Chapter 1 : status and sacredness | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

Status and Sacredness provides a new theory of status and sacral relationships and a provocative reinterpretation of the Indian caste system and Hinduism. Milner shows how in India and many other social contexts status is a key resource, and that sacredness can be usefully understood as a special form of status.

Please click button to get status and sacredness book now. This site is like a library, you could find million book here by using search box in the widget. Oxford University Press Format Available: Status and Sacredness provides a new theory of status and sacral relationships and a provocative reinterpretation of the Indian caste system and Hinduism. Milner shows how in India and many other social contexts status is a key resource, and that sacredness can be usefully understood as a special form of status. By analyzing the nature of this resource Milner is able to provide powerful explanations of the key features of the social structure, culture, and religion. He argues against the widely held view that the Indian caste system is best understood as a unique cultural development, demonstrating that many of the seemingly exotic features are variations on themes common to other societies. The book thus provides a bold new analysis of India, an innovative approach to the analysis of religion, and an important contribution to social theory. This volume of essays is devoted to a careful examination of the importance of methodology in the study of primary religious data. The central question to which the contributors respond are these: What is the Sacred? Is it a being or a concept of a being; is it a mental state or an objective reality or something else entirely? Can the Sacred be described as an empirical fact, or as a formal rule for religious inquiry? If the Sacred is a valid category in the study and teaching of religion, then what can be said about the antithesis of the sacred, namely the profane or the secular? This volume probes these questions with great care in order to justify a number of ways the Sacred can be construed as an indispensable notion for the study and teaching of religion. Provides a metaphysical outlook for religious naturalism. Nature as Sacred Ground explores a metaphysics for religious naturalism. Crosby discusses major aspects of reality implicit in his ongoing explication of Religion of Nature, a religious outlook that holds the natural world to be only world, one with no supernatural domains, presences, or powers behind it. Nature as thus envisioned is far more than just a system of facts and factual relations. Yet this endeavor also reminds us that, while it is good to think deeply and systematically about major features of reality and their relations to one another, we also need to reflect tirelessly about how to respond to metaphysical concepts that call for decision and action.

Chapter 2 : Status and Sacredness - Murray Milner - Oxford University Press

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Milner believes that the best current strategy for increasing our sociological knowledge is to focus on macro structures and processes instead of on the complex micro processes by which social structures are produced. He asserts that "it is possible to meaningfully identify the primary patterns that help us to understand why people behave as they do. He justifies his belief by an appeal to a version of the historical development of biological thinking and by a brief critique of selected contemporary social theories. But he acknowledges that the critical test of his strategy is the book itself. Does a reading of the book persuade the well-informed reader that a study of the Indian caste system, identified as a primary pattern, will enrich our understanding of status relations in other societies and during other historical times? He starts off with his ambitious claim: This book will offer a set of systematic explanations for many of the broad structural features of Hinduism and Indian society. My analysis attempts to explain this considerable array of phenomena with a general theoretical framework that is relevant to any social situation in which status is a crucial resource. While the focus is on Indian society, I will also suggest how the same theoretical ideas can both identify and explain parallel phenomena in other societies. He argues that the caste system provides a strong case of status power sustained independently of other forms of power. Here he defines "status" as a superior position based on a set of religiously sanctioned practices that require a highly regulated and esoteric life style. Over three millennia, he says, the Brahmans successfully maintained this self-created role by acknowledging the primary political and economic power of others. The Dumontian overtones of this analysis will be evident to the interested reader. He then qualifies this simple, central idea by introducing "countervailing patterns," "additional elements," and "ad hoc exogenous variables" as he tries to explain the different recommendations of the texts and the variant practices reported in the literature. By the time he has explained away the more obvious exceptions to his "primary pattern," such as tantrism, we wonder if there is anything left of his thesis, and so does Milner. At the conclusion to chapter 13, "The Worship of Gods," he writes: As in most other matters concerning India, the significance of variations and exceptions must be stressed" p. The same judgment can be applied to his preceding chapters as well. Milner then tries to transcend the complexity that he has been forced to acknowledge. He returns to a more abstract level by suggesting that "provisional resource structuralism" can be used to organize our understanding of religion and status variations in India and elsewhere. Here he emphasizes the need to understand the use of nonmaterial resources to underwrite power. Specifically he suggests that both sacredness and legitimacy are forms of non-material resources that sustain the exercise of power and so contribute to higher status. This seems to be all there is to "provisional resource structuralism" and to pages of a wide-ranging sweep through Indian history. Have we been shown any "primary patterns that help us to understand why people behave as they do. The primary pattern that Milner identifies is so general and variable that it does not help me, for one, to understand why the residents of the Bengal delta or the Periyar watershed behaved as they did, whether in the tenth or twentieth centuries. Scholars of South Asia familiar with other places and times will share my disappointment, I am sure. There is no substitute for detailed contextual studies in the social sciences and the historical disciplines, which, of course, will take into account the specific effect of the operation of the caste system and the relevance of the sacred in conferring status. General theories, primary patterns, and "provisional resource structuralism" add confusion rather than clarity. A confused interpretation of the Indian data is not likely to bring illumination to "parallel phenomena in other societies.

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Synopsis. Analyzing a crucial case to convey a new theory is an honored tradition in social analysis. Marx analyzed

England to explain the dynamics of capitalism, and Durkheim studied Australian aborigines to develop a theory of calendrierdelascience.com Status and Sacredness, Milner analyzes the Indian caste system and Hinduism to develop a general theory of status relationships.

Chapter 4 : Murray Milner Jr. â€" Status And Sacredness: â€¦ | | Free PDF Ebooks Downloads

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