

Louis Dumont's Sacred-Profane and Indian Beliefs on Auspicious-Inauspicious: A Comparative Sociological Analysis

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Abstract

Louis Dumont's sacred-profane framework as he has elaborated in his book *Homo Hierarchicus* provides a fundamental understanding of hierarchy and purity within the Indian caste system. His analysis highlights how sacredness is associated with higher castes, particularly Brahmins, while impurity is linked to so called lower castes and marginalized groups of society. Parallel to his framework, Indian religious-cultural traditions emphasize auspicious-inauspicious beliefs which governs various life events such as marriage, childbirth, and death. These beliefs deeply rooted in rituals, astrology and symbolism influence social behaviour and reinforce societal norms. This research paper aims to compare Dumont's sacred-profane dichotomy with Indian auspicious-inauspicious classifications to explore their structural similarities and differences by using a comparative sociological approach, this research paper analyzes textual sources, ethnographic accounts, primary data such as case studies to examine how these concepts shape Indian society. Findings of this research paper suggest that while both frameworks establish hierarchical structures, the sacred-profane dichotomy is caste-based and rigid, whereas auspicious-inauspicious beliefs are situational and flexible which allow ritualistic interventions to alter outcomes. The research paper contributes to the sociology of religion by demonstrating how these systems interact and evolve particularly in the face of modernization and socio-cultural changes.

Key Words: Sacred-profane, hierarchy, caste system, auspicious-inauspicious, rituals, symbolism, modernization.

Introduction

In Indian society, the social structures, customs and beliefs are significantly shaped by religious categories. One of the most influential frameworks for understanding these classifications is Louis Dumont's sacred-profane dichotomy which he elaborated in his book *Homo Hierarchicus*. The sacred is associated to so called higher castes (especially Brahmins), whereas the profane or impure is associated to

lower castes which are particularly Dalits and other marginalized groups, according to Dumont who claims that Indian society has been structured around a hierarchical system based on purity and impurity. This divide affects daily interactions and social mobility and is deeply embedded in Hindu religious scriptures, social practices, and ceremonial behaviours. Parallel to this Indian society also operates on the concept of auspicious (shubh) and inauspicious (ashubh) which governs not only caste relations but a wide array of cultural, religious and personal decisions as wedding ceremonies, childbirth, death rituals and temple worship etc. (Fuller, 2004). While Dumont's sacred-profane model provides a theoretical lens to understand caste-based hierarchy it also remains important to explore how this concept aligns with, or diverges from indigenous Indian beliefs on auspiciousness and inauspiciousness which are more dynamic and situational.

A deeper comprehension of the ways ceremonial purity, social status, and religious authority function in Indian society can be gained by investigating the intersection of sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious sociologically. Scholars like Marriott and Parry have examined purity and pollution in Indian religious traditions where they highlight the role of these in maintaining social order. However, existing research has often treated these concepts separately without fully comparing their structural similarities and differences. This research paper seeks to bridge this gap by analyzing how Dumont's sacred-profane framework interacts with Indian notions of auspicious-inauspicious particularly in ritual contexts. The critical question that guides this research paper is: To what extent do these two systems overlap and where do they diverge in their influence on Indian social and religious life? This research paper argues that while sacred-profane distinctions primarily reinforce caste hierarchy, auspicious-inauspicious beliefs function in a more situational, fluid and remedial manner which allow for the mitigation of inauspiciousness through rituals, prayers and astrology. To explore this relationship, this research paper employs a comparative sociological approach utilizing primary and secondary sources such as classical texts, ethnographic studies, case studies and sociological theories. The methodology involves textual analysis of Hindu scriptures, case studies from contemporary ethnographies, and interpretations from sociological and anthropological perspectives. By integrating theoretical insights with empirical evidence this research paper aims to provide a comprehensive sociological analysis of how hierarchical purity and ritual auspiciousness shape Indian social and religious life.

Theoretical Framework: Louis Dumont's Sacred-Profane Dichotomy

Dumont's sociological approach to caste and hierarchy in India is deeply rooted in structuralist and comparative sociology particularly in his seminal work *Homo Hierarchicus*. His study of the Indian caste system mainly focuses on the principle of hierarchy which he argues is fundamentally different from Western notions of equality and individualism. Dumont emphasizes that the Indian social order is structured by the

opposition between the pure (sacred) and the impure (profane), a dichotomy that determines social status, occupational roles and ritual practices etc. According to Dumont's theory purity is associated with higher castes, to be specific the Brahmins who are responsible for priestly duties and ritualistic functions, while impurity is linked to lower castes such as Dalits and other marginalized sections of society who engage in occupations considered polluting, such as leatherwork, sanitation and cremation. The hierarchical structure according to Dumont is not just an economic or political construct but a deeply ingrained ideological system that reinforces social stratification through religious and ritualistic means. This hierarchical opposition between the sacred and the profane is maintained through practices of ritual purity, dietary restrictions, endogamy and social distancing from groups that called impure. We see that Dumont's interpretation of sacred and profane on Hindu society is largely influenced by Émile Durkheim's sociological theory on religion. In his work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim conceptualized sacred and profane as the fundamental categories of religious experience where the sacred represents the collective consciousness, moral authority and objects of veneration, while on the other side the profane pertains to the ordinary, mundane and secular aspects of life. However, unlike Durkheim who saw the sacred-profane dichotomy as a universal characteristic of all religions, Dumont applies this framework specifically to the caste-based hierarchy of Indian society where he argued that purity and impurity are not just religious categories but the primary organizing principles of social stratification (Roberts, 2019). In Indian Hindu society the ritual superiority of Brahmins is justified through sacred texts like the Manusmriti and other Dharmashastras which prescribe rules of purity, pollution and social conduct for different varnas. In this way we see that sacred is thus not only religious but also a source of social power while the profane is systematically marginalized, reinforcing caste-based exclusion. Dumont's sacred-profane framework remains highly relevant in contemporary Indian society although it has faced several critiques and modifications. While modern urbanization, education, legal reforms etc. have challenged caste-based hierarchy, ritual purity and impurity continue to influence social behaviour, marriage patterns and access to religious institutions (Jodhka, 2012). Studies show that Dalits still face restrictions in temple entry and dining practices, reflecting the persistent impact of sacred-profane distinctions in social life. Scholars like Declan Quigley and Nicholas Dirks critique Dumont for overemphasizing ideological aspects and ignoring the material and political dimensions of caste. Similarly, others argue that auspicious-inauspicious beliefs in Indian society function differently from Dumont's rigid sacred-profane model as they allow ritual remedies to alter social fate (Raheja, 1988). By comparing Dumont's framework with indigenous concepts of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness this research paper highlights both the continuities and divergences in religious classification and social hierarchy in India.

Indian Beliefs on Auspicious (Shubh) and Inauspicious (Ashubh)

In Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and even folk religious practices the concepts of auspicious (Shubh) and inauspicious (Ashubh) are firmly engrained. These categories govern not just religious rites but also regular social and economic activity. While inauspiciousness is tied to failure, impurity, disruptive cosmic influences, auspiciousness is linked to divine grace, purity and positive cosmic energy in Hindu philosophy. Hindu writings like the Manusmriti, Dharmashastras, Puranas and others define purity and pollution in social-ritual contexts and go into detail on auspicious and inauspicious deeds, times, occurrences. The ancient Sanskrit treatise on astrology and rituals, the Brihat Samhita and Bhrigu Samhita, offers comprehensive instructions for identifying auspicious dates using astrological charts, lunar phases, planetary alignments. Every aspect of life is impacted by these beliefs, including daily domestic tasks, commercial endeavors, political decisions, marriages, burials and naming ceremonies (Namkaran). While inauspiciousness is frequently associated with premature deaths, eclipses and bad planetary alignments, auspiciousness is tightly associated with certain deities, symbols, and festivals in Hindu rites. For example, the goddesses Lakshmi and Saraswati are associated with wealth and knowledge, making Fridays and Thursdays especially favorable for worship and business dealings. In contrast, the goddess Alakshmi, who is Lakshmi's opposite, represents bad luck and some days are unlucky for business dealings. While certain dates, like Amavasya (new moon) or the time of Pitru Paksha (fortnight of ancestors) are considered unlucky for beginning new enterprises, important holidays like Diwali, Navratri, and Akshaya Tritiya are regarded as extremely auspicious events for riches, marriage and new undertakings in India. Hindu priests use panchangas or Hindu almanacs to select the most auspicious times for rites and events, a procedure known as muhurta (choosing the perfect moment). In similar way astrology plays a crucial role in marriage matching, childbirth ceremonies and business inaugurations where planetary alignments are believed to impact an individual's fate. The impact of auspicious-inauspicious beliefs extends beyond religious rituals to everyday activities as for example entering a new house (Griha Pravesh) must be performed on an auspicious day to ensure prosperity and harmony while beginning a journey on certain weekdays is avoided to prevent bad luck. The belief in Rahu Kaal (an inauspicious time of the day) discourages initiating any significant activity during this period as it is believed to bring obstacles and failures (Dandekar, 1986). In similar way widows, menstruating women and those experiencing death in the family are often considered temporarily inauspicious that restrict their participation in religious ceremonies. In contrast to all these pregnant women and newborns are seen as carriers of Shubh (auspicious energy) leading to protective rituals such as the tying of black threads or performing Satyanarayan Katha to ward off negative influences (McKim, 2001). Even businesses and politics adhere to these beliefs with Indian politicians and corporate leaders often consulting astrologers before making major decisions (Parry, 1994). The notion of auspicious and inauspicious

is not homogenous across pan India; it varies across castes, regions, socio-economic groups. Among upper castes ritual purity is strictly maintained with elaborate rules on auspicious timings and conduct such as avoiding meat consumption on certain days or maintaining strict vegetarianism during festival periods (Dumont, 1970). Lower castes especially Dalits have historically been considered inauspicious by higher castes which lead them to discriminatory practices such as their exclusion from temple rituals or prohibitions on their presence during sacred events. Yet, in many folk traditions and tribal communities, auspiciousness is determined by different markers such as natural omens, animal behavior or ancestral spirits (Freeman, 1979). For example, among the Gonds and Bhils, the cry of an owl is considered an ominous sign while for others seeing a cow first thing in the morning is a good omen. Regional variations further shape these beliefs with South Indian traditions emphasizing different auspicious markers compared to North Indian practices. Despite modernization-globalization, auspicious-inauspicious beliefs continue to shape Indian society blending religious orthodoxy with evolving cultural and personal interpretations.

Sacred-Profane and Auspicious-Inauspicious: Comparative Analysis

As proposed by Louis Dumont, the dichotomy of sacred-profane (as opposed to the indigenous Indian concept of auspicious-inauspicious) shares basic structural similarities in their function as social classification systems controlling daily life and religious behaviours. Both systems create hierarchical divisions that affect rituals, conventions and relationships therefore forming both personal and group experiences (Dumont, 1970). With Brahmins positioned as the purest or most sacred and lower castes (such as Dalits) considered as impure or profane and caste in India built around purity and pollution explained by Dumont's Homo Hierarchicus. Likewise, the auspicious-inauspicious classification system ranks events, times, people and objects into groups that affect decision-making in both religious and secular spheres (Fuller, 1992). For instance, because of their ceremonial purity Brahmins are typically regarded as naturally auspicious; those from underprivileged castes may be judged inauspicious in specific circumstances (Deliège, 1992). The auspicious-inauspicious structure controls the timing of holidays, marriages and other social activities, just as the caste system specifies guidelines for food, marriage and temple access (Madan, 1987). As such, both systems reinforce the hierarchical character of Indian society by acting as symbolic controllers of social order (Marriott, 1976). The sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious frameworks differ structurally even if they have certain parallels. While the auspicious-inauspicious system is situational and more flexible, the sacred-profane dichotomy is mostly caste-based; purity and pollution are assigned fixed traits ascribed to individuals and groups via birth. For example, a Brahmin stays holy all their life because of their caste; whereas the auspiciousness of an event or action might change with time, location and astrological considerations (Kane, 1941). Another important difference is that the auspicious-inauspicious framework lets one manipulate

through rituals and cures, whereas the sacred-profane difference is inflexible and mostly unchangeable (Parry, 1994). In traditional Hindu society a widow might be seen as inauspicious for instance, although her situation might change depending on particular ceremonies (like remarriage in some communities). Likewise, some astrological configurations such as negative planetary alignments can be offset with yajnas or gemstone wear (Pingree, 1981). Another basic difference is that whilst the auspicious-inauspicious system is primarily focused on favourable or negative results, the sacred-profane difference is closely related to ideas of ritual purity and contamination (Fuller, 1992). While eligibility for performing religious ceremonies depends on cleanliness and contamination, success or failure of an event depends on auspiciousness or inauspiciousness (Marriott, 1976). This difference emphasizes how whilst auspicious-inauspicious beliefs function inside a larger religious and cultural framework that crosses caste distinctions, the sacred-profane system is inherent in caste ideology (Babb, 1975). In many facets of Indian religious and social life the two systems clearly interact. Many times, while profane behaviour is seen as inauspicious, holy deeds are regarded auspicious (Dumont, 1970). For instance, eating contaminated food or breaching caste rules is considered both profane and inauspicious; entering a temple following cleansing rites is both holy and auspicious (Fuller, 1992). Maintaining both sacred status and auspiciousness depends on rituals, which also support social conventions and religious prescriptions by means of their indispensable nature (Kane, 1941). Under some circumstances the sacred-profane boundary might affect views of auspiciousness for example, a child born on an auspicious day, such as during a solar eclipse or a major celebration like Diwali is thought to be extremely lucky (Shulman, 1980). Similarly, revered sites like Varanasi or Haridwar are not only regarded as holy but also thought to be quite auspicious for completing last rites (Parry, 1994). On the other hand, while their significance in Hindu religious traditions contaminated sites like cremation grounds are sometimes connected with inauspiciousness (Madan, 1987). Modern influences challenge conventional ideas of sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious classifications, therefore changing both belief systems (Bayly, 1989). Urbanization, secular education and globalization have undermined caste-based purity regulations hence fostering increasing inter-caste meals, inter-caste marriages and the challenge of ceremonial pollution taboos (Béteille, 1991). Likewise, the scientific viewpoint has shaped ideas about astrology, omens and auspicious times; many urban Indians have chosen to follow these customs only while adding rationalist viewpoints (Sekhar, 2003). Nonetheless, as evidenced by politicians and corporate executives consulting astrologers before elections or financial choices both systems endure in many ways (Parry, 1994). Particularly in rural areas and traditional communities some caste groups also maintain enforce traditional sacred-profane limits in temple access and ceremonial activities (Deliège, 1992). Therefore, even if modernism has changed perspective the fundamental ideas of these belief systems are still ingrained in Indian socio-religious life.

Case Studies and Ethnographic Evidence

Ethnographic accounts and case studies analyzing the lived experiences of people and groups help one to grasp the interaction between Dumont's sacred-profane dichotomy and the Indian belief system of auspicious-inauspicious. These case studies show how in Indian society religious rules, social hierarchy and ceremonial practices impact people's views of purity, pollution and auspiciousness. The four scenarios below show several spheres in which these categories show themselves: Brahminical ceremonies, Hindu marriages, death customs and folk beliefs.

Case Study 1: Worship and Purity in Brahminical Rituals: Connection to Sacred-Profane

Brahminical ceremonial customs are the most obvious example of the sacred-profane difference since partaking in holy activities depends on ceremonial purity (Dumont, 1970). Ethnographic studies on Tamil Nadu's temple priests show that Brahmins uphold rigorous standards of purity, including food restrictions, ceremonial baths and avoidance of physical contact with lower castes so preserving their hallowed status. These customs fit Dumont's claim that as the highest caste Brahmins are in charge of preserving ceremonial purity; lower castes are linked with pollution (Marriott, 1976). Emphasizing the hierarchical structuring of religious responsibilities based on purity and pollution, only ritually pure people are allowed to execute sacred ceremonies during temple worship (Bayly, 1999). For example, before conducting puja, priests in Vaishnava temples in Karnataka go through complex purification rites as any touch with a polluted person e.g., menstrual women, lower-caste people is thought to defile the sacred area (Babb, 1975). Since auspiciousness is connected to ceremonial cleanliness, this sacred-profane limit strongly corresponds with the auspicious-inauspicious paradigm. A freshly married Brahmin couple for instance is seen as auspicious and called to temples to bless devotees; a widow on the other hand is usually left out of auspicious events (Madan, 1987). Reiterating caste-based religious hierarchies, this case study shows the relationship between sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious categories.

Case Study 2: Astrology and Auspicious Timings in Hindu Weddings: Its Relation to Social Norms

In Hindu marriages, the significance of auspicious times (muhurat) reflects the conviction that celestial alignments affect social and personal well-being (Pingree, 1981). North Indian wedding customs' ethnographic studies show that families seek astrologers to choose the most auspicious date and time for marriage ceremonies, therefore guaranteeing appropriate astrological alignments. These customs highlight how auspicious-inauspicious attitudes control important social events, much as the sacred-profane difference controls ceremonial activities (Parry, 1994). A wedding occurring during an unfavorable time, like Rahu Kalam, is thought to bring disaster to

the couple much as contact with apolluted person during a holy ceremony is thought to cause spiritual pollution (Shulman, 1980). Moreover, some caste-based marriage rules support both auspicious-inauspicious beliefs and purity-based hierarchy. Inter-caste marriages are seen among Brahmins in Tamil Nadu as not only socially unacceptable but also inauspicious since they go against conventional standards of purity (Béteille, 1991). On the other hand, marriages carried out under good astrological circumstances are seen to enhance family and social stability, just as following holy rites preserves religious order (Madan, 1987). With ceremonial cleanliness enhancing auspiciousness and impurity connected with inauspiciousness this case study shows how sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious categories interact in social life. It also shows how modernity has resulted in selective adherence to these standards; many urban Indians consult astrologers for marriages while challenging caste-based constraints.

Case Study 3: Death Rituals and Impurity: Link Between Sacred-Profane and Inauspiciousness

Reflecting the complicated link between the sacred-profane dichotomy and inauspiciousness death is both a sacred transition and a source of pollution in Hindu culture (Fuller, 1992). Ethnographic studies on death rites in Varanasi show that cremation is revered but ritually polluting as corpse-handling is limited to some castes (e.g., Doms) who are deemed impure because of their connection to death. This fits Dumont's contention that some jobs are permanently labeled as profane because of their involvement in activities connected to pollution (Dumont, 1970). Mourning customs clearly show the auspicious-inevolent classification as bereaved families follow rigorous rites to purge themselves of death-related impurity (Kane, 1941). For instance, for a designated mourning period family members of the dead must, bathe, refrain from cooking and avoid attending auspicious occasions (like marriages) in many Hindu communities (Madan, 1987). Particularly in traditional Brahmin households widows are thought to be inauspicious and are generally left out of participation in holy and festive events (Das, 2008). These ideas show that sacred-profane divisions affect life-cycle ceremonies and gender roles in addition to caste, therefore transcending caste. Death-related inauspiciousness remains despite contemporary changes, especially in rural and orthodox groups therefore supporting old ideas of cleanliness, contamination and holiness (Bayly, 1989). But urbanized Hindus show how modern influences change traditional sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious beliefs by challenging widow exclusion and mourning limits (Béteille, 1991).

Case Study 4: Folk Beliefs and Local Variations: Intersection of Caste, Gender, and Ritual Practices

Although Brahminical traditions predominate in mainstream religious discourse, regional folk beliefs provide many angles on auspicious-inauspicious classification (Shulman, 1980). Ethnographic narratives of Rajastani and Bengali folk

traditions highlight how non-Brahmin groups sometimes understand auspiciousness differently, combining local legends and agricultural practices into ceremonial events. For instance, whereas mainstream Hindu views link menstruation with ritual impurity, some tribal cultures in Madhya Pradesh perceive menstruation as a symbol of fertility and auspiciousness rather as polluting agent (Deliège, 1992). Likewise, whereas for Brahmins full moon days are more important for Vedic ceremonies, among the fishermen groups in Kerala full moon days are regarded as particularly lucky for visiting the sea (Parry, 1994). These illustrations show how different caste, gender and geographical settings affect auspicious-inauspicious classifications which are not monolithic (Madan, 1987). Some folk customs also question caste-based sacred-profane limits. Among the Bhakti movement groups, dedication (bhakti) is seen more crucial than ceremonial purity enabling people from lower castes to carry out religious activities usually reserved for Brahmins (Bayly, 1999). This throws off the conventional sacred-profane order and offers other ideas for explaining auspiciousness (Babb, 1975).

These case studies show in many spheres of Indian social and religious life how the sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious categories interact. While death rituals, astrology, and Brahminical rites support hierarchical purity-based divisions, folk traditions and modern influences bring other points of view. This study emphasizes the fluidity of ritual classifications and shows how ideas like sacredness, impurity and auspiciousness still define Indian society even with modernism.

Contemporary Relevance and Changing Patterns

Modernity, globalization, urbanization, scientific achievements, and legislative interventions have fundamentally changed the sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious categories used in Indian society. Although these conventional models still dominate social and religious life, their rigidity has become less in reaction to modern pressures. Modernism and globalization have brought rationalist ideas and changed caste-based systems, therefore subverting Dumont's sacred-profane dichotomy (Bayly, 1999). For example, caste-based limitations on occupations have lessened as a global economy and occupational mobility have grown, allowing lower-caste people to enter once exclusive professions. Furthermore, affected by scientific thinking and education are auspicious-inauspicious beliefs, especially among educated urban people who doubt superstitious behaviour more and more. Studies show that although astrology and ceremonial timings are still important in weddings and businesses, many people balance these ideas with scientific reason, therefore showing a change toward pragmatism rather than rigid adherence (Madan, 1987). Urbanization has affected ritualistic behaviours even more, which has changed old customs. Joint families have mostly been displaced in metropolitan areas by nuclear families, therefore changing the scale and type of ceremonial observances (Fuller, 1992). Once rigorously maintained in caste-segregated rural communities, ritual purity is increasingly considered as unworkable in cities where individuals of many backgrounds coexist daily. Declining

devotion to traditional purity requirements, temple priests and ritual experts note, urban Hindus put convenience above rigorous ritual discipline (Parry, 1994). Furthermore, women's participation in religious activities has evolved; many educated women challenge menstrual taboos and other limitations traditionally based in ideas of impurity (Deliège, 1992). Notwithstanding this, some rituals still strongly ingrained in society consciousness show that ideas change instead of totally disappearing. Reducing caste-based discrimination connected to sacred-profane divisions has been mostly dependent on legal initiatives. The Indian Constitution forbids untouchability and caste-based exclusions, therefore influencing the way caste functions in public areas (Béteille, 1991). Though opposition continues in many rural regions, laws guaranteeing Dalit temple access and the punishment of caste-based discriminatory practices question conventional ideas of ritual purity (Jaffrelot, 2003). Progressive legal decisions on matters including gender rights and inter-caste marriage protections also show a movement toward personal liberties over inherited social responsibilities (Bayly, 1989). Notwithstanding these developments, personal and group identities still are shaped by both holy-profane and auspicious-inauspicious models. The comeback of religious nationalism and cultural revivalism in modern India shows that, although scientific thinking shapes personal decisions, religious traditions remain politically and socially important (Madan, 1987). Though in modified versions, rituals include Griha Pravesh (housewarming rites), Vaastu consultations, and festival custom observance remain common among urban and rural people. Therefore, even if modernization has changed conventional hierarchies and values, the interaction between sacred, profane, auspicious, and inauspicious still defines Indian culture and shapes rather than eliminates.

Conclusion

Using their social relevance within caste system, religious practices, and ceremonial life, this work has investigated the conceptual and structural links between Louis Dumont's sacred-profane dichotomy and Indian ideas on auspicious-inauspicious. As expressed in *Homo Hierarchicus*, Dumont's point of view emphasizes the natural connection between sacredness and caste-based hierarchy, in which social stratification is dictated by pollution and purity. In Indian traditions, too, the auspicious-inauspicious framework controls both personal and group behaviour hence regulating ceremonies, daily choices, and life events. Although both systems provide means for organizing social life, their uses differ: auspicious-inauspicious is more situational and ritualistic, fit for changing circumstances; sacred-profane mostly determines caste and social hierarchy. The comparative sociological method used in this study provides a sophisticated knowledge of how religious categories affect Indian culture. Based on Durkheim's concept of the sacred-profane, Dumont underlined that Hindu social structure is based on hierarchy and that ritual purity supports caste divisions. Though entwined with caste, auspicious-inauspicious ideas go beyond strict

hierarchy and affect social behaviour across caste lines. This difference emphasizes how whilst auspicious-inauspicious beliefs are more flexible and allow for ceremonial mediation and adaptation, sacred-profane is essentially structural and requires different approaches. This kind of method shows the ongoing significance of conventional categories even among societal changes by bridging traditional sociological theory with ethnographic reality. This study adds to sociological debates on caste, ritual purity, and religious beliefs by proving that, even if modernity and legal reforms have changed caste-based exclusions, the sacred-profane logic still permeates cultural consciousness. Likewise, although changing, lucky-inauspicious beliefs exhibit their tenacity in the face of globalization and scientific logic and continue to impact social behaviour from marriage choices to corporate decisions. This paper emphasizes the great integration of these systems in daily life by including case studies on Brahminical rites, astrology, and death ceremonies, thereby showing how tradition and modernism coexist rather than conflict. Future studies should look at how globalization and digital technology are changing these categories, especially in urban settings where astrologists now provide online consultations and astrological treatments. Furthermore, deserving of study are regional and community-specific differences in auspicious-inauspicious beliefs, especially in Dalit and tribal societies whose viewpoints subvert Brahminical ideas of ceremonial hierarchy. Last but not least, a cross-cultural analysis of sacred-profane and auspicious-inauspicious models in other religious traditions including Islamic, Christian, and Buddhist belief systems in South Asia may offer more profound understanding of how religious categories operate in many sociocultural contexts. In essence, Dumont's sacred-profane model offers a basic knowledge of Hindu social order; the auspicious-inauspicious framework adds a dynamic, ritualistic dimension that influences individual decision-making outside of caste-based hierarchy. These systems taken together still influence Indian religious and social life, showing how constantly tradition, modernism, and societal change interact.

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