

**Introductory Sociology**  
**Prof. A. K. Sharma**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

**Lecture - 20**  
**Contributions of Marx and Weber**

There was an issue that whether a Muslim girl is allowed to marry at the age of 15. Now according to marriage law of India, which applies to all caste, community, religions. Having sometime in 70s, 1970s, from time to time during last century age of marriage has been raising, beginning with Saradha act. In 70's a law was passed to raise the minimum age of marriage of girls to 18, and minimum age of marriage of boys to 21. So, recently there was some controversy about a Muslim girl, who was sort of force to marry at age 15. Now finally, the court has accepted, that marriage of a Muslim girl at the age of 15, is acceptable legally acceptable in the Muslim framework, because according to Islam, immediately after puberty marriage of a girl should be arranged by her parents, and puberty means menstruation beginning of menstruation, which may be around 12 or 13. So, as soon as a girl starts menstruating; 12, 13, 14, it is ok if she gets married.

Now, there are various ways of approaching this problem, any true humanistic liberal, intellectual perspective, I would say humanistic perspective, I do not have to use other adjectives, it is not right to marry at the age of 15. From the point of view of education, when girls will be married at 12 or 13 or 14, what will happen to their education, it is not good from the point of view of nutrition, from the point of view of child's health, children they will produce, from the point of view of mother's health. India is one country, where maternal mortality is disproportionately high, more mothers in India die, due to factors associated with child birth, than anywhere else. So, from purely these points of view, there is no role of religion in this.

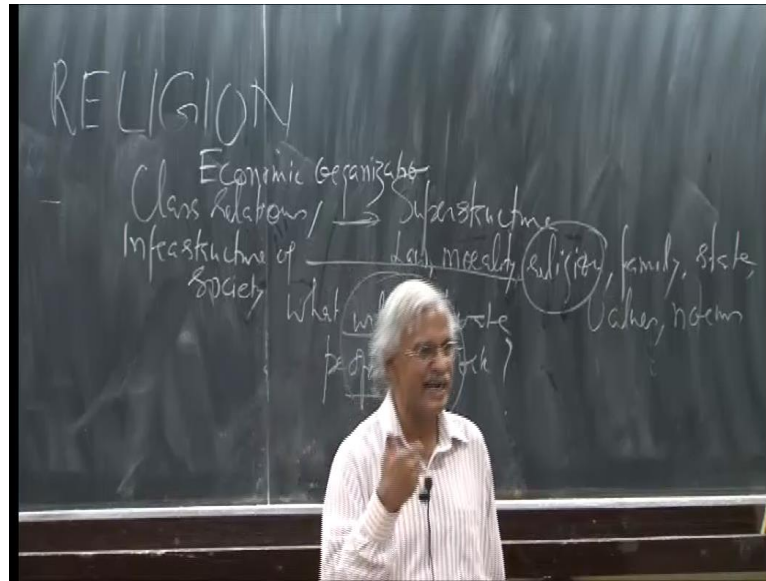
From the point of view of education, even from the point of view of politics, why should a girl of 13 years not be given opportunity to acquire education, and learn about history, politics, and culture of this country, and participate subsequently in political and communal processes. If she is married at the age of 13, then all the doors, except the door of being part of a family and reproduction are closed for her. But in this country in 2012, which is believed to be so advanced technologically, educationally, and is aspiring to become a world power, spiritually, intellectually in several senses, this is our court

says it is ok, because our court is bound, by the constitutional provision of having a separate law for Muslims. (( )) servant told me that, last week a similar law has been passed for 6.

So, in place of going in the right direction then we are going in the backward dir, we are going backward in. From a purely circular perspective, what should have happened that gradually. To begin with, in the political religious educational climate of 1947, it make sense that to keep some people happy, let us accept that as long as they want to remain confined to their religious framework it is ok, we should not mind, we should become more progressive, secular, enlightened, humanistic, but if there are some small number of persons, in one community or two communities it is ok, but gradually during 60 years time, from those communities proportionately more people should have come forward to become part of the civil code, uniform civil code. I can understand that if when these provisions were created, in early 50's, if 80 percent Muslims believed that this should be the case, then percentage of Muslims believing in this should have followed.

In place of that what is happening, if (( )) is right that a similar provision has been created for 6, then we are going backward, then I do not know where shall we stop. Perhaps there will be no one to be called human in this country then we all will be something, and some qualification is required for all of us to exist. We cannot exist in this country as a human being; we are going in wrong direction. Whether you like it or not, you believe in this or not, you are either Hindu, or Muslim, or general, or S C or S T, or O B C, there will be no human, we will not accept if you say who are you, and you say I am a human being, then we will be laughed at you, how is it possible that in India a human being exists. Human being will become a Jadu coming from some other planet this is part of society.

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From sociological perspective, then there are these. On the issue of religion there are two approaches; one, essentially Marx, or Karl Marx, and Max Weber. I am not said anything about Max Weber, so now, it is an opportunity for me to say something about Max Weber also. From Marxist point of view, class relations or the infrastructure, infrastructure of society; infrastructure means foundation, and what is the foundation of society according to Karl Marx; stage of development of society, mode of production, stage of development of mode of production, and corresponding to a given mode of production, there is one type of class relations, and these class relations determine superstructure. What is superstructure; means what is built on this foundation, foundation is economic, foundation is economic and what is built on this foundation; law morality, religion family, state everything.

The foundation of society according to Karl Marx, is the stage of development of mode of production. And corresponding to each stage of development in mode of production, there is a definite form of economic organization. In simple English you can call it, economic organization, and what kind of family system you will have; joint family, nuclear family, what kind of marriage you have; monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, matrilineal, Patrilineal. What kinds of things are considered to be moral or immoral, what is legal or illegal, what is right or wrong values? In short, in just one word values of society, and norms the procedures to attain those values, they constitute the

superstructure of society. So, since we are talking about religion, then religion is determined by economic organization of society; that is why Karl Marx says.

And why does something exist like this here, in superstructure. This serves a number of purposes, the main purpose is, to legitimize, the existence of this form of economic organization. There can be other forms of organization, capitalism is one form of organization, there may be anarchy, there may be gram Swaraj of Gandhiji, there may be Sarvodaya, there may be fascism, Nazism, syndicalism, there are various forms in which a state can exist. And the law and the Religion say; that this form of organization, is the right form of organization, and this only is possible. I remember that in the past, in sociology courses, when I ever discuss capitalism in more detail, and alternatives to capitalism. Then after the class is over students will come and say, some scientific students, sir how is it possible, let a society, and members of society become equal, what will motivate them to work, what will motivate people to work.

If everyone is equal, in a society, in a socialism, in a communist kind of society, everybody is equal. If an agricultural laborer gets the same reward, which a senior civil servant gets, then why should a civil servant become civil servant, why should one person work so hard to qualify civil service exam, when the rewards will be same as those of agriculture laborers, and I tell him (( )) I do not know the answer of this question so well, but I can teach you sociology, by saying, that you are asking this question, because you are part of this capitalist system. And this capitalist system creates an idea, that the chief motivation behind work, is economic incentive, and then I leave it to students only, to find their answer, whether people are motivated to work for some other reasons also. Is your mother working for your welfare for any economic incentive, did those people, who sacrifice their life for the independence of the country, world for any economic incentive.

Was Gandhi, or Vinoba Bhave, or Christ, any one of them, did Christ gave peace, faith, did Christ cure leprosy patients or others, for any financial incentive. Was he charging the same amount from these people, which today's religious gurus charge from them, and today's religious guru you find that almost all of them have property worth running into Crores of rupees, no such property was found left behind Christ. It was only after he dead that we found Jayaprakash Narayan. Jayaprakash Narayan was in some respect much taller than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and when he accepted to lead the agitation, he

was already in 70s and he was suffering from several diseases. What economic incentive did Jayaprakash Narayan have, to lead his student's movement in Bihar or the rest of the country at that age, when he was suffering from so many problems.

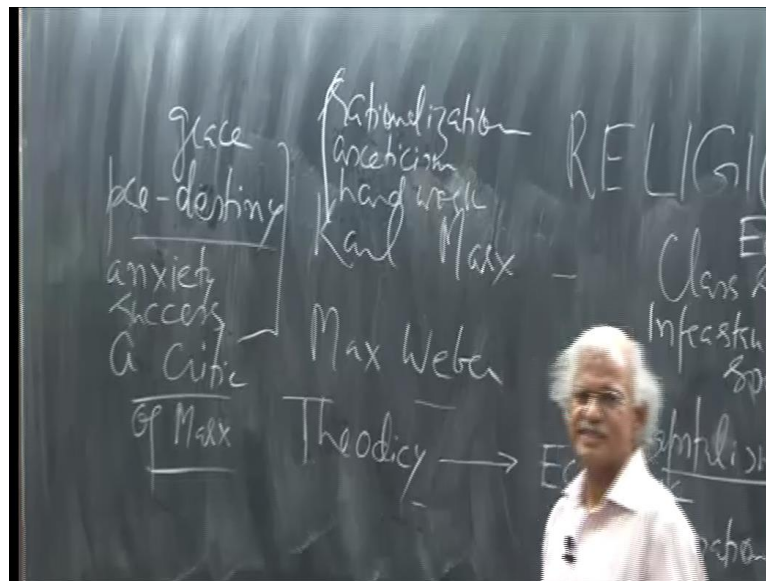
So, then I tell him perhaps, because I am also part of this capitalist system, immediately it comes to our mind that people can work, only for economic incentive. We cannot think of alternatives, because our mind is polluted, by the superstructure of capitalist society. Marxist will say, that if everyone is to be treated equally, imagine that if everyone is to be given A grade, either A or F. If all the students get A, or all the student get F. Then why should someone take special interest in sociology, and then I tell him, what I can immediately say is that, because you are born and brought up in a capitalist society. So, Karl Marx says that; in one kind of economic formation, we have one kind of thought, and because your society consist of, in egalitarian economic and power relations, so your society generates ideas, that people must be classified and made unequal.

It is only in a society, which is based on inequality, that educational institutions will one. One goal of educational institutions, in capitalist society becomes, classification of raw material, students like you raw material, when they come to educational institutions. The job of educational institution, which should have been to impart, real education to the next generation. In place of imparting real education to the next generation, the job of teacher, becomes to classify students, or the members of the new generation, into A B C D category. Although, no empirical research has shown, perhaps we need serious research on this issue, empirical research on this issue. Do the A graders contribute more to society than, D or C graders, subsequently in their life. Is any moral, religious, social, economic, cultural contribution of A graders, more than the contributions of B C D, and some D F graders.

I am not even sure whether those students were terminated from the institute; necessarily contribute less to society, than those who qualify for B Tech degree. This is an idea, because we live in a capitalist society, so educational institutions for them, in place of imparting education, whatever is meant by education. A more serious concern for them, becomes to classify, students into A B C D category, and to make a category, first we classify them into A B C D. Actually there may be not much or, no significant difference of mental capacity, cognitive or emotional or spiritual, no difference between A and D, but we classify them into A and D, and then we also create conditions in which A is start

thinking that they are superior, and D is start thinking that they are inferior. This is this is the meaning, economic organization ideas, and why are these ideas created, these ideas are created, to legitimize, to perpetuate the existing system. If existing system is unequal, then you create ideas, which will keep the unequal expletory system, perpetuated. This is one important theory of religion by Karl Marx. There are other purposes also we have already seen, to create hope, to maintain norms, norms which will go in favor of the capitalist class.

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There is another theorist; Max Weber, who says just opposite of that, and actually these opposites make us more confused, in sociology what is right, what is wrong. Ultimately, it becomes a matter of perspective. These are issues which cannot be resolved on the visible of empirical data; they are very similar to issues of the kind, whether God is male or female. We cannot conduct experiments, or we cannot conduct surveys, or sample research to decide whether, God is male or female transgender, we only believe. Max Weber says that, his term was theodicy, certain religious ideas, which lead to economic organization of certain type. Since we are dealing more with the questions of macro sociology, rather than micro sociology, and so far not in much place has been given to interactionism, symbolic interactionism or micro sociology, so I will teach about Max Weber much.

Max Weber says; some people will say that Max Weber's aim was to provide a critic of Marxist theory. Max Weber was a critic of Marxist theory, and Weberian sociology is a critic of Marxist theory of society, but Max Weber has an independent point of view also to make. He says that there is a connection between religious ideas, and economic organization, and Max Weber wrote a complete book on this topic, and showed how capitalism, has a form of economic organization, was developed only in certain countries of Europe first. Capitalism was developed, in certain countries of Europe first, which countries; countries, which had predominance of certain religious ideas, and those ideas, where the ideas of protestant ethics. Christianity is broadly divided into Protestants, and Catholics.

Since you do not know the history of Christianity, I can just say that catholic is something like Sanatan Dharm, and protestant is something like Arya Samaj, a reformist movement in Christian society, a few centuries ago. Like Arya Samaj, they are rationalist, reformist, against rituals. And these Protestants believed, there was also a saint, who created this. Without going into history of all that I will say that, according to Max Weber certain religious views, created capitalism as an economic institution in northwestern Europe, and Max Weber made a detailed study of all religions of the world, and he said that some religions are otherworldly, some are this worldly kind of. Some religions promote ideas which are more otherworldly type, and some are more concerned with this world. Like Hinduism, we will say Hinduism is otherworldly; Islam is also some kind of otherworldly religion.

Hindus were acquisitive, no doubt Hindus were selfish, acquisitive, ritualists, all those things are there, but Hindus were not rational. Muslims are. The main purpose of Islam became conversion of non-Muslims to Islam, and Max Weber say that what happens to Muslims, once they become Muslim, is not the concern of Islam at all, very powerful statement, something which you find any anybody with humanistic, or obviously, Islamic sensibility will find difficult to digest. Max Weber say that, Islam the only concern of Islam has been, to convert other people Christians, Hindus, Buddhists to Islam, but what to do with them after making the Muslims, this is a question on which Islam has not paid much attention. Max Weber say that protestant ethic alone, and why protestant ethic, because protestants believe in pre-destiny.

They believe that after pre-destiny, concept of pre-destiny, grace. Pre-destiny means, according to Islamic and Christian belief, after their death, a day of judgment will come, and some people will be sent to heaven, and some to hell. It is already fixed, you cannot do anything, your prayers, your pilgrimage, your offerings to God, church attendance, nothing can change, it is already fixed, whether you will go to heaven, or you will go to hell; that is already fixed. So, this puts people in tremendous anxiety, this idea of fixed pre-destiny, in religion, puts people under tremendous anxiety, will go to hell, or to heaven. According to protestant belief, success in this material world is an indicator, as in social sciences we deal with indicators. Success in this material world, is an indicator, of you are having the grace of the God, that you will go to heaven.

So, success, and if this is so then obviously, they would like to test, people would like to know, whether they can succeed in this world or not, because only if they can succeed in this world, in any field. If they can succeed in this world, then it shows that they will go to heaven, and if they fail, they will go to hell, simple. So, a kind of philosophy religion, a system of thought developed, according to which people simply or too much stress on success, and they started rationalizing their activities, rationalization of activities, asceticism, no, pleasure seen. The entrepreneurs of the businessman, what they earned from their enterprise, that was not to be used for pleasure, good clothes, good house, wine many wives; no. What they earned from their economic enterprise, must be put back, what we call investment, must be put back to the economic enterprise, and economic enterprise must be organized in a most rational manner, so that they succeed, succeeding is the only goal of life.

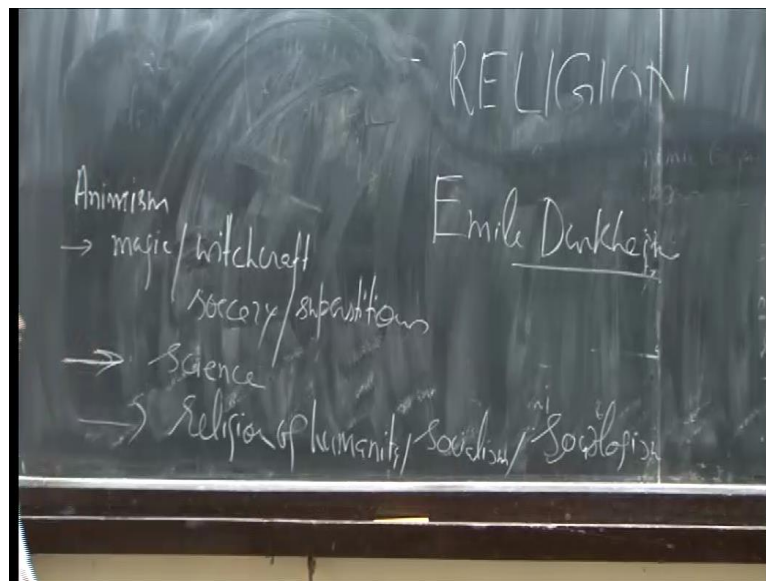
And with this rationalization, asceticism, I do not know whether when persons like Gandhi or Lok Manya Tilak, they gave more importance to Geetha during freedom struggle, than to Ramayan or Srimad Bhagavat, they were influenced by these kinds of ideas of protestant ethics, this is what protestant ethics shown, success; no pleasures, postponement of pleasures, or no pleasures just work, hard work, rationalization asceticism, hard work, and what they earn when they succeed in their economic enterprise. Put it back so that their economic enterprise prospers more, nothing for me, but for my organization. Now, with this kind of idea, capitalism developed as an institution. In northwestern Europe, where the impact of protestant ethics was more, and Max Weber also argued, that it could not have development of capitalism, as an



institution, could not have been possible, in the context of other religions; Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism all other religions which Max Weber studied, so far if while for Karl Marx economic organization affects religious ideas.

For Max Weber religious ideas decide, what form of economic organization, reverse of that. In Max Weber the relationship between economy and religion, takes a u turn, just opposite of what we Karl Marx is saying. Max Weber is saying, just opposite of what Karl Marx is saying. Behind saying this thing may be Max Weber had some other interest, and when we talk about social stratification, and education, and other things, we will see more of it. So, these are in sociology, these are two ways of looking at requisition of relationship between society and religion. For Karl Marx religion is part of superstructure, and it determined by economic infrastructure. And for Max Weber economic organization or economic infrastructure, either result of prevailing religious ideas. And at the end, let me also explain a little bit, because yesterday, when I talked about sociology of religion, this issue was perhaps not so clearly understood.

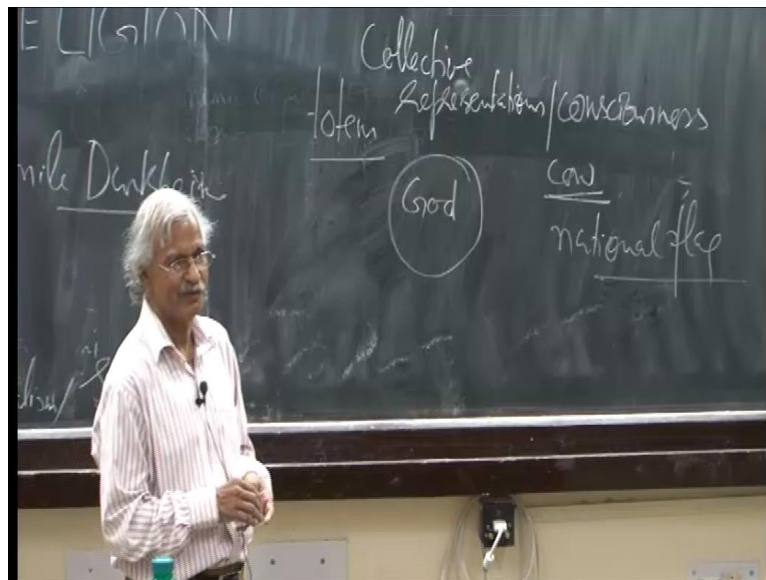
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Emile Durkheim; another important, I mentioned Karl Marx, Malinowski, Talcott Parsons. Talcott Parsons is more important, to study what is happening to religion in our times, and the link that some of these people expected, that animism, animatism magic, or side by side magic witchcraft or sorcery; in short superstition to science, and religion of humanity, you can call it socialism or sociologism. This is what our sociologists had

thought, two hundred years ago, our sociologists had thought that this is what will happen, that in primitive society, without education, development they are magic witchcraft, sorcery, superstition, and then religion, and from religion come science, and science, if you still call a religion the ideas which will prevail in this post scientific stage. If you still call a religion, you will have religion of humanity. Religion of humanity can be called socialism, or sociologism, and the priest of this religion will be sociologists. Emile Durkheim said, that priest of this religion will be sociologists, and in society decisions more and more social decisions, will be taken on the basis of sociological surveys, or empirical studies, experimental studies.

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Emile Durkheim, to explain religion, introduce in his famous book, elementary form of religious life; introduced the idea of totem, that if you want to understand what religion is. Let us see what totem is. The totem is anything, from plant or animal, totem can be, a classic example of totem is a kind of musical instrument, bullroarer, found in Africa. Thousands of years ago it was found, there are varieties of bullroarer, and the purpose of that is to communicate. It is a very simple musical instrument, but with this you can reach several miles, you can communicate masses, several miles that can be a totem. Yesterday I gave one example of, how women of Rajput caste in Bijnor district, to which I belong, treated tortoise as their father-in-law, tortoise can be a totem. In Indian context in place of bullroarer, are examples of western society, I can say that, a water bridge can also be a kind of totem. On certain festival, only last month this festival was celebrated,

Hindu women in this part of the country, go to a water bridge, to worship it, with the hope that, worshipping a water bridge banyan tree, will prolong life of their husbands.

In the same manner in which, Savitri save the life of Satyavan. And there they believed that a women of this land, will worship banyan tree on a particular day, in according to Hindu calendar month, then they can also prolong life of their husbands. That can also be seen as kind of totem, or cow, or a ring. Anything, what is common to totem is, that it combines a community, that the members of a community engage in certain religious practices to gather, and on certain days in a year, they all assemble. All the people belonging to the community, clan, subclan, tribe, large community, caste, in our case caste gotra, actually caste not gotra, caste is a bigger community, or the whole village the whole civilizers, they will assemble at one place so and in presence of a totem.

What Emile Durkheim said, that to understand totem, it is not at all important to understand what this totem is, physical features of the totem, physical, biological, medicinal features of totem, they are not important. What is important is that, this totem represents the collective consciousness of a community, collectivity of thought systems, collectivity of beliefs, collectivity of faiths, togetherness, common faith of a community, this commonness or collective representations, or collective consciousness. So, the tortoise, in the field, unites all the women belonging to Rajput caste. Totem must be seen, tortoise must not be seen as a tortoise, then what are the properties of tortoise. Some people start saying the, those who are hope follow religious route, they start studying the properties of gods and goddesses, or the totems, or symbols; that if Tulsi.

If Tulsi exists as a kind of totem for Hindus, then it is not because of medicinal value of Tulsi plant. It is the fact that, the Tulsi plant brings all members of Hindu community together, togetherness, collectiveness, collective consciousness, collective representations. So, god must be seen as something part of collective representation of people. In cow, physical properties of cow, or physical distinctions, or biological distinctions between cow and buffaloes are not important, this is a mistake we some people do, even Gandhiji did this mistake; that if Hindus of India worship cow, then they start thinking how important cow is, for the agricultural society of India. Cow does this, cow does this, cow is important for agriculture, cow is important for leather. Emile Durkheim when he looks at cow, something like cow, he looked at bullroarer of that part of the world.

Then what is more interesting for Emile Durkheim, is that cow unites, the members of the community together, it bring them together, it unifies. And in this respect, there is no difference between cow, and national flag of today, flag hoisting, our eleventh five year plan is saying, then in Madarsa's and Maktab's also, flags must be hoisted, and there should be some financial incentive for them to do so. It is the same kind of thing, it is like Hindu saying that cow is an important animal for Muslims also, what cow does for Hindus, cow also does for Muslims. So, Muslims should also celebrate, it is a very similar kind of thing, that hoisting of national flag, which is important for all other educational institutions of India, that thing must be done by Madarsa's and Maktab's also. So, government of India assumes that Maktab's and Madarsa's are not part of this religious community of India, and they must be converted to Hinduism.

For Emile Durkheim; that means, when we analyze religion, or when we look at God, we have to analyze it sociologically. We must see what is the connection between, what they called God, Goddess, totem, plants, animals, people worship, and their own socioeconomic conditions. What does? And as totem integrates people, as bullroarer integrates people, as cow integrates people, as Tulsi integrates people, as the myths around Sethusamduram in Rameswaram, as the myth about Sethusamduram in Rameswaram unite the whole of Hindu community or Ayodhya connects the whole Hindu community, and also the whole Muslim community, it is a totem for both, totem can be good, or totem can be bad. Totem can be, totem must be eaten, or totem must not be eaten, forbidden, sacred can be any type, sacred which is touched, which is not touched, it is not.

There can be totems, or there can be sacred things, which need to be touched on certain days, and there are things which are not to be touched, I would say that in traditional, Hindu society when things grown underground, like onion or potatoes, where also some kind of sacred things, they were sacred in the sense, that true Vaishna vites, but were not expected to eat them. You are cow, milk cow milk is sacred, and you are expected to take cow milk, not drink buffalo milk, give more cow milk to your children, infants particularly, cow milk is great, not buffalo milk. Medicinal value is not important, may be from certain perspective. Goat milk is better or buffalo milk is better ,or sometime cow milk, but it was the religious sentiment, and Emile Durkheim says that, religion

must be seen sociologically, and the place of God in. What is the place of God in religion, in traditional society.

In scientific society, we will have society at that place. God will be replaced by society, and religious thinking will be replaced by rational scientific sociological thinking, this is what Emile Durkheim. I thought I must to spend two three minutes again on that that according to Emile Durkheim, in the years to come, God will be replaced by society, totems will be replaced by national flags or symbols of society, collectivities and religiousness will be replaced by sociological thinking; this is what we thought. And at the end of religion on lecture, I can just say, that this prediction has not come true, and the recent evident shows that, the religion have not been replaced, religion in some other form religion is surviving, nature of religion may be changing, but religion is surviving, and religion has not been replaced by socialism or sociologism, why does this happen perhaps Talcott Parsons or Bronislaw Malinowski explain this phenomenon better, that increasing uncertainties, anxieties, disorganization, anomie, suffering, exploitation or absurdity or meaninglessness of our society creates conditions, in which some or other kind of religion continues, and we will become victim of religion.