

## Lecture 2

### Definition of Religion

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### Definitions of Religion - 1

- “A man’s religion is what he would die for rather than abandon.” (H. Bosanquet) (Meaning: whatever man believes in, he holds firm on to...)
- “A body of samples which impede the free exercise of our faculties” (Salomon Reinach)
- “[T]he feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine” (William James).

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### Definitions of Religion - 2

- Religion is the “opium of the people” (Karl Marx).
- “The essence of religion consists in the feeling of an absolute dependence. Religion is the consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us” (F. Schleiermacher 1768-1834).
- “Religion is the quest of life by means of symbols” (Lord Raglan).

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### Definitions of Religion - 3

- “Religion is morality tinged with emotion” (Mathew Arnold).
- “Religion is a set of beliefs, practices and institutions which men have evolved in various societies” (T. Parsons).
- “Religion is the recognition that all things are manifestations of a power which transcends our knowledge” (Herbert Spencer).
- Human recognition of a superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship (Concise Oxford Dictionary).

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### The Seven Dimensions of Religion (Ninian Smart)

- *Ritual*: Forms and orders of ceremonies (private and/or public) (often regarded as revealed)
- *Narrative and Mythic*: stories (often regarded as revealed) that work on several levels. Sometimes narratives fit together into a fairly complete and systematic interpretation of the universe and human's place in it.
- *Experiential and emotional*: dread, guilt, awe, mystery, devotion, liberation, ecstasy, inner peace, bliss (private)
- *Social and Institutional*: belief system is shared and attitudes practiced by a group. Often rules for identifying community membership and participation (public)

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### The Seven Dimensions of Religion (Ninian Smart)

- *Ethical and legal*: Rules about human behaviour (often regarded as revealed from supernatural realm).
- *Doctrinal and philosophical*: Systematic formulation of religious teachings in an intellectually coherent form.
- *Material*: Ordinary objects or places that symbolize or manifest the sacred or supernatural

Smart, Ninian. *Secular Education and the Logic of Religion* New York: Humanities Press, 1968

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### Five dimensions of Religion

- (1) *ritual* activities (including, but not only, "church" attendance);
- (2) *ideology* or adherence to the principal beliefs of the religion;
- (3) *experience* or the "feeling" aspect of religion;
- (4) the *intellectual* side of religion, which involved religious "knowledge" and was frequently measured by such activities as reading religious publications (including, but not only, sacred texts);
- (5) the *consequential* dimension, which attempted to measure the "effect" of an individual's religion in its other dimensions upon his or her "life."

C. Y. Glock and R. Stark, *Religion and Society in Tension* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965)

### Religion versus spirituality

- **Religion:** Creed, Code, Cult, Community
- **Spirituality:** "a search for meaning, for unity, for connectedness, for transcendence, and for the highest of human potential" (Emmons, 1999/2003, p. 5).

Spirituality may not include faith in God



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### Spiritual-but-not-religious

- 40% of American respondents and 20% of German respondents identify themselves this way (Csof, Hood, & Keller, 2009).

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### Religiosity & Spirituality

High Spirituality	<b>1</b> Spiritual-but-not-religious <i>Quest</i> Sacred or Secular Search for significance	<b>2</b> Religious Spirituality <i>Intrinsic Religion</i> Sacred & Secular Search for significance
	<b>3</b> Neither religious nor spiritual Secular Searching OR no search for significance	<b>4</b> 'Empty' Religion <i>Extrinsic Religion</i> Sacred No search for significance
Low Spirituality	Low Religiosity	High Religiosity

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