History of Religion – Evolution of Religion

Ursula Davatz, M.D.

	God or superpower in nature – animal – spiritsform
3000 BC	God – animal – man (Egypt)
500 – 300	God – man (Greek)
0	God like man in Christ
17th century	human individual becomes the center
19th century	human intellect becomes god
20th century	human psyche becomes center of interest

Bowen theory outgrowth of christian tradition emphasis on individual.

My personal experience

raised protestant

Abandoned religion of 18 – 20 kept interest and humbleness of the unknown and I keep continous interest and fascination with the unknown.

In my family background were some ministers.

Religion experience – eureca experience – self experience
– emotional/cognitive experience.

Da/KDL/rs

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On Religion

Ursula Davatz, M.D.

By loosing contact with god, orders on earth are taken to seriously

Provides order as accepted order, understands the importance of order

1. **Definition**

   religion – religere

   to bind, to attach

   sense of belonging

2. **Reasons for which people seek religion**

   what religion provides for people:

   a) **sense of belonging** to a greater unity than the individual, the family, the country, part of collective body, integration of the individual in spiritual group (fusion)

   b) **absolution** from responsibility – guilt, sin or having to make one's own decisions, decides what's right and what's wrong

   also creates guilt

   c) **sense of direction** goal setting by a higher institution than the individual, a goal that can never be reached during a lifetime and yet is recommended, desirable

   d) **increases chance of survival**

   protection of the individual by the group

   altruism, protection of the weak one

   hygiene

   mutual instruction, teaching, disciples, rituals which bind anxiety in difficult moments

   laws about reproduction

   protection of family unit securing the upbringing of the offspring

   laws about intramarital sex

   e) **provides absolute point of reference** in the thinking world or conceptual world (dangerous factor)

   in cult: reduces contradictory world to cant formulas

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f) **provides structure of the group**

hierarchical organization

stability

one person is usually in charge who is the religious leader

Egypt: religious leader and King within same person

China: Mao, religious and political leader

g) **makes connection with the unknown**, future

religion relates man to something that is not quite comprehensible, called meta-world, God, nirvana, Za Zen, Alha

all the 7 aspects of religion or functions of religion can be seen as mechanisms that bind or decrease anxiety

h) rejuvenating experience, born again experience

3. **How religion can be used by a leader, what are the mechanisms:**

a) **increase of his ego-mass-power** the religious leader has the power not only over his individual but over the entire group

b) **easy control of members** due to the abstract consureship such as moral systems. Power is not executed from person to person but from abstract moral code set up by the religious leader or handled by the religious leader, Therefore the religious leader has a spiritual weapon beyond his personal authority that is very powerful since it is always present in anybody who believes in the religion at any given time, which is more effective than having one's obedient soldiers spread all over

"Paranoia principle instrument of discipline in cult"

c) having cheap labor, workers get payed spiritually and not in money (reciprocal altruism)

4. **How religion can be used in a dangerous way by anybody who believes in it**

a) to feel and act superior to anybody else who doesn't belong to the group

b) to fight wars, power fights with the intention of fighting for the good

c) belief in superiority of the religion one belongs to can lead to a lot of misery

d) evangelizing, spreading knowledge an culture

e) convert into cult, seeking of earthly paradise

5. **Time when religion flourishes more**

a) **time of social change**

rootlessness

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break down of old social structures such as family now, Roman Empire, after World War I

chiliasm flourishes when life is no longer seen as ascendant

time now in U.S.A.

breakdown of U.S.A. as a superpower, of being the first world power, devaluation of $, loss of image through Vietnam, impeachment of president

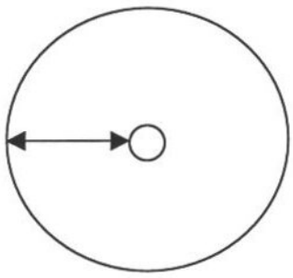
⟶ which all creates insecurity within a nation

JONESTOWN PHENOMENON can never be explained just from the individual families' point of view, it has to be explained in a broader context which is the context of the American Nation at this point in time

6. **Two types of religion**
   a) religion that rides on the front wave of a new culture a new movement, e.g. Christianity, Christ as revolutionary
   b) Religion that is at the end of an era, in the decadence of a culture, it usually tries to prevent change, projects a very negative view of the future, e.g., Jones Peoples Temple, all sects, Jehovas witnesses, etc.
7. **Need for Religion or belief system, and examples of religious beliefs, over time**
   a) God being the king, Egypt (2000 BC)
   b) God and Christ (0 – 16th century)
   c) humanity, individualism (17 – 18th century)
   d) intellect as source of all well being, positivism (19th country)
   e) political power, man power (example: communism) (beginning of 20th century)
   f) scientific belief (middle of 20th century)
   g) emotional psychological beliefs, cults (end 20th century – 21th century)
   (Calhonn talks about compassionate era as being the future era)

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Bowen therapy gets people out of their narrow perspective of nuclear family.



The less serious you take the little order the better you will be able to deal with it. You get less serious about the little order by looking at a higher order of hierarchy.

Janet Kuhn:
- belief system
- structure
- relationship system

Ed Friedman:
- jewish Tradition: humour + seriousness
- religion does not have to have a belief system

Gary:
2 aspects
- secular
- mystical

- jews are not supernaturalists
- people hood phenomenon
- more definitions of god what god is not
- atheism is part of jewish tradition

Wilson:
- reduces everything to survival

Lary:
- looking for patterns and meaning related to religion

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