

Intro to Sociology-105-001

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29 November 2021

The Transformation Of Religion

One of the first questions I was asked when enrolled into sociology was about religion. I have constantly been fighting an internal battle with myself about who I am, what I believe in, and the greater powers that I trust. This battle was only tested more throughout my sociology course with Professor Elliot. The first question that grabbed me by surprise was “Why is the religion of society important to study?”. Now, I had never ever put religion and society hand in hand so this threw me off guard. If anything they are on exact ends of the spectrum for me. I have my religious life that I do not talk about a lot and I have kept to myself since entering college then I have my social self. A giggly and loud teenage girl who can talk someone's ear off. My religion had never combated with my society. Then when asked this question I realized not only that they correlate but all religion is based on society.

I wanted to write about this topic because this has made me question all things I have done growing up because I realized that all things I have done have been somewhat correlated with religion. Without knowing it or not I would always relate the things I am doing with my life with my religion. I would think about my conscious when making decisions that was deeply rooted in how my mom raised me in an extremely religious household. My religion is always

lose things that are important to me because that is what my mom taught me. I was raised in a private school where I was constantly surrounded by people, families, and a greater community that believed in the same things as me. I would see them all the time on the weekends at the same social events we would go to like brunch after church. I never put my religion with my society because I looked at them as two different realms in my life and I never put them together. But, this class showed me they are more similar than I ever realized.

Durkheim argued that religion was important to look at because it created the foundation of the beginning of society. He says that all fundamental thought and scientific ideologies are rooted in the idea of religion. Not only do I agree with this statement but so does Harari. Harari believes that the humans greatest invention was religion itself. In the beginning of time once we had the mental capability to understand and effectively use emotion we needed an outlet for it. Thus, ideologies arose across different groups of people. These religions allotted for people to come together under a common understanding. This built a community among humans which eventually led to great cognitive capabilities and stronger relationships. This is something that Durheim and Harari can agree with and have spoken upon. They both think that religion is universal. The only exception to this was when travel was difficult so religion were isolated by local groups due to the lack of communication amongst societies.

Although All people have different beliefs or may not believe at all everything is considered a religion. This is also a point that almost everyone can try and relate to even if you do not understand or agree with other people's beliefs. Harari defines religion as "a set of values

people sitting next to you or surround yourself with this does not mean you cannot try and level with them and connect on each other's religion. Not only is this constant sense of religion felt amongst all friends, you feel it even more when you're around people who share these similar beliefs. You can see them at things like church, youth group, and prayer services as well as things that may not be as religious that are still affiliated with your parish such as volunteer opportunities in the local area.

Durkheim once said “(The collective consciousness)...sees from above, it sees farther; at every moment of time, it embraces all known reality; that is why it alone can furnish the mind with the moulds which are applicable to the totality of things and which make it possible to think of them”. This is starting to claim that religion was beneficial to cognitive growth of people in the earliest eras of the world. Durkheim talks about how without religion we would not have come together as a community and become intelligent as a whole. We are much stronger together as a community than apart and alone. Homo sapiens are naturally made to want to be around each other and this only makes us stronger.

Harari himself is religious so it is difficult to say he will not have a bias viewpoint on the subject due to the fact that he looks up to a greater power. This bias goes even further when you look at the fact that Durkheim is also Jewish. This means that they both believe in one translucent God that revealed himself to Abraham, Moses, and the Hebrew prophets. This translucent God and those who are Jewish believe in a religious life in accordance with scriptures and rabbinic traditions. The traditional Jewish community has very strong beliefs against things

dairy products as the same meal. These things are not followed by the modern Jews unless they are very very devout.

These extreme beliefs were not followed by Harari and he did his best in order to not allow his beliefs to have anything to do with what he wrote about having to do with the foundation of religious beliefs. This is where Durkheim goes onto a different path. Although he was also not a very devout Judaism he used his belief in helping prove his points on the foundations of religion. He used his personal experiences as anecdotes to prove his point. This allowed him to see first hand that these beliefs were oftentimes not even strongly believed by those who were Jewish. They would not even completely follow all the rules of their religion because they thought it was too intense showing that they do not completely believe in all the things that their religion believes. But, they continue to go to the things and worship their own forms of gods for the social aspect. This proved to Durkheim that his point was correct in the fact that people use religion to build a form of society. It is always the first thing that people do when moving to a new area is jump into the religious community that they believe in so they can get to know people.

If you look around at the people around you they are usually in your religious community. You naturally form a bubble with people similar to you and this is why equality isn't such an issue in our community and the communities surrounding us. This is what Durkheim and Harari both agree on. Religion was formed only to create community amongst the people. This

abilities as well as build higher and stronger communities.