

The Encyclopedia of Religion



Mircea Eliade

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Volume 13

MACMILLAN PUBLISHING COMPANY

New York

Collier Macmillan Publishers

London

Copyright © 1987 by
Macmillan Publishing Company
A Division of Macmillan, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the publisher.

MACMILLAN PUBLISHING COMPANY
866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022

Collier Macmillan Canada, Inc.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 86-5432

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

printing number
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Encyclopedia of religion.

Includes bibliographies and index.

1. Religion—Dictionaries. I. Eliade, Mircea,
1907–1986. II. Adams, Charles J.

BL31.#46 1986 200'.3'21 86-5432

ISBN 0-02-909480-1 (set)

ISBN 0-02-909840-8 (v. 13)

Acknowledgments of sources, copyrights, and permissions to use previously published materials are gratefully made in a special listing in volume 16.

His early interest in literary and historical criticism of the Bible, a field then still regarded as suspect by some conservative Christians, contributed to his decision in 1878 to renounce the ministry and pursue a scholarly career in Arabic and Islamic studies. In 1880 he defended a doctoral thesis on the origins of the traditional pilgrimage to Mecca. In August 1884 he traveled to Jidda, where he was invited by Meccan religious scholars and notables to visit Mecca. Although he dressed as a Muslim and adopted a Muslim name, 'Abd al-Ghaffār, Snouck Hurgronje did not conceal his identity as a non-Muslim from his hosts; he remained in Mecca from February to August 1884. In 1889 he published, with photographs, a detailed ethnographic account of contemporary Meccan social and intellectual life, translated as *Mecca in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (1931). A chapter of this work is devoted to Mecca's Javanese colony.

Snouck Hurgronje's interests as a historian of religions were strongly informed by ethnography. For Snouck Hurgronje, both historical and contemporary religious beliefs and movements had to be understood in terms of the social and political contexts in which they occurred. After his return to Europe from Mecca, he continued to lecture and write on general themes in Islam and Islamic jurisprudence but he became increasingly interested in the Dutch East Indies (present-day Indonesia). In 1889 he was sent to Batavia (present-day Jakarta), where he served as a colonial adviser while remaining an ethnographer and a religious scholar. In 1892 he was posted at Aceh, a region of Sumatra in frequent rebellion against Dutch rule since 1873. Living like a Muslim (though again not concealing his European identity) and reestablishing ties with Acehnese he had first met in Mecca, his comprehensive reporting on Islamic political and religious movements began to shape colonial policy. He recommended that the government co-opt the secular chieftains, while suppressing the Islamic leaders who were the instigators of the rebellion. His advice was informed by his view of the Islamic leadership as alien agitators intent upon imposing norms and values contrary to local customs. Snouck Hurgronje continued his role as Islamicist and colonial adviser to the Dutch government from his return to Leiden in 1906 until his retirement in 1927.

[See also *Acehnese Religion*.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Snouck Hurgronje's ethnography, *The Acehnese*, 2 vols, translated by A. W. S. O'Sullivan (Leiden, 1906), remains a classic. For an analysis of his scholarship on Islam, see Jacques Waardenburg's *L'Islam dans le miroir de l'occident* (The Hague, 1970), which contains an extensive bibliography. James T. Sie-

gal's *The Rope of God* (Berkeley, 1969) contains an extensive discussion of Snouck Hurgronje's views on Islam and Acehnese society.

DALE F. EICKELMAN

SOCIETY AND RELIGION. Relations between religion and society are fundamental to the nature of religion and, according to long-standing intellectual claims, are intrinsic to the nature of society. Indeed, societies are characterized by the values they embody, the individual and collective motivations they encourage, the incentives they inspire and sanction, and the ideals by which belief, attitude, and behavior are established and secured. Accordingly, religion can hardly be identified or defined except in terms of human social relations. Religion offers prescriptions for social order, individual behavior, and collective action. Thus, all religious traditions give expression to the relationship between what are acknowledged and understood to be the most compelling objectives of human life and day-to-day conduct. To a remarkable extent, the religions of the world can be distinguished from each other on the basis of their selective interpretations of this fundamental relationship and in terms of the attitudes toward society that they prescribe and honor. And yet, while the religious traditions of the world can be distinguished from each other on these grounds, they also share some common convictions about this fundamental relationship and what it entails.

Relations between Society and Various Religious Traditions. All religious traditions seek a measure of congruence between the ideals they espouse and the societal ordering of life in which such ideals are meant to be expressed. As a consequence, a society is known by its collective aspirations—aspirations to which religion attributes sanction. Similarly, all religious traditions have mechanisms to inspire their adherents toward objectives that their societies have not yet attained. The relationship between these ideals and the collective behavior that religion sanctions is always subject to correction and modification, given the more comprehensive sense of the world's well-being to which the teaching of the world's religions attest. All religious traditions provide some means by which individuals and communities can establish (or reestablish) their lives on a basis that is distinct from the social and cultural status quo. That is, all religious traditions sanction forms of withdrawal from the world or release from the social status quo. In so doing, they certify that religious ideals and the day-to-day ordering of common life are not fully congruent, but rather are characterized by conflict and tension. The effective resolution or mediation of

such conflicts requires deliberate spiritual and practical strategies.

Given the complex nature of their relationship to society, religious traditions often find it useful to invoke a distinction between sacred and secular, and to apply this distinction in establishing the status of society. While there is an inviolable tendency within religious consciousness to affirm that all of life is sacred, there is also the recognition that what is sacred is determined in relation to what is reckoned to be profane. Sacred and secular are dichotomous terms that can only be defined in relationship to each other. Thus, the intrinsic dynamism of each religious tradition issues from its comprehension of how all can be sacred when sacred is known and perceived only in contrast to the profane. The teachings of the religious traditions are drawn from knowledge and experience of how individual and collective human life ought to be ordered, and how human aspirations are to be accorded privilege, in light of the complexities of this fundamental relationship between the sacred and the profane. Consequently, the religious traditions offer tested formulas by which the boundaries and contours of the sacred can be discerned in relation to the boundaries and contours of the profane. But all of them seek to affirm that life itself is sacred, and that its societal forms and expressions can and must be infused by such perceptions and convictions.

Confucianism. Confucius (552–479 BCE) traveled from state to state throughout China in order to awaken the social responsibility of the populace and to generate social and political reforms. Indeed, the teachings of Confucius are designed to create the moral context sufficient to encourage a harmonious family life, a state that is governed equitably, and a world with sufficient spiritual resourcefulness to allow its inhabitants to live in peace. In Confucius's eyes, individual character and a just social and political order are both consequences of moral cultivation. His emphasis upon the cultivation of individual moral character as well as a harmonious social order prompted his followers to point his teachings in two directions. The first, represented by the *Great Learning (Ta-hsüeh)*, from the fifth century BCE, emphasized the social implications of Confucian teaching. The second, represented by the *Doctrine of the Mean (Chung-yung)*, attributed to Tzu-ssu (483–402 BCE), Confucius's grandson, lays stress on the harmonization of emotion, temperament, and intelligence, as the means of achieving full realization of one's individual nature. The *Doctrine of the Mean* affirms that it is through the realization of individual natures that more comprehensive forms of social and political harmony can occur. Because Confucian teaching carried this twofold capacity, to provide individual moral incentive while pre-

scribing the bases for harmonious social and political order, it became the prevailing school of thought in China, and, in 136 BCE, was proclaimed official state doctrine. Through the centuries, Confucianism has exercised a fundamental formative role throughout Chinese social and cultural life, and particularly in the spheres of government, jurisprudence, education, music, and the ritual life of the people. While both Taoism and Buddhism have had enormous impact on Chinese religion and philosophy, the fundamental cohesiveness of traditional Chinese society can be attributed to the capacity of Confucian teaching to identify compatibilities between individual moral imperatives and the dictates of social order.

Islam. The Islamic religion offers a clear example of societal order that is prescribed by religious doctrine. Indeed, within regions where Islam dominates, it is just as appropriate to refer to Islamic states as to Islamic religion. The Islamic ideal is meant to be developed into community-states; the individual's relationship with God is interdependent with relationships among human beings in social settings. Thus, there are Islamic peoples, a Muslim empire, and indeed an Islamic civilization, all of which originated from the insights and teachings of the prophet Muhammad in Arabia in the seventh century CE. Understanding that a Muslim is identified as one who "surrenders" to the will of God and who confesses "There is no god but God and Muhammad is his prophet" establishes a strong basis for social and political cohesiveness. Islamic doctrine and Islamic law are conceived as aspects of the same will. The characteristic Islamic ethos blends the spiritual with the temporal, the public with the private, and individual religious aspiration with the affairs of the state. Because there can be no fundamental distinction between the religious and temporal spheres of life, Muslims understand Islamic states to have come into being in accordance with the divine will. Thus, from the beginning, the Muslim world has been populated by theocratic states. Indeed, much of the tension that exists within that world today derives from the power of modern educational and social reform and of increasing political democratization to upset the religious and social harmony that was explicit in traditional Islamic law.

Shintō. The indigenous culture and ethos of Japan, Shintō offers an example of interdependency between spiritual and temporal elements that are virtually impossible to distinguish. Having come to expression through the ancient folk tales, myths, and rites of the Japanese people, Shintō developed in close correspondence to the emerging and ongoing Japanese collective identity. Thus, Shintō came to describe those beliefs and practices that were distinctively and inherently

Japanese. It has no single founder, no authorized sacred scripture, and no set of prescribed doctrines. The myths to which it lays claim are in many respects similar to those that have been found among the peoples of Southeast Asia. Yet, the attitude to life that Shintō espouses is distinctively Japanese, and its influences are to be felt in myriad ways throughout Japanese social and cultural life. In its encounter with religious and cultural traditions whose origins lie elsewhere—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, in particular—Shintō has displayed both its adaptive and resistive sides. Its presence among the people always has been associated with respect for ancestors that through the centuries has translated into respect for the emperor and the imperial line. This connotes a devotion to the power (*kami*) from which life flows, by which human conduct must be guided, and by means of which the people are united.

Hinduism. The religion (as well as civilization) of India presents a more complicated picture. Within Hindu civilization, religion functions much less in correspondence with national objectives, and much more as a way of life or mode of consciousness. The Hindu perception that human life consists of an endless series of births and rebirths, together with Hindu belief in *karman*—namely, that previous acts are factors that determine present and future circumstances—leads to a stratification of social classes as well as to a hierarchical ordering of religious values. Individuals are enjoined to perform the laws and duties (*dharma*) that are expected and required of the class, or caste, to which he or she belongs. Indeed, the distinctions between classes correspond to the fundamentally distinguishable estates of human beings. *Brahmāṇas* (brahmans), judged to be in the preeminent positions, are understood to be the guardians of the divine power. *Kṣatriyas*, the nobility, exist to protect the people. *Vaiśyas*, members of the third estate, are obliged to do the necessary work, that is, to tend farmland, to conduct trade, to care for cattle, and so on. The fourth estate, that of the *śūdras*, a kind of servant class, is supposed “to serve meekly.” Hindu teaching justifies social stratification insofar as it understands such stratification to be sanctioned by cosmic action. The social system is a necessary complement to the power of *karman*, and it is through *karman* that individuals can hope for an eventual release from the perpetual cycle of birth and rebirth. Thus, in Hindu understanding, there is a strong duality between spirit and matter. And while the existing social matrix is acknowledged and upheld, it sustains conditions that are deplorable. But such interpretation occurs within perceptions and convictions that affirm the world to be a single reality, and thus affirm religion and society to be complementary. [See also *Varṇa* and *Jāti*.]

Buddhism. Originating from a keen perception of the pervasiveness of suffering and spiritual ignorance in human life, Buddhism gives expression to the relationship between religion and society via the conviction that worldly life cannot ensure lasting or final happiness. Its founder, Siddhārtha Gautama (c. 563?–483? BCE), counseled his hearers and followers to resist a life of indulgence in sensual pleasure as well as a life of perpetual self-mortification. The “middle path” between these two extremes was designed to encourage true knowledge, tranquility, and enlightenment, pursued via a process that, as in Hinduism, works through a succession of lives toward an ultimate goal, *nirvāṇa*. This final goal is conceived as a transcendent state in which the individual is free from craving and sorrow and over which suffering has no effective control.

The deliberate character of spiritual formation, under Buddhism’s auspices, has required a strong monastic movement. The purpose of monastic life is to provide the context and spiritual nurture so that aspirants, guided by the dictates of the famous Eightfold Path, might progress toward *nirvāṇa*. Within the monastic order (*saṅgha*), life was to be lived simply; however, extreme ascetic practices were not condoned. Indeed, Buddhism can be described as a monastic religion, to be supported as well as followed by the laity. Thus, Buddhism has come to influence, but not to define, the societies within which it has become prevalent. In India, China, Japan, Tibet, Burma, Sri Lanka, and indeed, throughout Southeast and Southwest Asia, and even within the United States, it has been pliable and adaptive. It teaches a way of life that is exemplified by the monks, who are regarded as moral leaders, and is both respected and practiced by the laity. Buddhism specifically teaches that the response to suffering humanity should be active compassion, and the direct result of this has been the formation of social service ministries (i.e., hospitals, schools, orphanages, and other benevolent institutions). Compassion also dictates such individual virtues as generosity, morality, patience, vigor, concentration in meditation, and wisdom. But these virtues belong to a fundamental emphasis upon the primacy of individual consciousness; this is understood in stricter Theravāda Buddhism as communion with the Buddha and in Mahāyāna Buddhism as the vow of the human spirit to become a Buddha.

Taoism. Rooted in a response to the transition from feudalism toward a new social order in sixth-century BCE China, Taoism has had a formative influence on Chinese culture in all of its aspects. Associated with Lao-tzu, the reputed author of the *Tao-te ching*, Taoism teaches a practical way of life (the natural way) as well as an attitude that enables its adherents to dispose

themselves peacefully in the presence of the unity of the universe. It counsels harmony, simplicity, and peacefulness, which are expressed in artistic and cultural forms, such as landscape painting, tea drinking, and so on. Although it was never raised to official governmental status, as was Shintō in Japan, it has been the source of a collective attitude toward life in traditional Chinese society and was influential up to 1949, when the Communist government came to power.

Judaism. Within Judaism, complexities in the basic relationship of religion to society are mediated in a variety of ways. The Hebrew scriptures attest, for example, that creation (the world that was made by the one true God) is good and is intended for enjoyment. At the same time, the goodness and sanctity of life are interpreted in light of strong and abiding convictions regarding the special status and character of a people whose way of life is ordered according to precise and specific covenantal sanctions. In Jewish understanding, the covenant promise, "If you hear my words and obey my commands, I will be your god and you shall be my people" (*Ex.* 19:5), is not given to everyone. Thus, while Judaism affirms the propriety of all of life, it is particularly attentive to what has been properly consecrated and sanctified. Understanding the relation between God and his people to be delineated through the covenant, Judaism also places great emphasis upon the conditions—through laws and ritual practices—by which the covenant is honored and protected. The primacy of the covenant insures that those who are bound to a sovereign deity according to its dictates possess a collective identity. It also implies that this identity will distinguish them from all other peoples who are not so bound. Thus, the relationship between religion and society, in Jewish thought and understanding, must be depicted from two standpoints, that is, from outside and from within the covenantal relationship. In the more comprehensive sense, God established the pattern for harmonious existence between himself and all peoples when the world was created. And in establishing the covenant, God chose a people through which the redemption of that same world was to be carried out. From either vantage point, Judaism understands the world, and thus society, to be the environment in which divine activity occurs. From both vantage points, salvation involves the realization of the creator's purpose for his creation. Thus, Judaism affirms a basic compatibility between religious ideals and social reality, a compatibility that through the centuries has been invested in the idea of the nation of Israel, a nation of both religious and political circumscription.

Christianity. Beginning as a movement within Judaism, Christianity has inherited its predecessor's empha-

sis upon the primacy of the covenant as well as its singularly monotheistic understanding of the nature of deity. However, informed by the life of Jesus Christ and giving a triune formulation to its belief in the one true God, Christianity, even in its initial stages of development, made appeals not only to Jews but to all inhabitants of the Greco-Roman world. As a consequence, adherence to the covenant was reinterpreted in terms more spiritual and less juridical than otherwise prevails in Judaism.

Indeed, the Christian revision of the understanding of the covenant required the formulation of a new covenant, which would be the basis of a revised collective identity. This new covenant made it possible to conceive of Christianity in universal terms and to identify followers of Jesus Christ. Thus, basic convictions about the goodness of the created order as well as the need for redemption—convictions Christianity shares with Judaism—have to be applied and understood contextually. It is possible to apply such convictions to mean that there should be a Christian state and to cite the same convictions as providing a rationale for conceiving of Christians as "the salt of the earth," whose task it is to bring and/or discover the presence of God wherever they find themselves. And when these basic religious convictions are combined with insights derived in large part from Greek and Hellenistic influence, it is also possible to approach society both in transcendent and ideal terms, as in the Christian understanding of the kingdom of God.

Thus, it can be demonstrated that particular prescriptions regarding the relationships between religion and society are inherent in the basic and formative dispositions by which each of the religious traditions is motivated. Indeed, in every instance, one can anticipate the attitude that a religion will take toward society by knowing how that religion portrays the human condition, what value it places on human community, and how it delineates what is expected of the individual in light of its more comprehensive understanding of the cosmic order.

The Study of Society and Religion. Though the relationship between religion and society did not become an object of concentrated study in the West until the nineteenth century, the subject has formed the basis for perennial intellectual exposition from the time that questions arose concerning the ingredients of an ideal society, as, for example, in Plato's *Republic*. The way in which ethical and moral ideals contribute to effective social and community life are also explored in the writings of Aristotle (particularly in his *Nicomachean Ethics*), Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and other Epicureans and Stoics. The subject also appears in medieval Chris-

tian literature, wherein Greek contentions and categories of thought are utilized to lend expression to biblical affirmations. Syntheses were formed through a combination of Greek formulations of the relationships of permanence to change and of being to becoming with the Judeo-Christian understanding of the relationships between the creator and creation. Plato's question in *Timaeus*, "What is that which always is and has no becoming, and what is that which is always becoming and never is?" was answered in classical Christian theology in terms that described the relation between God and the world. Under such formulas, the world—and, by extension, society—was accorded a secondary, subordinate, and derivative reality in contrast to God, the seat of all permanence, or of "that which always is and has no becoming." And the theological task for the medieval writers, under dictates of the relationship between sacred and profane, was to affirm the intrinsic goodness and propriety of the subordinate reality in full recognition of the fact that its status could only be conceived in contrast to what was acknowledged to be primary.

The normative exposition of this relationship was offered by Augustine (354–430), in his *City of God*, in which the temporal order was conceived in the likeness of the eternal order and yet accorded an intrinsic positive status. Whereas Augustine utilized Platonic philosophical categories to spell out these interdependencies, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) employed an Aristotelian mode to affirm compatibilities between heavenly and earthly realms as well as between ecclesiastical and civil orders. At the time of the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther (1483–1546) developed a doctrine of "two kingdoms," as, for example, in his *Christian Liberty*, so that both temporary and permanent obligations and services could be distinguished and rightly ordered. And there are many examples within Christian theological literature of attempts to create earthly or civil societies in close approximation to the heavenly or permanent ideal. John Calvin (1509–1564), the author of *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, wished this for his city of Geneva. The Cambridge Platform of 1648 outlines the plan of the Massachusetts Bay Puritans to order their community life on biblical principles, supported by both divine and natural law. All of these formulations conceived of the relationship of religion to society to be modeled according to the interdependencies between the ideal and the actual and sought to mediate the distance between such states by exploring the relationships between theory and practice.

Comte and Saint-Simon. The subject became an object of analytical (as distinct from theological) scholarly interest in the nineteenth century, with the birth of the science of sociology. Auguste Comte (1798–1857), the

acknowledged founder of sociology, built upon the influence of Claude-Henri de Rouvroy, Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825) in developing an evolutionary conception of the growth of intellectual consciousness. In Saint-Simon's view, human sensitivity had already passed through the religious stages of polytheism and monotheism, as well as through the philosophical stage of metaphysics, and had just embarked upon the era of positive science. Having come to this new stage, it was man's task to identify the conditions necessary to create an effective rapprochement between intellectuals and the society as a whole. Comte, sharing Saint-Simon's aspiration to improve social and political conditions, also approached theology as an antecedent and provisional mode of human intelligence that had been superseded by both philosophy and science. Each held that the theological mode identifies humankind's first way of coming to terms with experience. But as human knowledge became more exact and progressively more certain, all previous stages or forms of understanding became obsolete. [See the biography of Comte.]

Lévy-Bruhl and Durkheim. Comte's views were highly respected within nineteenth and early twentieth-century French thought, specifically by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857–1939) and Émile Durkheim (1858–1917). Lévy-Bruhl, sharing the widespread enthusiasm for "the law of three stages," worked particularly to distinguish the mental reasoning processes of archaic (first stage) and more civilized (third stage) human beings. In his *How Natives Think* (1910) and *Primitive Mentality* (1922), which he described as "one and the same work in two volumes," he concentrated on the distinctive mental habits of primitive (or rudimentary) peoples in order to characterize religious consciousness. He contended that the mode of intelligence that is exercised among archaic human beings can be described as being mystical, prelogical, and pervaded by a sense of "affectational participation." To call it mystical is to recognize that it is "at all times oriented to occult forces." To call it prelogical is to describe it as being "indifferent to the laws of contradiction." "Affectational participation" is the phrase Lévy-Bruhl used to describe the way in which, in rudimentary apprehension, the data of experience tend to flow together and associate with each other in complex ways. His intention was to isolate fundamental differences between human beings of contemporary scientific disposition and those of a previous religious stage of intellectual development by comparing and contrasting the mental habits that lend form to knowledge in the two instances.

It is clear, however, that the same analytical strategy can be employed for alternative purposes. Instead of simply focusing on the coordinated mental habits of so-

called rudimentary peoples for purposes of sketching a possible primitive world of thought and experience, the scholar can decipher and describe the prevailing mental habits ("collective representations") wherever they occur. This, in brief, describes the analytical intentions of Durkheim, whose work illustrates a methodological shift from evolutionary to organic conceptions of the relationships between religion and society. Indeed, it was Durkheim who first defined religion as "something eminently social." His *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) stands as a landmark in the development of both sociological theory and the academic study of religion. The study registers in both contexts because Durkheim's intention to identify "the religious nature of man" by seeking to explain "the most primitive and simple religion" was a part of his preoccupation with man's relation to society. He contended that "religious representations are collective representations." That is, they give expression to the manner in which intellectual life is formed and constituted. To be sure, knowledge is shaped by the intellect, which bestows order, offers pattern, lends arrangement, and seeks coherence. And yet order, pattern, arrangement, and coherence do not derive from an isolated intellect, but from intellects in social association. The collective ideal is always socially conceived and formulated. Thus religion becomes associated with the collective social vision, apart from which the social context cannot be understood. [See the biographies of Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl.]

Weber. It was left to Max Weber (1864–1920) to break with the evolutionist model, and to place an analysis of the interdependencies between religion and society within a cross-cultural framework. Weber's primary intention was to understand how cultures are formed. Noting the self-evident compatibilities between Protestant-religious and capitalist-economic incentives in those nations and societies that have been influenced by the Reformation, Weber worked to identify the interrelationships between motivations and intentions, on the one hand, and acts and events, on the other, within whatever society came under his analytical scrutiny. He observed that religious ideas possess independent causal significance in all systems of social action or processes of social change. The interdependence of Protestant theology (motive) and capitalist economics (action) is Weber's chief example of the dynamics of social integration. But the same principles will apply to the place, status, and function of all religious traditions within their respective sociocultural environments. In general terms, religion, standing as ideology and as conceptual system, supplies motivation within a society. In more specific terms, the prevailing conception of deity

within a society influences individual and collective actions as well as the significance that is attributed to social relationships. For example, conception of deity in Hindu religion both affects and is in keeping with the socioeconomic situation of Indian culture. So, too, the way in which the cosmos is depicted in Hindu scriptures bears causal relevance to the socioeconomic theory of those peoples whose life has been influenced by Hindu religious principles. Similarly, there is sanction within the Judeo-Christian doctrine of creation to make the world acceptable; this doctrine is implicit in the economic theory sanctioned in Judeo-Christian theology. In all of these instances, religion can be seen to lend constitutionality to the social order. [See also the biography of Weber.]

Weber's influence. The method Weber devised was intended to be used on a cross-cultural basis and, where possible, comparatively. He himself was eager to test his methods and theories on as many traditions as he had time and energy to study. Weber left the way clear for others to inquire into the social characteristics of individual religions, whether or not they wished to insert their findings into comparative cultural contexts.

Indeed, one would expect that significant sociocultural analyses of the major religious traditions would be inspired by Weber's pioneering work and would approach religion and society as formative cultural elements, to be described and defined in relation to one another. In this regard, the work of Gustave von Grunebaum, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, and Clifford Geertz on Islam should be cited. Notable, too, are the studies of William Theodore de Bary, James B. Pratt, and Charles Norton Eliot on the religions of India. Also significant are the more specialized analyses of Melford E. Spiro, Edward Conze, and Richard F. Gombrich on Buddhism; Oscar Lewis's *Life in a Mexican Village* (1963); Ch'ing-K'un Yang's *Religion in Chinese Society* (1961); Henri Frankfort's work on the religions of Egyptian antiquity; W. E. H. Stanner's portrayal of Aboriginal life in Australia; Vittorio Lanternari's *The Religions of the Oppressed* (1963), which analyzed religion functioning as protest movement; and Gerhard Lenski's *The Religious Factor* (1961), a comprehensive analysis of modern American socioreligious interaction.

Weber's interest in comparative cultural analysis was forwarded by Joachim Wach (1898–1955), a German-born scholar who taught at the University of Chicago from 1944 until his death. Wach is probably the first prominent historian of religion to approach the major religious traditions of the world as instances of organic coordination, for which the societal element is both formative and constitutive. It was Wach's conviction that religion could be studied properly only if ideational,

cultic, and social components were approached as interdependent. He contended that it is through the instrumentation of religion that such elements become integrated within a culture. The comparative history of culture, as Weber had recommended, is the context within which these integrative processes are best studied. [See the biography of Wach.]

Perhaps the most straightforward of recent attempts to approach the major religious traditions of the world as examples of organic coordination has been provided by Ninian Smart in his book *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (1969). Unlike Weber, however, Smart does not arrive at the religious traditions after engaging in complex theoretical analyses of the components of more comprehensive sociocultural ideological stances. Nor does he treat the religious as a testing ground for more extensive methodological or cultural issues. Instead, without flourish or methodological brocade, Smart contends that religions consist of strands of dimensions (John Henry Newman might have called them "notes") that are present in various degrees of emphasis in the religious traditions. Although Smart does not insist that the list be taken as exhaustive, there are six strands or dimensions: doctrine, mythology, ethics, ritual, social institutions, and religious experience. As noted, not all dimensions are present to the same degree in all religions. Indeed, not all of the dimensions are present in every religion. But some are present in all religions, and the way in which they are present and interact with society gives a religion its internal dynamism as well as its morphology. In *The Phenomenon of Religion* (London, 1973), Smart writes:

For instance, the shape of a particular myth may be in part determined by the exigencies of the kinship-system in the society in which it is recited. More sweepingly, the dominance of mother-goddesses in certain phases of religion might be at least partially ascribed to the emergence of agriculture. Conversely, some features of a society may be heavily influenced by religion itself, in which case the direction of the explanation runs the other way. (p. 44)

In Smart's view, such examples illustrate the "mutual dynamic," that is, the ongoing "dialectic in which a religion and its society help and shape one another." It is on this basis that Smart subsequently referred prominently to religion, in its social setting, as being "worldview," and the study of religion "worldview analysis" (see Smart, *Worldviews: Crosscultural Exploration of Human Beliefs*, New York, 1983).

Other contributions. The methods and insights of Durkheim and Weber were instrumental in establishing the dominant theoretical framework to identify and clarify relationships between religion and society. Yet,

along the way, there were numerous additional contributions that became accepted as belonging to the subject's permanent intellectual legacy. In 1864, for example, N. D. Fustel de Coulanges (1830–1889) published his seminal study, *The Ancient City*, which traced the impact of religious beliefs and customs upon the social institutions of classical Western civilization. At approximately the same time, Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) utilized a theory of evolution to describe the processes by which religious ideas develop in correspondence with the development of social institutions. In 1889, W. Robertson Smith, in his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*, portrayed Jewish worship and belief against the background of the customs and folkways of Semitic nomads. In 1887, Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) published his *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (translated as *Community and Society*, 1957), which traced the shift from a "communal, status-based concentric society of the Middle Ages to the more individualistic, impersonal and large-scale society of the democratic-industrial period." In so doing, Tönnies illustrated the intricate relations that religion and society have had in selected historical periods.

Focusing his Weberian sensitivities on the influence the Christian religion has had on Western culture, Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) identified two prominent forms of social organization, church and sect, in correspondence with two formative dispositional factors. In his *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1912), Troeltsch argued that the two forms of social organization have been dominant within Christianity because the religion has fostered two distinctive and not always congruent attitudes toward the world. Churches reflect an intention to accept the social order and lend credibility to its status; sects are motivated by the desire to disassociate from the societal status quo. Troeltsch's analyses, illustrating an application of Weberian inquiry to a specific religious tradition, also fostered linkages between sociological study and theological reflection. Bernhard Groethuysen, in his study of the development of the middle class (*Die Entstehung der bürgerlichen Welt- und Lebensanschauung in Frankreich*, 1927), illustrated that the bourgeois outlook developed in eighteenth-century France when the traditional dogma of the Roman Catholic church, removed from the formative environment of religious ritual and practice, had become "abstract." Gustav Mensching, who trained under Rudolf Otto at Marburg and became professor of the history of religions at Bonn, developed an approach that treated religions as instances of social coordination, motivated along the two distinctive dispositional lines of folk religion and universal religion (see his *Die Religion*, 1959).

The field of anthropology contributed several studies that are basic to an understanding of the relations between religion and society. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1881–1955), for example, portrayed religion as belonging to the complex social machinery that enables human beings to live harmoniously and collectively. Paul Radin (1883–1959) investigated the beliefs and attitudes of primitive societies in light of his theory that religion has roots in fear and that the basis of fear is insecurity; Radin's intention was to isolate the psychological origins of religious sensitivity. Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942), drawing much of his evidence from analyses of the collective behavior of the Trobriand Islanders, approached religion as one of the primary social institutions that is produced and shaped in response to the need for cultural survival. Durkheim's nephew Marcel Mauss (1872–1950) saw religion as belonging to that range of entities that deserved to be classified as "total social phenomena." Such analyses provided corroboration of the contention that religion and society could be approached, described, and defined in relation to one another. [See also the biographies of *Fustel de Coulanges, Malinowski, Mauss, Rudolf Otto, Radcliffe-Brown, Radin, W. Robertson Smith, Spencer, Tönnies, and Troeltsch.*]

Contemporary research. One direct line of succession from Weber to present-day sociology of religion is an extended commentary on social-action theory as modified, tempered, and extended in the work of Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929); John R. Commons (1862–1945); Robert M. MacIver (1882–1970); Karl Mannheim (1893–1947), who is important for his treatment of the influence of utopian ideas within selected societies; Alfred Marshall (1842–1924); Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923); and, perhaps most significantly, Talcott Parsons (1902–1979). Parsons is important not only because of his own contributions to the field—his translation of Weber's *Protestant Ethic* (1930) may have been the single most important event in bringing the work of the German sociologist to the attention of the English-speaking world—but, in addition, because of the remarkable influence he has had on other scholars who have become leaders in the field. Because of his translation of Weber's book, Parsons is associated with the legacy of Weber, but he must also be given credit for reviving interest in Durkheim's view and for making Durkheim into something more than an analyst of primitive societies. In exploring the congruences between Weber's and Durkheim's interests, Parsons was influential, too, in establishing associations between the German and French schools of social theory. By combining Durkheim's insight regarding the influence of social constraints with Weber's interest in discerning the way in which reli-

gious values are translated as social sanctions, Parsons was led to a new view of the structure of social action. He contended that the social milieu possesses a set of conditions that are beyond the control of each individual, but not outside the mastery of collective human agency. Interweaving Durkheim's and Weber's insights and working to give due respect to both scholars, Parsons offered this summary in *The Structure of Social Action* (New York, 1937):

Durkheim called attention to the importance of the relation of symbolism as distinguished from that of intrinsic causality in cognitive patterns. . . . Weber integrated the various aspects of the role of non-empirical cognitive patterns in social action in terms of his theory of the significance of the problems of meaning and the corresponding cognitive structures, in a way which preclude, for analytical purposes, their being assimilated to the patterns of science. (p. 715)

Parsons worked to give due respect to both scholars.

Parsons was a nestor. His reworking and fusing of Weberian and Durkheimian themes was so comprehensive and detailed that he inspired a host of students to take up the same or related investigatory causes. Indeed, one of the most significant paths of intellectual influence within religious studies is that initiated by Talcott Parsons and his associates at Harvard. They insisted that social thought be pursued in a methodologically sophisticated cross-cultural and interdisciplinary manner.

The anthropologist Clifford Geertz, one of the most influential of Parsons's students, is known not only for his studies of Islamic religion and culture but also for his proposal that religion should be viewed as a "cultural system." In his highly regarded article "Religion as Cultural System," first published in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Banton (New York, 1966), Geertz defined religion in organic terms:

Religion is (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

The role assigned to religion befits Geertz's conception of culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meaning."

Similar combinations of interests are reflected in the work of Thomas Luckmann and Peter L. Berger, who were influenced by Karl Mannheim, Robert Merton, continental philosophical phenomenology, and, in particular, the work of Alfred Schutz (1899–1959). Luckmann and Berger share concerns about the fate of the

individual within a "socially construed" context. In *The Invisible Religion* (New York, 1967), Luckmann identifies religion as "symbolic self-transcendence," and he sketches the process by which the human organism transcends its particularities by constructive objective, all-embracing, and morally binding universes of meaning. In describing the way in which this process is effected, Luckmann wrote of "the social construction of reality." For Berger, all religious propositions are "projections grounded in specific infrastructures," and religion itself is that "human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established." Without an awareness of the presence of the sacred in human consciousness, according to Berger, it would likely not have been possible "to conceive of a cosmos in the first place." Berger writes:

It can thus be said that religion has played a strategic part in the human enterprise of world-building. Religion implies the farthest reach of man's self-externalization, of his infusion of reality with his own meanings. Religion implies that human order is projected into the totality of being. Put differently, religion is the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant.

(Berger, 1967, pp. 27-28)

Both Luckmann and Berger acknowledge that religion is present in institutions, that is, in readily identifiable religious organizations such as churches, synagogues, and temples. But they are unwilling to restrict the social reality of religion to these institutional forms. They observe that a sociology of religion that deals only with such organizations is a sociology of churches that may be concentrating upon already "frozen" forms of religion. In the larger sense, religion (Luckmann's "invisible religion") legitimates the fundamental values of a society by constructing symbolic universes of meaning. Berger understands the process of legitimation to require two important steps: first, "religion legitimates social institutions by bestowing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status, that is, by locating them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference" (Berger, 1967, p. 33); and, second, "religion . . . serves to maintain the reality of that socially constructed world within which men exist in their everyday lives" (ibid., p. 42).

What Berger and Luckmann divined in theory, namely, the dynamics of the interdependence of religious patterns of meaning and the social construction of reality, Robert N. Bellah has disclosed as a certifiable American fact under the concept of *civil religion*. In so doing, Bellah discerns a systematic, organic form of religious understanding in the collective American consciousness that he believes has existed since the founding of the nation:

What we have, then, from the earliest years of the republic is a collection of beliefs, symbols and rituals with respect to sacred things and institutionalized in a collectivity. This religion—there seems no other word for it—while not antithetical to and indeed sharing much in common with Christianity, was neither sectarian nor in any specific sense Christian. At a time when the society was overwhelmingly Christian, it seems unlikely that this lack of Christian reference was meant to spare the feelings of the tiny non-Christian minority. Rather, the civil religion expressed what those who set the precedents felt was appropriate under the circumstances. It reflected their private as well as their public views. Nor was the civil religion simply "religion in general." . . . because of its specificity, the civil religion was saved from empty formalism and served as a genuine vehicle of national religious self-understanding. (Bellah, 1967, p. 9)

So far I have traced a line of inquiry, from Durkheim and Weber forward, that attests that religion gains concrete expression and possesses meaning within the context of social reality. This conviction can be interpreted as a refinement and extension of Weber's analyses of the interrelationships between motives and acts in the constitution of a culture. It belongs to Durkheim's more comprehensive observation that religious conceptions always reflect prescribed patterns of social organization. But how do scholars respond when the interrelationships are not clear or when expected correlations between motivation and action are in a state of disarray? Their recourse is to study the lack of correspondence as well as the dysfunctions that have become apparent. The term used to denote the ineffectiveness of religious meaning (because such meaning no longer corresponds with one's experience within the social reality) is *secularization*. Secularization means that some prior prevailing pattern of religious and ideological order is no longer functioning characteristically as a viable source of motivation or behavior. The work of more recent scholars, such as Bryan Wilson, Thomas F. O'Dea, Charles Y. Glock, Rodney Stark, Guy Swanson, and Harvey Cox, among others, is directed toward making sociological and religious sense of this pervasive development. As a consequence, scholarly analyses of the relation between religion and society that are appearing in the mid-1980s are focusing increasingly on the function and status of the sacred in a secular society. I refer specifically to two anthologies: Mary Douglas and Steven Tipton's *Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age* (1982) and Phillip E. Hammond's *The Sacred in a Secular Society* (1985). The ingredients are the same as they were when Durkheim, Weber, and the others constructed the dominant paradigm. But there have been significant shifts, and necessary conceptual readjustments, in every chronicle that has attempted to cor-

relate analyses of the relationship between religion and society with a more extensive portrayal of the evolution or development of Western intellectual history.

Religion and Society in the Contemporary Era. Contemporary discussion of the relationship between religion and society is framed by widespread social and cultural change. Societies affected by complex processes of modernization are having difficulty deciding whether, under the new circumstances, traditional religion exercises benevolent or malevolent social influence.

In many quarters, the fundamental issue has to do with whether traditional religious aspirations are congruent or compatible with Marxist political theory and practice. [See *Marxism and the biography of Marx*.] In those areas of the world where Christianity has been the dominant religious tradition—and where, historically, it has been identified with the interests of colonial powers—there is a fascination with liberation theologies that sometimes advocate social and political revolution. [See *Political Theology and Revolution*.] Within these settings, the relations between religion and society are being shaped by the responses that the traditions are making to new formulations of faith that are tailored to facilitate transitional or revolutionary activity. To date, the dominant responses have been of two contrasting kinds. One of these kinds of responses condones (sometimes radical) change and appears to its enemies to be in league with the very secularizing forces that traditional religions oppose. The other, fundamentalist, response calls for a return to the purity of the tradition at its origins and has shown itself willing at times to adopt a militant, antirevolutionary stance. Within the United States, in particular, this conflict is implicit in the controversy surrounding the rise of a radical religious right. It has found expression, too, in court cases and legislative debate concerning abortion, prayer in schools, and the status of public religious observance. [See *Law and Religion*, *article on Religion and the Constitution of the United States*.]

Yet even in the present situation, perennial ingredients have been made explicit. In its social manifestations, religion still presents itself as the guardian of sensitivities concerning distinctions between the sacred and the profane. And in its religious dimensions, society continues to be known by the collective aspirations to which its sanctioned activity lends expression.

[See also *Sociology and Study of Religion*, *article on History of Study*.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bellah, Robert N. "Religious Evolution." *American Sociological Review* 29 (June 1964): 358-374.
- Bellah, Robert N. "Civil Religion in American." *Daedalus* 96 (Winter 1967): 1-21.
- Bellah, Robert N., and Phillip E. Hammond. *Varieties of Civil Religion*. San Francisco, 1980.
- Berger, Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, N.Y., 1967.
- Cohn, Norman R. C. *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. 3d ed. New York, 1970.
- Ch'en, Kenneth. *Buddhism in China*. Princeton, 1964.
- Conze, Edward. *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*. Oxford, 1951.
- Douglas, Mary. *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*. New York, 1970.
- Douglas, Mary. "The Effects of Modernization on Religious Change." In *Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age*, edited by Mary Douglas and Steven Tipton, pp. 25-43. Boston, 1982.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. *The Political Systems of Empires*. New York, 1963.
- Evans-Pritchard, E. E. *Nuer Religion*. Oxford, 1956.
- Frankfort, Henri. *Kingship and the Gods* (1948). Reprint, Chicago, 1978.
- Geertz, Clifford. *Islam Observed*. New Haven, 1968.
- Hammond, Phillip E., ed. *The Sacred in a Secular Age: Toward Revision in the Scientific Study of Religion*. Berkeley, 1985.
- Kitagawa, Joseph M. *Religion in Japanese History*. New York, 1966.
- Lanternari, Vittorio. *The Religions of the Oppressed*. New York, 1963.
- Leach, Edmund. *Dialectic in Practical Religion*. Cambridge, 1968.
- Lewis, Oscar. *Life in a Mexican Village*. Urbana, Ill., 1963.
- Lee, Robert, and Martin E. Marty, eds. *Religion and Social Conflict*. New York, 1964.
- O'Dea, Thomas F. *Sociology and the Study of Religion: Theory, Research, Interpretation*. New York, 1970.
- Pareto, Vilfredo. *The Mind and Society*. 4 vols. New York, 1935.
- Parsons, Talcott. *Essays in Sociological Theory*. 2d rev. ed. Glencoe, Ill., 1954.
- Parsons, Talcott. *Structure and Process in Modern Society*. Glencoe, Ill., 1960.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*. London, 1952.
- Schneider, Louis. *Sociological Approach to Religion*. New York, 1970.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *Islam in Modern History*. Princeton, 1957.
- Spiro, Melford E. *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*. 2d ed. Berkeley, 1982.
- Stark, Rodney, and William S. Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*. Berkeley, 1985.
- Swanson, Guy E. *Religion and Regime: A Sociological Account of the Reformation*. Ann Arbor, 1967.
- Swanson, Guy E. *Social Change*. Glenview, Ill., 1971.
- Wach, Joachim. *Sociology of Religion* (1944). Reprint, Chicago, 1962.

- Walzer, Michael. *The Revolution of the Saints*. New York, 1965.
 Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London, 1930.
 Weber, Max. *The Sociology of Religion*. Boston, 1963.
 Wilson, Bryan R. *Religion in Secular Society*. London, 1966.
 Yinger, J. Milton. *Religion, Society, and the Individual*. New York, 1957.
 Yinger, J. Milton. *The Scientific Study of Religion*. New York, 1970.
 Yinger, J. Milton. *Sociology Looks at Religion*. New York, 1963.

WALTER H. CAPPS

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. See Quakers.

SOCIETY OF JESUS. See Jesuits.

SOCINUS. See Sozzini, Fausto Pavolo.

SOCIOLOGY. [This entry consists of two articles. Sociology and Religion provides a historical survey of the relationship between the discipline of sociology and the scientific study of religion. Sociology of Religion focuses more precisely on sociological method and its antecedents in philosophical social thought insofar as they constitute a distinct approach to understanding religious phenomena.]

Sociology and Religion

The discipline of sociology has been closely associated with the study of religion ever since sociology emerged as a distinct field in the mid-nineteenth century; only psychology is similarly close. Indeed, Auguste Comte, the social philosopher who coined the word *sociology*, saw his new science equally as religion and as science. In his *Positive Philosophy* (1830–1842), and again in *Positive Polity* (1851–1854), Comte envisioned sociology (which he first named social physics) not only as the queen of the sciences but also as the scientific basis of the new religion of Positivism, which would gradually push all existing religions out of sight. There were some excellent thinkers of the nineteenth century—among them Harriet Martineau and Frederick Harrison in England—who took Comte's religion very seriously. But the real and enduring relationship between sociology and religion was established by those, including Comte, who saw religion as one of the vital constituents of the social bond and thus necessarily a matter for careful study by sociologists.

Development of the Discipline. A significant change in attitude toward religion took place from that

adopted by the eighteenth-century French *philosophes* to that represented by the nineteenth-century founders of sociology. The critical rationalists of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century had seen religion essentially as a mental or intellectual phenomenon, for the most part a tissue of superstitions, and therefore capable of eradication once the truth was told the people; but the sociologists from the beginning saw religion as a nearly inseparable aspect of social organization, a necessary window to understanding the past and present. Karl Marx, no lover of religion in any form, was not denigrating religion when, in a famous phrase, he declared it the "opium of the people." What he meant, as the context of his essay on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* shows, is that in a world of human exploitation, religion is necessary to man; it is at once "the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress." Religion would not be banished, Marx stressed, until all of the social conditions of religion had been removed by revolution. Friedrich Engels, after Marx's death, went even further. He found many analogies between the infant socialism of his day and the infant Christianity of imperial Rome. Those who wished to understand the foundations of Christianity, Engels advised, needed only to look at "a local section of the International Workingmen's Association." He even advanced the idea that socialism, when it eventually drove out Christianity, would itself take on some of the attributes of religion. In this prophecy he has been proved largely right. As socialism became a mass movement in Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a prominent element was the apostasy of socialists from Judaism or Christianity and their turning to a surrogate. The longer socialism lasts in the Soviet Union, the more intense the reverence for Lenin and the more numerous the festivals and ceremonies in honor of great personages and events of the past.

Ludwig Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) must be seen (despite Marx's assault on it) as a profoundly sociological work in its dominant theme of religion as alienation and etherealization of powers belonging in man alone, and also in the structural character of his treatment of dogma, liturgy, and symbol. Too often the political purpose of Alexis de Tocqueville's classic *Democracy in America* (2 vols., 1835–1840) leads us to overlook the cultural and social content of the work, especially in the second volume. Religion fascinated Tocqueville, and along with analyses of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism based upon the social-status groups to be found in each, there are treatments of the patterns that spiritual fanaticism and of pantheism tend to take in democratic society. Frédéric Le Play's monumental work *The European Workers* (1855),