancestors. Finally, society is deductively established as the ultimate source of *mana*: because the totem, as the symbol of society, is at the same time the incarnation of the

impersonal *mana*, the totemic principle can be nothing but the clan that hypostatizes itself in it.

From our summary of Durkheim's argumentation it will be clear that his rallying point is the explanation of the human forces that are responsible for religion in general and for the opposition of the sacred and the profane in particular. Those human forces, Durkheim concluded, are social forces, whether they are related either to the religious functions or to the social functions of totemism. If Durkheim's study implied only propositions like this, most people would agree with him especially in our present time. Indeed, it can be said that, for instance, it has become a truism in sociology that religion has been possible in and through society. It only amounts to the statement that religion is a social phenomenon. However, this is still far removed from saying that all religious meanings can be reduced to social significance. In other words, the meaning of the sacred and the profane remains a problem as well as their relationship. But, before engaging in more personal comments, I will look for some other sources of critique towards Durkheim and further discussion of our subject matter.

Bronislaw Malinowski

Malinowski's criticism of Durkheim⁸⁾ concerns, first, the latter's disregard of the individual aspects of religion. According to Malinowski, it is rather to individual consciousness *in solitude* that the strongest religious feelings should be ascribed. Also, individual and personal beliefs, rather than fear of social sanctions lie at the ground of the primitives' observances of morals and taboos, much the same as in the case of people in modern societies. However, even if Malinowski is right in stating that the forces of individual minds should not be overlooked, it should also not be forgotten that morals and taboos come about socially and that individual minds begin to function after

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socialization has done its work, after the individuals have internalized moral and religious beliefs. Individual consciousness and observances of moral rules, then, cannot be disconnected from the social sphere.

Second, a more convincing argument brought up by Malinowski against Durkheim is that the latter mainly studied the seasonal ceremonies of the primitives and much less other forms of collective life. Collective effervescence or heightening of emotions also occurs in profane events such as battles, sailing regatta, tribal gatherings for trading purposes etc. Yet, no religion is generated on any of these occasions. Consequently, it may be more correct to say that Durkheim, in spite of concentrating too much on religious events by overlooking other social activities, by the same token underestimated religious events by over-emphasizing their social meaning. Anyway, problematic is Durkheim's argumentation about the relationship of the religious and the non-religious sphere. Durkheim's solution was one of combination and finally of reducing the meaning of the former to that of the latter. Malinowski's view, in contrast, is rather one of separation.

Based on his own fieldwork among the Papuo-Melanesian tribes of Eastern New Guinea, Malinowski is able to demonstrate that the natives clearly distinguish between profane work and magic activities⁹⁾. He reports that many islanders rely on gardening for their subsistence and that they manage successfully. The reasons for their success are, except favorable climatological conditions, their careful work and extensive knowledge about the soil, the cultivated plants and other natural conditions. A similar situation is reported in connection with other activities such as fishing, warfare, care for health and so on. However, apart from their knowledge and work, they also rely on magic practices in most of their activities. A different efficacy is attributed to the latter as can be understood from the fact that the natives never substitute magic for work.

In the domain of the sacred¹⁰⁾, religious and magic activities are distinguished. First, religious creeds and attitudes are found to be

centered around the most important events and crises of the life cycle: pregnancy, birth, initiation, rites of marriage and death. Ceremonies and celebrations in these cases are performed with no particular purpose, except that they are traditional activities, which have several creative functions for the group as well as for the individuals. They establish, fix and reinforce social life and tradition; they sacralize the crucial moments of individual existence by shaping and enhancing its mental attitudes. For example, the initiation ceremony is the occasion of systematic instruction combined with dramatic ritual. It results in spiritual metamorphosis of the young men who from now on will be able to see themselves as different persons, with new duties and privileges, with a new knowledge of tradition and the communion with the sacred beings. Though very different, a similar creative function is realized by the rites for the departed, which counteract the devastating effect of death at the personal and the collective level. These rites, also, may support or attribute greater significance to individual and social life by inspiring and enhancing the belief in its continuation in another world. All in all, religious ceremonies are not a means to an end, they rather contain their end in their very performance.

Second, magic is a practical art or a pseudo science, consisting of acts which are only a means to definite results expected to follow later on. Malinowski finds three elements in magic : A spell, a rite and a series of strict conditions in relation to the performer. He rejects the idea that magic is born from the abstract conception of a universal power like *mana* that some scholars conceive of as a physical force while others see it rather as a supernatural one. Like religion, magic is based on mythological tradition. It also finds its origin in a situational stress, more in particular, it is an emotional reaction on the awareness of impotence in practical activities. Magic as a whole is characterized as: *a strong emotional experience, which spends itself in a purely subjective flow of images, words, and acts of behavior, leaves a*

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very deep conviction of its reality as if of some practical and positive achievement, as if of something done by a power revealed to man. In a word, it is the sublime folly of hope (p. 81).

Malinowski's description of the natives' profane and religious life seems to be a model of *idées claires et distinctes*. Referring continuously in concrete terms to their society, he presents us with an unambiguous picture of profane activities, magic, religion and scientific attitudes. In contrast to Durkheim, Malinowski delineates religion as a special sphere of specific attitudes and activities with a definite meaning of its own, not detectable in other activities. Religion is not separated from magic, but it is clearly distinguishable from it. Malinowski is not interested in defining religion in connection with a narrow matter (e. g., spirit worship, ancestor cult, the cult of nature etc.), because it may include many things. He sees religion mainly in connection with the vital interests of life. It is in this area that its meaning and its functions must be looked for.

Agreeing in principle with Malinowski's vitalistic view of religion, I would like to venture, however, at least one reservation in connection with the articulation of the different areas of activity Malinowski has outlined so well, almost up to the point of sealing them off from one another¹¹). How magic and religion result from the complexities of life and from man's effort to overcome his inadequacy and his crises, all this is well illustrated, but how these areas of the profane, magic and religion do exist side by side, or how they are integrated into one system is not touched upon. In his discussion of profane work and magic, for instance, Malinowski concludes that the attempts at efficiency through work and knowledge are the dominant tendencies. These tendencies are signs of a scientific way of thinking that in itself is not different from the one in advanced science. They constitute what he calls the profane sphere, which is different from the religious one. As we can see: their relationship remains an unsolved question.

Next, we will turn our attention to Eliade, historian of religion, who treated the matter extensively in his book *The Sacred and the Profane*. Although Eliade's view of the relationship of the sacred and the profane resembles that of Durkheim, he provides us with some different aspects of the problem, especially because he treats it in connection with various religions, ancient and modern.

Mercea Eliade

The meaning that Eliade attributes to the sacred is largely traceable to Christian theology. He begins his study¹²⁾ by referring to Otto's conception of the sacred, but he proposes to investigate it, *not only in so far as it is irrational*, as Otto had done, but *in all its complexity* (p. 10). Eliade, in this way, seems to pledge continuity with Otto, but actually his approach is rather different. Otto studied religious experience, i. e., man's religious feelings towards the Holy as found in the Bible and other sacred texts. He came to characterize the *numinous* as an awe-inspiring, fascinating mystery. Eliade, on the other hand, is not at all concerned with a description of the Holy itself, but with its "revelation" in nature. He is also concerned with the "perceptions" of things as sacred or profane by religious or non-religious people — It may be remarked that the latter perceptions are much less important to religious experience than the perceptions of the Holy itself — In other words, Eliade mainly discusses various cross-cultural religious meanings that have been attributed to space, time, to nature and human life in some of its physiological functions (e. g., the body itself, eating and sex) and social manifestations and activities (e. g., sanctification of dwellings, initiation rites, belonging to men's or women's groups etc.)

Two lines of description are interwoven as already suggested. First, the sacred is represented as factually revealing itself to man in a Christian-theological fashion, as may be seen especially from the

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much used term *hierophany*, *something sacred manifesting itself* (p. 11). In other words, an identical meaning is found in manifestations of the sacred in things, for instance, in a rock or a tree, as well as in the supreme hierophany which occurred in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. It is called a paradox that, although the sacred is thought to be totally different from the profane, there is no solution of continuity in any hierophany, *because there is the manifestation of something of a wholly different order...in objects that are an integral part of our natural "profane" world* (p. 11). Shortly, we will return to this way of presentation.

A second line of description is that of religious experience, more specifically of the religious or non-religious orientations of man. Things in nature and in life are capable of being experienced in a merely material or natural way, but also, as things participating or revealing cosmic sacrality. As a consequence, there are two modes of existence, the religious and the non-religious one, which are separated by *the abyss of the sacred and the profane* (p. 14). In other words, the sacred and the profane are two existential situations assumed by man in the course of his history. Later, Eliade will expose the view that the sacred or religious way of life has prevailed from the beginning throughout the greatest part of man's history and that the profane way is a recent development.

As the characteristics of the sacred and the profane are concerned, we have encountered two in our summary so far, which earn Eliade companionship with Durkheim. They are, firstly, of course, the opposition of the two aspects, the illustration and definition of which Eliade proclaims to be the very aim of his study, and secondly, their continuity. Otherwise, Eliade's presentation is quite different, as compared with Durkheim's and also Malinowski's. Therefore, we will encounter different problems we would like to comment upon, because they are not unrelated to the conception of the sacred and the profane.

To begin with, a methodological problem seems to be involved

in the alternation of the two lines of description, which is already felt in the very broad use of the term "sacred". It is used to indicate not only the sacred quality that is perceived in things by religious people, but also to refer to all religious ways of life. The problem with the alternation of different descriptions is that the aspect of revelation is a theological perspective and that it seems to be inferred as part of the explanation. Concretely, the sacred reveals itself as being of a totally different nature as its mediums. This was also Otto's inference concerning the Holy, but it is actually a theological statement and object of belief, which cannot be verified. It corresponds closely to the Christian conception of the transcendence of God.

Further, Eliade, as already mentioned, treats all the manifestations of the sacred, whether in primitive or modern religion, whether oriental or western, as one single category opposed to a similarly homogeneous treatment of the profane in all cultural circumstances. This makes one wonder about the value of those concepts of the sacred and the profane, especially if they are interpreted in a Christian way. If Eliade's view of man's religiosity is backed only by Christian theological thinking, it can only have value as such, not as an empirical generalization we are entitled to expect from any empirical discipline, whether historical or sociological. In order to check on this aspect more carefully, let us follow Eliade's argumentation concerning religious and non-religious experiences of space and time¹³⁾.

Concerning space, Eliade states that its experience is homogeneous for non-religious man and heterogeneous for religiously oriented people. *The revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity* (p. 23). One conclusion is that : *The World becomes apprehensible as world, as cosmos, in the measure in which it reveals itself as a sacred world* (p. 64). Except that here again revelation and experience go hand in hand, we cannot but remark that religious man, according to Eliade, experiences only some places as sacred and others as pro-

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fane, while Eliade states elsewhere *that all nature is capable of revealing itself as cosmic sacrality* (p. 12) and *that the whole of life is capable of being sanctified.* (p.167) How this "division of awareness" works, is not explained. A double arbitrariness seems to be involved between the principle of the general possibility of sacrality in all nature and, on the one hand, its partial experience (only some space is experienced as sacred), and on the other hand, its result at least if we take at face value the statement that "experience of sacred space makes possible experience of profane space".

Time is experienced similarly but the situation is more complex. As in the case of space, it is the introduction of sacred time *that makes possible the other time, ordinary time, the profane duration in which every human life takes its course* (p. 89). However, sacred time is not all of the same quality. There is mythological and historical time. The former is sacred time periodically reactualized in pre-Christian religions. It is primordial, original and not preceded by any other time. The latter, historical time, is a mutation originating in the affirmation of the historicity of the person of Jesus Christ. However, in non-religious time more heterogeneity is allowed for than in the case of the experience of space. Also, for non-religious man varying temporal rhythms are recorded in work, celebrations, while listening to music, when being bored etc. But after all, non-religious time cannot present neither break nor mystery.

What Eliade's argumentation amounts to is the statement that, basically, there are two opposing orientations of the mind, a sacred and a profane one. This is illustrated by many examples in relation to the various conceptions of man's existence in nature and in society. These examples are taken from many religions, primitive and modern. Because the concepts about space, time etc, are not central to religion, Eliade's study bears more on culture than on religion itself, as was announced in the subtitle of the book, and as we find in his assertion that culture from the beginning of human history has been

religious and still remains so today, though many people are not aware of its religious origin. This view is reminiscent of Durkheim's, as we find expressed toward the end of his study on religion¹⁴).

The fact that the concept of „sacred-profane” is used in a context of culture will diminish its utility in connection with religion itself, especially because Eliade attributes to it a certain Christian interpretation as mentioned above. To focus more precisely on this issue: what is the cognitive or evaluative value of such a concept? What does it convey about Christianity, Buddhism, Islam or any other religion? It only conveys that those religions nurse some kind of sacral awareness, which is not much more than a tautology, an affirmation to the extent that these religions are religious. The specific, sacral awareness of any religion can only be known by studying the concrete case.

From the preceeding can be concluded that, even if there exists an opposition between sacred and profane, it can only exist within a concrete religion, within its believers.

I would like to argue that the opposition between the sacred and the profane is only *one* manifestation of religious awareness, and that many different religious orientations do exist. To mention some by way of example, there is the basic belief of Christianity in the goodness of all “creation”, or the belief that all creation reflects Gods power and majesty¹⁵). We also can mention a similar belief usually held in Catholic convent life, that a religious value can be attributed to all activity, provided it does not violate religious commandments. There is also the view in Calvinism, famous since Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, that the glory of God can, and has to be achieved through work in society (inner-worldly ascetism). In connection with Buddhism, mention can be made of the belief in the Hinayana traditon of the sacredness of all animal life. In Mahayana there are trends and endeavors to integrate or transcend the for Western thinking fundamental opposition between the good and the bad, etc. All these examples show that the realm of the sacred

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is quite different in the various religions. As may be easily remarked, the perspective in all the examples is not reified religion as it may be thought to exist in culture, but that of religious action and individualized awareness. Consequently the relationship of the sacred and the profane, or better, of sacred and profane awareness is different in every case. This means that the concept of the sacred and the profane as thought of by Durkheim, Malinowski and Eliade, is certainly not universally applicable. It is a rather ambiguous concept in need of redefinition or elimination.

Toward an Alternative View

When looking toward an alternative view of the matter, it is not unimportant to ask the question why, after all, religion has been conceived of as the realm of the sacred and everyday life as that of the profane. Without being able to investigate the question very carefully, I would like to venture some suggestions.

A latent reason probably lies in the division of labor and in the tendency of religious activities to differentiate into a world of their own. Because of the relationship with the mysterious, and because efficiency and rationalization is not much of a problem as it is in the rest of life, religion is apt to fix ways of behavior, ritualizing and sacralizing them, making implements of worship exclusive to its use and so on. Conservatism in religion is a much known tendency.

A. Jensen has pointed this out for primitive religion¹⁶). Here, according to him, tradition itself mostly functions as motivation for religious behavior. If the natives are asked why they have such and such a fertility cult, why they knock out incisors at initiation ceremonies etc, they will answer that they have been taught that way and that it is a mystery of the ancestors. Jensen also argues that, because of the natives' reasonableness in so called profane matters, we should entertain as a possibility the initial reasonableness of cultic acts. Being

passed on didactically, they may have lost their creative quality and comprehensibility in the ensuing situation of application. But also, he argues, religious activity cannot always be an object of rational understanding, because of its relation to such mysteries as life and death, which have been incomprehensible from the beginning and remain largely so today. Anyway, Jensen's argument seems to imply that "incomprehensibility" and separation from daily life are not inherent qualities of religion.

However, a reason for the conceptual separation of the sacred and the profane may be found in the continuity of the recent history of European Christianity. No reforms have been recorded during the 19th. century and the first half of the 20th. Towards the turn of the last century there has been a movement, within church institutes, though mostly unorganized, to work for a new orientation of catholicism towards the world. This is known as "modernism"¹⁷⁾. Attempted at was the application of modern criticism to bible study and church history. Rome, however, radically condemned and suppressed the movement.

The fact that the Catholic church has reacted with panic measures such as excommunication against what was only modern learning, shows that the church must have been strongly embedded and embattled in tradition. A similar situation also existed in the highly ritualized liturgy, which was only modernized after the 1960's. Therefore, it is easily imagined that the 19th. and the first half of the 20th. century was a time in which the religious "services" had become totally different from anything profane. This is further illustrated by the attitudes of the priests towards their parishioners they spoke of as "souls" that had to be saved from "the world". The relation of this situation to our present interest is, that it have been scholars who lived in such a climate during the 19th. century, who began studying primitive religions in which they located the same fundamental differences between religion and non-religion.

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Actually, classic anthropology is being criticized in recent studies¹⁸⁾ for perpetuating discriminating views between primitive times and modern societies, for the confusion of the sacred and the unclean, for considering ideas concerning pollution as primitive hygiene, for the opposition between ritual and spiritual religion, between the sacred and the profane. About the latter is mentioned that: *A total opposition between the sacred and the profane seems to have been a necessary step in Durkheim's theory of social integration. It expressed the opposition between the individual and society* (p. 21). Further, especially Frazer is severely criticized and even blamed for *isolating and hardening the idea of magic as the efficacious symbol*¹⁹⁾. Magic, according to Frazer, resulted from early man's inability of distinguishing between his own subjective associations and external objective reality. Critique of this and similar views from early anthropology resembles the saying that beauty exists in the eye of the beholder. So possibly do conceptual problems.

Bringing our argument about the vitale relationship between sacred and profane awareness to a close, we have to say that this relation cannot be explained without connection to the question what religion and society is, or that of how individuals relate to society. We have to see how institutions come into being, how they are maintained, and how they change. We also have to consider how man is socialized into the ways of thinking and behavior in his society. Considering these things, we will find that religion like all other social reality is constructed reality²⁰⁾. To summarise this view of society briefly, there is externalization of subjective experience in the setting of social interaction. There is habitualization of activities some of which become typified as roles. The process of institutionalization is completed when not only activities but also actors are typified. When habitualized and institutionalized patterns of behavior have been transmitted to the following generations, society takes on its full shape as objectivated reality. It is then that gradually a system of legitimation

evolves which will be largely responsible for the maintenance of the social fabric.

Durkheim has been much aware of the objectified social reality, represented by his „collective consciousness” and expressed in his advice to treat social facts as „things”. But he seems to have given little thought to the creative processes of social interaction, so that he stressed the role of society over that of individual actors—Here again, it may be noted that Durkheim is followed by Eliade who held a similar view. He stated: *Religious man is not given, he makes himself by approaching divine models*²¹⁾. No mention is made about the origin of these models.

All this is to say that the essence of a social institution must not be sought in its objectified appearance only. This means in the case of the sacred and the profane that, even if their opposition is the socially-natural result of a certain development, it is not a necessary result. Since religion originally grows out of life situations, as Durkheim after all saw it and as was emphatically stated by Malinowski, its origin should be sought in the human mind that seeks a solution to life's problems, or, in final analysis, in the endeavor of pinpointing the ultimate meaning of human existence. Religion in this sense is an added consciousness or an ideological orientation akin to other ideological orientations that can be magical, philosophical, scientific, materialistic, hedonistic and what not?²²⁾

Within the religious frame of reference many combinations of sacred and profane awareness are possible. They range from total sacredness towards continuity and coexistence of both aspects or their opposition, towards the intensification of profane awareness and the evaporation of the sacred one. If this is right, we have to conclude that the twin concept of the sacred and the profane has indeed minimal cognitive or evaluative value, either religiously or culturally, especially because it easily conveys the idea of opposition, which is only an unqualified ascession of one, possible way of relationship.

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NOTES

- 1) E. Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Presses de France, 1960, pp. 1-12
- 2) Durkheim, *op. cit.* pp. 49-58
- 3) Concerning the negative and positive cult, *cf.* Durkheim, *ibid.* esp. pp. 427-459
- 4) Durkheim, *ibid.*, pp. 584-592
- 5) *Ibid.*, p. 58
- 6) Concerning the social and religious functions of totemism *cf. ibid.*, esp. pp. 329-42 and 508-16
- 7) For the concept of *mana*, *cf., ibid.* pp. 292-5
- 8) B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion*, Doubleday, 1954 (1948). pp. 55-60
- 9) Malinowski, *op. cit.* pp. 25-6
- 10) Concerning religion and magic *cf.*, Malinowski, *op. cit.* respectively pp. 36-53 and pp. 69-90
- 11) Malinowski, *ibid.*, p. 87 where is written : *As matter of empirical fact the body of rational knowledge and the body of magical lore are incorporated each in a different tradition, in a different social setting and in a different type of activity, and all these differences are clearly recognized by the savages. Cf. also pp. 17, 29, 35-6 and 59*
- 12) M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane, The Nature of Religion, The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, Harper & Brothers, 1957, pp. 8-18
- 13) Eliade, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-91
- 14) Durkheim, *The fundamental categories of thought, and therefore of science, have a religious origin* p. 598
- 15) The Bible, Rom. 1, 19-20
- 16) A. Jensen, *Myth and Cult among Primitive Peoples*, The University of Chicago Press, 1951, *cf.* pp. 1-38
- 17) A. Vidler, *The Church in an Age of Revolution*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1961. pp. 179-89
- 18) M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger, An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966, *cf.* pp. 7-28

- 19) Douglass, *op. cit.*, p. 59, *cf.*, also pp. 22-4, 20, 58
- 20) P. Berger-T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Doubleday, 1966, *cf.* 47-128
- 21) Eliade, *op. cit.*, p. 100
- 22) The ideological dimension of religion should not be taken to exhaust its significance. A belief in a higher transcendency or spiritual nature of man is usually required as the proper qualification of religion. *Cf.* a related study by my self, *On Thomas Luckmann's Theory of Religion*, in *Shakagaku Ronsô*, No. 14, Bukkô University, 1980