

5:1 BELIEF SYSTEMS

A. INTRODUCTION

- **“Religion” A Human Universal**
- **Religious Organization**
- **Religious Belief System**

[“Cultural Pie” 5.1.2]

B. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Early Theorists

- a. **E. B. Tylor . . . Animism**
- b. **R. R. Marett . . . Animatism**

2. Misconceptions: Theologians vs. Anthropologists

a. “Biblical” Views of Creation in 17th Century

- **Charles Darwin**
- **Annemarie de Waal Malefit**

b. Anthropologist dropped value judgments

C. RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES

1. Myths

- a. Stories of cosmic origins [Mayers]**
- b. Poetic commentaries on world view**
- c. Philosophies in symbolic literature**
- d. Charters for belief [Malinowski]**
- e. Reflectors of culture**
- f. Expressions of psychological conflict [Freud]**
- g. Logical models resolving contradictions [Levi-Strauss]**
- h. Information in compact form [Edmund Leach]**

2. Rituals

- a. Reenact myths**
- b. Symbolic expressions of belief**
- c. Sacred and/or related to universe**
- d. Non-Western world: no form/meaning separation**
- e. Categorical differences:**

1) Calendrical or crisis

- a) Human rites of passage**
- b) Cycles of nature**
- c) Life cycles of supernatural beings**

2) Rites of transition and taboo [Cf. Mary Douglas, Natural Symbols]

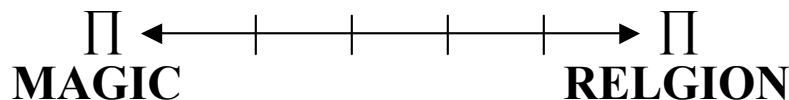
3) Function and meaning

- a) Condense information**
- b) Repetition**
- c) Individual identity**
- d) Unity of group**
- e) Dramatize social order**

D. RELIGION AND MAGIC

1. The Concept

- a. Magical attitudes – control**
- b. Religious attitudes – supplication**



2. The Practitioners

- a. Shaman = a charismatic leader who claims powers directly from supernatural**
- b. Priest = receives authority from his office in a religious organization**

3. The Content

- a. Spirits = person supernatural beings**
- b. Mana = impersonal supernatural forces**

E. SUMMARY