

Social Science and Religious Beliefs: Some Misconceptions

A. DON SORENSON

IN THIS CENTURY THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN science and religion has shifted from natural science to social science. The conflict is less heated because religion is culturally less important now than it used to be. Still the controversy is real enough and, in at least one way, more deadly for religion because religion itself has become the subject of scientific investigation. Sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists have probed the depths of man's unconscious, dissected the strange beliefs of tribal societies and examined the religious survivors of a secularized world in search of naturalistic explanations of religious phenomena with the result that the validity of religious beliefs themselves seems undermined.

It is thought that the study of religious man by social science has undermined religious belief by revealing the true nature of these beliefs and thereby ending them. This study can be grouped under the headings of genesis of religious beliefs, and their relativity in the life of man.^{1, 2}

The term "genesis" has several different senses when applied to religious beliefs. Sometimes genesis stands for *historical* development. A famous example is Freud's explanation of *totemism*, one of the oldest forms of religious and social organization,³ in a historical narrative about the killing of the primeval father by his sons. Freud uses the principles in this narrative to explain the development of religion through Christianity. He argues, for example, that the repressed memory of the primeval murders and the

repressed, ambivalent, hostile and affectionate impulses toward the father find expression in the Jews' worship of an omnipotent father-deity (the transformed primeval father). Christianity later added its views of Jesus Christ as son of God to reconcile the ancient conflict. A more common and popular historical explanation is represented by the following theory:

We find in religious philosophy a reflection of the real world; the theology of a people will echo a dominant note in their terrestrial mode of life. A pastoral culture may find its image in a Good Shepherd and his flocks; an era of cathedral building sees God as a Great Architect; an age of Commerce finds Him with a ledger, jotting down moral debits and credits; emphasis upon the profit system and a high-pressure salesmanship that is required to make it function, picture Jesus as a super-salesman; and, in an age of science, God "is a God of law and order" (Millican, 1931), a Great Scientist, moving about in his cosmic laboratory, his experiment to perform.⁴

A second sense of genesis is the development of religious beliefs within the individual. Here again Freud may serve as an introduction. According to him, susceptibilities to belief in a theistic God arise from the so-called Oedipus complex, or the projection of the childhood father-image onto a supernatural being. It is very common for social scientists to assume or conclude that religious beliefs do not usually develop from man's rational abilities to analyze information and ideas; rather, they develop from socialization or acculturation, with rational faculties playing little or no role. Note the following from a book supposedly written as an inventory of scientific knowledge about human behavior.

For the population as a whole, there appears to be little lasting development of [opinions, attitudes or beliefs] that is independent of parental groups or strata predispositions and is based mainly on "objective" or "rational" analysis of information and ideas.⁵

A final example of the genesis of religious beliefs emphasizes the existing support of such beliefs. In the words of a modern anthropologist:

An agricultural people inhabiting a cool and arid region needs, above all things, warmth and rain for the growth of its crops. It is understandable, consequently, that Hopi should worship a Sky God who brings rain, an Earth Goddess who nourishes the seed, and a Sun God who matures the crops, as well as a special corn Mother and God of growth or germination.⁶

It is common for people, exposed for the first time to naturalistic explanations of religious beliefs, to feel that these explanations affect the *validity* of those beliefs. Religious beliefs are somehow rendered doubtful or unacceptable by disclosures of the underlying circumstances of their existence. It is as though falsity had been unmasked, leaving these beliefs wanting. This feeling in a believer may actually lead to disbelief.

The "function" of religious beliefs has to do with the consequences those beliefs have for the individual or society. Freud writes that religion "is born of the need to make tolerable the helplessness of man." Death, suffering and coercion make life for the individual hard to endure or to understand.

Religion, a re-enactment of childhood responses to an analogous situation of threat and helplessness, provides a view of the world which "reconciles us to the troubles of life" and "solves for us the riddles of the universe." For Freud maturity means finally giving up these wish-images and childish responses.⁷ For Max Weber also, religion helps man adjust to and interpret the evils of injustice, suffering and death.⁸ For Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, the primary role of religion is to uphold the norms upon which the integrity of the social order depends.⁹

Here again, as with theories about the genesis of religious beliefs, naturalistic explanations of the psychological or social function of such beliefs are thought to undermine their credibility. As a contemporary psychologist of religion notes, the "view commonly persists that a belief *must* be either psychologically motivated or true."¹⁰

From the viewpoint of social science, man's moral consciousness appears to be environmentally conditioned. From his social environment he learns to judge an act as right or wrong, to call certain ends good and others bad, to feel guilty about some things and proud about others. Consequently, man's moral values vary from one era to another, from culture to culture and from group to group. Some of these values even stand in fundamental conflict with one another. Yet inhabitants of each era, culture or group have claimed their moral beliefs to be the true ones. It would appear, therefore, that no set of moral beliefs is more true than another, that the moral beliefs a group thinks are true are true only for it, and that anyone who presumes one set to be more true than another is culture-bound and ethnocentric. In short, the facts of "cultural relativism" establish the doctrine of "ethical relativism."

It is not too difficult to find serious students of society making the transition from cultural to ethical relativism. Thus we read from a recent book on sociology:

These illustrations show what we mean by cultural relativism—that *the function and meaning of a trait are relative to its cultural setting*. A trait is neither good nor bad in itself. It is good or bad only with reference to the culture in which it is to function. Fur clothing is good in the arctic, but not in the tropics. Premarital pregnancy is bad in our society, where the mores condemn it and where there are no comfortable arrangements for the care of illegitimate children; premarital pregnancy is good in a society such as that of the Bontocs of the Philippines, who consider a woman more marriageable when her fertility has been established, and who have a set of customs and values which make a secure place for the children. Adolescent girls in the United States are advised that they will improve their marital bargaining power by remaining chaste until marriage. Adolescent girls in New Guinea are given the opposite advice, and in each setting the advice is probably correct. The rugged individualism and peasant thrift of early America would produce great unemployment if they were widely practiced in our present mass-production economy. From such examples we see that *any cultural trait is socially "good" if it operates harmoniously within its cultural setting to attain the goals which the people are seeking*. This is a workable nonethnocentric test of the goodness or badness of a culture trait.¹¹

Does a naturalistic explanation of the genesis or the function of theistic belief have any logical bearing on the truth or validity of that belief? Does

cultural relativity logically establish ethical relativity?

If naturalistic explanations of the genesis or relativity of religious beliefs constitute rational support for the denial of those beliefs, then that denial will occur as the conclusion of a logical argument. Misconceptions can enter an argument in two ways. First, the premises of the argument may be incorrect. This is a definite possibility in every theory mentioned above, and for some a foregone conclusion—as in the case of Freud's historical narrative about the origin of totemism and its application to the rise of Judaism and Christianity. But the truth or falsity, the plausibility or implausibility, of the theories is not at stake here. For present purposes I am assuming the theories to be highly confirmed or even "true."

The second misconception occurs when the evidence is not logically relevant to the conclusion—even if all the premises are true. The misconception is independent of the truth or falsity of the premises. It is this second misconception that is most often overlooked when social science theories of religion appear to present direct evidence against theistic belief or religious moral beliefs.

The first question, then, is whether a naturalistic explanation of the genesis or function of theistic belief (e.g., that the God of Joseph Smith exists) has any logical bearing on the truth or validity of that belief. To say that it does is to claim that such an explanation constitutes logical support against (or for) belief in God's existence.

Not always apparent are the underlying assumptions of those who make psychological inferences from naturalistic explanations or descriptions to conclusions about the existence of God. They rarely, if ever, occur in bald form, but are usually hidden beneath layers of learning and verbal sophistication.

A common assumption is that if theistic belief has any natural social cause at all, then its truth is thrown into question. To say that a person believes the way he does because "he was brought up that way" appears to deny the acceptability of his belief in God. And when this statement is turned into a sophisticated explanation drawn from the social sciences (explaining how he was "socialized" or "acculturated,") then the impression that the belief is no longer worthy of acceptance is further reinforced.

A second assumption begins with the idea that people usually believe in God because of irrelevant social or psychological causes. The distinction is presumable between causes of theistic belief which would constitute good reasons for that belief and causes which are insufficient. Usually only the insufficient causes are stressed. The quotation above from Berelsen and Steiner's inventory of scientific knowledge about human behavior illustrates this attitude. There appears to be little lasting development of beliefs, they write, that is based on objective analysis of information and ideas. The assumption seems to be that if people develop a belief in God based on irrelevant reasons, then that belief is unacceptable or false.

Another assumption stems from naturalistic explanations of the genesis or function of theistic beliefs which make that belief seem "unworthy" of acceptance by a mature adult. To say, as Freud did, that religion is a re-enactment of infant helplessness and defenselessness, and that "the gods"

are the forces of nature to which man gives the characteristics of the father, seems to cut against the grain of modern man's conception of what it is to be "grown up" or mature. Here the assumption is that whatever is immature or infantile to modern western man cannot be true or valid.

One more example: Falsity of theistic belief is sometimes assumed as part of the very definition of psychological defense mechanisms. This occurs especially when psychoanalytic theory is employed by educated laymen during religious discussions at late hours. To say that theistic belief is, for instance, part of a "reaction formation," a process of "projection" or of "rationalization," seems to imply that the belief has in some way been rendered unacceptable. I think this assumption stems from what these defense mechanisms are *thought* to mean. As Ernest Hilgard writes,

Another way of looking at the mechanisms is to see them as bolstering self-esteem through self-deception. There is a deceptive element in each of the mechanisms. Rationalization is using false or distorted reasons to oneself as well as to the outside world. It is entirely appropriate to consider self-deception as one of the defining characteristics of a mechanism¹³

Statements of this sort may lead some to assume that if theistic belief functions as part of a psychological defense mechanism, then by definition that belief is deceptive or false.

These examples of assumptions are not exhaustive, but they are representative. Setting them forth in bald form renders them much less plausible in appearance than when they are an integral part of a complex and fluent discussion about belief in God.

But let us consider the matter in some detail. I suppose no one would want to hold that any belief can be refuted by explaining its social or psychological genesis or function. It is trivially true that all beliefs have psychological or sociological origins and that they play various roles in human affairs. This includes the best established scientific laws, correct mathematical derivations, as well as other less prestigious beliefs. This fact does not by itself make these beliefs untrue or invalid. No one could contend, for instance, that a person's initial belief in Galileo's law for freely falling bodies would be disconfirmed by pointing out that he believed this law because of the way he was educated or because of the peculiar circumstances of his upbringing. To do so would involve committing the "genetic fallacy," namely, considering factors in the genesis of a statement relevant, *ipso facto*, to its truth or falsity.

This fallacy is not avoided by noting that theistic belief often results from irrelevant causes. Many sincere beliefs are acquired in this way, including some scientific ones. And no doubt religious beliefs are often acquired as a result of causes that are not necessarily reasons. Indeed, it is common for people to hold a belief without good reasons, while others possess good reasons for the same belief. It is not unusual for a person to develop a belief as a consequence of causes that are irrelevant as reasons and then later to hold that same belief on grounds that have become relevant. To say that most people do not acquire belief in God because of relevant considerations is not the same thing as to say that no valid grounds are known for that belief. Again, how people come to have their beliefs (the context of devel-

opment) is logically distinct from whether those beliefs are correct or not (the context of validation).

This last distinction may also apply to arguments which assume the "unworthiness" of religious beliefs. In addition to the possibility of confusing the context of development with the context of validation, two senses of "worthy of belief" may be confused. It is one thing to say that a belief, because of its infantile roots, is unworthy of an adult when "unworthy" signifies that the belief does not conform to the norms of an adult in middle class America. And it is quite another thing to say that a conviction is unworthy as a belief when "unworthy" means that adequate evidence exists for denying the belief. A belief may be unworthy in one sense and worthy in another. Thus it may be infantile and yet true.

Hilgard says that it is "entirely appropriate to consider self-deception as one of the defining characteristics of a mechanism." Two misconceptions are liable to occur as a result of this definition. First, the psychological functioning of a belief may be confused with the logical validity of a belief. True beliefs may function as parts of defense mechanisms, defined solely in psychological terms, just as false ones may. Second, two meanings of "deception" may be confused. For instance, deception may mean that a person engaged in rationalizing justifies his behavior by inventing reasons which he believes are the real motives for his behavior. Here deception has to do with a person thinking that his given reasons are his actual motives. But deception may also mean that a person thinks, incorrectly, that a belief is supported by an existing body of evidence (or that its denial is not so supported). One would not ordinarily use the term "deception" in this second way.

But Hilgard also writes that there is "a deceptive element in each of the mechanisms. Rationalization is using false or distorted reasons to oneself as well as to the outside world"¹³ The apparent interchangeability of the terms "deceptive," "false" and "distorted" justifies the two senses of deception distinguished above and provides an example of writing which leads to this confusion. It is clearly possible for a person to be deceived in one of the above senses and not in the other. He may say, for example, that his employer requires his employees to do a certain thing and that he did that thing on a certain occasion because it is thus required. He may, on the one hand, be correct in saying that his employer requires that a certain thing be done and yet, on the other, be deceiving himself by saying to himself or others that he actually did what he did on the given occasion because his employer requires it. The incorrectness of the belief cannot be established simply by examining the psychological process itself.

There are conditions under which functional or genetic considerations may be relevant to the validity of a belief. Lewis Feuer helps us to see this possibility by making three distinctions in the procedure of genetic analysis:

A proposition is genetically self-consistent, or self-reinforcing, if its assertion, in existential form, constitutes a necessary part of the theory of its origin. A proposition is genetically self-inconsistent, or self-dissolving, if its denial, in existential form, appears as a necessary component in the theory of its origin. A proposition is genetically neutral if neither its assertion nor denial are part of the theory of its origin.¹⁴

Thus the belief that no beliefs are causally determined could be refuted by showing it to be causally determined. Or, to use Feuer's examples, an economic explanation of a purely political interpretation of history would be dissolving in its impact, whereas an economic explanation of the development of the belief in the primacy of economic factors in history would be self-reinforcing genetically.

But theistic belief is not genetically self-inconsistent with respect to any social science theories of its origin or function. Psychological or sociological explanations of what makes a person a theist need not assume or deny God's existence. Perhaps the theorist himself may assume that God does not exist and then try to explain, as Freud did, why people still believe in him. But in doing this, Freud does not commit (for example) the genetic fallacy. Rather his argument is twofold. In *The Future of An Illusion* he first argues that there is not adequate ground for theistic belief and then presents a possible explanation of it. But the theory used in this explanation does not itself constitute grounds for denying such belief. Theistic belief is not genetically inconsistent with Freud's theories nor is it genetically consistent with them. The relation is genetically neutral. This also applies to other theories of religion found in the social sciences—even though some of the theorists themselves deny theistic belief.¹⁵

If theistic belief can be explained by assuming that God alone establishes belief in him, then it would be in conflict with any naturalistic explanations. There are various reasons why this conflict does not materialize. For one thing, scriptures themselves indicate that belief in God will be produced by various natural processes. These processes are mentioned in a common sense way, or they are simply taken for granted. The general idea is that God set up the natural world so that belief in his existence would result from the working of natural factors. Among them might be those partially described by Freud or others. How supernatural factors enter into having a belief in God is not easy to say, in large part because the distinction between natural and supernatural, at least in Mormon theology, presents special problems.

Perhaps an objective connection can be made between theistic belief and genetic functional theories explaining that belief in still another way, that is, by emphasizing certain premises about God's purposes in his dealings with humankind. These premises may imply that theistic belief and naturalistic explanations are logically inconsistent. Someone may suppose, for example, that it is contrary to the purposes of God to allow belief in him to be the effect of natural causes, since his plan is to allow people to make this choice freely. To believe in God is to believe in a being who has such purposes. Naturalistic explanations of this belief are incompatible with it because they present a causal explanation of its origin. One of the assumptions here is that freedom is somehow incompatible with determination as it is assumed in naturalistic explanations and, perhaps also, compatible with indeterminism. This is a complex issue, too complex to try to unravel here. The free will problem is in general sufficiently unsettled, and the position that causal determination of beliefs is incompatible with free choice is enough in doubt that it would be premature to claim an objective connection between genetic theories and theistic belief. I think some proponents of social scientism assume that analysis of free will problems by recent philosophers or by

social scientists delving into philosophy has reached more solid conclusions than it actually has.

We come now to the second question: Does cultural relativity logically establish ethical relativity? Once more there is no doubt about the psychological influence that the growing awareness of cultural relativity has had on the acceptance of ethical relativity. The findings of psychology, sociology and anthropology which appear to support the former belief have led, in our century, to acceptance of the latter belief by educated people. The position being taken in this essay is, however, that cultural relativity by itself does not logically establish ethical relativity and that inferences assuming that it does rest on misconceptions.

Cultural relativity itself is not as obviously grounded in facts as some people presume. According to this hypothesis people in different cultures hold conflicting fundamental moral principles, and the cause of this is that these people come from different cultures. Notice that, according to this view, "fundamental" principles are in conflict. This means that the grounds for moral disagreement between two groups would not be removed by agreement on all the relevant facts. The disagreement would involve basic moral principles alone and not other properties of the thing being evaluated—a proposition very difficult to document. For one thing, it is difficult to demonstrate that the thing or act being evaluated is really the same thing or act for both evaluators. Definitions of what appear to be the same situations may vary enormously with the subtle but relevant nuances of meaning peculiar to one cultural group or another. These nuances are not easily detected nor their importance to the group readily appreciated even by trained outsiders. Thus, to take an often used example, it may not be a fundamental conflict of moral principles if some tribal society approves of a child executing an aged parent whereas another group disapproves of such an act. Perhaps the first group thinks that putting the parent away is necessary for the parent's welfare in the hereafter, while the second group does not believe this. Both groups might hold to the principle that children should act to guarantee the overall welfare of the parent, but disagree on methods to be used. It is difficult to show that seemingly divergent evaluations of some act or thing really conflict. Western conceptions of "morally right" or "morally wrong" may not have simple equivalents in the languages of other peoples. The findings of social scientists have not usually provided the detailed information necessary to document cultural relativism.

I am willing to grant that conflicts between some basic moral principles do exist, but I contend that even if they do occur, ethical relativism does not necessarily follow from them.

Let us suppose, then, that cultural relativism is valid. What are the implications for ethical relativism? One form of ethical relativism says that conflicting moral judgments made by members of different cultures are equally correct. This is one interpretation of the popular notion that what is right in one society may be wrong in another. It is clear that ethical relativism in this sense does not follow directly from cultural relativism. What is needed for the conclusion to follow is an intermediate premise which claims, in effect, that if the same thing is evaluated differently in different cultures,

then those different evaluations would both be correct. In other words, the assumption would have to be made that conflicting moral judgments made by members of different cultures are equally valid. But this is the doctrine of ethical relativism itself. Rather than establishing the correctness of ethical relativism, the argument actually presupposes ethical relativism in making the derivation.

Cultural relativism was earlier defined as the view that people in different cultures hold conflicting fundamental moral principles and that the cause of this is the fact that these people come from different cultures. We have seen that ethical relativism does not follow from the second part. The fact that a belief is caused, whether by cultural factors or not, does not logically establish its truth or validity.

Ethical relativism sometimes takes the form that if a cultural group believes it right to do X and backs that belief with sanctions, then it *is* right to do X. It is thought by some that ethical relativism in this sense follows from cultural relativism because of the meaning of moral terms.¹⁶ "Right" simply means that some act agrees with the mores of a group and "wrong" means that some act is violating those mores. But this view (and others like it) hardly seems tenable. For one thing it makes it self-contradictory for anyone in a given group to say that a customary way of doing things within that group is wrong. Surely it is not contradictory for a member of a group to say, "I realize that doing X is in accord with our mores, but it is wrong"; nor is it redundant for him to say, "The customary way is the right way in this case."

This point also applies to "good" and its opposites. Thus something being good surely does not mean "society strongly approves of it." For again it would be self-contradictory for a reformist member of the group to say that "T is not good, although my society approves of it"; or "T is good, although my society disapproves of it." It would be the same as saying that society disapproves of something although it approves of it, or society approves of something although it disapproves of it. Here, as above, reformist moralities became logically impossible. But I think it must be admitted that there is not self-contradiction in the reformist's claim that his society's morality is in need of reform because it is seriously mistaken. Even if his claim turns out to be unsupportable, it is not self-contradictory. There is something wrong with this way of interpreting moral terms as our simple argument shows.

It will not do to argue that the view that mores make an act right or wrong follows logically from a moral rule which says that a person ought to comply with the mores of his society. No headway is made here since this rule itself is what must be established as following from cultural relativism. The situation is not helped at all by pushing the argument back further by showing that mores themselves are necessary for the well-being of a people or for giving purpose to their lives. For, again, the moral principle containing the notions "well-being" or "purposefulness of life" are the very principles which must be established by cultural relativity. Besides, if cultural relativism could be established as an ethical universal like the principle just mentioned, then ethical relativism itself would be refuted. And, finally, if major moral terms do not have purely descriptive meanings, then none of these principles or rules can be derived from cultural facts alone. Value conclusions would require value premises. Thus, cultural relativism as a *factual* thesis cannot

logically establish ethical relativism (or ethical universalism) as a *normative* thesis.

Ethical relativism in another sense is the view that conflicting fundamental moral principles are equally valid because there is no rational method for determining their correctness or incorrectness.¹⁷ The point is that cultural relativism does not establish ethical relativism in this sense either. Obviously, the fact that there are conflicting moral principles caused by different cultural centers does not preclude such a method. The work of a rational method of this kind is to resolve conflicts between fundamental moral principles. The existence of such a method presupposes the presence of such conflicts.

Some may think that, if a rational method in ethics exists, it may be valid for the cultural group that devised it but not for other groups. But believing or disbelieving a method of reasoning does not itself constitute a justification or a lack of justification of it. A method does not cease to be valid as borders are crossed from one culture where it is believed to be valid to another where it is not so believed. Nor does the number of people, their status, the degree of agreement or disagreement among them, as simple cultural facts affect the justifiability of a method of reasoning. For example, it would be irrelevant for someone to infer that inductive logic is correct for scientists from the West but incorrect for scientists from the East because historically beliefs have varied among Westerners and Easterners on the matter; or because the cause of having and believing certain procedures of logic goes back to special cultural conditions peculiar to certain Westerners but not shared by certain Easterners; or even because certain Easterners have discovered laws of logic equally justifiable as those used by certain Westerners. The last example presupposes that the correctness of laws of logic is not a matter to be established by the facts of cultural relativism. What is true of logical procedures in scientific reasoning is true of such procedures in ethical reasoning.

It appears that some people prefer ethical relativism to ethical universalism for moral reasons. They dislike the possibility of a rational method that could show one ethical view superior to others. The motive may be a genuine respect and affection for those who have different ways of life than their own. Somehow belief in ethical relativism seems compatible with feelings of universal brotherhood, while belief that one ethical view (especially if it is one's own) is superior to all others seems definitely incompatible. These motives have some foundation, for in the past some people who thought themselves morally superior have severely persecuted those who would not accept that morality. But this does not exclude the possibility of a rational method in ethics. In fact, these feelings of aversion may betray a misunderstanding of the workings of such a method. For it may be assumed that a rational method would destroy ethical diversity by showing one way of life superior to all others. But this assumption may not be true. Even if a rational method showed one way of life to be superior to other ways, the latter may remain as live alternatives, because the superior way of life may not be for everybody. For various reasons some may not choose the highest alternative, life. They may be unwilling or unable to abide the higher law. Instead they may choose another alternative and do so in accord with the same rational method that establishes one way of life as superior. Perhaps

the only form of life the method would absolutely reject would be that of a universal negation—that is, that form of human life which not only undermines other ways of life but is self-destructive as well.

Many points have not been considered in this essay that would have to be discussed in a longer work. There have been no arguments for the existence of God or for the superiority of one form of human existence over others. I have only tried to describe a few of the misconceptions that stand in the way of these beliefs.

NOTES

¹ Thanks are due to those undergraduates at Brigham Young University, most of whom were majoring in one or the other of the social sciences, in the senior seminar in philosophy to whom a longer paper was given in the Winter of 1974 and who commented on its relevancy to their experience as students of the social sciences.

² It would be unfair to many social scientists, I think, to characterize the misconceptions examined in this paper as being part of a conflict between social science proper and religion, for it is actually between religion and certain ideological, in some instances even quasi-religious, beliefs which grow up around, and too often become identified with, the social scientific study of man.

³ *Moses and Monotheism* (London: Hagarth Press, 1951) and *Totem and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950).

⁴ Quoted in Bernard Berelsen and Gary A. Steiner, *Human Behavior* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1964), p. 391.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 574. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁷ *The Future of An Illusion*, translated by W. D. Robson-Scott (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1957), pp 24–27, 45, 54, 88.

⁸ See Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory*, rev. ed. (Illinois: The Free Press, 1958), and Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963).

⁹ A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Societies* (Illinois: The Free Press, 1952 (1961)).

¹⁰ James E. Dittes, "Religion: Psychological Study," in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, David L. Shils, editor (The Macmillan Co., and the Free Press, 1968), Vol. 13, p. 416.

¹¹ Paul B. Horton and Chester L. Hunt, *Sociology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1964), pp. 87–88.

¹² Ernest L. Hilgard, "Human Motives and the Concepts of Self," in Albert D. Ullman, *Sociocultural Foundations of Personality* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), p. 166.

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ Lewis S. Feuer, "The Bearing of Psychoanalysis Upon Philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 19 (September 1958–June 1959), pp. 333–334.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, *Future of An Illusion*, p. 30, 52–58, 76.

¹⁶ Ruth Benedict, an anthropologist, writes that, "We recognize that morality differs in every society, and is a convenient term for socially approved habits. Mankind has always preferred to say, 'It is morally good,' rather than 'It is habitual,' and the fact of this preference is matter enough for a critical science of ethics. But historically the two phrases are synonymous. The concept of the normal is properly variant of the good. It is that which society has approved." From her "Anthropological and the Abnormal," *The Journal of General Psychology*, Vol. 10 (1934), p. 73. See also her still-famous *Patterns of Culture* (1934).

¹⁷ The distinction between two kinds of ethical relativism is made by Richard Brandt, *Ethical Theory* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), pp. 272–278.