

MAGIC RELIGION AND SCIENCE

"Science without Religion is lame, Religion without Science is Blind"—Albert Einstein

The relation between Magic, religion and science has been in constant flux from Pre-Renaissance period where science co-existed with institutions like magic and Religion--to Renaissance Period which clearly demarcated the three institutions from each other due to forces like rationalization and secularization.

Tylor in his book '*Primitive Culture*' defined Religion as "*belief in spiritual beings.*" and argued that people had used religion to explain things that occurred in the world. Primitive society is driven by Animism. He claimed the contemporary belief in God to be a survival, because science could explain the phenomena previously justified by religion.

Magic is Pseudo-science because "*Magic was a product of an erroneous application of the principles of association of ideas, especially the relations of analogy for example the primitive notices that the cock crows with the rising sun; he then infers that if the cock is made to crow, the sun will rise.*"

Science and religion in the form of animism can't exist together and are antithetical to each other. But when it comes to relation between science and higher revealed religion(monotheism), both exist together without sharing any antithetical relation with each other.

Frazer developed a linear evolutionary framework whereby magical thought being primordial one, is replaced by religious thought, and eventually by scientific thought in due process of time.

Frazer made nonsense of Tylor's categories by arranging without qualifications magic, religion, and science in an evolutionary linear scheme, with the unsupportable assertion that magic preceded religion in time.... and that science must inevitably dissolve religion in our time."

Hence it can be advocated that to both Tylor and Frazer, Magic, religion, and science shared not only an evolutionary relation with each other but also a relation where magic in itself exist as pseudo-science and religion co-existing with science as a survival of primitive age.

But Durkheim somehow disagreed with Tylor's and Frazer's evolutionary scheme as he explains:

To Durkheim, it was not magic that gave way to religion, rather it was vice-versa. Not only this, Durkheim also viewed both magic and religion as sharing antagonistic relation with each other. He also observed that both magic and Science has its origin in Religion itself. To Durkheim, It is the religion that gave birth to both magic and science.

The essential difference between magic and religion lies in the fact that magic may be but is not necessarily social in character or even expression. Hence unlike Religion which is

functional for society at large to integrate, magic is not functional and sacred because it does not have social force within it.

But unlike Evolutionary scholars who held this view that with rise of human intellect and rationalization religion would decline in all the spheres, Durkheim held an opposite view stating that that Religion would still exist in the society with science because "*scientific thought is nothing, but only a more perfect form of religious thought*".

According to Durkheim, religion would always remain essential to all societies, traditional or modern, because it serves a public function by providing a sense of social solidarity.

In his essay "Magic, Science, and Religion", Bronisław Malinowski says that "no savage race lacks in scientific attitude or science" and to support this argument he advocates that "*no art or craft could have been invented... without careful observation of natural process... power of reasoning: that is; without the rudiments of science*". Also, he argues that every person, no matter how primitive, uses both magic and science. Magic is identical to science in that it always has a definite aim associated with "*human instincts, needs, and pursuits*".

Malinowski concludes that native knows that despite all hard work, crops do fail. Rain or sun may not appear at the right time. Hence to control these influences and these only, the Trobrianders take recourse to magic. Hence Known set of conditions about weather, soil, plants, weeding are handled by natives on basis of rational knowledge (Science) and the unknown and unaccountable set of conditions with the help of Magic. Primitive man resorts to magic when scientific knowledge is exhausted.