



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

COURSE: B.A.LL.B 204

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SUBJECT: SOCIOLOGY-II

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Lecture- 13



LECTURE 13:

Notes on sacred and profane dichotomy “Sacred”, the meaning of this word in an abstract sense is the quality, of a particular thing, of holiness. In other words, if a thing is considered as it is sacred, it means it is holy. It is not an absolute word or in other words, holiness is the matter of belief, a material or thing which may be holy and sacred for one society and community may not be considered as holy and sacred in other society. For instance take an example of cross, it is a holy symbol for Christians and not a holy symbol or sign for Hindus, the materials which are holy and sacred for Sikhs, for example Pagadi; it is a long cloth, wearied on head by Sikh and likewise there are many things which may not have value in one society but may possibly be considered as the most valued thing in other society. Profane is the material, which also has values, same as sacred materials, objects and holy scripts; but are negative in sense, i.e., in other words, they are unholy and impure, the word “profane” has its meaning in anonymity sense from the word sacred and pure. These are such object which is considered so much impure that, if come in contact then they are believed to contaminate them also. These two words are on the based on the beliefs of people. One thing which is sacred in the view of an individual may be profane in the view of the other. The same thing may not even have any value, neither profane nor sacred. The object may earn the value due to any reason, these reasons may include in them the orthodox values, illogical facts, astronomical factors etc. The sacred and profane have same high emotional attitude towards them, it can be noticed or understood here that they both are not wholly or completely different or occupy different meaning in the literal sense. People considering a materialistic object as sacred works with an intention to keep separate: the things which are considered as sacred from the thing with profane values. This characteristic of isolation installs and fixes a unique feature to both the values, as two faces of the same coin. A thing without value, with it, may get induced with the value of scarcity, i.e. pureness, and thus shall be gifted as the value of profanity. For example, The Ganga is a holy sacred river and thus the place from where it flows is also considered as sacred or holy, likewise, the area around the profane or unsuspecting graveyard is also considered and conferred with a value of profanity. Sacred things, sometimes, begin to acquire their value with some specific rules. These rules are the rules which do not get accumulated suddenly and overnight and even if they get formed also, then to enforce in a society is not an easy task. Sacred things take time to collect auspicious value.