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The Codification of the Sociological Theory on Secularization

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**THE CODIFICATION OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY
ON SECULARIZATION**

by

Vivian Tellis-Nayak, S.J.

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfilment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts**

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LIFE

The author was born in Mangalore, India. After high school and junior college at St. Aloysius College, Mangalore, he joined the Society of Jesus in 1954. He did his studies in humanities at Calicut and in philosophy at Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur and received his Licentiate in Philosophy in 1961. After two years of high school teaching he pursued studies in divinities at the Pontifical Athenaeum, Poona, securing the degree of Licentiate in Theology in 1967. He worked briefly at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, before beginning his studies in sociology at Loyola University, Chicago.

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CHAPTER I

AN OVERVIEW

This chapter intends to make a preliminary statement on the purpose, aim, method, and scope of the present research as well as to introduce a brief overview of the steps through which our argument develops.

The purpose for the choice of the research topic, which is the sociological theory of secularization, has its origin in the sociologically demonstrable conviction that religious traditions and experience have had a substantive role in the development of Western man and his culture. In modern society there have appeared indications that the role of religion is not only changing but that in several instances its impact on life is diminishing or is already neutralized. This fact is vitally significant to the present situation in India, which is the country of birth and future work of the present author. In few other nations in history has religion played as important a role as it has in the forming of the very fiber of Indian society and culture. But the emergence of the forces of modernization has begun to make its impact and touch the heart of Hindu culture--a phenomenon which is reflected in the fact that a deeply "religiously-minded" people and overwhelmingly Hindu society have constitutionally defined their country as a "secular nation." Wherever the forces of modernization are most prevalent, the structure of Hindu society and culture seem to undergo radi-

cal alterations. One would have to ask questions as to how open Hindu values and culture are to accept modernization, how Hindu society will accommodate or react to it, what patterns these responses will take, what overall social structures will eventually emerge as a consequence, what benefit or detriment the people will derive from the experience, and what direct and indirect formal and informal role religion will play in all this. These questions relate not only to the academic interest of social scientists but are of direct concern to those interested in the development of the country and in the contribution religion can make or obstacles it can present. The phenomenon of secularization in the West is not easily comparable to the Indian situation, but an investigation into it would prove fruitful in so far as it would highlight its unique features, the complex of variables involved, the patterns in its present phase, and its likely course in the future. All this would prove as a useful point of reference in any study of the secular situation in India.

The aim of this research into secularization has been clarified in the following chapter. Briefly, it consists of the codification of the sociological theory on secularization. By codification is here meant the systematic and economical arrangement of basic concepts, their interrelations, and their collation with other major concepts in sociology in general, and in sociology of religion in particular. This codification has for its goal a cumulative theoretical interpretation of the secularization phenomenon. The concepts and theories that will be handled for

this codification will be drawn from some of the major authors in sociology in general, and in sociology of religion in particular. The emphasis in this method will not rest on a systematic, quantitative arrangement of the contributions according to the respective authors, but on a systematic qualitative interpretation and interrelations of their concepts. Thus, the aim and method of this research are intertwined and do not in all instances appear quite distinct.

Though this theoretical task and its distinctive methodology are not generally undertaken by graduate students, the utility of both as a significant research effort is demonstrated by Robert Merton, as is clear in the next chapter. With hardly any graduate studies of this nature to fall back upon as useful guides, often the scope left for the exercise of imagination in the selection and arrangement of the content and in the determination of the research direction was bound to prove overwhelming, even after the guidance of the advisors. In such a plight the words of C. Wright Mills afforded the needed encouragement: "Avoid any rigid set of procedures. Above all, seek to develop and to use the sociological imagination. Avoid the fetishism of method and technique.... Let every man be his own methodologist; let every man be his own theorist; let theory and method again become part of the practice of the craft."¹ The personal contribution in this research, therefore, rests not on the categorization of concepts but in the synthesis of perspectives that is here attempted.

¹C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 224.

The general framework in which the theory of secularization is located and the clarification of interrelations between its subthemes and concepts relate to the distinctiveness and, therefore, to the criterion of success of this research effort. For this reason, though the sources and authors have always been meticulously documented, no effort has been made to present extensive quotations. As is noted in the final chapter, the objectivity, validity, and success of the research will have to rest on the distinctiveness and inner plausibility of the explanations as well as on their furtherance of the understanding of the secularization phenomenon.

Regarding the scope of the present study, it must be explicitly remarked that the prime focus here is the secularization phenomenon as it obtains in the West. This self-imposed limit has to do with the limited availability of source material regarding the studies of the secularization process in the non-Western world. However, as it will be clear from the appendix, the analysis of secularization herein attempted was conducted with reference to the studies that do exist concerning the Eastern world. As regards the level of abstraction of the theory that is considered here, not much choice was available. The codification of concepts and theories had to draw upon the contributions of social scientists; these scientists have worked on hypotheses of a grand theory level, as it will be abundantly clear, because of the complex constellation of personality, historical, and sociocultural variables that are involved in the secularization phenomenon. This complex set of factors can be

meaningfully taken into account in the studies of particular religious situations, but the more generalized studies in which we find significant contributions to secularization theory necessarily operate on higher levels of abstraction. On this level, operationalization of concepts would suggest only broad empirical indicators which are pointed out in our presentation, and not the strict, quantitative measurement of them.

Finally, a brief overview may be presented here of the steps through which our argument develops. First, in the following chapter we discuss the methodology employed in this research. Its central device, which is codification in the paradigm pattern, is explained and its specific use here is pointed out. A summary of definitions of the central concepts of this study concisely suggests their context in the argument and their interrelatedness.

Chapter III provides a background for the subsequent development of our argument. Here we merely aim to classify systematically the several meanings of the terms "secular" and "secularization" as they have been utilized in sociological works. A concluding critique briefly discusses the utility and potentiality of the two terms for further research.

Chapter IV begins the first substantive step towards codification by describing the context of secularization. This is done by the sketching of a sociological model of two dominant patterns of social change hinging round the two concepts of rationalization and individuation.

Chapter V attempts the codification of the secularization theory by the utilization of the rationalization-individuation model.

Chapter VI offers the conclusion by way of suggesting the contribution of the research and the possibility of future research.

The Appendix briefly discusses supplementary issues and factors concerning the present and future of secularization.

In conclusion one point should be added as regards the use of the terms secular and secularization. The discussion in Chapter III points to the sponginess of the terms and concludes to the desirability of abandoning them in favor of their constituent and more conventionally labeled elements. This conclusion serves as a general theme of the argument of this study in so far as its emphasis rests on subsuming the diverse concepts suggested by the two terms secular and secularization, along with other concepts, under one scheme with the possibility of relabeling them.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The study of the secularization process, more than most other themes in the study of religion, has been the common concern of theologians, philosophers, and sociologists. Specialists in theology, philosophy, and sociology have not only studied the subject from their respective perspectives but some have freely drawn on the method and/or findings of one or both of the other areas. Some have explicitly assumed the roles characteristic of the specialists in all the three of the approaches. The studies of Peter Berger are illustrative of the case where a professional sociologist has on occasion deliberately undertaken the function of a philosopher or theologian.¹ Interdepartmental debate has sometimes occurred when professionals in one field have broadly interpreted or casually assumed the role or method of another. Such controversy² was part of the reaction that followed Harvey Cox's popular essay, The Secular City.³

In a discussion of the sociological approach to the secularization process, therefore, it is in order to distinguish clearly the approaches of the theologian, the philosopher, and the sociologist. But since the area

¹ Among the major examples of his works are The Noise of Solemn Assemblies (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1961), and The Rumor of Angels (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969).

² Daniel Callahan, ed., The Secular City Debate (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966).

³ Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966).

of religion in general, and that of secularization in particular, are intimately bound up with the question of values (which again are differently related to some of the approaches in the study of religion and secularization), it might be worthwhile to begin the discussion with a preliminary comment on the problem of values.

Values can simply "refer to widely shared conceptions of the good."⁴ A concise treatment of the problem of values as it concerns social scientists has been presented by W. H. Werkmeister.⁵ There are three distinct aspects in which values can be spoken of in social science. The first is the value of the social sciences. This constitutes no problem in the present study. Knowledge is valued for the understanding of reality which it brings and for its aid in rational decision-making.

The second aspect is the value in the social sciences. Values can enter the social sciences either as factual matter for analysis, in which case it constitutes no serious problem, or as valuational premises within factual analysis. In this latter case values enter as an explanatory category either indigenous to the subject matter itself which is studied, or as a value premise expressing the personal predilections of the investi-

⁴Sister Marie Augusta Neal, SND, Values and Interests in Social Change (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p.8.

⁵W. H. Werkmeister, "Theory Construction and the Problem of Objectivity," in Symposium on Sociological Theory, ed. by Llewellyn Gross (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1959), pp. 483-508. Cf. also "Science As a Vocation," in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, trans. and ed. by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968), pp. 129-156; and Alvin W. Gouldner, "Anti-Minotaur: The Myth of a Value-Free Sociology," in Sociology on Trial, ed. by Maurice Stein and Arthur Vidich (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 35-52.

gator.

The third aspect is the value for the social sciences. This concerns the investigator's commitment as a person to the general subject matter of the social sciences and, as a scientist, to the value framework within which he operates for the choice of fields of research and the interest and tenacity with which he pursues his goals. In addition it implies value commitments that constitute standards of scientific research.

One important way in which the theologian's approach differs from that of the philosopher and the sociologist concerns the place of values in theological research. Whereas in the methodology of philosophy and sociology it is illegitimate to introduce value postulates which express the predilection or bias of the researcher and which therefore affect the understanding of social reality, in the methodology of theology, values form an explanatory category both in the data that are studied and the explanatory postulates of "salvation history" implicitly accepted by the theologian. Theology as a conceptual machinery in the systematic understanding of the symbolic universe of meaning is a natural outgrowth from the mythological system that conceptualizes the symbolic universe on a naive level. Theological conceptualization may be distinguished from its mythological predecessor in terms of the consistency, integration, and sophistication of the theory which attempts to maintain the same symbolic universe as does mythology. Hence theology, like mythology, concerns itself with values in the religious content of its definitions, though it comes closer to philosophy and sociology in its use of the rational tools

for the theorizing, systematizing, and inquiring about these values.

In the methodology of philosophy and sociology, on the other hand, value commitments primarily imply scientific levels of standards of research to be adopted. They also imply such questions as dealt with in disciplines like metasociology, which investigates the values given to sociology itself, and to some particular approach, system, or school of sociology.⁶ But value-postulates as part of the research method and definitional content may not enter the strictly philosophical or sociological method, as it may the theological method, or the life of a sociologist as an educator or a moral person.

Social philosophy and sociology are two different endeavors of the human mind despite their similarities.⁷ They are similar in that they try to describe and explain reality and to base their inquiry on observation of fact and on generalizations derived from these observations. But they differ from one another as does philosophy from an empirical science, namely in their levels of abstraction and procedure. A philosopher tries to relate social reality to total human experience, to reality in its totality. From this totality of human experience he constructs "ultimate principles" and draws axioms and postulates to reinterpret the particular class of experience, i.e., the social reality.

⁶ Paul H. Furey, The Scope and Method of Sociology; A Metasociological Treatise (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), pp. 217-225.

⁷ Nicholas S. Timasheff, "The Study of Sociological Theories," in his Sociological Theory, Its Nature and Growth (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 3-13.

While the philosopher explains society in terms of his explanation of total reality, the sociologist attempts to derive his generalizations strictly from the empirical observation of sociological facts without assuming knowledge on a level of higher abstraction. The philosopher can speak of first causes, supreme values, and ultimate ends; the sociologist is not entitled to do so.⁸ In sociology the deductive method can enter as a phase in hypothesis construction.

The Present Method

The present research effort is aimed at studying the concept and theory of secularization. In general, it will study the substantive, theoretical contributions that have been made to its understanding in the context of the general theory of the sociology of religion. Since the methodology for the study of sociological theory in general, and of the sociological theory of secularization in particular, has neither been precisely defined or standardized, a distinct procedure had to be adopted to suit the present purpose. This procedure both draws on and departs from some fairly standardized approaches to sociological theory. Its nature and distinctiveness are discussed below in the light of other closely related methods.

Two of the well known approaches to the study of sociological theory are the history of the sociological thought and the study of the systematic substance of sociological theory. Both these approaches have been discussed by Merton.⁹ He urges a sharpened distinction between the

⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

⁹ Robert K. Merton, "On the History and Systematics of Sociological Theory," in On Theoretical Sociology (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 1-37.

two and expects a history of sociological thought to go beyond a mere chronological ordering of theory and to be in practice "a sociological history of sociological theory."¹⁰

Such a sociological history, Merton maintains, would take up such matters as the filiation of sociological ideas, the ways in which they developed, the interplay between theory and the social origin and statuses of its exponents, the interaction of theory with the changing social organization of sociology, the diffusion of theory and its modification in the course of diffusion, and their relation to the environing social and cultural structure.

This historical approach to the theory of secularization is clearly not the procedure that is attempted in this research. Rather the present approach falls under the second category, the systematic analysis of the substantive contributions to the theory of secularization.

This latter systematic approach suggests distinct arrangements of the material. In the area of general sociology Sorokin adopts the procedure of classifying theory into different schools, based on the types of theoretical solutions of the basic problems.¹¹ Timasheff combines Sorokin's approach with the presentation in the historical sequence of the appearance of the theories.¹² Merton has suggested and skillfully employed the paradigm-ap-

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹ Pitrim A. Sorokin, Contemporary Sociological Theories (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928), and Sociological Theories of Today, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

¹² Timasheff, Sociological Theory, op. cit.

proach to interpret and codify sociological theory.¹³

For Merton, a paradigm, though never defined, seems to refer to an orderly display of material according to a pattern or model. Among the functions explicitly assigned to paradigms by Merton are the following.¹⁴ They bring into open the assumptions, concepts, and propositions used in sociological analysis. They isolate the skeleton of fact, inference, and theoretic conclusion. They provide an economical arrangement of concepts and their interrelations for description, having a notational function. They require that each new concept be logically derivable from previous terms of the paradigms or explicitly incorporated in it. They promote cumulative theoretical interpretation. They suggest systematic cross-tabulation of basic concepts. They assist codification of methods of qualitative analysis in a manner approximating the rigor of quantitative analysis.

The methodological approach to the theory of secularization which is here adopted approximates the device of a paradigm. However, it will not bear all the possible characteristics of a Mertonian paradigm enumerated above. Merton himself does not seem to imply that all these features have to characterize every type of a paradigm; rather he seems to suggest that at times a paradigm can be merely an outline of basic ideas of a particular study, or at the other extreme, it can be a completed system of theory reduced

¹³ Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1949), pp. 12-16. Also in Theoretical Sociology, op. cit., pp. 69-72.

¹⁴ Merton, Theoretical Sociology, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

to its economical structure. He even warns against the misuse resulting from "absolutizing the paradigm rather than using it as a tentative point of departure."¹⁵ His own skillful and imaginative employment of the device suggests flexibility and variety as evidenced in his studies on functional analysis, deviant social behavior, sociology of knowledge, etc.

Following some of the key features of Merton's paradigm, the clarification and codification of secularization theory herein attempted aims at an orderly, compact arrangement of the central concepts and basic assumptions and their interrelations. The systematization of the findings, propositions, and concepts on secularization are cross-related to the other major themes and concepts in the sociology of religion. Hence this clarification and reorganization will entail no invention of new strategies of research but will operate on the work of the past. It will have the virtue of promoting somewhat the cumulative theoretical interpretation.

If the present method approximates the paradigmatic approach, it will be further clarified by noting what it does not purport to do. The present method is not an exercise in the approach of the sociology of knowledge. The sociology of knowledge is expected to tackle "the question of what happens if intellectual processes and products are unmasked as the expression of, or in relation to, social-historical circumstance--if intellectual life as such is so unmasked."¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁶ Kurt H. Wolff, "The Sociology of Knowledge and Sociological Theory," in Symposium on Sociological Theory, op. cit., p. 576.

Wolff contends that among the methodological premises of the sociology of knowledge are the propositions that the scientific validity of intellectual phenomena has nothing to do with their origin; that intellectual phenomena have logical, as well as social aspects.¹⁷ Despite the fact that sociological theory of religion and of secularization cannot be adequately constructed without grounding it on the theory of sociology of knowledge, the social origins of various conceptions of the secular and secularization cannot be explored here. The differential understanding of secularization and the construction of its theory, both among the classicists and contemporaries, fall within the focus of the present research, but the discovering of the social filiation of these differences clearly does not. An attempt is made at establishing the scientific validity of the content of the theories, not the enviroming social causes of their differences from one another.

Another technique which comes close to the present approach is content analysis, which is described by Berelson as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication."¹⁸ The technique has also been used for other kinds of data than communication, where the data reflect meaning. The controls under which the analysis proceeds demand explicitly defined categories of analysis, a methodical classification of all the relevant material,

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 578.

¹⁸ Bernard Berelson, "Content Analysis," in Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. by Gardner Lindzey (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1954), p. 489.

and a quantitative handling of the data which would facilitate the frequency counts based on the standard units. The procedure in the present research does attempt an examination of the texts, over a period of time, relating to the secularization problem. However, it departs from the technique of content analysis when it is strictly required to deal quantitatively with the manifest content of systematically selected data. The texts that are studied here are not randomly sampled or methodically selected to cover all the relevant material on the problem. They rather cover most of the explicit sociological contributions on secularization which have been published in book form or in professional journals and which are judged to be of substantive theoretical import. This approach so essential for a qualitative as against a quantitative analysis is guided by some consistent, objective criteria of selection: the treatment in the said work of the major concepts which are central to the sociological theory of religion; the utilization of the work by other authors or class lectures for discussion or reference; the number and length of reviews it received; the favorable opinion of one or other of the advisors about its theoretical importance. By the same criteria the material outside this limit of explicit sociological contribution will sometimes be utilized not only to serve as background material, but also to construct the argument of the paper. As regards the content of the texts, in keeping with the purpose of the research, which is the codification of secularization theory, the analysis probes beyond their manifest content and tries to discover the hidden assumptions, theoretical implications, and relatedness to other concepts. The objectivity of the research therefore does not rely on prefashioned categories of analy-

sis, but on the plausibility of explanation and construction of the synthetic theory herein advanced.

It is in this context that the use of empirical data in the construction of the paradigm or the codifying of the theory has to be viewed. The main emphasis in this approach lies on the theoretical effort of economical ordering and systematizing of the available concepts, assumptions, theories, hypotheses, and generalizations related to the problem. But these latter are related to empirical data in two ways. They either derive the generalizations from already available data, or they suggest the need for further collection of data that will test and prove the theoretical propositions. The systematic presentation of available data, and the search for fresh data do not pertain to the central task of codification of theory as Marton conceives it. Depending on the specific scope and nature of this task the handling of data can variously be considered as a subordinate theme.

As regards the present task of codification of secularization theory the concepts and propositions that are dealt with here pertain largely to global situations and processes. In the sociology of religion more propositions and theories have been proposed to explain macrosociological phenomena than empirical data collected to prove the explanations. Hence much of the theory of secularization is in fact a set of hypotheses that remain to be tested. The testing, proving, or confirming of these hypotheses and theory clearly fall beyond the scope of the present task. No reference to empirical data will be made in the construction of the paradigm. These citations to data do not have as much probative as illus-

trative value and their central purpose will be to indicate empirical lines along which proofs can be advanced, as well as further operationalization can be attempted.

We might say in summary that the purpose of the study is toward clarifying the concepts of "secular" and "secularization" by attempting a coherent restatement of the theory of the terms by placing the theory in the general perspective of the sociological theory of religion, especially in relation to such concepts as rationalization, individuation, legitimation, alienation, and pluralism. The method used for the purpose is the qualitative analysis of all the major, substantive contributions to the understanding of the secular and secularization. The emphasis is not on discovering the differential use of the terms in relation to their historical contexts, but on finding out the set of attributes which will maximize the interrelations with the larger concepts in the sociological theory of religion. Since the final purpose is the identification and codification of the existing theory of secularization, the methodology here adopted is not statistical or quantitative. Rather, it is the paradigm-approach of Merton seeking an explanation of the concept in what Kaplan terms the "pattern model" whose "objectivity consists essentially in this, that the pattern can be indefinitely filled in and extended: as we obtain more and more knowledge it continues to fall into place in this pattern, and the pattern itself has a place in the larger whole."¹⁹ The specific model chosen to provide the framework for the secularization theory and its subthemes and

¹⁹Abraham Kaplan, The Conduct of Inquiry (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1964), p. 335.

units will be constructed on the flexible paradigma-pattern of Merton. This model is elucidated in Chapter IV and is applied to the secularization theory in the subsequent chapters. By way of providing an introduction to this task, Chapter II attempts a general survey of the major categories of meanings of the terms "secular" and "secularization" as used by social scientists.

Definitions

A few definitions of terms which are more commonly utilized in our presentation can here be preliminarily clarified. These terms are elaborately defined and explained in appropriate places where they appear in the argument; a few have already been used in the present chapter. Their initial definition here stresses their elementary, sometimes partial, but generally accepted aspects. This serves the purpose of providing a brief overview of the central concepts, their context in the argument, and their interrelatedness.

First, the terms which are more general in their relation to the argument. By a "concept" is simply meant "an abstraction from observed events,"²⁰ which is an aid to simplified thinking by way of subsuming a number of events under one general heading. By a "theory" is meant a set of propositions ideally consisting of exactly defined concepts consistent with one another from which existing generalizations deductively derive and which show the way to further observations and generalizations increas-

²⁰Clare Selltitz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 41.

ing the scope of knowledge.²¹ A "grand theory" refers to the all-inclusive systematic effort to explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, social organization, and social change.

We use the term "ideal type" to describe a mental construct. "It is formed by exaggeration or accentuation of one or more traits or points of view observable in reality."²² We use the term "model" to refer to "a rather general image of the main outline of some major phenomenon, including certain leading ideas about the nature of the units involved and the pattern of relations."²³ By a "paradigm" is meant an orderly display of material according to some pattern for the purpose of serving several possible functions.²⁴ The paradigm is the basis used in this presentation for the codification of secularization theory. By "codification" is herein understood the orderly, compact arrangement of the central concepts, propositions, and basic assumptions of the secularization theory, as well as their interrelations with one another and with other related theories and concepts in the sociology of religion.²⁵ It also subsumes heretofore separate ideas into some new scheme, with possible relabeling.

²¹ Timasheff, Sociological Theory, op. cit., p. 10.

²² Ibid., p. 179.

²³ Alex Inkeles, What is Sociology? An Introduction to the Discipline and Profession (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 28.

²⁴ Merton, Theoretical Sociology, op. cit., pp. 70-72.

²⁵ Ibid.

Second, the terms which more directly and specifically relate to the argument. "Religion" has been defined in terms of man's experience of the "holy" and his effort to answer life's ultimate questions regarding death and human problems. "Religion, then, can be defined as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with these ultimate problems of human life."²⁶ The terms "religious variable," "religious factor," and "religious phenomenon" are used here interchangeably to designate the totality of religious experiences and their expressions in tradition, institutions, doctrines, ritual, etc. "Religious conduct or behavior" is used to designate a part of that totality, namely, the measurable religious expressions in action of individuals or groups.

The "sacred" and the "profane" are the classification by religion of the contents of human experience into two absolutely opposed categories.²⁷ The profane is the realm of routine "logico-experimental" experience which is transcended by religion. The sacred is the sphere entirely other than this utilitarian sphere, variously designated as religion itself, an "enchanted" attitude, a concern with ultimate symbols. The term "secular" is used to signify a type of attitude or phenomenon opposite to that of the sacred, while "secularisation" is used to signify a process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious

²⁶ J. Milton Yinger, Religion, Society, and the Individual (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 9.

²⁷ Thomas F. O'Dea, The Sociology of Religion (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 20.

religious institutions and symbols, as well as a process of religious-to-non-religious change in consciousness.

A "religious world-view" or "sacred cosmos" refers to a conceptual construction of a religiously ordered and meaningful world of man's experience. "Myth" is a naive construction of a sacred cosmos while "theology" is a more complex and rationalized construction of the same.

By "religious change" is meant any change in religious structures, expressions, or consciousness involving no loss of the religious element in the process of the change. Secularization on the other hand implies a dissolution of the religious element itself. Religious change and secularization are described here as a part of a bigger social process. "Social process" refers to a characteristic series of social changes in which one step develops out of the previous one. The "objective process of social change" refers to the characteristic of changing structures of social relationships, while the "subjective process of social change" describes the corresponding change in individual and/or collective consciousness.

The process of "rationalization" characterizes some aspects of the objective social process and refers to the emergence of the primacy of the rational element in social relationships. The process of "individuation" characterizes the subjective change in consciousness and refers to the emergence of man's awareness and conception of himself as an independent and separate being.²⁸ Rationalization and individuation are considered

²⁸ Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom (New York: Farrar and Reinhart, Inc., 1941), p. 24.

to be complementary and reciprocal processes in as much as they reinforce each other.

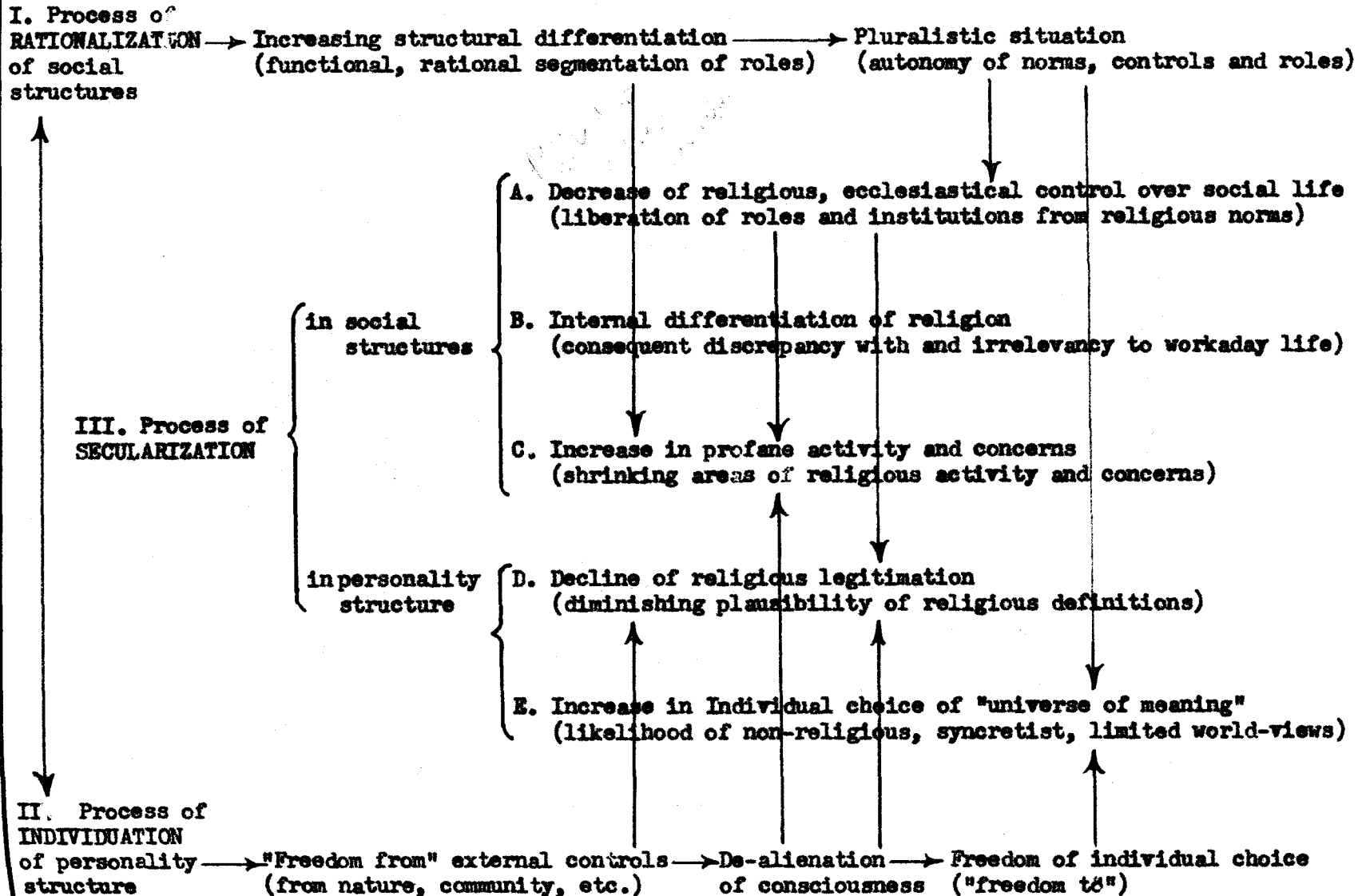
The process of rationalization is here described as a historical trend leading towards "pluralism" and "professionalization." By this is meant that rationalization gives rise to differentiation of functions in society, as well as to their specialization. Professionalization primarily connotes that differentiated roles and institutions develop specialized, autonomous, or self-sufficient bodies of knowledge, norms, and controls. The rationalization process is said to promote secularization in a threefold way: firstly, through a "decline of religious controls" which refers to the progressive growth of social institutions outside the normative influence of religion; secondly, through a "differentiation of roles" which refers to a specialization of leadership roles in religion and a consequent distance between the leaders and the members, which phenomenon is described as a condition favorable to the drifting away of the laity from religion; thirdly, by the "receding of the frontiers of the sacred" which refers to the quantitative and qualitative expansion of the areas of man's profane concerns.

The process of individuation is described here as a reciprocal historical trend leading to "de-alienation" of human consciousness. By de-alienation is meant man's becoming aware of his real part in the construction of social reality and of the possibility of his changing it. Individuation promotes secularization by the "collapse of plausibility" of religion. This refers to the process of decline of the monopoly and the legitimacy of the claims of the religious world-view. This decline of plausibility is

said to be caused by two phenomena: firstly, through the "discrepancy of demands," which refers to the perception of the incongruence between the religious definition of life and the practical demands of life; secondly, through the "competition of universes" of meanings, which refers to the fact that different systems of meanings of life become readily accessible and that they compete with the religious world-view for validity and legitimacy on the strength of their own internal plausibility.

SECULARIZATION PROCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The Main Variables



SECULARIZATION PROCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL CHANGE--THE MAIN VARIABLES

Notes on the Master Chart

1. I and II are the master processes which form the rationalization-individuation model of social change.

In the horizontal direction are the main sequential variables in these processes.

2. III is the process of secularization appearing as the subtheme in the rationalization-individuation model, as a dependent process.

A, B, C, D and E are the four dependent variables in the secularization process around which the codification of the theory is constructed.

3. The arrows indicate the lines of influence between the variables.

The origin of the arrow indicates the dependent variable, while the terminus indicates the dependent variable.

Some dependent variables in turn function as independent variables.

Some variables are reciprocally related, i.e. they are mutually reinforcing.

In the interest of clarity not all the lines of influence are indicated in the chart.

4. A concise definition of the variables and the main lines of relation between them appear immediately preceding the chart. Their elaboration forms part of the argument of the present study.

CHAPTER III

MEANINGS OF SECULARIZATION

This chapter serves as a background for the main task of the codification of secularization theory. It surveys the uses of the terms "secular" and "secularization" in sociological studies and classifies these meanings in distinct categories.

The phenomena that are connoted by these two terms in sociological literature are not only different, but sometimes overlapping, confusing, and contradictory. In part this confusion and ambiguity in their meanings stem from the confusion and ambiguity that surround the concept of "religion." Hence, a brief preliminary discussion of the meaning of "religion" is called for.

Ambiguities in the Meaning of "religion"

Despite all the disagreement in the use of the term secularization, there is almost a clear, though implicit, agreement among scholars that the phenomenon of secularization has to be understood in the context of or in relation to the phenomenon of religion. Since there is considerable lack of consensus about the definition, empirical identification, and measurement of religious behavior, it is to be expected that similar lack of consensus be found in the understanding of the nature of secularization.

One of the difficulties in identifying the precise nature of religious behavior rises from the fact that religion is essentially a

multidimensional variable. Glock, Fukuyama, Lenski, Demerath, and others have proposed several somewhat distinct dimensions.¹ Morton King explicitly tested the unidimensional hypothesis on a local sample of Methodists before rejecting it for his data. He identified, by using factor and cluster analyses, nine dimensions for his subjects: (1) creedal assent and personal commitment, (2) participation in congregational activities, (3) personal religious experience, (4) personal ties in the congregation, (5) commitment to intellectual search despite doubt, (6) openness to religious growth, (7) dogmatism; extrinsic orientation, (8) financial behavior; financial attitude, (9) talking and reading about religion.

The problem of identifying the integral factor in religious tradition and practice is dependent on the fact that these different dimensions of religion are differently interrelated so that a high score on one or cluster of dimensions might correlate with a low score on the other. Not only is there no necessary consistency in these correlations between one religion and another, but the difficulty is further complicated when different religions take normative stands on different dimensions to define the measure of religiosity for their members. Thus, the traditional

¹ Charles Y. Glock, "On the Study of Religious Commitment," Religious Education, Research Supplement, (July-August, 1962), pp. 98-110; Yoshio Fukuyama, "The Major Dimensions of Church Membership," Review of Religious Research, II (1961a), pp. 154-161; Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963); Nicholas J. Demerath III, Social Class in American Protestantism (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965).

² Morton King, "Measuring the Religious Variable: Nine Proposed Dimensions," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, VI (Fall, 1967), pp. 174-190.

Catholic emphasis has been on the "ritualistic," while some Christian sects have stressed the "experiential."

Another difficulty rises from the considerable divergence in the normative stance taken within the same religion, between one phase of its history and another, between its lower class members and higher, between its different cultural environments. Even a greater difficulty arises for establishing universal criteria, when we compare Eastern non-Christian faiths with Western Christian religions.³

A further difficulty in standardizing the meaning of religion, arises from the fact that non-established religions do not always take too kindly to word "religion" as designating their religious behavior. The Hindus who are commonly known to be a "religiously minded" people do not generally think of their faith as a reified religion. A similar trend is noticeable among Christian theologians who prefer to think in terms of the "religionless Christianity" of Bonhoeffer.⁴ Wilfred Cantwell Smith argues for the displacement of the word "religion" by the concepts of "faith" and "tradition" to designate respectively the interior and exterior aspects of religious behavior.⁵

³ Ernest Benz, "On Understanding Non-Christian Religion," in The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology, ed. by Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 120-130.

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962).

⁵ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion (New York: The New American Library, 1964), pp. 139-181.

Even more fundamental is the problem of relating the idea of the holy and the supernatural to the integral part of the religious phenomenon. Implicit in this problem is the question of distinguishing authentic religious experience from the various religious surrogates. Lenski's definition of religion as a "system of beliefs about the nature of the force(s) ultimately shaping man's destiny, and the practices associated therewith, shared by the members of a group," explicitly purports to include under the heading of religion "not only the major theistic faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, but also non-theistic faiths such as Hinayana Buddhism, Communism, and even contemporary humanism of the type espoused by such men as Bertrand Russell and Julian Huxley."⁶

Robert Bellah makes a convincing case as to the existence of a "civil religion in America" which is the religion of "the American way of life."⁷ It is a religion, Bellah claims, which supersedes the church and state separation; which is not lower in insight than regular religion; which has provided powerful symbols of and rituals for national solidarity and personal motivation for national goals; which has used the biblical archetypes of Exodus, Chosen People, New Jerusalem, sacrificial death and rebirth, and the Israel theme of manifest destiny and calling, for example, against the American Indians and Communism. Describing its nature, Bellah maintains that this "civil religion at its best is a genuine apprehension of universal and transcendental reality as seen in or, one could almost

⁶Lenski, Religious Factor, op. cit., p. 331.

⁷Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," Daedalus, XCVI (Winter, 1967), pp. 1-21.

say, as revealed through the experience of the American people."⁸

A final area of confusion in the understanding of religion, which is pertinent to the problem of defining secularization, concerns the affective element in the religious behavior. By the affective element is here understood the emotional, "enchanted," aesthetic, nonrational, and supernatural factor that relates to the religious attitude of the practitioner towards all that is held sacred by him. The problem is of deciding about the specificity of the affective factor in religious experience; unless the specifically religious content of this affective factor is clearly identified, it becomes difficult to establish and measure the erosion of religion in the loss of the "enchanted," sacredist attitude of the religious behavior.

The problem of identifying the specificity of the religious affect arises from the nature of religious experience which, Joachim Wach maintains, is a "total response" of the integral person to ultimate reality as it is apprehended, as well as potentially "the most intense experience of which man is capable."⁹

The occurrence of non-religious implications of the religious sentiment is suggested for his data by Brown, who concludes: "The affective concomitants of religious belief are probably not specific to religion, being more subtle and variable than those usually postulated. Affective factors influence the way in which an individual expresses any belief."¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 12.

⁹Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experience: Christian and Non-Christian (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1851), pp. 30-35.

¹⁰L.B. Brown, "The Structure of Religious Belief," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, V (Fall, 1966), p. 20.

This inability, therefore, of clearly discriminating the religious specificity in man's affective life has occasioned ambiguous claims about the rise of functionality and secularity in the behavior of modern man. This has been part of the ambiguity that prevailed in the debate between Cox and Greeley concerning the emergence of the modern secular man. Unproven premises regarding the place of emotion in religion and secularity are implicit in Greeley's contention that "the secular city does not exist, and given the human's tendency to preserve the traditional, primordial, the suprarational elements of his life, the secular city may never exist."¹¹

How is one to distinguish religion in its regular, civil, and ersatz forms? How valid is the distinction? These are questions that are bound up with the functional theory of religion. They are bound up with, for instance, the question of sociopsychological functions of illusions and aberrations in religious feeling,¹² with the question of maturity or immaturity of religious practice that is implicit in Allport's distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic religion.¹³ They are bound up again with the question of the Church which minimizes its prophetic role when it becomes a part of the establishment, as Berger claims the Church in America has become,¹⁴

¹¹ The Secular City Debate, ed. by Daniel Callahan, op. cit. p. 107.

¹² W. L. Lowe, "Group Beliefs and Socio-Cultural Factors in Religious Delusions," Journal of Social Psychology, XL (1954), pp. 267-274.

¹³ Gordon Allport, "Religion and Prejudice," The Crane Review, II (1959), pp. 1-10.

¹⁴ Berger, Noise of Solemn Assemblies, op. cit.

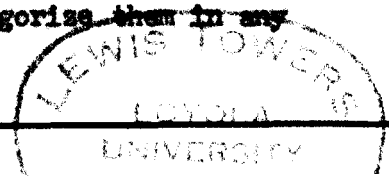
and the function it then plays for society analogous to the Durkheimian function which religion plays in primitive society.

These ambiguities and difficulties in the conceptualizing of the nature and function of religion point up the problem of devising generalized criteria for identifying religious behavior, of setting up valid and reliable measurement to scale the religious phenomena from high-to-low religiosity to irreligiosity and secularity. In other words, it is almost impossible to suggest universally applicable indicators for meaningfully distinguishing religious evolution from loss of religion; it is almost impossible to set up acceptable points of departure from which to scale orthodoxy or liberalism, authentic religious experience or its surrogates.

The confusion that prevails around the effort to conceptualize the nature of religion and the limited validity and reliability of the empiricized indicators used in scaling religious behavior directly and indirectly relate to the confusion and contradictions that prevail in the understanding and quantifying of the concept of secularization.

The Classification of the Meanings of the Secular

Disagreement in the understanding of the sociological nature of religion has variously been responsible for the disagreement in conceptualizing the phenomenon of secularization. The differential use of the term to cover a wide range of factors has not always been precise and consistent. Sometimes it has been somewhat overlapping in the meanings designated by different authors, and at times even contradictory. This fact makes it somewhat hard to chart the uses of the term and categorize them in any even pattern.



It should be clear at the outset that most of the problems pointed out in the definition and quantifying of the religious factor obtain even more truly in the focusing and measuring of the meaning of secularization. The principal problem in this regard is the illegitimacy of conceptualizing religion as a static reality, which fact engenders the problem of discriminating between, on the one hand, an evolutionary change in the internal structure and external adaptation of religion, and on the other hand, a true dissolution of religion and the emergence of irreligion and secularity. What is sometimes decried as the erosion of traditional religion by some has been hailed by others as the emergence of authentic religious value. But despite the problem of universalizing the necessary criteria, in reality there have always existed some phenomena, and, of recent times, there has occurred a socio-religious change in the world, whose different aspects have been termed as the "secular" or "secularization" and have been studied from different points of view.

While categorizing differently the several uses of the same term, it should be remembered that authors who define the term in one way for the purpose of their study do not necessarily deny the propriety of using the term differently. In this chapter, the emphasis is on classifying these different meanings of the term, and not on discussing the validity of their use.

The term "secular" etymologically derives from the Latin saeculum which meant a generation, an age, the spirit of an age, or the span of a century. Its widely diverse use in its religious, legal, and other meanings and their polemic overtones have been exhaustively traced back in history

by German scholars referred to, among others, by Shiner.¹⁵ Our concern here is with the term used for descriptive and analytic purposes in the social sciences. Shiner attempts to identify some of the empirical uses of the term and tries to present an assesement of the same.¹⁶ Our effort attempts a more exhaustive schematization of the various meanings, including also the conceptual uses. Unlike Shiner's effort, the present inquiry offers two major categories of meanings which have theoretical significance.

The two categories of meanings under which all the major uses of the terms fall are first, the category which treats of the secular as a polar type of state or outlook; and second, the category which treats secularization as a process which generally signifies a progressive departure from the sacred.

The Secular As Polar State or Outlook

The secular as a polar type of state or attitude has been widely used in scholarship and has been commonly held in the popular conception. In this conception the secular is contrasted with the sacred in various kinds of polar contrasts.

The most famous contribution in understanding one variety of this polar contrast is the division of reality between sacred and profane as held by Durkheim. As regards the use of the terms sacred and profane itself, Howard Becker traces a polemic intent in Durkheim, who, Becker

¹⁵ Larry Shiner, "The Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, VI (Fall, 1967), p. 208.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 207-220.

claims, equates "holy" and "secular" or "lay," with "sacred" and "profane," in his polemic opposition to the Roman Catholic clerics of his day.¹⁷ Becker contends, in keeping with his theory of the sacred-secular, that the sacred should a larger concept than supernaturalistically oriented conduct, i.e. religion, and that holy as a term should be exclusively used in designating matters pertaining to religious conduct.¹⁸

For Durkheim the division of the world into sacred and profane, which is the distinctive trait of religious thought, is absolute and universal to the extent that "in all the history of human thought there exists no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another."¹⁹ They are "two worlds between which there is nothing in common."²⁰

The Durkheimian sacred character attaches itself to certain beliefs, objects, rites, and persons, which then evoke from man the attitude of awe, love, or dread. It gives the sacred things a natural superiority over the profane, which is the useful, practical, familiar part of the everyday life lacking in emotional significance characteristic of the sacred. The incompatibility between the two worlds is complete though the passage of some things from one sphere to the other is possible through

¹⁷ Howard Becker, "Current Sacred-Secular Theory," in Modern Sociological Theory (New York: Dryden Press, 1957), pp. 181-182.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 144.

¹⁹ Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (New York: Free Press, 1965), p. 52.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 53.

initiating rites if the passage is from the profane to the sacred. Durkheim utilizes sacred perspective to analyse several social institutions.

The Durkheimian polarities of the sacred and profane can be said to be in modal contrast to one another. They suggest two modes of being, two segments of life, to which correspond two types of human responses, namely, the non-utilitarian religious response, and the practical nonsacredist response.

It should be noted that Durkheim's duality does admit hierarchical rankings on either side, as for instance is suggested in his remarks that "there are sacred things of every degree."²¹ But gradations on either side do not necessarily suggest a continuum from the sacred to the profane. Durkheim affirms both the hierarchical structure on each side, as well as the passage of things from one side to the other, but he also strongly emphasizes the heterogeneity in nature of the duality and its "break of continuity."²²

The division of life into modally contrasted segments such as suggested by Durkheim is a perspective shared also by other sociologists. Some among these latter might hold important reservations about the manner in which and the place where Durkheim lays his emphasis, but they seem to accept essentially the idea of modal contrasts in life.

Thus Yinger discusses the use of the term secular and concludes that it should be used "to refer simply to beliefs and practices related

²¹ Ibid., p. 53.

²² Ibid., p. 54.

to the 'non-ultimate' aspects of human life. It is not anti-religion, it is not substitute religion, it is simply another segment of life" and need not emphasize any particular relationship with religion.²³ Yinger, like most others, departs from Durkheim in his continuum approach to the sacred and secular.

A similar differentiation of spheres is also commented upon by Herberg.²⁴ The secular, according to Herberg, can be taken to refer to interests and activities outside the realm of conventional religious activities. Thus business, law, teaching, or warfare, for example, are secular affairs, as against spiritual, cultic activities of religion.

Though Weber's notion of charismatic legitimacy implies a different perspective it should be noted in passing that Durkheim's "sacred" might at times be equivalent to Weber's traditional legitimacy and at others to the charismatic.

The secular as the modal type which connotes that segment of human life signified by an absence of man's religious motives, feelings, and responses stands in different relationships with its contrasting sacred modal type. Sometimes it remains in subordination to the sacred mode. This is distinctly suggested by Durkheim as the prevalent case in primitive society. It is also the case where religion dominates

²³ J. Milton Yinger, "Pluralism, Religion, and Secularism," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, VI (Spring, 1967), p. 19.

²⁴ Will Herberg, "Religion in a Secularized Society: The New Shape of Religion in America," in The Sociology of Religion, ed. by Richard D. Knudten (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), pp. 470-481.

non-religious spheres of life as among sectarian and creedal groups.

The relation between the two types can also be that of two independent, autonomous, sometimes institutionalized, spheres of the sacred and the secular. Here nonsacral interests and activities coexist with religion without being subordinated to religion. Herberg contends that this is the relation that is widely existent in America, where the two sides even support one another.²⁵

There is yet a third kind of relationship that can exist between the two sides, where one of the sides tries to actively fight the other. Durkheim recognizes the "veritable antagonism" that can turn the two into "hostile and jealous rivals of each other." He finds an expression of the sacred fighting against the profane in monasticism which organizes a world of its own against the profane in asceticism which roots out man's attachment to the profane; in "all the forms of religious suicide, the logical working-out of this asceticism...."²⁶

On the other hand, in this dialectical opposition when it is the secular which tries to deny or fight the sacred, the secular is designated by many authors as "secularism," a term recently popularized in this meaning by Cox.²⁷ Secularism emerges as an ideology or philosophy of life, as it works for the extrusion of religion as a formative influence in life. It

²⁵ Ibid., p. 477.

²⁶ Durkheim, Forms of Religious Life, op. cit., p. 55.

²⁷ Cox, The Secular City, op. cit., p. 18.

²⁸ Herberg, "Religion in Secularized Society," op. cit., p. 472.

then becomes, in Herberg's words, "something very like religion."²⁸ The adherent of this "religion" approximates the "non-religious man" of Mircea Eliade, who characterizes him as a "man who makes himself, and he only makes himself completely in proportion as he desacralizes himself and the world. The sacred is the prime obstacle to his freedom. He will become himself only when he is totally demysticized. He will not be truly free until he has killed the last god."²⁹ Eliade does not necessarily impute a religion-denying premise to the approach of his non-religious man, which is all that would be required to identify him with the subscriber of a "profaned sacrality," or "integral atheism" of which Shiner, Marty, Fallding and others speak.³⁰

Finally and in passing a somewhat different categorization suggested by Kingsley Davis should be noted in this context. He suggests the accepted distinction between the sacred or holy and its opposite the unholy; the unholy tries to contaminate, deny, or subordinate the holy.^{30a} In addition to this, he contends, there is the domain of the "ordinary" which is regarded

²⁸ Herberg, "Religion in Secularized Society," op. cit., p. 472.

²⁹ Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1961), p. 203.

³⁰ Larry Shiner, "Toward a Theology of Secularization," Journal of Religion, XLV (October, 1965), pp. 279-295; Martin Marty, Varieties of Unbelief (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., Anchor Books, 1966), p. 115; Harold Fallding, "Secularization and the Sacred and Profane," Sociological Quarterly, VIII (Summer, 1967), pp. 349-364.

^{30a} Kingsley Davis, Human Society (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), pp. 520-521.

with an everyday attitude of commonness, utility, and familiarity.

In summary, the concept of the secular has been widely used as a state or outlook polarly contrasted to the sacred. The sacred state or outlook has been variously designated to be religion in its conventional, operative, or existential forms (Berberg), as an "enchanted" attitude (Eliade), as a concern with ultimate symbols (Yinger), or a combination of most of these attributes (Durkheim). In this use of the secular its discrete break with the sacred is more stressed than its possible graduated approximation with it. The polarities signify two modes of human existence with their two respective sets of human attitudes and behavior. They stand in differential relationships with each other, i.e. neutral, or various degrees of antagonism or accommodation.

Secularization As a Process

The secular as a polar state and secularization as a process are two different concepts. They are two different constructions of the mind designed to understand the objects they signify from two different perspectives. This does not imply that some or all the characteristics of the objects they signify are necessarily either distinct or identical in objective fact.

The objective reality that is designated by the term secular as a polar state has been different according to different authors. Though the conceptual perspective suggested by secularization as a process is distinct from that suggested by secular as a polar state, the corresponding objective reality in either case sometimes overlaps. This in general is true also of some other types widely accepted in sociological theory,

which exist in objective reality in their non-pure, mixed forms and thus might suggest a passage from one polar type to the other, which then could be understood as a sociological process.

In the case of the secular polar state especially, the reality does exist in its mixed, often ambiguous forms. The sacred and secular polar types moreover stand in different relationships with one another. These relationships, in some cases, shift in emphasis or change in degree over a period of time. Certain types of these changes showing a direction towards the secular are usually termed as the secularization process. Thus the secular as polar state and the secularization process remain distinct concepts but not always as distinct in the concrete phenomenon they represent. This needs to be stressed because the utilization of secularization as process need not be contradictory but complementary to the utilization of the secular as a polar state or outlook.

Secularization as process has been used in six different senses in social science. Of these the third and fourth emphasize the personal or social psychological level while the others stress the level of social structure.

1. The first and most common use in social sciences of the concept of secularization as a process, signifies a decline of religion as an operative principle in society. Many authors have assumed this use of the term. Berger who has contributed significantly to the theory of secularization

and the emergence of individualism

³¹ Cf. contributions in South Asian Politics and Religion, ed. by Donald Smith (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); and contributions on secularization in Comparative Studies in History and Society, VII (January, 1965).

defines secularization as "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols."³²

In the Western world, Berger illustrates, the shrinkage of the Christian churches' control over society is seen in the separation of church and state, the expropriation of church lands, the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority. The diminishing influence of religious symbols on cultural life and ideation is observed in the decline of religious contents in the arts, philosophy, literature, and it is seen also in "the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world."³³

In this use of the term of secularization, which signifies an increasing demonopolization of religious authority and influence, it is also suggested that there is a process both of increasing compartmentalization and privatization of formal religion. This process in fact is just one strand in the general trend of differentiation and professionalization in the modern world where segments of life emerge as autonomous institutions with their proper values, norms, and symbols. Whether this process, whereby the traditional significance of religion alters and a new relationship of religion with other autonomous spheres of life emerges, should be termed "secularization" is a question that throws us back on the problem of identifying the proper nature and role of religion. Here our task is the classification of the uses of secularization and not their evaluation.

³² Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy, Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 107.

³³ Ibid., p. 107.

2. A second and somewhat similar use of the secularization concept suggests a decline in society in the acceptance of conventional religious beliefs, practices, and institutions. The departure from traditional forms of religion has been empiricized along different lines of religious life and has been extensively studied by Fichter, Lenski, and others. Glock and Stark who have studied this form of religious decline have accepted secularization to mean the replacement of mystical and supernatural elements of traditional Christianity by a demythologized, ethical order rather than theological religion.³⁴

Yinger sounds a cautionary note that is applicable to both these uses of the meaning of secularization. He urges a refinement of the concept of secularization to distinguish it from the phenomenon of "religious change." He maintains that "the separation of religious motives, feelings, and decisions from other aspects of life," is a process distinct from "persons acting religiously in a way that does not express directly the faith they profess." If the former suggests a secularization process, the latter fact can merely mean an effort "to redefine one's religion while disguising or obscuring the process by holding, somewhat superficially, to many of the symbols of the earlier religious system. Religious change is usually a latent process, carried on beneath symbols of nonchange."³⁵ Lack of orthodoxy does not mean weakening of religion; therefore it does not

³⁴ Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, Religion and Society in Tension (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 116.

³⁵ J. Milton Yinger, Sociology Looks at Religion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), pp. 69-70.

mean secularization.

3. Yet a third use has been made of the concept of secularization, which here suggests a progressive deprivation of the world of its sacral character, which ultimately means the emergence of rationality in man's attitude and thought.

It is in this sense essentially that O'Dea defines secularization. "Secularization may be said to consist fundamentally of two related transformations in human thinking. There is first the 'desacralization' of the attitude toward persons and things--the withdrawal of the kind of emotional involvement which is to be found in the religious response, in the response of the sacred. Secondly, there is the rationalization of thought--the withholding of emotional participation in thinking about the world."³⁶

This process of disenchantment is a part of Weber's theory of the rationalization process. It has been anthropologically and historically studied by Mircea Eliade, who describes the emergence of the non-religious man with the progressive loss of the sense of the sacred. The non-religious man stands at the opposite extreme of the "homo religiosus," who "always believes that there is an absolute reality, the sacred, which transcends this world but manifests itself in this world, thereby sanctifying it and making it real."³⁷

The deconsecration of the world advances in step with the increase in the rationality in man's attitude. The demystification process means

³⁶O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, op. cit., p. 81.

³⁷Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, op. cit., p. 202.

that the faith and awe elements in man's response give way to the scientific, and thus, as O'Dea remarks, mysteries turn into problems, mythology into history. In the context of the classicists, Robert Nisbet touches on this process of the dissolution of the sacred as the emergence of a non-religious frame of mind, a utilitarian, scientific world-view, employing rational attitudes and standards towards persons, things, and institutions.³⁸

4. Somewhat related to this use of the term is yet a fourth meaning of secularization. This is the use of the concept of secularization to mean a historical evolutionary process whereby religious groups conform more and more to this world, turn their attention away from the transcendental and supernatural, and toward the immanent, pragmatic, earthly concerns.

This meaning of the term has been adopted by Harold Pfautz in his analysis of religious groups.³⁹ By secularization he understands "the tendency of sectarian religious movements to become both part of and like 'the world.'"⁴⁰ This tendency is classically described in the sociology of religion as the evolution of the "sect" from its phase of conflict with its environment to its progressive acceptance of and accommodation to the world through its phase of "denomination" to its terminal phase of

³⁸ Robert A. Nisbet, "The Sacred" and "Alienation," in The Sociological Tradition (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1966), pp. 221-263 and 264-312.

³⁹ Harold Pfautz, "The Sociology of Secularization: Religion Groups," American Journal of Sociology, LXI (September, 1955), pp. 121-128.

⁴⁰ Harold Pfautz, "Christian Science: A Case Study of the Social Psychological Aspect of Secularization," Social Forces, XXXIV (1956), p. 246.

"church." It is in this sense again that Berger speaks of "the secularization of theology" of the present day. Describing this phenomenon he says that "the movement generally shows a shift from a transcendental to an immanent perspective, and from an objective to a subjective understanding of religion; it speaks in terms of the "concerns of this world" and "the nature of man or his temporal situation."⁴¹

5. A fifth use of the term secularization suggests a process which in aspects is akin to yet in essence is different from some of the four meanings suggested above. This is the process of transposition of religious beliefs and institutions to the non-religious realms of life. This is not a process identical to the process of shrinkage of religious control over society through the trend towards differentiation. This is rather a shift of religious beliefs, religious experience, and religious institutions into a nonsacral context, into the area of non-religious responsibility.

Shiner quotes the German scholar Adalbert Klempt who speaks of this use of the term and describes secularization as the "transformation of conceptions and modes of thought which were originally developed by the Christian salvation belief and its theology into ones of a world-based outlook."⁴² Shiner goes on to say, regarding examples of transposition, that "some well-known theses have proposed the 'spirit of capitalism' as a secularization of the Calvinistic ethic, the Marxist version of consum-

⁴¹ Peter Berger, "A Sociological View of the Secularization of Theology," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, VI (Spring, 1967), p. 4.

⁴² Quoted by Shiner, "Concept of Secularization," op. cit., p. 214.

mation of the revolution as coming from Jewish-Christian eschatology, psychotherapy as a secular outgrowth of confession and the cure of souls, etc."⁴³ The validity of the use of the term of secularization in this sense and the difficulty of its quantification again are not the concern here, which is merely the clarifying of the different meanings that have been actually assigned to it.

6. A sixth use of the term secularization is that of Howard Becker who uses the concept to designate the social change that occurs from sacred to secular society. Acceptance or rejection of social change is the essential variable in these two systems of social life. The sacred and secular are described by Becker as two types of systems, where the secular society is one bringing its members to be willing and able to accept or pursue the new as the new is defined in that society.⁴⁴ But these types are only poles of one continuum: "reluctance and readiness to accept or initiate social change provide the construction lines of what may be called a sacred-secular scale or continuum."⁴⁵ Moving from the sacred to the secular are four intermediary subtypes, the proverbial, the prescriptive, the principal, and the pronormless.

Sorekin has severely criticized this systemic conception of Becker for its "factual and logical errors" and has pointed out that "Becker's types are a variation of Tonnies' Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft types of

⁴³Ibid., pp. 214-215.

⁴⁴Howard Becker, "Current Sacred-Secular Theory," in Modern Sociological Theory, op. cit., pp. 133-185.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 141-142.

organized social systems."⁴⁶ It could also be argued that the introduction of sacred-secular designations for general social systems and social changes contributes more towards confusion than clarification of the terms.

Summary and Critique

The inquiry in this chapter up to this point should now be summarized. Social scientists have used the terms secular and secularization to mean several distinct phenomena. The investigation up to now was attempted to arrive at possible distinct and precise categories among these several uses. To begin with, it was suggested that the concept of the secular relates to the concept of religion and hence inherits the confusion and ambiguities that surround the concept of religion.

The ambiguities in the concept of religion stem from the fact that it is a multidimensional variable. Not only is there no consensus on the precise number of these dimensions, but there is less understanding of the interrelations between these dimensions both within the same religion and between different religions. Hence, there is little agreement as to the integral elements that constitute the nature of authentic religious behavior. Therefore, there is consequent disagreement on the identification of the distinction between religious change from the decline of religion. The opposite of religion is the secular, the decline of religion is secularization.

One category of the uses of the term is the secular as a type of attitude or an end state. In contrast to the other category, here the

⁴⁶ Sorokin, Sociological Theories of Today, op. cit., p. 337.

emphasis is on the polar contrast of the secular to the sacred. The secular type is one mode of being or behavior contrasted to the sacred type of being or behavior. They are differently contrasted as to be either neutral or subordinate or superordinate in relation to one another. Where the secular claims total superordination over the sacred, it becomes secularism, an alternate "religious" value to the sacred.

The second category of the uses of the term is secularization as a process. Here the emphasis is on the continuum and the passage from the sacred to the secular. Six different uses fall under the category: (1) The removal of society from the control and influence of formal and/or informal religion; (2) The departure of believers from conventional religious beliefs, practices, and institutions; (3) The desacralization of the cosmos and the rise of rationality in man's attitude; (4) A preoccupation with this worldly concerns and human condition rather than with the transcendental and supernatural realities; (5) The transposition of beliefs, practices, and institutions from the realm of religion to the realm of reason and non-religious responsibility; (6) An evolution from a non-change oriented social system to a change oriented social system.

The two categories of meanings of the secular and secularization represent distinct conceptual perspectives relating to objective phenomena often overlapping in the concrete.

This categorization was attempted in order to provide a somewhat historiographic background for the subsequent codification of the secularization theory which is the central task of the present study. This being the case, other lines of inquiry related to the uses of the term secular

and secularization have to be considered as falling beyond the legitimate scope and purpose of this study. However, a brief identification of their further lines of research would here be suggested as a concluding critique.

An endless possibility of investigation on the secular and secularization as terms and phenomena is afforded by the fundamental vagueness, ambiguity, and impreciseness that surround the definition and operationalization of concepts like sacred, holy, religion, etc., which in turn contaminate the former with their confusion. The historical resultant of this situation has been not only the several scholarly uses of the terms secular and secularization which we have noted, but also the fact that the terms have been inflated with residual overtones of the polemical and popular usage in their checkered history.

One of the simpler researches could try to chart historiographically this terminological evolution, and to disentangle the layered meanings and overtones. A research of this nature would provide the groundwork for a further inquiry as to the theoretical contribution of some of the more academic uses of the term. It would lead one into a discussion of the semantic problem involved, into the realm of the sociology of language, into metasociology which evaluates the value content--human, theoretical, methodological--of the various approaches and procedures in sociology. In other words, this would imply an evaluation of the analytic value of and the contribution to a better understanding of social reality made by the utilization of the terms secular and secularization. Would the same reality be better understood by its analysis and designation

by other terms?

Yet another investigation could be conducted to determine the relative validity and reliability of the quantifying measures that have sometimes been developed to test empirically the several uses of the terms or some aspects of the secular and secularization.

What will be the contribution of all these lines of inquiry to the question whether these terms should be retained for further analysis and research in sociology? Four points should be made in answering this question.

Firstly, everyone of the above investigations would uncover the cluster of contradictory meanings that have developed and continue to develop around the terms. Because of the popular and ideological implications of the terms, it cannot be anticipated that this confusion will ever be sufficiently cleared in the interest of sociological research.

Secondly, it will not be reasonable to expect that a moratorium can be effected on any use of the terms in order to solve or bypass the problem of confusion. The multitude of phenomena designated by the terms could be, ideally speaking, covered by different, more neutral terms describing distinctly the individual categories or aspects of the phenomena. A consensus on this among researchers will not be easy to achieve.

Thirdly, neither would it be realistic to expect researchers to agree on the term secular or secularization as a general designation to cover certain subsumed aspects of religious change. Shiner's suggestion and argument for such a use of the term to cover three complementary processes,

namely, desacralization, differentiation, and transposition,⁴⁷ not only invite the charge of arbitrariness in the selection of the three processes, but they also labor under the unrealistic hope that researchers would rally round such a normative ideal.

Fourthly, the only approach that can and must be expected of all social researchers would be for everyone to state precisely the meaning of the term and the phenomenon it covers in his particular research and to be consistent in its use. The precision in definition and operationalization and the consistency in their use would de-emphasize the subsidiary semantic problem and would provide precise comparable data for research by others who may or may not utilize the terms secular and secularization to designate essentially comparable phenomena. Thus, the critique of the terms secular and secularization with the aim of either rehabilitating them or giving them the coup de grace does not seem to promise a great effective contribution to methodology and research.

Though generally the abandoning of the spongy terms secular and secularization would contribute towards clarity, in the present study the terms could not be completely eliminated by the nature of the research problem. The codification of theory implies, as noted earlier, the examination and interrelating of concepts as utilized by others. Some of these concepts have been designated by or related to the terms secular and secularization. Thus, an examination of the nature and content of these concepts has had to be done under these labels.

⁴⁷Shiner, "Concept of Secularization," *op. cit.*, p. 219.

Still, the stress in the present study does not lie on the semantic aspects but on the constituent elements designated by the terms. Therefore these constituent elements have had to be indicated precisely at every step. Further, in places where the terms secular and secularization would still appear inaccurate or ambivalent the term religious change is used in addition or as a substitute in the precise designation suggested in the context.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEXT OF THE SECULARIZATION PROCESS

This chapter deals with the first of the two stages in the codification of the secularization theory, namely with the construction of a generalized sociological model of some main features of social change. The second stage consists in the codification of secularization theory in terms of this general context of social change. The general sociological model in this chapter will be constructed in terms of some of the sociological concepts, propositions, and theories dealing with the social processes of modern times.

In order to plot some of the dominant features in the pattern of change in modern society, two fundamental and pervasive processes, as discussed in classical literature, may be singled out. These two principles or processes form the two poles of the conceptual model which provides the framework to understand the dominant social changes in the modern world. These are the processes of rationalization and individuation. They can be considered to be such fundamental themes in various aspects of social change that they have been widely utilized in social sciences as methodological tools to analyze several aspects of changing social relationships--political, economic, organizational, religious, etc.

In general the process of rationalization refers to the emergence of the primacy of rationality in social relationships. The process of individuation refers in general, on the other hand, to a specific evolution of human consciousness and self-conception of man. Rationalization is an objective

process as much as it is a characteristic of changing social structures, while individuation is a subjective process as much as it describes the change of subjective consciousness of individuals in society. In so far as human consciousness relates dialectically to its social base, rationalization and individuation too are dialectically related processes, influencing and reinforcing each other.

The Objective Process of Rationalization

The concept of rationalization has been proposed by Max Weber as a methodological tool to plot the dominant themes of modern social history, patterns of thought, culture, and art in the West.¹ For Weber the process of rationalization is the central theme of Western civilization.

The term rationalization has been used in a variety of ways in different branches of social science.² For Weber it implied in essence a progressive "disenchantment of the world" and an increasing utilization of rational bases for social action. The undercurrent of rationalization in Western history has tended to convert social values and relationships from the primary, communal, and traditional shapes to the larger rational, impersonal, utilitarian shapes of modern life. It has progressively tried

¹ The present discussion of Weber's concept of rationalization is based on the following: Gerth and Mills (eds.), Max Weber: Essays, op. cit., pp. 51-52, 293-299; Nisbet, Sociological Tradition, op. cit., pp. 141-150, 293-297; Talcott Parsons, "Introduction" in The Sociology of Religion, by Max Weber, trans. by Ephraim Eischoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), pp. xxxii-xxxv, xlii-xliii.

² Cf. Max Weber: Essays, op. cit., p. 293, and William Faunce, Problems of an Industrial Society (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968), p. 32.

to eliminate the irrational, the informal, and the sacredist element from man's attitudes, his organizations, and thought processes.

An expression of this theme of rationality is manifested in the Weberian concept of bureaucratic authority. Bureaucracy is the mode of hierarchy that supplants the patrimonial, charismatic, traditional authority, and builds the institutions in society on "the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas."³ Bureaucracy encourages the following practices: division, distribution and hierarchy of authority; regularization of the channels of communication; functional priority of the office over the person occupying it; the emphasis on formal recorded orders; separation of official and personal identity in the management of affairs; the identification of expertise for office or function; the conversion of duties and functions to specific, preceptive rules.⁴

The Weberian use of the term rationalization develops the concept of functional rationality rather than that of substantive rationality. The latter is connoted by the word reasonability which suggests the rational development of the total human person and total human society in terms of the totality of their needs, rational and emotional. Functional rationality, on the other hand, refers to the operation of the utilitarian principle in the adoption of best possible means for the attainment of specified goals. This is often characterized by the elimination of traditional norms in favor of strictly scientific criteria, by the division

³ Max Weber: Essays, op. cit., p. 74.

⁴ Ibid., p. 126.

of functions and roles for the specialized, professionalized development of these functions and roles.

The Subjective Process of Individuation

A systematic and historical treatment of the socio-psychological implications of the process of individuation has been presented by Erich Fromm.⁵ By the process of individuation Fromm means the gradual emergence of "man's awareness and conception of himself as an independent and separate being."⁶ The emergence of individuality corresponds to the emergence of man's "freedom from" his primary ties to nature and society and seeks its fulfillment in his "freedom to" exercise and express his individuality in the midst of optimum available choices.

Individuation as an historical process is analogous to the psychological, biographic process of a normal human being in its growth from childhood in- to adulthood. In the earlier period of social history man was tied to the world and to his society with primary, organic ties which gave him a certain corporate identity and security. The stronger are these ties that "connect the child with its mother, the member of a primitive community with his clan and nature, or the medieval man with the Church and his social caste," the greater is the lack of freedom and individuality.⁷

⁵ Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom, op. cit. Fromm's treatment is supplemented by the perspectives of J. Piaget's The Moral Judgement of the Child (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1932). Cf. also Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, trans. by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1936), pp. 32ff, 189ff.

⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

The weakening of these primary ties that hold man integrally linked to his economic, political, social, and religious environment is a necessary condition for him to grow into an awareness of the possibilities and responsibilities of individual freedom and action. The closed secure world with its definite meanings and definite roles and means to attain fixed aims now collapses when its organic bonds are severed. The emerging individual thus faces a new open world and its limitless possibilities for development.

This process of individuation, Fromm argues, "seems to have reached its peak in modern history in the centuries between Reformation and the present."⁸ Luther and Calvin symbolized and legitimized the breaking away of the "Reformation Man" from the traditional, religious, economic, and political authority of the Church. Subsequently, capitalism served man's freedom on the economic level just as the Reformers served it on the religious and psychological level. Protestantism legitimized man's individualistic relations with God. Capitalism with its new concept and values of capital, market, and competition promotes man's individualistic, instrumental, functional approach to the world and his fellowman.

Reciprocal Processes

Rationalization and individuation are two complementary and reciprocal concepts corresponding to two dialectic processes in society. Rationalization of social structures and processes suggests the growing tendency of man and society to make rational and conscious selection of appropriate means for

⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

specified goals.⁹ Individuation implies the self-awareness of man and his awakening to the possibilities and responsibilities of his freedom, his self-decisions, and choices to attain the goal which he sets for himself, and not his community forces on him.

Conscious selection of inappropriate means for the end one seeks is irrationality. The unreflective and habitual selection of means that may or may not be appropriate to the end is traditionalism. The elimination of non-rational factors in the selection of adequate means is emphasized by rationalization, just as the elimination of unreflective, tradition-dictated choices is emphasized by individuation.

Rationality as a force is increasingly evidenced in the objective social processes of life, while individuation as a subjective evolution is a correlative resultant. Human consciousness reflects the character of its social base as well as affects it. Hence the thematic changes in the objective social processes both influence and are conditioned by a correlated thematic change in the subjective consciousness of man.

The principles of rationalization and individuation are methodological devices to study the change in society and consciousness and do not necessarily imply any value stance. But both Weber and Fromm who deal with them explicitly, as well as almost every classical sociologist who has attempted a grand theory of social change, have found it necessary to give consideration to the values and moral implications involved therein. Weber, who so forcefully argued for a value-free sociology and so well demonstrated his skill at it in tracing

⁹Max Weber: Essays, op. cit., p. 74.

the ramifications of the effects of the rationalization process, himself assumes a moral stand as he projects the devastations of a rationalized, overorganized society into a future "polar night of icy darkness and hardness."¹⁰ Raising the spectre of a regimented, mechanized, reason-destroying society, Weber asserts: "And the great question is...what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from the parcelling out of the soul, from the supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life."¹¹

In a similar vein Fromm speaks of the dangers involved in the individuation of human consciousness. The growing individuation of modern man which is "a process of growing strength and integration, mastery of nature, growing power of human reason, and growing solidarity with other human beings," also implies "growing isolation, insecurity, doubt concerning one's own role in the universe and the meaning of one's life, and feeling of one's own powerlessness and insignificance as an individual."¹² Fromm devotes considerable analytic effort to argue about the dangers of subtle inner constraints to modern man's freedom, as well as the temptation of the individuated man who may feel the sense of individuality too overwhelming and his freedom too burdensome, which fact may lead him to seek psychic and social mechanisms of escape.

The concepts of rationalization and individuation which describe the breaking away of man from the earlier forms of social structures and modes

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 128.

¹¹ Cited by Nisbet, Sociological Tradition, op. cit., p. 299.

¹² Fromm, Escape from Freedom, op. cit., p. 36.

of consciousness, treat of the greater possibilities of and the greater dangers to the freedom of modern man. The moral concern expressed by Weber and Fromm is also reflected in the authors who are dealt with in the following pages in terms of their elaboration of the rationalization-individuation model.

Rationalization-Individuation as the Theme of Social Change

The all pervasive nature of the concepts of rationalization and individuation can be both illustrated and tested by utilizing them as analytic tools to clarify some dominant aspects of modern society in the light of the classical theories regarding these aspects. It can be demonstrated that some of the widely accepted theories of social change do in fact fit in and are illuminated by the rationalization-individuation model. Four fundamental aspects of modern social life-style will be dealt with here: (1) The scientific management of social relationships, (2) The environment of modern urban living, (3) The principle and practice of political life, (4) The production system. Following this analysis a preliminary, generalized description of religious change will be attempted in terms of the rationalization-individuation model.

The first aspect of modern life which illustrates this model is the scientific management of social relationships, which has been already alluded to under the Weberian theory of bureaucracy.¹³ A bureaucratic system which stresses external controls, functional work allotments, and a hierar-

¹³ A useful compendium of studies is Reader in Bureaucracy, ed. by Robert K. Merton, Ailsa P. Gray, Barbara Hockey, Hanon C. Selvin (New York: The Free Press, 1952); Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967).

chized authority structure is itself a functional response of society towards a new rationalized integration of man in the face of loosening traditional controls. A highly differentiated, complex, fluid society calls for institutionalized, formalized means for accommodating conflicts and opposing interests. Viewed in this light it is a higher and maturer level of social integration, characteristic of more individuated persons. For this integration is based on a web of formal rules, not on unreflective traditional controls, on free contractual relationships rather than on sacral, communal ties. The bureaucratization of life thus connotes the primacy of rationality and the conscious management of social relationships.

The second aspect of modern society which illustrates our theoretical model is the style and environment of modern urban living. This aspect of life has been studied in terms that transcend the immediate confines of city life; and in terms of social change it has been classified variously, sometimes emphasizing the dichotomous nature and sometimes the graduated progression between the two contrasting poles: Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft (Tönnies); sacred/secular societies (Becker); mechanical/organic solidarity (Durkheim); status/contract societies (Maier); folk/urban societies (Redfield); communal/associative social relationships (Weber and MacIver).

The contribution of Tönnies is the more famous and distinctive of the classifications. His concepts embody and reflect many kinds of human relationships. legal, economic, cultural, intellectual, and even the division between sexes. Essentially they clarify the historical development in the Western world, almost coinciding with the perspective suggested by rationalization and individuation. Tönnies traces four stages of historical develop-

ment in the social relationships from the past to the present.¹⁴ The first three phases of this development reflect a growing individualization of human relationships, with impersonality, competition and egoism becoming gradually more dominant. The fourth phase is the effort to recover within the context of modern society the social securities of earlier communal life. The development progresses from the prototypical relationships which are the context for the modern economic enterprise. Insisting on the spirit of rationality and individuality that exists in the Gesellschaft stages, Tönnies writes: "The difference lies in the fact that all its activities are restricted to a definite means of attaining it, if it is to be valid, i.e., to conform to the will of its members."¹⁵ And again: "...In Gemeinschaft the individuals remain essentially united inspite of all separating factors, whereas in Gesellschaft they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors."¹⁶

The progression of social relationships from their communal form to the associative form as described by Tönnies is particularly well reflected and embodied in the urban setting which provides the context for the rational, impersonal, associative kind of human relationships. "The city," says Leonard Reissman, "is a rational environment even though its inhabitants sometimes manifest actions irrational by any standard. The quality of rationality has been a constant urban feature since antiquity, although it has been elevated as a general principle in the industrial city."¹⁷ The

¹⁴ Ferdinand Tönnies, Community and Society, trans. and ed. by Charles Loomis (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1963).
¹⁵ Ibid., p. 192.
¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

spirit of rationality manifests in the street patterns, the land use, the architecture, the behavior and outlook of the urbanite, and even in the existence of the urban slums. The individualistic nature of the city life is manifest in the theme of variety and heterogeneity that characterize the urban style of living. William Monroe writes: "The city has more wealth than the country, more skill, more education within its bounds, more initiative, more philanthropy, more science, more divorces, more aliens, more births and deaths, more accidents, more rich, more poor, more wise men and more fools."¹⁸

A third aspect of modern society that elucidates our rationalization-individuation model is the emergence of the principle and practice of democracy as the form of life and political behavior in modern society. Tocqueville's classic analysis of the democratic way of life as an example can confirm our model. The equalitarian principle, Tocqueville contends, is the dominant force in democracy, where men "love equality more ardently and tenaciously than liberty."¹⁹ Love of equality as a correlate of individualism rebels as much against an intellectual aristocracy as it does against a political aristocracy.²⁰ Rationalism in democracy is another element, Tocqueville maintains, that weakens authority and dogmas, diminishes trust, and makes for a utilitarian devotion to technique, to

¹⁸ William B. Monroe, "City," in Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 479.

¹⁹ Alexis Tocqueville, Democracy in America, ed. by J. P. Meyer and Max Lerner (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 473.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 679.

things that are useful, finite, and functional. A devotion to equality and individualism, he says, leads democratic man to derive his identity and worth not from his identification with his group, but from his own self worth. Democratic man is not inclined to accept the role definition ascribed to him by tradition as in a prestructured, aristocratic society, but to achieve this status in a mobile, open society; he will not prefer the security of living under authority, be it cultural, political, intellectual, or religious, to the risk of making his personal decisions; he tends to accept no ideology on faith but to submit everything to his reason and to test all approaches for their functional utility. Tocqueville's tone and argument suggest a valuational stance and his concern about the moral ambivalence of these values. In the works of the democratic man there is less perfection and more abundance. "Almost all extremes are softened and blunted. Almost all salient characteristics are obliterated to make room for something average, less high and less low, less brilliant and less dim, than what the world had before.... Equality may be less elevated, but it is more just, and in its justice lies its greatness and beauty."²¹

The operation of the rationalization and individuation processes are starkly evident in yet another aspect of modern society, namely, in the rise of industrialism which is not merely a system of production but also a style of life. Industrialization is the supreme result of the relentless application of the principle of rationality. Rationalization, William Faunce maintains, "represents an important qualitative difference

²¹ Ibid., p. 679.

between early and later industrial stages."²² The developmental sequence in most industries, and in the general trend in the history of production technology, has been identified by Faunce to proceed in three stages: (1) Craft production, (2) Mechanized production, (3) Automated production.²³ There is a differential pace in different industries and a "unique man-machine relationship that is characteristic of each period."²⁴ Each production component, moreover, like each stage of development, may have different social and economic consequences. Faunce argues convincingly that industrialism affects the values and structures of society so decisively that we can talk not only of problems in an industrial society, but of problems of the industrial society generated by the intrinsic logic of its operation. An unhampered application of functional rationality evidences the emergence of the individuated man now emancipated from non-rational control of his community, religion, or tradition and at the same time raises the moral question of the reasonability of institutionalizing technological rationality. Robert Nisbet sees in this a threat to individuality and to ethical decision-making: "In the same way that technological revolution reduced man's significance through the transfer of, first, strength, then, skill, and finally thought itself, to the machine, it now appears to have a fourth phase: one in which individual decision is being transferred to

²² Faunce, Problems of an Industrial Society, op. cit., p. 34.

²³ Ibid., pp. 44-45

²⁴ Ibid., p. 45

the machine--conceived as scientific and channelled organization."²⁵ He says further that when technology's "institutionalization reaches the point of reducing the normal conflict of institutions through techniques of abstraction, generalization, and rationalization, it may be regarded as posing a threat to individuality and to ethical decision making."²⁶

What we have attempted till now is, first, the setting up of a general sociological model of some aspects of social change in modern times, and second, the elaboration of the model by its application to various aspects of social change. We designated the sociological model as the rationalization-individuation model which corresponds to the objective changes in the structural forms of social relationships, and the parallel, reciprocal subjective change in human consciousness. The model, derived from the fairly well established sociological theory, in essence describes the objective social change as the emergence of the primacy of rationality in social relationships and the subjective change as a growing sense of individuality, as distinct from the primacy of group identity, that characterizes the evolution of human consciousness in modern times. This model was then applied to four aspects of social change as handled by classical theorists, namely, the emergence of a bureaucratic approach in social relationships, the growing urban environment in modern living, the principle and practice of a democratic way of life, the rise of industrialism as a

²⁵ Robert Nisbet, "The Impact of Technology on Ethical Decision-Making," in Religion and Social Conflict, ed. by Robert Lee and Martin Marty (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 20.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

production system and as a style of life. The individual concepts and theories regarding these aspects of social change contain their own unique emphases and nuances. The presumption we work on here is that these individual concepts and theories can be understood better by locating them in the general sociological model we have constructed. At the same time these concepts and theories elaborate and clarify the model by adding to or emphasizing now one and now the other element in the model. The essential point, however, has been to demonstrate that the principles of rationalization and individuation can be used as methodological concepts to clarify the pattern of the multi-faced social change in modern society.

The rationalization-individuation model has now to be utilized to codify the secularization theory. But introductorily it is here first suggested that just as most other aspects of modern society, so too the religious evolution of modern times in general fits in with the perspective of the individualizing and rationalizing processes of modern change.

Rationalization-Individuation as the Theme of Religious Change

Religious change is understood here as any change in religious structures, institutions, experience, or expressions involving no loss of the authentic religious element in the process of change. This is in contrast to the process of secularization which implies the dissolution of the religious element itself. The empirical identification of this religious authenticity is a point of controversy in sociology as was explained at length in Chapter III. As was implied in the discussion the authentic religious factor could be initially defined in terms of its

opposition to magic, "extrinsic religion," etc.

Three theoretical perspectives from the sociology of religion will be drawn upon here to demonstrate that the operation of the rationalization-individuation process does also obtain in the sphere of religious change in modern society. Not every one of these perspectives reinforces the total framework of the rationalization-individuation model, but it only clarifies, elaborates, and contributes to the total framework by emphasizing one or other of its poles. The three theories of religious change that are considered here are the following: (1) The sect-to-church typological progression, (2) The evolution of folk to universal religion, (3) The religious change in industrial society.

1. The classic sect-to-church progression typology with its modifications concerning the further progression towards denominationalism or the voluntary association has been variously studied and applied to particular religious movements or phenomena.²⁷

But in the present study it is used in the grand theory manner of Ernst Troeltsch²⁸ to characterize the general trend and dominant pattern of historical religious change in the Western world towards a growing rationalization. The rational development is typified in the sect-to-church change. The sect is characterized by a primary group, lower class, voluntary membership based on some self-conception of elect; a hostility or indifference

²⁷ Cf. Readings on "Sect, Church, Denomination, and Stratification," in Religion, Culture and Society, ed. by Lewis Schneider (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964), pp. 457-507.

²⁸ Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, trans. by Olive Wyon (London: Allen and Unwin, 1931), Vol. I.

towards the "world;" irregularly distributed roles among members; a non-professionalized, untrained, charismatic leadership; simple, austere, ritual and behavior patterns. The church on the other hand suggests a broader, sophisticated, rationalized approach to the world. It is characterized by an accommodation with the environing world; a universalized membership; a complex institution, legal-rational and/or traditionalistic structure; elaborated doctrine and sacramentalized worship; professionalized leadership and service.²⁹ Barring the repeated eruptions of sectarian groupings it could be hypothesized that religious movements and traditions in the main participate in the rationalizing trends in the modern world and thus attain the characteristics of the ecclesiastic or denominational type.

2. A second theory concerning religious change towards religious structural differentiation which contributes to the individualizing dimension of the rationalization-individuation model has been suggested by Gustav Mensching.³⁰ The structural differentiation in religion which occurs in answer to the needs of man when his basic life situation changes is characterized by Mensching as the evolution of folk religion to universal religion. He maintains that when the condition of man remains unindividuated, in the sense of Fromm, then his religion has the characteristics of folk or nature religion. In folk religion, "the individual has not discovered himself," and hence

²⁹ Cf. Earl D.C. Brewer, "Sect and Church in Methodism," and Bryan R. Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., pp. 471-482, 482-497.

³⁰ Gustav Mensching, "Folk and Universal Religion," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., pp. 254-261.

"the vital community" is the carrier of his religion.³¹ Its gods have an exclusive and binding relation to the limited community. Its ethic, values, and spirit are directly related to the welfare and security of the particular community and lack the conception of absolute, universal characteristics of a universal religion. "Early man is not yet isolated from the elementary unity of life, has not yet fathomed himself as an ego and a self released from community and life unity. Folk religion corresponds to this stage of human existence, for it is the religion of unexamined elementary unity."³²

Universal religion, on the other hand, emerges as a response "to a newly arisen need of man awakened to self consciousness in more recent times."³³ Now it is no longer the community but the individual who is the subject of religion. It is the individual who finds himself now in the personal condition of nonsalvation, desiring to find salvation in a community which will no longer automatically sanctify him. The universal religion has man as the object of its message and thus has an inner universality to its message which is thus no longer designed to reflect a particular community. The process of individuation wherein man attains a heightened conception of his self worth and potentiality implies a reciprocal change in man's religion which in its content, structure, and appeal now relates to the individuated consciousness of man.

3. A Third theory concerning religious change has been proposed by Parsons.³⁴ Mensching's theory rests on a cultural analysis of historical

³¹Ibid., p. 254.

³²Ibid., p. 257.

³³Ibid., p. 261.

situations of man. Parsons applies Fromm's and Mensching's concept of individuation to the evolution of Western Christianity in terms of its internal and environmental differentiation. Parsons' starting point is a disagreement with Sorokin who allegedly regards "Protestantism, compared with medieval Catholicism, as primarily a step in the general decline of religiousness and the secularism which has been prominent since the Age of Enlightenment as the natural further step in the same direction."³⁵ Against this view Parsons claims on sociological grounds what Bonhoeffer seems to have claimed on the theological as regards the emergence of "man come of age" facing the new responsibilities of his secular, religionless Christianity. Parsons says: "That the general trend has been to higher orders of autonomous responsibility is, in my opinion, sociologically demonstrable."³⁶

(A progressive extension of the principle of autonomy and individualization in Christianity, Parsons contends, is discernible in three stages: the Middle Ages, the Reformation period, the Modern times.) In the Middle Ages the principle of autonomy operated in the Church trying to institutionalize its values not by the absorption of the temporal order, but by establishing the fundamental differentiation between the spiritual and temporal orders, between God and Caesar, between the Church and the State, and then extending its influence on the secular order. The Catholic Church emancipated the

³⁴ Talcott Parsons, "Christianity and Modern Industrial Society," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., pp. 274-298.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 274.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 297.

individual from his imbeddedness in his social community, from the all encompassing Jewish law, and gave him autonomy in the secular sphere.

The Reformation Age saw "the extension of this principle of autonomy to the internal structure of religious organization itself."³⁷ Luther broke the tutelage of the Church over the individual and his dependence on human mediation of the Church by putting him in direct relation with God and by placing his religious responsibility on his conscience. He also placed the secular calling on an equal moral plane as the religious sphere.

Modern times have seen a third phase of the continuation of the process of autonomy. The individual is now further emancipated from all control of religious organization and faces the legitimacy of its choice in the midst of denominational pluralism. "The individual is responsible not only for managing his own relation to God through faith within the ascribed framework of an established church, which is the Reformation position, but for choosing the framework itself, for deciding as a mature individual what to believe, and with whom to associate himself in the organizational expression and reinforcement of his commitments."³⁸ The principle of differentiation and autonomy now stress the voluntary aspect of the religious organization in the face of an indefinite plurality of morally acceptable denominations. The individualistic trend has furthered the differentiation between the religious and secular spheres by the privatizing of formal, external religious commitment, just as the Reformation made internal religious

³⁷ Ibid., p. 285.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 293.

faith a matter for the individual alone.

Summary

This chapter has suggested the usefulness of the two concepts of rationalization and individuation in the analysis of the different facets of social change in the modern world. This was demonstrated by a brief review in the light of the rationalization-individuation model of some of the classical sociological theories regarding the formalization of man's social relationships, his context of urban life, his political conduct, and his economic behavior. These theories accentuate one or other aspect or implication of the model. This same framework was then utilized to suggest that religious evolution in modern society does in general share the same basic perspective, and that it can be understood as one of the subthemes of the general rationalization-individuation process in the modern world.

We have had to side step the controversy regarding the identification of a concrete phenomenon as "religious change" or as "secularization." The conceptual and research questions it gives rise to do not concern the purpose of the present chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE THEORY OF SECULARIZATION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a patterned theoretical elaboration of religious change and/or secularization and not the resolving of the controversy regarding the empirical differentiation between and identification of religious change and secularization. It is contended here that the theory of religious change and/or secularization can be concisely and meaningfully codified when viewed in the light of rationalization-individuation model. As noted earlier the conceptual difference between religious change and secularization exists and the focus here is specifically on the theory of secularization as the process is understood by sociologists.

The theory or theories of secularization refer to a two-faceted phenomenon of secularization--the objective and the subjective. This dual aspect of secularization is related to the dual process of social change--rationalization and individuation. Secularization as an objective development in the religious factor is the correlate of the objective socio-structural process of rationalization; secularization as a subjective development of a new consciousness is the correlate of the subjective process of individuation. Just as the two social processes of rationalization and individuation are conceptually and in empirical reality related in a dialectical manner, so too the socio-structural aspect of secularization are interrelated. Each one causes and is reinforced by the other.

The Functional Theory of Religion

To clarify better the secularization phenomenon it is useful at this

point to recall the functional role that religion plays in society. Sociological theory generally maintains that religion is a social mechanism which institutionalizes answers to the problem of meaning. Man is condemned to meaning, and nothing so threatens his existence as meaninglessness, chaos, and disorder. Religion provides him with the security of living in a meaningful world. Clifford Geertz asserts that the capacity to interpret is man's greatest asset, just as chaos is his greatest fright.¹ "The existence of bafflement, pain, and moral paradox--of The Problem of Meaning--is one of the things that drive man toward belief in gods, devils, spirits, totemic principles, or the spiritual efficacy of cannibalism."²

O'Dea identifies three fundamental characteristics of human existence, namely contingency, powerlessness, scarcity, which are crucially significant for man's security and well being because they confront him with "breaking points" in his daily behavior and experience, and raise questions which can find an answer only in some kind of "beyond."³ Religion tries to construct a "sacred canopy" of life, in the words of Berger, with a "transcendental reference," in the words of Parsons, to provide a meaningful answer to these problems of theodicy. Therefore, Berger emphasizes "the centrality of the problem of theodicy for any religious effort at world

¹ Clifford Geertz, "Religion As a Cultural System," in The Religious Situation: 1968, ed. by Donald R. Cutler (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 653.

² Ibid., p. 655.

³ O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

maintenance.... Every human order is a community in the face death."⁴

The sacred symbolic cosmos is religion's alternative to a threatening chaos of existence. Mythology as a conceptual machinery is closest to the naive level of the symbolic universe. "Myth, moreover, is the affirmation by man that he is at home in this world--that he belongs, a being among the many beings, in the orderly and meaningful world of his experience."⁵

(Luckmann makes the controversial observation that the world-view of a society as a unitary matrix of meaning performs an essentially religious function and therefore is an "elementary and nonspecific" form of social religion.⁶)

Luckmann also suggests, more plausibly, that the religious world-view contains typifications, interpretative schemes, and models of conduct, all arranged in a hierarchy of significance.⁷ On the lowest level are the interpretative schemes and recipes regarding the familiar and the unproblematic experiences of life. From the lower to the higher levels is a gradual decrease of the familiar, routinized models, till you reach the highest level, "the domain transcending the world of everyday life which is experienced as 'different' and mysterious. If the characteristic quality of everyday life is its 'profaneness,' the quality that defines the transcendent domain is its 'sacredness.'"⁸

⁴Berger, Sacred Canopy, op. cit., p. 80.

⁵Thomas F. O'Dea, Alienation, Atheism, and the Religious Crisis (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), p. 26.

⁶Luckmann, Invisible Religion, op. cit., p. 50ff.

⁷Ibid., p. 56.

⁸Ibid., p. 58.

The concrete configuration of this transcendent level into a standardized sacred cosmos, with its concomitant social implications, is described by Luckmann as the emergence of a specific historical form of religion. This statement seems to supplement the analysis of Robert Bellah, who distinguishes the incidence of the sacred in primitive and historical religions by the fact that in the latter the sacred emerges as focussed, confined, crystallized, and differentiated.⁹ In a primitive, noncomplex society the sense of the sacred pervades all but a few, practical, mundane, aspects of life, so that their world-view almost coincides with their sacred cosmos. As the structure of the society becomes more complex, and as man's technical control over environment grows, the sacred cosmos as the overarching symbolic universe shrinks, and it gets restricted to those specific, limited areas where man still faces the threat of insecurity and/or the experience of the sacred.

This in part is the sociological theory of religion as a social functional construction. The question as to how the symbolic universe is constructed, legitimated, perpetuated etc., does not pertain to our immediate concern here. Religion has other functions in society notably the prophetic function which provides religion as the basis and the legitimation for criticism of and opposition to the established order. The consideration of these questions also does not pertain to the immediate argument that follows. A reference is made to them in places appropriate to the development of the argument.

⁹Robert Bellah, "epilogue," in Religion and Progress in Modern Asia, ed. by Robert Bellah (New York: Free Press, 1965), p. 178.

The Objective Process of Secularization

The objective process of secularization, as was already suggested, can be considered as one strand in the objective process of rationalization. The rationalization process primarily connotes the rationalization of social structures along functional, utilitarian principles. The inner logic of this process leads to a progressive segmentation of functions and roles. The adoption of best possible rational means to achieve specified ends calls for a division of labor, functions, and roles for the purpose of their specialized development. The main visible difference between a traditional and rationalized social structure of an industrial society is the evidence of the elaborate and complex division and specialization of roles, functions, and skills. The segmentation of roles and functions for the specialized development leads to professionalization of functions characterized by the development of an autonomous body of knowledge, norms, and controls. Self-sufficiency and autonomy are the primary characteristic of roles and functions that have been highly specialized on a rational basis.

This objective rationalization process corresponds to at least three types of changes in the religious sphere. These religious changes have been designated by different authors as three processes of the objective secularization process. These three changes can be designated as (1) The decline of religious controls, (2) The internal differentiation of religious roles, (3) The receding frontiers of the sacred. The orderly clarification of concepts and the theoretical assumptions involved in these three categories, as well as the interrelating of the concepts and assumptions among themselves and with the general theory in sociology of religion constitutes the major

part of the paradigm-construction or codification of the objective process of secularization.

The nature of the citations of the empirical data in the codification should be recalled here and somewhat elaborated upon. The main thrust of the codification task is conceptual, as noted earlier. The adducing of the data serves a subsidiary role. It does not purport to test, prove or confirm the theories or hypotheses--that is a different line of research. Rather, the data both plays an illustrative function as well as suggests avenues of possible operationalization and empirical testing of the concepts.

Special qualifications are called for as regards the empirical task by the scope of the present problem. Firstly, the concern here is about religious and secularization phenomena. The ambiguities that surround this class of phenomena raise insurmountable difficulties in devising universal, empiricized indicators, as was noted in Chapter III. This difficulty has characterized even some of the best studies in the sociology of religion. Secondly, we are concerned here about global situations. Few empirical studies of this scope exist, fewer still are pertinent to the present purpose. Thirdly, we deal here with historical processes. Serious gaps exist as regards the availability of data for historical comparisons. Different conclusions have sometimes been suggested for the data that do exist.

Thus a survey of existing empirical studies neither pertains to the central purpose of the present study nor would it possess much value and reliability for the present task. The stress is laid here instead on indicating broad lines of operationalization along which available data can be assembled or fresh investigation made to provide a converging empirical

evidence about the theoretical trends of secularization which will be here codified. The actual data cited will generally be selective in scope and illustrative in nature.

The Decline of Religious Controls

The first way in which the operation of the principle of rationality affects religion is by restricting and diminishing the influence of religion on life. The growth of professional, autonomous functions and institutions which are governed by their own intrinsic norms and controls corresponds to the progressive shrinkage of the sacred canopy. Both formal and informal religious influence progressively fades and disappears as religious norms become increasingly irrelevant to the autonomous functioning of social institutions. "What in the religious sphere we call secularization seems to be of the same order as professionalization and bureaucratization, and to have similar roots and consequences."¹⁰

In primitive society religious norms have pervasive governing influence. Functions and roles remain relatively undifferentiated and non-independent from the normative influence of one another. In this context religious values and norms have an overriding significance and they retain a normative influence on most sectors of life--political, economic, artistic, social. Religious considerations remain as one of the prime operative principles in sectors of life which have not yet attained their independence through the specialization process.

¹⁰ Guy Swanson, "Modern Secularity: Its Meaning, Sources, and Interpretation," in Religious Situations: 1968, op. cit., p. 803.

One use of the term secularization suggests a progressive decline of the normative influence of religion on life as more and more functions and roles attain their independence from religion. This has been termed by Berger as the liberation of areas of society from the tutelage of religion.¹¹ The introduction of the rational principle sets in a "near-inexorable" process of demonopolization of religion, and so Berger notes that "the decisive variable for secularization does not seem to be the institutionalization of particular property relations, nor the specifics of different constitutional systems, but rather the process of rationalization that is the prerequisite for any industrial society of the modern type."¹²

Since the operation of the rationalization principle contains a secularizing potency, those areas and strata of social life closest to the capitalistic and industrial process, which is based on the rationalistic principle, are affected by the secularization tendency sooner than the others. Thus, the area of economics was the first to be the "liberated territory." So too the scientific and technological personnel, whose training and ongoing social organization presupposes a high degree of rationalization even on the level of consciousness increasingly tend to liberate themselves from the traditional and religious controls as regards their professional conduct, and by contagion, their nonprofessional behavior.

Religion thus becomes demonopolized of its influence and controls

¹¹ Berger, Sacred Canopy, op. cit., p. 129.

¹² Ibid., p. 133.

and tends to become, for practical purposes, one among the many domains of life. A subsidiary but allied process of demonopolization of religion takes place in terms of the rationalization of the political set-up in a society whereby the political state and professional agencies take over many social functions and services which were formerly performed either by religious functionaries or in the name of religion for the benefit of society. This process further emphasizes the segregating of religion as one specialized sector of life. This is one meaning of secularization utilized in sociology.

From the scattered empirical evidence, both scientific and otherwise, the theory of this aspect of secularization can be considered fairly well established in its broad generalizations. The data collected here in addition to being selective cannot consider the several intervening factors which qualify their interpretation. It primarily serves to indicate the broad empirical categories along which converging evidence can be sought.

The first category of evidence of the progressive decline of the normative influence of religion on life should be sought in terms of historical comparison. That religion has overarching influence over most sectors of life in a primitive, undifferentiated society has been evidenced for example by Malinowski. An incipient autonomy of some practical functions and roles from religious and magical influence among the Trobrianders has been documented by him.¹³ A series of societies perhaps could be placed on a continuum of

¹³ Bronislaw Malinowski, Magic, Science, and Religion (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), pp. 25ff.

lowest to highest degree of differentiation of functions and roles. While the Trobrianders would be towards one end of the continuum, modern industrial societies would be at the other. The present hypothesis suggests that these latter would possess the highest number of functions and institutions that are free from the normative control of religion.

A second category of similar evidence could be provided on a cross-cultural comparison. Thus, traditional and developing countries like India could be compared with modernized, developed societies. In Indian society religious norms and controls still operate in many institutional spheres, for example in inheritance laws and customs, which would generally be considered non-religious in Western societies.¹⁴

Thirdly, the progressive demonopolization of religion is evidenced by the growth of professions in modern society. A profession in contrast to an occupation is characterized by the attribute of rational autonomy as seen in the development of a systematic body of theory, professional authority, a self-regulative code of ethics, and a professional culture.¹⁵ Carr-Saunders and Wilson point to the historical emergence of professions--medicine, law, university teaching, business management etc.--in an increasingly independent growth from the church. "As the culture of the Middle Ages slowly shed its religious character, the professions formerly within the church emerged out of it."¹⁶

¹⁴ M. N. Srinivas, Caste in Modern India and Other Essays (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), and Social Change in Modern India (Berkeley: University Press, 1966).

¹⁵ Ernest Greenwood, "Attributes of a Profession," Social Work, II (July, 1957), pp. 45-55.

Not only can large sectors of a modern society--economics, politics, arts, etc.--can be considered virtually independent of religious control, but the evidence of growing professionalization of life can be an indication of the growing rationalization as well as the increasing shrinkage of the normative religious influence on life. Professional, technical, and kindred occupational groups in the United States have been steadily expanding from 6.6% of all the occupational groups in 1947 to 12.3% in 1965 to a projected 14.9% in 1975.¹⁷

Fourthly, a weakening of the religious control over life can be evidenced in the lessening of the conflict between religion and science, the lessening claim of religion to determine the direction of science. The emergence of psychology, sociology, anthropology, the theory of evolution, biblical "higher criticism" have all had to encounter the opposition of religion in diverse forms. Evidence can be found that this opposition in the West is not of great significance any more and is confined largely to sectarian, fundamentalist groups. Even "in theology, ethics, and social action, the entire realm of the 'secular' has been appreciatively reappraised."¹⁸ A historical study by Stackhouse of a century of conflict following Darwin points to the liberal victory and the effective neutralisation of religious

¹⁶ A.M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, "The Emergence of Professions," in Man, Work, and Society, ed. by Sigmund Neosow and William H. Form (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1962), p. 201.

¹⁷ Manpower Report of the President, March 1966.

¹⁸ Sudney E. Ashlstrom, "Theology and the Present Revival," in The Sociology of Religion, ed. by Richard D. Knudten, op. cit., p. 16.

opposition to the autonomy of rational science.¹⁹

Fifthly, the decline of the normative influence of religion can be gauged by the lessening evidence of the overt religious determinants in public institutions and policy decisions. Thus, not only has there been a legal ban on the bringing in of religion into public schools in the United States, but in practice at present "the infusion of religion throughout the curriculum is practised only in the church-related schools...."²⁰ Diernfield conducted an investigation in 1961 into the extent of religious influence in American public schools as exerted in practice by local officials.²¹ On the national scene, he studied the influence of religion on the curriculum, the non-curricular activities, the cooperation of public schools with religious groups, and the attitudes of superintendents. Though he found marked variations according to regions, he could report only a moderate influence of religion in the public schools; he had to report a negative conclusion: "The American public schools cannot be charged with being a Godless institution."²² Though there are no data here to suggest a historical trend, there is no reason to believe the influence of religion has been or will be on the increase in public schools.

The effective influence of religion on public policy could be studied over a period of time as for example in the United States in issues like slavery, prohibition, and various blue laws, organisations like the Women's

¹⁹Reginald Stackhouse, "Darwin and a Century of Conflict," in The Sociology of Religion, ed. by Richard D. Knudten, op. cit., p. 435.

²⁰Richard D. Lambert, "Current Trends in Religion," Ibid., p. 537.

²¹R. B. Diernfield, "The Extent of Religious Influence in American Public Schools," Ibid., pp. 436-445.

²²Ibid., p. 445.

Christian Temperance Union, the Anti-Saloon League, the lobbies that various churches maintain to pressure the government. A telling indication of the waning normative influence of religion can be studied in terms of the changing ideology, personal practice, and tolerance among religious adherents on matters like divorce, birth control, and abortion. For example, among Catholics, Glock and Stark reported in 1965 that less than a quarter of them in the United States held that the practice of birth control through artificial means would "prevent salvation."²³ Potter has documented that the percentage of Catholic women in the United States complying with the Church's ban on artificial contraception declined from 70% in 1955 to 62% in 1960 and to 47% in 1965.²⁴ A Gallup Poll taken in October 1965 revealed that a majority of Catholics supports the idea of Federal aid for family planning clinics.²⁵ As regards abortion, the rates of legal and illegal abortions have distinctly tended to increase in European countries.²⁶ As regards the United States, an N.O.R.C. survey concluded in 1965 that there exists a "very widespread support among a majority of adult Americans for legal abortion when pregnancy involves a risk to maternal health, a high probability of deformity in the fetus, or sexual assault. Catholic-Protestant differences

²³ Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, "Is There an American Protestantism?," Transaction, III (November-December, 1965), pp. 12-13.

²⁴ Arthur J. Dyck, "Religious Factors in the Population Problem," in Religious Situation: 1968, op. cit., p. 171.

²⁵ Cf. Religious Situation: 1968, op. cit., p. 190.

²⁶ Christopher Tietze, "Abortion in Europe," in The Case for Legalized Abortion Now, by Alan F. Guttmacher (Berkeley: Diablo Press, 1967), pp. 145-146.

are much smaller than one would be led to expect on the basis of official positions held by their respective clergies."²⁷

Finally the converging evidence from all of the above lines of data as regards the declining significance of religious values and norms on social functions, roles, and institutions is reflected in the opinion of the general public in the United States. In 1957 14% of a Gallup national sample was of the opinion that "religion is losing its influence." By 1962 the figure had risen to 31%, by 1965 to 45%, and by 1967 it stood at 57%.²⁸

Differentiation of Religious Roles

A second way in which the rationalization process affects religion is by changing its internal structure. If the decline of religious control may be described as the differentiation of religion from its social environment, this second type of change can be described as the differentiation of the internal structure of religion.

A complexly structure society with its differentiated, autonomous roles poses a threat to the overarching world-view presented by religion. A pluralistic situation implies that many sectors of life can function validly on the strength of their own principles and do not need to draw their legitimacy or intelligibility with an appeal to a religious value. Thus, a pluralistic situation is a threat to the monopolistic claims of a religious world-view.

²⁷ Alice S. Rossi, "Public Views on Abortion," Ibid., p. 47.

²⁸ Cf. Jack Weimer, "Mental Health Highlights," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, XXXVII (July, 1967), p. 820.

Religion meets this threat by increasing its internal autonomy and functional rationality. When religion gets functionally restricted into a specified area of experience and behavior, it tends to hold on jealously to the area of its effective control. At the same time it has now to develop a sophisticated conceptual machinery to handle the challenge involved in the restriction of its world-view. Considerable sophistication is called for to demonstrate and to legitimize the superior status of the increasingly shrinking religious world-view.

The passage of mythology into theology requires a specialized skill. The emergence of pure theory and specialized knowledge calls for experts who devote themselves to the developing of a conceptual machinery. "The specialization of knowledge and the concomitant organization of personnel for the administration of the specialized bodies of knowledge develop as a result of the division of labor."²⁹ Specialization of religion, therefore, gives rise to an official hierarchy of membership with its specialized roles. Those who devote themselves to the development of the religious conceptual machinery gradually gain control of leadership, become subjects of special privilege, and restrict entrance into their ranks through an obligatory training period. "Institutional specialization as a social form of religion, we may say in summary, is characterized by standardization of the sacred cosmos in a well defined doctrine, differentiation of full-time religious

²⁹Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967), pp. 116-117.

roles, transfer of sanctions enforcing doctrinal and ritual conformity to special agencies and the emergence of organizations of the 'ecclesiastic' type."³⁰

Specialization and differentiation of religious roles widen the distance between the ranks of religious adherents which fact can promote the process of secularization. Religious experts devoted to the constructing of conceptual machineries run the risk of becoming increasingly removed from the pragmatic necessities of life. They now confront the problem of relating the official model to the intelligence and practical concerns of the lower ranks. Further, they have the added task of developing socializing structures through which they could help the lower ranks internalize the official doctrine. The laity on their part have the problem of being socialized into an official model which transcends their immediate grasp both because of its sophistication, as well as because of its increasing irrelevance to the demands of their other autonomous functions and roles in life. Luckmann says: "The church...gained a high degree of internal autonomy and her institutional structure was characterized by the trend to functional rationality. The validity of her norms became restricted to a specifically 'religious sphere,' while the global claims of the 'official' model were generally neutralized as mere rhetoric."³¹ The increasing incongruence of the official model with the individual's religiosity, and the neutralization of religious claims, has been described as another phenomenon of secularization or potential source of it.

³⁰Luckmann, Invisible Religion, op. cit., p. 66.

³¹Ibid., p. 95.

As regards the adducing of empirical evidence it must be said that this aspect of secularization is more speculative and hypothetical in nature than the first aspect just dealt with. There is less directly pertinent research data available; its operationalization task would also seem more complex.

Firstly, evidence as regards the growing role differentiation in a religious group can be drawn from the studies on the general sect-to-church evolution of religious groups. The threat of environmental rationalization leads to a functional adjustment in the internal structure of the sect, to the "rise of professional public functionaries--where functions become institutionally differentiated and specialization of roles occurs."³²

A logical next step in this direction is the special training of leaders which implies disparity and distance between leaders and members, compromise of sectarian democracy and the priesthood of all believers, employment of status symbols by the leaders.³³ The structure differentiation and the emergence of professional leadership are important features in the study Brewer made of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the pattern of change occurring in it from the decade of organization, 1780-1790, to the Decade of unification with other Methodists bodies, 1930-1940.³⁴ On a global and less

³²Bryan R. Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., p. 490.

³³Bryan R. Wilson, "Role Conflicts and Status Contradictions of the Pentecostal Minister," American Journal of Sociology, LXIV (March, 1959, pp. 494-504.

³⁴Earl D.C. Brewer, "Sect and Church in Methodism," in Religion, Culture and Society, ed. by Louis Schneider, op. cit., pp. 471-482.

statistical manner Mensching has studied the anthropological condition of world religions in their evolution from "folk" to "universal" stages.³⁵ These stages show a marked resemblance to structural features of the sect-to-church evolutionary pattern. Gibson Winter provides varied evidence that specialized, organizational structures have emerged in the United States, in the Protestant Churches, in the Roman Catholic Church, and in the Jewish community.³⁶ Similarity of situational demands of a secularist context, Winter contends, have given rise to a pragmatic, rational organizational development.³⁷

Secondly, there is greater scarcity of data to demonstrate readily that the structural differentiation of roles in religion, which increases the distance of the laity from the clergy and from the official ideology, does have the potency of weakening the laity's adherence to the religious institution and religious orthodoxy. But several scattered data point in the direction of proving this hypothesis. The following could be considered.

The Catholic Church is a typical example of a religious organization which has highly structured and separated the priestly and lay roles. The role of leadership and doctrinal definition has been concentrated in the priest. The seminary system has been a function of this arrangement. An indication that a distance has been institutionalized and maintained between the clergy and the laity lies in the fact that the professional training in

³⁵Mensching, "Folk and Universal Religion," op. cit.

³⁶Gibson Winter, Religious Identity, A Study of Religious Organization (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968).

³⁷Ibid. pp. 97ff.

the seminaries has been academically rather than pastorally oriented. Despite the great changes towards pastoral emphasis after Vatican II, Fichter found in 1968 that the majority of the United States clergy rated the seminary training as conducive to lead a holy life (74%) and an intellectual life (62%) rather than to deal with people (32%).³⁸ It can be argued that, in the face of weakening supportive, socializing structures in the Catholic Church, the disparity between clergy and laity has a causal relation to the laity drifting away from the institution and orthodoxy.

The study of Pin in 1956 in France pointed generally in this same direction.³⁹ He found that the official Catholic religion was beyond the intellectual and practical grasp of the proletarian, because it was a religion that operated according to a mode inaccessible to him and without connection to his daily life. The refinements of ritual, doctrinal concepts, and the language were the real obstacles. The fact of the distance of the working class from the professionalized modes of organized religion as measured in terms of church attendance has been found in France, Belgium, Italy, and Spain by Isambert.⁴⁰ Wickham reports the estrangement of the working class from the church in England.⁴¹ As regards the situation in the Protestant

³⁸ Joseph H. Fichter, America's Forgotten Priests--What They Are Saying (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 86.

³⁹ Emile Pin, "Social Classes and Their Religious Approaches," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., p. 416.

⁴⁰ Francois-Andre Isambert, "Is the Religious Abstention of the Working Class a General Phenomenon?" Ibid., pp. 400-402.

⁴¹ E.R. Wickham, "Church and People in the Years of 'Decline and Fall,' 1900 to the Present," Ibid., p. 410.

Churches in the United States, in analyzing different studies Hadden points to the complex of variables involved in the relation of the clergy and the laity, and of the official church.⁴² He points to the conclusion of Glock and Stark who found that laity commitment to the institutional life of the church in large part is a function of their adherence to orthodox Christian doctrine.⁴³

In support of our present argument the converse of this conclusion could perhaps be advanced. Luckmann's hypothesis suggests, as noted above, that in the midst of the irrelevancy of the official model to his practical life the layman can still display a rhetorical allegiance to it. Hadden's conclusion seems supportive of this: "Orthodox laity seem to be no more or no less liberal in their social and political views than laity who have rejected orthodox doctrine."⁴⁴

Perhaps laity have not so much rejected orthodox belief as they have found it irrelevant for their privatized civil religion that espouses the good, the true, and the beautiful."⁴⁵ The layman still clings on to religion as a source of comfort and help.

Briefly, our argument has been that religion responds to rationalization through its internal differentiation. Structural differentiation leads to disparity and to incongruence of the official model with practical life.

⁴² Jeffrey K. Hadden, The Gathering Storm (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), Chapters III and IV.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 68.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 98.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 99.

Incongruence and irrelevancy leads to the rejection of religion, to secularization.

The Receding Frontiers of the Sacred

A third way in which the rationalization process affects religion can be described as the receding of the frontiers of the sacred. Religion provides security in the face of the ultimate, in the face of the threat of the uncontrollable, unpredictable, meaningless aspects of existence. The rational principle has been responsible for the progressive control and ordering of man's environment. Through the rise of science and technology man has learnt the workings of nature, as well as to predict and to control it. O'Dea has presented five strategic contexts, namely work, war, exchange, government, learning and science, in which Western man has increased his rational control over his environment.⁴⁶ The control of his life and environment lead to the dissolving of man's enchanted, sacredist attitude to the world, enlarging thereby the areas of his practical, profane concerns. O'Dea says simply: "Increased human control over the environment was a source of secularization."⁴⁷

Huston Smith describes the secular as that segment of life under the control of man.⁴⁸ As the frontiers of threat recede with the increased control

⁴⁶O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, op. cit., pp. 80ff.

⁴⁷O'Dea, Religious Crisis, op. cit., p. 51.

⁴⁸Huston Smith, "Secularization and the Sacred," in Religious Situations: 1968, op. cit., pp. 583f.

of the environment, the frontiers of ultimacy too recede so that religion now gets more and more confined. Thunder, lightning, and the forces of nature are now no more populated with gods. Man has gained confidence in himself that he can stave off hunger, control disease, explore the frontiers of space. The area of "profanity" has grown, the gods are now invoked primarily to answer the remaining questions of ultimacy in man's experience.

More crucial than the quantitative confinement of the sacred area is the qualitative transformation that has taken place in the attitude and outlook of man. The inherently close but fundamentally incompatible relationship between faith and doubt has been a perennial characteristic of crisis of religious experience.⁴⁹ But the modern religious crisis is posed in an essentially new, radical human situation where the attitude of man has been desacralized. "The ontological mind was replaced more and more by the problem-solving mentality, and worldly concerns assumed centrality, legitimacy, and the capacity to elicit the enthusiasm of men."⁵⁰ The religious world-view becomes less and less the operative frame of reference. Bellah asserts that modernity is characterized not only by the rationalization of means, but by an increasing insistence on the rationalization of ends.⁵¹ O'Dea describes the shift in modern thinking when he says: "Progress replaced Providence; perfectibility through grace gave way to perfectibility through

⁴⁹O'Dea, Religious Crisis, op. cit., p. 15.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 127.

⁵¹Robert Bellah, "Epilogue," op. cit., p. 195.

effort. The city of man belonged in the world of nature. History was no longer a religious drama but a natural process."⁵² This is the theme that is also emphasized by Joseph Campbell: "Pelagianism today is the only brand of Christianity with any possibility of an Occidental future."⁵³

The enlarging of the area of the pragmatic, non-sacral concerns, and the rationalization of the attitude, which we have described as the receding of the horizons of the sacred, have been treated by some authors as another aspect of the secularization process.

From the availability of empirical evidence, or the possibility of its collection, this aspect of secularization may be considered a fairly established theory.

Firstly, as regards the global historical situation it could be asserted even without elaborate documentation that modern societies in comparison with traditional ones have had increasing proportion of areas of profane activity measured in terms of the absence of religious, transcendent referents.

Secondly, in modern societies themselves several converging indications are available evidencing the diminishing references to the transcendent. Swanson reviews an array of different sources of data about unbelief in a transcendent reality in the United States and Europe.⁵⁴ His statistics reveal that 1% to 6% of the population of the western nations declare themselves as atheists. If we add agnostics and serious doubters, the range widens

⁵²O'Dea, Religious Crisis, op. cit., p. 31.

⁵³Joseph Campbell, "The Secularization of the Sacred," in Religious Situation: 1968, op. cit., p. 614.

⁵⁴Swanson, "Modern Secularity," op. cit., pp. 804ff.

from 3% to 25%, with France being an exception with 34%. His analysis admits a great diminution in modern times, both in scope and relevance as well as in intensity and immediacy, of the experience of the sacred. It is found, for example, that in the United States 30% believe in life after death and in supernatural punishments or rewards in the afterworld. Some European countries show substantially lower percentages of adults holding these traditional doctrines, 40% to 60% being the range.⁵⁵

In many portions of the world, there has been a decline of inherited religious institutions. Suppression or discouragement by political powers in the name of rationality has contributed to the decline of Christian institutions. Suppression or discouragement by political powers in the name of rationality has contributed to the decline of Christian institutions in some places, as nation by nation statistical evidence provided by Hutten demonstrates.⁵⁶ From a peak in about 1880 down to the present, the church in England has seen a general decline in membership, attendance, communions made, and voluntary contributions.⁵⁷ While almost all Scandinavians are nominal church members, a very small percentage of the population participates regularly in the institutional life of the churches.⁵⁸ Down into the 1960's the United States

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 809.

⁵⁶ Kurt Hutten, Iron Curtain Christians (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1967), p. 16.

⁵⁷ Michael Argyle, Religious Behavior (New York: The Free Press, 1961), pp. 23-28.

⁵⁸ Michael P. Fogarty, "Religious Statistics," in Religion, Culture and Society, op. cit., pp. 393-399.

showed itself an exception,⁵⁹ but at the same time prompted different hypotheses made by authors regarding the nature of this religion which are not inconsistent with the present argument.⁶⁰ While this aspect of secularization may be viewed as a global phenomenon of modern societies, it is not uniformly distributed within them. Different groups of the population have been affected by it differently.⁶¹

Thirdly, indications of a shifting emphasis from sacral to non-sacral concerns can be sought from a different set of investigations. Steiner's non-sociological investigation of the different resorts where people take their troubles, though not a study in behavioral trends, is suggestive of the direction popular behavior seems to be actually taking.⁶² Religion is only one of the several kinds of therapy, Steiner suggests. The other he considers are the growing psychiatric profession, syndicated counsel in papers, advisory programs on radio, vocational guidance therapy, correspondence clubs, spiritualism and trance therapy, occult sciences, "success schools." A different indication of growing concern away from religion is the striking decline of the Catholic parochial system. After a peak student enrollment of 6,112,146

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⁵⁹"Facts, Figures and Opinions on Religion in the United States," in Religions in America, ed. by Leo Rosten (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), pp. 220-248.

⁶⁰e.g. Berger, Noise of Solemn Assemblies, op. cit., Will Herberg, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1960), Gibson Winter, The Suburban Captivity of the Churches (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961).

⁶¹Cf. N.J. Demerath, Social Class in American Protestantism (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), and Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor, op. cit.

⁶²Lee R. Steiner, Where Do People Take Their Troubles? (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1945).

in 1964-65 there has occurred a steady decline to a total of 5,736,684 in 1967-68. Almost all of the decrease has been at the elementary level; the high school enrollment (a fourth of the total for the elementary level) and the college and university enrollment (one half of the total for the high school level) are edging up in the pattern, characteristic of all United States higher education.⁶³ Schneider and Dornbusch in their study of popular religion through a content analysis of inspirational books in America reported in 1958 that "trends towards secularization are present in the literature."⁶⁴ Secularization of which they speak was evident on two levels. At one level it holds for the whole literature in so far as "there is generally slight eschatological concern." At another it manifests over a period of time, suggesting that religion offers happiness in increasingly this-worldly terms.⁶⁵ Fry has drawn attention to the growing trend in the United States of a changing sacred attitude towards and strict observance of Sunday as a holy day--due to an increasing competition by secular agencies and activities.⁶⁶ Wickham, on the other hand, points to a graphic indication of the "deflation of the religious habits" in England, namely, the trend towards constructing proportionately fewer and

⁶³Russell Shaw and Richard J. Hurley (eds.), Trends and Issues in Catholic Education (New York: Citation Press, 1969), p. 35.

⁶⁴Louis Schneider and Sanford M. Dornbusch, Popular Religion (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 41.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 42.

⁶⁶C. Luther Fry, "Changes in Religious Organizations," in Recent Social Trends in the United States, Report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, Vol. II (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1933), p. 1012.

smaller church buildings.⁶⁷ Sorokin puts together some variables like quantitative growth in marriages with non-religious context, decline in the amount of prayer or church attendance, the increase in number of non-religious themes in art, literature and philosophy, to suggest a general theory of the decline of religion.⁶⁸

Fourthly, the shrinking boundaries of the sacred, it was pointed out, tends towards the privatizing of religious experience, activity, and choice. As indication of this one could refer to our earlier citation that Catholics in growing numbers and ahead of official doctrine, are in private accepting the ideology and practice of artificial contraception and divorce.

Fifthly, a decline of interest in the transcendent and the ultimate in favor of the proximate and earthly realities can be studied for example through a content analysis of the proceedings and documents of the Vatican Council II. When contrasted with the previous Church Councils one can discern in it a trend towards the incorporation into Catholic ideology of personalistic perspectives, of the subjective, immanentist values of existential philosophy, of contemporary man's ideals of freedom and democracy, of the humanitarian values and this worldly concerns of modern culture. These perspectives are evidenced for example in the following: the new developments in the concepts of "collegiality," "ecumenism," and "freedom of conscience;" new emphasis on the

⁶⁷ Wickham "Church and People," op. cit., pp. 404-405.

⁶⁸ Pitrim A. Sorokin, "The Western Religion and Morality of Today," in International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion, Vol. II (Köln und Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1966), pp. 9-43.

explicitly admitted value of secular professions.⁶⁹ Berger points to the trend in the secularization of Protestant theology.⁷⁰ Analyzing the ideational content of this phenomenon he finds that "the movement generally shows a shift from a transcendental to an immanent perspective, and from an objective to a subjective understanding of religion. Generally, traditional affirmations referring to other-worldly entities or events are 'translated' to refer to concerns of this world, and traditional affirmations about the nature of something 'out there' (to use a phrase of Robinson's) are 'translated' to become statements about the nature of man or his temporal situation."⁷¹ In other words, the general trend is towards the reduction of theology to anthropology.

As regards the qualitative change in modern man's attitude expressed in all the above indicators, Eliade presents his conclusion of the analysis of the history of religions: "It should be said at once that the completely profane world, the wholly desacralized cosmos, is a recent discovery in the history of the human spirit." "But it is only in the modern societies of the West that nonreligious man has developed fully. Modern nonreligious man... refuses all appeal to transcendence. In other words, he accepts no model for humanity outside the human condition....He will not be truly free until he has killed the last God."⁷²

⁶⁹The Documents of Vatican II, ed. by Walter M. Abbot (New York: Guild Press, 1966). Cf. especially "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," and "Declaration on Religious Freedom."

⁷⁰Berger, "A Sociological View of the Secularization of Theology," op. cit. pp. 1-16.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 4.

⁷²Eliade, Sacred and Profane, op. cit., pp. 13 and 203.

In sum we have argued up to now that the objective rationalization of society has its repercussions on the objective social changes in the field of religion. We have tried to chart these changes towards secularization along three lines of development. The rationalization process has engendered a pluralistic situation wherein domains of social action and institutions get specialized, segregated, and governed by an autonomous, functional set of norms, approaches, and independent, limited world-views.. The effectiveness of the religious world-view declines in correlation to the emergence of the functional autonomy of social agencies and institutions. Secondly, a rationalizing society gives rise to a specialized religion whose sacred universe gets effectively restricted to its jurisdictional area, while at the same time it increases in sophistication inducing thereby a hierarchical ranking of the religionists. This situation contains a secularizing potency in so far as the specialized official doctrine becomes increasingly problematic in its being internalized by the laity, or in its effective influence over their lives. Thirdly, the rational principle increases man's control over his life and environment, and thus limits the areas of his sacred concerns as well as generates in him an essentially nonsacred, nonreligious orientation to life.

The Subjective Process of Secularization

The objective process of rationalization, we contended earlier, has a subjective repercussion on individual consciousness, which has been described as the subjective process of individuation. The subjective secularizing consciousness can be considered as one aspect of the individuating consciousness of man, and as such, it is influenced by the objective process of

secularization and in turn influences it.

The individuation process implies that man attains a more realistic conception of his self, individuality, freedom and power of decision. This development in self consciousness arises when he becomes increasingly aware of the social roots of his knowledge and the subtle social constraints on his thoughts, aspirations and freedom. In other words the subjective individuation process can be described in general as a process of de-alienation.

The concept of alienation is here used in the sense akin to that of Marx, and as it is utilized by Berger.⁷³ "...Alienation is the process whereby the dialectical relationship between the individual and his world is lost to consciousness."⁷⁴ The fundamental dialectic of human consciousness, according to Berger, consists of three movements: externalization, objectivation, and internalization, the sum of which constitutes the phenomenon of society. Man by his nature is compelled to externalize himself, and collectively men externalize themselves in common activity and thereby produce a human world. This world attains for man a status of objective reality; and as an objective reality, it is internalized in the process of socialization, and thus it becomes a part of the subjective consciousness of the socialized individual. Society, in other words, is a product of collective human activity. Alienation

⁷³Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, op. cit., pp. 81-101.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 85.

occurs when "the individual 'forgets' this world was and continues to be co-produced by him. Alienated consciousness is undialectical consciousness."⁷⁵

The internalization or socialization of social roles and demands by the individual to such an extent as to make him forget that he has been a co-producer of the social reality which he now accepts as given, reified, objectivated, leads to a "false consciousness" because social reality now confronts him with an "inexorable facticity," and he feels incapable of changing it. "The essence of alienation is the imposition of a fictitious inexorability upon the humanly constructed world."⁷⁶

The Secularization of Consciousness

Religion has an intensifying character in terms of the alienation that is involved in the socialization process. Religion appeals to a world of the beyond and seeks legitimation in terms of ultimate destiny. Religion treats of the sacred as the "wholly other," as immutable, untouchable, mysterious, and makes it confront man with a greater degree of objectivation. Thus religion sacralizes norms, mystifies institutions, sanctifies tradition, presents man with an immutable "deposit of faith," and robs him of the awareness of having participated in the social construction of the religious factor. Ludwig Feuerbach, who inspired Marx, held that the very belief in God was the projection of man's interior nature into the void outside.⁷⁷ A man of

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 95.

⁷⁷Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Trans. by George Eliot (New York: Peter Smith, 1957), especially Chapter II.

religion, Feuerbach holds, conceives of his own essence as an object outside and above himself and thereby turns himself into the creature of that object. In this consists man's alienation from himself, for it robs man of his capacity to take responsibility for his own self-development and self-fulfillment.

De-alienation in this framework refers to the process of individuation, of man's coming into his own, of the awareness of man of his real part in the construction of society and the continuing possibility of his shaping it. An individuated man is the one who has a realistic self-conception of his individuality, creativity, freedom, and autonomy. The discovery of the social constraints on human modes of thought, Karl Mannheim says, compels self-criticism and self-control and leads to a new conception of objectivity. Speaking analogously, he says: "Even in our personal life we become masters of ourselves only when the unconscious motivations which existed behind our backs suddenly come into our field of vision and thereby become accessible to conscious control."⁷⁸ O'Dea speaks of secularization in the context of man's attaining individuality through this emancipation from the limiting effects of orthodoxies, traditions, myths, and superstition. "Emancipation freed Western man and brought him into confrontation with the challenge of genuine adulthood."⁷⁹

The subjective secularization process is the correlate of this larger theme of individuation. In essence, it means the decline of the inevitability of the claims of a religious world-view on an individual's consciousness and

⁷⁸Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 47.

⁷⁹O'Dea, Religious Crisis, op. cit., p. 128.

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the corresponding emergence of self-responsibility demonstrated in his autonomously choosing a world-view, religious or non-religious, among those available to him. When man becomes aware of the social roots of the socialization process and the legitimations which religion has imposed on him, then he has a new mode of control on himself. Now religious claims and legitimations do not appear to him as inevitable, objective phenomena. He realizes the part of human effort in the construction of the sacred universe. In so far as the claims and demands of religion lose their inexorability, inevitability and terror, the door is opened for the individual to exercise an option: personally to construct or choose a religious world-view, or to repudiate altogether the need of a religious framework or approach in life. This situation has been described by some authors as the secularization of human consciousness.

The process of the secularization of consciousness has been attributed to the "collapse of plausibility" by Berger.⁸⁰ This implies the process by which the plausibility of a religious world-view is disintegrated as a result of the breakdown of the legitimizing social structures. The monopoly and inexorability of the claim of the sacred cosmos is not accepted anymore as believable. This can happen in two ways: (1) the discrepancy of demands, (2) the competition of the universes.

Before elaborating these two processes, a note about their empirical evidence. It must be pointed out that the secularization of consciousness is a resultant of the secularization of social structures and as such most of the

⁸⁰ Berger, Sacred Canopy, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

empirical evidence adduced earlier in this latter regard bears relevance here. The following discussion pertains primarily to the causal relationships between the objective structures and subjective consciousness. These causal relationships between the variables tend to be more speculative and abstract in their identification; and this fact reflects the general state of social psychology which has not developed adequate methodological tools to identify precisely and measure empirically the causal relationships in the major, historical process regarding social consciousness. Hence more speculation and little empirical data obtains in this field especially as it concerns the problem here.

The Discrepancy of Demands

In the discussion about the objective social bases of religion, reference was made to the internal differentiation of religious roles and structures. One result of this differentiation is the emergence of a sophisticated legitimizing theory, an official model.

By the very necessity of this differentiation the actions and pronouncements of the official ranks become more distinguished from and irrelevant to the actions of the lower ranks. The sophistication and demands of the official model become increasingly irrelevant to the "biographical demands," as Luckmann phrases it, of the lay man's practical life. "...The reality of the religious cosmos waned in proportion to its shrinking social base; to wit, specialized religious institutions."⁸¹ The religious cosmos had provided significance to

⁸¹Luckmann, Invisible Religion, op. cit., p. 39.

the individual's life in its totality, and religious norms were superordinated to all norms of other institutions which determined the individual's conduct in every day life. As specialization of roles and institutions increasingly developed independent, autonomous norms and controls which were valid within their own restricted areas of jurisdiction, so did the disengagement of these roles and institutions from any effective influence from the religious domain increase. The individual moving within different social domains was now governed by specific norms of each self-governing domain, and now he could afford to ignore, for practical purposes, the claims of religion. The practical ineffectiveness of religious norms tend at the same time to deprive the official religious model also of its theoretical effectiveness and plausibility. This progressive collapse of plausibility emancipates human consciousness from the monopolistic hold and claims of a religious world-view and sets it free to construct its own theoretical model, religious or not. This is, in other words, the process of the secularization of consciousness.

Another way in which the actions and pronouncements of the official ranks become more distinguished from and irrelevant to the lower ranks is by the increasing incongruence of the official definitions with the practical demands of life. Specialization of religion demands complex forms of knowledge and professional theoreticians to handle and develop the sophisticated official model. Experts in the religious cosmos do not have the ready measurable checks and verifications for their pure theory as do many forms of knowledge. Because they operate on a level of considerable abstraction from the vicissitudes of everyday life, their theories run the risk of not maintaining

ready and immediate relation to, if not congruence with, the ongoing processes of social life, at least in the eyes of the non-experts. This fact can serve as a contributing factor in the collapse of plausibility of religion as a meaningful and integrating approach in modern society.

The Competition of Universes

The monopoly of religious claims become less plausible in a second way. A complex social base gives rise to a pluralistic situation. A complex, pluralistic society calls for not only different limited models of meanings for the operation of different autonomous functions, but it also leads to the construction of different universes of meaning, i.e., the construction of different world-views, by men of different orientation and training.

In a mobile, open society, it becomes increasingly hard to maintain or build social mechanisms that will wall out access to world-views which contradict the one presented to the individual by his religious group. In other words, the ghetto situation or that approximating a total institution, where an individual is intensely socialized into one religious point of view through, for example, denominational education, social rituals and custom, becomes difficult to maintain. Folk religion was communicated through family sentiment, censorship of local customs, and the rhetoric of tribal or a community way of life, whereas specialized religion developed specialized institutional mechanisms for the socialization of its adherents. Both folk religion and specialized religion remain highly vulnerable in a mobile, urban society in which social, cultural, and ideological exchange becomes commonplace. Thus a religious adherent finds himself in direct and repeated confrontation with

different, even contradictory, points of view and philosophies of life.

Moreover one discovers that different world-views are often held and propounded by sincere, honest, and good men. This realization can engender a legitimate doubt as to the monopolistic nature of one's personal religious persuasion. Michael Novak asserts that lack of social interaction even among sincere individuals can lead to misunderstanding and polemical misjudgements of different points of view, whereas an affective, empathetic entry into the other's horizon reveals reasons why his words make sense to him; thus the discovery of the richness and variety of human beliefs leads to a new appreciation of the relativity of human life and values.⁸²

In a non-complex society, where the religious world-view is more pervasive and dominant, the world is structured mainly on a hierarchical duality, the sacred on the one hand, and on the other the earthly, empirical aspects of life where the latter holds a subordinated place. In a complex society, the hierarchical duality structure gives way to an infinitely multiplex one where the horizontal authority of principle becomes a rapidly growing experience. Novak speaks of the American experience of a lived relativism where each view of life must prove itself under the critical eye of the others.⁸³ O'Dea speaks of a critical equality among American educated and semi-educated youth among whom "the standards of the peers now compete with those of the elders; the present competes with the past; spontaneity competes with establishment." Their condition is characterized by "equality instead of hierarchy; criticism

⁸²Michael Novak, "The New Relativism in American Theology," in Religious Situation: 1968, op. cit., p. 201.

⁸³Ibid., p. 210.

instead of docility; functionally specific instead of generalized sacral authority; free instead of supervised leisure time; psychic mobility instead of traditional rootedness."⁸⁴ In other words, in a society where external legitimizing structures lose their socializing potency, and where the individuated consciousness of the adherents finds easy access to rival points of view, a competition occurs between different universes of meaning. In this competition no one world-view can now any longer depend for its plausibility on the external authority of persons or supporting structures, but has to claim its validity and legitimacy on the strength of its internal plausibility and content. A critical approach to life both caused by and reinforcing the disintegration of the external legitimizing structures thus contributes significantly to the collapse of plausibility of the religious point of view which one inherited, or of the religious approach as such as a valid approach to life.

The collapse of plausibility of religion thus is the resultant of two processes, namely, the increasing discrepancy of demands between the reality-producing social factors and the reality-defining religious factors, and the increasing competition of different universes of meaning on the strength of their internal validity rather than the legitimizing external factors. The collapse of plausibility is a contributing element in the secularization of consciousness because it is essentially a de-alienating element. It introduces a note of rationality in the matters of faith, and intensifies the factor of doubt and scepticism which, as O'Dea notes, constitutes the perennial crisis of faith. A critical, rational mentality at the very least makes the plausibility and the automatic acceptance of a religious explanation

problematic. An awareness and the overcoming of the social conditioning factors of one's religious beliefs and behavior are steps towards the individuation of consciousness through which the individual grows towards self knowledge and autonomous action. This is essentially within the perspective of man's development as suggested by Mensching, who, as noted in the previous chapter, points out that as man grows towards a more realistic discovery of his ego, his community ceases to be the prime object, conditioner, and carrier of his religion, and he himself becomes the subject and object of his religion.

Greater autonomous action connotes that the imposition of social reality on one's consciousness becomes less and less an inescapable possibility. Unshackled and autonomous action in the midst of a multitude of competing world-views means that the individual is inclined to assess the internal validity of their claims and to match them to his personal needs. In this context, specialized religions will tend increasingly to take a market-oriented approach in order to woo their consumer primarily by the intrinsic value of their products. This situation falls within the perspective suggested by Parsons as regards the pattern of increasing autonomous action and individuality manifest in the behavior of the Western religionist. This pattern has been pointing towards not only autonomous religious behavior within an institutionalized framework, but also autonomous action as regards the very choice of the denominational framework.

Thus, in so far as the individuated consciousness is liberated from necessarily accepting a given religious creed and creedal organization, and insofar as it is weighted towards making a choice of a non-religious frame-

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work of meaning due to the dynamics of the secularizing objective social base, thus far such consciousness can be described as a secularized consciousness.

Summary

The purpose here has been specifically to codify the secularization theory. This was attempted in the general context of social change in terms of a rationalization-individuation model. The secularization process emerges as a subtheme of this general framework of social change. The secularization process has two aspects, the objective structural and the subjective consciousness aspects, and they correlate respectively to the rationalization and individuation processes in society. The objective secularization process occurs in three different ways; the liberation of life-sectors from religious influence, the structural differentiation of religion, and the diminishing sacred concerns. The subjective secularization process is one aspect of the individuation process in modern consciousness, a de-alienating process, the decline of the claims of a religious world-view on human consciousness. This occurs due to the collapse of plausibility of religion through the discrepancy of demands and the competition of universes of meanings.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This chapter offers the conclusion of the research together with its proposals for future research. The summary of the argument has been offered at each stage of its development and the end of the last chapter offers a concise, consolidated statement of it.

The contribution of this study seems to lie along different lines. Firstly, in its methodology by the specific application of the paradigmatic approach, this research confirms the multifarious use to which Merton's codification concept can be used. The present use of it was to a specific aspect of social change described here as secularization.

Secondly, the codification of secularization theory has suggested an orderly, economical arrangement of the central concepts and assumptions of the existing secularization theory. This procedure has hopefully contributed a coherent theoretical perspective and thus has furthered a cumulative theoretical interpretation of the secularization phenomenon. The objectivity and validity of this contribution rests on the following: the model's internal plausibility and explanation; its successful integration of the concepts and theories of secularization among themselves, as well as in their relation with the major theories of social change and the perspectives in the sociology of religion; the possibility of deriving specific concepts, correlations, and hypotheses based on the suggested relations between concepts in the model;

the possibility of further filling out and expanding it as new concepts, theories, and research are advanced.

Thirdly, the model also suggests a cumulative interpretation of existing empirical generalizations drawn from diverse studies when they are placed in the broad theoretical framework herein constructed. Further, a number of lines of operationalization of specific concepts, correlations, and hypotheses in the model are suggested for the testing or the confirming of the model in empirical research.

Fourthly, since the focus of the research was on the construction of a skeletal model of secularization, several factors have not been considered or integrated into its conclusions. These offer lines for future research which would modify, fill out, and refine the model. Among these are the following.

One of these directions of research would concern the terms "secular" and "secularization" as was noted in Chapter III. Briefly, a historiographic research of the terms could be conducted in the light of the present model: the disentangling of the layered, historical meanings and overtones of the terms and the evaluation of the analytic value for research of the terms in their present state. Further, a research has to be conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the quantifying measures used in the empirical understanding of the terms.

A second direction of the kinds of research relate directly to our theoretical model. Several variables have to be considered in developing concrete hypotheses from the broad generalizations in the model concerning the interrelation between the objective and subjective factors of seculariza-

tion. This suggests endless possibilities among which are the following. These same are elaborated upon in the Appendix.

"Secularism" as a religion-denying ideology or approach to life has been a recurring phenomenon in history, implying different variables and impact on society. The identification of these variables and the integration of the concept of secularism in the model of secularization is a fruitfully researchable project.

The social and cultural functionality of religious behavior in modernized societies, characterized for example in the emergence of the "established church," can be at the same time consistent and inconsistent with the secularization phenomenon. Their interrelations need to be explored in order to test our model.

The secularization process occurs at varying pace among different religious groups, especially when they are culturally distinguished from one another. Thus, for example, the general variables obtaining in the process of secularization in Asian societies can be fruitfully compared with those of the Western phenomenon of secularization. In this context, significant modifications of the present model may be called for.

The present model suggests rationalization and individuation as the immediate causes of secularization in the West. A research would have to be conducted to investigate the remote roots and the cultural determinants that promote the rationalization process leading to secularization. Similarly different cultural and religious traditions have to be studied for their characteristic elements, for example, mysticism and prophecy, which are significant for the promotion of de-alienation and individuation.

Our model has not considered the different impact on secularization that can be exerted by the earlier and later stages of pluralism in a society. An investigation of this nature would suggest refinements of the concepts of rationalization and individuation.

Finally, there is the cluster of personality, historical, and socio-cultural variables that give rise to varying responses and resistances on the part of individuals and institutions to the secularization process. A consideration of this constellation of factors in concrete situations would suggest the modification of the secularization model and its specific applications.

APPENDIX

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF SECULARIZATION

Several questions were not specifically treated in the present research because it was necessary to severely limit its scope and select only a few major concepts in the interest of brevity and clarity of treatment. An exploration of these questions would contribute to the consolidation and expansion of the rationalization-individuation model, as well as to the specification and clarification of its aspects. Thus the precise determination of the lines of influence between some of the social and psychological factors, for example the collapse of legitimating social structures and its precise impact on the de-alienating of consciousness, would both clarify the model and suggest operational hypotheses to test it. The exploration of these questions distinctly falls beyond the present study, but by way of an appendix to it a few of these questions of research will be suggested here to supplement the skeletal model we have presented.

Secularism

Firstly, there is the question of secularism as a factor distinct from secularization. Secularism as a religion-denying ideology was briefly discussed in Chapter III. Secularism as a phenomenon has not been touched upon in our treatment, because it is somewhat at variance with the perspective of secularization which as a process is a progressive departure from religion;

while secularism, on the other hand, has been often suggested as functionally playing the role of religion when it assumes the character of a non-religiously based total philosophy of life.¹ Hence Swanson correctly suggests that secularism has to be studied separately from secularization.² Secularism, unlike secularization, has existed in many periods of history and provides distinctly different correlations with social, cultural, and economic variables.

The Crosscultural Variables

A second question refers to the variance in pace and content of the secularization phenomenon as it occurs in different social settings. A discussion of our model in terms of this aspect would have raised far too many and complex issues. Attention has often been drawn to the fact that a more "modern," and therefore more "rationalized," country like the United States has measured higher in terms of "church religion" in recent years than most European countries. Explanations of these findings have to take into consideration not only the often non-comparable elements in the findings, but also the unique constellation of social and historical factors that make up the religious behavior in different societies.

Luckmann distinguishes between the "secularization from without" and "secularization from within" which respectively are the characteristics of the

¹Herberg, "Religion in Secularized Society," op. cit., p. 472.

²Swanson, "Modern Secularity," op. cit., p. 807.

European and American situation. "...Traditional church religion was pushed to the periphery of 'modern' life in Europe while it became more 'modern' in America by undergoing a process of internal secularization."³ Gibson Winter makes a strong case for the existence of this secularity in the American Church which reflects and caters to the secular, non-religious needs of the laity rather than provide them with the authentic Christian mission.⁴ Berger has made a similar theme a major proposition of one of his books, where he contends that the social irrelevance of the religious establishment is its functionality, so that involvement in religious activities may be an invitation to inauthenticity, a device protecting one against an encounter with the Christian message.⁵

The social and cultural functionality of religious behavior, the differential religious distribution among groups differently affected by the technological, rational process, the variables of motives, or of emotional needs, as for example among U.S. Negroes and immigrants--these are all factors that have to be standardly weighed before crosscultural statistical data would yield any meaningful comparisons. Bryan Wilson points to some unique sets of variables that need to be considered in the history and context of religion and secularization in England.⁶

³Luckmann, Invisible Religion, op. cit., pp. 36-38.

⁴Gibson Winter, Suburban Captivity, op. cit.

⁵Berger, Noise of Solemn Assemblies, op. cit.

⁶Bryan Wilson, Religion in Secular Society (London: C.A. Watts and Company, 1966), pp. 89ff.

The uniqueness of the religious situations in the Western world contrasts even more fundamentally when compared with eastern religions. Firstly, even the standardized indicators of western religious behavior cannot be validly applied to Eastern practices which stem from entirely different religious orientations. Some of the studies on Asian secularization markedly illustrate this difficulty.⁷ Hindu religion holds on to a cyclic view of history and the universe in marked contrast to the Judeo-Christian linear, eschatological approach. Bellah discusses various socio-psychological conditions derived from this and other factors in the East which remain unfavorable to the religious encouragement of progress and modernity, which he defines in terms of Western rationalization of both means and ends, the capacity to learn how to learn.⁸ Entirely a new situation emerges when western Christianity is imported into Asia by the colonizers. Bellah refers to it as the modernistic catalyst in the East, and notes the different secular and religious responses to the religion of the conquerors.⁹

⁷Bellah (ed.), Religion and Progress in Modern Asia, op. cit.; K.R. Rao, "Caste, Secularism and Democracy in India," International Journal of Comparative Sociology, VII (March, 1967), pp. 197-208; Donald Smith, (ed.), South Asian Politics and Religion, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); Donald Smith, India As a Secular State (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

⁸Bellah, "Epilogue," op. cit., pp. 193ff.

⁹Ibid., pp. 203ff.

The Seeds of Secularization

This leads to the third question we need to clarify as regards the seeds or carriers of the phenomenon of secularization. If secularization can be viewed under the twin processes of rationalization and individuation we need to ask about the conditions that promote their occurrence in one culture more than in another. The immediate and direct influence of rationalization by way of industrialization, urbanization, and pluralism has been touched upon in our presentation. But concerning their remote roots it has become commonplace among social scientists to propose that it is the Judeo-Christian religious world-view which has carried the seeds of the rationalization process, and therefore of the secularization process in the West. A popular treatment of this proposition has been presented by Harvey Cox under the colorful labels of disenchantment of nature, desacralization of politics, deconsecration of values.¹⁰ A much more scholarly presentation is found in Berger who points to three pervasive motifs in the Judaic religion seminally responsible for the secularization process: transcendentalization, historicization, and the rationalization of ethics.¹¹

By transcendentalization is meant a concept of God who stands outside the cosmos and leaves the world to the subjugation of man. It expresses therefore "the fundamental Biblical polarization between the transcendent God and man, with a thoroughly 'demythologized' universe between them."¹²

¹⁰Cox, Secular City, op. cit., pp. 15ff.

¹¹Berger, Sacred Canopy, op. cit., pp. 115ff.

¹²Ibid., p. 117.

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Historicization is a conception of the universe where "the world, bereft of mythologically conceived divine forces, becomes the arena on the one hand of God's great acts...and on the other of the activity of highly individuated men..."¹³ Berger says this presupposes "a considerable individuation in the conception of man."¹⁴ Ethical rationalization points to the anti-magical animus of Yahwism.

Berger maintains that "the secularizing potency of Biblical religion, combined with other factors, came to fruition in the modern west."¹⁵ He further maintains that the emergence of Christianity in Europe, with its incarnational and trinitarian doctrines, represented a retrogressive step in terms of the secularizing motifs of the Old Testament religion. Catholicism too modified the transcendentalism and ethical rationalization by remythologizing the world, by introducing mediating elements like angels, Mary, etc., by the sacramental system and a distinct piety and morality. Berger, largely sharing Parsons' analysis, holds that Protestantism is a disengagement from the Catholic approach and a step towards rationalization and secularization. "...Protestantism divested itself as much as possible from the three most ancient and most powerful concomitants of the sacred--mystery, miracle, and magic."¹⁶ In a grand historical review Berger traces the Protestant develop-

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 118.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 111f.

ment, prototypical of other religious traditions in the modern situation, towards rationalization, autonomization, liberalism and secularization, despite its uneven and sometimes retrogressive phases.¹⁷

The Seeds of De-alienation

Closely allied to the previous question of the secularizing potency of different factors is the fourth question as regards similar factors in religion that lead to the process of de-alienation and individuation of consciousness which are, as we contended earlier, the precondition for the secularization phenomenon. Different religious traditions have been characterized by certain elements that have been significant in their potency towards de-alienation and individuation.

Alienation as understood in the present context arises in connection with the imposition of a humanly constructed world as an inexorable objectivity on human consciousness. Alienation gets intensified when religion legitimizes such an inevitability. But religion also has a paradoxical de-alienating potentiality as much as it can radically relativize and unmask this inexorability. The Hindu religion has demonstrated this potentiality in its two traditions, the jnana marga or the way of knowledge, and the karma marga or the way of action. The former insists that the world is maya or illusion, therefore contingent and a historical construction, while the latter insists on the need of an inner detachment from the mundane activity even while performing them and the religious ceremonies.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 159ff.

Mystical tradition in India and in other religions, "with its radical depreciation not only of the value but the reality-status of the empirical world, has a similar de-alienating potential."¹⁸ The mystical tradition tends to withdraw from the empirical world and to the denial of its status of sanctity. In the Biblical religion there is the phenomenon of prophecy which has a similar relativizing quality. The revolutionary theme in prophecy tends to disrupt the sacred status of legitimated institutions and practices, and to expose them as human constructions. All these factors, like those mentioned in the previous question, have the potential to loosen the hold of religion on man, to enhance his self conception, and to enlarge the spheres of his creative activity. This is essentially an individuating process.

The Non-religious Variables

At this juncture it is necessary to ask a fifth question regarding the social situations in which the rationalizing and de-alienating factors do not in actuality lead to any significant secularization. The Muslim religion has always maintained an exalted notion of the transcendent God and the non-incarnational, non-trinitarian doctrinal approach. This approach, as authors have contended, was wrought with a secularizing potency in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But in the Islamic lands and cultures it does not seem to have caused any high degree of rationalization or secularization. Again, the

¹⁸Ibid., p. 98.

de-alienating elements in Hinduism, and its strongly individualistic philosophy, have not led to any massive secularizing activity in modern times.

This suggests the need of a deeper and clearer understanding of the social aspects of Eastern and Middle Eastern religious traditions. The categories and concepts of Western analysis cannot simply be applied to non-Western situations. It also suggests that many non-religious variables may conjointly cause, encourage, or impede the secularization process. The sorting out of these socio-psychological factors and the determining of their causal influence would demand the effort and analytic skill of a Weber, who conducted similar well known investigations in different aspects of eastern religions. This type of an investigation would perhaps expand, supplement, correct, or nullify the rationalization-individuation framework which has been suggested here as an analytic perspective to understand the secularization phenomenon. But it could not be attempted here even in a remote sense for obvious reasons.

The Future of Secularization

The sixth question that should be referred to here is perhaps the most vital. This question pertains to the various responses of the institutional churches and of individuals to the secularization process, and as such it raises many complex issues like the specific variables that have promoted secularization, the various kinds of resistance or response to the phenomenon, and their possible future lines of development.

Some general hypotheses regarding the different factors that are concretely involved in the objective and subjective secularization were lightly touched upon in the previous chapter. The generality of that treatment was called upon by the level of abstraction of sociological theory herein attempted. Any descent to specific concrete hypotheses would have had to confront a complex constellation of factors that will have to be taken into consideration but in fact have not yet been adequately investigated into by social scientists. These socio-psychological independent variables would decisively influence the pace of secularization, the responses and resistances to it, and its future development.

Regarding the subjective aspect of secularization, questions will have to be asked about the psychological aspects in religious behavior. Gordon Allport in his study of prejudice has significantly alluded to the personality factors that go into religious behavior. He has said: "Thus for many individuals the functional significance of prejudice and religion is identical. One does not cause the other, but rather both satisfy the same psychological needs. Multitude of Church goers, perhaps especially in times of social anomie and crisis, embrace both supports."¹⁹ Investigation into social psychology would reveal the impact of some world situations, like for example times of acute economic depression or the peak of the cold war situation, on the religious behavior of large groups.

¹⁹Gordon Allport, "The Religious Context of Prejudice," in Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, V (Fall, 1966), p. 451.

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Then there is the set of variables linked with the unique history and structures inherited by different religious traditions. Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, for example, have not only developed different doctrines and organizational structures but have found themselves in unique, non-comparable, social-historical situations. The existence of certain organizational structures can significantly hinder the process of secularization, as has been the case in the Catholic Church and perhaps will be to an extent the case in the phenomenon of Billy Graham, whose movement is being organized into a strong businesslike structure which will engender its own vested interests.

Finally, there are the unique variables of history that give rise to surprise developments which range from such trivial human accidents, as the length of Cleopatra's nose, to the emergence of leadership of the like of a Napoleon or Pope John XXIII. "One might wonder whether someone equipped with the techniques of modern social science in the late fifteenth century would have been in a position to predict the imminence of the Reformation-- or a similarly precocious type in the late first century the coming expansion of Christianity."²⁰

The constellation of these personality, historical, and sociocultural factors need to be considered for any possible development of specific hypotheses concerning the present and the future secularization phenomenon.

²⁰Berger, Rumor of Angels, op. cit., p. 20.

Only studies of particular religious situations, like O'Dea's research on the Mormons, can hope to treat them specifically in their limited scope. The more generalized studies, like Luckmann's and Berger's, predictably restrict themselves to hypotheses of a grand theory level. The present codification of secularization has had necessarily to choose to remain at such a level.

This being true, we could still attempt to touch upon some of the main lines of development of secularization in the future. Whatever historical surprises and occasional reverses may occur, it is safe to anticipate a continuation of the general trend of secularization. This proposition rests on the presumption that the vehicular processes of rationalization and individuation are by their nature irreversible whatever modifications they may suffer. The dependent processes of industrialization, urbanization, and specialization of institutions are similarly irreversible despite the trend for an automation and leisure oriented society to rise to a higher, newer shape of communal relationship. Thus, a pluralistic situation, which is the product of all the above, will more and more come to be the permanent characteristic of society. It has been variously demonstrated earlier that a pluralistic situation is essential to the development of secularization. Thus, along with pluralism, secularization is destined to be the characteristic of the future society.

The general trend in religious change towards secularization may take the following forms. The coming of specialization of institutions in society, as described earlier, had the influence on religion of making it emerge as a specialized, internally differentiated institution. Specialized institutionalization was religion's answer to early stages of pluralism. Through it

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religion succeeded in preserving its role and identity and in containing the secularizing impact of pluralism. But the very factor of specialization of religion carried with it, as was again pointed out, seeds of secularization insofar as the socialization into and the relevance of the official model was thereby rendered more difficult.

The later and future stages of pluralism thus have a different impact on religion. They have the tendency now to uninstitutionalize religion in the opinion of Luckmann. "...We are observing the emergence of a new social form of religion characterized neither by the diffusion of the sacred cosmos through the social structure nor by institutional specialization of religion."²¹ Growing pluralism in society disintegrates the plausibility structures of a specialized religion and makes the task of socialization into the specialized sacred cosmos more difficult. Luckmann points out that the primary public institutional forms like the state, the economic system, the family, become less and less of a social support in this task of socialization. On the other hand secondary institutions like friendship and professional groups and particularly those in the communication media, like the Reader's Digest, Playboy, Ann Landers-like advice and inspiration columns, reflect and cater to the individual by articulating existential themes in terms of ultimate significance much more relevantly and by making them available to the individual more immediately than does the institutional religion. Thus, in the present pluralistic situation, the de-alienated, individuated person not only does not fully internalize the specialized sacred cosmos of the institutional church, but he

²¹Luckmann, Invisible Religion, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

has direct access to various packaged universes of meaning that claim their legitimation from their internal content and their capacity to meet his needs, and not from any external, institutional support. As in folk religion, these universes of meaning are not mediated to the person through a specialized hierarchy but are directly available to him; but unlike in folk religion, it is no longer just one but a plurality of these world-views that are available to him.

The pluralistic situation is typically consumer-oriented, wherein an individual is largely left on his own to choose goods and services, friends, and neighbors. Not only is such a person inclined to choose his own interpretative and evaluative schemes, but a plurality of these schemes become readily accessible to him. The more he is inadequately socialized in a religious world-view, the more he might be inclined to accept the non-religious, secular alternatives that are "marketed" to him in his social context. He is thus likely to construct his individual system of ultimate meanings to match his personal identity. In so far as he is not a specialist, his approach is likely to be that of a syncretist. All these are factors to be taken into consideration in the process of subjectivization, privatization, and noninstitutionalization of religion.

Even though it is somewhat safe to project this general trend of secularization into the future, it is not as easy to chart the various subpatterns in this trend. But some indicators of certain of these patterns can be pointed out. Firstly, there is the variety of responses of the institutional churches to the phenomenon of secularization and religious change. The recent trend towards ecumenism has been pointed out as one of these by Wilson in his

study of secularization.²² Ecumenism can be regarded not only as a defense mechanism of churches in the face of secularization threat, but it also indicates a certain change in the social religious environment. As religious values cannot now be simply dictated but have to be sold to the clients, this effort leads to competition, and competition leads to the similarity of the products, so that denominational differences begin increasingly to decline. Competition can reach such a point as to jeopardize the gains to be derived from it in a context where the market is already diminishing. Rationalization of competition has thus given rise to conciliar structures, agreements on allocation of territory, mergers and coalitions needed for bureaucratic purposes, exchange of technical data across denominational lines, etc.

Another response to secularization is at one extreme surrender, and at another extreme a defiant traditionalism. Surrender to modernity can in an extreme sense take the form of Christian atheism attractive to perhaps only a small section of intellectuals, the death-of-god theologians. But by and large it remains a phenomenon among larger sections with an emphasis on this worldly concerns rather than other worldly doctrines. Berger refers to the use made of psychology, existentialism, and popular sociology by radical theologians to translate traditional affirmations to the new frame of reference of modernity.²³ But he correctly points out the likelihood of progressive surrender of this approach that has "a built-in escalation

²²Wilson, Religion in Secular Society, op. cit., p. 125.

²³Berger, Rumor of Angels, op. cit., p. 25.

factor-escalation, that is, toward the pole of cognitive surrender.... Once one starts a process of cognitive bargaining, one subjects oneself to cognitive contamination.... If the secularization thesis holds, the stronger party, of course, is the modern world in which the supernatural has become irrelevant."²⁴

(A formulation of a secular value system can be itself yet a different response to the modern situation where the supernatural has become irrelevant. The situations that prevail under Communist systems, among some atheistic and anti-theistic groups, as well as in some new nation states where nationalism can serve as a surrogate of religion, all fall somewhat under a separate sociological consideration as these situations do not seem to be in the main line of development of the secularization process. But for considerable numbers of people, "practical atheism" can emerge as an everyday philosophy of life. "Some men avoid the contemporary religious crisis by relying upon an enlightened and sophisticated commonsense."²⁵ Other men may stay within the safe confines of academic, professional, or humanitarian pursuits without bothering to question the fundamental implications of their methodology, functions or results.)

If surrender to modernity is one response, its polar opposite is the grand defiance displayed by the Catholic leadership. From the declaration of the dogma of infallibility in the face of the nineteenth century liberalism

²⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁵ O'Dea, Religious Crisis, op. cit., p. 138.

and evolutionism, to the declaration by Pius XII of the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven in the face of psychologism and existentialism, spans this period of steadfast defiance of the Catholic Church against the challenge of secularization. The success of this posture was dependent on the closed, authoritarian, inquisitorial structure of the Catholic organization that effectively neutralized the cognitive contamination of the secular world. The sudden collapse of this closed world was effected by the essentially pluralistic and open situation in which the Vatican II Council took place.

Once the supporting structure collapses, any organized large scale maintenance of traditionalism becomes difficult. The individual finds himself face to face with essentially the same option of either accommodating to or rejecting the secularizing world. When he is inclined towards the latter, his response can take many forms. One is the robbing the secular world of its victory by giving a sacred meaning to one's secular engagements. This is also the tactic followed by secular theology which postulates a religious dimension to all secular functions and experiences. Another is the blind leap of faith and a return to an essentially pre-reflective stage of consciousness as regards the inconsistency of religious claims and secular reality. The problem of meaningful integration of one's value system is achieved through the elimination of the inconsistent secular elements of the problem. Yet another form of this is a rhetorical allegiance to the official religion's doctrine even when it has lost its effect on practical life or private virtue.

But any effective refusal to accommodate to secularization will have to find its survival in a sectarian situation where the onslaught of

pluralism and the effects of the communication of open knowledge through the communication media can be neutralized. To remain in the fenced-in, sectarian situation in tension with one's environment calls for strong motivation. Factors of ethnicity, of class, of prestige, of social, economic, or psychic deprivation or persecution can all find functional support and solidarity from sectarian groupings. In proportion to the decline of these motivating factors, the barriers against the environing secular world will dissolve. The suburban and small town communities, which are the conservative enclaves in the United States, have succeeded in preserving some such sectarian barriers.

A modification of the sect concept and one approaching that of a social movement emerges as still another negative response to secularization. This is the phenomenon of the "underground Church", which raises the sociologically relevant issue of its being a functional alternative to the burdens of modern society, of its providing an atmosphere of informality as against the legalism of an institutional Church, of its catering to emotional and communal needs as against the bureaucratic demands of life. The number of professional, affluent participants in such celebrations raises the other interesting issue as to whether a thoroughly secular theodicy without a reference to the transcendental beyond can ever be a permanently satisfying cosmos of meaning to man.

Huston Smith contends that the sense for the sacred will always prevail among men because man's control over life is increasing only in parts

but not as a whole.²⁶ The power of the unconscious over life, the always new and unpredictable evolutionary frontier, and the incomprehensible world of interpersonal relations, Smith holds, will remain as the permanent apertures for the divine. The excessively rationalized world of science and human relations can generate reactions that range from pentecostalism, through astrological superstitions, to extreme experiments of heightened intensity through drugs, sexual cults, etc. "...Human mind stands ready to believe anything as long as it provides an alternative to the totally desacralized mechanomorphic outlook of objective science.... It follows that the sacred depends, not entirely, but in part, on man's nose for it"²⁷

All in all, it is a multi-faceted pattern of processes that comprises the general trend of religious change into the future. The complex of factors of still unidentified variables, of the responses, resistances, and reactions, all suggest neither an utter collapse of traditional religion, nor any massive reactionary return to it, but a continued movement of the secularization process along with a continued quest of religious bodies and groups for a middle ground between a complete rejection or acceptance of it.

Conclusion

In conclusion it might be said that this appendix has attempted to highlight many issues and factors that should supplement our skeletal codifica-

²⁶Smith, "Secularization and the Sacred," op. cit., p. 586.

²⁷Ibid., p. 595.

tion of secularization theory. These issues and factors suggest supplementary lines of exploration, areas in which hypotheses and their operationalization could be developed, and the still uncharted dimensions of the secularization phenomenon and its theory. The explicit clarification and elaboration of all these in the context of our main treatment would have led us beyond the modest bounds and purpose of the research. But their identification and enumeration here is meant to show that, if our model was developed without incorporating them, it was not without taking them into consideration.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Vivian Tellis-Nayak, S.J. has been read and approved by members of the Department of Sociology.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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