

a given region of space time was no longer an invariant attribute, as it had been in the Newtonian theory, but a covariant attribute.

Einstein noted (in "Prinzipielles zur allgemeinen Relativitätstheorie," *Annalen der Physik*, Vol. 55, 1918, 241 ff.) that both the inertial forces and the metric geometry in a gravity-free system are different from what they are in a system like the rotating disk. He succeeded in functionally relating both the geometry of material rods and clocks and the inertial behavior of particles and light in the context of that geometry to the *same* physical quantities. But it is a widespread error to suppose that the GTR actually carried out Mach's program. To be sure, when Einstein first developed the GTR he sought to implement Mach's idea that a single test particle would have no inertia whatever if the matter and energy of the universe were either annihilated or moved indefinitely far away. But the GTR failed to implement Mach's program in a number of essential respects. For example, according to the GTR the gravitational acceleration of the earth toward the sun is independent of the amount of distant matter isotropically distributed about the sun. Yet on Mach's assumptions about the origin of inertia this acceleration should depend on the total mass distribution.

Thus, there is an important sense in which the GTR has not repudiated the concept of absolute space and has not vindicated the Leibniz-Huygens polemic against Newton and Clarke.

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RELIGION. This article is not a survey of the various forms that religion has taken in human history; rather, it treats the nature of religion as a problem in the philosophy of religion. It will be concerned with attempts to develop an adequate *definition* of religion, that is, to make explicit the basic features of the concept of religion.

GENERAL DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS

Examination of definitions. A survey of existing definitions reveals many different interpretations.

"Religion is the belief in an ever living God, that is, in a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind."—James Martineau

"Religion is the recognition that all things are manifestations of a Power which transcends our knowledge."—Herbert Spencer

"By religion, then, I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of Nature and of human life."—J. G. Frazer

"Religion is rather the attempt to express the complete reality of goodness through every aspect of our being."—F. H. Bradley

"Religion is ethics heightened, enkindled, lit up by feeling."—Matthew Arnold

"It seems to me that it [religion] may best be described as an emotion resting on a conviction of a harmony between ourselves and the universe at large."—J. M. E. McTaggart

"Religion is, in truth, that pure and reverential disposition or frame of mind which we call piety."—C. P. Tiele

"A man's religion is the expression of his ultimate attitude to the universe, the summed-up meaning and purport of his whole consciousness of things."—Edward Caird

"To be religious is to effect in some way and in some measure a vital adjustment (however tentative and incomplete) to whatever is reacted to or regarded implicitly or explicitly as worthy of serious and ulterior concern."—Vergilius Ferm

If we take these definitions as attempts to state necessary and sufficient conditions for something to be a religion, it is not difficult to show that none of them is adequate. With respect to necessary conditions, consider Martineau's definition. It is clear that such a belief does not have to be present in a religion. No polytheistic religion recognizes a single divine ruler of the universe; and there are religions, such as Hinayana Buddhism, in which beliefs in personal deities play no role at all. Bradley and Arnold identify religion with morality, but there are primitive societies in which there is no real connection between the ritual system, with its associated beliefs in supernatural beings, and the moral code. The latter is based solely on tribal precedent and is not thought of as either originating with or sanctioned by the gods. If, as would commonly be done, we call the former the religion of the culture, we have a religion without morality. As for McTaggart and Tiele, it seems likely that if we specify "piety" or "feeling of harmony" sufficiently to give them a clear and unambiguous meaning, we will be able to find acknowledged religions in which they do not play an important role. It would seem

that we could avoid this only by construing "piety," for example, to cover any state of feeling that arises in connection with religious activities. It does seem plausible to regard some of the definitions as stating necessary conditions, as in Caird and Ferm. However, it is doubtful that these are sufficient conditions. Does any "ultimate attitude" or any "vital adjustment" constitute a religion? As William James points out (*The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Ch. 2), it seems doubtful that a frivolous attitude toward life constitutes a religion, even if it is the fundamental attitude of a given person. And Ferm's overcaressfully worded statement would seem to admit any attitude with respect to anything considered important to the ranks of the religious. This would presumably include one's attitude toward one's wife, toward one's vocation, and, in many cases, toward one's athletic activities. At this point one wonders what has happened to the concept of religion. Many of the definitions are deficient on grounds of both necessity and sufficiency. To return to Martineau, it is quite conceivable that such a belief might be held purely as a speculative hypothesis, without affecting the believer's feelings and attitudes in the way that would be requisite for religious belief. And as for McTaggart, it seems clear that one could from time to time have such a sense of harmony without this being integrated into anything that we would call a religion.

It is noteworthy that most of these definitions stress one aspect or another of religion to the exclusion of others. Thus, Martineau and Spencer represent religion as some sort of belief or other cognitive state; Frazer, as ritual (conceived in a utilitarian fashion); Bradley and Arnold, as a kind of moral attitude and activity; and McTaggart and Tiele as a certain kind of feeling. One might attribute the failings of these definitions to their one-sidedness. One could hardly expect to get an adequate statement of the nature of so complex a phenomenon as religion, essentially involving, as it does, all these forms of human activity by restricting oneself to belief, feeling, ritual, or moral attitude alone. Caird and Ferm escape this particular failing by concentrating on a comprehensive term like "attitude" or "adjustment," which itself embraces belief, feeling, and moral attitude. But, as we have seen, these formulations do not come measurably closer to providing a set of necessary and sufficient conditions.

There are other ways of construing definitions of religion. Instead of taking the above statements as attempts to specify features that are common and peculiar to cases of religion, we might take each of them as an attempt to state the *essence* of religion, that central feature in terms of which all religious phenomena are to be understood. This approach to the matter is explicit in the following statements:

"The essence of religion is a belief in the persistency of value in the world."—Harald Høffding

"The heart of religion, the quest of the ages, is the outreach of man, the social animal, for the values of the satisfying life."—A. E. Haydon

"The essence of religion consists in the feeling of an absolute dependence."—Friedrich Schleiermacher

There are two distinguishable interpretations of claims of this type. They might be interpreted genetically, as accounts of the origin of religion. The claim would then be that what is specified as the essence of religion is the original root from which all phenomena of religion have sprung. Thus, Julian Huxley, like Schleiermacher working with a conception of the essence of religion as a kind of feeling, says, ". . . the essence of religion springs from man's capacity for awe and reverence, that the objects of religion . . . are in origin and essence those things, events, and ideas which arouse the feeling of sacredness" (*Religion Without Revelation*, p. 111). Similarly starting with Høffding's formulation, we might try to show how typical religious doctrines, rites, and sentiments grew out of an original belief in the persistency of value. However, since we know virtually nothing about the prehistoric origins of religion, speculation in this area is almost completely unchecked by data, and it seems impossible to find any rational basis for choosing between alternative genetic accounts.

However, we might also give a nongenetic interpretation. Saying that the essence of religion is a feeling of absolute dependence, for example, might mean that the full interrelatedness of the various features of religion can be understood only if we view them all in relation to a feeling of absolute dependence. This claim would be independent of any view of the origin of religion. The difficulty with this is that there would seem to be several different features of religion that could be taken as central—such as ritual, a need for reassurance against the terrors of life, or a need to get a satisfactory explanation of the cosmos—and it is illuminating to view the rest of religion as related to each of these. How is one to settle on a unique essence?

Characteristic features of religion. Despite the fact that none of the definitions specifies a set of characteristics which is present when and only when we have a religion, or gives us a unique essence, it does seem that they contribute to our understanding of the nature of religion. It appears that the presence of any of the features stressed by these definitions will help to make something a religion. We might call such features, listed below, religion-making characteristics.

1. Belief in supernatural beings (gods).
2. A distinction between sacred and profane objects.
3. Ritual acts focused on sacred objects.
4. A moral code believed to be sanctioned by the gods.
5. Characteristically religious feelings (awe, sense of mystery, sense of guilt, adoration), which tend to be aroused in the presence of sacred objects and during the practice of ritual, and which are connected in idea with the gods.
6. Prayer and other forms of communication with gods.
7. A world view, or a general picture of the world as a whole and the place of the individual therein. This picture contains some specification of an over-all purpose or point of the world and an indication of how the individual fits into it.

Religion

8. A more or less total organization of one's life based on the world view.
9. A social group bound together by the above.

Interrelations of characteristics. Religion-making characteristics do not just happen to be associated in religion; they are intimately interconnected in several ways. Some of these connections have been indicated, but there are others. For example, the distinction between sacred and profane objects is based on other factors mentioned. It is not any intrinsic characteristic of a thing that makes it a sacred object; things of every conceivable kind have occupied this position—animals, plants, mountains, rivers, persons, and heavenly bodies. Certain objects are singled out as sacred in a given community because they typically arouse such feelings as awe and a sense of mystery, and thus the members of that community tend to respond to these objects with ritual acts. Again, the emotional reaction to sacred objects may be rationalized by conceiving the object to be the habitation or manifestation of a god. The awe aroused by the wild bull led to its being identified with the wild god of intoxication, Dionysus. The very special impression made by Jesus of Nazareth on certain of his contemporaries was expressed by calling him the Son of God. These examples make it sound as if emotional reactions to sacred objects come first and that these reactions are then explained by positing gods as their causes. But it can also happen the other way round. The acceptance of beliefs about the gods and their earthly habitations contribute to the evocation of awe and other feelings in the presence of certain objects. The members of a religious community are taught to hold certain objects in awe by being taught various doctrines about the gods. Thus, Christians are taught to regard the cross and the consecrated bread and wine with reverence by being told of the Crucifixion and the Last Supper.

A similar reciprocal relationship holds between ritual and doctrine. A doctrine can be introduced as the justification of an already established ritual. Thus, the myth of Proserpine being carried off to the underworld and remaining there half the year seems to have been introduced as an explanation of a pre-existing magical fertility cult, in which an ear of grain, perhaps called the corn maiden, was buried in the fall and raised sprouting in the spring. On the other hand, changes in doctrine can engender, modify, or abolish rituals. Beliefs about the divine status of Jesus Christ played an important role in shaping the Christmas festival.

Definition in terms of characteristics. If it is true that the religion-making characteristics neither singly nor in combination constitute tight necessary and sufficient conditions for something being a religion, and yet that each of them contributes to making something a religion, then it must be that they are related in some looser way to the application of the term. Perhaps the best way to put it is this. When enough of these characteristics are present to a sufficient degree, we have a religion. It seems that, given the actual use of the term "religion," this is as precise as we can be. If we tried to say something like "for a religion to exist, there must be the first two plus any three others," or "for a religion to exist, any four of these characteristics

must be present," we would be introducing a degree of precision not to be found in the concept of religion actually in use.

Another way of putting the matter is this. There are cultural phenomena that embody all of these characteristics to a marked degree. They are the ideally clear paradigm cases of religion, such as Roman Catholicism, Orthodox Judaism, and Orphism. These are the cases to which the term "religion" applies most certainly and unmistakably. However, there can be a variety of cases that differ from the paradigm in different ways and to different degrees, by one or another of the religion-making characteristics dropping out more or less. For example, ritual can be sharply de-emphasized, and with it the demarcation of certain objects as sacred, as in Protestantism; it can even disappear altogether, as with the Quakers. Beliefs in supernatural beings can be whittled away to nothing, as in certain forms of Unitarianism, or may never be present, as in certain forms of Buddhism. And, as mentioned earlier, in certain primitive societies morality has no close connection with the cultic system. As more of the religion-making characteristics drop out, either partially or completely, we feel less secure about applying the term "religion," and there will be less unanimity in the language community with respect to the application of the term. However, there do not seem to be points along these various dimensions of deviations that serve as a sharp demarcation of religion from nonreligion. It is simply that we encounter less and less obvious cases of religion as we move from, for example, Roman Catholicism through Unitarianism, humanism, and Hinayana Buddhism to communism. Thus, the best way to explain the concept of religion is to elaborate in detail the relevant features of an ideally clear case of religion and then indicate the respects in which less clear cases can differ from this, without hoping to find any sharp line dividing religion from nonreligion. (Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of "family-resemblances" among the things to which a term applies.)

An adequate definition of religion should throw light on the sorts of disputes and perplexities that typically produce a need to define religion, such as disputes over whether communism is a religion, and whether devotion to science can be called a man's religion. So long as we are dealing with definitions of the simplistic type that we have criticized, these problems are not illuminated. Each party to the dispute will appeal to a definition suited to the position he is defending, and since none of these definitions is wholly adequate, there is an irreducible plurality of not wholly inadequate definitions to be used for this purpose. Person A, who claims that communism is a religion, will give, for instance, Caird's statement as his definition of religion, and person B, who denies this, will choose Martineau's. Obviously, the position of each is upheld by his chosen definition. Hence, it would seem that the only way to settle the dispute is to determine which is the correct definition. However, we have seen that this gets us nowhere; no such definition is wholly adequate.

At this point there is a temptation to brand the dispute purely verbal, a reflection of different senses attached to the word "religion." It may seem that the disagreement can be dissolved by persuading all parties to use the word

in the same sense. But this is a superficial reaction which does not adequately bring out how much the parties to the dispute have in common. In fact, Martineau and Caird represent two contrasting emphases within a common framework. Suppose that *A* and *B* begin with the same paradigm, orthodox Protestant Christianity. But *A* gives greatest weight to the moral-orientation-emotion elements in this paradigm. As long as anything strongly manifests these elements, as long as it serves as a system of life orientation for the individual who is bound to it by strong emotional ties, he will call it a religion. *B*, on the other hand, gives greatest weight to the belief in a personal God and the complex of emotions, ritual, and devotional acts that is bound up with that belief. Thus, although they have basically the same concept of religion, they will diverge in their application of the term at certain points. Once we realize that this is the true situation, we can state the problem in a more tractable form. We can enumerate the religion-making characteristics and determine which of them communism has and in what degree. Then we can proceed to the heart of the dispute—the relative importance of these characteristics. Insofar as there is a real issue between *A* and *B*, once both are in possession of all the relevant facts, it is whether communism is similar to clear cases of religion in the most important respects, that is, whether the respects in which it is like Protestant Christianity are more important than those in which it is different.

TYPES OF RELIGION

In the case of so complex a concept as religion, it is desirable to supplement the very general portrayal of basic features with some indications of the varying emphases placed on them in different religions. To do this, we must develop a classificatory scheme.

William James has reminded us that in every religion there is some sort of awareness of what is called divine and some sort of response to this divinity. This being the case, a very fruitful way of classifying religions is to ask in the case of each: "Where is the divine (the object of religious responses) primarily sought and located, and what sort of response is primarily made to it?" In answering these questions for a given religion, the religion-making features most stressed in that religion will also come to light. According to this principle of division, religions fall into three major groups: sacramental, prophetic, and mystical.

Location of the divine. In sacramental religion the divine is sought chiefly in things—inanimate physical things like pieces of wood (relics of saints, statues, crosses), food and drink (bread and wine, baptismal water), living things (the totem animal of the group, the sacred cow, the sacred tree), processes (the movements of the sacred dance). This does not mean that the thing itself is responded to as divine, although this can happen in very primitive forms of sacramental religion, called fetishism. Usually the sacred thing is conceived to be the habitation or manifestation of some god or spirit. Thus, the ancient Hebrews treated the elaborate box that they called the Ark of God as the habitation of their god, Jahweh; the Hindus consider the river Ganges sacred to the god Shiva—they believe that Shiva is

in some specially intimate relation to that river, and they bathe in its waters to benefit from his healing power. The Roman Catholic finds the presence of God concentrated in the consecrated bread and wine, which, he believes, has been transformed into the body and blood of Christ. At a more sophisticated level the material thing may be taken as a symbol of the divine rather than as its direct embodiment, as in the definition of a sacrament given in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

In prophetic religion the divine is thought to manifest itself primarily in human society—in the events of human history and in the inspired utterances of great historical figures. It is not denied that nature issues from the divine and is under divine control, but it is not in nature that God is most immediately encountered. The divine reality is to be discovered in great historical events—the destruction of cities, the rise and fall of empires, the escape of a people from bondage. The hand of God is seen in these matters because God is encountered more immediately in the lives and the inspired words of his messengers, the prophets, who reveal in their utterances God's nature, his purposes and commands, and derivatively in the sacred books that contain the records of these revelations. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, the three chief prophetic religions, are sometimes called religions of the book. Here the key term is not "sacrament" but "revelation." Prophetic religion, unlike the others, stresses the *word* as the medium of contact with the divine. (An example is the opening of the Gospel of John.) For the ritualist, and still more for the mystic, whatever words he may use, the consummation of his endeavors is found in a wordless communion with the divine. In prophetic religion, however, the linguistic barrier is never let down; it is not felt as a barrier at all.

The center of mystical religion is the mystical experience, which at its highest development dominates the consciousness, excluding all awareness of words, nature, even of the mystic's own self. In this experience the individual feels himself pervaded and transformed by the divine, identified with it in an indivisible unity. The world and all its ordinary concerns seem as naught as the mystic is caught up in the ineffable bliss of this union. It is not surprising that those who have enjoyed this experience, and those who aspire to it, should take it to be the one true avenue of contact with the divine and dismiss all other modes as spurious, or at least as grossly inferior. Rituals and sacraments, creeds and sacred books, are viewed as paltry substitutes, which are doled out to those who, by reason of incapacity or lack of effort, miss the firsthand mystic communion; or else they are external aids that are of use only in the earlier stages of the quest, crutches to be thrown away when direct access to God is attained.

Response to the divine. In sacramental religion, where the divine is apprehended chiefly in material embodiments, the center of religious activity will be found in ritual acts centering on these embodiments. The sacred places, animals, statues, and such, must be treated with reverence, approached and made use of with due precautions; and around these usages tend to grow prescribed rites. Since the sense of the divine presence in certain objects is likely to be enhanced by participation in solemn

ceremonials centering on these objects, the religious activity becomes a self-perpetuating system, embodying what is currently called positive feedback.

In sacramental religion, the ritual tends to absorb most of the religious energies of the adherents and to crowd the other elements out of the center of the picture. Primitive religion, which is strongly sacramental in character, is often unconcerned with moral distinctions; and we might speculate that the progressive moralization of religion is achieved at the expense of ritual preoccupations. We can see this conflict at many points in the history of religions, most notably in the denunciations that the Hebrew prophets directed against the ritual-minded religionists of their day, and in their exhortations to substitute thirst for righteousness for the concern for niceties of ceremony. Even in its highest developments, sacramental religion tends to slacken the ethical tension that is found in prophetic religion. Where sacramentalism is strong in a monotheistic religion, the natural tendency is to take everything in nature as a divine manifestation. If everything is sacred, then nothing can be fundamentally evil; and thus the distinction between good and evil becomes blurred. One of the elements in the Protestant Reformation was a protest against tendencies to blurring of this sort, which took place in the largely sacramental medieval form of Christianity.

The typical response of prophetic religion to the divine is also nicely coordinated with the chief form in which the divine is apprehended. The reaction naturally called for by a message from the divine is acceptance. This involves both an intellectual acceptance of its contents—belief that whatever statements it makes are true—and obedience to the commands and exhortations it contains. Hence, in prophetic religion faith is the supreme virtue, and affirmations and confessions of faith play an important role. This is illustrated by the insistence of such great Christian prophetic figures as Paul and Luther on faith in Christ as both necessary and sufficient for salvation and by the Muslim practice of repeating daily the creed “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.” It is important to realize that faith in this sense means far more than the intellectual assent to certain propositions. It also involves taking up an attitude on the basis of that affirmation and expressing that attitude in action. The Jewish prophet Micah expressed the essence of prophetic religion when he said, “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Thus, it would not be incorrect to say that the emphasis in the prophetic response is ethical, providing we do not separate ethics from the believing acceptance of the divine message that is its foundation.

To understand the typical response of mystical religion, we must remember that for the mystic, immediate identification with the divine is of supreme importance. Therefore he concentrates on an ascetic and contemplative discipline that will be conducive to the attainment and maintenance of that condition. He tends to become involved in abstentions and self-tortures designed to wean him from his attachment to things of this world, and in contemplative exercises designed to withdraw the attention from finite things, leaving the soul empty and recep-

tive to influences from the divine. He will make use of ceremonies and will accede to moral principles insofar as he believes them to be efficacious in furthering his ultimate goal. But ultimately they must go; when union with God has been achieved, they are of no more significance. Thus, like sacramentalism, mysticism tends toward the amoral. Only rarely does either become completely amoral, and then for different reasons. For the sacramentalist, conventional moral distinctions may come to seem unimportant because he views everything as equally saturated with the divine; they seem unimportant to the mystic because every finite object or activity is outside the mystic union, and so all are, in the end, equally worthless. The righteous and the wicked are equally far from the true religious goal. While united with God, one does not act.

Place of doctrine. Finally, we may compare the three types of religion with respect to the status of beliefs and creeds. Since faith is central for prophetic religion and since the word is stressed as the primary medium of divine manifestation, it is not surprising that in prophetic religion, creed and doctrine are emphasized more than in the others. Mystical religion, at its purest, is indifferent to matters of belief and doctrine. The mystical experience and the divinity it reveals are often regarded as ineffable, not to be expressed in human language; hence, mystics tend to reject all doctrinal formulations as inadequate. At best, a mystic will admit that some formulations are less inadequate symbols of the unutterable than are others. Thus, in such predominantly mystical groups as the Sufis and the Quakers, little or no attempt is made to enforce doctrinal conformity. And in an extreme form of mysticism, like that of Zen Buddhism, any doctrinal formulation is discouraged. Sacramental religion occupies a middle ground in this respect. In its more primitive forms, it is often extremely indefinite about belief. It has been said that primitive man “dances out his religion.” Certainly the elaboration of ritual in primitive religion far outstrips the associated theory. The primitive will often possess an incredibly detailed set of ritual prescriptions but have only the haziest idea of what there is about the nature or doings of the gods that makes them appropriate. In its more developed forms, sacramental theology becomes more definite, but it is still true that to the extent that a religion is preoccupied with a sacramental approach to the divine, it is more impatient than prophetic religion with doctrinal subtleties.

We can coordinate this classification with the list of religion-making characteristics by pointing out that sacramental religion stresses sacred objects and ritual, prophetic religion stresses belief and morality, and mystical religion places chief emphasis on immediate experience and feeling.

Concrete application. When we come to apply our scheme to particular cases, we must not suppose that any religion will fall completely in one class or another. In fact, it is better not to think of types of religions, but of religious tendencies that enter in varying proportions into the make-up of any actual religion. However, we can usually say that one tendency or another predominates in a given religion. Thus, Buddhism and philosophical Hinduism are predominantly mystical; Judaism, Islam, and Confucian-

ism are primarily prophetic; and popular Hinduism, in company with all polytheistic and primitive religions, is primarily sacramental. Often a religion that begins with a definite bent will admit other elements in the course of its development. Islam, which began as the most severely prophetic of religions, has developed one of the world's most extreme group of mystics in the Sufis, who are completely out of harmony with the spirit of Muhammad, no matter how they may continue to express themselves in his phrases. Again, in Tibet, Buddhism has undergone a development quite foreign to its founder's intentions, blossoming into an extremely elaborate sacramentalism.

Christianity furnishes a good opportunity to study the intermingling and conflict of the different tendencies. It began as an outgrowth of Jewish prophecy, but in the process of adapting itself to the rest of the Western world it took on a considerable protective coloration of both the sacramental and mystical, and these aspects have remained with it throughout its career. Christian mysticism presents a good example of an element existing in a religion that is dominated by another element. As the price of toleration, Christian mystics have had to pay lip service to the official theology and to the prophetic moral element; and as a result, mystic thought and practice in Christianity have seldom received the extreme development found in India. In those cases where the mystical spirit has burst the fetters, as with Meister Eckhart, official condemnation has often resulted.

Looking at Christianity today, it can be said that although it is predominantly a prophetic religion, as compared with Hinduism and Buddhism, with respect to its internal divisions the Catholic wing (both Roman and Greek) tends more toward the sacramental, while the Protestant is more purely prophetic, with mysticism appearing sporadically throughout. In Catholicism the elaborateness of prescribed ceremonies, the emphasis on the necessity of material sacraments for salvation, and the insistence on a special status for consecrated priests are all typically sacramental. In Protestantism the emphasis on the sermon (the speaking forth of the Word of God) rather than on ritual, the emphasis on the Bible as the repository of divine revelation, and the moral earnestness and social concern are all earmarks of the prophetic spirit.

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RELIGION, NATURALISTIC RECONSTRUCTIONS OF.

In philosophy a naturalist is one who holds that there is nothing over and above nature. A naturalist is committed to rejecting traditional religion, which is based on beliefs in the supernatural. This does not necessarily carry with it a rejection of religion as such, however. Many naturalists envisage a substitute for traditional religion which will perform the typical functions of religion without making any claims beyond the natural world. We can best classify naturalistic forms of religion in terms of what they take God to be—that is, what they set up as an object of worship. In traditional religion the supernatural personal deity is worshiped because he is thought of as the zenith of both goodness and power. More generally, we can say that religious worship is accorded to any being because it is regarded as having a controlling voice in the course of events and at least potentially exercising that power for the good. This suggests that to find a focus for religious responses in the natural world, we should look for a basic natural source of value. Forms of naturalistic religion differ as to where this is located. Broadly speaking, achievements of value in human life are due to factors of two sorts: (1) man's natural endowments, together with the deposit of his past achievements in the cultural heritage of a society, and (2) things and processes in nonhuman nature on which man depends for the possibility of his successes and, indeed, his very life. Most naturalists locate their religious object primarily on one or the other side of this distinction, although some try to maintain an even balance between the two.

The first factor is stressed most by those who are called religious humanists. This group includes Ludwig Feuerbach and Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century and John Dewey and Erich Fromm in the twentieth. Of these men Comte has been the most influential.

Comte. In Comte's view, it is to humanity that the individual man owes everything that he is and has. It is because he shares in the general biological and psychological capacities of human nature that he is able to live a human life. And the men of a given generation are able to lead a fully human life because of the labors of their predecessors in building up their cultural heritage. Moreover, according to Comte, the service of humanity, in the many forms this can take, is the noblest ideal which could be proposed to an individual; and humanity, unlike an omnipotent God, needs this service. Thus, Comte proposed to set up a religion of humanity with man, viewed as a unitary though spatiotemporally scattered being, as the object of worship.

5 Religion, Naturalistic Reconstructions of

Unlike many naturalists Comte was not at all vague about the detailed functioning of his proposed religion. He was impressed with the ritual structure of Roman Catholicism and took it as his model. For example, in the analogue of baptism, the sacrament of presentation, the parents would dedicate their child to the service of humanity in an impressive public ceremony. Public observances were to be reinforced by the regular practice of private prayer, on which Comte laid the greatest stress. A person was to pray four times daily, with each prayer divided into a commemorative and a purificatory part. In the first part one would invoke some great benefactor of humanity: by reflecting gratefully on his deeds, one would be inspired to follow his example, and one's love of humanity would thus be quickened. The purificatory part would give solemn expression to the noble desires thereby evoked; in it the individual would dedicate himself to the service of humanity. Other rituals included a system of religious festivals and a calendar of the saints of humanity that provided the material for the prayers on each day of the year.

Some idea of the religious fervor generated in Comte by the contemplation of humanity may be gained from this quotation from *A General View of Positivism*:

The Being upon whom all our thoughts are concentrated is one whose existence is undoubted. We recognize that existence not in the Present only, but in the Past, and even in the Future: and we find it always subject to one fundamental Law, by which we are enabled to conceive of it as a whole. Placing our highest happiness in universal Love, we live, as far as it is possible, for others: and this in public life as well as in private; for the two are closely linked together in our religion; a religion clothed in all the beauty of Art, and yet never inconsistent with Science. After having thus exercised our powers to the full, and having given a charm and sacredness to our temporary life, we shall at last be forever incorporated into the Supreme Being, of whose life all noble natures are necessarily partakers. It is only through the worship of Humanity that we can feel the inward reality and inexpressible sweetness of this incorporation. (P. 444)

Comte had considerable influence in his lifetime, and a few functioning parishes of his religion of humanity sprang up. They have not survived, however, and a revival in our time hardly seems likely. In the twentieth century, reeling under the impact of two world wars and the hourly expectation of the death knell of civilization, we are not inclined to grow misty-eyed over humanity. Recent humanists have tended to be more critical in their reverence. The latest trend is to single out the more ideal aspects of man—his aspirations for truth, beauty, and goodness—for religious worship. Or the emphasis shifts from man as he actually exists to the ideals which man pursues in his better moments. Thus, in his book *A Common Faith*, John Dewey defines God as “the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and action” (p. 42).

Dewey. Unlike Comte, Dewey has no interest in developing an organized naturalistic religion. It would seem that religious organization and religious ritual are too closely associated in his mind with the supernaturalism which he rejects. For Dewey the important thing is the

religious quality which experience can assume under certain conditions. Any unification of the whole self around the pursuit of an ideal end is religious in quality. Dewey is emphatic in insisting that this is a quality, rather than a kind, of experience. Whenever a person is thoroughly committed to the pursuit of any ideal, be it scientific, social, artistic, or whatever, his experience attains the kind of fulfillment that has always been characteristic of what is most valuable in religion. According to Dewey, in traditional religion this quality has been encumbered and obscured by irrelevant trappings, particularly the theological dogma in terms of which it has been pursued. In the past, self-integration in the pursuit of the ideal has been thought of as service of God, unity with God, or submission to God's will. It is Dewey's conviction that the religious quality can be more effectively sought if the quest is not carried on under this banner. To reflective men, supernaturalistic dogma will always appear dubious at best. If the quest for self-integration in the service of the ideal is too closely tied to theology, it will be endangered when the theology is rejected as rationally groundless. Moreover, insofar as the theology is taken seriously, it diverts attention from the active pursuit of the ideal. Worse, the assurance that the good is already perfectly realized in the divine nature has the tendency to cut the nerve of moral effort; in that case it is not up to us to introduce the good into the world. Thus, Dewey's main concern as a philosopher of religion is to redirect religious ardor into the quest for a richer quality of human life rather than to construct a framework for a naturalistically oriented religious organization.

There is no developed naturalistic philosophy of religion which stresses the nonhuman side of the natural sources of value to the extent to which Comte stresses the human side. (Though we can find this in literature, notably in Richard Jeffries, who had a kind of religious intoxication with inanimate nature without, however, conceiving of it as suffused with a spiritual being or beings. This is a naturalistic counterpart of the nature worship of ancient Greece, just as Comte's religion of humanity is a naturalistic counterpart of an ethical monotheism like Christianity.) However, there is a marked tendency among contemporary naturalists to emphasize the nonhuman side much more than Comte or Dewey. Good examples of this are the liberal theologian Henry Nelson Wieman and the biologist Julian Huxley, who in his book *Religion Without Revelation* has made the most coherent and comprehensive recent attempt to sketch out a naturalistically oriented religion.

Huxley. According to Huxley's conception, religion stems from two basic sources. One is man's concern with his destiny—his position and role in the universe and their implications for his activity; the other is the sense of sacredness. Following Rudolf Otto, Huxley thinks of the sense of sacredness as a unique kind of experience which is an intimate blend of awe, wonder, and fascination; this mode of feeling arises spontaneously in reaction to a wide variety of objects and situations. Religion, then, is a social organ for dealing with problems of human destiny. As such it involves a conception of the world within which this destiny exists, some mobilization of the emotional forces in

man vis-à-vis the world thus conceived, some sort of ritual for expressing and maintaining the feelings and attitudes developed with respect to the forces affecting human destiny, and some dispositions with respect to the practical problems connected with our destiny. The sense of sacredness enters into the second and third of these aspects. As Huxley sees it, a way of dealing with problems of human destiny would not be distinctively religious if it did not stem from and encourage a sense of the sacredness of the major elements in its view of the world, man, and human life.

Huxley, as a thoroughgoing naturalist, holds that the supernaturalistic world view in terms of which religion has traditionally performed its functions is no longer tenable in the light of modern scientific knowledge. Moreover, he thinks that it is possible to develop a full-blown religion on a naturalistic basis. As the intellectual basis for such a religion, Huxley puts forward "evolutionary naturalism," a view of the spatiotemporal universe, inspired by modern biology and cosmology, in which the universe is conceived of as an indefinitely extended creative process, always tending to higher levels of development, with all the sources and principles of this creativity immanent in the process. The basic role of man is to be the chief agent of this evolutionary advance on earth through the application of his intelligence to the problems of life on earth and through the building of a harmonious and stable community. A religion based on these conceptions will be focused on an object of worship which is a construct out of all the forces affecting human destiny, including basic physical forces as well as the fundamental facts of human existence and social life. God, then, will consist of all these factors, held together by the feeling of sacredness with which they are apprehended. As a start toward conceiving this assemblage as a unified object of worship, Huxley presents a naturalistic version of the Christian doctrine of the trinity. God the Father is made up of the forces of nonhuman nature. God the Holy Ghost symbolizes the ideals toward which human beings at their best are striving. God the Son personifies human nature as it actually exists, bridging the gulf between the other two by channeling natural forces into the pursuit of ideals. And the unity of all the persons as one God represents the fact that all these aspects of the divine are intimately connected.

Many thinkers, atheists as well as theists, take a dim view of all these proceedings. Since the theists' lack of enthusiasm stems from obvious sources, let us concentrate on the atheists. The issues here are normative or evaluative rather than factual. Comte and Huxley as philosophers of religion are not, with perhaps minor exceptions, making any factual judgments with which other naturalists might disagree because they are making no factual judgments at all beyond their basic commitment to naturalism. If a man like Russell or Sartre disagrees with Huxley, he differs about the value of what Huxley is proposing. His low evaluation may have different bases. First, he may feel that man or the basic forces of nature constitute too pallid a substitute for the God of theism to afford a secure footing for the distinctively religious reactions of reverence, adoration, and worship. A man like Huxley might, for his part,

interpret this as a reflection of a suppressed hankering after the old supernatural deity. Second, Russell or Sartre may turn this charge on Huxley and maintain that one searches for an object of worship within nature only because he has not sufficiently emancipated himself from the old religious orientation and that this religion of evolutionary naturalism represents an uneasy compromise between religious and secular orientations. It seems clear that there is no one objective resolution of such disputes. People differ in such a way that different total orientations will seem congenial to people with different temperaments and cultural backgrounds. It is perhaps unfortunate, on the whole, that many people need to find something fundamentally unworthy in every other religion in order to find a firm attachment to their own religious positions, although it is undoubtedly true that religious discussions are more lively than they would be if this were not the case.

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