CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A study of 'Sampradaya' from sociological standpoint has received an inadequate attention. The present thesis titled 'Sociological Analysis of Nimbargi Sampradaya : A case study in Sociology of Religion', is a pioneering effort attempting to overcome this shortcoming. Apart from the conceptual analysis of 'Sampradaya' an attempt is made to study thoroughly the history, the features and the philosophy, the centres, and the personal information and views of the followers and close associates (Sadhakas) of Nimbargi Sampradaya in this work.

A meaningful case study of Nimabrgi Sampradaya from the viewpoint of Sociology of religion becomes possible only when one develops some acquaintance with meaning, theories, methods, contents of scope, and significance of Sociology of Religion along with its allied disciplines on the one hand and some obvious research problems that are relevant to the present study on the other.

SECTION I

AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Sociology as a scientific study of society with a distinct place and name has not made its appearance among the family of social sciences until about the middle of nineteenth century. Sociology is a budding science and through the passage of time several specialisms have grown within its field and one among them is 'Sociology of Religion'.

Sociology of religion is one of the earliest branches in Sociology and it has drawn the considerable attention of classical Sociologists like Emile Durkheim (1858 - 1917) - "The Elementary forms of religious life"; and Max Weber (1864 - 1920) - "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism". There are quite a few text books written on 'Sociology of religion' by Scholars like Joachim Wach (The University of Chicago Press - Chicago 1944), and Thomas F. O'Dea (Prentice Hall - 1966) in recent times but there seems to be no effort to present the meaning nature, theories, methods, scope and significance of

Sociology of religion succinctly. An attempt is made to have a bird's eye view of the same below.

MEANING AND TASK OF SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

In order to make the meaning and task of sociology of religion intelligible the following views may be considered.

The task of the sociology of religion has been defined by Joachim Wach "........ as the study of the interrelation and interaction of religion and society with special emphasis on the typology of groups".[1]

Thomas F. O'Dea observes, "The Sociology of Religion is the study of the significant and often subtle relationships which prevail between religion and social structure and between religion and social processes."[2] Hence the sociology of religion must not only study the effects of social structure upon religion, but also the effect of religion upon social structure. Moreover society is not simply a social structure; it is a complex of social processes. Different groups in society are affected differently by social change.[3]

RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION TO RELIGIOUS SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY.

At this stage it is essential to differentiate sociology of religion from religious Sociology and Social Philosophy, not only with a view to understand more about nature and subject matter of Sociology of religion but also to dispel the confusion that prevails between sociology of religion and religious sociology; and sociology of religion and social Philosophy.

RELIGIOUS SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

There is an important distinction between the adjective before and noun after the term 'Sociology', religious Sociology and the Sociology of religion.[4] In religious sociology the term 'Sociology' refers to a battery of pastoral and ecclesiastical techniques; the sociology of religion refers to an autonomous academic discipline.[5] Religious sociology is

placed at the service of particular religious groups (especially Christians). In contrast with market-research and pastoral concerns sociologists who study religion- though they might well import value judgments into their work must ultimately submit their research to the scrutiny of other sociologists and argue its significance against a body of sociological theory rather than arguing against a background of ecclesiastical policy.[6] The sociological study of religion cannot be subordinated to Christian or any other particular religious group.

Sociologists of religion have tolerated but not enthusiastically welcomed the interpolation of a positive religion commitment into research whereby religious sociology can become aids to religious education and mission.[7]

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Social Philosophy is closely related to sociology on the one hand and ethics on the other. Normative theory of society is social philosophy. A careful discrimination between Social Philosophy and Sociology is necessary though difficult. In this context Joachim Wach[8] Writes :

"There is no such thing as Christian or Jewish or Moslem Sociology. But there are implicit or explicit Christian, Moslem or Jewish Social Philosophies. The totally unwarranted confusion of Social Philosophy with Sociology is evident in the normative concept of religion often styled "Christian Sociology" which underlies most studies of the social implications of Christianity valuable as they may be, and the few existing monographs on other religions. It is a mistake to assume, as was frequently done at the high tide of the promulgation of the "Social gospel", that the Sociology of religion should be identical with definite programs of social reform. Such a conception of Sociology would be a betrayal of its true character as a descriptive science".

Relationship of Sociology of Religion with the General Science of Religion and Philosophy of Religion.

A brief reference to the relationship of sociology of religion and Philosophy of religion would not be out of place here.

The general science of religion, which reckons within its province Phenomenology, History, Psychology, Anthropology, and Sociology of religion is essentially descriptive aiming to understand the nature of all religions.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Phenomenology is the description of the formal structure of the objects of awareness and of awareness itself in abstraction from any claims concerning existence.[9] It is held that the phenomena shaping individual behaviour are phenomena as perceived by the acting individual. Objects are recognised as existing as objective phenomena but it is maintained that their meaning for behaviour derived from the individual's relationship and reaction to objects.[10] According to Otto - the phenomenologist of religion - the religious experience can be phenomenologically understood, but it cannot be explained.[11] Some phenomenologists of religion emphasize the irreducible elements in religion such as the 'Idea of holy' or the 'Sense of Sacred'. The question that is raised here is, whether the study of religion within the province of Social Sciences is subordinated to the concerns of social sciences ? Is not religion subordinated to culture in cultural anthropology, to society in social anthropology and Sociology of religion, and to the human psyche in Psychology of religion? It would be easy to set up discussion in terms of 'either - or', either the social sciences or religion and as we shall see in a moment much depends upon how we define the word 'religion'. One approach which regards that religious phenomena as out of reach of human scrutiny i.e., religion cannot be explained by sociological techniques is inimical to sociology, the second approach that religious phenomena are products of their social environment and can be explained away entirely in socio-economic terms is inimical to religion. Religion is a product of the social environment and can be understood only in socio-economic terms according to Karl Marx. As per Freudian notion religion is the projection of man's psychological needs. Machael Hill stresses the transcendent elements within religion at the expense of those elements open to social scientific scrutiny.[12]

The Phenomenological Sociology of religion is only of academic interest and can be analysed as a combination of the Phenomenology of religion and formal Sociology.[13] The

contention of formalistic school of thought with respect to subject matter and scope of Sociology is that the only forms of social relationships need be studied and not their contents. The prime exponent of the formalistic school of thought is George Simmel - a German Sociologist. Joachim Wach is a comparative religionist and a Phenomenologist as well and his interests are wider than those of Sociology of religion.

HISTORY OF RELIGION AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

The History of religion presents a chronological descriptive picture of manifestation and developments of religious experiences. History of religion describes religious incidents taking place at a definite place and time and Sociology of religion strives to discover universal laws and is not related to particular spatio-temporal religious incidents. History of religion is interested in longitudinal lines of development, Sociology of religion tries to cut through these lines vertically.[14] A very large amount of material from the history of religions is collected by W.G. Sumner and A.G. Keller and others, but is not related to a specific Sociological viewpoint.[15]

On account of the development in field work and empirical research and rise in communication and rapid change in the modern world and other reasons most social scientists focus on religious persons, groups and on those that are contemporary in the sense they are alive now. The primary emphasis is upon modern, the present day state of religion rather than the past history of religion. The main stress is upon modern situation in the West and in the non-Western primal religious societies[16]. But it must be remembered that we would never be able successfully to describe and analyze types of religiously motivated grouping without the material with which the history of religion supplies us.[17]

PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Main stress in Psychology of religion is on religious experiences of the individual. Sociologists of religion are concerned primarily with the religious practices, beliefs and experiences that people share as a group. The great

Sociological studies of religion have dealt with the religious traditions that are passed on from one generation to another.[18]

Psychologists, more than Sociologists have at one time or another become intrigued with the question of consequences of receiving or not receiving - religious training, of holding or not holding - a set of religious beliefs; of participating - or not participating - in religious rituals. The 'twenties' and early 'thirties' produced a large number of studies directed primarily to determining the consequences for moral behaviour of various orientations to religions. The results of these studies show either no effects at all or effects too slight to be statistically significant.[19] The positive correlation between the indices of religion and of prejudice, authoritarianism or other conservative attitudes and other findings in social Psychology is a major impetus to the development of Psychology of religion.[20]

Major advances in the immediate future are likely to be made in work on religion more akin to Social Psychology than Sociology. The methodological development of the last several decades in small group research, interviewing techniques survey research and such notions as the panel and contextual analysis seem to be eminently applicable to studies in Social Psychology of religion. Although the methods themselves cannot supply the conceptual ideas, their availability broadens the horizons and has already stimulating studies.[21] Of course, Sociology of religion in this respect as we shall see later is not lagging far behind Social Psychology and the distinction between Sociology of religion and Social Psychology of religion should not be rigidly understood. Social Psychology is a study of behaviour of individual in different group situations. Group is taken as a unit of study in Sociology. Both Sociology and Social Psychology are concerned with different aspects of indivisible reality. Individuals cannot be understood apart from their relations with one another ard relations cannot be understood apart from individuals.

In the light of the above description it may be poined out that the interrelationship between Psychology of religion and Sociology of religion is likely be the order of the day.

ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

While anthropology can embrace the total spectrum of man's social, cultural and natural behaviour, for our purposes it reduces to first two varieties only - Social and cultural authropology - for only these two deal with religion.

Social anthropology of religion has worked on primal religious thought, totems and taboos, belief systems, myths, cosmologies and cultures, rituals, symbols, magic, shamanism and so on. Social anthropology of religion has a more interest in religion of small scale societies mainly those outside the industrial societies. In this sense it is largely complementary to sociology of religion which has obvious concern whenever for both primal religious communities and religious communities of civilized societies.

Cultural anthropology of religion has worked on religion as a cultural order, how religious concepts, emotions and experiences are shaped by the cultural order, how religious beliefs, practices and institutions explain the origin of and preserve the cultural order, the role of myths, legends, symbols and rituals, ideologies, the relation of religion to other cultural orders; the difference between literate and non-literate religions, the relationship between great traditions and little traditions of religion, the role of language and other means of communication and religious concepts, the relationship between ritual and moral practice and other such topics.

It is a fair generalisation that many anthropological studies of religion are concerned not with the explanation of religion but with the role of religion in the explanation of society and culture and from this point of view there is much common between anthropology of religion and sociology of religion.

The question is raised of relationship between study of religion in general and study of religion within the approach concerned. Are the psychology of religion, sociology of religion and anthropology of religion part of the study of religion, part of the disciplines of Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, or equally involved in both particular disciplines and the general study of religion? In principle, the later alternative is the ideal situation wherein there is a

dual involvement with the discipline concerned and the wider study of religion.[22]

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

A philosophy of religion is akin to theology in its normative interest, but it shares its subject matter with the science of religion.[23] Theology is a normative discipline and, is concerned with the analysis, interpretation and exposition of one particular faith.[24] Theologies consist of religious beliefs that provide meaningful explanations of the major questions of human existence such as life and death, human origins and destiny, happiness and sufferings, success and failure, good and evil.[25]

The sociologist, though not called upon to deny or confirm religious claims cannot ignore them. In estimating the effects of the initiative of the founders, their own theological claims must be taken into account, because the sociological effectiveness of their work is dependent on the significance which they attach to themselves and their message. The interaction among the theology which formulates the basic concepts for the interpretation of a religious experience, the history of religion which describes its manifestations and developments, Psychology of religion which analyses its subjective aspects; and sociology of religion which analyses the nature and variety of the grouping which it produces, thus become evident[26] Psychology, philosophy, and theology may all be concerned with the same phenomenon, such as a particular belief or a particular ritual, but they ask different questions about the phenomenon. Psychological analysis is concerned with the psychological development and the functions of the belief or ritual. Philosophy is concerned with the correspondence between the belief and ritual and some criterion of truth, logic or goodness and theology, with its correspondence with such criteria as the will of God or other given norms of faith[27]   .

Sociology of religion and other descriptive social sciences cannot show the validity of any particular faith, nor do they try to. Descriptive disciplines such as Sociology of religion, on the one hand and philosophy and theology as normative sciences, on the other have different aims and methods and hence should be treated differently and

8

separately.[28]   For   instance,   theology is an   attempt   to   use
rational Philosophical method in explaining what is involved in
the religious experiences of various traditions.[29]

Sociological   examination   of   religious   groups need not   be
interpreted   as   an   implicit admission   that   the   theological,
philosophical and metaphysical problems and questions   growing
out of such a study will have to remain unanswerable. They can
and most certainly should be answered, but it is not the task
of   this   enquiry to do so.   One purpose has   been   to   present
material which would be of use to readers - who are   interested
in a study of the interrelation of religion and society. We do
not   expect   anyone to "derive" theological   or   philosophical
principles from   a   descriptive study.[30]   To   summarize,   the
sociology   of   religion will supplement but can   never   replace
Phenomenology,   Psychology   or   History   of   religion,   to   say
nothing of theology.[31]

In the pages that follow the relationship of sociology of
religion   to   some important branches of sociology is   brought
out.

SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

As   compared to sociology of   religion sociology   of
knowledge is slightly developed. Major contributions were   made
to   sociology   of   knowledge   in its   earlier   stages   by   Karl
Mannheim (1893 - 1947).   Karl Mannheim speaks of two kinds of
knowledge;   true   knowledge based on scientific   criteria;   and
knowledge   relative to classes, e.g. religion, philosophy and
traditional knowledge.[32]

Peter   Berger   and Thomas Luckmann see   the   sociology of
religion as   a   part of a larger field,   the   sociology of
knowledge, which is concerned with the meanings and definitions
of reality held by members of a society. A universe of meaning
includes   not   only high level philosophical ideas about   the
meaning of life, but also every day knowledge which is   taken
for granted. The universe of meaning is a social   construction
of   reality.   One society's reality is   another's   pretence,
things defined as meaningful in one society are meaningless in
another;   common   sense in one society is nonsense in another
because of the arbitrary nature of the universe of meaning it
is   precarious, insecure, easily shattered.   For example, when

the _Inca_ _Empire_ was destroyed by the Spaniards, the social base of _Inca_ religion was shattered. Throughout human history religion has played a decisive part in the construction and maintenance of the universes of meaning. Religion performs this function in the following way. Man constructs knowledge and meaning about the whole universe and his place within it. An example is the Christian view of the relation of the world and mankind given in the Book of Genesis. Religion provides ultimate answers which cannot be questioned by those who believe. For example, men observe that the sun rises every morning and, in some societies, this is confirmed and explained by the idea that the sun is controlled by supernatural powers. Religion also legitimates social institutions. It does this by locating them within a social and cosmic frame of reference. In this sense law is located in religion when a legal offence becomes a sin against God; authority is located in religion then kings speak for gods or become gods as in the case of the Pharoahs of ancient Egypt. Berger and Luckmann argue that religion is probably the most effective mechanism for legitimation of universe of meaning. Unlike other sources of legitimation only religion links meaning with ultimate reality.[33]

SOCIOLOGY OF MEDICINE AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

The interest of sociologists in the field of medicine is rather new. Although medical Sociology emerged rather late in the 1950's as a specialized area of sociology it has subsequently developed rapidly, partly because the medical profession has recognized the importance of sociology in the education of medical students.[34]

Sociologists generally see the field of medicine in two main aspects :[35]

a. as a cultural complex, i.e., a totality of material objects, tools, techniques, knowledge, ideas and values;

b. as a part of social structure and organization, i.e., a network of relations between groups, classes and categories of persons.

...... a knowledge of these two aspects of medicine in itself and in relation to other fields of social life such as

economy, religion, magic and law, is becoming increasingly necessary for a comprehensive understanding of society.

Some of the following major issues related to health are of immense help in the understanding of the relationship between sociology of medicine and sociology of religion.

1. Health and culture - including the traditional belief in the supernatural concerning diseases.

2. Health, food habits and environment - Covering sanitation, water supply, settlement pattern, the total physical environment affecting health and food during Socio-religious occasions.

3. Medicine, Health and community - the traditional health practitioners, their position in Society, concept and treatment of diseases, nature and use of medicine - traditional and modern.

4. Fertility and Mortality - Variations and reasons, use of traditional and modern practices of birth control;

5. Interaction of traditional and modern systems of medicine at various levels, reasons for non-adoption of modern practices.

6. Traditional medicine - Its use and application with certain modifications and change, study of indigenous methods of treatment.[36]

SOCIOLOGY OF MARRIAGE AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

The sociological study of marriage as an institution is far less adequate than either its universality or popularity could seem to warrant. Early studies were largely devoted to hypothetical constructions as to 'original' or 'prior' forms of marriage, usually with a view to establishing Christian monogamous marriage as the end product of social evolution.[37]

The interrelationship between sociology of marriage and sociology of religion can be brought out in the following manner.

Since religion tends to regulate marriage, the adoption of a new religion sometimes requires modification of existing marriage forms. Christian missionaries have introduced the monogamous ideal among polygynous people.[38] Judaism, Christianity and Islam in all of which man's duty is to live according to ethical standards revealed by a personal God, have all attempted to regulate kinship relations, especially marriage and the family. In Islam the personal example of the prophet Mohammed helped to legitimate polygyny.[39]

More recently, sociologists have tended to concentrate on the pathology of marriage and above all the phenomena of marriage breakdown and divorce.[40] There is some evidence that religious commitment helps to keep down the rate of divorce. Studies covering approximately 25,000 marriages showed that there were three times as many marital failures among those with no religious affiliation as among those within given religions. In marriages between persons of different religions, religion is frequently a disruptive factor, yet the failure rate of marriages of mixed religions is generally lower than that among marriages where there is no religion.[41] In developing countries like India the study of the interrelationship of sociology of marriage and sociology of religion is of utmost importance. Harry Johnson[42] points out that child marriage and female infanticide before British occupation were uppercaste practices.

Due to excessive preoccupation of a majority of Indian as well as foreign sociologists with the various aspects of caste in India, certain branches of sociology have received inadequate attention. Among these branches are sociology of marriage and sociology of religion, which are of basic cultural significance for analyzing the changing Indian society. For example, we have woefully insufficient sociological literature on the intercaste marriage. Same is the plight of sociology in the field of religion, which is still overwhelmed by ideological approach and which wittingly or unwittingly overemphasize the elements of ideological stability and persistence in the Indian society. Dr. (Mrs.) Usha Bambawale's work, 'Interreligious' Marriage (first published in 1982) should be welcome in that it covers in good measures, the meeting ground of the two branches of sociological enquiry.[43]

SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANCE AND SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Sociology of deviance and sociology of religion have presented very often different interests. However a convergence between the two viz. Sociology of deviance and Sociology of religion is not wholly fortuitous for the following reasons :

A generalized Sociology of deviance approach is of immense value in dealing with the mechanisms whereby religious converts acquire deviant identity. Some other empirical studies of deviance are generally directed to the analysis of particular social problems such as crime and delinquency, drug addiction, illegitimacy, prostitution, marriage breakdown, racial conflict, vagrancy, and suicide.[44] On the subject of suicide for instance, Emile Durkheim discovers that the rate of suicide is higher among protestants than among catholics.

One may anticipate a much greater cross-fertilization in the future between Sociology of deviance and Sociology of religion.

Finally, it must be noted that it is perhaps a mistake to think of sociology of religion as the exclusive province of sociological specialists of religion. The important problems of the field are in varying degrees, relevant to other disciplines of sociology; some of them can be studied more appropriately from the points of view of other disciplines.[45] As has been true to some extent in the past contribution to the body of knowledge comprising the sociology of religion should be expected to come not only from the sociological specialists of religion but also from sociological specialists of knowledge, medicine, marriage, deviance, organization (bureaucracy), occupation and professions, morality, family, kinship, law, and from the general field of social psychology, rural sociology, urban sociology, industrial sociology and so on including social theorists and methodologists.

Before I proceed to deal with some important methods developed in sociology of religion attention may be paid to perspectives/models/ theories of sociology of religion.

SECTION II

THEORIES AND METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

There is no single dominant theory/model/perspective in sociology of religion and this reflects the situation of sociology in general. Most of the social theories of religion subscribe their views to any one or more of the four major perspectives: evolutionary; functionalism; conflict and change, and symbolic interaction.

EVOLUTIONISM : Just as Darwin attempted to explain the origin and evolution of species, some sociologists tried to explain the origin and evolution of social institutions and society. Beginning with Auguste Comte, almost all early sociologists like Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, and Emile Durkheim held to an evolutionary model of society - the belief in a law of historical progress (i.e., all societies go through stages of increasing complexity). In terms of religion, two main theories, animism and naturism were advanced to account for its origin. Animism is the belief in anima. Anima is spirit or soul. According to Edward B. Tylor animism is the earliest form of religion and it is an intellectual attempt to make sense of death, dreams and visions. The argument of Tylor centres around two main questions (a) What is that makes the difference between a living body and a dead body? and (b) What are the human shapes or forms which appear in dreams and visions etc;?

a) Primitive man had certain experiences. In his dreams he met his dead ancestors and while he was awake; he heard the echoes of his own voice; he saw his own reflection in rivers, ponds, pools and he utterly failed to disentangle himself from his shadow.

b) What had really happened which had suddenly put an end to a person's actions, verbal and non-verbal ? He looked the same but he was not the same. There must have been some unseen thing in him which must have escaped unseen, making him dead. It was thus that the belief in such an unseen thing or power, which kept people alive when it was in them, and made them dead when it left their bodies, emerged. Such a thing, or power is called 'Soul'. But how was it that sleep, so very like death, was not death, and how was it that people had all these various experiences in dreams and while awake, heard echoes and saw

shadows and reflections? Certainly, Tylor says, primitive men must have thought there must be two souls in a human being; a free soul which could go out of him and have experiences, and a body soul which if it left the body resulted in its death.[1] He (primitive man) was compelled to assume that the soul became free and constituted a disembodied spirit. As the number of dead persons augmented with time, a population of spirit souls formed around the living population. These spirits were thought to have the needs, passions, and interests of men and concern themselves with their living companions of yesterday, either to aid or too injure them possessing extreme fluidity, they could enter into the body of the living and cause all sorts of disorders or else increase the body's strength and validity ..... Thus the power of souls was increased by all that men attributed to them, and in the end the living found themselves the prisoners of this imaginary world which their own imagination had created. For if the spirits were the givers of health and sickness, of good and evil, it was wise to conciliate and appease them when they were irritated. Hence arose offerings, prayers, sacrifices[2], and ancestor worship. The ancestor worship was earliest form of worship and tombs, the earliest temples. It is a kind of polytheism. Tylor believed that in course of time there was evolutionary development in religious beliefs and forms and the progress was from polytheism towards monotheism[3].

Tylor said that early man's limited intelligence could not distinguish animate from inanimate objects but endowed all things, even inanimate objects, with human characteristics and consequently with souls. Whereas the souls of men were thought to govern the world of men, the souls of other things were thought to govern the external world - the flow of rivers, the movement of stars, the germination of plants, the reproduction of animals etc,. He implored their assistance with offerings and prayers. Thus, a completely animistic view of the world came into being[4].

NATURISM : Max Muller and other students of Sanskrit accepted in general Tylor's theory of the soul's origin except that they placed more emphasis on death as the source rather than dreams. They believed, however, that this development was only secondary in importance. The true source of religion they sought in another direction - the influence of external nature on man.[5] Naturism is man's response to the effect of the power and wonder of nature upon his emotions.[6]

Max Muller said that earliest form of religion must have been the worship of objects of nature; and evidence in support of such a view has come in from archaeological excavations conducted in Egypt and elsewhere. It is maintained that an attitude of awe or love and reverence towards objects of nature is born as a result of a 'diseased' mind which invests lifeless things with life and all the power that is associated with life.[7] Religion arises only when these natural forces are no longer represented in abstract form but are transformed into personal agents: Spiritual beings or gods.[8] For instance the forces of the wind became the spirit of the wind[9], the power of the sun became the spirit of the sun. This result was brought about by man's linguistic confusion.[10] Such linguistic errors as the sun rises and sets, or thunder sends rain, or that trees bear flowers and fruit, give rise to belief in some power inherent in the sun, thunder, trees etc;[11], It originally referred to human acts and when applied to external nature it gave the names of human acts to natural objects. A new world composed of spiritual beings was created out of nothing and felt to be the cause of physical events.[12]

CRITICISMS : These evolutionary theories, now generally outmoded in scientific circles but still prevalent in popular accounts are subject to several criticisms and most of these criticisms can be, brought under two main types: (A) Criticisms that are directed against animism and naturism; (B) Criticisms with respect to evolutionary theories in general.

(A) (1) It has been complained that Tylor had no field experience.[13] We can raise the question of whether or not known primitive men do confuse waking state with dreaming state or animate with inanimate nature. The answer is they do not.[14] Animism is neither universal nor prior to other types.[15] It overemphasized one aspect of primitive religion viz; the belief in soul or spirits. Tylor's evolutionary sequence leading from polytheism to monotheism found no proof and therefore not many adherents.[16] For instance, Andrew Long points out, many simplest societies have religions based on monotheism, which Tylor claimed was limited to modern societies.[17]

(2) So far as it is maintained that objects of nature are worshipped no difficulty arises; evidence in support of such a practice is heavy. But the overriding claim to such worship being the earliest form of religion or explanation given to them is not convincing.[18] Muller's belief that the application

of humanistic language to inanimate objects created animism is hardly a satisfactory theory of religious origin; it assumes that when religion appeared language and society were already developed whereas a different analysis suggests that religion, language, and society are all inextricably related and must have developed simultaneously and not serially.[19]

(3) Evolutionists such as Tylor and Muller came up with plausible reasons for why certain beliefs were held by members of particular societies but this does not necessarily explain why those beliefs originated in the first place. Nor can it be argued that all religions originated in the same way.[20]

(B) (1) These outmoded theories of religion appeared too evolutionary, rationalistic and individualistic to explain the facts of religion.[21] The evolutionists put the cart before the horse: they tried to understand present day institutions (about which they could secure data) in terms of remote beginning (about which they could secure no data)...... What they needed was a thorough knowledge of functional and structural operation of real societies before they speculated about the beginnings of society.[22]

(2) The evolutionary school not only indulged in a fruitless search for origins but also in a rationalistic mode of explanation... Religions beliefs are obviously nonrational. That religion will ultimately disappear being replaced by science.... But surely the role of religion in human affairs cannot be determined solely on the basis of scientific accuracy or inaccuracy of religious beliefs. Unless we understand the personal and social importance of non-rational belief we fail utterly to understand religion.[23]

(3) Traditional evolutionary theory is individualistic dreaming, looking at nature and speculating. It takes no account of the fact that religion is something held in common by group of people that it is traditional and institutional, that it is a part of culture. It omits the phenomena of collective ritual and worship.[24]

In the years between the two world wars, evolutionary sociology was almost dead. Parsons' remark in 1937 that 'Spencer is dead' meant also the end of evolutionary thinking. About one and a half decades after II world war we can see the rebirth evolutionary approaches in the social sciences.[25]

Contemporary evolutionists believe that human species as a whole has gone through a number of evolutionary stages, but they do not claim that each society must go through all or most of these stages.[26]

The new version of evolutionism suggests that the spread in industrialization is resulting in the development of similar institutions and social patterns throughout the world.[27]

Robert N. Bellah started his career as a sociologist with an analysis of the role of Japanese religion in the modernisation process of Japan during the Tokugwa period (1957). Bellah draws a line from the stage where 'Church and society are one' (primitive religion) through the stage where religion denied the world and in some form society to the modern world where despite the fact of religious pluralism, religions offer the opportunity for 'Creative innovations in every sphere of human action'. It cannot be denied that in the first millennium B.C. theological and philosophical thinking, as far as it has been transferred to us - is highly world rejecting .... Bellah lays too much stress on religion as such.[28]

FUNCTIONALISM : Edward B. Tylor and Max Muller and other such evolutionists explained religion in terms of human needs. Tylor and Muller saw religion as a response to man's intellectual and emotional needs respectively. Functionalist analysis is mainly concerned with the contribution religion makes to meeting basic needs or functional pre-requisites of society.

It is an axiom of functional theory that what has no function ceases to exist. Since religion has continued to exist from time immemorial it obviously must have a function or even a complex of functions.[29] As a minimal definition, functionalism accounts for a social activity by referring to its consequences for the operation of some other activity, institution or society as a whole.[30] Functionalism is said to do two things most commonly - to relate the parts of society to the whole and to relate one part to another.

There are various types of Functionalist arguments, but the following three are worthy of consideration.

1. A social activity or institution may have latent functions for some other activity. R. K. Merton makes a distinction between manifest function and latent function. Manifest functions are those consequences that are intended by participants in the system of action concerned and latent functions are those consequences neither intended nor recognized by participants. To provide peace of mind may be considered a manifest function of religion. One of the latent functions of religion suggested by Merton is as follows. The puritan point of view had a bearing upon the development of modern science because of its emphasis on the study and glorification of nature as the hand; work of God.[31]

2. A social activity may contribute to the maintenance of the stability of a social system. Bronislaw Malinowski says that religion promotes social solidarity by dealing with situations of emotional stress which threaten the stability of society. Malinowski sees the death as the most disruptive of these situations and religion tackles the problem of death in the following manner.

A funeral ceremony expresses the belief in immortality which denies the fact of death, and so comforts the bereaved. Other mourners support the bereaved by their presence at the ceremony. Thus comfort and support checks the emotions which death produces and controls the stress and anxiety which might disrupt society .... At a funeral ceremony the social group unites to support the bereaved. This expression of social solidarity reintegrates society.[32]

Emile Durkheim argues that religious practices are best understood as contributing to the integration and stability of a society. Durkheim lays the stress upon collective worship. In the highly charged atmosphere of collective worship the integration of society is strengthened because this gives an opportunity to members of society to express their faith in common values and beliefs; and to communicate the comprehend and moral bonds which unite them.[33]

3. A social activity may contribute to the satisfying of basic social needs or functional prerequisites (adaptation, goal attainment, integration, latency or pattern maintenance - known as AGIL). In order to meet each of these functional requirements for the survival of society groups of action or subsystems of action develop.

Talcott parsons argues that human action is directed and controlled by norms provided by the social system. The cultural system provided more general guidelines for action in the form of beliefs, values and systems of meaning..... Religion is a part of the cultural system. As such religious beliefs provide guidelines for human action and standards against which man's conduct can be evaluated. In a Christian society the Ten Commandments operate in this way. Many of the norms of the social system are integrated by religious beliefs. For example, the Commandment, 'Thou shall not kill", integrates such diverse norms as the ways to drive a car, to settle argument, and to deal with the suffering of the aged..... In this way religion provides general guidelines for conduct which are expressed in a variety of norms. By establishing general principles and moral beliefs, religion helps to provide the consensus which Parsons believes is necessary for order and stability in society.[34]

CRITICISMS : Some of the important criticisms against functional theory of religion are as follows :

1. What is intended (manifest) function for one may be unintended (latent) function for another. However, this distinction between manifest (recognised) and latent (unrecognised) functions is significant because it calls our attention to latent functions that are apt to be overlooked in the analysis.

2. If social integration is the function of religion, this function could be served by a powerful and strong and efficient government. If salvation is the function served by religion, a simple system of faith could do, and the heterogeneity of numerous religious forms cannot be easily explained. Therefore, Merton rightly introduces such complimentary concepts as 'functional alternatives', 'functional equivalents' or 'functional substitutes'.

3. Functionalists simply concentrate on the consequences of actions and neglect the meanings that individuals give to their actions.

4. The questions of theodicy can occur when there is a very intimate relationship between religion and morality. It is by no means sure that the connection between religion and

ethics are universal in time and space in human society although religion and morality are universal. It seems more plausible that this kind of moral religion is a recent outcome in the history of religion.

5. Parsons relies too much upon the Christian belief system in its protestant form. Within this belief system the ethical problem of undeserved suffering (including that of premature death) is very much crucial.

6. It is very easy to produce a long list of basic social needs. Since it is only a list we can always add to it.

7. It is a too vague question to ask what are the basic social needs for the survival of the society? Rather one should ask, 'What conditions must be met if a given social system is to be maintained in its present setting?'

8. Functionalism explains the existence of a social activity by its consequences or effects and therefore it is a form of teleology. Teleology is the doctrine according to which the existence of every thing in nature or society can be explained in terms of purpose. Teleology is one fallacy that functionalists try hard to avoid but when they are charged with it, their ambiguities make defence difficult.

9. Functionalism cannot account for social conflict or other forms of instability, because it sees all social activities as smoothly interacting to stabilise societies. Functionalists have responded to this claim by suggesting that social conflict may, in fact, have positive functions for social order, or, in the concept of dysfunction, admitting that not all social activities will have positive functions for all other activities.[35] (Dysfunctions are those observed consequences which lesson the adaptation or adjustment of the system).

10. Functions cannot account for change, in that there appears to be no mechanism which will disturb existing functional relationships. The functionalist response to this has been to employ concepts such as differentiation.[36]

Conflict and Change

Parsons and some other functionalists argue that society is a system with mechanisms for automatically regulating itself. The equilibrium model suggests that society could take corrective action - perhaps increasing its social work, services, developing community youth centres and so on. With enough social adjustment the "Wounded social organism" could "heal" itself and restore its balance.[37]

The severe criticism of the equilibrium model comes from those sociologists who favour the conflict model of society. It was illusion they say, to hold that society, especially modern society, is in an equilibrium state. On the contrary societies are always in a state of conflict and conflict theorists think that whenever one group gains, a different group is likely to loose.

Conflict theorists could focus on difference in religion as a source of conflict between groups. Usually these conflicts are associated with differences in the power and economic resources of religious groups. The conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland and between Christians and Muslims in Lebanon are current examples of religious conflict. This conflict largely stems from the economic and political inequality of Catholics and Muslims in these societies.[38] The history of Christianity with its many Muslims, manifests the great power of religion not merely to bind but to divide. The etymological meaning of religion (religare) i.e., to tie up or bind together or link is not applicable here.

To Karl Marx religion is an illusion which eases the pain produced by exploitation and oppression. In the following four important ways[38] religion can dull the pain of oppression.

1. Firstly, it promises a paradise of eternal bliss in life after death. Engels argues that the appeal of Christianity to oppressed classes lies in its promise of salvation from bondage and misery in the after life.

2. Secondly, some religions make a virtue of the suffering produced by oppression. This view is contained in the well known biblical quotation, "it is easier for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven".

3. Thirdly, religion can offer the hope of the supernatural intervention to solve the problems on earth. As per the doctrine of incarnation (Avatar) in Bhagavadgita God is born for the preservation of right. Anticipation of this future can make the present acceptable.

4. Fourthly, religion often justifies the social order and a person's position within it. God can be seen as creating and ordaining the social structure. For instance, in the Bhagavadgita we are told, "The four orders of society viz., the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra, were created by Me classifying them according to their prenatal values". This can make the life more bearable by encouraging people to accept their situation philosophically.

Karl Marx holds religion as a social product. Religion is an expression of social experience and that the religious world view takes its form from the study of the social structure in which it is placed or located. From Marxian viewpoint, it (religion) keeps people in their place. By making unsatisfactory lives bearable religion tends to discourage people from attempting to change their position.[40] From a Marxian perspective ruling classes adopt religious beliefs to justify their position both to themelves and to others. Religion can be used to justify social inequality not simply to the poor, but also to rich. Religion is often directly supported by ruling classes to further their interest.[41] To Marx religion is such a doctrine an 'Opiate of the people' that prevents them from rebelling against their oppressors.[42]

Marx states, "Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves round man as long as he does not revolve round himself".[43] The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness. To call to abandon about their condition is a call to abandon a condition which requires illusion.[44]

CRITICISMS

We have considerable evidence to support and contradict the Marxian view of the role of religion in society. The caste system is justified by Hindu religious beliefs. Kings ruled by divine right in medieval Europe. The Egyptian Pharoahs went one step further by combining god and king in the person.[45]

The Marxian view of religion as a response to exploitation and oppression helps to explain many millenarian movements as these movements are usually preceded by a crisis. The Cargo cults promise a new world in which the islanders will enjoy the wealth of the Europeans.[46] The above evidence suggests that a case can be made to support Marxian propositions regarding the role of religion in society.

However conflicting evidence suggests that the Marxian views must be limited to the operation of religion at certain times and in certain places. Religion does not always legitimate power. It is not simply an expression of alienation or a justification of privilege.[47] For instance, Veerasaivism movement in India under the Charismatic leadership of Basava fought against the caste system. Many Israeli Kibbutzim are fervently religious and their members appear to experience no contradiction between religion and socialism.[48] Hence religion cannot be always viewed as the illusory sun which revolves round man as long as he does not revolve round himself.

Clearly Marx did not argue that religion has no effect. It has to have some effect if it is used by the ruling classes to dominate the workers. However, Marx did not expect religion as a source of social change. Against the background of Marxism Weber's book the Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism stands out sharply.[49]

RELIGION AND CHANGE

Marx put forward a view of history known as economic determinism. He argued that the mode of production (i.e., hand labour or steam power) was fundamental in determining the kind of economy a society possessed and the kind of cultural and social structure of the society. The economic base was the substructure, and the political, religious, and artistic features together with social arrangements constituted the super structure, the later being conditioned by the former. This basic belief and his ideas about social change (i.e., the dialectical conflict of classes whereby the class structure is progressively simplified into antagonism of bourgeoisie and proletariat, with the eventual triumph of the latter) were the main sociological features of his thought.[50].

24

Max Weber rejects the view that religion is always shaped by economic factors. He does not deny that at certain times and in certain places, religious behaviour may be largely shaped by economic forces, but he maintains that this is not always the case. Under certain conditions the reverse can occur, that is religious beliefs can be a major influence on economic behaviour.[51] For instance, we may take religious factor as a variable and try to investigate its effects on economic phenomenon. Precisely this has been done by Max Weber in his brilliant essay on 'The Protestant Ethic and the spirit of Capitalism' (1930). He (Weber) argues that the capitalism was a result of Protestantism.

Weber noted that an unusually high number of European business leaders were Protestants. Remembering that the Industrial revolution began shortly after the Protestant Reformation, somehow caused Industrial revolution.[52] Weber discovered that various aspects of Protestantism such as an ethic of hard work, self-denial and allowing people to take interest on loans and creating a sense of anxiety about personal salvation speeded the rise of capitalism.

The Catholic Church had forbidden to lend money at interest, for this allowed a person to profit from the misfortunes and needs of others. This rule made capitalism impossible. Groups of businessmen disliked the Church rule which forbade them from charging interest on loans. Sometime after Calvin's day Protestantism began to allow the taking of interest and this freed devout Christian to invest their capital.[53]

Protestantism also preached that one's work in the world could be viewed as a "calling" from God. One should devote one's life to worldly tasks with the same zeal that hermits have for religious matters. No longer did one turn away from worldly things to serve God. The work of the world was God's work and it required no less sacrifice than the work of a monk. A person was to forgo the pleasures of the flesh and instead work hard and prudently invest the profits of his or her labour, which are God's.[54]

Finally, protestantism (especially calvinism) created a terrible sense of loneliness and anxiety by emphasizing that God was entirely beyond people's ability to understand and had already decided whether each individual to be served or damned.

People could not earn salvation and should never allow themselves to believe that they were among the chosen. Indeed, in the minds of early Calvinists there could be no clue as to whether one belonged to the chosen or damned. People must live out their lives in anxiety, waiting to learn their eternal fate.[55]

By the time Protestantism was in full swing, however, this calling doctrine had been modified in a way that was vital for development of Capitalism. Although one still could not earn salvation, one could measure how well one was carrying out God's work on earth by how well it turned out. Thus, a wealthy businessman who succeeded in his "Calling" could seem to be acceptable to God. Money became a means of reducing people's anxiety about whether or not they were saved. Poverty on the other hand, was evidence that people were not putting enough zeal into their work and probably were not worthy of salvation. Because hard working Protestants were not supposed to spend their money on luxuries and because they were not supposed to interfere with their poverty stricken neighborus by helping them in their own "calling" they acquired wealth that they could neither spend nor give away. Fortunately they were allowed to invest this money and thus to become capitalist entrepreneurs. This Ethic of worldly asceticism is the 'Protestant Ethic'.[56] It has been argued that the secular culture of capitalist society originated paradoxically in the asceticism of the Protest and Reformation. Protestantism emphasized the autonomy and independence of the individual rather than dependence on the Church, priesthood and ritual. The religious doctrine of Calvinism held that believers could no longer depend for their salvation on the institutionalized means of grace found in the Catholic Church (Confession, eucharist, baptism), on the intermediary role of priests or on good works. Individual faith in Christ as a personal saviour of sinful humanity became the key element of Protestant doctrines.[57]

WEBER'S THESIS HAS BEEN CRITICIZED ON A NUMBER OF GROUNDS :

1. Some sociologists like Pitirim A. Sorokin object that Weber's interpretation of Protestantism is based on too narrow and unrepresentative empirical evidence. Sorokin writes that Weber's statement that the Protestants everywhere and always are economically better off than the members of

other religions is likely to be far from truth. His statistical data are rather scarce and concern almost exclusively Baden in Germany. It is impossible to make any universal generalisation on the basis of such fragmentary and limited statistical material.[58]

2. Capitalism was not unknown in the Catholic world. There were aspects of traditional Catholic teaching which were equally compatible with capitalism.[59] Several pre-reformation Catholic groups rivaled the puritans in their hospitality towards capitalism in general and even usury in particular.[60] Weber ignored crucial developments which occurred after the reformation and which modernized catholicism from within.[61]

3. If there ever was a distinctively Protestant Ethic it no longer exists. In Polls and Surveys about values and ethics, Catholics and Protestants give similar answer.[62] The Protestant ethic became less popular among the protestants overtime.

4. The precise relationship between Capitalism and Protestantism has not been adequately brought out by Max Weber. Weber very often slips from his "Functional" standpoint into that of one-sided causation.[63] Perhaps the greatest weakness in Weber's thesis is that it is still possible even today to take the Marxist position that Protestantism didn't cause Capitalism - Capitalism caused Protestantism.[64] Weber explained the rise of Capitalism in the West largely as a result of the values of the Protestant religion. Marx however, gave greater weight to changes in technology and the economic relationships between classes that result of from technological development.[65] The Protestant Ethic is itself a response to changing economic conditions. The increased wealth and opportunities that resulted from colonialism stimulated inventiveness, risk taking in business, and achievement motivation particularly among urban middle classes.[66] Weber attributed the rise of capitalism in the West (the dependent variable) to the values of the Protestant reformation (the independent variable). Weber felt that these values - worldly success, individualism, hard work, and self denial - promoted the risk taking and profit orientation that are essential to capitalism. But an English Historian, R. H. Tawney, has argued convincingly that the values of Protestantism simply hastened a process that had begun before the Protestant Reformation. He pointed to the economic changes (the intervening variable) that

resulted from the voyages of discovery by Holland and England. Colonialism brought vast quantities of economic resources into these countries and was a more important factor in the rise of capitalism.[67]

5. Capitalism is contradictory in that it requires the consumption of commodities as well as saving for future investment; protestant asceticism aids the later, but the former may require hedonism.[68]

6. Japan, has not become either Christian or Jewish. In its religion it has remained essentially the same as it was before the second half of the nineteenth century; yet the country has made a miraculous progress in the way of a "Rationalization" of its economic, social, political and cultural life. "The traditionalist and the magical" religion of the majority of Japan's population evidently did not hinder at all the most successful development of modern capitalism. According to Weber, this is impossible in the midst of such a religion.[69]

7. Since the "religious factor" represents a mysterious box filled with numerous trans-subjective stimuli - like speech - reactions, bodily movements in rituals, by stimuli of songs, music, paintings, dances, statues, buildings, "religious" objects, other men and their behaviour - patterns, the actions of physical punishments, coercion, imprisonment, various chemicals used in the ceremonies etc,; and by numerous physical experiences like "ideas", images, emotions, sentiments, volitions, etc.; we are lost in the multitudinal complexity of factors united under the name of "religion", and we do not know which of these stimuli is really effective, even if it is proved that the "religious factor" is generally influential.[70]

The above is sufficient to show that all these sociologies of religion are still speculative and unsatisfactory. No one gives to us a really scientific analysis of "the role of religion." No one supplies with a severely verified correlation between well defined religious and non-religious social phenomena.[71]

This does not mean that they do not possess at least a part of truth. It is highly probable that they do. How great this part is, remains to be found. The theories themselves do not give any certain basis for solving the problem. It is up

to the future student, first, to forsake the existing half - speculative method of these theories; second, to define clearly and scientifically their "factor of religion" and third, to plunge into a scrupulous sifting of the truth from the "rubbish" in the field by a careful statistical, historical, and even experimental analysis of the corresponding facts.[72]

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionists view that the social relationships are built up through social interactions on a symbolic level, that is, through language, clues and gestures. According to symbolic interactionists it is improper to regard society as an organism and they strongly oppose the structural - functional model (especially its equilibrium version). Commenting on 'symbolic Interactionism' Metta Spencer writes, "Society does not contain organs; it does not feel needs, nor does it have purposes. Symbolic interactionists accuse structural functionalists of believing that individuals do not exist at all in there own right but are only parts of a large social system. According to symbolic interactionists, only people have needs and purposes; only people act. Society is not an organism with a fixed arrangement of parts. It is not born and it does not have a life cycle. It is not at all real the way people are real. Forget the mythical "social system", they say and look at real people, at individuals acting in relation to each other. Each person tries to figure out what others are doing and adjusts his or her own behaviour accordingly. People communicate about what they are planning to do, and often, though not always, they are able to make plans that fit together to make an orderly collective activity, such as playing golf or launching a rocket. They are constantly cooperating in new ways, not merely playing the fixed roles of an unchanging social system. Instead, they are always adjusting to changing conditions. Symbolic interactionism, more than most other models, tends to explain the actions of a group in terms of its members definition of the situation. Its explanation of the orderliness of social relationship centers on the communication that takes place between people as they fit their actions together."[73]

Some role theorists known as "Symbolic interactionists" would argue that in industrialized societies there are few specific and widely agreed-on culturally defined roles

associated with particular statuses. They focus primarily on the specialized versions of roles - negotiations, compromises, and agreements - that are worked out by individuals in groups. This is done by means of communication and interaction using symbols..... hence the name symbolic interaction.[74]

This approach takes its name from George Herbert Mead and its emphasis on the meaning of behaviour primarily from Mead and Weber. Herbert Blumer and other contemporary symbolic interactionists focus on the interpretations that people make when they interact with one another - their definitions of the situation, their motivations, their expectations, as well as their outward reactions.[75]

Role theorists might analyze cultural role definitions of priests and parishioners in a society at a given time. Or they might do a comparative historical study to explain how and why these definitions are changing or have changed. At the microlevel, role theorists would do an in-depth case study of a church or sect. They would analyze the day-to-day relationships of members - the norms, sanctions, role conflicts, socialization of new member, and personal meaning of the religious experience.[76]

The four most important perspectives of religion are evolutionism, structural functionalism, the conflict and change, and finally symbolic interactionism. For a long time the field of sociology of religion was dominated by evolutionism and attempts have been made by some sociologists to revive it in recent years. Structural functionalism developed later and was the leading model for many years, but during the past few decades it has lost support as the conflict model has become more popular, especially among radical sociologists and others who focus on political processes and social upheavals. Finally, the perspective symbolic interactionism has long held a very influential position among certain groups of sociologists only.

These perspectives of religion are not necessarily be incompatible. Marx, for example, held to both an evolutionary perspective and a conflict model. And Durkheim was both an evolutionist and a structural functionalist. Weber's stress on Verstschen, for instance, is currently applied in what is called the "Symbolic interaction" approach in modern sociology. Weber is also regarded as a functionalist. Notwithstanding,

when sociologists of religion get into an argument at a party or in a professional journal the debate often hinges on the differences among the perspectives they favour.

Which model is the correct one? This is a very difficult question to answer. Societies mirror both conflict and harmony - some relatively more conflict, some more harmony. Some institutions or groups within a society depend on harmony more than others. Metta Spencer observes, "No single model is likely to be able to answer all our questions. Holding too firmly to evolutionism, structural - functionalism, the conflict model or symbolic interactionism will lead us off the track. We need to maintain a healthy skepticism toward each of these models, keeping in mind that any model will lead us to emphasize some facts and ignore others."[77]

METHODS

Many people regard that they know fairly well what religion is about. Some people hold that religion consists of a mistaken belief in divine beings that do not exist, while others believe that the essence of all religions is the same. These and other such notions are not very encouraging for the development of sociological study of religion.

The sociologist of religion should not be concerned with the truth or falsity of religion, nor with its superiority or inferiority and his prime concern is with understanding and explaining of religion. The study of the sociological or anthropological implications of religion requires an impartial and objective approach. However, while presenting a scientific explanation of religion from sociological point of view, two obstacles come in the way and they are emotional bias and rational bias.

The value orientations and ethnocentrism of social scientists of religion shape their congnition of social reality and the conclusions they arrive at. It has been stated that one's own religious position, whether it be strong, weak, or negative is not totally irrelevant; one's own temperament, ability, upbringing, motive and personal vision have some influence upon one's academic work. The atheism of a Durkheim, a Marx, a Freud is clearly a factor within the explanatory theories of religion they expound and the Christian commitment

of an Evans Pritchard is not entirely irrelevant in the field of scholarship.

Apart from ethnocentric or emotional bias, there is another hurdle while presenting a scientific explanation of religion i.e. a rational bias. Rational bias attributes the existence of religion to error or ignorance and assumes when these are set aside there will emerge the completely rational i.e. completely non-religious man. But completely a rational person has not yet appeared.

The Sociologist of religion can never escape the obstacle of emotional or ethnocentric bias wholly; since he is conditioned by his own culture or temperament, but he should reflect on his own perspective as a methodical requirement of all sociological research. I mention some of the important methods employed by sociologists of religion.

The statistical approach has occupied a much smaller part of the sociological study of religion in Britain. Microsociological method, demographic and social surveys are more prominent methods in Britain, France and U.S.A. respectively.[78] There is widespread misconception that the source of sociological data is the sample survey. Even when interview techniques are employed recent research suggests that these may only surface data such as official denominational adherence and that more sensitive instruments are needed to elicit more sophisticated data.[79]

There is an increasing use of quantificatory data - sample survey, standard questionnaires, census statistics, the statistics of religious communities (sociogram and other techniques of sociometry), historical data. In the study of religion, data have rarely been subjected to content analysis. Quantificatory data are not opposed to but complementary with other species of data - standardized reporting, computer research and qualificatory analysis.[80]

Most of the empirical research has taken the form of individual case studies or rough comparisons utilizing the methods of typologizing and dichotomizing. In the absence of standardized sociological data on the structure and functioning of religious organizations (some religious organizations are not efficient at collecting a primary source of data) theorizing has depended more on insight than information.[81]

The object of the comparative approach is to make the more general in its scope, and this entails making precise comparisons between different types of organizations and plotting their typical responses to various types of situations. Comparison is beset with methodological plans such as the structural order, the scale of units compared, the techniques of collecting data etc.

The data from participating in religious conferences, meetings, rituals, festivals, gossips and personal interviews with religious leaders, followers and visits to various centres of religious activity can be made not only to collect more information but also with a view to check the information available in the biographies, journals, letters, diaries and other such sources of material.

Having discussed theories and methods of sociology of religion, let me now envisage some important contents of scope of sociological study of religion.

SECTION III

CONTENTS OF SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

1. An examination of definitions of religion :

Religion is a multivocal term whose range of meanings varies in different social and cultural contexts. There is no one agreed definition in the social sciences, but the variety of definitions serves to indicate the areas of interest and the breadth of treatment of religion in the social scientific field as we shall see below.

If we analyse the kinds of definitions employed in sociological literature, two types are prevalent: substantive and functional definitions. Substantive definitions say what religion is; functional definitions of religion state what religion does.

Tylor[1] defines religion substantively as the "Belief in spiritual beings", and Yinger[2] defines functionally religion as ".... a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with (the) ultimate problems of human life".

Not all definitions are either substantive or functional; some are a combination of the two. Take for example, Durkhiem's well known definition: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which united into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them."[3] The substantive part of the definition has to do with the essence of religion, "A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things." A functional element is added to the definition "which united into a single moral community called a Church those who adhere to them." In other words Durkheim says, the function of religion is integration.[4]

Some important problems of the above mentioned definitions are still unsolved.

A substantive definition of religion searches for the essence of the religion and defines it as "Sacred". The sacred - the differentia in the substantive definition - is defined by some as supernatural by others as not. This depends upon their position, their situational and historical facts. Sociologists should not look for the essence of religion; this is a philosophical question; for them the essential aspect of religion is that - it is differently defined by different categories of actors according to their position and situational context.[5]

A universal approach to the religious phenomena which is typical of some sociologists using a substantive definition allows only a specification of this concept in formal terms; for example; set apart and forbidden; a mysterious and awesome power. This approach is culturally loaded as no reference is made to the Socio-cultural context..... in fact their work is too global to be Sociological. Concrete Sociological research is only possible if one drops this global approach and studies what is called "Sacred" in a concrete socio-structural context.[6] A substantive definition needs a specification of the socio-cultural context. Now the attention will be paid to the difficulties in functional definitions of religion.

If one defines religion by its..... "Integrating function" how can one call challenging or prophetic groups "religious"..... One may regard the churches as irreligious when they do not function integratively and ideologies such as

Marxism or the "Parliamentary Democracy" may be viewed as religious as long as they perform an integrating function. In both cases it is not taken into consideration that in reality the Churches are regarded as religious while Marxism is not by society. All norms, all values, all organizations and all behaviour, all ideologies can have integrating function in certain situations. This indicates that everything can be religion but also that everything can cease to be religion.[7]

A functional definition and a functional analysis (of religion) is possible only if one specifies descriptively the "item" to which one is attributing function. The analysis of Durkhiem's definition (on religion) allows us to specify "the item" more sociologically as the "religious community"; churches, denominations, sects, cults etc., But in order to be able to talk about functions we do not only have to specify the item, the religious structure to be studied, we also must specify the socio-structural context for which it is functional and/ or dysfunctional.[8]

When the sociologist defining religion wants to keep aloof from every ideological standpoint, only one alternative is possible; to avoid defining religion himself but have it defined by social positions in society. Then the definition of religion is not a starting point for sociological research but it is a part of the object to be examined.[9]

The sociologist of religion cannot avoid starting from ideological social definitions of religion but instead of leaving these definitions unquestioned in his research he must try to determine the social context of these definitions and show how these definitions are supported and realized in society by concrete social positions.[10]

What is true of religion is also true of superstition. The term superstition is better avoided by the sociologist of religion, since it (superstition) often only expresses the value judgements of the participants. The superstition of one may be religion of another.

2. **Classification of religions** : Some social scientists of religion are ventured into classification of religions. There are various classifications of religion but I briefly refer only to three important classifications of religions.

(a) David Sopher[11] has classified religions into three categories: Ethnic, Universalizing, and Segmental.

Ethnic religions are confined to a particular place and people. Most primitive religions, and Judaism and Hinduism may be considered the illustrations of Ethnic religions as they are closely tied to the land and people in which they originally developed.

Universalizing religions are not tied to any specific region or ethnic group, although they have been when they began. Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity are illustrations in point. Members of universalizing religions consider their beliefs to be right for all humankind and feel that it is obligatory on their part to convert others to their religion, either personally or through organized missions.

Segmental religions are offshoots of universalizing religions or new systems that integrate small groups into larger communities. Neo-Buddhists among the lower classes of India, the Black Muslims in America are the examples of this category. Although the segmental religions account for only a small portion of the world's population, they are significant as they stimulate social change or at least they tend to appear when major social changes are going on.

(b) The classification of religions into folk (popular), and universal is the most common. There are some religions which are confined to a single folk. The gods of folk religion are exclusively related a particular folk and limited to that folk and accordingly they lack universality.

Religions that transcend societal boundaries in claims to membership are universal religions.[12] Universal religions preach universal morality for all human beings and tend to stress the significance of the unity of the faithful regardless of cultural differences. As a consequence the contents of the world religions are usually abstract and general than those of the non-literate religions of the world.

In most introductions to world religions we read what the Buddhist or the Christian or the Muslim believes and practises. But the Muslim in Indonesia in the twentieth century and the Muslim in medieval Persia differ in several ways. At the same time they share a common set of beliefs and practices and their

religions may be viewed as each other's variants. Sociological analysis of religion should aim both at the exposition of religious similarities and differences.

Shintoism (Japan), Confucianism (China), and Hinduism (India) and other older ethnic religions survived the spread of universal/world religions, but they, too eventually imbibed certain universalistic elements in their beliefs.

(c) Some Sociologists have classified religions into official (state), and non-official (denominational). Official religion is supported by government/state and claims that all the citizens of the state are its (official religions') members. Catholic Church in Italy, the Lutheran - Church in Sweden and the Orthodox Church in Greece are the examples of this category.

Denominations have large, formal, religious organizations that are not state religions. They are well established with formally trained clergy and other officials. They do not claim the status of a state religion and may, at times, be in opposition to the state religion. The United States has been called a "Denominational society" because it does not have a state religion.[13]

Thus, sociologists of religion classify religions into various types and point out the distinctive features and variant forms (if any) of each type and further they (Sociologists of religion) discuss about their spread and also admit that there is considerable over- lapping among the types of religions and that a systematic classification of them is not always forthcoming.

3. Components of religion : Sacred and profane, belief and ritual are some important components of religion which over and again draw the attention of social scientists of religion.

(a) **Sacred and Profane**: Emile Durkheim argues that all societies divide the world into two categories: the 'sacred' and the 'profane'.[14] The profane is everyday experience, while the sacred is anything material or non-material, human or non-human, that is elevated above the ordinary and mundane and is endowed with awe, reverence, mystery and sometimes fear. Religious meetings and places of worship are set off from other kinds of meetings and places.

The sacred things are symbolic and their significance lies in what they symbolize rather than what they are.[15] There is nothing about the particular qualities of a rock or a spring which make them sacred. Therefore, sacred things must be symbolic as they represent something.

The distinction between sacred and profane is absolute. It does not mean that things or beings do not pass from one sphere to the other..... Purification rites, as in initiation..... are the means through which a person or thing passes from the profane to the sacred.[16]

The sacred according to Durkheim consists of what has been termed religion, and the profane part magic and primitive science. Malinowski, however has classified religion and magic as the sacred part and science as the profane part.[17] Davis says that since it is not always clear whether the unholy is included in the sacred or the profane a three fold distinction - holy, ordinary and unholy seems preferable.[18]

(b) **Religious Beliefs and Rituals**: Sacred is the heart of religion. What makes a thing holy however, is nothing inhering in the thing itself but simply an attitude inhering in the mind. Resting on this subjective attitude there are two different aspects of the holy viz, belief and ritual.[19]

. A proper sociological study of religion will take into consideration the three components of the organic complex viz; (a) Beliefs in supernatural entities; (b) Specialists who create such beliefs; (c) Laity who receive it in various forms.[20]

Religious belief is the coquitive aspect of religion. It refers in the first place to the superempirical world telling us what this world is like, what kind of creatures inhabit it and what their past history and present interests are; above all it tells us how this world is related to the one we actually live in. This means in the second place that religious belief tells us also what the nature of the sacred objects is and how these objects relate to the superempirical world.[21]

Cosmology, myths and legends can be included in the study of religious beliefs. Cosmology is often taken to be equivalent to world view and religion is often regarded as an

important component of world view. The world view is the image or picture of the world held by members of society. From their world view individuals derive meanings, purposes and motives which direct their actions.[22] In Christianity, terrestrial life is inextrically linked up with sin, with loss of paradise; and the goal of human life is the expiation of sin; the regaining of paradise.

A myth is a narrative organizing data such as beliefs about transcendental powers, about the origins of the universe, and of social institutions or about the history of people. Its functions for the members of a particular society is to record and present the moral system whereby present attitudes and actions are ordered and validated.[23] In Hinduism myths concerning truth have been circulating in connection with Raja Harischandra and Yudhisthira.

Myths are not identical with legends. Myths posses greater degree of truth than the legends. Legends are a form of social myths that are related to some heroes and events. Both are the representatives of beliefs and values of society. Both are also a part of the cultural heritage and both help to maintain the continuity of the cultural life of society. There are so many legends attached to the life of Srikrishna in India.

Religious ritual is the active side of religion.[24] A ritual may best be defined as a prescribed way of performing religious acts.[25] Rituals may involve wearing of special clothing, the recitation of special formulae/prayer, and the immersion in rivers, burning, lighting candles and camphors, scarring, singing, crawling, starving, feasting, reading etc., A ceremony on the other hand involves a number of interconnected rituals at a given time.[26] Fairs, festivals, pilgrimages consist of number of rituals and ceremonies.

Rituals promote commitment to religious faith. They may be performed in private, but when they are performed with the group, they reinforce feeling of community with others who share the same religious beliefs.[27] Sociologists are primarily concerned with the practices and beliefs and experiences that people share as a group. In collective acts of worship society reaffirms and strengthens itself. In Durkhiem's theory collective aspect of religion is emphasized, the function or religious ritual is to affirm the moral superiority of society

over individual members and thus to maintain the solidarity of society. Durkheim gives more importance to rituals than beliefs. In the study of religion in civilized societies, Durkhiem's theory is less useful. In civilised society, religion not only unites people but also divides them. In modern societies beliefs, doctrines have more importance than ritual and ceremonies.

Thus, in the field of Sociology of religion not only the meaning and importance of sacred and profane, rituals, ceremonies, beliefs (including myths, cosmology, legends) are analysed but also their interrelationship is discussed.

4. Relationship of religion to magic, morality, science.

Sociologists of religions point out the relationship of religion to magic, morality, and science.

Both magic and religion recognise a supernatural power or powers. However, magic is used as a supernatural means to try to obtain empirical ends and religion is viewed not as a means to an end but an end in itself. Apart from similarities and differences between religion and magic sociological studies of religion concentrate on types of magic as well as the principles on which magical formulae are based and such other issues.

Sociologists of religion study the relationship of religion to morality from various angles: dissimilarities, intimacy, priority, conflict and reconciliation between the two. Some sociologists like Pitirim A Sorkin, Walter A. Lunden have discussed the phenomenon of ethico-religious polarization in the following manner.

In periods of catastrophe the majority of moral and religious leaders (and the general population also) who in normal times are neither too sinful nor too saintly, tend to split into extreme factions; some become more saintly, while some others become atheistic and demoralised "Sinners". The majority of normal times thus begins to shift more and more towards opposite poles of "Sinners and Saints".[28]

Sociologists of religion point out some of the differences between religion and science such as (a) empirical, superempirical (b) Immediate cause, first and final causes, (c) descriptive, explanatory (d) proto truths and absolute truth (e) amoral and supermoral. Further sociology of religion explains how religion and science depend upon each other and why and how conflict and confusion between religion and science assume various forms, and examines whether the reconciliation between the two is possible.

5. The relationship of religion to kinship, family, prostitution, beggary, recreation, geography and agriculture, economic and political and educational and other activities throws some light upon religion and differentiation.

There seems to be a very close relationship between religion and kinship. This is more true in religions like Hinduism Normally without the presence of wife (Patni) no religious ceremony is said to be complete. It is a religious duty of parents to provide husbands for their daughters. It is believed that periodical offerings of food and drink to the dead ancestors by their male descendants is a religious necessity and there is no heaven for sonless.

In the sociological literature of the family, the place of religion in family life and its influence in maintaining traditional norms bearing on marriage, divorce, sexual relations and child development has not been neglected. There are a number of important articles on such questions as intermarriage, religion and divorce and sex and religion and most text books on the family include a chapter on religion. There is no substantial work however, which considers interrelatedness of religion and the family in a systematic and comparative way.[29]

Originally prostitute was priestess dedicated to a goddess or god and in serving the passing strangers she was performing an act of worship. In our country (India) the transition from religious to commercial prostitution is not yet over although this type of prostitution has been prohibited by law.[*] The

_____

* Devadasi protection act 1934 makes all persons who dedicate the girl and the persons who help in the dedication i.e., the priests liable for prosecution. If the girl is over 18 she too can be fined.

examples of this type of prostitution in India are Devadasi system in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the Kulina system of Bengal and some customs among the Naiks of U.P. and the Nambudris of Malbar.

In India the institution of beggary is often traced to the ancient educational system which provided for training in the Ashram and where pupils used to support themselves and their guru by asking alms just enough for the day. But the spirit behind such type of begging for alms was not that of parasites but of seekers for truth and the householders thought it their duty to support them. There was no idea of caring for a certain group of people who were unfortunate or distressed.[30] Because of religious sympathy for beggars in India, many have embraced beggary. A study of types of religious beggars is quite interesting. Indian Sadhus by G.S. Ghurye[**] is an important work in this direction. Of course, that is not the only purpose of that book.

Recreational activities are closely related to religious activities. Many a time, religious programmes have two functions. By taking part in religious fairs, festivals, devotional songs, lectures people get some instructions in religious behaviour and at the same time they get entertainment. Different festivals in India are so evenly distributed throughout the year so as to provide some relief from the toil.

The impact of geographical environment upon religion is well known. In many religions mountains, rivers, the Sun, the Moon, trees, and animals and birds etc., are worshipped. What specific trees are to be treated is indicated by divination. Dendrolatry[31] (worship of trees) is for two reasons. According to one spirits and supernatural beings have incarnated in the form of trees and so trees also become supernatural beings. Secondly, a few trees are abodes of gods. Some of the most important trees and plants worshipped by vast majority of Hindus are Tulashi (Ocimum Sanctum), Patri (Aegele Marmelos), and Ashwatha (Ficus bengalensis).

** Ghurye G.S. "Indian sadhus" (Popular Prakashan, Bombay Second edition, 1904)

Zoolatry[32] is animal worship. Agriculturists in India mostly worship bulls and cows. There are several problems connected with efforts to raise agricultural production and one among them is the credible cost of the average Hindus attitudes towards the monkey and other animals.

In another sense, religion is closely related to agriculture. Some festivals are related to agriculture. For instance, one of the most important calendar festivals of Coorgs is the Putri (lit; new rice) when the paddy sheaves are ritually cut.[33]

The protestant Ethic and spirit of capitalism by Max Weber (which I have already dealt with) points to the interrelationship of religion and economics. Like the study of "Religion and art" or "Religion and legal institution", "Religion and educational institutions", the examination of the complicated interrelations of economics and religion is of great importance in the general investigation of the relationships between religion and the entire gamut of social activities. But the study of "Religion and economics" is by no means identical with a study of religion.

As regards the interrelationship between politics and religion the literature is largely historical rather than sociological. Among the topics frequently discussed in sociology of religion that can be included in the political dimension are roles and statuses, leadership and authority.

Struggles for power and status have been a prominent feature of religious hierarchies and as one of the oldest professions, the clergy provides rich material for the study of professionalization in its interaction with bureaucratization.[34]

In the Israellite kingdom the prophets were not occupants of institutionalized status - roles, and they were attacking the royal - power......... the prophets were often physically attacked and prevented from addressing people. To a certain extent, however, the political authorities feared because of their (prophets') alleged magical powers.[35]

Political institutions are often sanctioned by religion. The ruling caste in India was sanctioned by Brahminian

religion. The emperor of China was sacred, and his officials had the prestige due to their religious learning. People who believed in the religion were to some extent committed to support government. But it is also true that the same religions to some extent required that the government should support the people. The emperor of China was responsible for flood and famine control and for the protection of the boundaries; if he failed conspicuously in his duties, he was thought to have lost the "mandate of heaven".[36]

Religious laws exercise an indirect control over social relations because their foundation is in the suprasocial power. Its fears could supersede even the fear of socio-political forces. Some religious notions such as spirits and ghosts, heaven and hell have great disciplinarian value.

6. Stratification and Religion

One of the important forms of social stratification is social class. In sociology of region it is examined why certain classes or groups of people choose certain types of religions. Groups such as craftsmen and small traders are less involved in a way of life based on rational economic calculation. Peasants, on the other hand, are subject to the unpredictable processes of nature. So peasants are usually attracted not to a rational theology but, rather, to a system that offers magical ways of controlling nature. Wealthy and commercial classes prefer world religions and not attracted to prophetic or Ethical religions. Militaristic societies emphasize protection against evil magic and pray for victory or happiness in a warrior's heaven and not much bothered about sin according to Weber.[37] Because of extreme asceticism and non-violence Jainism did not become popular among agriculturists (agriculture involves killing of insects) but among the Merchant classes.

7. Religion and War

In the name of religion slavery, infanticide, cannibalism and other cruel activities take place. Some of the bloodiest wars in the history have been fought over theological points in the east and west. The fights between Hindus and Muslims,

between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, and between Jews and Muslims in the middle east are the examples.

Actually, the fights between religious groups today are not over theological issues. Neither side is interested in converting the other to its faith. In such conflicts the opposing side is an ascribed community (or Ethnic group) that views itself as an in-group and the other side as an out-group. The fact that membership is based on religion is unimportant - it might just as well be based on skin, colour, language, caste, national origin or any other ascribed characteristic. Hence, non-religious Jews and non-religious Arabs can be as hostile to each other as devot Jews and Arabs. Their hostility may actually be based on rivalry for land or political power or prestige or some other valued object.[38]

Sociologists of religion point out how people are united and are divided in the name of religion. Publication of certain journals, establishing hostels, educational institutions and other such activities may promote unity among the members of the same religion while religion may also prove to be a disruptive force.

8. Secularization and Religion

What is secularization ? What are its characteristics and aspects and causes and consequences?. Which parts are most or least affected by secularization?. What is meant by a secular state?. Suitable answers to these and other such questions could be found in the study of sociology of religion.

Like most of the key concepts in sociology of religion the concept of secularization has been used in a variety of ways. Some thinkers hold that secularization is process whereby religious thinking and practice and institutions lose their social significance. While others hold that "Secularization" implies that what was previously regarded as religious is now ceasing to be such and it also implies a process of differentiation which results in the several aspects of society, political, legal, economic and ethical, becoming increasingly discrete in relation to each other.

Differentiation is one of the salient features of secularization. The ethical, political and economic questions

are separated from each other and for instance, the economic issues are decided on the basis of economic principles only in a true secular state. Some other characteristics of secularization process are rationality, scientific attitude, and humanistic outlook. Modern education which lays stress upon scientific attitude towards human problems, development in the means of transport and communication, urbanization, legislations, social and religious reformative movements which have humanitarian outlook are said to be some of the outcome of secularization.

Where there is discussion concerning secularism there stress is laid on problems relating to state and law rather than the secularism relating to rationalism and empiricism.

Some sociologists feel that secularization is not uniformly distributed within the modern societies. Different groups of the population have been affected differently. The impact of secularization is said to be greater on men than women, in the middle range than on the very young or old, cities than country side, classes directly connected with modern industrial production than on those of more traditional occupation.

In a true secular state all religions are accorded equal status and where necessary equal assistance is provided without discrimination.

9. **Religious Pluralism**

Sociology of religion pays an adequate attention to the meaning of religious pluralism and pluralistic society and the effects of them in the diffusion of power among various institutions. Further, it discusses the problem of how one religion is related to another and the philosophical and other issues involved in the plurality of religions.

Pluralism is the view that the best way to preserve freedom in a society is to have within it a number of powerful groups that represent various interests.[39] Plural societies are societies fragmented into different racial, religious, or linguistic groups. The degree of fragmentation will vary considerably from society to society.[40] Religion no longer expresses and reinforces the value of society as a whole and so

ceases to perform its traditional function of promoting social solidarity. Burger and Luckmann argue that the emergence of denominations weakens the influence of religion. No longer is a single 'Universe of meaning' provides for all members of society.[41]

India is having a pluralistic religious tradition. In north India apart from world religions - Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism we find there a plurality of tribal religions.

In a plural society, religious conflicts take place around religious symbols and institutions. Asghar Ali Engineer[42] states that in a pluralistic democratic society every religious community is quite conscious of its voting power and its importance to the political system and tries to use it to the maximum advantage. This leads to competitive aggressiveness which is displayed through symbol like Shah Bano issue or the Ramjanma Bhoomi - Babri Masjid controversy.

10. Religious Minorities

Another important content in the scope of sociological study of religion is religious minorities. Louis Wirth defines minority as, "A group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential or unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. Minority status carries with it the exclusion from full participation in the life of society".[43] The opposite term of a religious minority group is a dominant group and the dominant group is not necessarily be a majority group. In South Africa, for instance, the Negroes are in minority, although their numerical strength exceeds those of the Whites.

The constitution of India in its provisions recognises minorities based on religion and language, and, by implication those based on both in combination.

Some sociologists of religion have classified religious minorities into; Puralistic; Assimilationist, Secessionist; and Militant.

Apart from the meaning and classification of religious minorities into types, sociologists of religion analyse the problems faced by them (religious minorities) and trace their causes and offer important solutions to keep check over them.

11.Religiosity and Rationalism

What is religiosity and how is this related to rationalism and the impact of religiosity on society are analysed in sociology of religion.

A belief in the supernatural causation and control of human affairs is religiosity and it often lays emphasis on other worldly rewards. Rationalism is the belief that the means chosen to achieve one's goals should be logically chosen on the basis of verified knowledge and information.[44]

As rationalism becomes more prevalent religiosity as a standard for behaviour declines according to some sociologists like Betty Yorburg.[45] For instance, parents of a sick child in traditional societies pray and make offerings to the deities; in industrialized societies they take the child to a pediatrician.

Religiosity does not by any means disappear in advanced societies. In times of serious personal or social crisis religiosity may reappear in renewed form. Most people go to doctors when they are ill, but they may also pray for recovery from illness.

Some Sociologists have tried to determine whether deeply religious people behave more differently than atheists or moderately religious people. That is they try to measure religiosity and use this measure as an independent variable. But not all sociologists are convinced that religiosity is validly measured.[46]

12.Religious Organizations

The religious experience is the experience of the 'sacred' or 'holy' that calls for great respect. Out of the responses of men to religious or spiritual experiences (genuine or otherwise) religious groups form and religious institutions

develop, religious ideas are elaborated and religious practices are standardized. According to Wach doctrine, cultus, communion are theoritical, practical and sociological expressions of religious experiences respectively. Sociologists of religion will have to study and classify with care the typologically different organizational structures resulting from divergent concepts of religious communion.[47]

Religious organization is the complex of institutionalized roles and procedures which regulate the relation of men with the supernatural order, however such an order may be conceived.[48]

There are two kinds of religious organizations..... In primitive societies.... religion is one aspect of the life of all social groups... In time, organizations whose main function is religious make their appearance. These specifically religious organizations are found generally in societies in which an internal differentiation of function and consequent stratification have developed. Tonnies has called the former types of social organization Gemeinschaft the latter Gesellschaft. Specifically religious organization tends to appear as part of the development of Gesellschaft.[49]

Specifically religious organizations evolve out of the specific experiences of, particular founders and their disciples. From such experiences a form of religious association emerges, which eventuates in a permanent institutionalized religious organization.[50] Secret and mystery societies, Church - sect typology, Sampradaya my be cited as examples of specifically religious organizations.

The comparative work done in Church/Sect typology is relatively limited in scope, restricted as it is to Christian groups. Briefly described the Sect and Church represent two polar types of religious organization. The sect is distinguished theologically by its less well - developed dogma and ritual, psychologically by its more emotional appeal and sociologically by a converted rather than an inherited membership and, among other things, an uncompromising attitude towards the world.[51]

There are three different "Ideal types" of Church organization: (1) The congregational type (Baptists) hires and fixes its own leaders (2) The episopal type has a well defined

hierarchy of authority within the whole faith; (Roman Catholic)
(3) The presbysterian type has an elected board of ministers
and lay persons from different congregations with the authority
to appoint clergy.[52]

Unlike a Church a denomination does not identify with the
state and approves of the separation of church and state....
Membership of denomination is drawn from all levels of
society....... Denominations usually accept the norms and
values of society, though they impose minor restrictions on
them....... Like a Church, a denomination has a hierarchy of
paid officials and a bureaucratic structure though there is a
tendency for more lay preaching. Denominations typify religious
organizations in the U.S.A. where there is no established
Church.[53]

Denominationalism implies a degree of exclusiveness and
inner coherence usually lacking in non- Christian religions.
Hinduism gives the individual a choice of cults that emphasize
a particular style of devotion to one or another deity.[54] The
cult is a small religious aggregate often centered around a
single charismatic leader. It develops beliefs and ceremonies
which are at odds with those of the larger society. It also is
oriented to the individual and his problems, rather than to the
larger society and social issues. The cult tends to be short-
lived because of the problem of succession. Charisma is not
readily transferable. Cult membership is voluntary.[55]

Three different meanings attributed by Laxman Ramachandra
Vaidya[56] in his 'The Standard Sanskrit - English dictionary' of
the term 'Sampradaya' are :

1) Traditional doctrine;
2) A religious doctrine with exclusive worship of one divinity;
3) Custom, usage ;

In our context the second meaning (i.e. a religious
doctrine with exclusive worship of one divinity) is more
relevant than the first and the third meanings attributed to
the term 'Sampradaya' by S. R. Vaidya.

Grierson emphasizes the fact that the Sampradaya are
differentiated by "the preferences (ruchi) of particular
teachers in laying emphasis on particular points, but form
theoretically one body of Vishnu worshippers (Bhagavata),

insisting on bhakti (emotional relation to the deity) in distinction to intellectual Vedanta".[57] These views of Grierson in my opinion are more applicable to Bhagavata Sampradaya than to the concept of Sampradaya of our context as a whole. All Sampradaya are not in distinction to intellectual Vedanta. For instance, Sri Sampradaya established by Ramanuja is not wholly in distinction to intellectual Vedanta.

According to Joachim Wach, "Sampradaya is not translatable by the term "sect" or "denomination" because that implies secession from a larger body (Church). The Indian term does not have so much a negative as a positive connotation, implying a group with special concepts, forms of worship, and adherence to exclusive leadership exercised by an outstanding religious personality or by his physical or spiritual descendant ...... The basis of organization is, of course, a special religious experience, which may be traceable to an inspired or divine mythological or historical figure as in Vishnuism (Vishnu-Krishna-Vasudeva), or which may go back to a dim past (Shaivism and Shaktism).[58] Nimbaditya the founder of Sanakadi Sampradaya is a historical figure while the Lord Siva may be the mythological figure of several Sampradaya of Shaivism.

In his "Philosophical Trends in Modern Maharashtra", M. R. Lederle writes, "The word Sampradaya means an established doctrine transmitted from one to another, a traditional belief or usage, a particular and sectarian system of religious teaching, or a sect. In our context the word does not mean 'sect' since this would suggest a considerably large number of followers. It is also not an 'order' or religious brotherhood with a dedication for life, sealed by vows as understood in the Catholic Church. The word could be translated as 'sodality', meaning a lay organization whose aim is the sanctification of its members and a radiation of its ideals into the milieu under the spiritual guidance of the 'Spiritual father', the Guru. In our context the stress is on the spiritual guidance".[59]

The title (THE "SAMPRADAYA" of HINDU)[60] used by J. Wach gives the obvious impression that the Sampradaya includes only Hindus. But Muslim saints like Kabir are very much influenced by Nath Sampradaya and quite a few followers of Nimbargi Sampradaya are non - Hindus.

From the preceding discussion it is clear that to give a precise meaning of the term 'Sampradaya' is an extremely

difficult task. However in our context, the following provisional definition and meaning of the term (Sampradaya) may be offered.

A specifically religious group with special concepts, forms of worship exercised by an outstanding religious personality (historical or mythical) or his physical or spiritual descendant may be called Sampradaya.

As regards to the meaning and nature of the term 'Sampradaya' a few more points may be clarified. It may be noted here that each Sampradaya is likely to develop branches within its fold with the passage of time and each branch is viewed as a Sampradaya.

Another point that is to be noted in this connection is that some Sampradaya having certain common features show a tendency to come under a common name though they have different founders. For example, Sri Sampradaya of Ramanuja, Brahma Sampradaya of Madhva bear the common name - Vaishnava Sampradaya.

Though the terms 'cult and sodality' approximate the meaning of the term 'Sampradaya', it is preferred to retain the term 'Sampradaya'. Ceremonies and beliefs that are developed by Sampradaya are not necessarily be at odds with those of large society as in cults. The term 'sodality' indicates spiritual guidance but there are Sampradaya like Ramdas (established by Ramdas swami - the spiritual teacher of Shivaji), which lay emphasis not only on spiritual guidance but also on material welfare.

Religious and historical figures like Ramdas, Ramanuja, Nimbaditya, Madhva, Vishnu Swamin, and the saint of Nimbargi have founded Ramdasi, Sri Sanakadi, Brahma, Rudra, and Nimbargi Sampradaya respectively with a view to propagate their spiritual, philosophical and ethical and other such messages

In addition to the topics mentioned above, some sociologists of the religion have made the study of religious observance which includes all kinds of overt religious behaviour, and both positive and negative aspects of functions of religion such as explanation of evil, social control, socialization, and so on and circle of disciples, brotherhood. There is, of course, considerable historical material on

religious leadership/authority/specialists (prophets, priests, saints, seers and sages etc.;) in the form of biographies, church histories and the like. Very little of this material, however, can be considered sociological or systematic and only limited attempts have been undertaken to make it so. Broader trends in the development of religious movements and organizations call for more serious study of sociologists. The relationship between the onset sectarian religious movements and political radicalism, has still to be systematically investigated. Sociologists of religion also study religious reformative and Bhakti (devotional)and other such movements.

With all this we cannot say that the list of the contents of scope of sociology of religion is exhaustive. This is far from it. At least one must have been convinced from the foregoing account that sociology of religion has a very wide scope. It comprehends the study of the interrelationship of religion and society and the forms of interaction which take place between them.

The foregoing discussion on scope and other aspects of sociological study of religion sheds light upon its importance.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

All sciences are useful to humankind in one way or another. But it is left to human beings themselves to make proper use of them or not. The maximum usefulness of any science is obtained, when two tasks are accomplished i) a systematic study of causal relations; and (ii) the diffusion of the knowledge thus obtained to the general population. The present world which is in a disordered and baffling state of various religious tensions of a high degree cries out for sociology of religion to rise to its needs. A study of religion from sociological point of view is of immense importance to both individual and society.

A study of sociology of religion develops in an individual the spirit of inquiry and a scientific outlook towards religion and other related aspects of religion such as morality, magic, art, science. The sociology of religion does not concern itself with the truth or worth of the superempirical beliefs upon which religion rests. It is concerned with the effects of these in the historical experience of men and in the

development of societies. Although it takes a naturalistic approach as a methodological rule, it does not pass judgment upon the questions of faith itself. Yet it provides empirical information and ways of looking at religious phenomena without which an intelligent and sophisticated approach to religion is no longer possible in our days.[61]

We can overcome to certain extent at least rational bias and emotional bias when we make a scientific study of religion from Sociological viewpoint. Of course, it is not fully possible to eliminate ethnocentric approach and personal vision will have some impact on academic work. A study of religion from sociological viewpoint would tend to enhance toleration, benevolent spirit on the one hand and reduce religious prejudice on the other hand.

For instance, religion had been regarded as product of civilization by some missionaries and travellers until Tylor gave convincing proof that primitive societies have their own versions of religious activity, not very different from that of civilized societies. Ever since Tylor's views were published no ethnographer has reported any primitive society without religious beliefs and practices.[62]

Apart from enhancing religious toleration and reducing religious prejudice and bias, a study of religion enriches our knowledge. Sociology of religion offers modern man an important avenue for better understanding of religion as a human concern and activity. Since religion is related to deeper human needs, feelings and aspirations and most profound aspects of human conditions that are still mysterious to us, the prospects of further study and research in the field of sociology of religion issue an attractive and exciting challenge to those interested in furthering the study of man and society. Sociology of religion as an academic discipline, it is still young but it offers the possibility of a promising future.

A thorough examination of effects of religion on the social life of mankind and of the influence of religion on the cohesion of groups, on the development and differentiation of social attitudes and patterns and on the growth and decline of social institutions is likely to yield results of utmost importance.[63] Further, sociology of religion, can offer invaluable suggestions both as a preventive and curative

measure in tackling problems of religious minorities, tensions, and conflicts and wars.

No explanation of religion can be complete without considering its sociological aspects. Those of us who study the sociological implications of religion will err equally if we imagine that our work will reveal the nature and essence of religion itself.[64] Sociology of religion and other disciplines of religion are complementary to each other and their mutual interdependence would enable us to have a comprehensive picture of religion.

It is a matter of great delight to note that interest in sociology of religion is growing considerably. This may be in part a consequence of the general interest in religion. Notwithstanding the curiosity in sociology of religion exists, and this is an essential precondition to innovating work in the field of sociology of religion. Also encouraging is the understandably concomitant dissatisfaction with some of the heretofore accepted propositions about the place of religion in society. The fact should not be ignored that some churches ard religious organizations come forward expressing their enthusiasm over their self-examination by persons with sociological training.[65]

A brief reference is made hereafter to some important research problems that are relevant to the present thesis from the point of view of Sociology of religion.

<div align="center">

SECTION IV

SOME IMPORTANT RESEARCH PROBLEMS OF THE THESIS

</div>

The preceding description reveals that no religious phenomenon exists in vacuum and it can be perceived from different perspectives. The two most important perspectives are : (i) General Science of Religion; (ii) Philosophy of Religion. Nimbargi Sampradaya, as a religious phenomenon, for instance, can be scrutinized from the standpoint of both the aforesaid perspectives.

As noted earlier Philosophy of Religion is akin to theology in its normative interests but it shares its subject-matter with the General Science of Religion (including History of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Sociology of Religion).

Theology of Nimbargi Sampradaya consists of religious beliefs that provide meaningful explanations of the major questions of human existence such as life and death, human origins and destiny, happiness and suffering, success and failure, good and evil. We shall see later, how these religious beliefs find their expression in the sayings, writings of the leaders and followers of Nimbargi Sampradaya.

History of Nimbargi Sampradaya can be traced. Nimbargi Sampradaya is having the history of about 200 years.

It is possible to make a distinction to a certain degree between the religious (spiritual) experiences of some individual leaders and followers of Nimbargi Sampradaya, and Nimbargi Sampradaya as an institutional body. The former attracts the attention of Psychologists of religion and the latter of Sociologists of religion. It has been proposed to study in this volume Nimbargi Sampradaya primarily from the standpoint of Sociology of religion and pushing other disciplines of religion and various branches of Sociology into the background. Hence it is essential here to mention some important research problems of the present thesis.

It is an established fact that Sampradaya, cults, mystery and secret societies, sects and various other religious organizations and movements appear from time to time in response to new ideologies, challenges and catering to the everchanging local, regional conditions and needs, inspite of the prevalence of universalizing and ethnic religions. The universalizing and ethnic religions like Christianity, Hinduism, Islam become too broad, vague and uninspiring, unintelligible and pave the way for various religious movements and organizations within or outside their fold. The following two examples sufficiently illustrate this point.

Sufism is said to be Islamic in origin and Prophet Mohammed is its originator. We are told that Prophet Mohammed is the recipient of a two-fold revelation - the one embodies in the contents of the Quran, the other within his heart. The former is meant for all and is binding on all; the latter is transmitted to the chosen few. Sufism is strictly esoteric and mystical. Indian sufism has its roots in the mystic speculations of Persia where it has reached its zenith in the 15th century A.D.

Sufism has appealed to the masses mainly on account of the element of love and of the inspired works of its founders which speaks in a language that is easily understood. It appeals to the deepest emotions of men and rouses in them a longing for God. Sufism has provided to the men of diverse aptitude a variety of ways by which they can give vent to their spiritual feelings. There is nothing rigid or stern in Sufism.

Veerasaivism is a twelfth century reformist movement in Karnataka lead by Basava - a charismatic leader and his followers. The core of Veerasaiva teachings is its refusal to recognize the principle of ritual pollution and purity basic to Brahminical Hinduism. The biological processes such as birth, death, menstruation, spittle and Jati (caste) cause ritual pollution necessitating segregation of persons for a fixed period before purification is effected. Veerasaivism proclaims non-observance of five kinds of pollution. Veerasaivism does not recognize ritual pollution and in practice it is considerably diluted. Veerasaivism refuses to make a distinction between auspicious and inauspicious occasions on the ground that the Linga, emblem of Siva knows no pollution.

Veerasaivism upholds the dignity of labour. It advocates that one should find one's heaven in one's work. It disapproves of the traditional attributes of high and low occupations.

Basava rejects the idea of Samsara (Meta Psychosis) and the related ideal of Karma. He holds that one life is enough for a Veerasaiva to attain salvation by leading a meaningful and purposive life. This is to be realized in this world.

Basava and other Veerasaiva saints and their followers preached the tenets of Veerasaivism to the masses in Kannada - a regional language. This helped in making the message intelligible to the masses and winning a large number of converts both from low and high castes in a short period of time.

The present volume, therefore, is not meant merely for the clarification of the concept of 'Sampradaya' but to show how Nimbargi Sampradaya has emerged as a response to the then prevailing conditions, challenges, needs during the life time of its founder in and around Bombay Karnataka.

A brief survey of Indian History reveals that not only various Sampradaya have occurred in this land but with the passage of time the processes of fusion and fission have taken place in some Sampradaya. For instance, Sampradaya established by Madhva, Ramanuja, Vallabha, Chaitanya bear the common name of Vaishnava Sampradaya. In Sri Sampradaya of Ramanuja the split has taken place into Vadakarai and Tenkalai Sampradaya. In course of investigation, an attempt is made to see whether split has occurred in Nimbargi Sampradaya or not due to temperamental and other differences of followers and leaders of this Sampradaya.

There are three types of leadership according to Max Weber. These are traditional, charismatic, and bureaucratic. Our study reveals whether these are ideal types or not.

Religions begin through the leadership of charismatic founders and their followers who have supernormal, (possibly divine) powers. Charisma is spontaneous, creative, and it stimulates new ways of thinking. But the charismatic phase of a religion is short and temporary according to Max Weber. In this work, a critical examination of this statement is made.

Elsewhere in this chapter it is mentioned that according to Max Weber certain classes or groups of people choose certain types of religions. Our present study indicates how far this stand taken by Weber is correct. This thesis further examines the question whether Sampradaya is meant only for Hindus.

Doctrinally speaking, castes have no special religious significance, but they have become so intertwined with sacred practices that the two are almost fused in the context of Indian Society according to R. A. Schermerhorn[1]. Our study questions the adequacy of this statement made by Schermerhorn.

Mandelbaum[2] opines that religious observances entail much participation by family members. Our present study shows whether this statement can be confirmed or rejected or modified. But for the purpose of our analysis close kins and not merely family members are taken into consideration.

Rituals in some Sampradaya like Nimbargi are of two kinds. Nirguna (meditation) and Saguna (recitation of holy book, Bhajan. Kirtan etc.,). The present study explores whether Nirguna Bhakti is linked with Saguna Bhakti.

It is the contention of some sociologists that in modern societies beliefs and doctrines have more importance than rituals and ceremonies. Hence, as we have observed elsewhere in this chapter that the religious doctrine of Emile Durkheim which gives prominance to rituals and ceremonies is found less useful in explaining religion of the so-called civilized societies. Our study confirms or rejects or modifies the stand taken by some sociologists regarding the usefulness of this religious doctrine of Durkheim in explaining religion of modern societies.

Most of the text books on sociology give a coverage on the relationship of religion to morality. Although it is not intended to study in this work all aspects of the relationship between religion and morality, sufficient attention is paid to one important aspect of their relationship viz; whether spirituality is linked with morality or not.

According to K. Davis[3] the very non-rationality of religious behaviour is the thing that gives religion its vitality in human life. In other words, K. Davis takes it for granted that the essence of religion is non-rational. Our study critically examines this statement made by K. Davis and shows whether there is absolutely no place for the element of rationality in religion.

Finally, in this volume an attempt is made to show why do people join Sampradaya. Is it because of a single incentive or a combination of two or more than two incentives? Once they join, do they stick to Sampradaya? If so, why? Is it possible for a person to subscribe to more than one Sampradaya at a time?

It must be borne clearly in mind, however, that the aforesaid and some other research problems of the present thesis are not going to be tested wholly by adopting empirical methods. Our examination of research problems, needless to say, is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The chapter that follows is on 'Research Methodology' which gives further details on this issue.

REFERENCES

I CHAPTER

SECTION I

1. **Wach Joachim**, "Sociology of Religion" (The Univesrsity of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) p. 374.

2. **O'Dea Thomas F.**,"The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India Private, Ltd, New Delhi,1969) p. 117.

3. Op. Cit; p. 55.

4 **Hill Michael**, "Sociological Approaches (1) in Frank Whaling (ed.) ("Contemporary approaches to the study of religion ",Vol.II; Social sciences. Berlin: Mouton: 1985) p. 99.

5 Ibid;

6 Ibid;

7 Op. Cit. " Introduction " Frank whaling p. 17.

8 **Wach Joachim**, "The Sociology of Religion"; (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) pp. 7-8.

9 Vide "Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, Indian Edition of 1981 Edition of published in 1983." p. 853.

10 **Scott William P**, "Dictionary of Sociology" (Ashwani Goyal for GOYLSaab Delhi, First Indian Edition; 1987) p.298.

11. "International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences" Vols. 13 & 14 (Complete unabridged, The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, New York); Collier-Macmillan Publishers, London, 1968) p. 406.

12. **FrankWhaling**, (ed.) Introduction ("Sociological Approaches (1) "Contemporary approaches to the study of religion, Vol.II: Social Sciences, Berlin Mouton: 1985) p. 6.

13. **Kehrer Gunter,** ("Sociological Approaches(2)" in Kehrer Gunter and Hardin Bert (eds.) Contemporary Approaches to the study of Religion, Vol.II: Social Sciences. Berlin: Mouton; 1985) p. 152.

14. **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion", (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) p. 2.

15. <u>Vide</u> Op. Cit; p. 11.

16. <u>Vide</u> **Frank Whaling,** (ed.) 1985. Introduction (Sociological Approaches (1) "Contemporary approaches to the study of religion Vol II: Social Sciences. Berlin: Mouton) p. 10.

17. <u>Vide</u>**Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion" (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago,1944) p. 10.

18. **Spencer Metta,**" Foundations of Modern Sociology " Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p.370.

19. **Glock Charles Y,**· "The Sociology of Religion" in Thomas Merton Broom Leonard, Cotrellr Leonard S. (eds.) (Sociology Today Vol. I Problems and perspects, Harper and Row, New York, 1959) p. 167.

20. International encycopaedia of the Social Sciences" Vols. 13 and 14 (Complete unabridged, The Macmillan company and the Free Press, New York) Collie-Macmillan Publishers, London, 1968) p. 415.

21. **Glock Charles Y,** ("The Sociology of Religion" in Sociology Today, Vol.I - Problems and Prospects, (ed.) by Thomas Merton, Leonard Cotrell Harper and Row New York. 1959) pp. 153-177.

22. **Frank Whaling,** (ed.)-Introduction"(Sociological Approaches (1)" Contemporary approaches to the study of religion, Vol. II: Social Sciences. Berlin: Mouton, 1985) p. 5.

23. **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion" (The University c Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) pp. 1-2.

24. <u>Ibid;</u>

25. <u>Vide</u> **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology ", (Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1982) pp. 419-471.

26. **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion". (The university of Chicago press, Chicago 1944) p. 133.

27. "International encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences" Vols. 13 and 14 (Complete unabridged Macmillan company and the Free Press. New York, Collier - Macmillan Publishers, London, 1968) p. 416.

28. **WachJoachim,** "Sociology of Religion", (The university of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) p. 374.

29. **O'Dea Thomas F,** "The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India, Private Ltd, New Delhi, 1969) p. 34.

30. **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion" (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) pp. 374-75.

31. <u>Op. Cit:</u> p. 6

32. **Mitchell G Duncan,** (ed.), "A Dictionary of Sociology", (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London, First published, 1968), p. 113.

33. <u>Vide</u> **Harlambos Michael with Herald Robin,** "Sociology : Themes and Perspectives", Oxford University Press, Delhi, First Published, 1980) pp. 463-64.

34. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.,** " The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology" (Penguin Books Ltd; Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, First published 1984), p. 132.

35. **Ahluwalia, Aneeta,** "Sociology of Medicine", (A Survey of Research in Sociology and Social Anthropology, Vol.II, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1974) pp. 401-30.

36. **Chaudhari, Buddhadeb,** "Social Sciences, Health and Culture: The Tribal situation." (Social Action, A Quarterly review of Social Trends - Indian Social institute, July - Sept. 1989 Vol. 39 No. 3) p. 265.

37. **Mitchell G. Duncan** , (ed.) "A Dictionary of Sociology," (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London, First Published, 1968) p. 114.

38. *Johnson* **Harry M** ,"Sociology : A systematic introduction", (Allied publishers Private Ltd; New Delhi, Third Indian reprint, 1970) p. 443.

39. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 442.

40. **Mitchell G. Duncan**, (eds.), "A dictionary of Sociology" (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London, First published, 1968) p. 114.

41. *Johnson* **Harry M.**, "Sociology A Systematic Introduction". (Allied publishers private Ltd; New Delhi, Third Indian reprint, 1970) p. 114.

42. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 442

43. **Pundlik V.G.** 'Foreword' in **Bambawale Usha**, "Intrerreligious marriages", (Dastane Ramchandra & Co; Pune, First published Jan. 1982, Pune, Ph. D. Thesis). pp. V-VI.

44. **Mitchell G. Duncan** (ed.), "A Dictionary of Sociology" (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London, First Published, 1968) p. 56.

45. <u>Vide</u> **Glock Charles** Y, Sociology of Religion" in Thomas Merton, Leonard Broom, Leonard Cotrell (eds.) ("Sociology Today, Vol. I : Problems and Perspects. Harper and Row, New York, 1959) pp. 176-77.

SECTION II

1. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T.N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) pp. 153-54.

2. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 511.

3. **Majumdar D.N. and Madan T.N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 155.

4. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 512.

5. <u>Ibid;</u>

6. **Harlambos Michael with Herald Robin**, "Sociology; Themes and Perspectivs" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 454.

7. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 156.

8. <u>Vide</u> **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 513.

9. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin**, "Sociology; Themes and Perspectivs" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 454.

10. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 513.

11. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 156.

12. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 513.

13. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 155.

14. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 513.

15. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 514.

16. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 155.

17. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin**, "Sociology; Themes and Perspectivs" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 454.

18. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.**, "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 156.

19. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 514.

20. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin**, "Sociology; Themes and Perspectivs" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 455.

21. **Davis K.**, "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 544.

22. Op. Cit; pp. 515-16.

23. Vide Op. Cit; pp. 516-18.

24. Op. Cit; p. 518.

25. **Kehrer Gunter**, ("Sociological Approaches (2) in Kehrer Gunter and Hardin Bert (ed.) Contermporary Approaches to the study of Religion; Vol II; Social Sciences 1985) p. 161.

26. **Spencer Metta**, "Foundations of Modern Sociology",(Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 15.

27. Ibid;

28. **Kehrer Gunter**, ("Sociological Approaches (2) in Kehrer Gunter dand Hardin Bert (ed.) Contemporary Approaches to the study of Religion; Vol II; Social Sciences, 1985 pp. 161 - 62.

29. **O'Dea Thomas F.**, "The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India Private Ltd; New Delhi, 1969) p. 11.

30. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.** , "The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth Middlesex, England Published 1984) p.93.

31. **Merton Robert K.**, "Social Theory and Social Structure" (The Free Press Glencoe, Illinois, 1957) pp. 576-77.

32. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology : Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 457.

33. Op. Cit; pp. 456 - 57.

34. Op. Cit; pp. 458 - 59.

35. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.** , "The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmonds worth Middlesex, England First Published 1984) p. 93.

36. Ibid;

37. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 17.

38. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row Publishers New York; 1982) p. 176.

39. Vide **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,,** "Sociology Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 461.

40. Ibid;

41. Op. Cit; p. 462.

42. **Spencer Metta "Foundations of Modern Sociology,** "(Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 380.

43. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology: Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 463.

44. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row Publishers New York; 1982) p. 177.

45. <u>Vide</u> **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology: Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 462.

46. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 472.

47. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 462.

48. <u>Ibid;</u>

49. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 387.

50. **Mitchell G. Duncan** (ed.)" A dictionary of Sociology", (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London, First Published 1968) p. 465.

51. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology: Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 465.

52. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 388.

53. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 389 - 90.

54. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 390.

55. <u>Ibid;</u>

56. <u>Ibid;</u>

57. **Abercrombie Nicholas,** <u>Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.</u> "The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth Middlesex, England Published 1984) p. 170.

58. <u>Vide</u> **Sorokin Pitirim A,** "Contemporary Sociological Theories",(Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, First Indian Edition, 1978) p. 396.

59. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.,** "The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth Middlesex,England Published 1984) p.170.

60. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice
    - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 390.

61. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S. ,** "The
    Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd;
    Harmondsworth Middlesex,England Published 1984) p.171.

62. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice
    - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 390.

63. **Sorokin Pitirim A.,** "Contemporary Sociological theories",
    (Kalyani Publishers New Delhi, First Indian Edition,
    1978) p. 690.

64. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice
    - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) p. 390.

65. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row
    Publishers New York; 1982) p. 143.

66. Op. Cit; p. 202.

67. Op. Cit; p 57.

68. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.,** "The
    Penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd,
    Harmondsworth Middlesex, England Published 1984)
    p. 171.

69. **Sorokin Pitirim A.,** "Contemporary Sociological Theories",
    (Kalyani Publishers New Delhi, First Indian Edition,
    1978) p. 695 - 96.

70. Op. Cit; p 684.

71. Op. Cit; p 696.

72. Ibid;

73. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology",
    (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979)
    p. 17-18.

74. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and
    Row Publishers, New York; 1982) p. 164.

75. Ibid;

76. Op. Cit; p 177.

77. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology",
   (Prentice- Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979)
   pp. 18-19.

78. Vide **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion"; (The
   Univesrsity of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) p. 7.

79. Ibid;

80. Vide Ibid;

81. Vide **Thompson K.A.,** "Religious Organizations", in
   (Mckinlay John B. (ed.) "Processing People: Cases in
   Organizational behaviour". Holt, Rinehart & Winston,
   London, 1975) p. 1.

SECTION III

1. **Guthrie Stewart,** (quoted Tylor's definition of Religion) in
   "A Cognitive Theory of Religion", (Current
   Anthropology Vol. 21, No. 2 April 1980) p. 182.

2. **Hill Machael,** , "Sociological Approaches (i) in Frank
   Whaling (ed.) ("Contemporary approaches to the study
   or religion", Vol II. Social Sciences. Berlin, Mouton,
   1985) p. 108 (quoted Yinger J Milton's definition of
   religion).

3. **Nisbert Robert A.** ,"The Sociology of Emile Durkheim",
   (Oxford University Press, New York 1974) p. 169.

4. Vide **Dobbelaere Karel and Lauwers,** ("Social compass XX".
   Definitions of religion A Sociological critique ( )
   1973/74) p. 537.

5. Op. Cit; p. 546.

6. Vide Op. Cit; p. 542.

7. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 546.

8. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 542.

9. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 549.

10. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> p. 551.

11. **Spencer Metta,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) pp. 368-69.

12. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row Publishers New York; 1982) p. 436.

13. <u>Vide Op. Cit;</u> pp. 423 and p. 425.

14. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology: Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 455.

15. **Davis K.,** "Human Society", (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 521.

16. **Nisbert Robert A.,** "The Sociology of Emile Durkheim", (Oxford University Press, New York 1974) p. 174.

17. **Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N.** , "An Introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 153.

18. **Davis K.** , "Human Society", (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 520.

19. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 533.

20. **Sinha Surjit** , "Chapter 9, Sociology of Religion: A trend report", 1974. in Srinivas M. N; Rao M. S. A., Shah A. M. (eds.) "A survey of research in Sociology & Anthropology Vol II" (A project sponsored by the Indian Concil of Social Science Research, New Delhi Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1974) p. 508.

21. **Davis K.** , "Human Society", (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) pp. 533 - 34.

22. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology: Themes and Perspectives" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 466.

23. **Mitchell G. Duncan,** (ed.), "A Dictonary of Sociology", (Routledge & Kengan Paul, London First Published, 1968) p. 122.

24. **Davis K.,** "Human Society", (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 534.

25. **Beals Ralph L. and Hoijer Harry,** "An Introduction to Anthropology" (The Macmillan Company, New York, Third Edition, 1965) p. 594.

26. <u>Ibid;</u>

27. **Yorburg Betty,** "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row Publishers New York; 1982) p. 415.

28. <u>Vide</u> **Sorokin Pitirim A. and Lunden Walter A.,** "Power and Morality", (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1975) pp. 151-52.

29. **Glock Charles Y.,** "The Sociology of Religion", in Merton Robert K, Broom Leonard, Cotrell Leonard S. (eds.) ("Sociology Today, Vol I : Problems and Perspectives". Harper and Row, New York, 1959) pp. 174 - 75.

30. **Madan G. R.,** "Indian Social Problems, (Vol I)", (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1976) p. 226.

31. **Kadetotad N. K.,** "Religion and Society among the Harijans (Ph.D Thesis)" (Karnataka University, Dharwad, July 1977) p. 90.

32. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 93.

33. **Srinivas M. N.,** "Religion and Society Among the Coorgs o: South India", (Media Promoters & Publishers Pvt. Ltd; Bombay, First Edition, 1952) p. 230.

34. <u>Vide</u> **Thompson K. A.**, "Religious Organizations", in (Mckinlay John B. (ed.) "Processing People. Cases in Organizational Behaviour". Holt, Rinehart & Winston, London, 1975.) p. 2.

35. **Johnson Harry M.**, "Sociology A Systematic Introduction". (Allied publishers private Ltd; New Delhi, Third Indian reprint, 1970) p. 455.

36. <u>Vide</u> <u>Op. Cit;</u> pp. 453 - 54.

37. <u>Vide</u> **Spencer Metta**, "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) pp. 379 to 81 and 400.

38. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 399.

39. <u>Op. Cit;</u> p. 609.

40. **Abercrombie Nicholas, Hill Stephen, Turner Bryan S.**, "The penguin Dictionary of Sociology". (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmonds worth Middlesex, England First Published 1984) p. 158.

41. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin**, "Sociology: Themes and Perspectivs"(Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 477.

42. **Engineer Asghar Ali**, 'Muslims in a Multi-Religious Society' "Economic and Political Weekly " (Sameeksha Trust Publication, Vol XXX, No. 44, Nov. 3. 1990) p. 2420.

43. **Linton Ralph**, "The problems of minority groups. The Science of man in the world crisis (1945 p. 347)" Quoted in Ghurye G.S. ("Social Tensions in India", Popular Prakashan, Bomaby 1968) p. 46.

44. **Yorburg Betty**, "Introduction to Sociology", (Harper and Row Publishers New York; 1982) p. 215.

45. <u>Op. Cit;</u> pp. 215 - 16.

46. Vide **Spencer Metta** , "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice-Hall,New Jersey,Second eition, 1979) p.391.

47. Vide **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion"; (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) pp. 23 - 25.

48. "International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences" Volumes 13 and 14 (Complete unabridged, The Macmillan Company and Free Press, New York Collier Macmillan Publishers, London. 1968,) p. 418.

49. **O'Dea Thomas F.,** "The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India Private Ltd; New Delhi, 1969) p. 36.

50. Op. Cit; p. 37.

51. **Glock Charles Y.,** 1959 "The Sociology of Religion", in Thomas Merton Broom Leonard, Cotrell Leonard S. (eds.) ("Sociology Today, Vol. I Problems and Perspects. Harper and Row, New York, 1959.) p. 159.

52. **Spencer Metta.,** "Foundations of Modern Sociology", (Prentice - Hall, New Jersey, Second Edition, 1979) pp. 399-400.

53. **Haralambos Michael with Heald Robin,** "Sociology : Themes and Perspectivcs" (Oxford University press, Delhi First Published, 1980) p. 468.

54. "International encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences" Vols. 13 and 14 (Complete unabridged, The Macmillan Company and Free Press, New York. Collier-Macmillan Publishers, London, 1968) p. 435.

55. **Leslie Gerald R. Larson Richard F.,** Gorman Benjamin L. "Order and Change Introductory Sociology" (Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1963) p. 529.

56. **Vaidya L.R.,** "The Standard Sanskrit - English Dictionary"; (Mrs. Radhabai Atmaram sagoon, Book-seller and publisher, Kamaladevi Road, Bombay, 1989) p. 763.

57. Vide **Wach Joachim,** "Sociology of Religion" (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1944) p. 128

58. Ibid;

59. Lederle M R, "Philosophical Trends in Modern Maharashtra" (Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay. First published, 1976) p. 393.

60. Vide Wach Joachim, "Sociology of Religion",(The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1941) p. 127.

61. O'Dea Thomas F., "The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India Private Ltd; New Delhi, 1969) p. 117.

62. Majumdar D. N. and Madan T. N., "An introduction to Social Anthropology" (Asia publishing House, Bombay, First Edition, 1956) p. 151.

63. O'Dea Thomas F., "The Sociology of Religion" (Prentice Hall of India Private Ltd; New Delhi, 1969) p. 1.

64. Wach Joachim., "Sociology of Religion", (The university of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944) p. 4.

65. Vide Glock Charles Y., "The Sociology of Religion", in Merton Robert K, Broom Leonard, Cotrell Leonard S (eds.) ("Sociology Today, Vol. I. Problems and Perspectives. Harper and Row, New York, 1959) p. 176.

SECTION IV

1. Schermerhorn R.A., "Ethnic Plurality in India" (University of Arizona Press, Thueson, Arizona 1978) p. 119.

2. Mandelbaum David G., "Society in India" (Vols. I&II Popular Prakashan, Bombay. First Indian Edition, 1972) p. 42.

3. Davis K., "Human Society" (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967) p. 510.