

Berger, Peter (1967). *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

10—Culture is objective in that it confronts man as an assemblage of objects in the real world existing outside his own consciousness. Culture is there. But culture is also objective in that it may be experienced and apprehended, as it were, in company. Culture is there for everybody. This means that the objectives of culture (again, both the material & non-material ones may be shared with others. This distinguishes them sharply from any constructions of the subjective consciousness of the solitary individual.

The cultural world is not only collectively produced but remains real by virtue of collective recognition. To be in culture means to share in a particular world of objectivities with others.

10—The individual may dream up any number of, say, institutional arrangements that might well be more interesting, perhaps even more functional, than the institutions actually recognized in his culture. As long as these sociological dreams, so to speak, are confined to the individual's own consciousness and are not recognized by others...they will exist only as shadowlike phantasmata. By contrast, the institutions of the individual's society, however much he may dislike them, will be real. In other words, the cultural world is not only collectively produced, but it remains real by virtue of collective recognition. To be in culture means to share in a particular world of objectivities with others.

11—Society is a product of human activity that has attained the status of objective reality. The social formations are experienced by man as elements of an objective world. Society confronts man as external, subjectively opaque and coercive facticity. Indeed, society is commonly apprehended by man as virtually equivalent to the physical universe in its objective presence—a "second nature," indeed. Society is experienced as given "out there," extraneous to subjective consciousness and not controllable by the latter.

12—No human construction can be accurately called a social phenomenon unless it has achieved that measure of objectivity that compels the individual to recognize it as real. In other words, the fundamental coerciveness of society lies not in its machineries of social control, but in its power to constitute and to impose itself as reality.

54—A basic point must be made before one looks at the various types of theodicy. This is the point that there is a fundamental attitude, in itself quite irrational, that underlies all of them. This attitude is the surrender of self to the ordering power of society...The individual may "lose himself" in the meaning-giving nomos of his society. In consequence, the pain becomes more tolerable, the terror less overwhelming, as the sheltering canopy of the nomos extends to cover even those experiences that may reduce the individual to howling animality.

Every society entails a certain denial of the individual self & its needs, anxieties, and problems. One of the key functions of nomos is the facilitation of this denial in individual consciousness. There is also an intensification of this self-denying surrender to society and its

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order that is of particular interest in connection with religion. This is the attitude of masochism, that is, the attitude in which the individual reduces himself to an inert and thinglike object vis-à-vis his fellowmen, singly or in collectivities or in the nomoi established by them. In this attitude, pain itself, physical or mental, serves to ratify the denial of self to the point where it may actually be subjectively pleasurable...The key characteristic (of masochism) is the intoxication of surrender to an other—complete, self-denying, even self-destroying.