

Mircea Eliade provides an amazing purification of the experience one encounters as a religious man. Eliade expresses the sacred as the bar at which all other time and objects are measured. The experience of the sacred then is separated from all other time, which is expressed as amorphous. Homogenous time and space is merely space in which there is no reference or meaning, but the manifestation of the sacred brings a center to time. Sacred space serves as a break from the normal, or natural world. It can be a special time that is not like all other time, a vacation¹. This sort of break from normal life explains why religious man is so driven. It is for these breaks or openings, as Eliade puts it, that get religious man through not only the dull times, but also through the tough times. Although non-religious man could seem to have no breaks or sacred moments, he has unconscious sacred spaces and times in his life. These times consist of birthdays, birthplaces, wedding days, and any other place or time that is different from all other time. Even non-religious man has sacred moments that he can relate to when given this analogy about religious man. Now non-religious man can understand the religious. The religious is not one time, place, or people, but it is a collection of those times and places that were sacred and are being "re-actualized", as Eliade states. This serves as a reliving of past events, giving more importance to this time as apposed to other time. These times are, thought to be, brought back to the present through rites.

Eliade talks about a state of awareness called *homo religiosus*. This is an ability to appreciate the experience of *heirophany* (physical manifestation of cosmic beings). It

Comment [JMP1]: Phenomenological description

Comment [JMP2]: The experience of the sacred is an experience of a rupture in the ordinary. We must have a sense of the ordinary to have it ruptured. That there is a meaningful world of the ordinary at all, can itself be a sudden hierophany, a manifestation of mysterious power that a world could be at all.

Comment [JMP3]: explain

Comment [JMP4]: makes no sense

Comment [JMP5]: explain

Comment [JMP6]: explain

Comment [JMP7]: I don't see an explanation here. "Driven" is a poor choice as a substitute for "awe."

Comment [JMP8]: makes no sense to try to approach this issue quantitatively as a "collection"

Comment [JMP9]: You never got a handle on the sacred and so everything you say is missing the mark. The sacred is more REAL for religious man, not merely a matter of importance. Important because more real.

Comment [JMP10]: The sacred is not a matter of appreciation.

is religious humans (*homo religiosus*) that are able to reach this appreciation of the holy.

Comment [JMP11]: Same here.

It is the places that we experience the manifestation of *heirophanes* that becomes sacred or holy, and become our *axis mundi* (center). The word holy means "set apart", and it is sacred time that is set apart from the rest of normal homogenous space. The term *axis mundi* refers to the center of ones religious experience. For *homo religiosus* each place that has significant importance will be made holy or sacred. In this case, religious man will be surrounded by a world of sacred places, in which time will have more worth.

Comment [JMP12]: Experience as more real

Comment [JMP13]: Why?

Comment [JMP14]: More worth because there is something more real, primordial, basic than ordinary experience and it cannot be touched by common sense or science.

This idea of sacred places (*axis mundi*) and sacred time create a foundation of understanding for all religions, regardless of their rituals. The sacred becomes a universal concept that all can partake of. This removes the dogma's that grip our world so tightly, preventing us as humans to co-exist. The sacred, described by Eliade, is also not only limited to religious man, but non-religious man also has sacred times and places, but do not link them with a religion. It is this understanding of the sacred that gives us a hypothesis of how all religions themselves are linked at their origin. All religions emphasize holy space, and all religions rely on the revelation of the Sacred, therefore all religions could be descendants of an idea of setting apart time and space for things that are of more worth than others. In the most basic sense of the idea, it takes profane space to make possible sacred space. If all space was sacred then there would be no sacred space at all, because there has to be some sort of reference point (*axis mundi*). The sacred and profane areas of life are what give us this point of reference.

Comment [JMP15]: Beliefs and interpretations

Comment [JMP16]: points to an experience rather than a belief/truth

Comment [JMP17]: Important but we must be careful not to reduce such experiences to explanations.

Comment [JMP18]: Right. The stark difference is made possible because of the mundane.

Comment: What you say could be used but needs to be organized around a clear and direct account of the sacred. Need to start by giving some straight forward statements of what such an experience is that you can find in Eliade. It would then help you better organize the paper and you could certainly raise the grade.

GRADE: C or rewrite

