

Max Weber, "Sociology of Religion"
in Economy and Society

Chapter i.1. The Origins of Religion

- 399 Religious behavior can only be understood from the viewpoint of participant's subjective experience
399f Religious behavior oriented to this world; relatively rational - religion & magic behavior have economic ends
- irrational from modern point of view: means-ends, causality
 - effectiveness or power of practitioner: charisma: inherent or by works

Chapter i.2

- 401 Belief in spirits endowed with volition
magician's charisma - intoxication
402 animism - supersensual forces that intervene in the world
403 soul vs. supernatural powers (gods, demons)

Chapter i.3

- 403 magic transformed from direct manipulation of forces to symbolic activity
405 symbolic becomes more important - all areas of human activity drawn in; among the longest lasting aspects of dogma, even in rationalized religion.
pictorial art originally symbolic
406 stereotyping - "sacred is the uniquely unalterable" - fixes worldly behavior
407 slow transition from analogical thinking to syllogistic

Chapter i.4

- 407 systematic thinking, rationalization of life, specialization - evolution of pantheon of gods

Chapter i.5

- 411 household and kin groups need own gods: spirits of ancestors

Chapter i.6

- 412 development of gods of political confederation - e.g. Yahweh
413 political and military conquest also entailed victory of stronger god

Chapter i.7

- 415 monotheism: variation in potential of a god to achieve primacy in pantheon
416f which god exerts strongest influence - NB sky gods most constant; primacy of universal gods; growth of empire
419 hinderance to monotheism - interests of priests; need of laity for accessible gods, open to magical influence

Chapter ii.1. Magic and Religion

- 422 magical coercion, when god's power conceived by analogy to man's; also supplication and faithfulness to his will - prayer and sacrifice - mix magic and supplication
423 sacrifice of animals - fraternal community to gods

- 424 Dual aspect to religious evolution - rational systematization of god concept and relations of man to god; irrationalization - recession of practical goals in favor of otherworldly noneconomic goals.
Cult or religion vs. sorcery; gods vs. demons

Chapter ii.2

- 425f differentiation of priesthood from practitioners of magic
- possible distinctions:
 - * influence gods by worship vs. coercion with magic
 - * regular functionaries vs. individual and occasional efforts
 - * association with social organization vs. self-employed [cf. Durkheim]
 - * professionalism (knowledge, doctrine qualifications) vs. personal gifts (charisma)
- 426 - crucial feature of priesthood: specialization of group in continuous operation of cultic enterprise, permanently associated with particular norms, times and places, and specific social groups - also NB rationalization of metaphysics and ethics

Chapter ii.3

- 427f success or failure of influence with gods - affects priests' prestige

Chapter ii.4

- 430 increased ethical demands made on gods parallel social development - growing importance of judicial determination, cosmological rationalization, regulation by rules, economic reliability of given word: obligations which increase calculability of individuals' conduct

Chapter ii.5

- 432f source of ethics in magical norms of conduct - rationalization of taboos

Chapter ii.6

- 433 - totemism - relationship with an object

Chapter ii.7

- 435 taboo norms may impede development of trade and market, of capitalism
- 436 caste system and sacred vocations - opposite of economic rationalism: rather, traditional. Cf. ethics of ascetic Protestantism; Hindu notion of transmigration

Chapter ii.8

- 437 with rationalization of magic to religion - from coercion to worship - notion that violation of ethical norms caused gods' displeasure - led to notions of sin and salvation, for individuals and for groups (NB conscience)
- 438 magical sin-like notions

Chapter iii.1. The Prophet

- 439 Prophet - bearer of charisma, proclaims religious doctrine or divine commandment
 440 - personal call: distinction from priest
 - definite revelations, doctrine or commandment (not magic): distinct from magician.
 but NB charisma generally required magical authentication
 441 but prophet's prophecy is unremunerated, as against magician

Chapter iii.2

- 442 cf. lawgiver - called to office at time of social tensions

Chapter iii.3

- 444 teacher of ethics

Chapter iii.4

- 446 mystagogue

Chapter iii.5

- 447f ethical prophet (preaches ethical duties) vs. exemplary prophet (shows the way to religious salvation by personal example)

Chapter iii.6

- 450f Nature of Prophetic Revelation: view of world as meaningful totality - both social and cosmological - to which man's behavior must be oriented to obtain salvation
 - conflict between empirical reality and this concept - produces strongest tensions for man
 - competition of priests, prophets, non-priests (including philosophers) to give metaphysical account

Chapter iv.1. The Congregation between Prophet and Priest

- 452 Congregation - originally lay followers just outside the charismatic circle of followers of prophet;
 Routinization of prophetic charisma
 455 congregational religion - laity actively participates
 456 priesthood must meet needs of laity to maintain power; factors which they must come to grips with:
 prophecy (often themselves laymen); traditionalism; lay intellectualism

Chapter iv.2

- 457f Priesthood had to codify doctrine (new, victorious, of prophets; old, against prophecy) to retain power:
 produced canonical writings and dogma (latter is priestly interpretation of scriptures [hermeneutics]);
 becomes scripturally established tradition and basis of system of education
 460 with development of lay literacy and bureaucratization, priestly control of education - establishment of
 religious community was the strongest impetus for development of doctrine: sets community apart from
 others and gives it propaganda superiority
 461 also - to fight religious indifference

461f contrasts different religions in development of doctrine

Chapter iv.3

464 Preaching and Pastoral Care - cf. magicians: priestly activity innovative

465 pastoral care - priests' real instrument of power, especially over workaday world

467 prophetic charisma and lay traditionalism - polar opposites, influence work of priests in systematization; also lay rationalism - NB different social strata bearers

Chapter v.1. The Religious Propensities of Peasantry, Nobility & Bourgeoisie

468 Peasantry so tied to nature that it will become carrier of religion only when threatened with proletarianization or enslavement

470 image of peasantry as religious a modern romantic view

471 city traditionally considered seat of piety

Chapter v.2

472f Warrior Nobles and Feudal Powers not religious bearers - no concept of beneficent providence or religious ethics - seem reprehensible to sense of honor; also warrior regularly faces death - only needs protection against magic

473 nobility influenced by prophetic or reformist religion

475 different among standing armies, bureaucratic organizations

Chapter v.3

476 Bureaucracy - disesteem for religion and recognition of its usefulness in controlling people
- seems irrational

Chapter v.4

478 Upper levels of Commercial Class, Bourgeoisie not religious bearers - especially traditional capitalists; showed indifference or skepticism

479f However, modern rational capitalism has affinity to rational, ethical congregational religion - reasons given later

Chapter vi.1. The Religion of Non-Privileged Strata

481 Petty-Bourgeois strata show religious diversity; ancient and medieval Christianity a religion of artisans;

482 urban middle classes showed affinity to congregational religion - substitute for kinship groupings; less connection with nature (and thus, magic) and more with rational behavior and calculability: need for ethic of compensation. Artisans initially attracted to magic: specialized "art" imbued with charisma

Chapter vi.2

484 Slaves and Day Laborers not bearers of religion

485f Modern Proletariat - indifference or rejection of religion: modern surrogate ideologies and awareness of dependence on non-individual (rather, social) factors

486 - but lower levels susceptible to religious missionary enterprise, but not ethical religion; NB needs for salvation religion

Chapter vi.3

- 486f Salvation religion may start in privileged strata and devolve to non-privileged
 487 - may take direction of wizardry, may move to savior religion - for masses
 487f - sentimental legend - for middle and lower bourgeoisie

Chapter vi.4

- 488 Religion of disprivileged - tend to grant equality to women
 489 NB receptivity of women to non-military prophecy

Chapter vi.5

- 490f Function of Salvation Religion for Higher and Lower Strata: Legitimation vs. Compensation
 492 cf. Jewish religion, modern Chinese, modern proletariat

Chapter vi.6

- 492f Pariah people and Ressentiment - Judaism vs. Hinduism
 493 definition of pariah people - hereditary, stateless; socially disprivileged and distinctive economically
 494 ressentiment - inequality caused by sinfulness which God will avenge: desire for vengeance
 496 desire for revenge stirred up by persecutions
 497 absence of ressentiment among Hindus and Buddhists explained by theodicy of rebirth. Jewish theodicy -
 concern for own fidelity to law, struggle for sense of own worth. NB saw success in occupation as sign of
 God's favor, but no sense of Bewährung in calling as inner-worldly asceticism: Jew remained traditional
 in frank respect for wealth
 498f Jesus's teaching

Chapter vii.1. Intellectualism, Intellectuals, and Salvation Religion

- 500 Intellectual influence on religion - at first priesthood carrier of intellectualism through scriptures

Chapter vii.2

- 502 High status intellectuals as religious innovators - all Asian religions
 503 cf. Greek philosophy

Chapter vii.3

- 503 salvation religions emerge when ruling strata have lost political power to a bureaucratic-militaristic
 unitary state
 504 ruling strata then come to value their intellectual abilities, non-practical
 505f Salvation mass religion - esoteric intellectual doctrine, popular magical savior for masses
 506 Salvation sought by intellectual based on inner need rather than relief from distress (as masses) - seeks
 meaning and unity, infinite causality, especially as intellectualist Entzauberung proceeds and events lose
 magical significance
 506 contradictions of search for meaning and empirical world: intellectual's flight from world

Chapter vii.4

507 proletarian, petty-bourgeois, and pariah intellectualism

Chapter vii.5

508 ancient Jewish intellectualism

Chapter vii.6

511f anti-intellectualism of early Christianity

512 primary bearers or propagators of world religions -
 Confucianism - world-ordering bureaucrat
 Hinduism - world-ordering magician
 Buddhism - mendicant monk wandering through the world
 Islam - world-conquering warrior
 Judaism - wandering trader
 Christianity - itinerant journeyman

Chapter vii.7

513 elite and mass intellectualism in medieval Christianity

Chapter vii.8

515 modern intellectuals and secular salvation ideologies - e.g. socialist, populist

516f unlikely for new congregational religion to emerge from modern intellectualism

- factors - present religion's utility in controlling masses; intellectuals' indifference to religion

517 need of cafe-society intellectuals an unlikely source

Chapter viii.1. Theodicy, Salvation, and Rebirth

518 religion may be mono- or polytheistic - attributes of great power to god(s)

519 Problem of Theodicy - how to reconcile imperfection of world with great power of god(s) ["incongruity of destiny and merit" in Gerth & Mills, p. 275]

Solutions -

- future revolution in this world; suffering of present generation caused by sins of past
 520f - notion of world beyond present one - at first magical, including retribution for errors in ritual; later when religion ethicized, gods employ moral considerations - raised questions of relations of gods to this world; cf. day of judgment

Chapter viii.2

522 Notion arose of ethical chasm between transcendent god and men

Predestination an extreme example of this view

523 ethical behavior would have no effect, but might be a sign of predestination

- extreme tendencies to Entzauberung

Chapter viii.3

523 Other Solutions of Theodicy -

523f - Dualism - struggle of good and evil, light and dark, in which former purges latter from the world; man participates with forces of light, purges sin (darkness)

524f - Transmigration of souls - guilt and merit punished and rewarded in next life - each forges his destiny in next life

Chapter viii.4

526 not every religion is one of salvation - salvation may have variety of contents

528 notions may or may not affect economic life

Chapter ix.1. Salvation Through the Believer's Efforts

530 Salvation through Ritual - not much different than magic (cf. Puritanism). NB devotional mood

531 the more ritual is in everyday life, the more it takes on mystical character

532 NB casuistry - cf. ancient Judaism and law

Chapter ix.2

532 Salvation through Good Works

533 - fate depends on actual achievements - can make an accounting of actions

533f - can be symptom of underlying ethical total personality - may be tolerant of isolated deviations

Chapter ix.3

534 Salvation through Self-Perfection - cf. charismatic magical powers

536 in non-magical, ethical religion with transcendent god, self-deification cannot be goal - rather to be his instrument or vessel

Chapter ix.4

538 Certainty of Grace - heightening of certain subjective conditions - problem of their constant maintenance

539 Religious Virtuosi - have charisma of permanent certainty of grace

Chapter x.1. Asceticism, Mysticism and Salvation

541 Asceticism: methodical procedure for achieving religious salvation by god-directed ethical behavior

542 "world" as realm of temptations; asceticism may be world-rejecting (rejects political, economic, erotic, aesthetic, etc.); or inner-worldly - within institutions of world but in opposition to them (as god's instrument)

543 world is only the medium through which charismatic state of grace can be proved

- ascetic's vocation is to act in the world (NB aspects)

544 rationally systematize own conduct - especially ascetic Protestantism

Chapter x.2

- 544f Salvation may come not than activity but from contemplation - subjective condition
- 545 Mysticism - flight from world rather than rejection: strives for mystical union mystical knowledge - incommunicable
- 547 NB mystic who feels world is more dependent on it than ascetic who rejects it
- 547f inner-worldly ascetic becomes indifferent to meaning - he has vocation and does not question god's purpose
- 551 Decisive difference between Oriental and Occidental Salvation - former usually contemplative/mystical, later ascetic
- Reasons for difference -
- 552f 1. concept of transcendent, omnipotent god arise in West - road closed to self-defication and possession of god; salvation required ethical justification to god in West - led to activity and "work"
- 553 2. empirical world not abandoned for Oriental intellectual: meaning would be discovered; for Western religion - meaning of world transcendent
3. Legalistic (rational law) orientation of West - man subject to god - Roman legacy
- 553f 4. Roman-Jewish rejection of ecstasy, etc. in favor of rational-methods
- 555 5. Occidental Church organization - uniformly rational, monarchical, centralized - controlled lives of subjects
- 555f Only in occident was additional step taken - by ascetic Protestant of transferring rational asceticism into life of world - See sketch, page 556
- 557 Salvation through Savior and Institutionalized Grace - rejects own efforts as insufficient
- 560 Institutional Grace - (1) only through institution; (2) priest need not be personally charismatic; (3) recipient of grace needs no charismatic religious qualification - thus, salvation universal, open to more than virtuosi - level of ethical conduct must be average - will be low - this is description of Catholic Church
- 561 Results - spares recipient of necessity of organizing life systematically (can always receive grace and forgiveness for sins); sins remain individual and form no total pattern - rather discute actions; no one need feel certainty of grace - (always attainable) - for these reasons, control of laity - which confessional and spiritual direction should provide - often cancelled, since grace always waited
- 562 Contest Judaism and ascetic Protestantism, both of which lacked confessional: ethically rationalized pattern of life
- 563 Salvation through Faith and its Anti Intellectual Consequences - NB level of do
- 564 especially Christian churches, dogma to compete with intellectualism - cf. Confucianism, Judaism, Islam
- 567 NB unlimited trust - god, "sacrifice of intellect"
- 572 Salvation through Belief in Predestination - as free, inexplicable gift of grace from transcendent and unfluencable god - leading in Eastern relig, in ancient relig, in warrior ethic
- 573 predest gives recipient of grace greatest certainty - but needs signs, promote activity, not satanism
- 574 Puritanism - belief became stronger the more bouregious Puritanism became; BN hostility of and to secular (political) power
- 575 But - Predest understood as outcome of list rather than individuals place in world beyond - loses ethical, rational character - e.g. Islam, Confucianism, Puritanism - man of vocation; development - became ever more intolerably bleak - predestination given up

Chapter x.3

Chapter xi.1. Soteriology or Salvation from Outside

Chapter xi.2

Chapter xi.3

Chapter xii.1. Religious Ethics and the World: Economics

- 576 The more a salvation religion develops Gesinnungsethik, the greater its tension to the world.
- 577 Religions involving stereotyping, taboos, and rituals are in less tension with the world. When ethical prophecy breaks through stereotyping, revolution may take place in relations with the world.
- 578 Religion based on Gesinnungsethik sets its own goals within theological realm: world becomes a problem. Decisive aspect is not intensity of religious belief, but rather religion's theoretical attitude toward the world.

Chapter xii.2

- 579 Familial piety, neighborly help, and compensation.
- 580 Obligation to help one's fellow originally limited to neighbors; more universal extensions depend on extension of social-political unit, growth of plural societies.

Chapter xii.3

- 581 As economic differentiation proceeded, customs of mutual neighborly assistance transformed into customs of mutual aid among various social strata, ethnic groups.
- 582 Relations among brothers in faith an extension of neighborly and familial relations: usury prohibited, aid to families without compensation.

Chapter xii.4. Religious Ethics, Economic Rationality and the Issue of Usury

- 583 Rejection of usury is an extension of this familial treatment of brothers in faith. Prohibition of usury lacking only in Protestantism, Confucianism (NB its accommodation to the world), and ancient Babylonian religions controlled by urban trading citizenry.
- 584 Original basis for rejection of usury was primitive custom of economic assistance to one's fellows: brothers in faith.
- 584 Tensions arise between ethical religion and economics as both are further rationalized.
- Religion treats commercial enterprise as suspect even if possession of wealth is well regarded.
 - Also, economic rationalization tends to weaken traditional authority of sacred law (and traditionalism generally) - especially when economic rationalization becomes impersonal. Rationalized economy follows its own rules.
- 585 - Depersonalization under rationalized economy also undermines religious charitability, which appeals to particular individuals. Charity loses its meaning.
- 585f On the other hand, religions also have specific economic interests. This works against any consistent religious opposition to worldly economic activity, or economic power.
- 587 Medieval Christianity consistently kept the most devout groups from the life of trade.
- 587f Inner-worldly asceticism of Protestantism first - unintentionally - produced a capitalist ethics: legitimated a career, rational plan of life; confined prohibition against usury to cases of selfishness; eliminated systematic alms-giving and ended benevolent attitude toward beggars and idleness.
- 589 Mystical religions take opposite tack: required completely unselective generosity. Mystical flight from the world.

Chapter xiii.1. Religious Ethics and the World: Politics

- 590 Every ethical religion is in tension with the world.
- 591f Congregational religions of subjugated peoples tend toward demilitarization (example of ancient Jews).
- 592 - In some cases (e.g. early Christianity) this gave rise to ethic of brotherly love; ethic of non-resistance.
- 593 Inner-worldly asceticism can compromise with political power: aim of transformation of world. But compromise with political power more difficult than with economics, since former, oriented toward lowest common denominator, leads to greater surrender of principles.

Chapter xiii.2

- 594 Wherever congregational religions reject force, without requiring flight from world, it leads to martyrdom or passive acceptance of regime.
- 595 - Some variation on rejection of force if goal of force is to protect religion.
- 596f Ancient and medieval Christian attitudes toward the State: (1) abomination of Roman empire, (2) indifference and passive suffrance, (3) withdrawal from active participation but view that state is God-ordained, (4) positive view of state for social control, given condition of sin.

Chapter xiii.3

- 598 General schema by which religion resolves tension between ethics and politics: ethics of vocation, by which given order is God-ordained. Thus, any rebellion is expression of self-aggrandizement.
- 600 Medieval and Lutheran traditionalist ethics of vocation (and Confucian) assumed that political power had a personalistic character, on model of family. Today, this is rare: power, like economics, depersonalized. Likewise, calling becomes impersonal duty.

Chapter xiv.1. Religious Ethics and the World: Sexuality and Art

- 602f Sexual intoxication, especially in the orgy, is often by-product of primitive religious behavior, especially the dance.
- 603 Considerable functional equivalency between sexuality and religion: former can be sublimated into latter in a variety of ways. Also NB typical religious animosity to sexuality; cultic chastity or abstinence, especially among charismatics and religious virtuosi.
- 603f In ethical sphere, sexuality often seen as one of the temptations of the world: for mystic, a distraction; for ascetic, an interruption in planful activity.

Chapter xiv.2

- 606 All salvation religions, not just Christianity, have hostility to sexuality.

Chapter xiv.3

- 607 Ethical religion also in tension with art, although art and religion are intimately related from the beginning.
- 608 - Tension between esthetic sphere and religion due in part to anti-communal orientation of the former. Climax of conflict comes with ascetic religion.
- 609 - Tension also especially high with prophetic religion (e.g. Judaism), with its message of transcendental God.
- On the other hand, religion (especially mass religion) consistently recognizes the "divinity" of artistic achievement: tendency to magic and idolatry.
- 610 Special rejection of esthetic by most rational religions: Judaism, ancient Christianity, ascetic Protestantism.

Chapter xv.1. The Great Religions and the World

Chapter xv.2

Chapter xv.3

Chapter xv.4