Purity and Danger chapter summary

Purity and Danger  is a social anthropology book by  Mary Douglas that published in 1966.  The book discusses the concept of dirt and pollution and how it is perceived and managed in different social settings. The book is divided into two sections: the first section examines the cultural and social importance of dirt and pollution, while the second section explores the relationship between dirt and social order.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, each of which explores a different aspect of the concept of dirt and pollution. The first chapter, "Ritual Contamination", examines the role of dirt and pollution in religious rituals and the ways in which these rituals are used to maintain social order. The second chapter, "Secular Desecration", explores the role of dirt and pollution in secular contexts and the ways in which these contexts are used to maintain social order.

Mary Douglas argues that the concept of dirt and pollution is central to the maintenance of social order and that it is used to distinguish between different social groups and to maintain the boundaries of those groups. She suggests that the concept of dirt and pollution is used to maintain social stability and to prevent social disorder.

In the book, Mary Douglas also explores the role of dirt and pollution in the development of science and technology. She argues that the concept of dirt and pollution has played an important role in the development of science and technology and that it has been used to justify and maintain the social order of different societies.

The book is a classic in the field of social anthropology and has had a significant influence on the development of this field. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding the role of dirt and pollution in the maintenance of social order and the development of science and technology.
shattered and renewed system remains true that religions often sacralize very dirty things that have been abhorred. In ritual... In Israel it was unthinkable that dirty things, such as corpses and excreta, could be incorporated into the temple ritual, but only blood, and only blood shed in sacrifice. (197) The attitude of rejecting bits and parts goes... This is the stage where they are dangerous. (197) In its last phase then, dirt is shown as an apt symbol of lack creatively. (199) As long as identity is absent, litter is not dangerous. It... Where there is no differentiation there is no desecration. (197-198) Purity is the change, ambiguity and commitment. (201) Another way to protect the belief that religion can offer prosperity here and now is to make ritual effectiveness dependent on difficult conditions. (215) The third way is for religions to change course. Chihamba, a Ndembu cult, uses the paradox this way. (216)