

**SELINUS UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND LITERATURE**



**God Experience on Musical and Sportive Knowledge:  
A Critical Analysis on Philosophy of Religion**

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

By  
**Joy C.**

2019-2023

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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

As an academic discipline, the subject of Music and Sports has been in existence for a relatively short period of time. However, if we think that music and sport viewed from a philosophical perspective entails the explicit examination of their inherent qualities, then in one sense, the philosophical study of music and sport are as old as the creation itself. Though the philosophy of sport as an academic endeavor is relatively embryonic, a philosophical view of music and sport is not new even. When the ancient Greeks strove to ensure that their Olympians were able to perform at their peak, equal importance was placed on critically examining the nature, purpose and value that sport and musical activity played in Greek life. The Greeks were particularly concerned with how practicing such activities was pleasing to the Gods. So, we can see in the works of early philosophers such as Plato, and Aristotle, signs that sports as a cultural phenomenon raises important questions that are philosophical in nature.

And now in current times, despite the fact that the formal academic study of music and sport have a compartmentalized focus on technical performance, philosophy continues to provide an alternative critical avenue to conceive of these subjects. To a large extent then, much of what is studied in relation to sport focuses on the *techne* or 'know-how,' which allows for implementing more effective means for improving generally unquestioned ends. But philosophy considers music and sport in terms of 'Eudaimonia'; its overall good, value or virtue.

Music shields us from bad, harmful stuff. In ancient Israel, when Saul was being tormented by a harmful spirit, he asked his servants to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre. They brought David to be at his service. "And when the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hands. Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him" (1 Samuel 16:23). Music brings us joy and sometimes moves us to tears. It lifts up the spirit. As Plato said, "Music is an art imbued with the power to penetrate into the very depths of the soul." We have always known that music has profound effects on us physically, cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually. The Ancient Greek philosophers philosophized about it. Many verses in the Bible refer to music, singing, and playing the stringed instruments. Almost all religions are teaching the value of music and physical exercises for a better spiritual life. In



battles that date back to the earliest part of human history, music was used to inspire and energize the warriors.

The philosophy of religion, and the philosophy of sport and music have emerged as a discrete philosophical sub-discipline in its own right. Within the sub-discipline a number of central philosophical questions have interested me. Of greatest interest are issue of an ethical nature where the moral conduct and behavior of sports people and the overall moral atmosphere of sport is examined and evaluated in relation to a number of enduring and novel issues. I am very much interested in ethical debates about the rightness or wrongness of using performance enhancing substances, the importance of fair play, and concerns that various sports participants have regarding justice and equity for sports participation. Sport therefore gives rise to a broad range of philosophical questions which are reflected in this thesis.

My thesis is divided into two parts which broadly reflect a number of chapters. The first part concerns about the philosophy of music with religion. In this part there are twelve chapters which mainly focused on God centric philosophy in Music and its experience. The religious experience and spirituality through music will be a meditative finding of this first part.

The second part examines the artistic, aesthetic and spiritual aspects of sport. It explores the relationship between sporting activity and human physical embodiment. In this part there are seven chapters presenting a number of ethical issues in sport and how sport and faith fit together. How can we experience God in sports? In this part I can explore the transformation of a good experience in God. How sports help to achieve this spiritual element will be another focus. The experience and spiritualistic sports people are also mentioning in the end of the chapter.

Now in this modern era everything in the capsule way. The philosophical society is urged to get everything in the fingertip, people are not in thinking process and they are led by the electronic modes. So, getting God experience through the day today life is too difficult. So, the attainment of God experience through their influenced thing is most important. The best two elements in the world which influences all the people are music and sports. That is what the reason behind of this work. It will be a meditative work on philosophy of God experience through music and sports. How we can attribute the knowledge of God through music and sport is the great task and I think, God experience on musical and sportive knowledge will be

the true spirituality. Here I can go through holistic way of looking through the eyes of whole religion. Because the concept of God is equal in every religion.

In the primitive world as we know people are urged to get God experience through their personal life but in the contemporary world God has to go to the people through the mediums like sports and music. So, how these sports and music help to get the God experience is main focus of this thesis. Music does inexplicable things to us. The hills are alive with the sound of music. Music moves us. It sways us and causes us to tap our fingers or bob our heads as we listen to the rhythm and beat. A person who engages in sports regularly maintains a better physical shape, enthusiasm and energy level. Sports also actively contribute to shaping a person's mental and emotional well-being. That can be changed equally as a prayer.

How we can channelize the interested things into God experience is another target. I think, discovering the philosophical stand point of view, experiencing the God personally in the religious perspective of music and sport are very collective knowledge seeks. As we experience that, Music has the power to transport our minds and imaginations to another time or place. Music heals us. It helps ease our pain and our hurts. The ancient Greek philosophers believed that music served a therapeutic purpose. Today's science gives us the evidence that it's true. Many of us have probably heard of the "Mozart effect." Mozart's Piano Sonata in D Major decreased epileptiform activity in patients even in comatose state. Music therapy has now become a well-known practice in helping not only make us feel good but also in the treatment of different disorders mentally and physically. I could say that this discipline works as the hands of God.

One social media commenter responded to the podcast with a perspective that many people share — sports seem "like a whole other religion." He went on to describe the amount of excitement and money people pour into sports and how that ought to be poured into "the true battle we live in," such as healing the sick, feeding the poor, and saving souls. He makes the point that sports clearly aren't as important as these things. This perspective is quite common and deserves a thoughtful response. At first blush it has merit, but it is not entirely accurate. Let me take this observation into consideration as. "*Sports is its own Religion*".

Sports can easily become an idol. But that does not make it an inherently bad thing. Money can be an idol. So can music; attend any concert and we will find worshippers there. Anything that we devote ourselves can become an idol which can then become a religion; that is, it can become something which gives structure to our lives and determines our values. But the human ability to make idols out of anything does not make those things bad. And sports contain enormous good as a reflection of God's creative power. *"People should devote their excitement and energy to things of eternal value"*. During this developmental stage in my early adult life, I got the opportunity to really get immersed not only in popular music but also in Sports. Doing so gave me the reference point in my life where I can compare my experience with how music and sports could positively impact the philosophical life. Because Music and Sports have the power to bring the mind, body, and spirit in unison as we reach out to God.

Finally, I believe sports and music are the gifts, that God gave through human creativity for our enjoyment. Somewhat that is the enjoyment of spirituality. They should be participated in every level and in every way as such to attain the God experience. And just like all in life, we ought to approach them with thoughtfulness, discernment, and intentionality. Then any one can explore the spirituality and God experience throughout the life.

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*"Music is God's gift to man, the only art of Heaven given to earth, the only art of earth we take to Heaven".*

*" Sports is the gift to God that is carried to heaven from the earth to praise God in heaven physically"*

## Chapter-1

### 1. WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

#### 1.1. Introduction

The primary concern of philosophy is the study of ideas central to the ways we think and live. The value, however, of many of our key concepts is often hidden from us. We tend to take the ways we make sense of ourselves and the world around us for granted. We forget why truth matters, or why acting decently is a minimal requirement for treating others justly. Philosophy makes the invisible visible, cultivates skills that help us become clearer about what matters to us most. It develops skills that are essential in the pursuit of any career. Philosophy is a way of thinking about certain subjects such as ethics, thought, existence, time, meaning and value. That 'way of thinking' involves 4 'R's: responsiveness, reflection, reason and re-evaluation. The aim is to deepen understanding. The hope is that by doing philosophy we learn to think better, to act more wisely, and thereby help to improve the quality of all our lives.

#### 1.2 What is Philosophy?

The word philosophy derived from Greek *φιλοσοφία* or *phílosophía*, meaning 'The love of wisdom', 'The study of knowledge', or 'Thinking about thinking'.<sup>1</sup> The Philosophical discipline concerned with questions of how one should live (Ethics); what sorts of things exist and what are their essential natures (Metaphysics); what counts as genuine knowledge (Epistemology); and what are the correct principles of reasoning (Logic)

#### 1.3 Word meaning of Philosophy

- Investigation of the nature, causes, or principles of reality, knowledge, or values, based on logical reasoning rather than empirical methods (*American Heritage Dictionary*).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.philosophybasics.com/general-what-is.html>

- The study of the ultimate nature of existence, reality, knowledge and goodness, as discoverable by human reasoning (*Penguin English Dictionary*).
- The rational investigation of questions about existence and knowledge and ethics (*WordNet*).
- The search for knowledge and truth, especially about the nature of man and his behavior and beliefs (*Kerner Man English Multilingual Dictionary*).
- The rational and critical inquiry into basic principles (*Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia*).
- The study of the most general and abstract features of the world and categories with which we think: mind, matter, reason, proof, truth, etc. (*Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*).

Careful thought about the fundamental nature of the world, the grounds for human knowledge, and the evaluation of human conduct (*The Philosophy Pages*).

Philosophy is the study of underlying things. This means philosophy tries to understand the reasons or basis for things. It also tries to understand how things should be. "*Philosophia*" is the Ancient Greek word for the "love of wisdom".<sup>2</sup> A person who does philosophy is called a philosopher. A philosopher is a kind of thinker or researcher. A "philosophy" can also mean a group of ideas by philosophers, or by a philosopher. Philosophy is a way of thinking about the world, the universe, and society. In the past, sciences were part of philosophy as well.

The ideas in philosophy are often general and *abstract*. But this does not mean that philosophy is not about the real world. Ethics, for example, asks about how to be good in our day-to-day lives. Metaphysics asks about how the world works and what it is made of. Sometimes people talk about how they have a '*personal philosophy*', which means the way a person thinks about the world. One philosophical question is this: "Is there any knowledge in the world which is so certain that no

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<sup>2</sup> <https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

reasonable man could doubt it?". Other common questions asked by philosophers are these:

- ***What happens to a soul after death, how does a soul enter into the body before death?***
- ***Why are we born?***
- ***Why should we live?***
- ***Why are there so many hurdles in life?***
- ***How do we overcome suffering?***
- ***What is the importance of the material life?***
- ***Will the universe exist forever?***
- ***What is beauty?***
- ***Do we have free will?***
- ***Does God exist?***
- ***Does the world around us exist?***
- ***What is truth?***
- ***What is evil?***
- ***What is the relationship between mind and body?***
- ***What is conscious?***
- ***What is Reasoning and Justification?***

#### **1.4 The importance of Philosophy**

Philosophy is the Queen of Sciences. Classic systematic philosophers – such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel – boldly affirmed that philosophy grounds all other sciences. Also, among those who see philosophy as a method, can find many who regard it as the chief source of knowledge. Is philosophy really the queen of sciences? Granted, there was a time in which philosophy vested the role of protagonist. Nowadays, however, it may sound exaggerated to regard it as such. More modestly, philosophy may seem to provide valuable resources for thinking about fundamental questions. This is reflected, for instance, in the growing popularity of philosophical counseling, philosophical cafés, and in the success that philosophy majors seem to enjoy on the job market.

## **1.5 The Branches of Philosophy**

The deep and multifarious relationship that philosophy bears to other sciences is clear by taking a look at its branches. Philosophy has some core areas: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, logic. To these should be added an indefinite number of branches. Some that are more standard: political philosophy, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, philosophy of science. Others that are domain specific: philosophy of physics, philosophy of biology, philosophy of food, philosophy of culture, philosophy of education, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of art, philosophy of economics, legal philosophy, environmental philosophy, philosophy of technology. The specialization of contemporary intellectual research has affected the queen of wonder too.

## **1.6 The attitude of Philosophy**

Some take a different route. To those, the gist of philosophy lies not in the answers, but in the questions. Philosophical wonder is a methodology. It does not matter which topic comes under discussion and what we make of it; philosophy is about the stance we take towards it. Philosophy is that attitude which brings to question even what's most obvious. Why are there spots on the surface of the moon? What creates a tide? What is the difference between a living and a non-living entity? Once upon a time, these were philosophical questions, and the wonder from which they emerged was a philosophical wonder. Through the ages, philosophers have sought to answer such questions as, what is the meaning and purpose of life? How do we know what we know? Does God exist? What does it mean to possess consciousness? And, what is the value of morals?

Philosophers attempt to answer such questions through the philosophical method. The method usually begins when a philosopher examines his own beliefs and begins to doubt their validity. From his doubt, questions emerge. Before answering a question, the philosopher thoroughly analyzes it to ensure it is clearly and properly defined. This helps narrow the path to the most precise answer. Next, the philosopher proposes possible answers to the question and provides reasoned arguments to support each one. The arguments are then critiqued by other philosophers, who may give rebuttals. Through this process of criticism and judgment, known as dialectic,

philosophers attempt to prove the rationality of their beliefs and discover fundamental truths.

However, the study of philosophy is not necessarily about discovering all of the answers to life's toughest questions. Asking a question is more fundamentally important than answering one. In philosophy, questioning a deeply held belief or social practice sets one onto the path of true understanding, and it's this understanding that leads to meaningful personal and social change. A good philosopher recognizes the danger of accepting knowledge at face value. Social or scientific theories may be untested or contain personal bias; trusting them immediately could result in terrible consequences.

Today, philosophers can be found working in nearly every career field. Some are scientists developing ways to test household products without using animals. Some are politicians and human rights activists fighting for changes in foreign policy that will alleviate war and poverty for millions of Third World citizens. Some are economists seeking practical solutions to economic inequality. Still others are programmers working on the cutting edge of technology to develop faster and more efficient computer software. Those who study philosophy also tend to lead fulfilling and successful lives.

### 1.7. What is Religion?





Religion is difficult to define, because human belief structures are varied and complicated. It occurs in today's confusing and wild world that "*Religion*" is a term that is denied by some of those very people who the term encompasses. Some Christians declare that Christianity "*is not a religion, it is a relationship with Jesus*". Likewise, some Muslims say "*Islam is not a religion - it is a way of life*" and it used to be the case that "most Hindus do not realize they 'belong' to that religion", for it is a name given by outsiders. There are many definitions of Religion. It is not easy to pin down exactly what religion is and then to ensure that the definition distinguishes religion from magic and from cults and sects. Many people offer definitions without much knowledge of the wide range of religious phenomena and the many different cultural manifestations of religion.

It is a rather common misconception to think that religion has to do with God. Gods and supernatural beings or spiritual dimension or greater reality. None of that is absolutely necessary because there are religions that are without those elements.

### **1.7.1. Definition of Religion**

Many definitions of *Religion* have been attempted but many falls foul of being too narrow, or too wide. Many definitions are biased towards continental cultural norms - in particular, Western credal theism. *Religion* is an umbrella term for multiple things and as such, it is difficult to define religion without taking time to highlight the various guises of religion and religious behavior.

**a,** According to Oxford Dictionary, "*Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or Gods*".

**b,** According to William James, one of the most respected surveyors of religion, "*The very fact that Religions are so many and so different from one another is enough to prove that the word 'Religion' cannot stand for any single principle or essence, but is rather a collective name*".

**c,** '*Religion is a set of beliefs that is passionately held by a group of people that is reflected in a world view and in expected beliefs and actions.*

**d,** '*Religion is a social-cultural system of designated behaviors and practices, morals, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics, or organizations, that relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental, or spiritual elements. However, there is no scholarly consensus over what precisely constitutes a religion*'.

**e,** According to Frederick Ferree in his work *Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion*. ‘Religion is the most comprehensive and intensive manner of valuing known to human beings.’<sup>3</sup> This is a definition that captures the common core and yet distinguishes religion from other institutions and phenomena.

**f,** Religion is a belief; it has a set of code of conduct, principles, ethics and morals to follow in one’s life. There are several Religions in the world. It only means that people of the world follow different kinds of religion that frame different sets of principles, ethics, morals and codes of conduct to follow for the people that belong to them.

**g,** There are religions like, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism, to mention some of the religions of the world. Each of these religions prescribes a separate set of principles, ethics and morals along with customs to follow by the people of the particular religion.

**h,** Religion insists on the performance of rituals. On the other hand, if a person is religious, he cannot do away with the performance of rituals and rites. They become part and parcel of his life.

### ***1.7.2. Strength of the Religious Sector***

In this millennium there are over 6.2 billion people on the planet earth. Most of them would declare that they are religious in some way. Rough estimates are made that place people in the various traditions.

### ***1.7.3. The world religions***

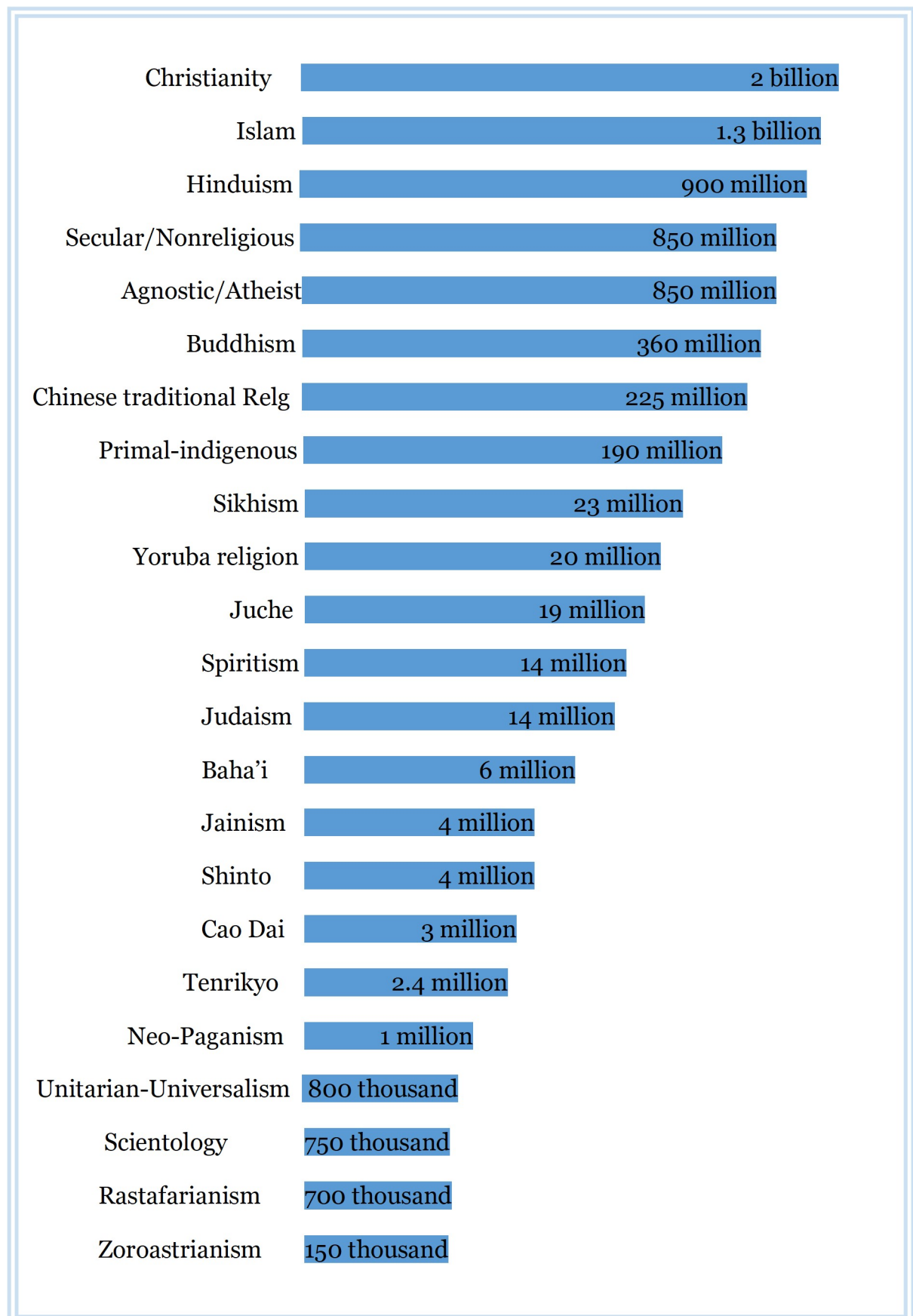
The world’s faithful account for 83% of the global population; the great majority of these fall under 22 classical religions. The majority of people follow one of five major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. But there are many, many more religions than that. And within each of these are

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<sup>3</sup> Frederick Ferree, *Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion*, Gods dienstfilosofie Publisher New York, Scribner.1967

denominations so, distinct that some people may consider them to be different religions altogether. There are many traditional African religions, and they are quite diverse. However, many traditional African religions share certain characteristics. Approximately 100 million people practice a traditional African religion. Many traditional African religions transmit knowledge orally rather than through scripture.

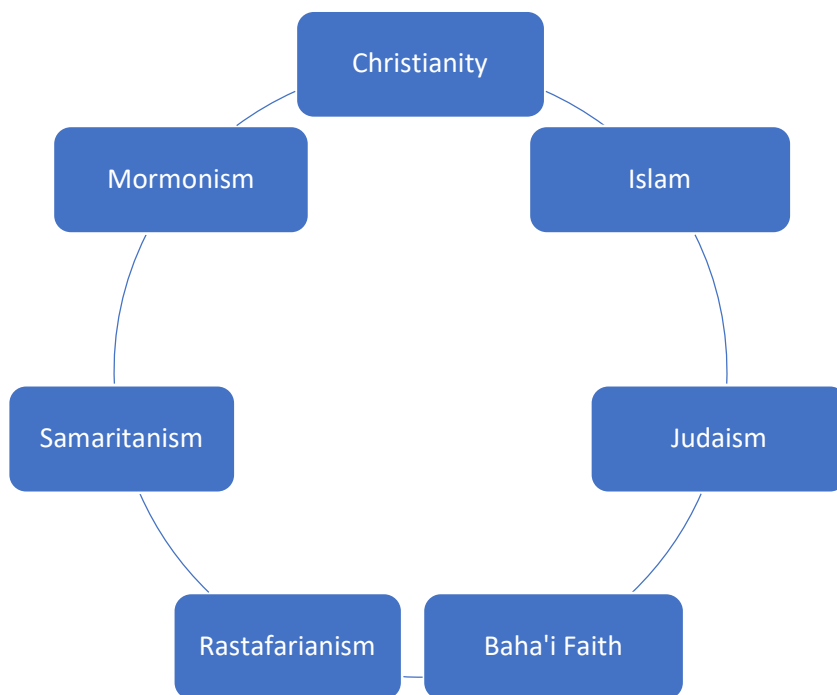
## The chart representation of the world religion's population



The three religions that are proselytizing religions, seeking more members actively are: Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Islam is the fastest growing of the traditions and will most likely have the most adherents in the world by 2030. Some of these religions have no belief in a God. Some have no belief in the survival of a soul. Some believe in more than one God.

#### **1.7.4. Kinds of Religions**

##### ***Abrahamic Religions***



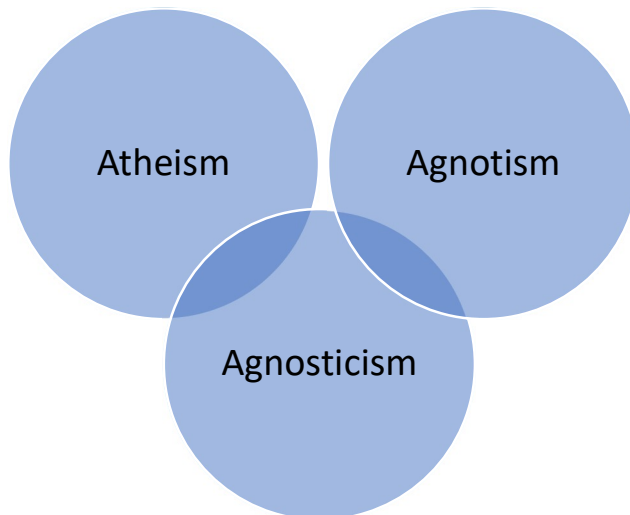
##### ***Dharmic religions***



### **UnitarianUniversalism**



### **Nontheist**



## Holy Books



These are the main names of the eleven religious holy books<sup>4</sup>.

### ***1.7.5. Characteristics of Religion***

Religion can be characterized as a family. Just as with family members not every member must have every trait but most have most of the traits. The more any human phenomena demonstrate the traits, the more likely it is that it will be included into this category of social institutions known as Religion.

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<sup>4</sup> *Book of Shadows · Book of Mormon*

## Common Characteristics

- It has the notion of a deity or absolute, that which is of ultimate concern and importance
- Philosophy of Religion penetrates ideas on the nature of human beings
- Philosophy of Religion seeks the idea of divine providence, destiny, fate
- Philosophy of Religion deals with the meaning of human history
- Philosophy of Religion explains the problem of evil
- Philosophy of Religion narrates the description of the central problem of human life and suffering idea of an afterlife-life after death
- The term Philosophy is a concept of the world
- Philosophy of Religion has the ideas of human community and ethics-a moral code

The more any phenomena display the characteristics above, it is likely to be accepted as a Religion. The fewer the features demonstrated, the less likely it will be termed a Religion. It might be termed magic, or sorcery, cult or some other description but not as a full-fledged Religion <sup>5</sup>.

### ***1.7.6. Religions of the West – the one God***

Religions of the West: Judaism - Christianity and Islam share in some common traits or characteristics that distinguish them from other religions in this world.

- a. Belief in one God
- b. Belief in linear history
- c. Belief in a sacred scripture

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.adherents.com/Religions\\_By\\_Adherents.html](http://www.adherents.com/Religions_By_Adherents.html)



These common features bind the three traditions of the West together. They share many similar ideas. Among those shared are: One God made the universe and along with it the beginning of time and that one God will end the universe. Each human has a soul and at the death of the body the soul shall separate from the body and go on into another dimension. There is a judgment to be made concerning the moral worthiness of the soul at death for an eternal reward or lack thereof. Time is linear and there is but one period of existence for individuals and the entire universe. There may be variations from these basic tenets of the faith or religious beliefs; however, these are ideas fairly typical for most of the religions of the West. Other Religions hold for multiple deities or no deities at all, cyclic time and the reincarnation of souls, even multiple reincarnations. Some religions have no idea of a deity and some have no belief in the survival of a soul.

### **1.8. Philosophy of Religion**

Philosophy of religion is "the philosophical examination of the central themes and concepts involved in religious traditions". Philosophical discussions on such topics date from ancient times, and appear in the earliest known texts concerning philosophy. The field is related to many other branches of philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics<sup>6</sup>.

Philosophy is the most critical and comprehensive thought process developed by human beings. It is quite different from religion in that where Philosophy is both critical and comprehensive; Religion is comprehensive but not necessarily critical. Religion attempts to offer a view of all of life and the universe and to offer answers to most, if not all, of the most basic and important questions which occur to humans all over the planet. The answers offered by Religion are not often subject to the careful scrutiny of reason and logic. Indeed, many religious beliefs defy logic and seem to be unreasonable. Religion has its basis in belief. Philosophy, on the other hand, is a critic of belief and belief systems. Philosophy subjects, what some would

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<sup>6</sup> [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy\\_of\\_religion](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_religion)

be satisfied in believing to, go under severe examination. Philosophy looks for rational explications and justifications for beliefs. Philosophy has its basis in reason.

Theology deals with thinking about religious beliefs in a rational manner but it presumes faith. Theologians employ reason to make their beliefs appear more clearly and to wherever possible have beliefs satisfy the dictates of reason. Theologians begin with a set of beliefs as foundational or fundamental and in some sense not subject to possible disbelief or to truly critical analysis. Philosophers examine; indeed, they look for, all assumptions and suppositions of any system of thought or belief. For philosophers there are no ideas to be accepted on faith.

Philosophy of religion is the interface between philosophy on the one hand and theology and religious studies on the other. It belongs to theology and religious studies in virtue of its subject matter, and to philosophy in virtue of its method. How we think of the philosophy of religion will then depend on how we think of its mother disciplines.

### ***1.8.1 Definition***

Philosophy of Religion is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with the philosophical study of religion, including arguments over the nature and existence of God, religious language, miracles, prayer, the problem of evil, and the relationship between religion and other value-systems such as science and ethics. It is often regarded as a part of Metaphysics, especially insofar as it is interested in understanding what it is for something to exist, although arguably it also touches on issues commonly dealt with in Epistemology, Ethics, Logic and the Philosophy of Language<sup>7</sup>.

Philosophy of Religion is rational thought about religious issues and concerns without a presumption of the existence of a deity or reliance on acts of faith. Philosophy is about thinking critically about religion in all of its aspects. Thinking

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<sup>7</sup><https://www.dictionary.com/browse/religion>

critically about religious beliefs might indicate that they are flawed in a number of ways: inconsistent, contradictory, without evidence to support the basic claims. This does not mean that philosophy attempts to disprove religious beliefs. Philosophy has come to reveal that religious beliefs are just that beliefs and not empirical claims. Religious language is not ordinary language and certainly not scientific language. Philosophy helps us to understand this religious belief.

### ***1.8.2. Difference between Religion and Philosophy***

As we know, religion and philosophy are two different topics altogether. Religion is all about practices and customs whereas philosophy is all about metaphysics. A religion preaches its followers what they should do, what they should not do. Often a religion presents rewards and punishments. An example is the belief that people who does good go to heaven while those who sin go to hell. On the other hand, a philosophy searches and questions to get the right and logical answers. A philosophy does not accept everything as a religion does unless it has a logical reason behind it <sup>8</sup>.

- ❖ Religion is a belief in a supreme power and worship of it as the creator and controller of the universe without reasoning whereas philosophy is a pursuit of wisdom by intellectual search and logical reasoning.

- ❖ Philosophy of religion questions the very existence of the supreme power.

- ❖ Religions discipline the people through a set of code of conduct, principles and ethics whereas philosophy relies on the moral self-discipline.

- ❖ Religion is all about practices and customs whereas philosophy is all about metaphysics.

- ❖ Philosophers are called as thinkers whereas propagators of religions are called leaders.

- ❖ Religion insists on the performance of rituals whereas philosophy does not emphasize the ritualistic aspect of life.

Religion speaks the topic of life after death and the existence of the soul and life hereafter. Philosophy establishes the divine nature of man. It questions the

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-religion-and-philosophy/>

absolute truth that each soul is potentially divine. Religion insists on the performance of rituals, philosophy does not emphasize the ritualistic aspect of life. Philosophy is, in fact, construed to be a way of thinking. This is the reason why philosophers are called as thinkers whereas propagators of religions are called leaders. These are the basic difference between religion and philosophy. Hence, it can be said that religion and philosophy are mutually exclusive and they cannot co-exist <sup>9</sup>.

### ***1.8.3. Philosophy of Religion and its Importance in Everyday Life***

Philosophy of religion is, in the simplest terms, *'the study of religious thought'*. Philosophers of religion seek to answer some very important questions that have been around since the dawn of time and continue to be relevant today. These questions include: 'Is there a God? If there is a God, what is he or she like? And furthermore, what does the belief or disbelief in God mean to us? Philosophy of religion is a part of our everyday lives, whether we realize it or not'. Our beliefs, or lack thereof, in God are an ever-present force that affects our thoughts, feelings and actions in everyday situations. Our personal beliefs effect what we perceive as ethical behavior; plague our conscious and subconscious thoughts, which in turn affect our judgment, for good or ill. Since our beliefs, thoughts and feelings about God and religion are individual, there are many different schools of thought within the study of philosophy of religion.

It is important for people to be aware of their beliefs and how they affect the everyday choices. For example, if a person working with someone whose beliefs differ from that person, his beliefs and personal biases could either become a barrier in that relationship, or he could seek to find a common ground with which to strengthen and build that relationship and work together harmoniously. It is important for people to be aware that their personal beliefs, whether religious or non-religious, lead them to hold some degree of bias toward anything that is not in agreement with those beliefs. These biases sometimes cause us to treat people with inequity. They can fuel hatred,

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bing.com/search?q=importance+of+philosophy+of+religion&FORM=QSRE5>

envy, and mistrust, leading people to act in opposition of the moral teachings of their faith, or other ethical values.

#### ***1.8.4. Why is the Philosophy of Religion Important?***

Religion — whether we are theists (the Greek word for “God,” Theos , is belief in a God who is active in human affairs), deists (the Latin word for “God,” Deus, is belief in a God who created the world and then left it alone), atheists (the Greek meaning “no God,” is belief in just that), Gnostics (knowing), agnostics (the Greek meaning “not knowing,” agnôstos), Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, Confucians, Shintoists, Zoroastrians, Animists, Polytheists, Pagans, Wiccans, Secular Humanists, Marxists, or Cult Devotees — is a matter of ultimate concern. Everything we are and do finally depends upon such questions as whether there is a God, whether we continue to exist after death, whether any God is active in human history, and whether human ethical relations have spiritual or supernatural dimensions. If God is real, then this is a different world than it would be if God were not real. The basic human need that probably exists for some sort of salvation, deliverance, release, liberation, pacification, or whatever it may be called, seems to be among the main foundations of all religions. Many remain sincere and unabashed about feeling a deep need for mystery in their lives. Such people are generally members of some kind of religious group. Many intelligent, well-educated people still say such things as:

*“Whatever the controversy, and however strong the scholarly arguments against it, choose to believe in the supernatural aspects of faith, simply because it is very important in the life of faith to be radically aware of sacred mysteries.”*

If one chooses to make the supernatural element a central aspect of one’s religion, scripture and tradition will certainly support such a set of beliefs.

German-British philologist Max Müller (1823-1900), one of the founders of the modern scholarly study of comparative religions, asserted in 1873 that whoever knows only one religion knows none. Against this claim, German theologian Adolf von Harnack (1851- 1930) responded in 1901 that whoever knows one religion knows them all. These assertions are not contradictory. Both are correct. They equivocate on two kinds of knowledge.

In short, Müller speaks as a philosopher; Harnack as a theologian. Religion must make sense to the believer, not necessarily common sense, but some sort of sense; i.e., believers ought to be able at some level to justify their beliefs. At the lowest level, such defense is accomplished by appeal to authority or tradition; at the highest level, it is done either through philosophy or through philosophical or systematic theology. The pre-eminent German idealist philosopher, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), believed that religion in its highest form is philosophy, that philosophy in its true form is religion, and that the true content of each is the same, even though their respective expressions may differ. In their development they move toward each other, since in the historical development of culture, the concept of God moves toward the philosophical, i.e., away from the anthropomorphic and toward the ever more comprehensively spiritual.

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## Chapter-2

### KNOWLEDGE AND PHILOSOPHY OF GOD

#### 2.1. Introduction

Knowledge means *'the things which are true, as opposed to opinion'*. *'Information which is correct is knowledge'*<sup>10</sup>. Knowledge can always be supported by evidence. If a statement is not supported by evidence, then it is not knowledge. The evidence makes it justified. In philosophy, the study of knowledge is called epistemology. The philosopher Plato defined knowledge as *"justified true belief"*. All knowledge is a claim to be true, but the claim can be incorrect. The only claims (propositions) which are certainly true are circular, based on how we use words or terms. We can correctly claim that there are 360 degrees in a circle, since that is part of how circles are defined.

The point of Aristotle's syllogism was to show that this kind of reasoning had a machine-like form:

- ✓ If all swans are white, and this is a swan, then it must be white.
- ✓ But actually, in the real world, not all swans are white.

The most widely accepted way to find reliable knowledge is the scientific method. Yet one thing all philosophers of science agree is that scientific knowledge is just the best we can do at any one time. All scientific knowledge is provisional, not a claim of absolute truth.

#### 2.2. Definition of Knowledge

➤ knowledge is "the ideas or understandings which an entity possesses that are used to take effective action to achieve the entity's goal(s).

➤ Knowledge is understanding of (or) information about a subject that we get by experience or study, either known by one person or by people generally.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Simple English Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

<sup>11</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/knowledge>

➤ knowledge is "the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association".<sup>12</sup>

### **2.3. Religion and Knowledge**

Knowledge in religion is different in that it depends on faith, belief and the authority of religious leaders, not on evidence of a scientific or legal kind. There are differing views on whether religious statements should be regarded as knowledge. In many expressions of Christianity, such as Catholicism and Anglicanism, knowledge is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the Garden of Eden knowledge is the factor that made humans greedy and treacherous. But in the Book of Proverbs it states: *'to be wise you must first obey the Lord'* (Proverb 9:10).

In Islam, knowledge has great significance. "The All-Knowing" (*al- 'Alīm*) is one of the Names of God, reflecting distinct properties of God in Islam. The Qur'an asserts that knowledge comes from God (Quran 2:239) and various *hadith* encourage getting knowledge. Muhammad is reported to have said *"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave"* and *"Verily the men of knowledge are the inheritors of the prophets"*. Islamic scholars, theologians and jurists are often given the title *alim*, meaning 'knowledgeable'.

In the scripture of Hinduism, Bhagavadgita narrates the word *'jnana'*. Bhagavadgita read in them words such as *jnana yoga, jnana yogi, jnana marga, jnana murthi, jnana indriya, jnana dipika, jnana jyoti, jnana caksu, jnana kanda, jnana nishta, jnana tapasa, jnana sadhana* and so on.<sup>13</sup>

Jnana means knowledge. A jnani is one who has jnana. The Upanishads are considered books of knowledge. They open our mind to the higher knowledge of a hidden Self and an invisible God of universal proportions. Likewise, in every religion knowledge of God is important. In general, the understanding of knowledge requires some grasp of its relationship to information. In everyday language, it has long been the practice to distinguish between information — data arranged in meaningful

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<sup>12</sup> Webster's Dictionary

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.hinduwebsite.com/upanishads/essays/jnana.asp>



patterns — and knowledge — which has historically been regarded as something that is believed, that is true (for pragmatic knowledge, that works) and that is reliable.

Some of the great theologians and modern philosophers remarked religion and knowledge can be interpreted as faith and reason. The key biblical terms for knowledge assume a personal familiarity, even an intimate involvement, with the known object. Similarly, knowing God entails acknowledging him as Lord in obedience and praise. As a result, human knowledge of God is decisively shaped by the fall and God's salvation.<sup>14</sup>

Natural knowledge of God distinguished from revealed knowledge of God in terms of the ways in which people have arrived at such knowledge i.e., one through reason the other through faith. However, as St. Thomas Aquinas argued, “God can reveal truths to us through our reasoning, and that our reasoning was given to us so that, we might learn more about God, the distinction becomes blurred”.

#### **2.4. Faith and Reason**

**According to St. Thomas Aquinas**, “*Existence of the world points to the existence of God*”. The traditional “*definition of Propositional Knowledge*,” emerging from Plato's ‘*Meno* and ‘*Theaetetus*’, is knowing or accepting something is so. It proposes that such knowledge—knowledge that something is the case—has three essential components. These components are identified by the view that knowledge is justified true belief. Knowledge, according to the traditional definition, is belief of a special kind, belief that satisfies two necessary conditions:

- (1) the truth of what is believed and
- (2) the justification of what is believed.

Propositional revelation is faith as acceptance of truths revealed by God, as propositions to be accepted. The Bible supports idea that people are born with a sense for God e.g., Genesis God breathes into Adam with his own breath. We are made in the image of God and so can appreciate beauty and goodness in the world which are manifestations of God’s goodness and creativity. Through reasoning we can discern this God is powerful as he can create the world and so not dependent on temples to live

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/knowledge-of-god>

in them. Non-propositional knowledge (generally Protestant approach): knowledge of 'how to do something' and 'gain skills through experience' e.g., knowing how to ride a bike. My knowledge of such things will increase the more I practice them. Non-propositional revelation is the faith of a personal encounter with God through experience.

**According to St. Augustin**, "Faith is superior to reason". 'I believe in order to understand', this is the caption in which he interpreted Faith. But according to his natural theology, original sin prevents people from knowing God. But Martin Luther had low estimate of reason as a human faculty because he considered it to be corrupted by egoism and sin. Like Augustine, he argued that faith, being above reason, was a more reliable path to truth. But if it was to be a saving faith, it required taking the risk of trust (*fiducia*).

**According to Karl Barth**, "human reason is fallible and cannot lead into any knowledge of God and it is arrogance to believe we are clever enough to access absolute and eternal truths". God can only be known when God chooses to disclose himself (revelation). People are incapable of working out right and wrong by themselves and need to follow God's commandments as revealed in the Bible. God revealed through Jesus Christ and so no truth to be found in other world religions. Augustine said, "original sin prevented people from being able to know God because they had become corrupt in their will and could never be holy enough to approach God through their own efforts". St. Thomas Aquinas says that there are five ways\_which - God has given us the ability to use our senses and reason for a purpose. Reason and Revelation work together. This is called as in Latin, '*Quinque Viae*'.

### ***I. The Argument from Change ("Motion")***

The first of Aquinas's arguments for God's existence points out that all changes are the result of some other change. But this chain of changes cannot be infinite, so there must be some un-changed (un-moving) thing (an un-moved Mover) that is ultimately responsible for all other changes (motion). The unmoved mover is God. Plato also mentioned about the unmoved mover.

## ***II. The Argument from Causality***

The second of Aquinas's ways to show God's existence is based on the fact that all effects are caused by some other event, which in turn is the effect of some other cause. But this chain of causality cannot be infinitely long, so there must be some uncaused cause: God, the First Cause.

## ***III. The Argument from Contingency***

Aquinas's third argument or way to prove God's existence is that, if everything were impermanent, eventually everything would cease to be. Therefore, there must be at least one thing that must, necessarily, exist (one non-contingent thing): God, the Necessary Being.

## ***IV. The Argument from Perfection***

Aquinas's fourth argument in favor of God's existence points out that, in order to speak of "goodness" or "power," we must have an absolute standard against which to judge those terms; there must be some other thing from which they ultimately derive that characteristic: God, the Ultimate Standard.

## ***V. The Argument from Purpose***

Aquinas's fifth way to show the existence of God involves the fact that inanimate matter and energy do not exhibit intelligence or purpose. When we see something unintelligent that appears to have some specific purpose or that fulfills some purposeful role, we must assume that thing to have been given that purpose by some other intelligence. Ultimately, this leads to God, the Grand Designer.<sup>15</sup>

**Soren Kierkegaard** asserts the argument of Thomas Aquinas's that the decision to make the leap of faith is not simply a suspension of reasoning but a conscious and morally intelligent decision which enables us to find religious enlightenment in a world of frustration and mystery. Kierkegaard says human beings

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Five-Ways-Thomas-Aquinas.html>

cannot use observation of the natural world to support belief that God exists but that does not alter the fact that God exists or not. Human beings must make a choice. Yet object of faith is a paradox – the paradox of God’s love.<sup>16</sup> Leibniz also contribute with it; what human observes might reflect objective truths but we cannot know with certainty because we cannot escape our subjectivity.

**According to Dawkins:** “faith encourages people to be lazy in their thinking. Where there is a gap in human knowledge it is described as a mystery and that evidence is not necessary”. The Atheist, Nietzsche says “faith in God who is dead was an obstacle to living a morally courageous life and human flourishing”. Belief in God based on faith is like belief in the tooth fairy. It cannot be conclusively disproved but there is no evidence to support them, and therefore no-good reason to commit to them. According to David Hume: ‘a wise man proportions his belief to the evidence.’ We should look to evidence.

As the conclusion of the existence of God in faith and reason, we can say that, many Christians would agree that faith alone is not sufficient but that it builds on knowledge developed through reasoning. This makes it a very different claim to ‘there’s a teapot orbiting Mars.’ At the same time, the knowledge gained through sense experience and reason does not provide conclusive evidence and hence why faith is necessary. Many cases where we have insufficient empirical or rational evidence on which we base our decisions, e.g., whether we have free will or whether the sun will rise tomorrow. Some beliefs can be justified by emotion, memory or intuition. Natural knowledge of God distinguished from revealed knowledge of God in terms of the ways in which people have arrived at such knowledge i.e., one through reason the other through faith. However, as Aquinas argued, God can reveal truths to us through our reason, and our reason was given to us so that we might learn more about God. Religious Experience is for the knowledge of God and the knowledge of God can be gained directly through religious experience.

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<sup>16</sup> Alastair Hannay, *Kierkegaard: A Biography*, Cambridge University Press, New edition 2003, ISBN 0521-53181-0.

## **2.5. God Knows Himself.**

The Bible talks about several different ways that God has made himself known to us. One of the ways God has shown us some things about himself is through the world he has made. Psalm 19:1-2 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge."

That God is omniscient is not only taught in the Scriptures; it must be inferred also from all else that is taught concerning Him. God perfectly knows Himself and, being the source and author of all things, it follows that He knows all that can be known. And this He knows instantly and with a fullness of perfection that includes every possible item of knowledge concerning everything that exists or could have existed anywhere in the universe at any time in the past or that may exist in the centuries or ages yet unborn.<sup>17</sup>

God knows instantly and effortlessly all matter and all matters, all mind and every mind, all spirit and all spirits, all being and every being, all creaturehood and all creatures, every plurality and all pluralities, all law and ever law, all relations, all causes, all thoughts, all mysteries, all enigmas, all feelings, all desires, every unuttered secret, all thrones and dominions, all personalities, all things visible and invisible in heaven and in earth, motion, space, time, life, death, good, evil, heaven, and hell.

Because God knows all things perfectly, He knows nothing better than the other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything. He is never surprised, never amazed. He never wonders about anything nor (except when drawing men out for their own good) does He seek information or ask questions. God is self-existent and self-contained and knows what no creature can ever know – Himself,

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<sup>17</sup> <https://tollelege.wordpress.com/2012/10/05/god-perfectly-knows-himself...>

perfectly. 'The things of God know no man, but the Spirit of God.' Only the Infinite can know the infinite.<sup>18</sup>

Knowledge of self is the key to the knowledge of God, according to the saying: "*He who knows himself knows God*". The Qur'an says: "*We will show them Our signs in the world and in themselves, that the truth may be manifest to them.*" Nothing is nearer to this than "I know myself," meaning the outward shape, body, face, limbs, and so forth. Maybe such knowledge can be a key to the knowledge of God.

## **2.6. Knowledge of God in the Biblical Context.**

The key biblical terms for knowledge assume a personal familiarity, even an intimate involvement, with the known object. Similarly, knowing God entails acknowledging him as Lord in obedience and praise. As a result, human knowledge of God is decisively shaped by the fall and God's salvation.

Adam and Eve knew God. They acknowledged him as their Lord and obediently carried out their responsibilities as his stewards in creation. However, eating from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, decisively shaped humanity's future ( Genesis 2:9 Genesis 2:17 ). The knowledge derived from eating this fruit is called godlike ( Genesis 3:5 Genesis 3:22 ), denoting a rebellious attempt to decide good and evil independently of the Creator.

The fall, however, did not destroy the availability of God's knowledge. General revelation, God's universal revelation, still exists. However, Scripture treats general revelation as ineffective in guiding humanity to God. Just as "the ox knows his master" ( Isa 1:3 ), humanity ought to recognize the Creator, but does not. Sin is the obstacle. Nothing in general revelation hints that God is gracious to the sinner. The sinner distorts the realities of general revelation, fabricating a suitable idea of God ( Rom 8:7-8 ; Phi 3:19 ). This failure to know God issues in all other sins. Consequently, Scripture indicts humans who do not know the one and only God as morally perverse ( Isa 1:2-

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<sup>18</sup> A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1961), 56-57.

4 ; Hosea 4:1-2 ), Rebellious sinners ( 1Sam 2:12 ; Jera 2:8 ), Apostates ( Jer9:1-6 ; Hosea 4:6 ), Idolaters ( Psalm 79:6 ; Hosea 2:13 ), and deceivers engrossed in an delusion ( John 1:5 John 1:10 ; 1 Col 1:18-2:16 ). After explicating these dynamics in Romans 1:18-2:1, Paul concludes that after the fall, general revelation only renders sinners inexcusable before God.

After the fall, saving knowledge of God is grounded solely in God's decision to reveal himself to sinners ( Gen 18:18-19 ; Exode 33:17 ; Ps. 139 Jera 1:5 ; Eph 3:35 ). In these Acts of special revelation, God chooses a people for his purposes and guides them back to himself ( Amos 3:2 ). For sinners can come into fellowship with God only through God's prior act, which objectively makes known his mercy, and subjectively makes us rightly related to Him.

Seeking God is dependent on the proper perspective. God has revealed himself through his prior Acts, and this revelation forms the proper historical context for understanding God in the present ( Duet 4:29-39 ; 1 Chron 16:11-12 ). Consequently, knowledge of God frequently depends on the witness of others to whom God has revealed himself ( Psalm44:1-4 ; Isa51:1-2 ). Only those who know God may seek him. In the New Testament, for example, the first step toward knowledge consists of receiving Jesus' message ( John 7:16-17 ; 12:37-46 ; 20:30-31 ). Only those willing to believe that Jesus is doing the will of the Father receive the light enabling them to discern that he is the Son of God. On this path, followers are led to the full truth. Sinners, on the other hand, come to a knowledge of God through judgment and repentance. In repentance one recognizes the holy God who demands righteousness: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ( Psalm 25:14 ; 111:10 ; Prov 1:7 ; 2:5 ; 9:10 ).

Unlike other types of knowing, God engages and draws us to himself ( John 6:44 ). When we surrender to him and acknowledge him as Lord, God "shows us the way we should go" ( Psalm143:8 ; John 14:6 ). The biblical terms associated with knowing God, like trusting, acknowledging, and believing in God as Lord ( 1 Chron 28:9 ; Psalm 36:10 ; 79:6 ; Isa 43:10 ; Hosea 6:3 ), have a covenantal context. As a result, knowledge of God involves not simply propositions about God, but encountering and embracing God as Lord ( Psalms 25:4 Psalms 25:12 ; 119:104 ), so that God becomes the center of our desires, affections, and knowledge.

Paul reinforces these connections by linking the love, knowledge, and glory of Jesus Christ. Christians know this love, are established in love ( Eph 3:16-19 ), and perceive the glory of God in his face ( 2 Cor 4:6 ). Knowing Christ is a living relationship ( John 7:29 ; 10:14 ; 11:25 ) in which he abides in and transforms the believer into his life ( John 14:17 ; 17:3 ; 1 John 3:2 ).

If knowledge of God is the "path of our life, " this must manifest itself in godly relationships to others ( Matt 7:17-20 ; John 10:27 ; 1 Cor 12:31-13:2 ; Phi 4:9 ; Col 1:23 ). "We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands" ( 1 John 2:3 ). Those who know God willingly practice his will and thus manifest his character by defending the cause of the poor ( Jer22:16 ; Hosea 6:6 ). In addition, the one following God's path becomes a co-worker for God's kingdom ( Isa 43:10-12 ).

Reflecting the messianic promise of knowledge ( Jere 24:7 ; 31:33-34 ), there is a finality to the Christian's knowledge of God ( Matt 11:27 ; Rom 16:25-27 ; Eph 1:9-10 ; Col 1:26-28 ). In Christ "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" ( Col 2:3 ). Moreover, in contrast to ordinary historical knowledge, this knowledge of God is self-authenticating. God himself personally confronts each individual in the Word ( 2 Cor 4:6 ; 1 John 2:27 ), foreshadowing the future when teaching is no longer necessary ( Jere 31:34 ).

On the other hand, the believer's knowledge of God in Jesus Christ is only provisional. It is sufficient for recognizing and trusting the object of faith ( John 17:3 ; Rom 10:9 ): "I know my sheep and my sheep know me... My sheep listen to my voice" ( John 10:14 John 10:27 ). Without answering all our questions, it provides an adequate light for the journeyer in this darkened world ( 2Peter 1:19 ). But this knowledge is only a foretaste of knowing God "*face to face*" in the hereafter ( 1 Cor 13:12 ), when "the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts" ( 2 Peter 1:19 ).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> J. Bergman and G. J. Botterweck, TDOT, 5:448-81; R. Bultmann, TDNT, 1:689-719; C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel; E. A. Martens, God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology; W. Elwell, TAB, pp.39-41, 564-67.



## 2.7. What Is the Difference between Knowledge and Knowledge?

Knowledge can be defined as the “*facts, information, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education*”. It is divided into personal knowledge and shared knowledge. Personal knowledge is what every individual knows from its own personal experience while shared knowledge is a collection of several individuals personal knowledge. Without personal knowledge there would be no shared knowledge.

In perhaps Plato’s most seminal work, *The Republic*, Plato lays out his “*theory of forms*”, through the voice of Socrates. The rudimentary summary of this theory is that for each word, for example table, there exists a form of table that is intelligible, but not visible. Socrates links this theory with his difference between knowledge and belief, where knowledge is what is and belief is what is and is what is not. The combination of these two principles, illustrated by the well-known “*cave allegory*”, results in the understanding that all objects on earth are imperfect copies and can only be discussed with beliefs, and not knowledge.

The fundamental difference between knowledge and belief is that knowledge is concerned with what is, while belief is both what is and what is not. Although, knowledge and belief are not diametrically opposed. Knowledge’s opposite is ignorance, but belief is somewhere in between those two, belief is opaquer than ignorance, but also not as clear as knowledge.<sup>20</sup> Belief is to knowledge as a particular is to a form. Plato frames knowledge as almost an ‘asymptote’ that one can strive towards, but never completely achievable. Furthermore, Plato distinguished the difference between the very fragile beliefs by recognizing knowledge as a power. A belief that happens to be right is much like a blind person lucking into traveling the right road.

Belief has two components – to believe in, which is one’s faith, and to believe that, which is one’s emotions. To believe in our self would be to have faith in ourself. Faith, to believe in, has certain expectations unlike “*to believe that*”. However, belief and faith are similar in that beliefs are biased, and it allows for individual interpretations. Belief is merely in the mind, it is not a kind of knowledge, but a requirement for knowledge. Belief and knowledge are related in the sense that to believe in something

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Is-Faith-A-Good-Basis-Of-Knowledge-fkh9...>

requires the basic knowledge of that something. No ideas or beliefs in our minds can exist without being known. How can you believe in something that you do not even know? If I did not know what snow is, how is it that I can believe that it will snow tomorrow? The more that something is known, the more certain.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.8. What is Religious Knowledge?**

The Religious knowledge is one that is based on a dogma, a belief accepted without rationing or scientific discussion. In religious knowledge the person and the reality that surrounds him, related to something higher, a divinity, is conceived. This allows people to faithfully believe in something that cannot be verified.<sup>22</sup> Another characteristic of this type of knowledge is that it is based on written or oral tradition and, sooner or later, becomes normative, that is, it produces rules, norms and values that must be fulfilled without any questioning. It also generates rituals and actions that refer to a sacred being. On the other hand, religious knowledge offers the opportunity to explain the events of life from a sacred and supernatural perspective to order and harmonize our world.<sup>23</sup>

### **2.9. Science and Religious Knowledge**

If Religion and Science are compatible is the fundamental question of today's world. There are several different lines of argument for the view that religious belief systems and scientific belief systems are compatible. Science and religion were concerned with different aspects of human life which deal with different human needs. The human need was to understand the workings of nature, which science dealt with. The job of science was to uncover objective knowledge about the 'laws of nature', which could be discovered using the scientific method.

Another human need was to find a meaning for their own life and to figure out a moral code which they should live by. Such meaning and morality are subjective and so cannot be discovered through the scientific method. People need religion to help

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.lifepersona.com/what-is-religious-knowledge>

<sup>22</sup> Burns, C. Delisle (1914). *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Apr., 1914), pp. 253-265. Published by The University of Chicago Press. What is Religious Knowledge?

<sup>23</sup> Alba María (2015). Religious knowledge systems. Retrieved from: [mariaalbatok.wordpress.com](http://mariaalbatok.wordpress.com).

them discover meaning and to lead a moral life. So, these two spheres of human need do not overlap, and so religious knowledge systems and scientific knowledge systems can exist side by side.

Monotheistic religions which have a belief in one, universal God are compatible with science. It is possible to believe that there is ‘one God’ who created the universe and the laws by which it is governed, and then to use science to uncover exactly what those rules are. Some recent concepts developed in the field of physics seem to support the worldview of traditional Asian belief systems, such as Taoism. A good example of this is ‘The Tao of Physics’.

Some religions are actually based on science – The most obvious example here is scientology, which has developed devices such as the E-meter to track people’s progress towards the ‘Bridge to Total Freedom’. Another characteristic of this type of knowledge is that it is based on written or oral tradition and, sooner or later, becomes normative, that is, it produces rules, norms and values that must be fulfilled without any questioning. It also generates rituals and actions that refer to sacred being. On the other hand, religious knowledge offers the opportunity to explain the events of life from a sacred and supernatural perspective to order and harmonize our world.<sup>24</sup>

### **2.10. The difference between knowledge and experience**

By definition, knowledge is information and skills acquired through experience or education. Similarly, experience is defined as the knowledge or skill acquired by a period of practical experience of something.<sup>25</sup> Knowledge: Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.

Experience: The knowledge or skill acquired by a period of practical experience of something.<sup>26</sup> In the end of the seventeenth century John Locke developed a theory of epistemology that influenced and determined the concept of knowledge. In this

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.lifepersona.com/what-is-religious-knowledge>

<sup>25</sup> [scholarblogs.emory.edu/basicproblems02/2015/01/21/the-inextricable-connect](https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/basicproblems02/2015/01/21/the-inextricable-connect)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-relationship-between-knowledge-and-experience>

theory he states that *“all our knowledge is founded”* in *“experience”*, *“from this it ultimately derives itself.”*

John Locke perceives the mind of a new born child as a *“white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas”*, thereby rejecting the concept of innate principles in the human mind that govern and order experience. In his opinion there are no such *“primary notions stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being; and brings into the world with it.”*

Ideas or general principles are only *“mistaken for innate principles”* while in reality they are *“discoveries made and varieties introduced, and brought into the mind”* not before but with experience. This experience consists of two aspects:

*“Our observation employed either about external sensible objects; or about the internal operations of our minds, perceived and reflected on by ourselves”.*<sup>27</sup>

According to this aspect of experience the content of the mind comes through the senses which *“convey into the mind, several distinct perceptions of things, according to those various ways, where in those objects do affect them”*. These sensations lead to *“those ideas, we have of yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard and all those which we call sensible qualities”*. And the experience is made by the *“perception of the operations of our own minds within us”* which then *“furnishes the understanding with another set of ideas, which could not be had from things without; and such are the different acting of our own minds”*. Locke calls this side of experience *“Reflection”*.<sup>28</sup>

Locke stresses that *“the understanding seems, not to have the least glimmering of any ideas, which it does not receive from these shared knowledge and personal knowledge.”* There is *“nothing in our minds”* which has not been brought into it by either sensation or reflection. Knowledge is solely derived from experience, from

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<sup>27</sup> 1John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited by Roger Woolhouse, (Penguin: London, 1997), p. 109, in the following text the book is referred to as *Essay* with page numbers in parenthesis.

<sup>28</sup> 1John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited by Roger Woolhouse, (Penguin: London, 1997), p. 109, in the following text the book is referred to as *Essay* with page numbers in parenthesis.

the principles that organize and categorize it to the 'facts' that are contained in these categories. Although this account of empiricism is rather simplistic and not unproblematic, it does indeed reflect the common concept of empiricism in the eighteenth century which derived itself mainly from Locke's point of view, later being modified by John Berkley and David Hume.

The knowledge and Experience can be summarized from this picturesque review. As we say sometimes experience makes the man perfect shows the high-level intensity. Knowledge always in the theoretical level unless and until we use it with the practical sense. There are people who have not even gone to the school but they speak and act as a highly educated men because of their practical experience.



Knowledge can be classified into shared knowledge and personal knowledge. Shared knowledge is known and accessible to everyone. It is based on concepts and explanations that can be spread and understood by the general public. Personal knowledge differentiates individuals. It is mainly based on personal experience, opinions and thoughts.

The term "*personal life*" composes the context of this statement. Personal life can be explained by breaking it down into shared and personal knowledge. Personal life includes shared knowledge however, it goes beyond, including personal knowledge, individualizing and personalizing the life of a human being. For instance, when playing a song, the lyrics and melody are shared knowledge, accessible and understood by

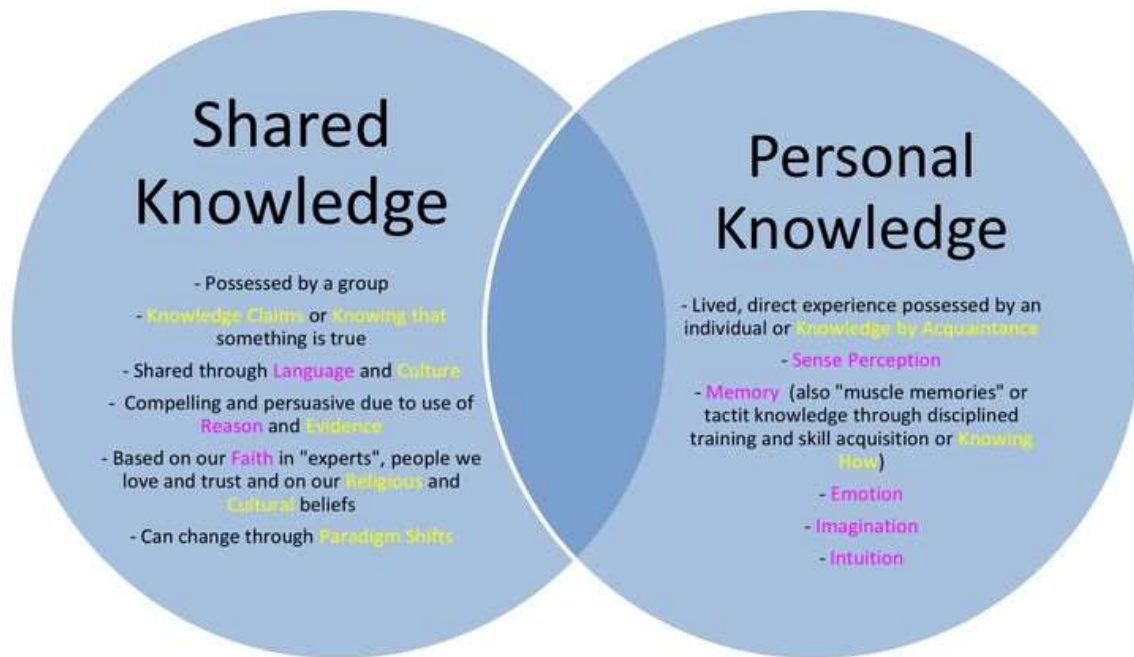
everyone. The memories and experiences that an individual may relate to this song compose the personal knowledge. It cannot be understood and explained by others.<sup>29</sup>

Shared knowledge is structured and systematic in nature, usually falling into more or less distinct areas of knowledge. Shared knowledge can travel across cultures and passes to ongoing generations, in this form surviving through time. Shared knowledge is assembled by a group of people. Most of the subject disciplines studied in the Diploma Programs are good examples of shared knowledge. For example, chemistry is a vast discipline built up over centuries by a large number of people working together. Individual chemists can contribute to this knowledge base by performing experiments. The results of this research are then written in the form of research papers and presented to peers for review. If there is enough corroboration of the results according to standards set by the chemistry community, they are accepted and become part of the corpus of chemistry knowledge. This knowledge is passed on through technical articles written in specialist chemistry journals.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.ipl.org/essay/Shared-Knowledge-And-Personal-Knowledge-PKV66574SCP6>

<sup>30</sup> <http://tokessay.weebly.com/shared-and-personal-knowledge.html>



In the philosophy of religion shared knowledge comes to the personal knowledge, the true knowledge of God. When the personal knowledge is acquired about God, it will lead to God experience. The sports and Music are the mediums to achieve the personal experience and knowledge to come to the God Experience. The religious leaders will share the personal knowledge so it is shared knowledge but personal knowledge is the relation between the person and the experience of God. Finding out the personal knowledge of God is the high-level experience of God.

### **2.11. Man's Knowledge of God**

The nature and relationship of God to man has always been human natures more important question. For example: "As man is, God once was? As God is, man may become?" What is God's nature? What is man's nature? And is human nature God's nature? Therefore, a study of God's nature is simultaneously a study of human nature. So, the God-given human nature, is to become like God. This will be realized that very slowly as the result of many mistakes and challenges. Some, may be most, of the experiences from nature—which is also human nature--have been negative, but a few have been positive. A negative experience, from which a great deal was taking its first drink of beer at a party, may become an alcoholic.

### ***2.11.1. The Nature of God and Man***

Is God's nature human nature? And is human nature God's nature? Therefore, a study of God's nature is simultaneously a study of human nature. "*As man is, God once was? As God is, man may become? Man is created in the image of God*". Was once God as I am today? With both good and bad qualities and characteristics? Had he flaws and character defects? Was God a man who desired good works and self-improvement?

God was intelligent, patient, and meek. Although at times, he also may have been angry and alone. God has experienced some of the same, if not all of the same emotions and feeling's human's experience. God desires to keep us from making some mistakes. And He can do that because our nature and His nature are the same. God gave us commandments to help us to become like him. One of the most important things is the existence of eternal principles.

The eternal principles existed as created by God. These principles have consequences, and when man abide by them, he receives joy, happiness, and progress. When he violates them, the reward is shame, guilt, and sorrow, and he quits making progress--or become worse.

God knows that the pain of labor and hard work is a tool to strengthen us and teach us valuable lessons. God knows about the pain of loss that comes from a broken heart or the death of a loved one, the pain of separation from the Holy Spirit, the pain of disappointment that may stem from family life and close relationships, the pain of failure from school or from a goal not accomplished. God knows that while some pain can be avoided, very often pain must be endured. God knows that it is the price he must pay for progress. Another thing which God knows is the love of others.

He knows that joy comes from thinking about and serving others. At first selfishness probably seemed best to meet his needs, but God knows that self-seeking doesn't really meet his needs. What He knows is that when a person cares for another person, they care for the person in return, and even if they don't care for the person in return, there's a feeling of joy that comes from helping them, and that seems to be another one of those eternal principles. God knows that joy and love are interconnected. He wants to share his knowledge with others. God shows us those



eternal principles in the form of commandments. If we live the commandments, we learn and live eternal principles, if we ignore the commandments we are on our own.

God knows that the body cannot always have pleasure and that it must endure some pain. Healthy people learn the same thing. Bodies are a great blessing if they are controlled. Humans can't have pleasures all the time; they must be controlled. Controlling pleasures is not the same as denying pleasures; we have to learn from God what an appropriate expression of physical pleasure is and what it isn't. God knows that you can't avoid all pain. We feel growing pains through emotions that are not always understood by us. There are the pains of labor from working on projects and tasks that might not be very successful.

We must endure the pain of sickness and death that may arrive without notice. These are all the types of discomforts which God understands. Humans are social beings who instinctively, which means by their nature as humans, need to be with other people and to feel love in order to feel fulfilled and complete. The importance of social needs and friendship are greatly misunderstood. Human's needs for friendship creates human's own self-image; how a human is accepted by peers determines to a large degree their own view of their personal worth.

Just like God, most humans know that loving others works better than selfishness. Humans are created in such a way that human beings need nourishment, constant stimulation through verbal and non-verbal communication from other people. During infants' beginning growth they need constant contact with their parents and others, giving them the opportunity to grow and learn. Throughout childhood and into adolescences and on to adulthood, humans need and want other humans in their life to give them a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction.

Physical embraces are common in all of life's relationships: for example, in athletics' high-fives and pats on the backside to congratulate one another for a job well done. Sporting teams huddle up before and during, as well as after games, in order to come together and experience their physical and emotional state of being. It is customary in many cultures to embrace one another with hugs and kisses upon

greeting one another. God is as man may become. In addition, man was and is created in the image and likeness of God.<sup>31</sup>

### **2.11.2. Innate Knowledge of God**

Knowledge of God is a knowledge that every person has. It is a knowledge that is “*manifest*” or evident in every individual and knowledge that the wicked “*suppress*”. It is a knowledge that consists of God’s invisible qualities, “*His eternal power and Godhead,*” and a knowledge that is so “*clearly seen*” that men are “*without excuse*”. Whether this knowledge can best be described as innate (an endowment by God of every man), or intuitive (an automatic knowledge that arises within the individual because of that which is communicated to him from around him), or a combination of the two, the point is that every individual has this knowledge. It is a knowledge that no man is without Innate Knowledge and Intellectually Astute.

To be man is to have knowledge of God; the knowledge is not probable but certain, not a possibility for man but a reality for man. The reasoning and arguments of man do not destroy this knowledge, for the knowledge is an integral part of every man. And it has been there “*since the creation of the world*”. Man may deny it; man may reject it; but the knowledge remains. “*Knowledge of God is both inescapable and universal*”. *Reymond speaks of this God-knowledge as “innate theism”*<sup>32</sup>.

To think is to think of God. In fact, one cannot think and not think of God, for God is inescapable. This is to say that God is not the highest evolving thought of man but that the God-thought is consistent with what it is for man to be man. The Creator made the creature capable of thinking, and when the creature thinks he thinks of the Creator—he cannot do otherwise. Written in the universe around man and written on the heart within man is the fact of God. Man thinks of God because God has impressed man indelibly with Himself. No thinking is possible without God, and no thinking is possible without God in the thinking. Really, no thought has meaning unless God is. To think is to face God. To be man is to know that God is God.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://phdessay.com/the-nature-of-god-and-man/>

<sup>32</sup>Raymond, ‘Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith’, 143

This knowledge of God that every man has is essentially ethical and not philosophical; that is, the knowledge imparts a sense of accountability, not just a sense of the fact that God is. It creates an abiding awareness of personal responsibility to God, not just an intellectual knowledge of the being of God. For man to know of God is for man to know that he is answerable to Him. The knowledge instructs man about God but the instruction about God is for the purpose of a confrontation of man by God. To admit God is to be confronted by God. If God exists, man is accountable. God's existence, finally, is not an intellectual problem, but a moral dilemma.

Even though man has this knowledge of God man has not glorified "*Him as God*" nor been "*thankful*". In fact, the Scripture claims that the truth is suppressed, and this suppression is in unrighteousness.<sup>33</sup> Because of his sin man rejects God; knowledge of God is suppressed and accountability is denied. And this suppression is not based upon man's lack of evidence from his unbiased examination of reality, but upon man's determined rejection of Him before whom he should submit. In this sense, man covers his sin. Man's nature is in opposition to God and His authority.

To admit the existence of God is to face the decision of whether to submit to the authority of God or to resist the authority. One bows to God or becomes his own god. Submission or the lack of it is what determines one's morality. There are really only two choices: Theism or humanism, Life or death, Heaven or Hell. It should be understood that this knowledge of God that every man is not a redemptive knowledge. It is sufficient to render man guilty before God, and thus, accountable to God, but it is not sufficient to save the sinner. Some thinkers, therefore, distinguish between general knowledge and special knowledge, with special knowledge completing what general knowledge initiates. General knowledge is the natural possession of every man by virtue of his creation—to be man is to have it—but special knowledge is the blessing of the grace of God—it is the possession of those loved by the Father before the foundation of the world and chosen to be in Christ. General knowledge occupies the philosopher whereas special knowledge is the passion of the Biblical theologian.

It must be noted, however, that general knowledge can only be interpreted properly from the perspective of special knowledge. With only general knowledge man

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<sup>33</sup> Bible, New Testament-Letter to Romans. 1:18)

has a knowledge of Someone (the Supreme Being or Cosmic Mind) he does not know; but once man becomes the recipient of special knowledge—that is, man is Embraced by Truth.<sup>34</sup>

### **2.11.3. Declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge**

How many doors are there in your home? Were we able to give a quick answer, probably within 2 seconds? we probably didn't have the answer instantaneously. First, we pictured our home on our mind and then wandered through it mentally counting the number of doors. Now, even being an *'expert'* on your home, why couldn't you simply state the number of doors in your own home instantaneously?

Our brain is not a coherently designed and engineered organ. It carries a myriad simultaneous and independent activities. Among these activities, the brain processes information for learning. That information, which is obtained from outside, is transformed into knowledge. This is the knowledge that helps us to name, explain and talk about matters. It is called declarative knowledge.

Then, what about the first question — the number of doors in your house? Naming the number of doors in your home requires declarative knowledge. Although you are an *'expert'* about your home, that knowledge is not available to you in declarative form. Therefore, your expertise was in walking through all areas. This is the type of knowledge that helps us to act and perform tasks. It is called procedural knowledge. Now, here's where that presents the problem when we train our student a skill. Teachers' expertise is in procedural knowledge. In the classroom, the teacher is expected to transmit the knowledge through explaining, giving examples and by providing contexts in declarative form. Then the learner converts that declarative knowledge back into procedural knowledge to meet with their expectation of being able to do the required task.

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<sup>34</sup> <http://embracedbytruth.com/God/God's%20Existence/Innate%20Knowledge%20of%20God.htm>

#### ***2.11.4 Much easier said (declarative) than done (procedural)!***

When we are aware of the kind of knowledge our learners need to acquire — declarative or procedural — we can adjust our teaching accordingly. When we need to teach our learners on fact recalling, we can plan activities that they can practice in a declarative manner. More hands-on approach can be taken if we want them to acquire do and use types of knowledge — procedural. Gaining procedural knowledge eventually allows learners to gain expertise in performing tasks with fluency. However, this fluency remains as long as the conditions remain the same. When the conditions change, their automaticity drops. That is when declarative knowledge comes to play. Declarative knowledge helps learners to generalize to new circumstances through explanations. It makes them get adapted to the new requirements. Therefore, combination of both types of knowledge — practice and explanation — is important to produce effective outcomes. The practice of the Music and Sports may lead to practical knowledge and it proceeds to achieve the God experience by assimilating and awareness.

#### **2.12. The knowledge of God According to Christianity.**

In this topic I deal with the man's knowledge of God covers the man's innate knowledge of God, the man's knowledge of God through the study of His creation, man's knowledge of God through His revelation to us, classical proofs for the existence of God, the irrationality of atheism and agnosticism, and man's proper response to his knowledge of God.

It is valuable to study the topic of man's knowledge of God because atheism is becoming so prevalent. In days passed, atheism was looked down upon; now atheism is becoming respectable and theism is looked down upon by many people. God has revealed Himself to man in so many ways that, to deny His existence, is to think irrationally. Be assured: atheism goes against rational logic and intelligence. As King David points out:

*"A fool says in his heart, `There is no God.'" (Psalm 14:1). And Paul says of those who come to deny the existence of God: "Although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." (Rom. 1:21).*

By considering this subject, we can strengthen our faith in God, and be reassured that our faith is based upon undeniable evidence; we can be more diligent in our obedience to God, and be reassured that our obedience is not in vain; and we can persevere in our service for God, and be reassured that our service is not futile.

Belief in God is the foundation of true intelligence. One cannot be wise as he lives in this world if he does not have an understanding of the Creator of the universe. It is self-evident that those who have a close relationship with the Creator and who are walking in His counsel will be wiser as they live in a world that He has created. Despite this, many, whom God has given an aptitude for intelligence, use this intelligence to further theories of science that begin with the premise that there is no God. The Lord warns these people through the prophet Isaiah: *"Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.'" (Isa. 47:10)*. They are self-deceived by the intelligence that should lead them to God.

We must be careful not to be deceived by them. We are warned: *"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ" (Col. 2:8)*. Unfortunately, the wisdom of the world is at odds with Godly wisdom, so much so that those who believe in God are seen as fool by the worldly wise. But Paul warns: *"Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a 'fool' so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight" (I Cor. 3:18-19)*. Despite the opinion of the world, God is known to us, not only by faith, but also by reason.

God is known to us because He has gone out of His way to reveal Himself to us. Every person who has ever lived upon the face of the earth has had a knowledge of God. As Paul says, *"What may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them" (Rom. 1:19)*. God has revealed Himself to man in three basic ways:

1. God has given man an innate knowledge of Him.
2. God has revealed Himself through His creation.
3. God has given man a direct revelation through His Word and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The first basic way that God has revealed Himself to us is through an innate knowledge of Him that He has given each of us. From a very young age, we know that there is a God. We have an awareness of our own being and we conclude, "I have been made by someone." We consider ourselves--our soul and our body--and we realize, as the Psalmist, that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14). We also have the voice of the Spirit of God speaking to us our entire life through our conscience, giving us a built-in sense of right and wrong, a law written on our hearts and our minds. This innate law points to a Lawgiver who has established the laws that have been put in our hearts.

The second basic way that God has revealed Himself to us is through His creation. We cannot help but notice the marvelous design of the universe. And where there is such a design, there must have been a designer, for no trick of chance could have produced such an intricate, wise design. The creation also reveals much about the character and attributes of the Creator: His wisdom, His mercy, His perfection, His omnipotence, etc. We see miracles of nature every day, miracles that have through familiarity become commonplace: the miracle of a sunset and a rainbow, the miracle of a bird in flight and an emerging butterfly from a cocoon, the miracle of a spider-spun web and a perfumed rose. Who can see such things and not admire their Creator?

The third basic way in which God has revealed Himself is by His direct revelation to us through His Word, the Holy Bible, and through His Son, Jesus Christ. God's revelation of Himself to us through our innate knowledge of Him and through the creation are subjective revelations, liable to be reinterpreted by our sinful nature. Therefore, God has revealed Himself to us in a clear and objective way--through the Bible and by sending His Son--in order to clear up the misconceptions we have developed concerning God. The Bible gives us a clear explanation of God's plan of redemption for His creation, as well as a written description of the attributes of God.

The Bible also gives us the law in written form, confirming and supplementing the law written on our hearts. Then, God's revelation through His Son, first, demonstrated God's love for us. Paul says: "*But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*" (Rom. 5:8). God's revelation through Christ also, by His behavior, demonstrated God's character to us. When Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father, Jesus replied: "*Anyone who has seen me has seen*

*the Father*" (John 14:9). In addition, Christ, through His life, demonstrated God's law to us, for "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth" (I Peter 2:22).

### ***2.12.1. Knowledge through Revelation***

All three types of revelation are necessary for us to gain a full understanding of God. The creation, by its marvelous design, leads us to believe in the existence of God. Our conscience gives us an awareness of our sinfulness and, thus, our need for God's salvation. God's direct revelation informs us objectively about God's plan of redemption through Christ. Although God's direct revelation through His Word contains all we need to know about God's character and plan, we still need God's revelation through the creation and through our conscience in order to accept and appreciate the Word of God. No one accepts the Bible as God's Word until he first has a belief in God, a belief he received through the other methods of God's revelation. Moreover, no one accepts Christ as his Savior until he first has a belief in God and also an awareness of his sinfulness, which he receives through his conscience.

So, our knowledge of God comes in stages and from all three methods of revelation. First, we have an innate knowledge that there is a God, so we desire to seek Him. Then, we become assured of His existence and, to some extent, learn of His attributes through the creation. Next, our consciences inform us that we need His salvation. We seek His salvation and find it in Jesus Christ. This plan of salvation, we find, is the theme of the Bible, and so we find in the Bible, objectively written, all we need to know about God and His plan for His creation.

Certainly, even given our innate knowledge of God, the revelation of God through His creation and his direct revelation through His Word, there is still much we do not understand about God. But that's OK! He would not be God if we could understand all His ways. Who would want a God that they could understand fully? Who would want such a small God, a God that could be understood by our feeble minds? So, do not despair if there are things about God that you do not understand. What is important is that we take advantage of the ways that He has revealed Himself to us. We must meditate on Him in our hearts. We must behold His creation and let it speak to us through its wonderful design. We must study His Word so that we understand all that it has to say to us.



### **2.12.2. God's wisdom verses mercy**

It is a well-known saying of the Prophet that *"He who knows himself, knows God"*; that is, by contemplation of his own being and attributes man arrives at some knowledge of God. But since many who contemplate themselves do not find God; it follows that there must be some special ways of doing so. When a man further considers how his various wants of food, lodging, etc., are amply supplied from the storehouse of creation, he becomes aware that God's mercy is as great as His power and wisdom, as He has Himself said, *"My mercy is greater than My wrath"* and according to the Prophet's saying, *"God is more tender to His servants than a mother to her suckling-child."* Thus, from his own creation man comes to know God's existence, from the wonders of his bodily frame God's power and wisdom, and from the ample provision made for his various needs God's love. In this way the knowledge of oneself becomes a key to the knowledge of God.

### **2.12.3. The essence and attributes of God**

Not only are man's attributes a reflection of God's attributes, but the mode of existence of man's soul affords some insight into God's mode of existence. That is to say, both God and the soul are invisible, indivisible, unconfined by space and time, and outside the categories of quantity and quality; nor can the ideas of shape, color, or size attach to them. People find it hard to form a conception of such realities as are devoid of quality and quantity, etc., but a similar difficulty attaches to the conception of our everyday feelings, such as anger, pain, pleasure, or love. They are thought-concepts, and cannot be cognized by the senses; whereas quality, quantity, etc., are sense-concepts. Just as the ear cannot take cognizance of color, nor the eye of sound, so, in conceiving of the ultimate realities, God and the soul, we find ourselves in a region in which sense-concepts can bear no part. So much, however, we can see, that, as God is Ruler of the universe, and, being Himself beyond space and time, quantity and quality, governs things that are so conditioned, so the soul rules the body and its members, being itself invisible, indivisible, and unlocated in any special part. For how can the indivisible be located in that which is divisible? From all this we see how true is the saying of the Prophet, *"God created man in His own likeness."*

And, as we arrive at some knowledge of God's essence and attributes from the contemplation of the soul's essence and attributes, so we come to understand God's method of working and government and delegation of power to angelic forces, etc., by

observing how each of us governs his own little kingdom. To take a simple instance: suppose a man wishes to write the name of God. First of all, the wish is conceived in his heart, it is then conveyed to the brain by the vital spirits, the form of the word "*God*" takes shape in the thought-chambers of the brain, then it travels by the nerve-channels, and sets in motion the fingers, which in their turn set in motion the pen, and thus the name "*God*" is traced on paper exactly as it had been conceived in the writer's brain. Similarly, when God wills a thing it appears in the spiritual plane, which in the Koran is called "The Throne"

[1] From the throne it passes, by a spiritual current, to a lower plane called "The Chair"

[2] Then the shape of it appears on the "*Tablet of Destiny*"

[3] When, by the mediation of the forces called "*angels*," it assumes actuality, and appears on the earth in the form of plants, trees, and animals, representing the will and thought of God, as the written letters represent the wish conceived in the heart and the shape present in the brain of the writer.

#### **2.12.4. *The providence of God***

As regards the recognition of God's providence, there are many degrees of Knowledge. The mere physicist is like an ant who, crawling on a sheet of paper and observing black letters spreading over it, should refer the cause to the pen alone. The astronomer is like an ant of somewhat wider vision who should catch sight of the fingers moving the pen, *i.e.*, he knows that the elements are under the power of the stars, but he does not know that the stars are under the power of the angels. Thus, owing to the different degrees of perception in people, disputes must arise in tracing effects to causes. Those whose eyes never see beyond the world of phenomena are like those who mistake servants of the lowest rank for the king. The laws of phenomena must be constant, or there could be no such thing as science; but it is a great error to mistake the slaves for the master.

We have a common instance of this referring to second causes what ought to be referred to the First Cause in the case of so-called illness. For instance, if a man ceases to take any interest in worldly matters, conceives a distaste for common pleasures, and appears sunk in depression, the doctor will say, "*This is a case of melancholy, and requires such and such a prescription.*" The physicist will say, "*This*

*is a dryness of the brain caused by hot weather and cannot be relieved till the air becomes moist.*" The astrologer will attribute it to some particular conjunction or opposition of planets. *"Thus far their wisdom reaches,"* says the Koran. It does not occur to them that what has really happened is this: that the Almighty has a concern for the welfare of that man, and has therefore commanded His servants, the planets or the elements, to produce such a condition in him that he may turn away from the world to his Maker. The knowledge of this fact is a lustrous pearl from the ocean of inspirational knowledge, to which all other forms of knowledge are as islands, in the sea.

#### ***2.12.5. The knowledge of God is response to the Almighty***

The doctor, physicist, and astrologer are doubtless right each in his particular branch of knowledge, but they do not see that illness is, so to speak, a cord of love by which God draws to Himself the saints concerning whom He has said, *"I was sick and yet visited Me not."* Illness itself is one of those forms of experience by which man arrives at the knowledge of God, as He says by the mouth of His Prophet, *"Sicknesses themselves are My servants, and are attached, to My chosen."*

The foregoing remarks may enable us to enter a little more fully into the meaning of those exclamations so often on the lips of the Faithful: *"God is holy," "Praise be to God," "There is no God but God," "God is great."* Concerning the last we may say that it does not mean that God is greater than creation, for creation is His manifestation as light manifests the sun, and it would not be correct to say that the sun is greater than its own light. It rather means that God's greatness immeasurably transcends our cognitive faculties, and that we can only form a very dim and imperfect idea of it. If a child asks us to explain to him the pleasure which exists in wielding sovereignty, we may say it is like the pleasure he feels in playing bat and ball, though in reality the two have nothing in common except that they both come under the category of pleasure. Thus, the exclamation *"God is great"* means that His greatness far exceeds all our powers of comprehension. Moreover, such imperfect knowledge of God as we can attain to is not a mere speculative knowledge, but must be accompanied by devotion and worship.

When a man dies, he has to do with God alone, and if we have to live with a person, our happiness entirely depends on the degree of affection we feel towards him.

Love is the seed of happiness, and love to God is fostered and developed by worship. Such worship and constant remembrance of God implies a certain degree of austerity and curbing of bodily appetites. Not that a man is intended altogether to abolish these, for then the human race would perish. But strict limits must be set to their indulgence, and as a man is not the best judge in his own case as to what these limits should be, he had better consult some spiritual guide on the subject. Such spiritual guides are the prophets, and the laws which they have laid down under divine inspiration prescribe the limits which must be observed in these matters. He who transgresses these limits "*wrongs his own soul,*" as it is written in the Koran.<sup>35</sup> Notwithstanding this clear pronouncement of the Koran, there are those who - through their ignorance of God - do transgress these limits, and this ignorance may be due to several different causes.

#### ***2.12.6. There are some who fail to find God by observation***

According to these causes, there is no God and this world of wonders made itself, or existed from everlasting. They are like a man who, seeing a beautifully written letter, should suppose that it had written itself without a writer, or had always existed. People in this state of mind are so far gone in error that it is of little use to argue with them. Such are some of the physicists and astronomers to whom we referred above.

Some, through ignorance of the real nature of the soul, repudiate the doctrine of a future life, in which man will be called to account and be rewarded or punished. They regard themselves as no better than animals or vegetables, and equally perishable. Some, on the other hand, believe in God and a future life but with a weak belief. They say to themselves, "God is great and independent of us; our worship or abstinence from worship is a matter of entire indifference to Him." Their state of mind is like that of a sick man who, when prescribed a certain regime by his doctor, should say, "Well, if I follow it or don't follow it, what does it matter to the doctor?" It certainly does not matter to the doctor, but the patient may destroy himself by his disobedience. Just as surely as, unchecked sickness of body ends in bodily death, so does uncured

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<sup>35</sup> <https://ses.edu/romans-1-and-mans-knowledge-of-god-a-response-to-fred-butler/>

disease of the soul ends in future misery, according to the saying of the Koran, "Only those shall be saved who come to God with a sound heart."

**2.12.7. *The Law tells us to abstain from anger, lust, and hypocrisy***

This is plainly impossible, for man is created with these qualities inherent in him. You might as well tell us to make black white. These foolish people ignore the fact that the law does not tell us to uproot these passions, but to restrain them within due limits, so that, by avoiding the greater sins, we may obtain forgiveness of the smaller ones. Even the Prophet of God said, "I am a man like you, and get angry like others"; and in the Koran it is written, "God loves those who swallow down their anger," not those who have no anger at all.

**2.12.8. *Stress on the beneficence of God, and ignore His justice***

This kind of people are saying to themselves, "Well, whatever we do, God is merciful." They do not consider that, though God is merciful, thousands of human beings perish miserably in hunger and disease. They know that whosoever wishes for a livelihood, or for wealth, or for learning, must not merely say, "God is merciful," but must exert himself. Although the Koran says, "Every living creature's support comes from God," it is also written, "Man obtains nothing except by striving." The fact is, such teaching is really from the devil, and such people only speak with their lips and not with their heart.<sup>36</sup>

**2.12.9. *Shared religious Knowledge and Individual religious Knowledge***

Any belief system is based on a body of semantic knowledge and, in the case of religious belief, that body of semantic knowledge is the doctrine, or set of concepts about agents and supernatural entities that believers accept as real. The source of religious knowledge is knowledge of events that come from explicitly religious personal

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<sup>36</sup> *The Existence and Attributes of God* by Stephen Charnock; *Institutes of Christian Religion* by John Calvin; *Summa Theologica* by Thomas Aquinas; *Systematic Theology* by Charles Hodge; and *Systematic Theology* by John Miley.

experiences (such as prayer or participation in ritual), but also from multiple social and moral events influenced by religion. This means that religious knowledge draws on both sources: doctrine and personal experience. In addition, the adoption and application of religious beliefs is influenced by the emotions and goals of the individual.

Personal knowledge of an individual is usually based on the shared knowledge of his family and the culture that surrounds him, so it is natural that tradition has a major impact on the formation of a person's religious knowledge. However, the experiences of the individual also end up influencing the formation, consolidation or validation of that knowledge. But ultimately, religion is a shared knowledge because communal ceremonies and traditions play a cohesive role in the community of believers of the same religion. Knowledge shared in a religion is the basis of that religion: rules, traditions, ancient prophecies, moral code and cultural / historical antecedents.<sup>37</sup>

### **2.13. Art as a means to truth or knowledge**

Art as a means to the acquisition of truth. Art has even been called the avenue to the highest knowledge available to humans and to a kind of knowledge impossible of attainment by any other means. Knowledge can be learned from sense observation that the sun is setting, and this is knowledge. Is knowledge acquired in this same sense from acquaintance with works of art? There is no doubt that there are some propositions that can be made after acquaintance with works of art that could not be made before: for example, that the performance of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony was 47 minutes long, that this painting predominates in green, that this piece of sculpture originated about 350 BCE. The question is whether there is anything that can be called truth or knowledge that can be found in works of art.

Literature is surely the most obvious candidate, for literature consists of words, and words are combined into sentences, and sentences are used to convey propositions—that is, to make assertions that are either true or false. And works of literature do certainly contain many true statements: a novel about the French

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<sup>37</sup> Religious knowledge systems. Retrieved from: [theoryofknowledge.net](http://theoryofknowledge.net).

Revolution conveys facts about the series of events. But the relevance of this fact to literature as an art is extremely dubious. If an 18th-century novel gives a true picture of English country life of that time, this makes it useful to read as history, but does it also make it a better novel? Many, at any rate, would say that it does not: that a tenth-rate novel might give more facts about 18th-century life than a first-rate novel of the same century. For that matter, many of the propositions in a novel are, taken at face value, false; it is false, for example, that there was a foundling named Tom Jones who had an uncle named Squire Western.

The thousands of pages of description in novels of fictional characters, ascribing to them thoughts and actions, are all false, since these characters never actually existed. Yet this fact in no way impugns their value as literature. Shakespeare, in *The Winter's Tale*, sets part of the action on the seacoast of Bohemia, but the fact that Bohemia has no seacoast does not damage *The Winter's Tale* as literature, though it would as geography. The fact that Milton used the outdated Ptolemaic astronomy does not make *Paradise Lost* less valuable, nor does the nonexistence of the lands described in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) in any way diminish Swift's work. There is no doubt, then, that works of literature can contain true statements and false ones. But it is tempting to ask, what does their truth or falsity matter? Literature is not astronomy or geography or history or any branch of knowledge, particular or general.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup><https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-art/Art-as-a-means-to-truth-or-knowledge>

## Chapter-3

### THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT OF GOD

#### 3.1. Introduction

The concept of God in A level philosophy is the concept of God as understood by the three main monotheistic religions – Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Typically, these religions agree that God has the following 4 divine attributes:

- Omnipotence
- Omniscience
- Omnibenevolence
- Eternal/everlasting

*'Omnipotence'* literally translates as all powerful. God is imagined to be perfectly powerful – it's not possible for there to exist a being with more power than God. But this doesn't mean God can do literally *'anything'*. For example, God can't make "*triangles have 4 sides*" true, because it is a logical contradiction. Omnipotence is thus best understood as the claim that God can do anything that's *'logically possible'*. *'Omniscience'* literally translates as all knowing. This is to say God has perfect knowledge. He knows everything – or, at least, everything it is *'possible'* to know. For example, it is argued that God doesn't know what we humans are going to do in the future because we have free will. The claim is still that God knows everything it's possible to know.

*'Omnibenevolence'* literally translates as that God is perfectly good. God always does what's morally good – He never does anything bad or evil. Eternal or Everlasting means. Whether God is eternal or everlasting depends on the nature of God. If God exists *'within time'*, then He is everlasting. This is to say He was there at the beginning of time and will continue to exist forever. If God exists *'outside of time'*, then He is eternal. He has no beginning or end – as these concepts only make sense within time. In this Chapter let's see the different views apart from this.



### 3.2. Aristotelianism

In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle discusses the meaning of "being as being". Aristotle holds that "being" primarily refers to the Unmoved Movers, and assigned one of these to each movement in the heavens. Aristotle's definition of God attributes perfection to this being, and, as a perfect being, it can only contemplate upon perfection and not on imperfection; otherwise, perfection would not be one of his attributes. God, according to Aristotle, is in a state of "stasis" untouched by change and imperfection. The "unmoved mover" is very unlike the conception of God that one sees in most religions<sup>39</sup>.

### 3.3. Hermeticism

"The All" is the Hermetic version of God. It has also been called "The One", "The Great One", "The Creator", "The Supreme Mind", "The Supreme Good", "The Father" and "The Universal Mother". The 'All' is seen by some to be a panentheistic conception of God, subsuming everything that is or can be experienced. One Hermetic maxim states that "While All is in THE ALL, it is equally true that THE ALL is in All."<sup>40</sup> The All can also be seen to be hermaphroditic, possessing both masculine and feminine qualities in equal part text.<sup>41</sup> These qualities are, however, of mental gender, as 'The All' lacks physical sex. According to *The Kybalion*, The All is more complicated than simply being the sum total of the universe. Rather than 'The All' being simply the physical universe, it is said that everything in the universe is within the mind of 'The All', since 'The All' can be looked at as Mind itself <sup>42</sup> The All's mind is thought to be infinitely more powerful and vast than humans can possibly achieve,<sup>43</sup> and possibly capable of keeping track of

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<sup>39</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/conceptions\\_of\\_God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/conceptions_of_God)

<sup>40</sup> *Three Initiates (1912). The Kybalion. Chicago: Yogi Publication Society. p. 95. ISBN 0-911662-25-1.*

<sup>41</sup> *The Way of Hermes: New Translations of The Corpus Hermeticum and The Definitions of Hermes Trismegistus to Asclepius (Book 1:9). Translated by Salaman, Clement; Van Oyen, Dorine; Wharton, William D.; Mahé, Jean-Pierre. Rochester: Inner Traditions. 2000. p. 19. ISBN 978-0892818174.*

<sup>42</sup> *Three Initiates pp. 96-7.*

<sup>43</sup>*Three Initiates p. 99.*

every particle in the Universe. The Kybalion states that nothing can be outside ‘*The All*’ or ‘*The All*’ would not be ‘*The All*’.

### 3.4. Judaism

In Judaism, God has been conceived in a variety of ways.<sup>44</sup> Traditionally, Judaism holds that YHWH, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the national god of the Israelites, delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, and gave them the Law of Moses at biblical Mount Sinai as described in the Torah. According to the rationalist stream of Judaism articulated by Maimonides, which later came to dominate much of official traditional Jewish thought, God is understood as the absolute one, indivisible, and incomparable being who is the ultimate cause of all existence. Traditional interpretations of Judaism generally emphasize that God is personal yet also transcendent, while some modern interpretations of Judaism emphasize that God is a force or ideal<sup>45</sup>.



### 3.5. Christianity

#### 3.5.1. Trinitarianism

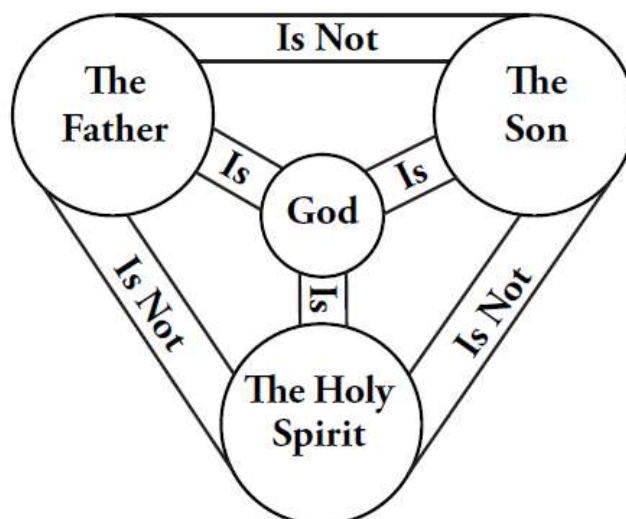
Within Christianity, the doctrine of the Trinity states that God is a single being that exists, simultaneously and eternally as a perichoresis of three hypostases (i.e. persons; *personae*, *prosopa*): the Father (the Source, the

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<sup>44</sup> James Kugel, ""The God of Old, Inside the Lost World of the Bible" (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/modern-jewish-views-of-god>

Eternal Majesty); the Son (the eternal *Logos* -"Word"), manifest in human form as Jesus and thereafter as Christ); and the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete or advocate). Since the 4th Century AD, in both Eastern and Western Christianity, this doctrine has been stated as "*One God in Three Persons*", all three of whom, as distinct and co-eternal "persons" or "*hypostases*", share a single divine essence, being, or nature.



### **3.5.2. Unitarianism**

Within Christianity, Unitarianism is the view that God consists of only one person, the Father, instead of three persons as Trinitarianism states<sup>46</sup>. Unitarians believe that mainstream Christianity has been corrupted over history, and that it is not strictly monotheistic. There are different Unitarian views on Jesus, ranging from seeing him purely as a man who was chosen by God, to seeing him as a divine being, as the Son of God who had pre-existence<sup>47</sup>. Thus, Unitarianism is typically divided into two principal groups:

<sup>46</sup> "Unitarianism and Universalism | religion". *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved 2017-10-04.

<sup>47</sup> Miano, David (2003), *An Explanation of Unitarian Christianity*, AUC, p. 15

- **Arianism**, which believes in the pre-existence of the Logos, and holds that the Son was God's first creation.<sup>48</sup>
- **Socinianism**, the view that Jesus was a mere man, and had no existence before his birth.<sup>49</sup>

### **3.5.3. Binitarianism**

Binitarianism is the view within Christianity that there were originally two beings in the Godhead – the Father and the Word – that became the Son (Jesus the Christ). Binitarians normally believe that God is a family, currently consisting of the Father and the Son. The word “*binitarian*” is typically used by scholars and theologians as a contrast to a trinitarian theology: a theology of “*two*” in God rather than a theology of “*three*”, and although some critics prefer to use the term ditheist or dualist instead of binitarian, those terms suggests that God is not one, yet binitarians believe that God is one family.

### **3.5.4. Mormonism**

In the Mormonism represented by most of Mormon communities, including The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “*God*” means ‘*Elohim*’ (the Father), whereas “*Godhead*” means a council of three distinct entities; Elohim, Jehovah (the Son, or Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. The Father and Son have perfected, material bodies, while the Holy Spirit is a spirit and does not have a body. This conception differs from the traditional Christian Trinity; in Mormonism, the three persons are considered to be physically separate beings, or personages, but indistinguishable in will and purpose.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> “*Arianism | Christianity*”. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved 2017-10-04.

<sup>49</sup> Wulfert De Greef, *The writings of John Calvin: an introductory guide*, 2008. Quote: “Lelio Sozzini’s Brevis explicatio in primum Johannis caput appeared in 1561, which marked the beginning of the Socinian phase among the Italian.”

<sup>50</sup> The term with its distinctive Mormon usage first appeared in *Lectures on Faith* (published 1834), Lecture 5 (“*We shall in this lecture speak of the Godhead; we mean the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*”). The term “*Godhead*” also appears several times in Lecture 2 in its sense as used in the Authorized King James Version as meaning divinity.

### 3.6. Islamism

Islam's most fundamental concept is a strict monotheism called *tawhīd*. God is described in the Quran as: "*Say: He is God, the One; God, the Eternal, the Absolute; He begot no one, nor is He begotten; Nor is there to Him equivalent anyone.*"<sup>51</sup> In Islam, God is beyond all comprehension or equal and does not resemble any of his creations in any way. Thus, Muslims are not iconodules and are not expected to visualize God. The message of God is carried by angels to 124,000 messengers starting with Adam and concluding with Mohammad. God is described and referred in the Quran by certain names or attributes, the most common being *Al-Rahman*, meaning "*Most Compassionate*" and *Al-Rahim*, meaning "*Most Merciful*".<sup>52</sup>



Muslims believe that creation of everything in the universe is brought into being by God's sheer command "*Be' and so it is.*"<sup>53</sup> and that the purpose of existence is to please God, both by worship and by good deeds. He is viewed as a personal God who responds whenever a person in need or distress calls Him. There are no intermediaries, such as clergy, to contact God: "He is nearer to his creation than

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<sup>51</sup> D. Gimaret. "Allah, Tawhid". *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*.

<sup>52</sup> Bentley, David (September 1999). *The 99 Beautiful Names for God for All the People of the Book*. William Carey Library. ISBN 0-87808-299-9.

<sup>53</sup> "Islām". *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Retrieved 2010-08-25.

the jugular vein". *Allāh* (Arabic: الله *Allāh*), without plural or gender is the divine name of the lord mentioned in the Quran, while "'ilāh" (Arabic: إله *ellāh*) is the term used for a deity or a God in general.<sup>54</sup>

### 3.7. Baha'í Faith

Bahá'ís believe in a single, imperishable God, the creator of all things, including all the creatures and forces in the universe. In Bahá'í belief, God is beyond space and time but is also described as "a personal God, unknowable, inaccessible, the source of all Revelation, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent and almighty."<sup>55</sup> Though inaccessible directly, God is nevertheless seen as conscious of creation, possessing a mind, will and purpose. Bahá'ís believe that God expresses this will at all times and in many ways, including Manifestations, a series of divine "messengers" or "educators"<sup>56</sup>. In expressing God's intent, these manifestations are seen to establish religion in the world. Bahá'í teachings state that God is too great for humans to fully comprehend, nor to create a complete and accurate image. Bahá'u'lláh often refers to God by titles, such as the "All-Powerful" or the "All-Loving".

### 3.8. Jainism

Jainism does not support belief in a creator deity. According to Jain doctrine, the universe and its constituents—soul, matter, space, time, and principles of motion—have always existed. All the constituents and actions are governed by universal natural laws. Jain text claims that the universe consists of Jiva (life force or souls) and Ajiva (lifeless objects). Similarly, the soul of each living being is unique and uncreated and has existed since beginningless time.

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<sup>54</sup> "Islam and Christianity", *Encyclopedia of Christianity* (2001): Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews also refer to God as Allāh.

<sup>55</sup> Effendi, Shoghi (1944). *God Passes By*. Wilmette, Illinois, USA: Bahá'í Publishing Trust. p. 139. ISBN 0-87743-020-9.

<sup>56</sup> Hutter, Manfred (2005). "Bahā'īs". In Lindsay Jones (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Religion*. 2(2nd ed.). Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA. pp. 737–740. ISBN 0-02-865733-0.



Furthermore, according to the Jain concept of divinity, any soul who destroys its karmas and desires, achieves liberation/Nirvana. A soul who destroys all its passions and desires has no desire to interfere in the working of the universe. Moral rewards and sufferings are not the work of a divine being, but a result of an innate moral order in the cosmos; a self-regulating mechanism whereby the individual reaps the fruits of his own actions through the workings of the karmas. They have adamantly rejected and opposed the concept of creator and omnipotent God. This has resulted in Jainism being labeled as '*nastika darsana*' (atheist philosophy) by rival religious philosophies. The theme of non-creationism and absence of omnipotent God and divine grace runs strongly in all the philosophical dimensions of Jainism. Through the ages, Jain philosophers include its cosmology, concepts of *karma* and *moksa* and its moral code of conduct. Jainism asserts a religious and virtuous life is possible without the idea of a creator God.<sup>57</sup>

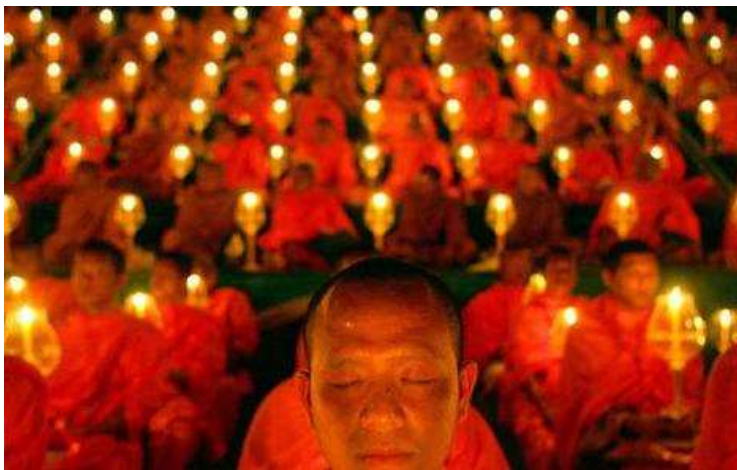
### 3.9. Buddhism

In Buddhism, the sole aim of the spiritual practice is the complete alleviation of distress (*dukkha*) in '*samsara*' called '*nirvana*'. The Buddha neither denies nor accepts a creator, denies endorsing any views on creation and states that questions on the origin of the world are worthless. Buddhists accept the existence of beings

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<sup>57</sup> Soni, Jayandra (1998). E. Craig (ed.). "*Jain Philosophy*". Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy. London: Routledge. Archived from *the original* on 2008-07-05. Retrieved 2008-06-27.

known as *devas* in higher realms, but they, like humans, are said to be suffering in '*samsara*',<sup>58</sup> and not necessarily wiser than us. In fact, the Buddha is often portrayed as a teacher of the gods, and superior to them. Despite this, there are believed to be enlightened *devas* on the path of Buddhahood.



In Buddhism, the idea of the metaphysical absolute is deconstructed in the same way as of the idea of an enduring "*Self*", but it is not necessarily denied. Reality is considered as dynamic, interactive and non-substantial, which implies rejection of '*Brahman*' or of a divine substratum. A cosmic principle can be embodied in concepts such as the '*dharmakaya*'. Though there is a primordial Buddha (or, in Vajrayana, the Adi-Buddha, a representation of immanent enlightenment in nature), its representation as a creator is a symbol of the presence of a universal cyclical creation and dissolution of the cosmos and not of an actual personal being. An intelligent, metaphysical underlying basis, however, is not ruled out by Buddhism, although Buddhists are generally very careful to distinguish this idea from that of an independent creator God.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-11435-4. Donald K. Swearer (2004). *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand*

<sup>59</sup>"*Dalai Lama Answers Questions on Various Topics*". [hhdl.dharmakara.net](http://hhdl.dharmakara.net).



### 3.10. Hinduism

In Hinduism, the concept of God is complex and depends on the particular tradition. The concept spans conceptions from absolute monism to henotheism, monotheism and polytheism. In Vedic period monotheistic God concept culminated in the semi abstract semi personified form of creative soul dwelling in all Gods such as *Vishvakarman, Purusha, and Prajapathy*'. In majority of Vaishnavism traditions, He is Vishnu, God, and the text identifies this being as Krishna, sometimes referred as '*svayam bhagavan*'. The term '*Ishvara*' - from the root is, to have extraordinary power. Some traditional '*sankhya*' systems contrast *purusha* (Divine, or souls) to '*prakriti*' (nature or energy), however the term for sovereign God, *Ishvara* is mentioned six times in the Atharva Veda, and is central to many traditions.<sup>60</sup> As per '*Advaita Vedanta*' school of Hindu philosophy the notion of *Brahman* (the highest Universal Principle) is akin to that of God; except that unlike most other philosophies Advaita likens Brahman to Atman (the true Self of an individual). For Sindhi Hindus, who are deeply influenced by Sikhism, God is seen as the omnipotent cultivation of all Hindu Gods and Goddesses. In short, the soul paramatma of all Gods and Goddesses are the omnipresent Brahman and are enlightened beings.




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<sup>60</sup> Bryant, Edwin H. (2003). *Krishna: the beautiful legend of God; Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa, book X with chapters 1, 6 and 29-31 from book XI. Harmondsworth [Eng.]: Penguin. ISBN 0-14-044799-7.*

### **3.10.1. Brahman**

Brahman is the 'eternal, unchanging, infinite, immanent, and transcendent reality which is the Divine Ground of all matter, energy, time, space, being and everything beyond in this Universe'.<sup>61</sup> The nature of Brahman is described as transpersonal, personal and impersonal by different philosophical schools. The word "Brahman" is derived from the verb ((brh)) (Sanskrit: to grow), and connotes greatness and infinity. Brahman is talked of at two levels (apara and para). Para-Brahman is the all-inclusive – he is the head from which all concepts including the alphabets emerge. The honey of all knowledge (i.e., the universal set of all concepts like mind, intellect, speech, alphabets, etc.) to denote this, a special term – not originating from alphabets – called 'OM' is used. He is the fountainhead of all concepts but He Himself cannot be conceived. He is the universal conceiver, universal concept and all the means of concept. 'Apara-Brahman' is the same 'Para Brahma' - but for human understanding thought - of a universal mind with universal intellect, from which all human beings derive an iota as their mind, intellect etc.

### **3.10.2. Ishvara**

Ishvara is a philosophical concept in Hinduism, meaning 'controller or the Supreme controller' (i.e., God) in a monotheistic or the Supreme Being or as an 'Ishta-deva' of monistic thought. Ishvara is a transcendent and immanent entity best described in the last chapter of the 'Shukla Yajur Veda Samhita', known as the 'Ishavasya Upanishad'. It states "ishavasyam idam sarvam" which means whatever there is in this world is covered and filled with Ishvara. Ishvara not only creates the world, but then also enters into everything there is. In Saivite traditions, the term is used as part of the compound "Maheshvara" ("Great Lord") later as a name for Siva.

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<sup>61</sup> Brodd, Jeffrey (2003). *World Religions*. Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press. ISBN 978-0-88489-725-5.

### **3.10.3 Mahadeva**

Lord Shiva is more often considered as first Hindu God. Mahadeva literally means "*Highest of all God*". Shiva is also known as '*Maheshvar, the Great Lord, Mahadeva, the Great God, Shambhu, Hara, Pinakadhrik, bearer of the axe and Mrityunjaya, conqueror of death*'. He is the spouse of Shakti, the Goddess. He also is represented by '*Mahakala and Bhairava*', the terrible, as well as many other forms including '*Rudra*'.

This must not be confused with the 'numerous *devas*'. '*Deva*' may be roughly translated into English as '*deity, demigod or angel*', and can describe any celestial being or thing that is of high excellence and thus is venerable. The word is cognate to Latin '*Deus*' for "God". The misconception of 330 million Devas is commonly objected to by Hindu scholars. The description of 33 '*kodi*' (10 million, crore in Hindi) Devas is a misunderstanding. The word '*kodi*' in Sanskrit translates to '*type*' and not '10 million'. So, the actual translation is 33 types and not 330 million Devas. Ishvara as a personal form of God is worshiped and not the 33 Devas. The concept of 33 Devas is perhaps related to the geometry of the universe.

### **3.10.4. Bhagavan**

Bhagavan literally means "*possessing fortune, blessed, prosperous*" (from the noun '*bhaga*', meaning "fortune, wealth", cognate to Slavic Bog "God"), and hence "*illustrious, divine, venerable, holy*", etc. In some traditions of Hinduism, it is used to indicate the Supreme Being or Absolute Truth, but with specific reference to that Supreme Being as possessing a personality (a personal God). This personal feature indicated in Bhagavan differentiates its usage from other similar terms such as Brahman, the "*Supreme Spirit*" or "*Spirit*", and thus, in this usage, Bhagavan is in many ways analogous to the general Christian and Islamic conception of God.

### **3.11. Zoroastrianism**

Zoroastrianism is a religion. Zoroaster, who lived in eastern ancient Iran around 1000 BC, created Zoroastrianism. Other names for Zoroastrianism are '*Mazdaism and Parsiism*'. Zoroastrianism is a monotheistic religion. The Zoroastrian God is called Ahura Mazda. The holy book of Zoroastrianism is the '*Zend Avesta*'. Zoroastrianism is also dualist. Zoroastrians believe Ahura Mazda created two spirits: '*a good one (Spenta Mainyu), and a bad one (Angra Mainyu)*'. Zoroastrians believe people are free to choose between good and bad. Choosing good

will lead to happiness, and choosing bad will lead to unhappiness. So, it is the best to choose good. Therefore, the motto of the religion is "*Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds*".<sup>62</sup>

### **3.12. Early Modern and New Religious Movements**

#### **3.12.1. Rosicrucian**

The Western Wisdom Teachings present the conception of The Absolute (unmanifested and unlimited "*Boundless Being*" or "*Root of Existence*", beyond the whole universe and beyond comprehension) from whom proceeds the Supreme Being at the dawn of manifestation: The One, the "*Great Architect of the Universe*". From the threefold Supreme Being proceed the "seven Great Logoi" who contain within themselves all the great hierarchies that differentiate more and more as they diffuse through the six lower Cosmic Planes. In the Highest World of the seventh (lowest) Cosmic Plane dwells the God of the solar systems in the universe. These great beings are also threefold in manifestation, like the Supreme Being; their three aspects are '*Will, Wisdom and Activity*'.

According these Rosicrucian teachings, in the beginning of a *Day of Manifestation* a certain collective Great Being, God, limits himself to a certain portion of space, in which he elects to create a solar system for the evolution of added self-consciousness. In God there are contained hosts of glorious hierarchies and lesser beings of every grade of intelligence and stage of consciousness, from omniscience to an unconsciousness deeper than that of the deepest trance condition. During the current period of manifestation these various grades of beings are working to acquire more experience than they possessed at the beginning of this period of existence. Those who, in previous manifestations, have attained to the highest degree of development work on those who have not yet evolved any consciousness. In the Solar system, God's Habitation, there are seven Worlds differentiated by God, within Himself, one after another. Mankind's evolutionary scheme is slowly carried through five of these Worlds in seven great Periods of manifestation, during which the evolving virgin spirit becomes first human and, then, a God.

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<sup>62</sup> Zoroastrianism ii. Historical review: from the Arab Conquest to Modern Times.

### **3.12.2. Unitarian Universalism**

Concepts about deity are diverse among Unitarian Universalism. Some have no belief in any Gods (atheism); others believe in many Gods (polytheism). Some believe that the question of the existence of any God is most likely unascertainable or unknowable (agnosticism). Some believe that God is a metaphor for a transcendent reality. Some believe in a female God (Goddess), a passive God (Deism), an Abrahamic God, or a God manifested in nature or the universe (pantheism). Many Unitarian Universalism reject the idea of deities and instead speak of the "spirit of life" that binds all life on earth. Unitarian Universalism support each person's search for truth and meaning in concepts of spirituality. Historically, Unitarianism was a denomination within Christianity. The term may refer to any belief about the nature of Jesus Christ that affirms God as a singular entity and rejects the doctrine of the Trinity. Universalism broadly refers to a theological belief that all persons and creatures are related to a God or the Divine and will be reconciled to a God (Universal Salvation).

### **3.12.3. Sikhism**

The term for God in Sikhism is *Waheguru*. Guru Nanak describes God as *nirankar* (from the Sanskrit *nirākārā*, meaning "formless"), *akal* (meaning "eternal") and *alakh* (from the Sanskrit *alakṣya*, meaning "invisible" or "unobserved"). Sikhism's principal scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, starts with the figure "1", signifying the unity of God. Nanak's interpretation of God is that of a single, personal and transcendental creator with whom the devotee must develop a most intimate faith and relationship to achieve salvation. Sikhism advocates the belief in one God who is omnipresent (*sarav vi'āpak*), whose qualities are infinite and who is without gender, a nature represented (especially in the Guru Granth Sahib) by the term '*Ek Onkar*'.



Nanak further emphasizes that a full understanding of God is beyond human beings, but that God is also not wholly unknowable. God is considered omnipresent in all creation and visible everywhere to the spiritually awakened. Nanak stresses that God must be seen by human beings from *"the inward eye"* or *"heart"* and that meditation must take place inwardly to achieve this enlightenment progressively; its rigorous application is what enables communication between God and human beings.

Sikhs believe in a single God that has existed from the beginning of time and will survive forever. God is genderless, fearless, formless, immutable, ineffable, self-sufficient, omnipotent and not subject to the cycle of birth and death. God in Sikhism is depicted in three distinct aspects: God as deity; God in relation to creation; and God in relation to man. During a discourse with 'siddhas' (wandering Hindu adepts), Nanak is asked where *"the Transcendent God"* was before creation. He replies: *"To think of the Transcendent Lord in that state is to enter the realm of wonder. Even at that stage of sun, he permeated all that void"* (GG, 940).

#### **3.12.4. Brahma Kumari's**

The Brahma Kumari's are a spiritual movement that originated in Hyderabad, Sindh in India, during the 1930s. The Brahma Kumari's movement was founded by Lekhraj Kripalani. The organization is known for the prominent role that women play in the movement. According to Brahma Kumari's, God is the incorporeal soul with the maximum degree of spiritual qualities such as peace and love.<sup>63</sup> The

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<sup>63</sup> Reender Kranenborg, "Brahma Kumaris: A New Religion?", Free University of Amsterdam. Retrieved 2007-07-27.

Brahma Kumari's teaches a form of meditation through which students are encouraged to purify their minds. This may be done by sitting tranquilly, then making affirmations regarding the eternal nature of the soul, the original purity of one's nature, and the nature of God. The followers of Brahma Kumari's believe that Shiva baba speaks to humanity through the spirit of Brahma Kumari's. Because they believe all matter to be eternal, He is not the creator of any matter. Human 'Atama' as well as animal souls are extremely small part of the ultimate spiritual light.

### **3.12.5. Extraterrestrial**

Some comparatively new belief systems and books portray God as extraterrestrial life. Many of these theories hold that intelligent beings from another world have been visiting Earth for many thousands of years and have influenced the development of our religions. Some of these books posit that prophets or messiahs were sent to the human race in order to teach morality and encourage the development of civilization. The spiritual teacher 'Meher Baba' described God as infinite love: *"God is not understood in His essence until He is also understood as Infinite Love. Divine Love is unlimited in essence and expression, because it is experienced by the soul through the soul itself. The sojourn of the soul is a thrilling divine romance in which the lover, who in the beginning is conscious of nothing but emptiness, frustration, superficiality and the gnawing chains of bondage, gradually attains an increasingly fuller and freer expression of love and ultimately disappears and merges in the Divine Beloved to realize the unity of the Lover and the Beloved in the supreme and eternal fact of God as Infinite Love."*<sup>64</sup>

### **3.12.6. Satanism**

'Anton LaVey', founder of the Church of Satan, espoused the view that "god" is a creation of man, rather than man being a creation of "god". In his book, *The Satanic Bible*, the Satanist's view of God is described as the Satanist's true "self"—a projection of his or her own personality—not an external deity. Satan is used as a representation of personal liberty and individualism. LaVey discusses this extensively

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<sup>64</sup> Kalchuri, Bhau (1997). *Meher Prabhu: Lord Meher*. Volume 20. Myrtle Beach: Manifestation, Inc. p. 6653. ISBN 9788190942812.

in *'The Book of Lucifer'*, explaining that the gods worshipped by other religions are also projections of man's true self. He argues that man's unwillingness to accept his own ego has caused him to externalize these gods so as to avoid the feeling of narcissism that would accompany self-worship.

"If man insists on externalizing his true self in the form of "God," then why fear his true self, in fearing "God,"—why praise his true self in praising "God,"—why remain externalized from "God" in order to engage in ritual and religious ceremony in his name. Man needs ritual and dogma, but no law states that an *'externalized'* God is necessary in order to engage in ritual and ceremony performed in a god's name! Could it be that when he closes the gap between himself and his "God" he sees the demon of pride creeping forth—that very embodiment of Lucifer appearing in his midst?"<sup>65</sup>

### **3.13. The existence of God in Different Theories**

#### **3.13.1. Agnosticism**

Agnosticism is the view that the existence of God, of the divine or the supernatural is unknown or unknowable.<sup>66</sup> Another definition provided is the view that *"human reason is incapable of providing sufficient rational grounds to justify either the belief that God exists or the belief that God does not exist."*<sup>67</sup> Agnosticism is the doctrine or tenet of agnostics with regard to the existence of anything beyond and behind material phenomena or to knowledge of a First Cause or God, and is not a religion. *Agnostic* from Ancient Greek *ἀ-* (*a-*), meaning *'without'*, and *γνώσις* (*gnōsis*), meaning *'knowledge'* The English biologist Thomas Henry Huxley coined the word *agnostic* in 1869, and said *"It simply means that a man shall*

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<sup>65</sup> Anton LaVey, *The Satanic Bible*, pp. 44–45

<sup>66</sup> Hepburn, Ronald W. (2005) [1967]. "Agnosticism". In Donald M. Borchert (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (2nd ed.). MacMillan Reference USA (Gale). p. 92. ISBN 0-02-865780-2. (Page 56 in 1967 edition)

<sup>67</sup> Rowe, William L. (1998). "Agnosticism". In Edward Craig (ed.). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Taylor & Francis. ISBN 978-0-415-07310-3. "Agnostic, agnosticism". OED Online, 3rd ed. Oxford University Press. September



not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe."

### **3.13.2. Agnostic views of Hindu philosophy**

Throughout the history of Hinduism there has been a strong tradition of philosophic speculation and skepticism. The Rig Veda takes an agnostic view on the fundamental question of how the universe and the gods were created. 'Nasadiya Sukta' (Creation Hymn) in the tenth chapter of the Rig Veda says:

But, after all, who knows, and who can say  
 Whence it all came, and how creation happened?  
 The gods themselves are later than creation,  
  
 So, who knows truly whence it has arisen?  
 Whence all creation had its origin,  
 He, whether he fashioned it or whether he did not,  
  
 He, who surveys it all from highest heaven,  
 He knows - or maybe even he does not know.<sup>68</sup>

### **3.13.3. Empiricism**

The English term *empirical* derives from the Ancient Greek word ἐμπειρία, *empeiria*, which is cognate with and translates to the Latin 'experientia', from which the words 'experience' and 'experiment' are derived.<sup>69</sup> Empiricism is a theory that states that knowledge comes only or primarily from sensory experience.<sup>70</sup> Empiricism emphasizes the role of empirical evidence in the formation of ideas, rather than innate ideas or traditions. Historically, empiricism was

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<sup>68</sup> Upinder Singh (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Pearson Education India. pp. 206-. ISBN 978-81-317-1120-0.

<sup>69</sup> [http://www.greekmedicine.net/whos\\_who/Alexander\\_the\\_Great.html](http://www.greekmedicine.net/whos_who/Alexander_the_Great.html)

<sup>70</sup> Psillos, Stathis; Curd, Martin (2010). *The Routledge companion to philosophy of science (1. publ. in paperback ed.)*. London: Routledge. pp. 129–38. ISBN 978-0415546133.

associated with the "*blank slate*" concept (*tabula rasa*), according to which the human mind is "*blank*" at birth and develops its thoughts only through experience.

Empiricism in the philosophy of science emphasizes evidence, especially as discovered in experiments. It is a fundamental part of the scientific method that all hypotheses and theories must be tested against observations of the natural world rather than resting solely on *a priori* reasoning, intuition, or revelation. Empiricism, often used by natural scientists, says that "*knowledge is based on experience*" and that "*knowledge is tentative and probabilistic, subject to continued revision and falsification*".<sup>71</sup> Empirical research, including experiments and validated measurement tools, guides the scientific method.

#### **3.13.4. Phenomenalism**

Phenomenalism is the view that physical objects, properties, events (whatever is physical) are reducible to mental objects, properties, events. Ultimately, only mental objects, properties, events, exist—hence the closely related term is subjective idealism. By the phenomenistic line of thinking, to have a visual experience of a real physical thing is to have an experience of a certain kind of group of experiences. This type of set of experiences possesses a constancy and coherence that is lacking in the set of experiences of which hallucinations, and the mathematical truths were merely very highly confirmed generalizations from experience; mathematical inference, generally conceived as deductive in nature.<sup>72</sup>

#### **3.13.5. Pragmatism**

The *pragmatic theory of truth*, is the perspective that integrates the basic insights of empirical (experience-based) and rational (concept-based) thinking. The pragmatic theory is based on inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning in a complementary rather than competitive mode. To this, the proponent Peirce added the concept of abductive reasoning. They are:

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<sup>71</sup> Shelley, M. (2006). Empiricism. In F. English (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of educational leadership and administration*. (pp. 338–39). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

<sup>72</sup> 14.Burch, Robert (2017). Zalta, Edward N. (ed.). *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 ed.). *Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University*.

- (1) the objects of knowledge are real things,
- (2) the characters (properties) of real things do not depend on our perceptions of them, and
- (3) everyone who has sufficient experience of real things will agree on the truth about them.

According to Peirce's doctrine of fallibilism, the conclusions of science are always tentative. The rationality of the scientific method does not depend on the certainty of its conclusions, but on its self-corrective character: by continued application of the method science can detect and correct its own mistakes, and thus eventually lead to the discovery of truth".<sup>73</sup>

### **3.13.6. Existentialism**

Existentialism (/ˌɛgzɪˈstɛnʃəlɪzəm/ or /ˌɛksəˈstɛntʃəlɪzəm/) is a tradition of philosophical enquiry that explores the nature of existence by emphasizing experience of the human subject—not merely the thinking subject, but the acting, feeling, living human individual.<sup>74</sup> An existentialist reading of the Bible would demand that the readers recognize that they are an existing subject studying the words more as a recollection of events. This is in contrast to looking at a collection of "truths" that are outside and unrelated to the reader, but may develop a sense of reality/God. Such a reader is not obligated to follow the commandments as if an external agent is forcing these commandments upon them, but as though they are inside them and guiding them from inside.

### **3.13.7. Humanism**

Humanism is a philosophical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively. The word "humanism" is derived from the Latin concept 'humanitas' which included both benevolence toward one's fellow humans and the values imparted by 'bonae litterae' or humane learning literally "good letters". Generally, however, humanism refers to a perspective that

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<sup>73</sup> Rock, Irvin (1983), *The Logic of Perception*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>74</sup> Macquarrie, John (1972). *Existentialism*. New York: Penguin. pp. 14–15.

affirms some notion of human freedom and progress. It views humans as solely responsible for the promotion and development of individuals and emphasizes a concern for humans in relation to the world.<sup>75</sup> In modern times, humanist movements are typically non-religious movements aligned with secularism, and today humanism may refer to a nontheistic life stance centered on human agency and looking to science rather than revelation from a supernatural source to understand the world.

### **3.13.8. Mechanism**

Mechanism is an umbrella term for a variety of different meanings. In terms of processes and systems, a mechanism is a device or property with which a final goal or aim can be accomplished by utilizing. For example, a kettle can be used as a mechanism for boiling water. *"A television or motor vehicle is a mechanism, which both contain within a large number of mechanisms to produce a visual image or movement."*

### **3.13.9. Idealism**

Idealism is a term with several related meanings. It comes via Latin *idea* from the Ancient Greek *idea* (ιδέα) from *idein* (ιδεῖν), meaning "to see". The term entered the English language by 1743. It was first used in the abstract metaphysical sense *"belief that reality is made up only of ideas"*.<sup>76</sup> In ordinary language, political idealism, it generally suggests the priority of ideals, principles, values, and goals over concrete realities. Idealists are understood to represent the world as it might or should be, unlike pragmatists, who focus on the world as it presently is. In the arts, similarly, idealism affirms imagination and attempts to realize a mental conception of beauty, a standard of perfection, juxtaposed to aesthetic naturalism and realism.<sup>77</sup> The term *"idealism"* is also sometimes used in a

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<sup>75</sup> Domenic Marbaniang, "Developing the Spirit of Patriotism and Humanism in Children for Peace and Harmony", *Children at Risk: Issues and Challenges*, Jesudason Jeyaraj (Ed.), Bangalore: CFCD/ISPCK, 2009, p.474

<sup>76</sup> "Idealism, n." *Online Etymological Dictionary*

<sup>77</sup> Macionis, John J. (2012). *Sociology 14th Edition*. Boston: Pearson. p. 88. ISBN 978-0-205-11671-3.

sociological sense, which emphasizes how human ideas—especially beliefs and values—shape society.

### **3.13.10. Naturalism**

Naturalism is a philosophical direction according to which nature is, directly or indirectly, the primary object of philosophical investigation. According to *naturalism*, reality can be understood exclusively or primarily through natural laws, without resorting to principles of transcendent or spiritual order. Naturalism can therefore be understood as a synonym for materialism, in opposition to spiritualism and idealism. However, one can speak of *naturalism* in the religious sphere to refer to those philosophical currents attributable to immanent conceptions that identify the divine with Nature, often understood as the Soul of the world (or set of souls) that self-generates and lives within it: in this case the term becomes synonymous with pantheism, and can have correlations with animism or with those forms of spirituality.

### **3.13.11. Rationalism**

Rationalism is the epistemological view that *"regards reason as the chief source and test of knowledge"* or *"any view appealing to reason as a source of knowledge or justification"*. More formally, rationalism is defined as a methodology or a theory *"in which the criterion of the truth is not sensory but intellectual and deductive"*.<sup>78</sup> The rationalists argued that certain truths exist and that the intellect can directly grasp these truths. That is to say, rationalists asserted that certain rational principles exist in logic, mathematics, ethics, and metaphysics that are so fundamentally true that denying them causes one to fall into contradiction. The rationalists had such a high confidence in reason that empirical proof and physical evidence were regarded as unnecessary to ascertain certain truths – in other words,

*"There are significant ways in which our concepts and knowledge are gained independently of sense experience"*.

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<sup>78</sup> Bourke, Vernon J., "Rationalism," p. 263 in Runes (1962).

### 3.14. Existence of God According to the Philosophers

Aristotle, Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Kierkegaard and Gödel presented arguments attempting to rationally prove the existence of God. The skeptical empiricism of David Hume, the antinomies of Immanuel Kant, and the existential philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard convinced many later philosophers to abandon these attempts, regarding it impossible to construct any unassailable proof for the existence or non-existence of God. In his book, *Philosophical Fragments*, Kierkegaard writes: 'Let us call this unknown something: God; It is nothing more than a name we assign to it. The idea of demonstrating that this unknown something (God) exists, could scarcely suggest itself to Reason. For if God does not exist it would of course be impossible to prove it; and if he does exist it would be folly to attempt it.' <sup>79</sup>

Darwin stated that it would be "absurd to doubt that a man might be an ardent theist and an evolutionist". Although reticent about his religious views, he wrote that *"I have never been an atheist in the sense of denying the existence of a God. – I think that generally ... an agnostic would be the most correct description of my state of mind."* <sup>80</sup> Bertrand Russell declared in his work, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, a classic statement of agnosticism. He calls upon his readers to *"stand on their own two feet and look fair and square at the world with a fearless attitude and a free intelligence"*.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Kierkegaard, Søren. *Philosophical Fragments*. Ch. 3

<sup>80</sup> "Darwin Correspondence Project – Belief: historical essay". Archived from the original on February 25, 2009. Retrieved November 25, 2008.

<sup>81</sup> Bertrand Russell (1992). *Why I Am Not a Christian: And Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects*. Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-07918-1.

### **3.15. Art as a means to moral improvement**

To say that a work of art is aesthetically good or has aesthetic value is one thing. To say that it is morally good or has a capacity to influence people so as to make them morally better is another. Yet, though the two kinds of judgments differ from one another, they are not entirely unrelated. Three views on the relation of art to morality can be distinguished.

### **3.16. Moralism**

According to this view, the primary or exclusive function of art is as a handmaiden to morality—which means, usually, whatever system of morality is adhered to by the theorist in question. Art that does not promote moral influence of the desired kind is viewed by the moralist with suspicion and sometimes with grudging tolerance of its existence. For art implants in people unorthodox ideas; it breaks the molds of provincialism in which people have been brought up; it disturbs and disquiets, since it tends to emphasize individuality rather than conformity; and works of art are often created out of rebellion or disenchantment with the established order. Thus, art may undermine beliefs and attitudes on which, it is thought, the welfare of society rests and so may be viewed with suspicion by the guardians of custom. When art does not affect people morally one way or the other (for example, much nonrepresentational painting), it is considered a harmless pleasure that can be tolerated if it does not take up too much of the viewer's time.

Plato is the first champion in the Western world of the moralistic view of art. Plato admired the poets and was himself something of a poet, but, when he was founding his ideal state, he was convinced that much art, even some passages in Homer, tended to have an evil influence upon the young and impressionable, and accordingly he decided that they must be banned. Passages that spoke ill or questioningly of the gods, passages containing excessive sexual passion and even passages of music that were disturbing to the soul or the senses were all condemned to the same fate.

Plato's concern here was with the purity of soul of the persons who would become members of the council of rulers of the state. Plato's view was that the influences should be kept from them during their formative years—that during this critical time, when the whole tenor of their lives was being shaped, art could be an

influence for evil and had to be sacrificed in the interests of morality. In other dialogues of Plato, such as the *'Ion'* and the *'Phaedrus'*, when he was not concerned with building a state, he extolled the virtues of art and even held the artist to be divine (although madly divine), but, when it came to a conflict between art and morality, it was art that would have to go.

The most famous champion of the moralistic view of art in modern times is Tolstoy. Long after he had finished writing his novels, he fell under the influence of primitive Christianity, the principal tenet of which was the fellowship of all humans. This one idea became such an obsession with him that everything else, including the pursuit of art to which he had devoted his life, became subordinate to it. Almost all the literature of his own time, including all his own novels, he condemned as inimical to human fellowship by emphasizing class distinction and pitting one group of humankind against another. Even art that appealed primarily (in his opinion) to "*upper class*" tastes, such as the symphonies of Beethoven and the operas of Richard Wagner, were condemned as "*false art.*" The art that remained after these colossal excisions included such items as folk songs that peasants might sing in the fields as they worked and pictures and stories either illustrating the tenets of primitive Christianity or fostering the spirit of Christianity by promoting fellowship.<sup>82</sup>

According to Christopher Dresser, the primary element of Decorative Art is utility. The maxim "*art for art's sake*", identifying art or beauty as the primary element in other branches of the Aesthetic Movement, especially fine art, cannot apply in this context. That is, Decorative art must first have utility, but may also be beautiful.<sup>83</sup> However, according to Michael Shindler, the decorative art branch of the Aesthetic Movement, was less the utilitarian cousin of Aestheticism's main '*pure*' branch, and more the very means by which aesthetes exercised their fundamental aesthetic strategy. Like contemporary art, Shindler writes that aestheticism was born of "the conundrum of constituting one's life in relation to an exterior work" and that

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<sup>82</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-art/Art-as-a-means-to-moral-improvement>

<sup>83</sup> Denney, Colleen. "At the Temple of Art: the Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-1890", Issue 1165, p. 38, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000 ISBN 0-8386-3850-3 supported by notable figures such as Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde.



it *"attempted to overcome"* this problem *"by subsuming artists within their work in the hope of yielding—more than mere objects—lives which could be living artworks."* Thus;

*"Beautiful things became the sensuous set pieces of a drama in which artists were not like their forebears a sort of crew of anonymous stagehands, but stars. Consequently, aesthetes made idols of portraits, prayers of poems, altars of writing desks, chapels of dining rooms, and fallen angels of their fellow men."*<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Shindler, Michael (March 2, 2020). "The Art of Madness and Mystery". *Church Life Journal*. The McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame. Retrieved 10 March 2020.

## Chapter-4

### GOD EXPERIENCE

#### 4.1. Introduction.

Throughout civilization, people have looked for ways to engage the sacred and holy. Christians go to church no matter how long it is, Hindus plunge into the Ganges River no matter how vast it is, Muslims make pilgrimages to Mecca no matter how far and crowded it is. *“So it is that monks kneel and chant, that Jews eat a Passover meal, that Polynesians dance, and Quakers sit still”*. In this case they are all sacraments, symbols of something else which is mysterious and hidden, sacred and holy. What, then is meant by experiencing God, and how do we go about it? If we begin with the dictionary definitions of ‘*experience*’, put them together, and apply them to our relationship to God, we come up with something like *“participating in the nature of God, being moved by Him, and learning of Him by familiarity”*. In a way understanding the true God is the Experience the God’s existence. In this chapter I would like to narrate in the religious knowledge of experiencing the true God.

#### 4.2. God can be experienced through faith

Is the existence of God something which we can claim to know? Or is it a belief for which a more or a less strong case can be made? Or is it a fantasy for which there is no reasonable case at all? Before we can claim to have had *“experienced”* God we must have faith in His existence and some type of relationship and knowledge of God. Firstly, then let us understand what we mean by the word *“knowledge”*. It would be a mistake to suppose that there is one clearly identifiable something called *“knowledge”* which one either has or has not got. *“Knowledge”* is always a progressive word denoting or signifying some kind of achievement or attainment. If, as the theists so maintain, our knowledge of God is obtained in a kind of personal intercourse with Him - such as we have with one another - then it is after all empirical knowledge.

The really important difference is that, while we can see other people’s bodies and check our understanding of them ‘by following’ their words and expressions from moment to moment, God has no body for us to see: our interpretations of His thoughts and purposes from the course of observed events is schematic and highly debatable. The other important factor is that different people will have varying degrees of intercourse with God. The more intense the relationship, the deeper the

experience. Another factor to point out as Peter Vardy notes, is that there are different types of Gods. For example, the God of religious language, the timeless spaceless God, the super spaceman God and so on. Obviously, the God of language cannot be experienced, for He is only a God of words. The timeless spaceless God cannot be experienced either because He is neither within time nor space so He would not be able to have any kind of relationship with human beings. The super spaceman God is obviously the only type of these Gods that can be experienced but let us reject these in favor of God in the standard sense.

#### **4.3. Experiencing God through the world elements**

God in the standard sense of the term is not a possible object of experience. Not just by the accident of our circumstances but essentially by His very nature. He 'is incapable' of coming under direct human observation. If we are to learn anything about such an object from experience, we must learn it indirectly from other objects which are observable. Because God cannot be described with a remotely comparable degree of precision, an intelligent being such as He is supposed to be is most readily traced by His actions. Such an inference is often made by historical students and in detective work. One finds among one's data a set of facts which seems to invite interpretation in terms of an agent previously unknown to us.

In the case of God, the case lies overwhelmingly in the seeming traces of purpose in nature, most strikingly in the long record of the evolution of life and mind. For, a God belief founded on an argument such as this, is sometimes claimed that an experimental verification is possible. From one's conception of God one deduces certain types of directives for conduct and lives life according to these directives. In course of time, one finds one's idea of God and the universe becoming clearer, and sees more and more of the signs of God's guiding action in events as one becomes better able to detect them. The individual will find if she is of the responsive kind, that she enters into a kind of intimacy of fellowship with God and, by reflex of this, with others around her circle.

In this type of relationship, one could be said to be "*experiencing*" God every day; experiencing God in thoughts, feelings and prayers. In the same way one would "*see*" God in the world though not as part of the world. One would see Him in the processes of nature somewhat as one "*sees*" human agents in the things which they

make and the processes which they initiate and control. The analogy is far from perfect. We should not suppose for a moment that God is related to the universe as humans are related to their bodies and that which they create. Nor do we normally profess to read God's thoughts and purposes in detail as we often do those of other human beings.

All we do is to "see" God's agency in the world around us. It is an intuitive perception possessed only by those who have a strong and true belief in God. For a profound believer of the intimately personal God experiencing God is an everyday occurrence. We walk with Him; we talk with Him and we believe that the world has derived its very being and existence from God. It follows that this type of God cannot be met personally and in isolation, but always in relation to the world, a relation such that He is not there because the world is there, but the world is there only because of Him. It is a relation of unilateral dependence. Since God is not seen as depending on anything else because the world depends on Him, we conceive Him as an absolute.<sup>85</sup>

#### **4.4. Religions are the way of Experiencing God**

Being with absolute existence, an infinite being, who although is not timeless or spaceless is still nevertheless not confined within the limits of time and space. Religious experience is of various kinds, but in none of them is God perceived as an object; though there is always that which is taken to be His presence and activity. The basic form of it is to be found in the God vision. In this type of experience with God, the believer perceives or seems to perceive the activity of God at the heart of all that is and all that happens. She will often say "I see" God in these things, so she does in one sense of the word "see" but God is not present to her as an object of direct perception.

All that is present are physical things and events. Religious experience in the form of the vision of God, as in seeing God's hand in all things is the foundation on which the whole structure of God is ultimately built. But the theological doctrine, once established, reacts upon our experience, and the more developed forms of religious

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<sup>85</sup><https://www.reviewofreligions.org/6480/god-can-be-experienced/amp>

experience are the result of our reactions to the doctrine of God and the universe and our attempts to work it out in life. We find ourselves drawn into a kind of personal intercourse with God which becomes more and more intimate as we progress in our spiritual life. This constitutes part of the realm called spiritual or religious experience. Not every God believer has experience of it. Indeed, many think they have none at all; their religion is their ethic backed up by a belief in its supernatural warrant. But others seem deeply initiated in experience with God and what they say and do affects the spiritual and intellectual atmosphere for themselves.

The most primitive reaction to God is the emotional response of awe. It is an emotion to which some people are more susceptible than others. Like other emotions it is subject to a degree of control; one can resist feeling it or one can throw oneself open to it. But essentially it is a passive experience, a response to something perceived or imagined. "*Experience*", however does not mean only seeing or feeling; it also means learning about things by seeking and finding and interacting with them by enquiry and experiment. Religious experience has this exploratory and experimental dimension too; there is a religious way of living and an expertise to it. There is a kind of "*Knowledge*" of God which is gained through a sustained active contact with "*Him*" in the events and actions of one's life. And there is for the finely attuned spiritual person a peculiar contemplative kind of awareness of God sometimes associated with a perpetual awareness; not of God in himself but of His action in the soul. It is a difficult phenomenon to describe with precision but it is a constant awareness of God working.

#### **4.5. God can be Experienced by doing**

God can be experienced not only in the mind but also in the soul and spiritually cleansing it. This would seem to be the most intense type of experience of God. But how does one experience this type of functioning of God in human thought and life? Again, it is by experiment and enquiry a type of trial and error of procedure. Let us start with what is believed about the nature of God and the nature of the human beings. Since we as intelligent beings are in some degree akin to God, we may venture to suppose that there can exist some kind of relationship between Him and us. However, this depends on, most importantly on our cultivating that in us which is most akin to God, and making ourselves responsive to any communications that may come from Him.

The characteristically religious life pattern is one endeavoring to do this; though the details of the way, and the nature of the goal, are differently presented in different doctrines. An individual's relation to God in her own life is implicit in the vision of God as "All-Doing". For if all that is and that happens is His doing, then in seeing anything, I am not merely seeing a thing, but something in which God is manifesting something which he is showing to me. In my recognition of this, my appreciation of His work, there is already a relationship, a kind of shared experience between Him and me. One can get into the habit of sharing experiences with Him in this way. But the relation becomes richer and more significant when we are confronted with a situation requiring that we should act or deliberately take up an attitude. God is "All-Doing" all the facts which together constitute my situation are His work. He made them, He brought about the situation and He brought me into the situation. If it requires of me action or decision, then it is He who through the situation demands these things of me. But further, we ourselves are His with our needs, desires, ideals and principles.

These are not what they would be if we were morally and spiritually more mature, but such as they are, they are the guide lines which He gives us in this situation, here and now. If I interpret the guidelines wisely and follow them earnestly, my judgement will be dearer and firmer next time. If we fail to achieve my purpose, if disconcerting results follow, then either our choice of means were unwise, or we may have got the wrong directive; or we may have thought too readily that if we do the right thing, we are entitled to expect success. This may be God's ways of governing events, or of disciplining us. So, through reflections like these we may grow in wisdom, insight, and experience. The moral life is an education, it is a life in which we gain fuller understanding as we act on the understanding which we have. All this is in a relationship with God, a relationship which matures in experience as we ourselves mature, through this relationship with God in thought and experience.

#### 4.6. Religious Experience

Religious experiences can be characterized generally as experiences that seem to the person having them to be of some objective reality and to have some religious import. That reality can be an individual, a state of affairs, a fact, or even an absence, depending on the religious tradition the experience is a part of a wide variety of kinds of experience fall under the general rubric of religious experience. The concept is vague, and the multiplicity of kinds of experiences that fall under it makes it difficult to capture in any general account. Part of that vagueness comes from the term '*religion*,' which is difficult to define in any way that does not either rule out institutions that clearly are religions, or include terms that can only be understood in the light of a prior understanding of what religions are. Nevertheless, we can make some progress in elucidating the concept by distinguishing it from distinct but related concepts.

First, religious experience is to be distinguished from religious feelings, in the same way that experience in general is to be distinguished from feelings in general. A feeling of elation, for example, even if it occurs in a religious context, does not count in itself as a religious experience, even if the subject later comes to think that the feeling was caused by some objective reality of religious significance. An analogy with sense experience is helpful here. If a subject feels a general feeling of happiness, not on account of anything in particular, and later comes to believe the feeling was caused by the presence of a particular person, that fact does not transform the feeling of happiness into a perception of the person. Just as a mental event, to be a perception of an object, must in some sense seem to be an experience of that object, a religiously oriented mental event, to be a religious experience, must in some way seem to be an experience of a religiously significant reality. So, although religious feelings may be involved in many, or even most, religious experiences, they are not the same thing.

Religious experience is also to be distinguished from mystical experience. Although there is obviously a close connection between the two, and mystical experiences are religious experiences, not all religious experiences qualify as mystical. The word '*mysticism*' has been understood in many different ways. Mysticism is a specific religious system or practice, deliberately undertaken in order to come to some realization or insight, to come to unity with the divine, or to experience the ultimate reality directly. At the very least, religious experiences form a broader category; many religious experiences, like those of Saint Paul, Arjuna, Moses, Muhammad, Guru

Nanak and many others come unsought, not as the result of some deliberate practice undertaken to produce an experience.<sup>86</sup>

Can God be Experienced? In Advaita (non-dual Hinduism) philosophy the answer is 'Yes'! It is called 'Self Realization'. In the Indian understanding, self-realization is liberating knowledge of the true Self, either as the permanent undying atman, or as the absence (sunyata) of such a permanent Self.

#### **4.7. Can a Religious Experience Show that There Is a God?**

The Bible reports many direct experiences of God. As we read in the Old Testament, for example, Moses came across a burning bush in the desert, and God commanded him to return to Egypt to free his people (Ex. 3–4). The Angel of the Lord promised Gideon divine deliverance from Israel’s enemy the Midianites (Judg. 6:11–8:32). In Abraham’s old age, and despite his having no children, the Lord promised Abraham that he and his aged wife, Sarah, would have a son through whom Abraham would become the father of a great nation (Gen. 12 and 28). In 1 and 2 Kings God appears to kings and prophets with numerous warnings and promises.

In the New Testament we read of the experiences surrounding the birth announcements of Jesus and John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-38); the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36); Paul’s conversion while on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1-19); and Peter’s decision, motivated by a vision, to take the gospel to the household of Cornelius (Acts 10). There are many other reports of this kind in the Bible—but the record does not end there. Every generation of believers has testified to the immediate presence of God in various ways.

Admittedly, in most cases, these religious experiences occurred in people who already believed in God. The experiences often were intended to impart reliable information or divine guidance and were frequently accompanied by miraculous confirming events. On the other hand, these experiences confirmed the participants in their belief in God, led them to testify to the existence and supremacy of the Lord, and emboldened them to act on the information and guidance they received.

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<sup>86</sup> From the publication; substantive revision Wed Dec 13, 2017



This raises an important question: does religious experience provide grounds for believing that God exists? It is reasonable to think so, and here's why. A basic principle of rationality is that how things appear in our experience is good grounds for believing that is how things are, unless there is a good reason to think that how things appear to us is actually mistaken. If we seem to see an orange tree in my garden, then, in general, we will have good grounds for believing there is an orange tree there. But suppose that, during the past 10 years, we've never seen an orange tree there, we did not arrange for an orange tree to be planted there, someone now looks and says he does not see an orange tree there, and we've recently been prescribed medication known for its hallucinogenic side-effects.

These considerations now make it very unlikely that we are seeing what we seem to be seeing. And thus, we have no good grounds for believing an orange tree is in the garden. While alleged religious experiences do not involve the five senses, they do correspond to perceptual experiences of things like orange trees. An entity (an object or a person) is present to the consciousness of some person. So, if we seem to be directly aware of God's presence, and if there are no overriding reasons why things are not as they seem, then we have good grounds for believing that God is present and hence for believing that God exists (since God would not be present if God did not exist).

But now we must ask, would my experience be evidence for others if we reported my experience to them? Is testimony about an experience of God good grounds for believing that God exists? A basic principle is that the testimony of an experience should be trusted unless there is at least as good a reason to think that it is mistaken. If we report to others that we saw a particular orange tree, then, in general, recipients of my testimony have good grounds for believing that we saw it and hence that particular orange tree exists. But if we have a reputation for clowning around or telling lies, or if we have no idea what an orange tree looks like, or if recipients of my testimony have strong independent reasons for denying that there is an orange tree in the garden, then it would not be so reasonable for them to accept my testimony.

Similarly, if we report a personal experience of God, then this will be grounds for others to believe that God exists if what we report is plausible, if it is likely that our faculties are adequate for such an experience, and if we have a reputation for honesty.

In general, it seems rational that, for those who have had the experience, belief in God may be grounded in an experience of God. Also, testimony about the experience may even provide grounds for belief in God for those who do not have such experiences themselves. In combination with other evidences for God's existence, direct religious experience and testimony about such an experience may provide strong motivation for believing in God. It should at least provide motivation for exploring other evidence for God's existence.<sup>87</sup>

#### **4.8. Types of Religious Experience**

Reports of religious experiences reveal a variety of different kinds. Perhaps most are visual or auditory presentations (visions and auditions), but not through the physical eyes or ears. Subject's report "*seeing*" or "*hearing*," but quickly disavow any claim to seeing or hearing with bodily sense organs. Such experiences are easy to dismiss as hallucinations, but the subjects of the experience frequently claim that though it is entirely internal, like a hallucination or imagination, it is nevertheless a veridical experience, through some spiritual analog of the eye or ear. In other cases, the language of "*seeing*" is used in its extended sense of realization, as when a "*Yogi*" is said to "*see*" his or her identity with Brahman; Buddhists speak of "*seeing things as they are*" as one of the hallmarks of true enlightenment, where this means grasping or realizing the emptiness of things, but not in a purely intellectual way.

Another type is the religious experience that comes through sensory experiences of ordinary objects, but seems to carry with its extra information about some supramundane reality. Examples include experiencing God in nature, in the starry sky, or a flower, or the like. A second person standing nearby would see exactly the same sky or flower, but would not necessarily have the further religious content to his or her experience. There are also cases in which the religious experience just is an ordinary perception, but the physical object is itself the object of religious significance.

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<sup>87</sup> Trevin Wax; B&H Publication '*This Is Our Time, Counterfeit Gospels, and Gospel-Centered Teaching*'. <https://twitter.com/trevinwax>

Moses's experience of the burning bush, or the Buddha's disciples watching him levitate, are examples of this type.

A second person standing nearby would see exactly the same phenomenon. Witnesses to miracles are having that kind of religious experience, whether they understand it that way or not. Another type of religious experience is harder to describe: it can't be characterized accurately in sensory language, even analogically, yet the subject of the experience insists that the experience is a real, direct awareness of some religiously significant reality external to the subject. These kinds of experiences are usually described as "ineffable." Depending on one's purposes, other ways of dividing up religious experiences will suggest themselves.<sup>88</sup>

For example, William James (1902) divides experiences into "*healthy-minded*" and "*sick-minded*," according to the personality of the subject, which colors the content of the experience itself<sup>89</sup>. Keith Yandell (1993, 25–32) divided them into five categories, according to the content of the experiences:

- a, Monotheistic
- b, Nirvanic (enlightenment experiences associated with Buddhism)
- c, Kevalic (enlightenment experiences associated with Jainism)
- d, Moksha (experiences of release from karma, associated with Hinduism)
- e, Nature experiences<sup>90</sup>.

These differences of object certainly make differences in content, and so make differences in what can be said about the experiences.

#### **4.9. The Roles of Music in Religious Experience**

*"He who sings prays twice." - Saint Augustine*

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<sup>88</sup> <http://www.apologeticsbible.com/>.

<sup>89</sup> James, William, 1902. *Varieties of Religious Experience*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co.

<sup>90</sup> Yandell, Keith E., 1993. *The Epistemology of Religious Experience*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Many religious scholars who have pointed out the fascinating ability of religion to establish great moments of introspection, clarity, and happiness have noted that music is also very much able to create these sentiments.

The importance of music on this path has been espoused by legendary sitarist Ravi Shankar who discusses the Hindu idea of Nada Brahma ("the sound of God") in which all of nature should seek harmony with the vibrational qualities emitted by the Creator. He and other Hindus uphold that music (especially the ragas) is a spiritual discipline which brings divine ecstasy to performers and listeners as they realize themselves and the universe as well as reach God.<sup>91</sup> Rouget's descriptions are likewise replete with stories of believers who become engulfed in fervor while participating in musical rituals, one being the steps taken by shamans to communicate with Gods or the dead. By frenetically dancing to music that may often rapidly accelerate or decelerate, Rouget says that the goal of these religious leaders is to put themselves in a state of rapture. In many cases, those who are gathered to watch the spectacle may even draw from fifteen energies to go into a trance themselves. In turn, by having others take on similar actions of the shamans, they will be strengthened in their own practice.

Music can be a great assistance in this acquisition thanks to how it can make believers much more receptive. Sean Williams writes that long periods of Buddhist chanting require prolonged control over breathing and the vocal cords which can lead to a meditative state of higher consciousness. This can help explain why Buddhism emphasizes the didactic benefits of music; chanting was in fact the sole way for the Buddha's teachings to be recalled for hundreds of years. Benkong, who insists that repetition is of utmost importance in ritual, states that music can help uncover some of Buddhism's chief principles:

*"Buddhism, which does not believe in the Buddha's divine intervention, focuses on the mind of the individual as being the highest power, because your mind creates everything. And so, music is extremely valuable in that it helps us learn how*

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<sup>91</sup> "Hindustani Classical Music" in Asian American Religious Cultures, Volume 2 edited by Lee, Jonathan H.X.; Matsuoka, Fumitaka; Nakasone, Ronald Y.; Yee, Edmond. California: ABC-CLIO. 2015. Page 446. 19 Rouget, 19. 23

*to reach our minds and to strengthen our minds and to make us focus so that we can develop ourselves and eventually become Buddhas".<sup>92</sup>*

Saint Augustine's Confessions in which he describes how the truth was distilled into his heart while listening to hymns. Likewise, his mentor, Saint Ambrose of Milan, praised the psalms which, among other benefits, were a more efficient teaching method than the use of stern discipline. Furthermore, the Sufi philosopher Ismail Hakkaï espoused that Mevlevi music, to which the whirling dervishes dance during their rituals, were to be known as "*concentration music*" because of its ability to help one focus on the love of God.

Today, such repertoire is also known as "*wisdom music*" and its chief purposes are not listening and enjoyment, but rather participation and reflection. Also, a common part of Sufism is '*dhikr*', the practice of absorbing oneself into the rhythmic repetition of the names of God. Marshall Hodgson believes that the mystical ecstasy generated by this devotion is actually part of the moral process of civilization. This is because it is followed by a sense of clarity which allows believers to have deeper understanding of God and what one's role is in the world, thus entailing social benefit.

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Texts of ancient Greece and Rome affirm that music was an important part of prophecy to the pagans of the time. Along with a pure heart and a relationship with the Gods, being worked up into musical states of ecstasy was said to produce the ideal atmosphere for prophets. Aside from making predictions, these religious leaders were also popular for their abilities to determine which deities were inflicting illness on a person, thus providing guidance on whom should be prayed for help. Don C. Ohadike's studies of indigenous African religions show that beliefs very similar to those of ancient days can be found in cultures of the modern world. According to Ohadike, the sacred drums of each community are instruments of language that can

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<sup>92</sup> Williams, Sean. "Buddhism and Music" in Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions edited by Beck, Guy L. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press. 2006. Page 186.

<sup>93</sup> Hodgson, Marshall G. S. The Venture of Islam, Volume 2. Illinois: University of Chicago Press. 2009. Page 212.

tell stories, teach lessons, give warnings, or even express emotions. During some sacred occasions like divination rituals, installation of chiefs, or burials of notable people, the drums are often said to reveal a message that is only understandable to those who have been initiated into the ancestral cults. Rouget adds that, aided by drums and rattles, many African mediums are said to consult the spirits of village ancestors, answering questions for those in need as to what should be done to remedy their misfortunes.<sup>94</sup>

The relationship between music and wisdom that is otherwise unattainable is also reflected in monotheism such as in the Zohar, a collection of Jewish mystical writings which states, *"In the highest heavens there are gates which open only through the power of song."* In fact, the middle letter in *"song"* or *"to sing"* in Hebrew represents the future, indicating that music is related to prophesy. These two words are also similar to the Hebrew word for *"minister,"* which reflects that like the polytheistic religions previously described, musical vision of the future is assigned only to certain talented individuals. This is because a minister is understood to be one in a position of power over others. Such a person, achieving this role through the rigorous practice of self-control, is said to have escaped the physical limitations of the world and can have access to knowledge of the future.<sup>95</sup>

It is also imperative that music be analyzed in the process of bringing newcomers into a religion for, according to James, knowledge of practices and doctrines may not be enough to win them over. It is usually experience which gives *"dead feelings, dead ideas, and cold beliefs"* the life needed to fill people with fascination and conviction. With music being a captivating force that everyone can understand, it is natural that it may play a key part in establishing this experience and can thus be an effective vehicle for promoting change.

Music has been a fundamental element of the Sikh religion from its inception when Guru Nanak, the founder of the faith, commonly shared his message through song. Many artistic representations of Nanak, an accomplished musician, depict him

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<sup>94</sup> Ohadike, Don C. *Sacred Drums of Liberation: Religions and Music of Resistance in Africa and the Diaspora*. New Jersey: African World Press Inc. 2007. Page 3.

<sup>95</sup> Glazerson, Matityahu. *Music and Kabbalah*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc. 1996. Page 49.

in the midst of a performance. According to his teachings, ritual was not a path to enlightenment; the answer lays in '*nam simaran*', reflecting on the name and character of God, which would drive the soul towards peace and holiness. Believing that music was one of the best ways for listeners to remember God, Nanak not only used it as his main medium for conversion, but also encouraged it as part of daily prayers amongst followers. In his words, "*The singing of God's praises is the act of highest virtue*" and it has been posited that no leader from any of the other world religions has ever placed such heavy emphasis on music like him.<sup>96</sup>

The powerful contribution of music to the field of preaching was also acknowledged by Martin Luther who said that "*next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.*" In contrast to the Roman Catholic Church which upheld the Mass as a display where the laity had almost no active role or even knowledge of what was going on, Luther promoted that Christianity should be comprehensible to all and that every believer was a priest who should be fully able to join in on rituals and celebrations. With that, he was quick to take popular folk tunes well known in his native Germany and turn their secular texts into holy proclamations.

It was not right, as he reportedly put it, for the devil to own all of the good music. Such works and even compositions that he came up with himself were easily comprehended by listeners, making it easier to accept the new doctrines of the Protestant Reformation. Additionally, Luther encouraged singing in one's own language instead of the Latin used in Catholicism which many found to be mysterious. In his opinion, music was created by God and originally served the purpose of spreading the gospel. Mankind may have drifted away from this goal by using music simply for self-gratifying amusement but the divine elements of melody, harmony, and lyrics had not disappeared; it was now time to reclaim them.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Warnock, Paul. "The Sikh Experience of Music" in *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society*, Volume 35. 2004. Page 51.

<sup>97</sup> Schwarz, Hans. "Martin Luther and Music" in *Lutheran Theological Journal*, Volume 39 No 2. 2005. Page 215.

#### 4.10. Music unites the community

In addition to drawing converts into a religious group, music can also serve as a valuable tool to maintain the unity of its members regardless of whether they were born into the faith or entered voluntarily. It is James' view that mankind's tribal instincts lie at the heart of religion and with music being a cultural norm that has been universally revered in societies, it can be further surmised that the repertoire of congregations is a central and energizing reminder of the journey which believers are taking together.

In the act of chanting, the Buddha noted that communal participation was a useful way to avoid placing too much importance on individual voices as each person's self-disappeared in the Sangha (community).<sup>98</sup> Benkong's attitudes towards individual and group activity in his own life could be seen as a reflection of this principle. As he says, *"I think when I'm with other people, it creates catharsis and it helps me focus more. I don't get distracted as much. It also relaxes me. It makes me calmer; I think because I can just go with the flow more than being forceful or focused on myself."*<sup>99</sup>

This building of communal strength and identity through religious music can be of great help when believers are faced with challenges that threaten their way of life. For example, one of the first accounts of Christianity coming from a non-Christian source is a letter from approximately 112 ADS during a time of persecutions. In this letter, the Roman governor Pliny the Younger reports learning about Christians gathering illegally in the early morning hours to sing hymns *"to Christ as if it were to God."* Similarly, 'Ohadike' writes that Africans have always used music and religion to combat all forms of oppression.

Music and dance have close religious ties to life in Africa, especially the drums which, upon their creation, go through a ritual process of being initiated into a clan. Because of their indispensable status in society, these ritual drums have been used

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<sup>98</sup> Williams 186.

<sup>99</sup> Benkong'



for political, social, and military mobilization against hostile forces ranging from the Atlantic slave traders to the laws of apartheid.<sup>100</sup>

The large part of religious gatherings goes towards singing songs devoted to the spiritual master Sai Baba. Such music has been praised for a variety of reasons that are common parts of religious experience such as happiness, excitement, or deep connection to God. Regula Qureshi additionally writes that Muslim immigrants in the United States and Canada hold it as a top goal to build communities of those of the same backgrounds. One of the most popular ways to do this is the Milad, a joyous get-together that takes place to mark auspicious events and includes the chanting of hymns. One of the features that makes this a unique event is that the recitation of these hymns is open to women and in many cases is led by them. From this gathering comes the safeguarding of values amongst those far from home and perhaps with it a sense of pride and recognition amongst those whose public roles in Islamic rituals are traditionally limited.

Stories like these are plentiful in today's age. Beginning in the late 1930s, gospel musicians such as Rosetta Tharpe and Mahalia Jackson began taking their repertoire to secular stages, much to the chagrin of many church-goers. The Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s furthered the combination of popular culture and Christian messages, featuring the works of legends such as Larry Norman, Kris Kristofferson, and Johnny Cash. In spite of producing music that could certainly be listened to for entertainment, the primary reason for this mission was evangelization.

Although it was acceptable to attract fans who were Christian already, it was much more important to use the experience of musical ecstasy to save "*lost souls*" from eternal damnation. The spirit of determination was especially empowered by the conversions of mainstream musicians such as Donna Summer and Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac. Christian musicians have since adopted a variety of genres to fit their religious agenda. While their works have great appeal to those already in the fold, the evangelist drive of the Jesus Movement remains a compelling factor.

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<sup>100</sup>Ohadike, 6.

In Buddhism, Gyosen Asakura, a Japanese priest and former professional DJ, annually hosts an event at his temple in Fukui which features religious iconographies projected in flashing lights and sutras fused to a techno beat. Having been upset at the decrease in Buddhism amongst Japanese youth, Asakura, claiming that priests are "*publicity agents*" for Buddha, has made it a mission to present attendees with a service that rekindles faith in the religion and also gives representations of paradise that Buddhism tells lie in the afterlife.

The relationship between musical and religious experience is one affecting many parts of our being, sometimes - as Benkong demonstrates - even transcending boundaries between one religion and another. With the abilities of music and religion to inspire hope, bring back memories, unite individuals, and stir indescribable emotions, their combined influence has been a marvel that has affected how believers have conducted themselves, honored their higher powers, and kept their faith even in the darkest times.

The repertoire of various religions and cultures may differ from one another as may doctrinal or individual views on what music means, but its use to enliven everything from public rituals to private prayers has been a constant throughout history. Working together with belief itself, such music has acquired a level of sanctity that has often been seen as essential to the religious experience. It has stood the test of time as a part of life capable of making ineradicable changes.

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## Chapter- 5

### EXPERIENCING GOD PERSONALLY: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

#### 5.1. Introduction

Religious people may know about God. Genuine Christians have the ability to know God in a personal way. Becoming a child of God cannot happen by our own efforts of good deeds or religious rituals like getting baptized (Ephesians 2:8-9). But when we transfer our trust of what we can do and begin trusting, we can experience a living relationship with the living God. If a complete stranger asked if he could borrow your car for a day, you'd probably say no. But if a close friend or relative made the same request you would be inclined to say yes. We can only put our full trust in someone we've come to know well. That's the difference in knowing about God versus knowing God in a personal way.

#### 5.2. What Experiences of God can Christians have?

##### *5.2.1. Assurance of Heaven*

According to the Christian belief, the moment a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit of God begins to live inside him (I Corinthians 6:19-20). The very first thing the Holy Spirit does when He came into the life was to give assurance of going to heaven. So, the child prays the same prayer every night – ***“Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake. I pray the Lord my soul to take.”*** This kind of prayer may lead to belief in the Holy Spirit.

##### *5.2.2. Assurance of Peace and Joy*

Another experience of knowing God is the daily joy and peace that comes to our hearts as we grow in our faith. We know and believe that God ultimately has control over everything. God is not the cause of all of the bad things that happen in the world. We live in a fallen world that has the obvious curse of sin upon it. But God is so great that He can even take the bad things that happen to us and teach us lessons that allow us to help others.

### **5.2.3. Assurance of Loving Others**

The Bible says that Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ for eternity – and that’s a very long time. Loving others is the one virtue that, Jesus said, identifies Christians as belonging to Him. If we are experiencing the feelings of loneliness, then it’s time to experience God through the joyful fellowship of worshipping the Savior with a congregation of people who desire to grow in their faith.

### **5.2.4. Assurance of New Desires**

Jesus said, “*I have come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10). Abundant living is an experience that comes when we truly know God. The Holy Spirit creates an inner compulsion for us to come together for worship, learning, and fellowship at church.

Man, very early becomes conscious that he is not alone in the world or the universe. There develops a natural spontaneous self-consciousness of other-mind in the environment of selfhood. Faith translates this natural experience into religion, the recognition of God as the reality—source, nature, and destiny—of other-mind. But such a knowledge of God is ever and always a reality of personal experience. If God were not a personality, he could not become a living part of the real religious experience of a human personality.

Faith transforms the philosophic God of probability into the saving God of certainty in the personal religious experience. Skepticism may challenge the theories of theology, but confidence in the dependability of personal experience affirms the truth of that belief which has grown into faith.

Those who would invent a religion without God are like those who would gather fruit without trees, have children without parents. We cannot have effects without causes; only the I AM is causeless. The fact of religious experience implies God, and such a God of personal experience must be a personal Deity. We cannot pray to a chemical formula, supplicate a mathematical equation, worship a hypothesis,

confide in a postulate, commune with a process, serve an abstraction, or hold loving fellowship with a law.<sup>101</sup>

## **5.2. Proof of God's Existence**

The existence of God can never be proved by scientific experiment or by the pure reason of logical deduction. God can be realized only in the realms of human experience. *"If we truly want to find God, that desire is in itself evidence that we have already found him."* Those who know God have experienced the fact of his presence; such God-knowing mortals hold in their personal experience the only positive proof of the existence of the living God which one human being can offer to another. In the physical universe we may see the divine beauty, in the intellectual world we may discern eternal truth, but the goodness of God is found only in the spiritual world of personal religious experience. We look for God in prayer, in close relation with others, and in the church. Most of all we find the face of God in the tears, the hugs, and the words of comfort others bring to us in times of great sorrow and pain. Here we can experience authentic moments of God's pure and unconditional love.<sup>102</sup>

### ***5.2.1. Where do I look to find God in this world of tragedy and pain?***

This is a world of tragedy and pain. It is also a world of joy and fulfillment. God is present to us in both worlds. The question always is how these two worlds can exist at the same time. The closest reaching is own experience that only a world of freedom could create that possibility. Tragedy and pain are disorienting. We don't want to experience either, yet life keeps bringing them on. Our egos try to keep our lives tragedy and pain-free. In every religion the God provides us with minimum protection and maximum support. In the face of tragedy and pain, minimum protection from God just doesn't feel good enough for us.

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<sup>101</sup> <https://truthbook.com/god/personal-god-personal-experience>

<sup>102</sup> <https://explorefaith.org/findgod.html>

People are instinct to seek—and expect—a spiritual firewall from God. And when they don't get it, suddenly they get indignant, and get the fist at the heavens and demand to know why this is happening. And all of a sudden end up looking for a God who will provide protection—and when miss out on the God who offers support. The people vary from their experience of getting God's support. Some are gone through utter prayer and some are turned up their efforts in what they are doing. In that way, arts and sports are their soulful prayers.

In our world of pain, we can find God in the loving acts of those who stand by us. In our illnesses we can be grateful for those of the medical profession who fight to restore our health. They are the instruments of God and through them his love comes. All healing really is divine. In our emotional distresses God comes to us through a friend, a family member, a counselor, or a minister to offer us encouragement. God is there through those who care. In moments of deep need, God comes in a mysterious way to give us courage.

### ***5.2.2. The presence of God in the Christian Perspective***

It is easy to sense God's presence when things are going right. But where is God when things fall apart? Do we not find the divine presence in the very place that Jesus found it during his crucifixion? Could there be a greater experience of tragedy and pain than that? God was there in the loving acts extended to Christ by those who loved him and stayed with him to the end. His mother, Mary Magdalene, the disciples—all were there in their grief and broken-heartedness.

No one escapes the struggles of life. Our goodness or our faith do not make us immune from suffering. God never promised that life would be without its painful moments. We are promised that God will be with us no matter what we face. *"Peace does not come with the absence of troubles, but with the conscious realization of adequate resources."* God can be found as the supplier of all the resources we need to get through life's difficult moments. We also find God in the messages of hope. This experience of pain will not have the last word. Jesus said to his disciples, "In this world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). The ultimate victory belongs to the power of love. Christ came to bring us that message. Something abides beyond the suffering—the presence of one who has control of the future. The word of hope is that our future is in the hands of God. Love,

courage and hope sum up the resources we have to face our personal tragedies and pain.

God does not promise to prevent pain and tragedy. If we are fortunate to live long enough, we will experience and encounter pain over and over again. What God does promise is to be with us through the pain; God promises to give us the power of His presence so that we can cope, so that we can have perspective, so that the pain of loss, of heartbreak, of our own dying does not overwhelm.

Christian thoughts are that the God's presence comes as a stranger's smile, a new flower, an e-mail message, scripture, words in a hymn. It is even possible that by helping others may lead to know the presence of God. According to Indian philosophy, God is everywhere. We may see Him in other people, in acts of kindness, in the faith of another people. We felt His presence in worship, in nature, in meditation, in scripture, and especially in prayer. My spiritual life sometimes seems like a roller coaster. The spiritual experience God brings spiritual joy and comfort that are more powerful than mere words. If anyone wants to experience God, he has to sincerely put God above all else and look He is there. Sometimes people become disillusioned by tragedy and pain. They attempt to explain it away by saying that everything has a purpose. In such a movement, God manifests himself in our solutions. It is our responsibility to make the proper response. Crisis can be opportunity. In *Search for Meaning* Victor Frankl refers to the concentration camps stating,

*"...it is just such an exceptionally difficult external situation which gives man the opportunity to grow spiritually beyond himself...an accomplishment which in ordinary circumstances they would have never achieved".<sup>103</sup>*

Based on human potentiality, that everything can have a purpose. We look for God in prayer, in close relation with others, and in the church. Most of all find the face of God in the tears, the hugs, and the words of comfort others bring to us in times of great sorrow and pain. Here we can experience authentic moments of God's pure and unconditional love.

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<sup>103</sup><https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/justintaylor/2017/06/08/bernie-sanders-to-traditional-christians-your-beliefs-are-indefensibly-hateful-and-insulting-and-not-what-this-country-is-supposed-to-be-about/>

Christian view of God's presence can be summarized as: Look for God in the person who sits and listens with his or her heart when you need to pour out yours. Look for God in hope that grows out of ashes; look for God in the growth and peace that comes to some who have been through dark valleys. Look for God in the laughs of small children and in the confidence of youth. Look for God in every person who is open to God, everyone who seeks and searches for God; look for God in everyone who asks questions such as yours.<sup>104</sup>

### **5.3. Where Is God? Christian Aspect**

Where is God? Most of us have at one time or another time asked. It's answer has more to do with His presence in our lives than with belief in His existence. We want to know -- where is God when I hurt, or where is God when something goes desperately wrong in my life? Our conclusions depend on what we rely on as a benchmark for truth in our lives. The word of God from the Bible itself is the best answers for the existence of God.

#### ***5.3.1. Where is God? How Can I Know He Exists?***

Where is God? If this question still needs to be settled in our mind, consider the evidence for God in His creation. Genesis 1:1 says, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. Do you believe it? Look around at the evidence. Psalm 19:1-2 tells us: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge'. God wants us to know He exists.

Where is God? We see Him in what He has created. Do you believe that God wants you to see Him? The Bible says He does. He reveals Himself to us. Psalm 98:2 says, 'The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations'. God reveals Himself to us through His creation (Romans 1:20) and through His Word: *'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for*

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<sup>104</sup> The author of the Qur'an believed that the Trinity was made up of the Father, Jesus, and Mary (Jesus' mother): see Surah 4:171; 5:116.



*instruction in righteousness*' (2 Timothy 3:16). Finally, God desires us to know Him so much that He took on the form of a man, in the person of His Son Jesus Christ. Consider these words from Paul in Philippians 2:6-8:

*'Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.'*

### **5.3.2. Where God revealed?**

John, another apostle, helps us to understand that Jesus is the same God who created the universe when he says in John 1: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'*

We can see God in what He has created; we can see Him when we read His Word; we can see Him in the person and character of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to help us understand God, and to assure us that God understands us. John goes on to say: *'No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.'* (John 1:18). Jesus declares His existence and further reveals the truth about God.

### **5.3.3. Where is God? How Can I Relate to Him?**

The Bible tells us He is a person, and that He is near. James, a man of history, records as the brother of Jesus, tells us that if we draw near to God, He draws near to us (James 4:8). Have we believed God is waiting to judge us? The Bible says, He longs to forgive the human. Over and over throughout the pages of Scripture, we read of His longsuffering nature. From Genesis through Revelation, we see a consistent picture of a God who continues to offer forgiveness, up to the very end of time. He is not willing that any should perish, the Bible says, but that all should be saved. The reason He sent Jesus into the world is so that we could all be saved! (John 3:17). Religions teach us we need to earn God's favor. The Bible tells us God's favor is a gift. All He is waiting for is for us to admit our need. Once we confess our sin, His forgiveness is ours (1 John 1:9).

### ***5.3.4. Where is God? What Next?***

In today's world, it's easy for us to think that we suffer alone. But if we have wondered where God is, so has someone else. Now that we know who He is and where He is, we can help someone else know where God is, too. Near the end of the Gospel of John, just before He was crucified, Jesus told His disciples about a comforter He would send, to remind them of all the things He had taught. That comforter, the Holy Spirit of God, came at Pentecost, just a short time after Jesus ascended into heaven. In the first chapter of Acts, we read about that event as His disciples were filled with His Spirit and began declaring the Gospel message.

### ***5.3.5. Where is God? In Worshiping***

The belief that peoples of all religions worship the same God, just in a different way, seems to be the cultural norm today. Behind this is the idea that all beliefs should be tolerated and that any claim to ultimate truth is arrogant.<sup>105</sup> Many Christians have inhaled the relativistic air of our pluralistic culture and fallen for this idea. However, it is not intolerant to acknowledge differences in belief. In fact, it is only when we take other views seriously on their own terms instead of trying to assimilate them to our own belief that we are truly being respectful to them. The fact of the matter is that all the world's religions make particular truth claims and seek to live those out. The idea that we all worship the same God just in different ways is a fairly easy thing to say if you don't know what different religions believe. For example, Buddhists deny the existence of a personal God, while Hindus believe in many Gods. Mormonism is also a polytheistic religion, though Mormons restrict their worship to only a few Gods.

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<sup>105</sup> <https://explorefaith.org/findgod.html>

### ***5.3.6. The Doctrine of the Trinity***

Even in the three monotheistic world religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—there are fundamental differences in God’s character, attributes, and especially his nature. Although all three are monotheistic, Judaism and Islam are Unitarian monotheists (the belief that the being of God exists as one person). Christianity on the other hand is Trinitarian monotheism. This is the belief that within the one Being that is God, there exists eternally three co-equal and co-eternal persons, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each is a distinct person, yet each is identified as God: Father (1 Corinthians 8:6); Son (John 1:1–3; Romans 9:5); Spirit (Acts 5:3–4). The doctrine of the Trinity especially distinguishes Christianity from the world’s religions. In Islam, even though it is misunderstood.<sup>106</sup>

Another major difference between Christianity and the world’s religions is that the world’s religions do not have a realistic view of human nature. Since all teach salvation by human effort or goodness. All religions, except Christianity, tone down both the bad news of our sinfulness and the good news of God’s free grace. In Christianity, salvation comes through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection and not through human effort (1 Corinthians 15:1–4; Romans 4:4–8).<sup>107</sup> On all of these points, it is not that each religion is professing different aspects of one truth, but that they are contradicting each other in their truth claims. While the world’s religions may all point in the direction of heaven and tell that we can save our self, Christianity teaches that Jesus has come, not just as a moral leader to show us the path to God, but to be our Way, our Truth, and our Life (John 14:6), the only One who can give us peace (John 14:27; Romans 5:1).

The book of Acts tells us that Christianity was born in a time of persecution and immorality in a world where the church was in the minority. Yet it was in that culture that the apostles proclaimed the exclusivity of Christ as the only way of salvation for all people (see Acts 8:5, 13:23–39, 16:30–31, 17:30–31, 20:21):

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<sup>106</sup> The author of the Qur’an believed that the Trinity was made up of the Father, Jesus, and Mary (Jesus’ mother): see Surah 4:171; 5:116.

<sup>107</sup> <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/justintaylor/2017/06/08/bernie-sanders-to-traditional-christians-your-beliefs-are-indefensibly-hateful-and-insulting-and-not-what-this-country-is-supposed-to-be-about/>.

*And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)*

Even when the apostles were told by the authorities to be silent and no longer proclaim Christ, they responded by saying, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19–20). In a time when the emperor claimed to be Lord and the moral code was decidedly in opposition to Scripture, the Holy Spirit gave that early church the ability to be faithful and to preach the Word of God without fear or compromise. He did it then, and he can do so now.<sup>108</sup>

#### **5.4. In Hindu worship, music is gift to gods**

In Hinduism the Lord Krishna is a flower. When the flower petals have enclosed, she's totally swallowed by the fragrance of love. So goes a song composed by 15th Century Indian poet Meera, a woman who gave up worldly ways to pen Hindu devotional songs about Krishna, believed to be a human incarnation of the god Vishnu. In the lyrics, religious and romantic love are intertwined. Bhajans, are the part of a rich tradition of music in Hinduism. Music is essential to the worship experience, Hindus say, because it arouses the senses and creates spiritual vibrations that enhance devotion.

Repetition and chanting help connect devotees to humankind and to their spirituality. Sometimes there is improvisation, like jazz, in the singing. The sound of “om” is a sacred mantra. *“Hindus believe there is a power in the statue they are worshipping,”* said Narasimha Acharya Samudrala, a priest at Rama Temple. *“You have to please the god with the good things like offerings.”* The range of expression in Hinduism is as large as India. Northern Indians have different traditions than those in the southern part of the country. Hindus venerate a variety of deities, such as Shiva and Vishnu. Some view the deities as various forms of a supreme god, and

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<sup>108</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Holiness* (Evangelical Press: Durham, England, 1879), 253.

different regions are more devoted to certain gods. Languages and rituals used in worshipping vary greatly.

In Hindu music, there are both ancient traditions and contemporary songs. Two main classical music forms--Hindustani, from northern India, and Carnatic, from the south--provide much of the framework. The sitar, a string instrument, is common in Hindustani music, in which flexibility and improvisation shape songs. Carnatic songs are beat heavy and commonly feature a drum called the mridangam. Once the classical framework is established, sub-melodies can enter. Indian musicians also have adopted Western instruments such as the violin, and some devotionals mimic melodies of British marching songs. The lyrics and music encompass the range of human emotion. Hindu music can be as varied as Christian music in the U.S., which ranges from Catholic chorales to Pentecostal gospel. But mysticism and dynamism are common threads in Hindu music, and songs about a god being a kindhearted soul or stories of a deity's achievements predominate.

David Roche, executive director of the Old Town School of Folk Music, has studied Indian music and said it plays to the sensory experience in Hinduism. "Music is a kind of sacred technology with a long history," said Roche, an ethnomusicologist. "It has deep importance in changing both personal consciousness and social atmosphere." When singing, devotees will describe the god's valor and strength, calming him like a baby. The music helps devotees concentrate on blessings and remember the good things in life. Peacefulness envelops them as they sing the Lord goodnight.



Great bhaktas (devotees) sang the praises of God. Verses sung in attractive tunes help us to focus on God. Singing and listening sustained musical notes have been linked to the Divinity in Hinduism from the earliest Vedic times. The gods themselves played musical instruments. Lord Shiva is often described as a cosmic dancer and a great musician. The ‘Tandavam’ of Shiva is the cosmic dance and its ‘Damaru’ (a small hourglass-shaped drum) represents the cosmic sound. Lord Brahma, creator of the universe, described as playing hand cymbals, shaped Indian music from the verses of Sama-Veda. Lord Vishnu, the Preserver, rings the conch shell. Lord Krishna could attract cowherds, ‘Gopikas’ and even cows with his playing flute. ‘Saraswati’ Maa is the beloved Hindu goddess of knowledge, music and the arts.

Music is essential to the cult experience, says Hindus, because it awakens the senses and creates spiritual vibrations that strengthen devotion. Rehearsal and song help to connect the faithful with humanity and their spirituality. While singing, the faithful will describe the value and the strength of the god, calming him like a baby. Music helps the faithful to focus on the blessings and to remember the good things in life. Mantra music has the power to open our hearts and reconnect to our natural state of love and joy by bringing us in a mood of meditation.

Today, music is evident in worship through ‘bhajan’ (hymns) and ‘kirtan’ (musical chanting of mantras). Common instruments include drums, such as *tabla* and *mridanga*, *manjira* and *harmonium*. Classical instruments, in addition to the *tabla*, include the flute, the *Veena*, the *Sitar*, the *Sarangi*, the *Santoor* and the ‘*Shenai*’. Saraswati is the beloved Hindu goddess of knowledge, music and the arts. The Veena that she holds signifies perfection in the sciences of all arts and music. Veena’s soothing music dispels negativity. It is believed that the goddess is the creator of ‘*Sanskrit*’ (which means perfectly made), the ancient language of Hinduism.



Krishna is a cosmic musician, and the tune he creates by playing his transcendental flute is embodied with cosmic energy. As Krishna's divine flute calls at any time of the day or night, nature, which is mesmerized by the captivating celestial tune, responds: Lakes and rivers overflow with water, expanding their banks because they are desirous of embracing Krishna's lotus feet. The kirtan is performed daily in the temples of Vaishnava, generally accompanying cults called Aartis. It can also be performed at home or in public. Whoever hears the kirtan is greatly advantaged, as the sound vibration acts gradually to cleanse the heart of greed, envy, lust, anger and other obstacles to a peaceful life. *"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything."* – Plato *"Listening to bhajans, it just brings you closer to your own art,"* "It puts you in a meditative form. It's connecting the inward with the outward."<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2006-05-12-0605120279-story.html>

## **Chapter-6**

### **MUSIC AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

Many religions agreed the sin of music is taken away when it is used for worship. Music is a nearly universal part of religion because it appeals to and heightens human senses in a pleasurable way which, in turn, allows humans to praise through a medium that makes worship more enjoyable. Since the dawn of time, music has been man's medium of communication with its divinity. Views of the origin of both religion and music swing between two poles: the belief in a reality that is essential and independent of an observer and a view that neither music nor religion exists on its own, challenging their independent existence. Both views address the question, did music and religion exist prior to our having discovered them or did they exist all along, whether we knew them or not? In modern psychology, may be the world comes into its being when man discovers it.

#### **6.2. Definitions and Concepts**

Given the close links between musical and religious concepts, a nonsectarian definition of music may be impossible. For example, one common definition of music as "*humanly patterned sound*" conflicts with widely held religious beliefs that music is not humanly, but rather, divinely patterned. To members of traditions holding that music or, at least, religious music originates with the Gods or with devils, the assertion of the human origin of music must seem the ultimate in western materialistic dogmatism, however scientifically neutral it may seem to the outsider.

Even definitions as simple as the dictionary staple "*art of sounds*" carry ethnocentric and sectarian implications. In many religious contexts, music is less an expressive "*art*" than a technology applied to produce practical results, from the storage and retrieval of information contained in religious narratives and teachings memorized in song to the attraction of animals in hunting, increase of harvests, curing of diseases, communication with the divine, supplication, and control of the various levels of psych cosmic experience. While aesthetic beauty may or may not be integral to such technologies, individual self-expression plays little part in them and may be detrimental to their intended results.



The concept of music as an *"art"* carries overtones of a late European ideology based on the sanctity of self-expression and individualism, ultimately rooted in Greek and Judeo-Christian notions of ego, self, and soul. For some traditions, music is antithetical to the very notion of an individual self or soul. One group of Buddhist texts takes music as the archetypal embodiment of impermanence and conditioned causality, dependent on external sources and conditions, in order to show that there can be no such thing as an individual self. By contrast, modern Western scholars tend to view music, at least in its ideally purest forms, as fundamentally independent of external causes and conditions; they draw a sharp line between *"extramusical"* elements such as symbolism, function, purpose, and so forth, and *"the music itself,"* which is supposed to consist of pure arrangements of tones.

This concept of music seems to reflect European post-Renaissance religious concepts of an autonomous and inviolable soul wholly contained in the body of the individual. Perhaps it also reflects post feudal economic concepts of individual entrepreneurial freedom, just as the Buddhist concept of an impermanent music resulting from temporary combinations of causes and conditions reflects basic Buddhist religious beliefs. Even sound may not play a decisive role in religious concepts of music, at least not in any technical sense. When fundamentalist Muslims ban recordings of Western popular music and fundamentalist Christians burn them, they are not necessarily reacting to the melodic or chordal structures that constitute the essence of music for the technically oriented outsider.

The *"music of the spheres"* extolled by early Christian writers was not sound in the sense of physical waves propagated in a gaseous medium; and, in Tibetan Buddhist thought, music consists of both the *"actually present music"* produced by sound-making voices and instruments and the *"mentally produced music"* perceived and imagined by each listener, with different results according to individual differences in experience, skill, and imagination. Religious traditions have by and large no more conceived music to consist of sounds and the *"extramusical"* than they have considered persons to be made up of the physical body and the *"extra personal."*

The very attempt to define music neutrally and open-mindedly might be objectionable from some religious viewpoints. For certain Christians, some kinds of secular music and the music of other religions are the works of the devil and should not be mentioned without condemnation; on the other hand, for the 'Mahāyāna

Buddhist' author Sa Skya Pandith, all music deserves praise because it relieves human suffering. Sufi writers discuss music only in terms of highest praise for its capacity to lead to spiritual fulfillment, and they would consider a neutral approach as evidence of a lack of real understanding or appreciation of music's most important meanings and values.

Many religions and cultures do not have a concept of corresponding to "music" or "religious music." For Islam, *al-mūsīqī* ("music") is, in principle, what the West might consider secular music, controversial for its potential to mislead believers into sensual distractions; melodic vocalizations of the Qur'ān and certain religious poetry are not "music," however musical they may seem on technical and aesthetic grounds. To avoid violating the integrity of a tradition by imposing a dissonant external viewpoint, it might help to consider all such cases of performances that sound musical to the outsider, but are not music to the insider, as "*para-musical*."<sup>110</sup>

Cultures as diverse as those of Ethiopia and modern Tibet have distinct terms and concepts for religious and secular music, with no common category of "music" to unite them.<sup>111</sup> The music of the Chinese 'chin' (a type of zither), on the other hand, is clearly conceived as music and has strong roots in Confucian and Daoist concepts and practices; but it certainly is not "*religious*" in the same sense as the singing of monks in Buddhist or Daoist temples. And, although the point lends itself all too easily to distortion and romanticism, it is a well-known fact that in many small-scale kinship-based societies of hunters, nomads, and subsistence farmers, where formal role distinctions are much less prominent than in bureaucratized state civilizations, it is often as difficult to draw a clear line between "*sacred*" and "*secular*" music as it is between religion and everyday life.

Are Pygmy honey-gathering songs part of a traditional ritual, a comic entertainment, a social regulatory system designed to ensure and enhance egalitarian universal participation in community life, or an aesthetically exquisite polyphonic art? The question, if not meaningless, is at least inelegant. Music, like religions, are

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<sup>110</sup> The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 20 vols., edited by Stanley Sadie (London, 1980).

<sup>111</sup> Shelemy, Kay Kaufman. *Music as Culture*. New York, 1990.

most meaningfully defined in their own terms. Along with aspects of musical sounds and their structural relationships, religious definitions frequently take into consideration such factors as cosmological and mathematical laws, divine origin or inspiration, psychological and emotional effects, social and ethical implications, relations or contrasts between religious and secular music, and a wide range of other elements.

Since the selection of factors varies widely from one religious' tradition to another, as does the relative importance assigned to any particular element, an approach that attempted to define all religious music "*in their own terms*" would result in a collection of mutually unintelligible approaches to what must on some level be a cosmically, divinely, or humanly universal topic. For want of a better solution, we must discuss music and religion in the terms most widely shared by the full range of musical and religious traditions; and these, in the first place, require attention to the technical elements of music and of the para musical phenomena found in religious contexts.

### **6.3. The Desire for Music and its Importance in Religion**

Music has the ability to deepen the meaning of words that accompany it, both in a religious context or any other medium. As described by St. Augustine, at his baptism "*The tears flowed from me when I heard your hymns and canticles, for the sweet singing of your church moved me deeply...The music surged in my ears, truth seeped into my heart, and my feelings of devotion overflowed...*" St. Augustine's account makes it clear that the hymns and canticles sung at his baptism amplified his personal religious experience all the way back in the 4th century. At the same time, music wasn't always considered an appropriate mode of worship, so why has music become such a universal part of worship today?

In the early Christian tradition, as with many other religions, one had to be careful with their use of music. According to Weiss and Taruskin's *Music of the Western World*, using music for unholy purposes such as pleasure was sinful because pleasure gets in the way of the Lord. If early Christians considered music a pleasure capable of distracting them from their relationship with God, then the impact music had on people of this time must have been significant. Putting religious text to music allows for a more involved worship experience, incorporating song performance skills

that give the performer and the listener a heightened sense of praise. In this way, music can be used as a tool for praise that is appealing to the worshiper.

Music has a way of filling in the gaps in thought, feeling, and emotion that words cannot do justice, which can be incredibly powerful when accompanied by a spiritual belief. Using music for religious reasons also gave early humans the ability to experience and explore the tantalizing effects of music without committing a sin. In the present day, music is used much more widely and for purposes other than worship, which has allowed religious music to grow and expand into many types of praise that have a wider impact on many people. Music is a nearly universal part of religion because it appeals to and heightens human senses in a pleasurable way which, in turn, allows humans to praise through a medium that makes worship more enjoyable.

#### **6.4. Music: Music and Religion**

Music and religion are closely linked in relationships as complex, diverse, and difficult to define as either term in itself. Religious believers have heard music as the voices of Gods and the cacophony of devils, praised it as the purest form of spirituality, and condemned it as the ultimate in sensual depravity; with equal enthusiasm they have promoted its use in worship and sought to eradicate it from both religious and secular life. Seldom a neutral phenomenon, music has a high positive or negative value that reflects its near-universal importance in the religious sphere. This importance—perhaps difficult to appreciate for post-industrial-revolution Westerners accustomed to reducing music to the secondary realms of "*art*," "*entertainment*," and occasional "*religious*" music isolated behind sanctuary walls—has nonetheless been pervasive.

Religious "*texts*" have been sung, not written, throughout most of human history; and religious behavior has found musical articulation in almost every religious tradition. Navajo priests are "singers"; the primary carriers of Sinhala traditional religion are drummers and dancers; and the shamans of northern Eurasia and Inner Asia use music as their principal medium of contact with the spirit world. Through the centuries, priests, monks, and other specialists have sung the Christian masses, Buddhist '*pūjā*'s, Islamic calls to prayer, Hindu sacrifices, and other

ceremonies that form the basis of organized religious observances in the world's major religions.

The values, uses, and forms of religious music are as diverse and culture-specific as the religious traditions in which they are found. Christian liturgical music is generally as characteristically "European" as Hindu devotional music is "Indian"; both use sounds, forms, and instruments from their respective cultures and have contributed greatly to the overall musical life of their own regions. Yet music, like religion, can transcend cultural limits; the religious musical systems of Ethiopia and Tibet, for example, differ almost as greatly from the secular music of their own respective cultures as the music of foreign countries.

Religious musical systems may also extend across cultural boundaries. Islam, for example, has forged musical links across vast regions of Asia and Africa; and North American traditions such as the Ghost Dance and the peyote cult have created musical bridges between very diverse ethnic groups. Other well-known intercultural religious musical traditions include Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and West African/Latin American possession music. Additional cases may include:

(1) The drumming and singing of Asian shamans, perhaps constituting a related tradition stretching from Scandinavia to the Himalayas, and possibly even extending into the Americas.

(2) The epic songs, based on improvisatory recombination of traditional song segments, of Central Asia and eastern Europe.

(3) The bronze gong ensembles, associated with cosmological and calendrical symbolism and functions, of Southeast Asia.

(4) The ancient sacrificial chants, linked to modal systems built on tetrachords, of Indo-European peoples extending from India to Greece.

(5) Conceivably an even wider connection between Chinese, Indian, and Greek conceptions of music as an embodiment of universal cosmological and mathematical laws.

Yet, second only to its universal occurrence, diversity is the most characteristic feature of religious music, even in the great intercultural religious

traditions. Christian music, for example, includes not only Gregorian plain song, Palestrina masses, Protestant hymns, and Bach oratorios but also the resonant basses of the Russian Orthodox choir, the ornate melodies of Greek Orthodox chant, and the percussion-accompanied dances of Ethiopian Coptic worship; in the postcolonial era, it encompasses West African rhythms, and metallic sonorities of the Javanese *gamelan* orchestra, and the driving beat and electronic tones of the rock band as well. Hindu music aimed at helping to achieve the meditative state of ‘*samādhi*’ can employ the very non-Indian sounds of Indonesian bronze instruments.

### **6.5. Technical Features**

Music has its technical basis in human voices and/or musical instruments that produce sounds with patterned acoustical characteristics. Religious traditions often stress a distinction between vocal and instrumental music and frequently assign higher value to vocal music. This is usually because of its capacity to communicate meanings through the words of song texts, because the human body seems more a part of divine creation than instruments created by human artifice, or because of negative associations of instruments and their music. In some traditions, such as the Mennonite churches and ‘*Theravāda*’ Buddhist monasteries, vocal music is performed *a cappella*, without instrumental accompaniment.

Patterned human vocalizations take two forms: speech, emphasizing contrastive distinctions between units (phonemes, syllables, words) with distinct meanings, and singing, emphasizing prolonged continuity of sounds with controlled pitch (frequency of vibration). Singing without words produces a melody, a patterned sequence of tones; with words sung to the melody, one has a song. A song may be sung on a single, steady pitch level (monotone); or its melody may rise and fall to any number of higher and lower pitches, the total of which, arranged in ascending or descending order, are its scale; or it may consist of continuous, gradually shifting tone contours without distinctly separate high or low levels. Sets of musical scales may be conceived as modes that incorporate standard melodic patterns, ethical and cosmological implications, and other non-acoustic features.

Religious traditions may place greater value and emphasis on either words or melody; and vocal styles may range from formally simple, with few up-and-down

melodic movements to avoid distortion of the words of the texts, to more elaborate, with complex melismatic movements to enhance musical beauty. It was once widely believed that such differences represented an evolutionary sequence from "*primitive*" chant to musical art; but, as Edith Gerson-Kiwi (1961) has convincingly argued, melodic simplicity may be a deliberately developed stylistic alternative to elaborate secular styles in complex cultures. Varying textual/musical emphasis may reflect varying mythic/ritual applications, stressing either the informational content of religious narratives or the aesthetic beauty or power of a religious offering. Contrasting textual/musical emphases may also reflect differences in communicating with human believers in an intelligible language, or with spirits or Gods, who may prefer the special mode of musical communication.

Melodies may be performed as a solo by a single singer or instrument player, in unison by a chorus of singers, or accompanied by other singers or instruments playing independent, distinct musical parts. They may be arranged so as to occur simultaneously with other melodies (polyphony), with a steady-pitch monotone (drone), or with conventionally arranged sequences (harmony) of other pitches or simultaneous-pitch clusters (chords). The most musically complex of these features may occur in the smallest local religions of the socio politically and technologically simplest cultures. Generally, such traditions tend toward maximum religious and musical participation by the whole group, while the "great" religions of urban civilizations tend toward complex patterns of religious and musical specialization.

However, the existence of religious and musical specialists such as the shaman in small cultures, of complex divisions of musical function in the group performances of hunter-gatherers such as the Pygmies and San, and of movements toward community religious and musical participation such as the growth of the Lutheran chorale and Buddhist monastic chant in urban civilizations in Europe and India, show that even the most general rules may find exceptions in religious and musical traditions.

Rhythms are the product of patterned accents and "long" and "short" durations of sounds. Their patterns may be varying groups of irregular or equal-length beats (abstract or actually played accent/time units) and pulses (shortest units actually played); or patterns may recur in cycles of the same number of beats played again and again. Rhythms and cycles may be classified as appropriate to specific Gods

and ritual activities, and some traditions (such as Tantric Buddhism) use mathematical beat groups extending into the hundreds to musically embody cosmological and other religious concepts. Rhythms often form a link between music, words, and dance. In songs with prose texts, musical rhythms are often free, varying along with long-short syllable and sentence patterns; while songs with poetic texts often reflect the meter of poetic stanzas, with the same number of syllables and beats recurring in successive lines.

However, musical settings may also utilize different rhythmic patterns from the texts set to them. Dance rhythms provide cues of accent and patterning to coincide with movements of the body; they range in style from syncopated (favoring sounds that fall between and overlap beats) and very fast styles associated with some African American possession religions to the asymmetrical, extremely slow rhythms used in Tibetan Buddhist dances.<sup>112</sup>

Musical instruments are scientifically classed into four groups according to the means used to produce sound: idiophones (bells, gongs, etc.), which produce sound by means of a solid vibrating body; membranophones (drums, etc.), which utilize a stretched membrane; chordophones (lutes, harps, etc.), which use strings; and aerophones (flutes, trumpets, etc.), in which vibrating air produces the sound. Instruments of all these classes are widely used in religious music, although one class or another is looked on with special favor or disfavor by various religious traditions. Instruments are often played in groups or ensembles. These are sometimes called "*bands*" or "*orchestras*," with the latter term technically implying greater size and more variety of instrument types; but the terms are often used simply to connote a lesser or greater degree of respect on the writer's part.

Some Western writings on religion and music, particularly works by early scholars and missionaries, contain misnomers that convey false technical implications. Most common is the term '*primitive*', which implies both "*early*" and "*simple*"; in fact, historical evolutionary chronologies of musical types are speculative

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<sup>112</sup> Alan P. Merriam's "African Musical Rhythm and Concepts of Time-Reckoning," in *Music East and West*, edited by Thomas Noblitt (New York, 1981), pp. 123–141



and controversial, and the term has been indiscriminately applied solely on racial grounds to music comparable in complexity and sophistication to the music of any known civilization. Words such as '*noise, din, and cacophony*' often simply indicate lack of understanding or sympathy.

Instruments are frequently misnamed; for example, '*flageolet*', the name of a flute, is widely applied to oboes and trumpets; *tambourine*, a frame drum with jingles, is used for every kind of drum; and *guitar* and *harp*, applied to almost any chordophone. A more ambiguous usage is *chant*, a term that should carry technical implications of free rhythm, limited pitch range, and a relatively simple melodic style. In fact, the term is widely used as a simple synonym for "*religious vocalization*" or "*religious song*," even in cases of melodically and rhythmically very complex music; hence, it may impart the misleading impression that a music is of inferior aesthetic quality simply by virtue of its being religious.

#### **6.6. Origins, Myths, and Symbolism**

The close relationship of music and religion may imply, as some myths and legends claim, a common or related origin. From the eighteenth to the early twentieth century, evolution-oriented scholars debated theories of musical origins in the sounds of birds and animals, emotional cries of grief at funerals, language intonations, stylized recitations of religious texts, and animistic awe of "*voices*" heard in natural objects such as shells and bamboo tubes, and so forth. All such theories proving no less speculative and resistant to objective investigation than the traditional myths they were meant to replace, the issue gradually lost scientific interest, and it is now all but ignored in musical research. But, as if in discouragement at having failed to construct their own myth of musical origins, scholars also made little effort to explore the origin question in its traditional context of religious mythology.

Accessible information, while insufficient to allow for generalization or systematic analysis, is abundant enough to show that music is as diverse in myths of origin as in any other of its aspects. Music may be thought to originate in a primordial divine power, as in the *nāda-brahman* "*God-as-sound*" of Hinduism, Music may also play a cosmogonic role in the origin or maintenance of the world, as in the drum-playing and cosmic dance of the Hindu God Śiva Nataraja or in widespread stories of Gods who "*sing*" their creations and creatures into existence.

The creation of individual pieces of music and musical instruments may involve contact with the divine. In the vision quest of the Plains Indians, individuals would go out alone into the wilderness to fast and seek divine messages revealed in songs, which they would then bring back to enhance the religious and musical life of the community. The Asian shaman's quest for a drum may take him to the center of the world and the beginning of time, just as the Australian Aborigine's dreaming of songs may provide a link to the primordial Dreaming. Musical creation may even move in the opposite direction, from the human world to the divine, as in the case of the Tibetan composer Milaraspa (1040–1123), whose songs are said to have been "*imported*" to heaven by the '*mkha' 'gro ma*' Goddesses who, like their counterparts in many other religions, fill the Tibetan Buddhist heavens with their music.<sup>113</sup>

The idea that music originally belonged to other places, times, persons, or beings is found in many myths, sometimes with connotations of conflict and conquest, as in the South American and Melanesian legends of male theft of sacred flutes from the women who originally possessed them. However, the discovery or creation of music is more often a joyful or ecstatic experience, as in the many vocal and instrumental pieces and religious dances of Tantric Buddhism experienced in dreams and meditations as celestial performances and then recomposed by the meditator for performance in the human world. Handel's often-quoted account of seeing God and the angels while composing the "Hallelujah" chorus—to say nothing of the religious experiences the chorus continues to evoke for many of its performers—may indicate the viability of such concepts even in cultures that favor ideas of human composition of music over divine creation and that tend to conceptualize musical "inspiration" in more secular terms.

Specific beliefs in music coming to us from other realms and beings may be a special case of a more general belief in the otherness, the special or extraordinary nature, of music in human experience. Such beliefs are seldom rooted in simple

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<sup>113</sup> A broadbased anthropological approach is used in *Horses, Musicians, and Gods: The Hausa Cult of Spirit Possession* by Fremont E. Besmer (South Hadley, Mass., 1983), while a focus on symbolism marks Steven Feld's work on the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea, *Sound and Sentiment* (Philadelphia, 1982).

perceptions of music as strange and alien but rather seem based on recognition of the beauty and power of music. Thus, even when some traditions condemn music, they are condemning aspects of it that other traditions find worthy of praise: music exerts a strong appeal on humans, spirits, or Gods; it stimulates sensual, bodily, and mental involvement, and so on. Does the power of music come from physical sensations of breath, motion, and vibration, from cognitions of proportion and symmetry as unexpected and serendipitous in the auditory realm as geometric arrays in nature, from socially and culturally conditioned associations? Is there one explanation, or are there separate causes for different kinds of music and experiences?

Whatever the answer, music enhances, intensifies, and—in ways that may elude precise analysis and control but which are nevertheless apparent both to participants and observers—transforms almost any experience into something felt not only as different but also as somehow better. In this transformative power, music resembles religion itself; and when the energies of music and religion are focused on the same object in a functional adaptation of both toward a common meaning and goal, intensification reaches a peak greater perhaps than either might achieve by itself. Thus, the "otherness" of music and the "other" levels of reality and beings encountered in religion merge into a heightened synthesis of religious-musical experience. The possibility of such a synthesis may help to explain the aspect of music in religion that we usually call symbolism.

### **6.7. Symbolism of Music**

Symbolism is a problematic concept for both religion and music. Like the Gods and Spirits who remain invisible to an outside observer or to a camera, music's religious meanings and functional effects that elude capture by microphones and tape recorders may strike the uninitiated outsider as pure symbolism and yet be at least as real as its physical sounds to the aware and sensitive insider. For the Aztec, songs were flowers, birds, pictures, and the spirits of dead warriors called back to earth; we ourselves would probably find it easier to agree that a song "is" a picture than that a song *is*, rather than *symbolizes*, a spirit. And if we adopt the kind of viewpoint that reduces the symbolic relationship between symbol and meaning to questions of physical-intangible and real-unreal, thus disposing of the spirits, we still have not decided whether songs are the symbols of flowers or vice versa. One senses that either

choice is equally arbitrary; but if both are admissible as the real basis of the symbol, then why not the spirits as well?<sup>114</sup>

Even if we take musical symbolism as a comparative and technical question of meanings attributed to sounds and forms, there are further questions of how so abstract and nondiscursive a medium can symbolize effectively, other than by purely arbitrary association, in the absence of explicit content that would lend itself to unambiguous communication. Some hear the diabolical in sounds that others find sacred; cross-cultural searches for even the most general agreement on music's cognitive or emotional significance have been unrewarding. There even seems to be a contradiction in the attempt to encode or decipher symbolic meanings in music: its aesthetic power seems to rely on the manipulation of abstract forms, however defined by a given culture and style, to the extent that subjecting form to an externally imposed system of meanings and functions might imply conflicts of purpose and musically inferior results.

Yet, if a symbol is that which stands for and reveals something other than itself, then music throughout the world has been accepted as successfully symbolizing the "other" of religion. Part of its success must derive from its generally perceived qualities of otherness and extraordinariness, and perhaps even from the very abstractness that frees it from associations too narrow to be associated with religious goals and meanings. But symbolic effectiveness must also rely on more specific associations than arbitrary applications to meanings or goals, which, even though they may be functionally linked to the goals of religious practice, may still appear extrinsic to the music. If such associations do not arise from explicit musical content, then they must result from specific forms that accord with other meaningful forms in the religious sphere.

Is formalism of shared musical and religious forms, then, may combine with is functional applications to produce music that effectively symbolizes a religious

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<sup>114</sup> John Bierhorst's *Cantares Mexicanos: Songs of the Aztecs* (Stanford, Calif., 1985); Edith Gerson-Kiwi's "Religious Chant: A Pan-Asiatic Conception of Music," *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 13 (1961): 64–67,

object, and moreover without compromising the aesthetic integrity or viability of music as a medium of structured forms. Taking religious inspiration as the primary element in the process, this synthesis would occur when the form of a religious experience, action, image, or statement stimulated the creation of a corresponding musical form appropriate to and effective in the context of the musical system of its particular culture or religious tradition.

When religious and musical forms and purposes thus coincide, we have the kind of congruence that allows religious meaning to pervade every aspect of music from its assumed origin to the forms of individual instruments, songs, and pieces, and at every level of meaning from the most central to the most peripheral, from the most general to the most specific. The synthesis may be so complete as to leave no certainty whether either component, religion or music, takes precedence over the other; and it certainly allows for influence in both directions. There are, for example, not only myths of music, but also music of myths; and the influence of music on mythology is almost certainly more pervasive and more important than the influence of mythology on music.

Contrary to a famous assertion by Lévi-Strauss, Wagner was far from the first, even in the Judeo-Christian tradition, to structurally "analyze" myths through music, for there are European precedents for the musical structuring of mythic narratives and themes going back to the Middle Ages, and far older examples from other parts of the world. These range in complexity from dramatizations as musically elaborate as Bach's or Wagner's (for example, the many performance genres of the Hindu epics '*Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*' in South and Southeast Asia), to the almost universal forms of mythic vocalization that utilize a simple binary contrast of sung myth/unsung ordinary discourse, or melodic and rhythmic highlighting of important words and passages to create a musically enhanced structure for a mythic narrative. For most religions throughout history, myths have been embodied not in written literature but in musical performance; and such performances provide one of the most characteristic bridges between religious belief and action, between myth and ritual.

## 6.8. Time, Space, and Ritual

Music is widely used as a demarcate of ritual time and space. In traditional settings all over the world, one may enter a community just before or during a ritual performance and be drawn toward the center of religious activity by musical sounds that grow progressively stronger as one moves toward the center. At the ceremonial site, music may emanate from the exact center of action; or musicians may be placed at the borders of the ritual site, creating a boundary zone of maximum sensual stimulation through which one passes to enter the ritual area itself. In either case, the ceremonial space is pervaded by musical sounds that, more than any other element, fill the entire sacred area with a tangible energy and evidence that a special situation has been created.

Sometimes architectural or geographic isolation is used to confine the sound to the ritual space, and the music becomes an intimate or secret experience restricted to ritual participants and unheard by the general public. In other contexts, musical contrasts may mark the boundaries of sacred spaces by reserving different styles or sounds for sacred centers and profane peripheries: for example, Christian churches with bells that ring on the outside and organ music on the inside, or Theravada Buddhist monastic ordinations with royal processional instruments outside the temple and choral chanting inside.

Unlike works of visual art, which exist in their entirety and all their details at any given moment, music unfolds through time. Thus, it creates a temporal framework that may be synchronized with ritual time in various ways. At the simplest level, the beginning and ending of a musical performance may coincide with the beginning and end of a ritual performance. Music may begin before a ritual and end after it, enclosing the performance in a temporal bracket or frame; or music may be performed selectively at temporal high points in ritual activity, highlighting significant periods of religious action.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Leonard, Neil. *Jazz: Myth and Religion*. New York, 1987.

But music also structures the experience of time in more complex ways. The tempo of the sounds that constitute the "*events*" of a musical performance may be considerably faster or slower than the pace of everyday experience, and they may combine in unusual temporal patterns. Music uses formal devices such as cyclicity, repetition, contrast, variation, and development of one pattern of organization into another. Any or all of these devices may be used to create perceptual impressions of the extension or compression of a moment of experience to a longer or shorter time than normal, the return of a previous moment, or the building of intensity toward a climax and emergence of a new structural and experiential framework.

For both time and space, the structuring effect of music and other performance media may thus function in quite distinct ways. The most obvious way is by contrastive marking of boundaries between music-filled sacred space/time and profane space/time without music. The musical preludes and postludes performed before and after Christian services, or the conch-shell trumpet notes sounded before and after many South Asian rituals, often from a temple door or gateway, exemplify the boundary-marking aspect of music used to highlight ritual activity by creating a sonic frame around it in time and space.

A different mode of organization is used when the spatial and temporal centers, rather than the boundaries, of ritual activity are brought into concentrated focus by music. This phenomenon occurs at a conceptual or "symbolic" level when music is perceived as a spatiotemporal axis mundus, a channel of communication with spiritual realms and primordial eras. For example, singing the "drum lineage" songs of the Tibetan Bon religion evokes a link with the beginning of time and the center of the world.

More concretely, the central spatiotemporal foci of ritual actions in the physical world may be highlighted by musical intensification, while movement toward or away from the center is marked by gradually changing intensity rather than a sharp boundary. For example, the religious and musical focus of a Sinhala Kohombā Kankāriya ritual is in the drumming, singing, and dancing of the priests themselves; their sound is heard with decreasing intensity as one moves outward through the concentric rows of the audience in the open-walled ritual enclosure, through the streets of the village, and on out through the fields of the surrounding district, which may be the ultimate space consecrated by their performance.

In such cases, the consecrated space is defined by its relation to the ritual action at its center, rather than by a boundary at its edge; and the gradually diminishing intensities of musical sounds emanating from the center serve well to embody this central-focal mode of spatial demarcation. A similar mode of temporal demarcation seems to occur in, for example, the Shona Bira ritual described by Berliner,<sup>116</sup> in which the “*mbira*” musicians begin their performance with unobtrusive, unelaborate playing and gradually build to a peak of musical and religious interaction with the audience. Both musical intensity of creative improvisation and religious experiences of spirit possession occur within this focal period, and both gradually fade away to more ordinary levels as the ritual draws to an end. In such modes of application, music ceases to be a simple boundary marker, enhancer, or accompaniment to ritual action and religious experience: musical and ritual structure and content begin to take on more vital and significant relationships.

The most basic and widespread musical and ritual time-structuring device is repetition, often carried to such lengths as to perplex or bore the outside observer. It may be that repetition and redundancy serve to impart sensations of continuity, stability, and security, that they aid concentration and provide safeguards against distraction, or that they simply allow continuation of a "state of music" to enhance a ritual performance. Whatever the cause, the use of repetition is surely wide enough to show the importance of this little-understood formal device. However, except in unusual cases such as South Asian *mantra*, Japanese Nembutsu chanting, and some kinds of instrumental accompaniments to rituals, which may involve very prolonged repetitions, musical repetition is almost always found in conjunction with variation, and each depends on the other.

For example, we might consider three possible musical settings for the beginning of the Christian Mass, "Kyrie eleison / Christe eleison / Kyrie eleison."

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<sup>116</sup> "Sacred Music" issues of the journal *World of Music*, Berlin; vol. 24, no. 3, 1982, and vol. 26, no. 3, 1978, chap.8.



(1) The same melody, musical form, and so forth, is repeated in all three phrases. This would appear to minimize the effect of the textual variation "Kyrie ... / Christe ... / Kyrie" and create a musical analogue of the textual continuity provided by the triple repetition of "eleison," reinforcing the conceptual unity of the plea for mercy expressed in all three phrases.

(2) Each phrase is set to a different melody or form. Here, the formal analogue is with the variation of initial words, rather than continuity and repetition, and the cognitive effect might be a heightened awareness that each phrase represents a new act of asking mercy, even though there is textual repetition in the first and third phrases.

(3) The beginning and ending "Kyrie ..." phrases are set to the same or a similar melody or form, with the intervening "Christe ..." set to a different one.<sup>117</sup>

Here, the use of musical variation and repetition corresponds exactly with the variation and repetition of "Kyrie ... / Christe ... / Kyrie"; continuity and conceptual unity are given cyclic expression in the identity of the beginning and ending phrases, while the middle phrase receives the special treatment of being given its own individual musical setting. Both repetition and variation in this context acquire a different significance than in its triple repetition, or with its ongoing changes. The individualized setting in the second phrase is likely to be experienced by performers and observers alike as a special or climactic moment between the pattern established in the first phrase and repeated at the end; and a participant might experience it as a special enhancement of asking mercy in the name of Christ, without special attention to the role played by musical forms. But the formal differences remain: with its repetition and sense of continuity and prolongation of a moment and action already begun, with its emphasis on change and newness, and with its variation-repetition structure and sense of return to a previous moment when the text and music of the first phrase are repeated at the end.

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<sup>117</sup> *Encyclopédie des musiques sacrées*, edited by Jacques Porte (Paris, 1968)

Similar cases can be found in many religious traditions; for example, in the various settings of the Buddhist Triple Refuge, with its three-phrase invocation of Buddha, Dharma (teaching), and 'Saṃgha' (religious community). The actual use of musical structuring through repetition and variation is frequently much more complex, and each tradition tends to develop its own characteristic styles. For example, many Christian Mass settings use extensive repetitions of text phrases such as "Kyrie eleison" with increasingly different variations of the melody, developing it into new forms, and building to climaxes of musical intensity.

Buddhist settings of the 'Triple Refuge', on the other hand, tend to use melodic variation in more restrained ways, and concentrate instead on text/music repetitions that build to mathematical or exponential permutations such as triple repetitions of a three-phrase structure, resulting in a 3<sup>2</sup> formal structure, and perhaps a sense of transcending cyclic repetition to reach a more abstractly perfect state. However, such structures may be felt or interpreted in their own traditions, it is clear that they make equally sophisticated but formally quite different use of such features as continuity, change, and development of basic elements into more complex forms. And since each in its own context is only a small part of a much longer ritual performance, opportunities for complex structuring of musical time are obviously great.<sup>118</sup>

### **6.9. Is Music Religion?**

In mythology Apollo, the son of Zeus and Leto, was the God of music. He is also recognized as the God of prophecy, truth, and healing. *"For me, singing is like a medicinal mantra,"* said Italian singer-songwriter 'Gianna Nannini' in an interview said. *"When I sing, I feel like I'm in a trance. It makes me happy and alters consciousness. And I'd like to transmit this feeling to the world."* *"But I'm not religious,"* she added. Giving oneself over to ecstatic feelings by way of music is an experience echoed across cultures and genres - shared among performers and audiences alike. Music can exercise a kind of magnetic pull, with its notes taking root

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<sup>118</sup> Lawrence E. Sullivan's "Sacred Music and Sacred Time," *World of Music* 26, no. 3 (1984): 33–52.

in the subconscious. *"Music and religion have the same roots",* believes Swiss musicologist and psychologist Maria Spychiger. *"They can unleash feelings that are difficult to capture in words. Experiences emerge that go beyond the everyday."*

#### **6.10. The spiritual power of Music**

The spiritual power of music can be seen as a thread running through the course of human history. Even into the 21st century, shamans draw on the beat of drums or the sounds of a flute for their rituals. A number of traditional and tribal groups use music not just for entertainment, but as a mode of access to the Gods. In Christianity, music has always played an important role. From Gregorian chants and Bach's organ cantatas all the way to gospel singing, music serves as a language for giving expression to sorrow and jubilation, meditation and ecstasy. Music psychologist Heiner Gembris expresses the phenomenon as such:

*"Music is like the flap of an angel's wing. It touches us and lets us sense the momentary presence of something that transcends the boundaries of our captivity in the world."*

#### **6.11. Music, without religion**

In secular parts of the West, however, the religious aspect of music has faded further and further into the background. But the adulation reserved in past generations for holy figures has been redirected to rock and pop stars among younger generations. Many people now seek the feelings that were once the province of prayer and religious rituals in concert halls and clubs.

*"The spiritual doesn't just emerge from a person. Instead, people draw on cultural reserves that already exist. For many people, music has great significance. They draw meaning and purpose from it. And some people even satisfy religious urges through the medium of music."*

#### **6.12. Ecstasy in music**

Fans like 36-year-old Elisabeth Dick share that view. "I used to like to listen to Enigma," she said. *"The band's gentle music was definitely something spiritual for me. I had the feeling that I was floating into other dimensions."* Dick enjoys going to rock concerts, but she downplays any direct connection with religion. *"Perhaps it doesn't really have so much to do with spirituality. But when hundreds of fans are celebrating together, it's easy to get swept up in it. Then it's like I'm in a trance."* The same can be observed at techno parties, where young people dance and move to a

driving and pulsating rhythm. Studies have shown that such music has an effect on the entire body via the autonomic nervous system. And DJs often know how to make use of that connection, playing tracks with identical beats per minute. After hours of exposure to the music, the dancers drift into a trance-like state.

### **6.13. Mystification of the rock stars**

In that way, not just music stars but also disc jockeys are stylized as pseudo-religious icons and play a particularly important role for young people as they begin to work out their personal identities. American singer Pink put it in a nutshell with the title of one of her hits, *"God is a DJ."*

There's a further parallel between religious figures and rock stars at the concert level. A congregational atmosphere develops among fans. And some groups of musical devotees even set themselves apart from fans of other genres by way of rituals, clothing and body jewelry. When it comes to marketing artists, mystification and deification also play a role. The industry often takes a tack of stylizing musical stars as "*Übermenschen*". And many fans' fascination with the idea of one day joining the ranks of their idols is reflected in the popularity of televised competitions like "American Idol" or "Deutschland Sucht den Superstar" (Germany Is Looking for a Superstar).

### **6.14. Lyrical Spirituality in Music**

The role religion plays for the stars themselves differs widely. There are religious musicians like German pop singer Xavier Naidoo, whose beliefs are reflected in his lyrics and in his daily life. He prays twice a day as part of his Christian practice. Other musicians have an affinity for using religious symbols as a means of provocation. Madonna made waves during a recent tour by painting stigmata on her body and appropriating images of Jesus' crucifixion - hardly the first time the "Like a Prayer" star mixed the potency of religion with music. The Vatican expressed outrage for what she herself dubbed as a symbol of emancipation. There's also an element of clever marketing to stunts that are sure to rile up religious opponents.

### **6.15. Spirituality in Rock concert**

Still other stars, including Michael Jackson at certain points in his career, celebrate themselves on stage with bombastic light effects or dazzling fire and laser shows. The effects make rock stars seem almost like redeemers who are descending

upon their followers, say psychologists. The traditional concert is transformed into a grandiose show full of symbols that recall elements of the Old Testament in the Bible in which God manifested himself personally in various ways to humankind. Such analyses are, of course, a bit lofty compared with the average fan's perceptions when attending a concert. But many might agree with one 19-year-old fan's description of the experience: "When I go with my friends to a rock concert, it's liberating. We're all soaring. All of the cares of the week, the troubles with your boss - it's all suddenly gone and doesn't matter. I feel like I've been transported somewhere else, to another world."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/music-is-my-religion/a-17102068>

## **Chapter- 7**

### **THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

#### **7.1. Introduction**

Music is a nearly universal part of religion because it appeals to and heightens human senses in a pleasurable way which, in turn, allows humans to praise through a medium that makes worship more enjoyable. It is impossible to assume that music and religion are not linked in some way or another in any society or culture on earth. This is not to say that all religions embrace the use of music in their worship to their God or Gods, in fact it is quite the opposite. While some religions use music to praise and worship, other religions believe music diverges the attention of followers away from their God, and even see it as a tool of the devil.

#### **7.2. Music is a powerful weapon.**

It evokes feelings and has the power to bring people together. Music plays an important part in all our lives. It is very difficult to imagine our world without it. We choose the music we listen to in our personal lives, but are subject to music in different environments. Music plays in restaurants, stores, when we are on hold, it also plays a very important part in movies and tv programs. Music communicates emotion and thought when we are at loss for words. It plays an integral role in the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of our lives. Music is a constant companion in our lives. What is the role of music in religions?

In most religions, music has an uplifting effect designed to help its performers and listeners achieve union with their higher power, music has an exceptional role in Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Dogon religion. The ancient Greeks understood music to be something related to tie every structure to the universe. The “music of the spheres” was originally thought to be the sounds of the concentric spheres of the universe rubbed against each other, and music was created. Music is a very important part of Christian worship and celebration. Music unites the congregation so that God is worshipped with one voice. A variety of music is used in Christian worship including hymns, gospel

songs, psalms, contemporary music, and instrumental music all of which are played for meditation and reflection<sup>120</sup>.

### 7.3. History of Music and Religion

Music and religion are perhaps two of the most intimate possessions of humankind. They have the ability to touch our souls, move us into another realm of being, and even change our lives. We get nearer to the Lord through music than perhaps through any other thing except prayer.” St. Augustine said, *“He who sings, prays twice.”* Lauryn Hill, a black R&B singer, said about her music, *“God said, ‘All right, I’m going to show you. I made you what you are.’ God takes care of me. I’m just the one who delivers the message.”* Here, with this wide variety of people giving praise to God through their music, it is apparent that the effect religion has on music transcends all cultures and all barriers<sup>121</sup>. King David of the Old Testament was the writer of the book of Psalms (a Greek word that comes from *“Psalmoi,”* which means songs sung to a harp)<sup>122</sup>.

David’s reign was from 1101-971 B.C. David was a prophet and a devout Jew and the psalms were supposedly inspired by God to glorify Him<sup>123</sup>. It is apparent in reading the text of the book of Psalms that God was firmly integrated into every aspect and emotion of David’s life. David’s strong faith helped him to write psalms extensively to convey each feeling he had toward God. There are many other references in the Old Testament where God has given music the power to tell of His glory, such as the trumpet blasts that shattered the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6:12-20), David curing Saul’s madness through song (1 Samuel 16:14-23), and the song of Moses and the Israelites after Pharaoh’s army had been cast into the sea (Exodus 15:1-18)<sup>124</sup>.

Influences of religion in early music are found in the pagan religions as well.

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<sup>120</sup> <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/The-Role-of-Music-in-Religion-FK38F24JDBRS>

<sup>121</sup> <http://elhoarty.blogspot.com/2006/12/music-and-religion-essay.html>

<sup>122</sup> Grout, Donald Jay, and Claude V. Palisca. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001.

<sup>123</sup> Wikipedia. “David.” 18 Nov. 2006.

<sup>124</sup> Wikipedia. “Religious Music.” 18 Nov. 2006.

Grout and Palisca, in *The History of Music* state, “*In Greek mythology, music had a divine origin: its inventors and earliest practitioners were Gods and Demigods...in this dim, prehistoric world, music had magic powers*”. The ancient Greeks, in the cults of Apollo and Dionysus, sang and played instruments to worship their Gods in religious ceremonies. Daoism, an ancient Chinese religion established in the sixth-century B.C., is a “*mystical and inward-looking philosophy overlaid by a variety of later rituals*” (Alves, 165)<sup>125</sup>. In this religion, music is such an intimacy that it is specifically prescribed for religious practices; using music for entertainment is frowned upon. About the year 112 A.D., Pliny the Younger reported the new Christian custom of “*singing a song to Christ as if to a God,*” and associated their singing with the act of binding themselves to their faith by an oath. From the beginning of the Middle Ages (about 400 A.D.) to the time of the Reformation in 1517 A.D., the Catholic Church held power and governed almost everything – the music included. A concern at this time was the question of whether people should delight in the aesthetic aspects of the music, so much as the text. St. Augustine explained this in his treatise “*On Music – Confessions on the Danger and Pleasures of Music*”.

In other words, the Roman Catholic culture was starting to analyze the affect religion and music had on people and they found that each had a great influence on the other and on individual people. We move onward to the years 1685-1750 A.D., the years of Johann Sebastian Bach’s existence. Bach, one of the most prolific composers who ever lived, is often called “*The Fifth Evangelist,*” which comes from the epithet “*Here lies Bach, shrouded in mist, yet through his music, the fifth evangelist*”<sup>126</sup>. Bach had the tradition of writing “*Jesus, help me!*” at the beginning of his compositions, and *Soli Deo Gloria* at the bottom of each of his compositions, implying that God was the inspiration behind all his music. Ludwig van Beethoven was a classical-era composer whose music was inspired by God. He was an intensely religious man, who, despite a life of personal turmoil, attempted to glorify God through his music. Beethoven once humorously wrote: “*Religion and thorough-bass are settled things concerning which there should be no disputing*”. He was a Catholic, although he did not like the structure of organized religion, and made several references in his letter

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<sup>125</sup> Alves, William. *Music of the Peoples of the World*. Toronto: Thomson Learning, Inc., 2006.

<sup>126</sup> Bloemendaal, Peter. “Bach and Religion.” July 2003. 18 Nov. 2006



writings to God or a Higher Being<sup>127</sup>.

In more recent times, black culture has brought about the existence of jazz, blues, spirituals, gospel, and rap music, among other genres – almost all of them grew out of African dependence on spirituality and religion. Reed, in *The Holy Profane*, states, “*Music and religion are inextricably bound together in West-African culture, so much so that it is impossible to imagine one without the other*”. Music and religion have typically been one and the same in black culture<sup>128</sup>. One might argue that “black music” such as rap has nothing to do with religion. While that is mostly true, rap rhythms originated from the rhythms of ancient African drumming ceremonies. Blues, the “*music of the Devil*,” is explained by Teresa Reed,

*“Though raunchy at times, blues texts also contained many thoughtful analyses of religion...the abundance of religious commentary in the blues suggests that these singers were deeply invested in spiritual matters”.*

Many black popular musicians, such as Marvin Gaye, Tupac Shakur, and Lauryn Hill have their roots in religion and spirituality. Many popular musicians of recent times have let their religion shape their music. Johnny Cash, despite a life of turmoil, had a deep faith in God, writing many songs that pertained to his faith. “Hurt,” a deeply-moving music video he made shortly before his death, is based on Jesus’ Passion. Moby, a singer and activist, is well known for his liberal views on politics and his love of God and religion. He began his musical career in a punk band called the “Vatican Commandoes” but was kicked out after their first release called “Hit Squad for God.”<sup>129</sup> It is amazing to see the influence religion had on music throughout the centuries. Ever since the beginning of time, people have been searching for a higher power, something that will transcend the throes of time. And many have found their highest prayer in the glorification of their God through

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<sup>127</sup> Markatos, D. “The Great Presence and Inspiring Effect of God in Man’s Life.” 18 Nov. 2006.

<sup>128</sup> Wikipedia. “History of Music.” 18 Nov. 2006.

<sup>129</sup> Jordan, James. *The Musician’s Soul*. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 1999.

music.<sup>130</sup>

#### **7.4. What Role Does Music Play in the Life of Human Being?**

In the course of history, music is the greatest creation of mankind. Creativity in the pure and undiluted form is the true definition of Music. Music is an important part of our life as it is a way of expressing our feelings as well as emotions. Some people consider music as a way to escape from the pain of life. It gives relief and allows to reduce the stress. Music is a powerful therapy that will make calm down and in the moment of joy, it will make cheerful. Furthermore, it develops the mind and boosts the self-confidence. Music plays a more important role in our life than just being a source of entertainment. Let us have a look on few aspects, how the music impacts the life.

##### ***7.4.1. Music makes us creative***

Music is creativity in the purest form, so it can also be concluded that the music is key to creativity. It helps you in improving your mind vigorously by making it more artistic and ingenious. No matter, what the great invention is, it requires art, creativity and imagination that is fulfilled by Music. There is also a proven fact that music has the potential to improve listening as well as the understanding ability. When we hear a song, try to understand its lyrics and try to make out what the composer wants to convey through his song. Understanding ability is enhanced, when a person listens to instrumental music and he uses his brain to understand the message, conveyed by the musician, without the use of words.

##### ***7.4.2. Music makes to express emotions***

When we play some instrument, then, usually play the music that reflects our thoughts or our emotions. This way the brain conveys the thoughts with the medium of music, without speaking a word. When we try to understand the music, then as per research, it makes our mind more creative.

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<sup>130</sup> Reed, Teresa L. *The Holy Profane: Religion in Black Popular Music*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003.

### ***7.4.3. Music makes learning more pleasant***

Music is an extremely unique way to develop the capability of memorizing. The best example to prove this sentence is, that we can easily learn songs rather than learning the syllabus. The reason behind learning a song quickly is that the mind enjoys music. Whatever the mind enjoys, it preserves it. Thus, music is said to be a good option to learn new things quickly. In the primary classes, we might have learned poems first. Poems are being taught to children because they find them interesting and easy to learn and retain them in their mind. The music in the poems makes it more enjoyable. This is the only reason that we remember those poems throughout our life.

## **7.5. The Importance of Music in Daily Lives**

Music is the greatest creation of man, which touches the soul and also helps man to sympathetically manifest unspoken desire and humanity in him. The effect of music in man is what that separated him from other animals. Due to the high effect of music in the life of human being, it is capable of breaking boundaries to unit people from different background and cultural heritage. Indeed, there are lots to say about music making it one of the most important factors in the life of human being of all races and religions. In fact, music can best be described as wonderful force that is capable of bonding people together and instituting international brotherhood, love as well as peace.

Some research findings indicated that if we listened to the music of the famous composer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, we might actually become smarter. In fact, these days it is commonly believed that if we are trained in music at an early age, the parts of your brain that deal with reasoning and language also develop more. As a human experience, there isn't much that can surpass music. Humans have learnt to listen for music in pretty much every sound that nature or man can create. All sorts of events are made more significant by the music that is played. In fact, around the world, there are specific songs and types of music for specific events. For example, the Bridal Chorus is standard at formal church weddings, when the bride walks up the aisle towards the groom.

### ***7.5.1. Everyday Music***

Even in our daily lives, music plays a significant role, especially in this day and age. Go on any public transport or in any public area and we will find people

standing around listening to music through their headphones which, in turn, are connected to their iPods or cell phones or MP3 players. Running, a sport that has become very popular among the general population, is just not complete without the proper playlist. There are plenty of people who swear that listening to music helps them concentrate on what they are doing much better. In the American White House, the President of America listens to music together with his collaborators to find more concentration for their daily work.

### ***7.5.2. Genres***

There are, of course, many different genres in music ranging from classical to pop to rock to hip hop and much more. Each genre has its own sub-divisions which means that if we stop and think about it, the styles of music are almost infinite. In fact, there is something for everyone – ‘Emo rock’ for those who are well, emo to opera for those who prefer something with a story. Some people can become almost as passionate about the specific sub-genre of music they like as they generally are about more divisive topics such as religion and politics. Others prefer to listen to all sorts of different genres rather than just limiting themselves to one. The point is that unless we don’t like any kind of music at all, we will probably find a genre or many genres of music that we enjoy.

### ***7.5.3. A Part of Education***

Music has been a part of education since ancient times. The famous Greek philosopher Plato believed that music was an important part of education. He believed that music was necessary for the realization of the soul, just as gymnastics were necessary for the development and training of the body and mathematics was necessary for the development and training of the brain. Even on a more practical level, music can help to retain information better and more efficiently. Simply think about putting the multiplication tables to a song or learning grammar rules in the form of rap. Even learning how to play an instrument such as the guitar or the piano can have a profound effect on a child. This, however, does not mean that children should be forced to learn an instrument that they don’t want to. This type of coercion can be counter effective and leave the child with a distaste for music, or at least for that particular instrument.

#### **7.5.4. Soothing and Relaxing**

Places such as airport waiting areas or the doctor's waiting room often have soft music playing, almost as though it were part of the background. Elevators play music and when you call customer service and are placed on hold, you hear music playing instead of just some sort of a dial tone. Why is this? Well, the popular saying, "*Music soothes the savage breast*" is most definitely true here. Most of the situations mentioned above can be quite tense. The music playing in the background influences you subconsciously and calms you down when you are angry, afraid or nervous. Without that music, there might be a lot more violence in the world. There is no question that music influences us hugely. Whether it calms us when we are anxious or whips us into a frenzy when we are ready to party, music speaks to us on multiple levels. The very fact that we even describe many of nature's sounds such as birdcalls as music speaks to how significant music is in our lives.<sup>131</sup>

#### **7.5.5. Music Draw People Together to Uplift Them Emotionally**

Indeed, due to the power of music in the heart and bone marrow of human being, it can draw millions of people from different parts of the world and uplift them emotionally. For that reason, music can easily be used as instrument of peace when there is chaos between people of different origin and background. We can easily notice this particular effect of music when we have issue with the partner and he or she started playing music we love to hear. If we are a strong hearted human being, we may not settle the issue due to the music but the annoyance in the mind will gradually subside just because of the music.

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<sup>131</sup> <https://www.myprivatetutor.qa/blog/the-importance-of-music-in-daily-life>

### ***7.5.6. Music Help Human to Express Him or Herself with Ease***

Whether we are music enthusiast or not, the best way we can express our feelings, anger, love, passion, joy and other kinds of feelings is simply through music. It is rightly said that when words and letters failed the best option is music. We will be able to express the intent of our heart through music which ordinarily may not be possible for us to either do in words or letters.

### ***7.5.7. Music Has Therapeutic Effect in the Life of Human***

In most cases, doctors and therapists normally recommend soft music for their patients. This is because, with the effect of the music in the heart and entire being of a sick person, there will be revival of hope of living, joy of existence and happiness in the mind of the sick person making it easy for him or her to respond positively to treatment.

### ***7.5.8. Music Is the Perfect Way to Communicate Word of Love***

Probably, we have been searching for a way to reignite love and passion in our relationship that is simply because we may have not tried music. Really, no matter the pain in our heart, the best solvent we need to melt the pain and replace the space with love and passion is simply gentle and soft music. In fact, music is love, peace, passion, creativity and music are capable of enchanting both the heart of man and God.<sup>132</sup>

## **7.6. Music benefits Our Brain**

Since music is such a big part of our lives, it would be interesting and useful to have a look at some of the ways we react to it without even realizing and how music brain. Of course, music affects many different areas of the brain.

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<sup>132</sup> [blog.procollabs.com](http://blog.procollabs.com) › [role-music-plays-life](#)

### **7.6.1. *Happy/sad music affects how we see neutral faces***

We can usually pick if a piece of music is particularly happy or sad, but this isn't just a subjective idea that comes from how it makes us feel. In fact, our brains actually respond differently to happy and sad music. Even short pieces of happy or sad music can affect us. One study showed that after hearing a short piece of music, participants were more likely to interpret a neutral expression as happy or sad, to match the tone of the music they heard. This also happened with other facial expressions, but was most notable for those that were close to neutral. Something else that's really interesting about how our emotions are affected by music is that there are two kinds of emotions related to music: *perceived* emotions and *felt* emotions. This means that sometimes we can understand the emotions of a piece of music without actually feeling them, which explains why some of us find listening to sad music enjoyable, rather than depressing. Unlike in real life situations, we don't feel any real threat or danger when listening to music, so we can *perceive* the related emotions without truly feeling them—almost like vicarious emotions.

### **7.6.2. *Ambient noise can improve creativity***

We all like to pump up the tunes when we're powering through our to-do lists, right? But when it comes to creative work, loud music may not be the best option. It turns out that a moderate noise level is the sweet spot for creativity. Even more than low noise levels, ambient noise apparently gets our creative juices flowing, and doesn't put us off the way high levels of noise do. The way this works, is that moderate noise levels increase processing difficulty which promotes abstract processing, leading to higher creativity. In other words, when we struggle to process things as we normally would, we resort to more creative approaches. In high noise levels, however, our creative thinking is impaired because we're overwhelmed and struggle to process information efficiently. This is very similar to how temperature and lighting can affect our productivity, where paradoxically a slightly more crowded place can be beneficial.

### **7.6.3. Our music choices can predict our personality**

In a study of couples who spent time getting to know each other, looking at each other's top ten favorite songs actually provided fairly reliable predictions as to the listener's personality traits. The study used five personality traits for the test: openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability. Interestingly, some traits were more accurately predicted based on the person's listening habits than others. For instance, openness to experience, extraversion and emotional stability were the easiest to guess correctly. Conscientiousness, on the other hand, wasn't obvious based on musical taste. Here is also a break-down of how the different genres correspond to our personality, according to a study conducted at Heriot-Watt University:

To break it down, here is the connection they have found: Blues fans have high self-esteem, are creative, outgoing, gentle and at ease

- **Jazz fans** have high self-esteem, are creative, outgoing and at ease
- **Classical music fans** have high self-esteem, are creative, introvert and at ease
- **Rap fans** have high self-esteem and are outgoing
- **Opera fans** have high self-esteem, are creative and gentle
- **Country and western fans** are hardworking and outgoing
- **Reggae fans** have high self-esteem, are creative, not hardworking, outgoing, gentle and at ease
- **Dance fans** are creative and outgoing but not gentle
- **Indie fans** have low self-esteem, are creative, not hard working, and not gentle
- **Bollywood fans** are creative and outgoing
- **Rock/heavy metal fans** have low self-esteem, are creative, not hard-working, not outgoing, gentle, and at ease
- **Chart pop fans** have high self-esteem, are hardworking, outgoing and gentle, but are not creative and not at ease
- **Soul fans** have high self-esteem, are creative, outgoing, gentle, and at ease



#### ***7.6.4. Music can significantly distract us while driving***

##### ***(Contrary to common belief)***

Another study done on teenagers and young adults focused on how their driving is affected by music. Drivers were tested while listening to their own choice of music, silence or “safe” music choices provided by the researchers. Of course, their own music was preferred, but it also proved to be more distracting: drivers made more mistakes and drove more aggressively when listening to their own choice of music. Even more surprising: music provided by the researchers proved to be more beneficial than no music at all. It seems that unfamiliar, or uninteresting, music is best for safe driving.

#### ***7.6.5. Music training – motor and reasoning skills***

We generally assume that learning a musical instrument can be beneficial for kids, but it’s actually useful in more ways than we might expect. One study showed that children who had three years or more musical instrument training performed better than those who didn’t learn an instrument in auditory discrimination abilities and fine motor skills. They also tested better on vocabulary and nonverbal reasoning skills, which involve understanding and analyzing visual information, such as identifying relationships, similarities and differences between shapes and patterns. These two areas in particular are quite removed from musical training as we imagine it, so it’s fascinating to see how learning to play an instrument can help kids develop such a wide variety of important skills. Similar research shows this correlation for exercise and motor skills in the same way, which is also fascinating.

#### ***7.6.6. Classical music can improve visual attention***

It’s not just kids that can benefit from musical training or exposure. Stroke patients in one small study showed improved visual attention while listening to classical music. The study also tried white noise and silence to compare the results, and found that, like the driving study mentioned earlier, silence resulted in the worst scores. Because this study was so small, the conclusions need to be explored further for validation, but we find it really interesting how music and noise can affect our other senses and abilities—in this case, vision.

### **7.6.7. *One-sided phone calls - normal conversations***

Another study focused on noise, rather than music, showed that when it comes to being distracted by the conversations of others, phone calls where we can only hear one side of the conversation are the worst offenders. After a survey showed that up to 82% of people find overhearing cellphone conversations annoying, Veronica Galvan, a cognitive psychologist at the University of San Diego, decided to study why these are such a pain. In the study, participants completed word puzzles while one half of them overheard one side of a mundane phone conversation in the background. The other half of the volunteers heard the entire conversation as it took place between two people in the room. Those who heard the one-sided phone conversation found it more distracting than those who heard both people speaking. They also remembered more of the conversation, showing that it had grabbed their attention more than those who heard both sides and didn't remember as much of the discussion. The unpredictability of a one-sided conversation seems to be the cause of it grabbing our attention more. Hearing both sides of a conversation, on the other hand, gives us more context which makes it easier to tune out the distraction.

### **7.7. Music helps us exercise**

We can see that just like silence doesn't help us to be more creative or better drivers, it's not much use when we're exercising, either. Research on the effects of music during exercise has been done for years. In 1911, an American researcher, Leonard Ayres, found that cyclists pedaled faster while listening to music than they did in silence. This happens because listening to music can drown out our brain's cries of fatigue. As our body realizes we're tired and wants to stop exercising, it sends signals to the brain to stop for a break. Listening to music competes for our brain's attention, and can help us to override those signals of fatigue, though this is mostly beneficial for low- and moderate-intensity exercise. During high-intensity exercise, music isn't as powerful at pulling our brain's attention away from the pain of the workout. Not only can we push through the pain to exercise longer and harder when we listen to music, but it can actually help us to use our energy more efficiently. A 2012 study showed that cyclists who listened to music required 7% less oxygen to do the same work as those who cycled in silence.

Some recent research has shown that there's a ceiling effect on music at around 145 bpm, where anything higher doesn't seem to add much motivation, so keep that in mind when choosing the workout playlist. Here is how this breaks down for different genres: Now if we team up these different "tempos" with the actual workout we're doing, we can be in much better sync and find the right beat for our exercise. If we match up the above with the graphic below it should be super easy to get into a good groove: Due to the high effect of music in the life of human being, it is capable of breaking boundaries to unit people from different background and cultural heritage.

### **7.8. The Influence of Music in Life**

Did we ever think about what would life be without music? Well, I did and I think that the world would be a very quiet place. In my opinion music is something extraordinary; it is what makes humans human. Music is in a number of ways the fabric to our lives and the definition of society. It can be described as one of the most treasured human experiences, everyone enjoys music and this becomes more apparent in every significant event from weddings and funerals to graduation ceremonies, formal inaugurations and birthdays. No matter what it is used for, music is the perfect art and our lives would be incomplete without it. The ambience in any room can be set just by adding some music.

There are many different styles, something for every occasion as it is very soothing and relaxing which can make our bad days better. Every culture makes music and every past culture has created music too. Studies show how music affects many parts of our brain very deeply. Music creates strong feelings and a lot of memories. The more we learn about music, the more we will be able to say what we want in music and also understand better what it means to be human. Listening to music has proved to be like therapy for our souls.

Music plays a very important and vital role in the lives of the people. We can work, shop while hearing the music. According to some Archaeologist, music came into existence over 55000 years ago. Some of the Musicologists describes the origin of the music is to be nature and nature best part is Man. It is said that the song sung by men in a different form is the music of nature. The sweet and humming tone of nightingale, skylark and cuckoo is the song of nature same like the sound of air, river, thundering and sounds of sea waves are termed as nature song and due to the massive

revolution in technology and most advanced and best sound card in 2020 given wings to produced exact same sound which were very difficult to produce.

Music is also known to be the universal language of humanity. It has the power to bring positivity and entertainment in the lives of people. Everyone loves music because it holds the power to transform the mood and bring a sense of relief in their daily life. We can get all answers to our unsolved questions through music. Music can make a person loyal and loving as it stays with people until the end of their lives. It never leaves the person alone during their difficult times in life.

Music plays an important role in the world as it helps us in easily expressing ourselves. It has different impacts on the daily lives of the people. There are different emotions attached to every kind of music as we can easily relate music with everything or everyone around us. Music has the power to bring people together in different ways on several occasions. It can also be termed as a good source of communication. In our daily life, there are certain feelings which we fail to express but through music, all the missing words find its way and we can easily communicate our message to the people. We find the words to express either by writing songs or just listening to them.

Music can be defined as a form of art that requires creative skills and great imagination power similar to other forms of art. Music can bring a sense of relief and reduce the struggle of our daily life. It can be a good escape to calm your mind. A calm mind can increase our self-confidence and make us a kind and positive person. Music can also be described as a therapy for many people because it has the power to heal the problems of many people. According to some doctors, music therapy has been a great source of help for them in the treatment of problems like dementia, depression, anxiety, trauma, etc. There are many children with a learning disability who have responded to the music sets pieces.

Music is a part of the meditation in many workshops to make people positive and to make them aware of their emotions. Music has an impact on everyone's life in different ways in different phase of life. Music can transform the emotions and feelings of the people within no time. It can lessen the stress, pain, struggle, distraction and bring positivity and calmness in our daily life. Music holds the power

to bring people together in different ways. Music can make us expressive and help us in understanding our feelings and emotions in a better manner.<sup>133</sup>

***Music plays a great role in our lives; it has a lot of benefits. the benefits of listening to music:***

➤ **Music is important for creativity:** Music is considered to be one of the best ways to enter a ‘mind- wandering mode’ which was discovered by neurologist Marcus Raichel in 2001. This is the state the brain enters into it most easily and music is one of the most effective ways of allowing us to enter this mode. Music fuels the mind and thus it fuels our creativity. A creative mind allows to make great discoveries and innovations.

➤ **Music makes learning more fun and memorable:** Music can make learning more fun and engaging which is a great tool for memorization. Music can help kids keep focus and remember things they learnt for a long time. Far from being a distraction it helps people remember better. Evidence that music helps with memory has led to researchers to study more about the impact of music on people who suffer memory loss.

➤ **Music is a universal language:** Musicians claim that with music we can communicate across cultural and linguistic boundaries in ways that we cannot do with ordinary languages. It has the ability to evoke deep feeling at the core of the shared human experience.

➤ **Music brings people together:** Although music can certainly be played and listened to alone it is a powerful social magnet. There is something about listening to music or playing it with other people that makes we feel connected with those around us. The more we use music to bring us together the more potential for increased empathy, social connection and cooperation.

➤ **Music reduces stress and anxiety:** Research has shown that listening to music, at least music with slow tempo and low pitch, can calm people

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<sup>133</sup> <https://edtimes.in/importance-of-music-in-life/>

down even during highly stressful and painful event. It also has the ability to help with pain management for example during childbirth.<sup>134</sup>

### **Some other Importance**

#### **1.The universal language**

While every country has its own language, there is only one language we can all understand: the language of music. We don't even need words to understand what music is saying. Every year a lot of different people, lot of different countries celebrate festivals. When the music is being played every one understands what is coming out of the speaker and they just start dancing to it.

#### **2.Ambiance**

Music creates ambience. Can we imagine a party without music, a sports event without music, or a movie without music? Probably not.

#### **3.Music Unites**

Music plays a very important role in bringing people together. Whether it is festival, concert or a night club, people come together to enjoy the music that is being played.

#### **4.Focus**

If we want to do some business-related works or anything, put some music at the background in order to focus a little better. It is scientifically proven that music enhances brain functioning. Besides, listening to music in an environment with other people also makes sure we don't get distracted by other people's noises.

#### **5.Emotions**

Music can do great things according to the mood. If we want to feel happy, we can listen to songs that are happy and this works the other way around, too. When we lost someone in our life, it's helpful to listen to sad songs. Sciences says listening to sad songs can actually make you happier.

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<sup>134</sup> <http://mcxl.se/thoughts/the-importance-of-music-in-our-lives/>

**6. Imagination**

Music makes to imagine and that obviously a good thing for the creativity and health.

**7. Memory**

Music is good for memory. we can remember the lyrics of a bunch of songs much better than an article we recently read. In nursing homes, they started using musical therapy in order to let the elderly remember things of their past, which they couldn't remember without listening to music.

**8. Music is a pleasure.**

Listening to the music will lead to much better feelings of pleasure, happiness, melancholic, joyful etc.

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## **Chapter-8**

### **THEOLOGY OF MUSIC IN PHILOSOPHY**

#### **8.1. Introduction**

The philosophy-theology of music in the Christian perspective is based on four basic considerations. The first consideration is that every aspect of music in the church is submitted to the Lordship of Christ. The second consideration is that music in the church serves various functions, and while they should all be biblical, these functions infer and result in different parameters and guidelines. Thirdly, the life is to be characterized by the continuous worship of God, and in this respect all musical activities for the individual Christian should be, in some sense, acts of worship.

#### **8.2. Worship Music**

In the worship sense of music employed in gathered worship (including wedding ceremonies, memorial services, and other types of worship services) should be:

***Biblical*** — As the rule of faith and practice, the Word of God is the authority of its believers. It contains sufficient principles, examples, and directives of worship music. Music serves in worship as praise, prayer, and proclamation (Ps. 96; Ps. 51; 1 Chr. 25:1). Although there are distinctions, in these ways the music ministry shares similar roles and goals with the pulpit ministry.

***God-centered*** — Texts and hearts should be focused on God, who is both the subject and object of worship (Ps. 22:22; Ps. 100). The music is offered principally to him, rather than to each other, and it is for his glory, not for the people own. Yet it should also edify, admonish, and teach the body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:26, Col. 3:16). It is a communal activity. Applause for musicians in the context of worship is therefore unnecessary and unbiblical. We present most non-congregational service music from the side of the sanctuary so as not to draw undue attention to the vessel through which the music is offered (Rom. 12:1; Phi. 2:5–7, Mt. 6:1). Although clapping one's hands to God is mentioned in the Psalms, in our cultural context applause is overwhelmingly associated with the entertainment industry, and so it is best avoided as a worship response.

***Excellent*** — Excellence is, first of all, an attribute of God (Gen. 1:31; Ps. 8:1). The people should offer him the best and nothing less. This has to do with the intrinsic



and extrinsic qualities of the music, with its melody, harmony, rhythm, form, and texts—which will be judged according to musical standards of excellence, as well as its appropriateness for a worship context and its delivery by the musicians offering it. Decisions about the quality and type of music offered in worship are entrusted to the Music Director who will consider musical, theological, cultural, and other informing aspects when making such decisions for the congregation. Excellence should never become a goal in and of itself, however, and it does not substitute for offering music with the proper spirit.

***Of the Spirit*** — Without the work of the Holy Spirit, our efforts are meaningless (John 4:24, 6:63; 1 Cor. 2:13). Music is not intrinsically worship. Without due caution, one can actually be guilty of worshiping the music that one enjoys. It is important to be mindful of the distinction between spiritual truth and musical pleasure. Worship directed anywhere but to God is idolatry.

***In truth*** — Truthfulness in worship refers to the actions we take, the attitudes of the hearts and the intentions of the minds. These should align with biblical teaching on worship (John 4:24). The musical offerings should be genuine and offered to the best of one’s ability. The congregation and its leaders should sing psalms and hymns with understanding and with conviction—with the mind and the spirit (1 Cor. 14:15).

***Skillfully-led*** — According to Psalm 33:1–3, we are to compose, sing, and play skillfully to the Lord. This demands that those leading in public worship music should be skillful, trained musicians. For musical leadership we draw on proficient amateur, semi-professional, and professional musicians from within the congregation and Christian brothers and sisters from other fellowships.

***Prepared*** — Because the music should be excellent and skillful, it follows that it must be carefully chosen, adequately rehearsed, and presented by musicians who have prepared themselves before God (1 Chr. 25:6–7). Choirs (adult and children’s) and soloists should be well-prepared for the significant roles they will play in corporate worship. Worship is not an opportunity to “try out” one’s ability or to showcase anyone or anything.

***Meaningful*** — Our musical offerings must be intentional and have purpose. They should never be trite or perfunctory (Mt. 6:7, 15:8–9). The ministers carefully select the psalms and hymns sung in worship with the input of the Music Director. All other music is selected or approved by the Music Director, who by biblical example is

to be the guardian of the people's praise (1 Chr. 15:22). An attempt is made, whenever possible, to make service music meaningful by suiting it to a particular element of the service and/or to the theme of the sermon.

***Of the people*** – It means that the music will find its basis in congregational song, the most important kind of worship music. It also means that the congregation should be fully involved in singing, listening, and learning (Ps. 111:1, 149:1). This characteristic informs the musical choices—that generally accessible to the people (or made accessible/taught by communicating information about it) although it is directed principally to God. This does not mean, however, that music selected will not require thought or that it will be “popular” in nature or immediately accessible to all who hear it.

***Joyful/Emotional*** – One of the most significant aspects of music in worship is that it should reflect the joy of being a Christian (Psalm 47:1) and a thankful, grateful spirit (Eph. 5:19). There are many other emotions inherent in music-making, and the book of Psalms provides examples of the musical expression of many of these within the context of worship.

***Intelligible*** – This parameter has ramifications for sung language, which on most occasions should be their own native language. Language used in worship should be comprehensible, and texts for non-congregational, sung music will appear in the order of service. When other languages are used, a translation will be given so that worshipers can fully interact with the textual and musical meaning (1 Cor. 14:7–10, 19). Musical style should also be intelligible—clear, understandable, explained when unusual or difficult, etc.

***Authentic*** – Authenticity in worship is related to truthfulness, but here refers to the realm of aesthetics. The Bible models this in many places. Do not use pre-recorded music or accompaniment tracks both because this precludes other participants from the body and because such recordings are historical rather than organic. The use of live musicians affords flexibility in tempo, nuance, time, pitch, and all of the other living aspects of music. Should not amplify soloists. In the Christian perspective, the electronic instruments should be avoided that require amplification and function as recording devices because they are aesthetically inauthentic. Truthfulness should characterize all that offer God (John 4:24)

### 8.3. Concert Music

Concert music, by definition, is music performed in programs called “concerts” or “recitals” that are outside the context of regular worship services. Concerts are not worship services, although one is certainly capable of worshiping in a concert context, and the performers’ work can be a musical offering to God. Some of the parameters such as theme, language, applause, and other protocol for a concert, however, will be different than those in force in the context of worship. Challenging art music and other music that primarily exists to display the virtuosity of the performer are welcome in this context.

***To the glory of God*** — All music is offered *Soli Deo Gloria* irrespective of its origin, compositional language or the composer’s intention. Applause on the part of the concert audience is culturally appropriate recognition for the effort and skill of the performers. At the same time, both audience and performers should internally acknowledge that it is all “from him and through him and to him”—Romans 11:36.

***Excellent*** — This has to do with the level of performer/performance as well as with the music selected and how it is presented.

***Artistic*** — Most music performed in concert contexts will be art music or sacred music. Art music is music that exists for purposes beyond function, though it may be functional. This is different from popular music, commercial music, patriotic music or other idioms. Art music primarily includes the genres of “classical” music, although some jazz and sacred music fits here as well. The amount of repertoire and variety of styles and forms that fit these classifications are incredibly large, spanning more than one thousand years.

***Edifying to the saints*** — We hold that concerts presented at Grace & Peace, or other places where ensembles from Grace & Peace perform, should be a means of bolstering both the spirit and the mind. Concerts should encourage believers in their faith, musical understanding, and artistic experience. As such, in addition to the qualities listed above, verbal or written notes will be regular facets of such programs to aid the audience.

***An outreach to the community*** — Concert programs draw some into the church building who do not attend our regular worship services. All programs are

open to everyone without charge. We also aim to give some verbal witness to Christ and the Christian faith in our concert programs.<sup>135</sup>

#### **8.4. Music in Non-Worship Service Settings**

Music is included in activities, such as Bible studies, small groups, banquets, meetings, coffee houses, retreats, conferences, and other church functions. All music for these activities should be God-honoring and biblical with regard to text and music, in keeping with the principles outlined in this document. The church's Music Director, in partnership with the pastor and the session, will oversee music and musical events occurring within the church buildings outside the context of regular worship services or Sunday School. Primarily this is to safeguard the church and to ensure a level of quality by having an educated musician guide in such decisions. Any Grace & Peace group desirous of engaging guest musicians, soloists, or instrumentalists, or desirous of using any recorded material for Grace & Peace events should consult with the Music Director as a first step. Though musical style will be more broadly defined outside the context of worship services, standards of excellence will be upheld for all events.

#### **8.5. Music Education**

The church has a responsibility to educate its people in the music of the church and, indeed, to teach Christian doctrine through music. Church music education takes place in many forms. Some of the ways we seek to provide such education at Grace & Peace are through:

***Hymn singing*** — Congregational hymnody and psalmody teach and propagate the faith. They bear witness to the lost and help the Christian recall biblical teaching. Every Christian should present to be a musical participant in worship and to join the heavenly choirs that praise God without ceasing (Eph. 5:19–20; Col. 3:16–17; Rev. 4 and 5).

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<sup>135</sup><https://www.gppopc.org/music/theology-of-music/>

**Choral ensembles** — The choral groups primary function in worship services, provide opportunity for many to learn more about vocal technique and music in general, to have fellowship with other believers, and to exercise and develop their musical abilities.

## **8.6. Music and the Individual**

The church has no specific authority over the music that individuals choose to purchase or over that to which they listen or in which they participate. The church does not seek to make such decisions nor to determine what is good or bad music for its members with respect to their private lives. However, the congregation is exhorted to be mindful that every aspect of life has a formative influence on our Christian walk. The following concepts and Scripture passages are offered for consideration when choosing music for oneself or for one's household.

Music is an integral part of the Christian life and should be encouraged in the home, particularly in family worship. Luther (with hymnody) and Calvin (with psalmody) both encouraged singing in the home. Singing and learning to play instruments is consistent with biblical teaching (Ps. 92:1–3, Ps. 98, Col. 3:16, Eph. 5:15–21). Singing is, in fact, one of those few activities that we know is eternal (Rev. 4 and 5). It also gives opportunities to glorify God inside and outside the church.

Music is a powerful medium that teaches and communicates things in deep ways. It can overpower other verbal or written teaching with ease. There is good and bad music. Music is not neutral—it will affect those who listen either positively or negatively. As such, musical choice is essentially an ethical choice. Texts that are anti-God, anti-authority, or humanistic will have a negative effect. Styles that are associated with baser things will not usually be edifying and would best be avoided. It is left up to the individual under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to determine what is God-honoring or destructive in this regard.

Music which derives from an anti-God, anti-Moral age and culture should be regarded as facially suspect, as well as music which was designed not from principles developed in the realm of the Church but rather from market driven principles. The Music Director is always open to questions regarding worthwhile music. Most people identify with a certain style of music or several styles as a means of defining themselves. The music to which we listen shapes our character, personality, and mind. Music is not without moral substance or consequence. Parents especially

should be mindful of this on behalf of their children and be cognizant of aesthetic concerns as well.

### **8.7. Theology of Music on Christian Perspective**

What is the purpose of music? Does it even have a purpose? Is it good, bad or neutral? Does God care about music? Should I care about music? Music is all around us. Not a single day goes without exposed to music. It could be a commercial on the radio, perhaps television or movies. Whether we like it or not music is an everyday part of our lives and, therefore, we need to think about and develop a good theology of music.

According to Webster's II: New Riverside University Dictionary, music is "the art of arranging tones in an orderly sequence so as to produce a unified and continuous composition". The reality of it is, though, that music doesn't have one concrete meaning. Music seems to make no sense. It comes from now here and goes now here. Literature says something, and the visual arts show something. Music seems only to show or say itself. Yet it feels like the most intimate, the most direct and true art. It means different things to different people depending on the context and culture. For some it is their passion – they live, eat and breathe music in every part of their life. Music defines them. For others – they are simply content to have music be in the background, seemingly unaware that it is even there. There is classical, pop, rock, country, opera, blue-grass, modern, instrumental, experimental, punk, acid, blues, hip-hop, Hindustani, Carnatic...and the list just goes on and on and on.

The reason we have so many styles of music is because music affects us. It is the great mood enhancer. The lyrics, melody, rhythm and chord structure all work together to produce an amazing emotional effect upon us. Music is an emotional language that engages with our souls. It can make us feel joy or stir up excitement. It can bring about feelings of sadness and distress. It can move us to tears or make us smile with glee. Music is a gift from God given to us to re-direct our attention back to him. Music, ultimately – like all of creation, is here to bring glory to God. We are to use, enjoy, listen, and play music all to the glory of God. Music is given to us by God to be used to draw our hearts and our gaze back to the Giver of the gift. In 1530 Martin Luther wrote in one of his essays:

*“I am not ashamed to confess publicly that next to theology there is no art which is the equal of music, for she alone, after theology, can do what otherwise only theology can accomplish, namely, quiet and cheer up the soul of man, which is clear evidence that the devil, the originator of depressing worries and troubled thoughts, flees from the voice of music just as he flees from the words of theology. For this very reason the prophets cultivated no art so much as music in that they attached their theology not to geometry, nor to arithmetic, nor to astronomy, but to music, speaking the truth through psalms and hymns.”*

So, what are we to do with this knowledge? How does this play out in our everyday lives, on our Mp3 players? The basic components of music (melody, harmony, rhythm) are not inherently evil. Music can find it connected with working, playing, war, funerals, and other everyday events. The role of music in worship is biblical. After escaping from the Egyptians and crossing the Red Sea, the people of Israel sang a song to the Lord (Exod. 15).

Singing was part of Israel’s formal worship in both tabernacle and temple (1 Chron. 6:31–32, 16:42). The Psalms bear rich testimony that in joy and sorrow, in praise and lament, the faithful raise their voices in song to God. Hymn singing was practiced by Jesus and his disciples (Matt. 26:30). The Apostle Paul instructed the Colossians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3: 16–17).

### **8.8. Theological Reflections on the Role of Music in Worship**

Music and song continue to play a vital role in the life of God’s people today. Contemporary culture and modern technology bring new possibilities and new challenges to the music ministry of the church. People’s lives are surrounded with music—television and radio, the background music of video games, the music of shopping malls, CDs, and synthesizers. Yet much of the time music functions as “background” rather than as an opportunity for serious listening, much less participation. Outside the church there are few occasions or opportunities in North American culture for people to sing together. Much of the popular music (including

popular Christian music) composed today is for performance rather than for participation<sup>136</sup>.

The church also has greater access and has shown greater openness to a greater variety of music—from classical hymnody to Christian rock, from European cantatas to South African choruses. Such diversity is to be welcomed and celebrated; it reflects the diversity and richness of God’s creation. But greater variety and options in music call for greater discernment and care in planning and implementing the music ministry of the church. The people of God sing; what they sing and how they sing are important issues.

### ***8.8.1. Music is a gift of God and part of the created order***

From its inception, “when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy” (Job 38:7), to its consummation, when “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them” will sing to the Lamb on the throne (Rev. 5:13), creation is musical. “All nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.” Human music-making participates in the music of creation and reflects the order, beauty, and diversity of God’s creation.

### ***8.8.2. Of all the musical instruments and the human voice has priority***

Other instruments are to be used primarily in the service of the singing of God’s people. Reformed theologian Karl Barth points out that singing is not an option for the people of God; it is one of the essential ministries of the church: “The Christian church sings. It is not a choral society. Its singing is not a concert. But from inner, material necessity it sings. Singing is the highest form of human expression....What we can and must say quite confidently is that the church which does not sing is not the church. And where...it does not really sing but it sighs and mumbles spasmodically, shamefacedly and with an ill grace, it can be at best only a troubled community which is not sure of its cause and of whose ministry and witness there can be no great expectation. The praise of God which finds its concrete culmination in the

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<sup>136</sup> <http://www.theworshipcommunity.com/theology-of-music-part-one/>



singing of the community is one of the indispensable forms of the ministry of the church.”<sup>137</sup>

### ***8.8.3. Singing is a ministry that belongs to all the people of God***

The congregation is always the primary choir. The role of professional or volunteer choirs and musicians is to aid the whole people of God in their worship. While anthems or vocal and instrumental solos may be offered, they do not have to be. Congregational singing, however, is essential. While it is possible to be actively engaged in worship and in prayer while listening to an anthem or solo, a diet of worship which does not regularly include ample opportunity for all the members of the congregation to join in song will be impoverished worship, and the life of the church and the faith of its people will suffer.

### ***8.8.4. The art forms employed in worship, singing is especially corporate***

Indeed, it is the art form most suited to expressing the church’s unity in the body of Christ. Different voices, different instruments, different parts are blended to offer a single, living, and unified work of beauty. John Calvin recognized the power of congregational singing and unison prayer in helping the church express and experience the unity of the body of Christ. Asserting that the human tongue was especially created to proclaim the praise of God, both through singing and speaking, he noted that “the chief use of the tongue is in public prayers, which are offered in the assembly of the believers, by which it comes about that with one common voice, and as it were, with the same mouth, we all glorify God together, worshiping him with one spirit and the same faith”<sup>138</sup>.

### ***8.8.5. The church’s ministry of song is for the glory of God***

The principal direction of congregational singing is to the Lord (Ps. 96:1). Music is made first of all to the Lord and only secondarily to each other. Music should communicate and express a sense of awe and wonder in the presence of God; it should lead our thoughts toward God rather than toward ourselves. God can be glorified by

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<sup>137</sup> Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. IV, part 3, chapter 16, par. 72, #4.

<sup>138</sup> Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.

beautiful sounds and spirits may be uplifted by a pleasing melody, but it is primarily the joining of the tune to a text that gives meaning to Christians' songs. Not only should both text and tune glorify God and be consistent with each other, but the tune must serve the text. Music is always the servant of the Word. Calvin cautioned that *"We should be very careful that our ears be not more attentive to the melody than our minds to the spiritual meaning of the words, such songs as have been composed only for the sweetness and delight of the ear are unbecoming to the majesty of the church and cannot but displease God in the highest degree."*<sup>139</sup>

#### **8.8.6. The church's ministry of song is for the edification of God's people**

Through congregational singing Christian faith is not only expressed; to a very real degree it is formed. Since people tend to remember the theology, they sing more than the theology that is preached, a congregation's repertoire of hymnody is often of critical importance in shaping the faith of its people. Here again, it is the meaning of the text that is of primary importance. It is through the sense of the words that God's people learn of the nature and character of God and of the Christian life. Noting that if one prays in a tongue, the "spirit prays," but the "mind is unfruitful," the Apostle Paul vows, "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also" (1 Cor. 14:14–15, RSV).

Christian hymnody contains some of the most tightly packed, concise doctrinal and devotional thought of the church. Through congregational song God's people learn their language about God; God's people learn how to speak with God. Songs of worship shape faith. It is, therefore, very important that a congregation have a rich *"vocabulary of praise."* Simple, repetitive music such as praise choruses and Taizé chants are very appropriate in worship and can be very effective in moving individuals to prayer and to praise. But it is also important for the congregation to know some of the great hymns of faith in order to have a sense that the Christian faith is both relevant and enduring, and to be enriched by the faith of the *"great cloud of witnesses."* Hymns, both ancient and modern, which stretch minds, increase

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<sup>139</sup> Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.

vocabulary, rehearse the biblical story, and teach of the nature and the mighty acts of God are essential for the congregation's growth in faith.

**8.8.7. *The emotional power of music, is a vital and moving aid to worship***

Music, quite apart from an associated text, is capable of evoking powerful emotions. Hearts are stirred and feet set to tapping by a rousing Sousa march, while another melody may move people to tears. Calvin recognized the emotional power of music and for that reason included the singing of Psalms in the church in Geneva. Such singing “*lends dignity and grace to sacred actions and has the greatest value in kindling our heart to a true zeal and eagerness to pray*”<sup>140</sup>. Music can indeed “*excite piety,*” and depending on its mood, move individuals to penitence, thanksgiving, adoration, love, or any one of a host of emotions. Those who love the Lord are encouraged to “*sing till we feel our hearts ascending with our tongues*”. It is, therefore, important that the emotional mood of a particular tune be commensurate with the sense of the text. It is also important that the emotional power of music in worship be evocative rather than manipulative, honest rather than manufactured, and that the congregation's singing allow for the full range of emotions in worship.

**8.9. Liturgical Music, Theology and Practice of Sacred Music**

In all official Vatican documents, the term “*sacred music*” is used to name the music used at, or appropriate for the liturgy. *Musicam sacram* (1967) expanded the current definition of sacred music beyond Gregorian chant and polyphony to include music indigenous to missionary countries. Like the categories “*religious music*” and “*church music,*” “*sacred music*” has a broad and rather nebulous meaning which does not necessarily relate to the liturgy at all. The phrase “*liturgical music*” was introduced to correct the older understanding. Some liturgists have argued that the term “*liturgical music*” tends to subordinate liturgy to music, and have suggested an

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<sup>140</sup> Leaver, Robin A. “The Theological Character of Music in Worship” in *Duty and Delight: Routley Remembered*. Leaver, Robin A., Litton, James H., and Young, Carlton R., eds. Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing Company, 1985.

alternative term, "*musical liturgy*." Another term, "*pastoral music*," as used by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, refers to all music used at the parish level.

The Second Vatican Council had paved the way for an interaction between reflection on liturgical music and the practice of liturgical music which was one of the most creative, challenging, and confusing in the history of church music. The new energy sparked by this interaction was reflected in musical composition and experiments in musical performance as well as in a fundamental shift in understanding both the liturgy itself and, subsequently, the role of liturgical music. That shift was caused not only by the introduction of the vernacular but also by the shift in primary responsibility for music from the choir to the whole assembly, and, more subtly, by the subsequent influence of culture on the music and the rite itself. The theology of liturgical music is embedded in the ecclesiology that is the foundation for Christian liturgy and in liturgical theology built on that foundation. While the development of ecclesiology and liturgical theology, which influenced the theology of liturgical music during this period of renewal.

As important as the documentary reflection, therefore, was pastoral practice. The opportunities for new compositions, the involvement of new persons in ministry, the shift in a basic understanding of liturgy from the action of the priest, assisted by various ministers, to the action of the gathered assembly were not worked out only on paper; they were shaped and reshaped by pastoral practice. Musical practice significantly influenced both official and non-official documents, and, no doubt, the documents influenced practice.

Theology is the study of God and, in a Christian context, of God's involvement with humanity, including specific divine interventions on behalf of particular people in certain historical periods. The theological purpose or ultimate end of liturgical music falls within the general purpose of all liturgical action, which is to associate the church with Christ in the "*great work where in God is perfectly glorified and the recipients made holy (Sacrosanctum Concilium 7)*".

The end of liturgical music, therefore, is "the glorification of God and the sanctification of the faithful" (SC 112, MS 4). Diverse interpretations of the way music are to accomplish this goal, using diverse approaches to music, have developed within the Catholic Church in the past 100 years. While all of these would agree that the

ultimate end (*finem*) of liturgical music is its twofold transcendental and incarnational purpose, the ways in which God becomes personally manifests is widely debated. One approach focuses on an incarnational ecclesiology: By becoming fully human, one achieves the completion of humanity's teleology and reaches, through divine grace, participation in the divinity of God. Another believes that by transcending normal experience through participating, e.g., in an aesthetic experience, one is lifted toward union with the divine.

### 8.10. Gregorian Music, the church Music

Gregorian chant 'lifts the heart and soul to God. The sacred sounds of Gregorian chant, a centuries-old tradition of the Church. In 9<sup>th</sup> century, Gregorian chant is produced by a choir of voices in a unified melody and key, singing prayers and texts taken directly out of the Scriptures. Although it is not mandatory to use, the Catholic Church lists Gregorian chant as the music most suitable for worship. The distinctive monophonic chant may have the traditional "*pride of place*" in Catholic liturgy. It's reaching people on a very spiritual level. The Church tells us very clearly, and has done so for well over a hundred years, that chant is the music that has pride of place in the liturgy. Chant itself is a sort of musical incense, it spirals up to heaven in the way incense does in the liturgy, even if we don't understand the Latin. It can lift us and transport us to heavenly places.



### 8.11. Second Vatican Council and Its Aftermath (1962–1972)

The documentation for this period begins with Chapter VI of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, approved by the bishops on Dec. 4, 1962. This chapter reflects two positions on sacred music which existed prior to the Second Vatican Council, drawn from two papal documents—*Tra le sollecitudine* (1903) and *Mediator Dei* (1947)—and especially from pastoral practice influenced by use of the *Liber Usualis*. Chapter VI, as already noted, defines the purpose of sacred music to be "the glorification of God and the sanctification of the faithful" (SC 112). The two positions mentioned above dealt with the ritual function (the *munus ministeriale*) of sacred music to achieve that purpose.

The first position affirms that the treasury of sacred music is to be preserved and Gregorian chant is to be fostered (SC 112, 114); the second states that the people's own songs are to be encouraged and due importance is to be attached to their music (SC 118, 119). So while the basic trust of the Council was to develop full, conscious, and active participation of the whole assembly as "the aim to be considered before all else" (SC 14), and despite the encouragement given to new compositions (SC 121), in accord with existing documentation the bishops gave pride of place to music from a treasury containing products of ages that, on comparison with the theology of liturgy articulated in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, do not represent an ideal in theological-liturgical thinking. That tension between the liturgical theology articulated at the Council and the recommended musical practices to express that theology did not take long to reveal itself.

*"A congregation that is devoutly present at the sacrifice, in which our Savior together with His children redeemed with His sacred blood sings the Nuptial Hymn of His immense love, cannot keep silent, for "song befits the lover," and, as the ancient saying has it, "he who sings well prays twice." Thus, the Church militant, faithful as well as clergy, joins the Hymns of the Church triumphant and with the choirs of angels, and all together, sing a wondrous and eternal Hymn of praise to the most Holy Trinity".*

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## Chapter- 9

### PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALITY IN MUSIC

#### 9.1. Introduction

Music plays an important part in all our lives. It is very difficult to imagine a world without music. We may choose which kind of music we listen to our own personal enjoyment but we are also subject to music in all kinds of places. Background music is played in shops, restaurants, hotels, when we are waiting on the telephone for example, and it plays an important part in films and television programs. Music communicates emotion, thoughts and inspiration transcending race, religion and culture, playing an integral role in the spiritual and emotional well-being of our lives. Individuals do not always respond in the same way to a piece of music or a song; it depends on their experience of life, the environment and their personal beliefs and their personal preference.

*“From ancient times, music is something that has put people in touch with their innermost feelings. Different kinds of music work upon different emotions of an individual and releases the various incomplete emotions leading towards a total healing of body and mind”*

#### 9.2. Bhakthi Sankeertan

Music is a constant companion on our journey through life. It is present in our celebrations, marking passages and milestones along the way, strengthening and encouraging us. Listening to music, composing and performing can help to answer the questions of who we are, what we stand for and what we value in life, both individually and collectively. It helps us to understand ourselves and others.<sup>141</sup>

*“When you hear a certain piece of music your mind is often transported very vividly to a place or a memory that means something to you. Like the sense of smell, songs are highly evocative and can bring back memories of significant times, places and people”.*<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> ‘Healing through Music’, *The Holistic Health Dictionary on Music Therapy*.

<sup>142</sup> Steven Fisch Backer in his paper entitled ‘Music and Spirituality’

There are times when we find difficulty in expressing our thoughts and emotions in words. Music is always there to communicate the inexpressible and free the mind from the boundaries of speech and transport us to an alternative place of emotion, rhythm and imagery, thus enabling us to come to accept and come to terms with our emotions and situations.

*“Religious education and music provide important opportunities for spiritual development. The different aspects of spiritual development can use creative responses such as music for pupils to express their innermost thoughts and feelings and exercise the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight.”*<sup>143</sup>

Spiritual development can be encouraged in school by using music in a calm environment to help children respond to the music they hear and to relate it to the world around them and their inner thoughts. These too can be expressed in their own music making and in their choice of music. It can be used as a stimulus for art and creative writing. Music also has an important part to play in collective worship to create an appropriate atmosphere and to enhance the theme. Margaret Cooling in her book *‘Art and Music Toolkit: Creative ideas for using the Bible in the Classroom’* (1996) suggest three ‘E’ words to help focus an activity:

**Explore** the meaning and significance of a subject

**Engage** a pupil’s interest

**Express** understanding in the subject studied.<sup>144</sup>

These three words can be particularly helpful in all aspects of Music and Spirituality.

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<sup>143</sup> *‘Promoting and evaluating pupils, spiritual, moral and cultural development.’ (Ofsted 2004) HMSO*

<sup>144</sup> Margaret Cooling; *Art and Music Toolkit: Creative ideas for using the Bible in the Classroom’* (1996)



### **9.3 Music of Taize**

Taize music for worship consists of chorales, psalms, canons, cantors and responses, much of which is written in a minor key to reflect the suffering aspect of life, though the endings modulate to a major key to reflect hope. The words are written in Latin, which is an international language but can be translated into other languages. This ensures that all worshippers are on an equal footing with a language that does not belong to any particular group and the pronunciation is not difficult. Music and singing have played a very important role in the prayer life of Taize from the beginning.

The Taize community gathers for prayer three times each day. The style of prayer is highly meditative and both singing and silence play a large part in the worship. The singing of much-repeated prayer chants during candle-lit prayer services is one of its trademarks. The music highlights simple phrases, usually lines from the psalms or other pieces of scripture, repeated or sung in canon. The repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer.

### **9.4. Judaist musical spirituality**

Jewish music is quite diverse and dates back thousands of years. Sometimes it is religious in nature and other times it is secular. The rhythm and sound of the music varies greatly depending on the origins of the Jewish composers. The earliest music used in Synagogues was based on a system used in the Temple in Jerusalem. The orchestra consisted of twelve instruments, including a harp, drums and cymbals, and a choir of twelve male singers. There are many references to music in the Bible – David playing the lyre, the Psalms, the Song of Solomon, Joshua’s trumpet. After the destruction of the temple, music was initially banned though later, restrictions were relaxed and liturgical poems named *piyyutim* were introduced. The Cantor sang them to melodies selected by the writer or by himself. Some of the music was based on phrases from the bible which recalled songs from the Temple itself, but generally echoed the tones in the country and age in which the Jews lived, not merely in the actual borrowing of tunes, but more in the tonality on which the local music was based.

Today music remains a fundamental part of Jewish worship. In a traditional Synagogue, the majority of the service is chanted or sung out loud, and the Torah reading is also chanted. Different melodies are used for the prayers and Torah

readings on weekdays, Shabbat and holidays – these form a calendar in song; someone who knows the melodies well can tell exactly what time of year it is by hearing the melodies of the prayers and the songs of specific festivals. Some Jewish music is used for services and large gatherings, some is sung in the home around Shabbat. Some Jewish music uses instruments, but in traditional communities' songs for Shabbat and holidays are for voices alone as it is forbidden to play instruments at those times

Different Jewish communities also bring songs reflecting their own heritage i.e., Sephardic Synagogue: much of Moroccan and Iraqi origin, Ashkenazi Synagogue: German or Russian melodies. Some congregations prefer traditional music while some use popular, new melodies. The service is led by a Cantor, who has undergone formal training in '*Chazznut*', the art of the Cantor, and will decorate the melody of the prayers with embellishments and ornaments in order to bring out the meaning of the words. Other religious music includes melodies utilized to heighten devotional fervor, especially melodies of *Hassidim*, followers of a traditional branch of Judaism which emphasizes simplicity and sincerity rather than intellectual achievement, and religious poetry.<sup>145</sup>

### **9.5 Klezmer Musical spirituality**

Klezmer' is a '*Yiddish*' term, combining the Hebrew words '*kley*' (vehicle, instrument) and '*Zemer*' (song), thus meaning instrument of the song.' *Klezmer*: it's not just music-*Hankus Netsky*(it's a way of life)!' The Bible contains many descriptions of ritualized instrumental music played in Jerusalem but not much is known about how the music sounded as there was no system of writing or recording. In 70 A.D. after the destruction of the second Temple of Jerusalem, the Jews were plunged into mourning and forbidden by '*halakhic*' (rabbinical) orders from rejoicing and using instruments, except for the shofar (ram's horn) on '*Rosh Hashanah*' and '*Yom Kippur*'. In the Middle Ages, instruments started to be used again for important events and some religious feasts. Jewish musicians used to wander through Eastern

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<sup>145</sup> *Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks* 'Music is the pulse of Jewish spirituality – song charts the biorhythms of the Jewish Soul.'

Europe from village to ghetto to perform at various joyful occasions (*'simkhes'*) such as birthdays, new rabbis or the arrival of new Torah rolls, a celebrity's visit, a synagogues inauguration, circumcisions and especially weddings (*'khasene'*). These musicians were often poor and were considered to be only a little better than beggars or criminals. However, they developed a good reputation as musicians and were in great demand.<sup>146</sup>

## **9.6. Christian Spirituality**

Music is an important part of Christian worship, thanksgiving and celebration showing how worshippers feel towards God. Music unites the congregation so that God is worshipped with one voice. A wide variety of music is used in Christian worship including hymns, psalms, choral music, gospel songs, contemporary music and instrumental music, played for meditation and reflection. Christian music is music that has been written to express personal or communal belief regarding Christian life and faith. Common themes include praise, worship, celebration, penitence and lament, its forms varying widely across the world. Most Christian worship involves singing accompanied by instruments. The Bible has many references to music: dancing, singing and playing instruments. Psalms are songs of praise to God and in them are many references to music and the playing of instruments to the glory of God.

Throughout the history of Christianity music has played an important role in worship. Psalms were first sung in Syrian Monasteries and churches as 'verse and response' led by Levite leaders. Hymns followed psalms, adapting melodies of early chants. The Catholic Church developed the 'Canticle' where passages of the Bible were sung at specified times in worship and these are still part of the Roman Catholic liturgy today. The first chants were associated with Pope Gregory and are known as 'Gregorian' chants.

In the Middle Ages, the Mass was deemed the most important form of worship service in the Catholic Church and music depended on the particular feast that was celebrated. The ordinary mass was the same for each service with five music sections. Composers added to or altered the Gregorian chant and they became too

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<sup>146</sup> Moshe Beregovski; 'Yiddishe Instrumentalishe Folkmuzik' 1938

difficult to sing. The organist then played the music or improvised on the theme and thus liturgical organ music was introduced.

It was decided at the 'Council of Trent' that music for worship should be of such a nature that members of the congregation should participate. Palestrina was asked to simplify church music but retain the beauty of the melody. He also magnified the text so the words became the most important part of the music. In the 1600s and 1700s some of the world's greatest composers contributed to the Mass and the Cantata and the Oratorio were introduced by composers such as Scarlatti, Bach, Handel, Haydn and Mozart.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries religious music underwent a transformation to suit a changing and evolving congregation. Liturgies were simplified and often translated into a country's own language instead of Latin. They preserved the history of liturgical music but at the same time sort to design a style of music to suit the needs of a more modern member of the congregation. Music was simplified and composers set religious texts to folk melodies to encourage congregations to join in the singing. In the latter half of the twentieth century contemporary Christian music was born. From the folk rock of the seventies with its guitars and drums to the Christian rap group of the twenty-first century, music continues to evolve, preserving the message of the Church while meeting the needs of an ever-changing world.

### **9.7. Islamic Musical Spirituality**

Muslims believe it is the Divine created melody and harmony of life itself. They believe that '*Allah*' created the universe, the earth and all its inhabitants, for Allah's own pleasure! In the beginning there was nothing until Allah spoke and commanded that all things should come into existence. They see the whole universe as a symphonic orchestra full of sound, rhythm, tones, beats and form synchronized for perfect melodious harmony in unison, precisely and perfectly composed, directed and conducted by its Creator, Allah, with many sounds, movements, rhythms and beats in specific arrangements in the various forms of nature. It is the most magnificent of any musical composition and is composed as a gift of Allah's great love for mankind.

During the prophet Mohammad's time and after his death, there developed new Islamic art of musical styles in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, which were

the centers of Islamic religious and political power. They began to celebrate life and its religious and spiritual mystical dimensions in activities of rich art and musical foundation. The necessity of explaining and reciting the Quran resulted in the birth of the art of music science of grammar, musical modes, styles and lexicology and the best material was found in Islamic poetry. Rules of solemn recitation – cantillation were made based on poetic musical language and its renditions. These became the model for both experts in Quranic recitation and for composers of poetic songs (gazels). Thus, they underlined the expressive, artistic manner of rhythmic speech in many ways as a chant (combined recitation-cantillation) and emotional expression of song, sacred music and rhetoric.

There are two main schools of thought in Islam, concerning the use of music. The first most sacred source for those who are opposed to music and those who are not, is the Quran, although there is nothing specific in the Quran concerning music explicitly. The prophet Mohammed enjoyed listening to the singing and playing of his young wife, but he did not approve three things:

- a) The clapping of hands in public performances (artistic hand clappers were allowed).
- b) “Sensual singing which was combined with “sensual” dancing in public taverns by males and females.
- c) The selling, buying or teaching of performing girls.

In ancient Arabia music was practiced in religious ceremonies by believers who encircled the Ka’ba (House of Worship) which contains the Black Stone (Seat of Mankind), who chanted a musical cantillation (talhin). These were chanted during Hajj (pilgrimage) and accompanied by fife/flute (shandin) and drum (bandir/tablah).

‘Music is an issue that has been hotly debated amongst Islamic scholars of the past and present’. While many of them have been generally inclined to condemn all forms of music, with the singular exception of ad-duff (tambourine) at weddings, quite a few have taken a more positive approach of considering music containing sensual, pagan or unethical themes or subliminal messages as being categorically forbidden. The latter view seems to be more consistent with the general nature of Islam, which is undoubtedly a complete way of life that caters to all of the genuine human instincts and needs within permissible limits. Thus, it is to say that all music in Islam does not seem to agree with the balanced approach of Islam to issues of

human life and experience.<sup>147</sup>

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111), an exceptional religious reformer, defined the seven purposes for which music is allowed (halal) and the five cases that are not allowed (haram):

Music Allowed:

- To evoke and invoke the love of Allah
  - To elicit love and longing for Allah in circumstances that permit singing, playing of permitted instruments
  - To evoke lamentation and sorrow – the latter being of two kinds:
    - a) Blameworthy b) praiseworthy
- To arouse joy
  - To encourage pilgrimage, and only for those it is permissible
  - To incite for battle
  - To inspire courage on the day of battle Music Forbidden
  - When music is produced by singing and dancing of men and women in taverns and in other public places
    - If certain instruments are used for only ‘secular’ purposes, they are strictly forbidden for use for only ‘religious purposes’
      - When the song’s contents are not compatible with spiritual concepts and Precepts of religion
      - When the listener is ruled by thoughts of lust and lustful actions
      - When a person listens to music for inviting sensuality for sexual reasons only.

Music and religious doctrine consider the fact of concept of art and music are integrated into a relevant system of thought. The inference being that music does

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<sup>147</sup> *Sheikh Ahmad Kutty, Senior Lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.*

not act independently of its own fundamentals, nor is art and music to pursue the dictates of imagination. Religious art and music are subordinate too and interact with legitimate mankind's orientation to the universe of The Creator and to various worldly goals in life.

### **9.8. Music in Islamic Worship**

Both the Islamic call to prayer and the art of reciting the Quran have influenced artistic expression in Muslim culture. Islamic worship incorporates 'music' into worship, but not in the same sense as Christian choral or organ music, for example. The call is an art form that utilizes tonal variation and rhythm in the human voice. Recitation of the Quran beautifies the words through tone, rhythm and the shaping of words. The living Quran is not only or primarily the written word – it is first of all the recited word of Allah, sounded with perfection and beauty. Numerous styles of recitation trace their origins to the teaching of Mohammed and have been passed down through the ages.

### **9.9. Sufism**

Sufism is a very small minority movement within Islam. It incorporates the '*Whirling Dervishes*' dances and worship as well as devotional songs. The '*Whirling Dance*' or '*Sufi Whirling*' is the practice of the '*Mevlevi*' order in Turkey and is one of the physical methods used to try to reach religious ecstasy. The music that accompanies the whirling from beginning to end ranges from somber to rhapsodic and its effect is intended to be mesmerizing. Chanting poetry, rhythmic rotation and incessant music, induces a feeling of soaring, ecstasy and mystical flight.

### **9.10. Sikhism spirituality**

Music plays an important part in Sikh Worship in the '*Gurdwara*' (Sikh Temple). The holy book of Sikhism is called the '*Guru Granth Sahib*' which contains the teachings of the five gurus and of Hindu and Muslim teachers, which Sikhs should follow. The last Guru, Gobind Singh, declared that the book would take the place of the human Gurus for all time. Sikhs believe that God's truth is revealed through the Guru Granth Sahib, which they treat with as much respect as they would a human Guru. Each morning the holy book is brought out from the small room where it is kept overnight.

Placed on cushions on a platform and covered with an embroidered cloth, called a '*Romalla*'. The whole of the Guru Granth Sahib is written in poetry, arranged

in stanzas named '*Shabads*'. The opening words are Guru Nanak's description of what God is. The Guru Granth Sahib contains hymns that praise God, reveal his nature and give guidance on how to live a good life. They are written mainly in Punjabi and each copy of the book has 1,430 pages. Each hymn is found on the same page in every copy and there are no spaces between the words so that nothing can be added to them. As it is very difficult to read, people have to be taught to read it and not everyone has that skill.

Many people memorize the hymns and recite them daily in their own devotions at home. Each hymn has its own traditional tune. The singing is called '*kirtan*' and is very important. It is done by musicians named '*ragis*', who usually play tabla, drums and harmoniums. Indian Harmoniums are small reed organs which are played with one hand whilst the player pumps air into the instrument by squeezing the bellows at the back with their other hand. The singing is accompanied by cymbals and at times other instruments can be added such as the sitar or the violin.

Children can be involved in playing the percussion instruments. Both men and women play the instruments and sing simultaneously, though the other worshippers do not usually join in the singing. The music notation is called '*Raag*' and it takes many years of practice to become an accomplished player and singer. The musicians sit to the right of the Guru Granth Sahib facing the worshippers. The singer sits in the middle, playing the harmonium as he or she sings.

The aim of Sikh worship is to give praise to God. The singing or '*kirtan*' is very important and plays a major part in the worship. Only sounds which are made by the voice-box are allowed therefore clapping and whistling are not allowed. The service usually includes a talk, which helps to explain the '*shabads*' or it may be about the things which affect the lives of Sikhs. A second type of music is 'man-made' poems set to music. These can be sung in services but do not command the same respect as the '*shabads*' from the Guru Granth Sahib and is regarded as '*weak music*'.

All services end with the '*Ardas*', a special prayer which lasts about 15 minutes. The people stand with their hands folded, facing the Guru Granth Sahib while the leader faces them. The first part reminds everyone to remember God and the ten Gurus, and to pass on the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. Prayers are then said for Sikhs and all people everywhere and their needs. Whilst the prayer is being said, the '*karah prashad*' (holy sweet) is stirred with a '*kirpan*' (a short sword which is one of the five Kings). The sweet is then distributed to everyone who attends



the service, as a symbol that everyone is equal. It is made of equal quantities of flour, sugar, semolina and ghee, which is a specially prepared butter, and then mixed in an iron bowl. At the end of the service everyone who has attended the service shares the '*langar*' which is a free vegetarian meal prepared by volunteers. This shows that all people are God's children and should eat together like one family. Sikhs are taught to give their time, money and skills freely to help others.

### **9.11. Spirituality of Hinduism**

Worship in the home, '*Puja*', may be as important as worship in the temple to Hindus. Although communal worship plays a central role in temple worship, there is no strong tradition of congregational rite or ceremony. Worship may be through words, music, dance or silence. '*Yagna*' (sacrifice) is an important aspect of worship.

Indian classical music is part of worship as in the Sikh tradition. They use '*Kirtan*' (call and response, chanting of the mantras with instruments and dance) and '*Bajan*' (devotional song) during worship in the temple. They use '*Raga*', which is a seven-note scale, and '*Tala*', which is a rhythmic pattern of beats accompanied by Tabla Drums, Harmoniums and Percussion instruments. An important element of Hindu worship is '*Bhajari*', which means adoration and indicates worship with love. This often refers to devotional singing or the hymns themselves.

In the Hindu tradition, the world was created by Shiva, whose aspects include Lord of the Dance, therefore dance often forms part of the worship in a temple, along with music and songs of praise (bhajan and kirtan). Worshippers dance spontaneously or it is danced by classical dance troupes. Their dances recount stories from the spiritual epics. Each hand gesture (mudra), movement or facial expression will have a special meaning known to the audience. This sort of dance is a form of worship in its own right, to recount stories about the Gods.

The '*Bharata Natyam*' is a narrative form of dance. Before the dance begins, the earth on which it is performed has to be sanctified. As dance is akin to trampling on the earth, the dancer seeks permission of mother earth to trample on her. The dancers touch the ground and bow to it at the beginning and at the end of the dance in order to make connections between spirituality, the environment and the dance they perform. By doing this they learn to respect the earth. The dancers dance bare foot using hands and body gestures, put to music, to tell a story. The traditional stories, which are based on nature and human emotion are drawn from

*Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. Mahabharata is the story of two fighting cousins in which Lord Krishna brings about the resolution.

The '*Ghita*' is a special chapter in the Mahabharata representing the '*Song of the Lord*'; this is an elaborate moral code which shows the '*how and why*' of doing good deeds containing numerous love poems narrated through the dance. '*Sringara*' (love) is the dominant theme – love for people and the environment. The costumes of the dancers are made in colors to represent the earth; red, brown, yellow and green. A song composed by 15th Century Indian poet Meera, a woman who gave up worldly ways to pen Hindu devotional songs about Krishna, believed to be a human incarnation of the God Vishnu. In the lyrics, religious and romantic love are intertwined. These songs, called bhajans, are part of a rich tradition of music in Hinduism. Music is essential to the worship experience, Hindus say, because it arouses the senses and creates spiritual vibrations that enhance devotion.

Repetition and chanting help connect devotees to humankind and to their spirituality. Sometimes there is improvisation, like in jazz, in the singing. The sound of "*Ohm*" is a sacred mantra. Hindus believe there is a power in the statue they are worshipping. In Hindu music, there are both ancient traditions and contemporary songs. Two main classical music forms--*Hindustani*, from northern India, and *Carnatic*, from the south--provide much of the framework.

The '*sitar*', a string instrument, is common in Hindustani music, in which flexibility and improvisation shape songs. Carnatic songs are beat heavy and commonly feature a drum called the '*mridangam*'. Once the classical framework is established, sub-melodies can enter. Indian musicians also have adopted Western instruments such as the violin, and some devotionals mimic melodies of British marching songs. The lyrics and music encompass the range of human emotion. Music in the Hindu culture has deep importance in changing both personal consciousness and social atmosphere. When singing, devotees will describe the God's valor and strength, calming him like a baby. The music helps devotees concentrate on blessings and remember the good things in life. Peacefulness envelops them as they sing the

Lord goodnight. It's very divine. Every word, every sentence has a meaning and connected to music.<sup>148</sup>

## **9.12. How can people express the spirituality through music?**

Throughout history, people have used art, music and literature to express their religious beliefs, and to help them to focus on practices such as prayer and worship. Beautiful words, images and objects have played a big part in many world religions, but there are some very different ideas about how they should be used.

### ***9.12.1. Music is a form of expression***

Art, music and literature are important forms of expression for many people. Whether they are religious or not, many people believe that human beings have a spiritual existence. There is a wide variety of ideas about what this actually means, but put simply, it means that being human goes beyond what we can experience with our senses, minds and intelligence.

Religious people might say that humans have a soul or some sort of non-physical form which connects them with a higher power, such as God, and which moves on to another life after the body dies. People who are not religious may also say there is a spiritual dimension because they believe that there is more to being human than just body and mind. But they will usually not think of this as having a soul that is connected to a God. We see this in places of worship, like Orthodox Christian churches which are full of icons and often highly decorated with gold and vibrant colors, designed to give worshippers a glimpse of what heaven may be like. Religious people will often decorate their homes with religious art as well.

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<sup>148</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2006-05-12-0605120279-story.html>

### **9.12.2. Worship and devotion**

For many Hindus art has important connections to worship and devotion. *'Rangoli'* patterns created from colored sand, rice, or grains, often adorn the doorsteps of Hindu homes around the time of *'Diwali'*. The bright colors of rangolis represent the idea of light, and they serve to offer a colorful welcome to Rama and Sita, the deities at the heart of the Diwali celebrations. Hindu mandirs, and often Hindu homes, feature 'shrines', which are places specially set aside for worship and devotion.

At the center of a shrine is usually a colorful statue or painting of a God or Goddess, or sometimes several of them together. These statues are often called *'Murtis'*, which means *'Forms'*. Sometimes a murti will be made using expensive materials, like gold and may be dressed in the finest silks. For many Hindus, the great care, skill and effort taken to make images of Gods and Goddesses shows the artist's devotion. The beautiful images help Hindus to focus on the deity they are worshipping.

Buddhists will often have a shrine around a statue of the Buddha, which helps them to meditate at home or in their temple (often called a vihara). The *'Mandala'* is an important art form in Buddhist tradition. It is a picture starting in the center and expanding outwards. Buddhists believe this symbolizes the entire universe. Mandalas can take the form of paintings on a wall or scroll; they might also be created with colored sands or grains on tables or floors. The concentration and focus needed to create a mandala is thought of as a meditation in itself. A mandala isn't necessarily a physical object.

Some Buddhists create mandalas in their minds through *'Meditation'*. Many Buddhists believe that mandalas can help a Buddhist along their path to *'Enlightenment'*. A lavishly decorated murti of the Goddess *'Durga'* at a *'pandal'* (a temporary structure for religious events) in *Ontario, Canada*. *'Durga Puja'* is a Hindu festival that pays respect to Durga and which celebrates the triumph of good over evil.

### **9.12.3. Abstract imagery**

The lack of pictures of saints, important figures, and depictions of God or the heavens in a place of worship, also shows us a lot about the beliefs of the worshippers who go there. For instance, Muslims and Jews believe that God is too great to try to capture in pictures or sculptures, and so they find other ways to adorn their holy spaces and make them look beautiful. Many mosques will have beautiful calligraphy and geometric patterns, while synagogues are often decorated with pictures of plants, trees and religious symbols.

### **9.12.4. Reflective music**

Songs, chants and instrumental music help to create an atmosphere that reflects the type of worship the people will participate in. This is very important in Sikh worship where prayers, called '*Ragas*', are sung by '*Ragis*' who lead the worship. They are usually accompanied by music played on traditional instruments. If worship happens without music, perhaps even in silence, this can be a way of expressing the spiritual, too.

## **9.13. Importance of Music in Hindu Religion**

Music is an essential aspect that has been entrenched in life since time memorial. It has emerged that music's significance is well understood and felt in matters concerning religion (Anjali). Acting as a fundamental factor, the importance of music cuts across numerous faiths. In this case, Hinduism is not an exemption. In the Hindu faith, music is of great importance. In other cases, the importance of music may be felt during the entertainment. Despite emerging as a common thing in religion, the intended role of music in religion is to appreciate, and part of making requests to the subject of worship (Anjali). In such a situation, followers have a chance to express their feelings to their God of choice. Having interacted effectively with Hindus, one can fully understand and experience how this specific religion values the musical feature of religion. This religion recognizes music as a mode of convincing senses allowing the creation of spiritual connection hence religious worship. It is evident that music plays a significant role in the religious life of a Hindu. It is a norm for a typical Hindu worship service to chant mantras and sings devotional songs, including bhajans.

The Veda emerges as the most ancient Hindu scripture that entails incantations and sacred prayers that are still chanted in the Hindu faith to date. Ancient Hindu texts are categorized into four Vedas. The '*Rig Veda*' is recognized as the most essential and the oldest, according to the scholars. This Veda is divided into ten books known as '*mandalas*', containing 1028 hymns of praise. The '*Yajur Veda*' is a priestly handbook used during sacrifices. '*Sama Veda*' consists of chants and sweet melodies sung during worships on normal services and the performance of '*yajna*'. '*Atharva Veda*' comprises of hymns, incantations, and mantras, largely outside the scope of '*yajna*.'

In the Hindu faith, music is considered a form of mediation. In this case, it is used to the aesthetic consciousness of man and opens his mind for the divine message masked in the gorgeousness of tunes. It is common and a habit to perform every ritual in the Hindu tradition in the existence of sound. In this religion, music is known as '*Bhakti*'. This term depicts the loving devotion to the superior being. The importance of this belief is to enhance a personal relationship between man and the superior being. In efforts to establish and maintain such a relationship, there calls the need for a medium responding to the emotional sphere of man's consciousness. In the Hindu religion, music is considered to arouse senses creating spiritual vibrations that promote devotion. Continuous chanting and repetition of religious musical phrases are essential in assisting devotees in connecting their humankind and spirituality. This enables the Hindus to concentrate during the time of worship.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> <https://www.coursehero.com/file/74014847/Hinduism-And-Musicdocx/>

### 9.13.1. Hindu Sacred Music



The origins of Indian classical music can be traced to the Vedas, the oldest scriptures in the Hindu tradition. The genre is also closely associated with and influenced by Indian folk music and Persian traditions. In general, it is based on ragas and tala (rhythmic beat patterns) played on the *Veena* (or *Been*), *Sarangi*, *Venu* (flute), *Mridanga* (or *Tabla*) (traditional Indian instruments). The Sikh Scripture, for example, contains 31 ragas and 17 talas which form the basis for kirtan music compositions.

There are 72 seven-toned scales in Indian music, hundreds of fewer-toned scales, thousands of melodic '*moulds*' and 35-time signatures. Hindustani music predominates in Northern India and seems to have its origins around 1000BC, and further developed between the 13th and 14th centuries AD with Persian influences and from existing religious and folk music. It is divided into two main forms, '*Khyal*' and '*Dhrupad*', along with several other classical and semi-classical forms. The Persian influence is perhaps most obvious in the instruments, style of presentation, and ragas. Also, as is the case with Carnatic music (more common in southern India), Hindustani music has assimilated folk tunes; ragas such as poetic '*Kafi*' and '*Jajaiwanti*' are based on folk tunes.

Both traditions claim Vedic roots, and history indicates that they diverged from a common musical stem around the time of the 13th century. Hymns (or Samaveda) are traditionally sung by ‘*Udgatar*’ priests in a chanting style.



Instruments typically used in Hindustani music include stringed instruments like *sitar*, *surbahar*, *veena*, *tanpura*, *santoor*; woodwind instruments such as the *bansuri*, *shehnai*; bowed instruments like *sarangi*, *violin*; and drums like the *pakhavaj* and *tabla*.

Carnatic music appears to have emerged in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. It tends to be more rhythmically intensive and structured than Hindustani music and has more in common with the Western classical genre. Carnatic ragas are generally much faster in tempo and shorter than their equivalents in Hindustani music, and accompanists have a much larger role to play. The meaning of the original Sanskrit word Carnatic is “*Soothing to the ears*”. There are also notated lyrical poems that are performed possibly with embellishments and interpretations according to the performer’s ideology.





The 15<sup>th</sup> Century composer 'Purandara Dasa' is credited with having founded today's Carnatic Music. He systematized its teaching methodology by devising a series of graded lessons such as '*swaravalis, janta swaras, and kritis*', that are followed by teachers and students of Carnatic music to this day. He introduced the '*Mayamalavagowla*' as the basic scale for music tuition. Another important contribution of his was the fusion of '*Bhava with Raga and Laya*' in composing.

Purandara Dasa was the first composer who started commenting on the daily life of the people as well as worship in compositions. He introduced the usage of popular folk language and helped bring folk ragas into the mainstream. Instruments common to Carnatic music include the '*venu (flute), gottuvadyam (a 21-stringed, fretless lute), harmonium, veena*'; percussive instruments like the '*mridangam, kanjira, ghatam; and the violin*'.

The '*Kirtan*' is the communal, call-and-response chanting of mantras, often with dancing. Kirtans are historically linked with Vedic tradition, and involve chanting hymns or mantras to instrumental accompaniment. It is a popular practice in 'Vaisnava devotionalism, Sikhism, the Sant traditions, as well as some forms of Buddhism'.



The ‘*Bauls of Bengal*’ are an order of musicians dating back to the 17th century, who play a form of ‘*Vaishnava Music*’ (Vaishnavism being a branch of Hinduism focused on the veneration of Vishnu) using a ‘*Khamak, Ektara and Dotara*’ (resonating stringed instruments). The word ‘*Baul*’ comes from Sanskrit ‘*batul*’ meaning ‘*divinely inspired insanity*’. They are a group of mystic minstrels influenced by Sufism and Buddhism. They are wandering singer-poets whose earthiness reflects on matters such as work and love. They have also been influenced by Hindu tantric sect of the ‘*Kartabhajas*’ and also by Sufi sects. Bauls travel in search of an internal ideal, called ‘*Maner Manush*’ (Man of the Heart).<sup>150</sup>

#### **9.14. The Role of Music in Confucianism and Christianity**

One of the Confucian canons — ‘*The Book of Rites*’, recompiled by Confucian scholars— describes the use of the arts and rituals for moral cultivation (Kong 1885). This book is closely related to the current discussion of music learning and lifeworld practices of two musician-educators. Confucius argued that to run a country smoothly, political leaders should rely on traditional rituals to cultivate morality among people. Music is the most powerful art form of all

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<sup>150</sup> <https://sacredmusicradio.org/hindu-sacred-music/>

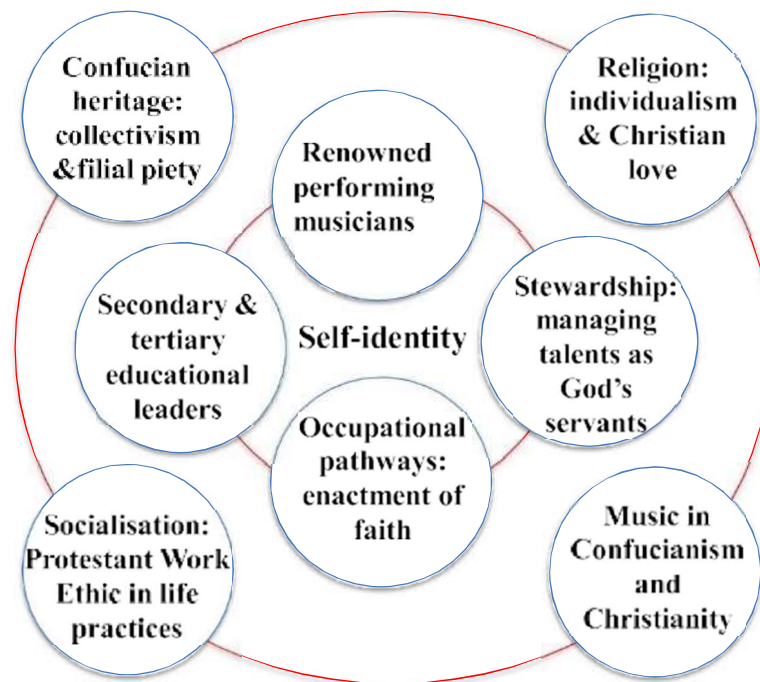
rites that contribute to the seeking of '*Dao*' (the way) where one is engaged in the transcendental flow state. It is through engagement in musical activities that self-perfection will be cultivated. The functional use of music and rituals in Confucianism draws parallels to Christian worship. According to the Comparative studies between Confucianism and Christianity, the Confucian holy man and Christian sanctification are equal. Confucian benevolence and Christian love are the father and son in Christianity and Confucianism. Table 1 shows the commonalities between Confucianism and Christianity: Both promote the cultivation of morality and make extensive use of music to achieve a pre-determined purpose. While Confucianism focuses on benevolence and filial piety, Christianity emphasizes the four loves. These concepts will be applied to the lifeworld practices of the two musicians in their unfolding stories.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Matteo Ricci, trans, *The philosophical thoughts of Confucius* Yao 2000.

Table 1: *Similarities between Confucianism and Christianity*

Confucianism	Christianity
Finding <i>Dao</i> (the way)	Seeking the truth
<p>Promoting benevolence: the intention to be good and take action to do good</p> <p>Filial piety: obeying and respecting family members, feeling obligatory</p>	<p>Promoting four types of love: <i>Agápe</i>, selfless love, moral goodwill to love the undeserving; <i>Philia</i>, natural affection and friendship; <i>Storge</i>, familial affection between kinfolk; <i>Éros</i>, sexual love</p>
Learning to be a <i>ren</i> (human being) who stands to be a societal role model	Learning to be a compassionate person who is an example of Christ
Cultivating morality so to become a <i>jingzi</i> (noble man)	Cultivating morality so to become a righteous person, a disciple of Christ
Striving to become a <i>zhengren</i> (Holy man), a divine being	Striving to be a saint or to be a living sacrifice of God
Using music extensively in rituals, ceremonies for the purpose of societal and familial harmony and self- perfection	Using music extensively in worship and gatherings for the purpose of promoting love, harmony, and unity between people and personal spiritual experience



To summaries the theoretical underpinnings of this study, I shall use a diagram to illustrate the interplay of the variables to enable a greater understanding of how music, religion, cultural heritage and stewardship interact with each other within the larger framework of identity formation of the two participants.

### **9.15. Conclusion**

Music is an essential and powerful element in most faiths, though the part played by music in the different faiths varies greatly. It enables worshippers to express their beliefs, their inner-most thoughts and emotions by either composing, taking part in the performance or simply by listening and reflecting, thus evoking a sense of spirituality. Music, when used sensitively, can create an atmosphere of worship, though if it is used insensitively the atmosphere can be destroyed. We can learn about the different faiths through their music and help children to empathize and respect the different points of view in the communities in which they live and in those they will live in the future.

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## **Chapter-10**

### **THE POWER OF MUSIC IN PHILOSOPHY**

#### **10.1. Introduction**

Music can lift our moods, combat depression, improve blood flow in ways similar to statins, lower levels of stress-related hormones such as cortisol, and ease pain. *“Music in itself is healing,”* According to American musician Billy Joel, *“It’s an explosive expression of humanity. It’s something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we’re from, everyone loves music.”* Music stimulates more parts of the brain than any other human function. The musical sound impacts our bodies in a way no other art does. Science all but confirms that humans are hard-wired to respond to music. Studies also suggest that someday music may even help patients heal from Parkinson's disease or a stroke. Music is so powerful that its sound actually penetrates our bodies.

Already, we are in a world of sound, of breath and heartbeat, of rhythm and vibration. Nature allows us to evolve with rhythm all around us. We can all think of at least one song that, when we hear it, triggers an emotional response. It might be a song that accompanied the first dance at the school, for example, or a song that reminds you of a difficult break-up or the loss of a loved one. *“We have a such a deep connection to music because it is ‘hardwired’ in our brains and bodies,”* According to Barbara Else, senior advisor of policy and research at the American Music Therapy Association. *“The elements of music – rhythm, melody, etc. – are echoed in our physiology, functioning and being.”*

Numerous studies have shown it can benefit our mental health. A 2011 study by researchers from McGill University in Canada found that listening to music increases the amount of dopamine produced in the brain – a mood-enhancing chemical, making it a feasible treatment for depression. One of a study published in *‘The Lancet Psychiatry’* that suggested listening to music may help individuals to understand mental health disorders. But increasingly, researchers are finding that the health benefits of music may go beyond mental health, and as a result, some health experts are calling for music therapy to be more widely incorporated into health care settings.

## **10.2. Music Reduces pain and anxiety**

According to some studies, “One good thing about music, when it hits feel no pain.” The study led by Brunel University in the UK that music may reduce pain and anxiety for patients who have undergone surgery. By analyzing 72 randomized controlled trials involving more than 7,000 patients who received surgery, researchers found those who were played music after their procedure reported feeling less pain and anxiety than those who did not listen to music, and they were also less likely to need pain medication. In March 2014, researchers from Denmark found music may be beneficial for patients with ‘fibromyalgia’ – a disorder that causes muscle and joint pain and fatigue. Listening to calm, relaxing, self-chosen music “*reduced pain and increased functional mobility significantly*” among 22 patients with ‘fibromyalgia’, according to the investigators.

## **10.3. An effective stress reliever**

When feeling stressed, listening to the favorite music will make feel better – and there are numerous studies that support this effect. A study reported by *MNT*, for example, found that infants remained calmer for longer when they were played music rather than spoken to – even when speech involved baby talk. The study researchers of the Center for Research on Brain, Music and Language at the University of Montreal in Canada, suggested the repetitive pattern of the music the infants listened to reduced distress, possibly by promoting “entrainment” – the ability of the body’s internal rhythms to synchronize with external rhythms, pulses or beats. According to some researchers, music may help alleviate stress by lowering the body’s cortisol levels – the hormone released in response to stress. Music’s effect on heart rate and its potential as a stress reliever has led a number of researchers to believe music may also be effective for treating heart conditions.

## **10.4. Music and memory**

Certain songs have the ability to remind us of certain periods or events in our lives – some that make us smile, and some we would rather forget. With this in mind, researchers are increasingly investigating whether music may aid memory recall. A study published in ‘the journal *Memory & Cognition* enrolled’ 60 adults who were learning Hungarian. The adults were randomized to one of three learning tasks:

speaking unfamiliar Hungarian phrases, speaking the same phrases in a rhythmic fashion or singing the phrases. When asked to recall the phrases, the researchers found participants who sang the phrases had much higher recall accuracy than the other two groups. “These results suggest that a ‘listen-and-sing’ learning method can facilitate verbatim memory for spoken foreign language phrases,” say the authors. Evidence from such studies has led researchers to suggest music may help memory recall for people with cognitive disorders, such as Alzheimer’s disease.

A study published in the journal *Gerontologist* last year assessed the effect of music on memory recall in individuals with early-stage dementia. For the research, 89 people with dementia and their care givers were randomly assigned to either a 10-week singing coaching group, a 10-week music listening coaching group or usual care. The results revealed that both the singing and music listening groups not only had better mood and overall well-being than the usual care group, but they demonstrated better episodic memory on cognitive assessments. The singing group also showed better working memory than the usual care group. “*Regular musical leisure activities can have long-term cognitive, emotional, and social benefits in mild/moderate dementia and could therefore be utilized in dementia care and rehabilitation,*” the authors concluded.

### **10.5. Helping recover brain injury, treat seizures**

Increasingly, research is indicating that music can help aid recovery from brain injury – such as that from stroke. A study conducted by researchers from the University of Helsinki in Finland found that stroke patients who listened to music for around 2 hours daily had better verbal memory and attention and a more positive mood than those who listened to an audio book or nothing at all. What is more, studies have shown that music may aid speech recovery following stroke. One study conducted by researchers from Korea, found that stroke patients who developed communication problems after stroke demonstrated improved language ability following one month of neurologic music therapy.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Elena Mannes, *Excerpted from The Power of Music; Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011*



## **10.6. Music and Emotion Relationship**

Music tends to hit on us a deep level. Whether it is sad music that helps us feel relatable when we are going through hard times or joyful music that adds an extra bounce to your step, music is incredibly powerful. The *Journal of Positive Psychology* conducted a study in 2013 that discovered that individuals who listened to music that could be classified as happy and upbeat were able to improve their mood and overall happiness in just a few weeks. Throughout the study, participants were encouraged to try to improve their mood, but they were only able to find success when they listened to happier music. Three aspects created the mood.

- Better physical health
- Higher income
- Greater relationship satisfaction

## **10.7. The Low-Risk Nature of Music Makes it a Perfect Option**

Music can improve our mood, quality of life, and self-esteem, but it is also:

- Extremely safe
- Non-invasive
- Easily accessible
- Non-expensive

## **10.8. Music Boosts Our Moods**

Can our favorite songs be a form of therapy? Researchers from the U. K. found that a unique orchestra for people with dementia helped improve their mood and boost their self-confidence. The orchestra is one of several research projects done by the Bournemouth University Dementia Institute that demonstrate that people with dementia can still have fun and learn new skills. The study involved eight individuals with dementia, students, professional musicians, and a handful of caregivers. The results were amazing. The orchestra was positively life-changing for all involved. Whether we are playing music or just listening and bobbing your head, the health benefits are remarkable. It was discovered that music can release dopamine in two main places in the brain, the dorsal and ventral striatum. When we

are having a pleasurable experience, such as listening to the favorite song, these areas of the brain light up.

### **10.9. Music Changes the Way We Perceive the World**

In experiments where people looked at a happy face or a sad face, the music they listened to affected how they perceived it. It influenced what they saw. If we were listening to happy music, a more neutral face was more likely to be viewed as happy, and vice versa. If we listened to any kind of music, you know your body can react in several different ways, such as:

- Nodding your head
- Tapping your feet
- Snapping your fingers.

The beat of the song we are listening to, can even influence our heart rate, and when people sing together, their breathing often becomes synchronized, producing positive emotions. These things happen because musical patterns affect our auditory cortex, which is part of the neural reward system and other areas involved in memory and emotion.

### **10.10. Music, Emotion, and Well-Being**

One of the most important issues in the psychology of music is how music affects emotional experience. Music has the ability to evoke powerful emotional responses such as chills and thrills in listeners. Positive emotions dominate musical experiences. Pleasurable music may lead to the release of neurotransmitters associated with reward, such as dopamine. Listening to music is an easy way to alter mood or relieve stress. People use music in their everyday lives to regulate, enhance, and diminish undesirable emotional states (e.g., stress, fatigue). How does listening to music produce emotions and pleasure in listeners?

#### ***10.10.1. Musical pleasure***

The enjoyment of music appears to involve the same pleasure center in the brain as other forms of pleasure, such as food, sex, and drugs. Evidence shows that an aesthetic stimulus, such as music, can naturally target the dopamine systems of the brain that are typically involved in highly reinforcing and addictive behaviors.

In one study, participants listened to their favorite songs after taking ‘*naltrexone*’. Naltrexone is a widely prescribed drug for treating addiction disorders. The researchers found that when study subjects took naltrexone, they reported that their favorite songs were no longer pleasurable.<sup>153</sup> However, not everyone experiences intense emotional responses to music. Roughly 5% of the populations do not experience chills. This incapacity to derive pleasure specifically from music has been called musical anhedonia.

### **10.10.2. Musical anticipation**

Music can be experienced as pleasurable both when it fulfills and violates expectations. The more unexpected the events in music, the more surprising is the musical experience.<sup>154</sup> We appreciate music that is less predictable and slightly more complex.

### **10.10.3. Refined emotions**

There is also an intellectual component to the appreciation for music. The dopamine systems do not work in isolation, and their influence will be largely dependent on their interaction with other regions of the brain. That is, our ability to enjoy music can be seen as the outcome of our human emotional brain and its more recently evolved *neocortex*. Evidence shows that people who consistently respond emotionally to aesthetic musical stimuli possess stronger white matter connectivity between their auditory cortex and the areas associated with emotional processing, which means the two areas communicate more efficiently.<sup>155</sup>

### **10.10.4. Memories**

Memories are one of the important ways in which musical events evoke emotions. As the late physician Oliver Sacks has noted, musical emotions and

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<sup>153</sup> Malik Adiel, et al (2017) Anhedonia to music and mu-opioids: Evidence from the administration of naltrexone. Scientific Reports volume 7, Article number: 41952 DOI:10.1038/srep41952

<sup>154</sup> Gebauer L, and Morten L. Kringelbach (2012) Ever-Changing Cycles of Musical Pleasure: The Role of Dopamine and Anticipation Psych musicology: Music, Mind, and Brain, Vol. 22, No. 2, 152–16.

<sup>155</sup> Sachs E Matthew, et al., (2016), Brain connectivity reflects human aesthetic responses to music, Social and Affective Neuroscience. 1-8.

musical memory can survive long after other forms of memory have disappeared. Part of the reason for the durable power of music appears to be that listening to music engages many parts of the brain, triggering connections and creating associations.

#### ***10.10.5. Action tendency***

Music often creates strong action tendencies to move in coordination with the music (e.g., dancing, foot-tapping). Our internal rhythms (e.g., heart rate) speed up or slow down to become one with the music. We float and move with the music.

#### ***10.10.6. Emotional Mimicry***

Music doesn't only evoke emotions at the individual level, but also at the interpersonal and intergroup level. Listeners mirror their reactions to what the music expresses, such as sadness from sad music, or cheer from happy music. Similarly, ambient music affects shoppers' and diners' moods.

#### ***10.10.7. Consumer behavior***

Background music has a surprisingly strong influence on consumer behavior. For example, one study exposed customers in a supermarket drinks section to either French music or German music. The results showed that French wine outsold German wine when French music was played, whereas German wine outsold French wine when German music was played.<sup>156</sup>

#### ***10.10.8. Mood regulation***

People crave 'escapism' during uncertain times to avoid their woes and troubles. Music offers a resource for emotion regulation. People use music to achieve various goals, such as to energize, maintain focus on a task, and reduce boredom. For instance, sad music enables the listener to disengage from the distressing situations (breakup, death, etc.), and focus instead on the beauty of the music. Further, lyrics that resonate with the listener's personal experience can give voice to feelings or experiences that one might not be able to express oneself.

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<sup>156</sup> North AC, Shilcock A, Hargreaves DJ. The effect of musical style on restaurant customers' spending. *Environ Behav.* 2003; 35:712–8.

### ***10.10.9. Time perception***

Music is a powerful emotional stimulus that changes our relationship with time. Time does indeed seem to fly when listening to pleasant music. Music is therefore used in waiting rooms to reduce the subjective duration of time spent waiting and in supermarkets to encourage people to stay for longer and buy more.<sup>157</sup> Hearing pleasant music seems to divert attention away from time processing. Moreover, this attention-related shortening effect appears to be greater in the case of calm music with a slow tempo.

### ***10.10.10. Identity development***

Music can be a powerful tool for identity development.<sup>158</sup> Young people derive a sense of identity from music. For example, the movie *'Blinded by the Light'* shows the power of Springsteen songs to speak to Javed's experience on a personal level. The lyrics help him to find a voice he never knew he had, and the courage to follow his dreams, find love, and assert himself.<sup>159</sup>

## **10.11. Neuroscience Studies on Religious Experience.**

In the field of Neuroscience there are several investigations that have tried to find physical, physiological, scientific evidence about the religious experience.

### ***10.11.1. Genetics of religiosity***

Studies of twins at the University of Minnesota in the United States suggest that there is a genetic contribution to the likelihood of church attendance or the tendency to have self-transcendent experiences. In fact, it has been stated that there is a genetic determination of the wiring of the brain in the service of religiosity.

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<sup>157</sup> Droit-Volet S, Ramos D, Bueno JL, Bigand E. (2013) Music, emotion, and time perception: the influence of subjective emotional valence and arousal? *Front Psychol*; 4:417. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00417.

<sup>158</sup> Lidskog Rolf (2016), The role of music in ethnic identity formation in diaspora: a research review, *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 66, nr 219-220, s. 23-38.

<sup>159</sup> Juslin PN (2019), *Musical Emotions Explained*, Oxford University Press.

However, this also seems to be related to non-religious self-transcendence, self-forgetfulness, or other non-religious psychological and social domains.<sup>160</sup>

### ***10.11.2. Religious experience produced or induced by hallucinogenic drugs***

In the context of religious rituals, Hallucinogenic substances of various types are often present to facilitate ecstatic and mystical states, including altered perception of reality and self, mood enhancement, visual and auditory hallucinations, and so on.

### ***10.11.3. Neurological disorder and religious experiences***

The relationship between brain function and religious experiences is also evidenced in cases of brain disease or injury. In a small group of patients Epilepsy, the intense religious fear, ecstasy or feelings of divine presence occur as a consequence of the abnormal electrical activity of the brain that constitutes the aura that leads to a convulsion. Even though these cases are rare, they are frequent enough to generate speculation. Something similar has also been found in case of patients 'Schizophrenic'. Or, conversely (reduced religiosity), in patients with Parkinson's disease.<sup>161</sup>

### ***10.11.4. Magnetic Stimulation of the Brain and a "Sense of Presence"***

In one experiment, the Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) applied on the right temporal lobe in non-epileptic individuals resulted in reports of a "sense of presence" that some religiously described (e.g., the presence of God or angels).

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<sup>160</sup> Wilkins, Pete (2017). Neuroscience and Religious Faith in International Society for Science & Religion (ISSR). Retrieved from: [issr.org.uk](http://issr.org.uk).

<sup>161</sup> Dimitrios Kapogiannis et al. (2009). Cognitive and neural foundations of religious belief. Retrieved from: [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov).

### ***10.11.5. Neuroimaging during religious states***

Current neuroimaging studies suggest that religious states and beliefs are associated with identifiable changes in the distribution of brain activity. All these investigations open the way to philosophical and theological questions such as: What is the nature of human religiosity? Is religion a product of biological or cultural evolution? In order to answer such questions, the approach must be based on theology and philosophy.

### ***10.11.6. Incarnation of religiosity***

Research on the neuroscience of religious experience shows that the activity of the body is a necessary part of religious life. The role of the soul or spirit can neither be affirmed nor refuted by science until this moment.

### ***10.11.7. Reductionism against Emergentist***

Reductionism posits that religion is nothing more than physiology. While Emergentist argues that human religiosity arises from the nature of the organization of physical systems (e.g., neurons), and is causal in the sense that it is the organization of the whole system that interacts with the social world and physical world. From this Neuroscience studies on religious experience that religion is a complex sociocultural construction that encompasses a great variety of group and individual activities, events, attitudes, behaviors and experiences, so that an appropriate neuroscience of religion must be equally diverse.

### **10.12. Therapeutic Benefits of Musical and Religious Experiences**

The inspirational experiences generated by music and religion can do more than instill us with positive thoughts and feelings; such episodes can provide an important way of reframing our mentalities that improves our health and enables us to endure medical challenges. Because of this, musical and religious techniques are now commonly used for therapeutic purposes around the world with many documented cases of improved health, functioning, and ability to cope. As a result, careers such as music therapy, spiritual cognitive therapy, and hospital chaplaincy have become respected fields that are continuously researched and refined. Because of the benefits that musical and religious styles of intervention can instill to a variety of patients, perhaps a combination involving aspects of the two would be even more helpful.

In the ancient world, the therapeutic link between music and religion was upheld in societies such as Egypt and Babylonia where healing ceremonies often included music and religious rituals. In Greece, hymn specialists were found in sacred temples where music was prescribed for illnesses. For such reasons, music was praised by those such as Plato who described it as the medicine of the soul.<sup>162</sup> Many practices with religious backgrounds such as yoga and meditation have integrated into the secular world with their advantages being felt by those of many different belief systems.

One of the most common ways in which musical and religious experiences have been applied in medicine is in the treatment of physical illnesses. In roughly the last 150 years, more than 250 studies have been done on the relationship between religion and medicine in matters such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, cancer, and colitis. The vast majority state that at least an average level of religiosity improves the severity of such conditions and maintains overall health. Musical experiences can also reap medical effects that alleviate various ailments. For example, singing or playing a wind instrument can help increase or maintain respiratory levels. This is an important part of recovery from issues like cardiac disease, congestive obstructive pulmonary disease, and asthma which impair respiratory functioning.<sup>163</sup>

A good example of the effectiveness of both musical and religious experiences in improving health comes from Meeting Point, an NGO in Kampala, Uganda founded in 1992 by AIDS activist Noelina Namukisa. Today, it offers medical, spiritual, economic, and psychological care for women, girls, and children suffering from the disease as well as the stigmas associated with it. In an interview with medical ethnomusicologist Gregory Barz, she states that faith is a key principle in the strength and courage needed not only by those afflicted with AIDS, but also the workers who

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<sup>162</sup> Davis, William B. and Gfeller, Kate E. "Clinical Practice in Music Therapy" in *An Introduction to Music Therapy: Theory and Practice*, Third Edition edited by Davis, William B.; Gfeller, Kate E.; Thaut, Michael H. Maryland: The American Music Therapy Association, Inc. 2008. Page 18.

<sup>163</sup> Norton, Kay. *Singing and Wellbeing: Ancient Wisdom, Modern Proof*. New York: Routledge. 2016. Page 22.



cater to them. Especially important in this are religious activities that bring everyone together to worship a loving God. She points out, "We are Catholics, and since we started, we now have a Catholic priest, and we go together on Fridays to visit patients. We go read the Bible together. "Praying is the most significant part of the job for 'Namukisa' when it comes to working with her patients. As she says, *"The first thing is a prayer because we know that without God nothing can go ahead."*<sup>164</sup> However, religion is not the sole source of comfort at meeting point. 'Barz' states that music is also a valuable asset that can rejuvenate life and heighten spirituality. Namukisa highlights this uplifting effect on those she looks after:

*"You know, music makes women happy. They feel at home when they sing, when they dance. They feel that even if they are sick, they can "put on the music, put on the drums," and as you know, we can really dance! I don't know how I can express it, but we have seen it happen. We have seen women walk in sick and then hours later dance, jumping high in the air, feeling a fresh breath of life! I feel that music - singing, dancing, drumming - is one of the best ways we have of maintaining our community of women and supporting them in their attempts to live positively with AIDS rather than being merely HIV positive."*<sup>165</sup>

The calming aspects of the prayers mixed with the frenetic nature of the music are both treasured parts of helping those with AIDS to recuperate, highlighting not only the importance of music and religion in therapy, but also that they can be administered in a variety of ways. As a result, musical or religious therapies that are fast, slow, or a combination of both can be used which could widen the amount of people who are helped.

Physical handicaps are another issue that a musical-religious therapy might be able to address. Whether they are caused by illness, aging, surgery, accident, or some other event, the limitations of such conditions can keep people from enjoying cherished parts of life or cause the misery of having to be reliant on others for basic functioning. With people living longer and longer, it must be assumed that the

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<sup>164</sup> Barz, Gregory. *Singing for Life: HIV/AIDS and Music in Uganda*. New York: Routledge. 2006. Page 164.

<sup>165</sup> Barz, 169.

number of those living with physical disabilities will continue to rise. The hope that comes from these beliefs often leads to greater motivation to exercise which can speed up recovery; research on a group recovering from hip fractures showed that those with greater religiousness walked longer distances at discharge time. Such improvements may be further aided by music which has the rare ability to so widely activate the brain's neural networks. Because rhythm is connected to the priming and timing reactions of the motor system, music can create stable templates for the temporal organization of motor responses and thus help trigger sensorimotor reactions. As a result, recovering muscles can work more efficiently when operating in conjunction with it.

Whether disabilities are permanent or not, religious tools can help to reframe the situation in a more positive light such as spiritual symbols, pictures, rituals, or words that convey trust and love. A 2007 interview of disabled people mentioned that many members of the group believed that they could also transcend their suffering through the arts, including music. As one of them discusses, "*Meaning in life can be transformed by the creative process.*"<sup>166</sup>

Music and religion are not merely for our enjoyment, but as evidence points to, significantly valuable sources of release from our pains no matter how severe. Researchers conducting a 2010 study in Belgium interviewed a group of people who had been struggling for years with chronic pain. The vast majority of these sufferers reported that they almost never went to any house of worship, but still identified as Christian or having some sort of spiritual inclination. Results concluded that the greatest levels of life satisfaction came from those who not only had a spiritual side to them, but saw their faith as a central part of their lives. In addition to religion, musical experiences have also been observed to offer improvement for those in pain. A 2013 study indicates that music can also give those in pain what they need to endure.

The release from trauma through uttered sounds can also be seen in the recovery of Maria, a German woman who had been born with cleft lip in 1939. Growing up at a time in which being deformed could make one a target of Nazi

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<sup>166</sup> Boswell, Boni; Glacoff, Mary; Hamer, Michael; Knight, Sharon; McChesney, Jon. "Dance of Disability and Spirituality" in *Journal of Rehabilitation*, Volume 73 No 4. 2007. Page 37.

atrocities, she trained herself to stay practically silent - even years after the war when she had an operation and learned to speak. In order to give her the freedom of expression, a music therapist started her on a course of intoning several crescendo emissions. Although it was at first terrifying for Maria to violate the principle that had once kept her alive, she eventually gained the confidence to communicate thanks to the musical repetition that taught her she would not be punished for making noise.<sup>167</sup>

Aside from more extreme cases of mental illness, a combination of musical and religious techniques may also be useful in helping to alleviate the struggles of conditions that are much more common such as depression and anxiety. Even altruistic behavior a normal mandate of most religions has lowered depression and anxiety rates. With music's ability to lower stress hormone levels in the blood, religious repertoire may help to reinforce this concept of a loving higher power when used in conjunction with these acts. yoga, a religiously-based practice that is now heavily used in the secular world, can create a state of "*discriminative knowledge*," an enlightened sense of self that leads to freedom from the troubles with which one may feel strained. As a result, those with depression or anxiety may experience renewed coherence about their lives and which direction they need to go. With these ideas in mind, it should be considered that listening to or playing music could accompany a religious or non-religious ritual (such as yoga which often includes chanting mantras) or even serve as the ritual itself in order to provide the peace.<sup>168</sup>

Another psychological issue that has become a mainstream problem around the world is that of addiction. From drugs to food to sex to gambling, there are indeed many stimuli to which one can develop a dependence, rapidly turning into a nightmare in which there is no control. One of the most popular systems that has been used in recent decades to assist those afflicted with addictions is the twelve-step program in which participation in a group offers opportunities for listening and expression as well as guidance from others. A fundamental idea laid out in these

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<sup>167</sup> Campbell, Don. *The Mozart Effect: Tapping the Power of Music to Heal the Body, Strengthen the Mind, and Unlock the Creative Spirit*. New York: Avon Books. 1997. Page 279.

<sup>168</sup> Fields, Gregory P. *Religious Therapeutics: Body and Health in Yoga, Ayurveda, and Tantra*. New York: State University of New York Press. 2001. Page 84.

groups is that of the *"Higher Power,"* a superior force which cares for participants and gives them the fortitude to keep going in spite of any difficulty.

As such a transition takes place, the benefits of music could be a fitting complement to the help that addicts feel coming from their Higher Power - perhaps music could even serve as the Higher Power itself. A decline in motivation is one of the biggest downfalls of many undergoing recovery and music therapy has been shown to help keep enthusiasm going even in the most distressing moments. This could largely be due to music's ability to influence natural opiate levels in the blood stream. Tsvia Horesh writes that many of the drug addicts with whom she works listen to music obsessively to fill the void of withdrawal. She points out that music can play a variety of roles in the recovery process such as validating emotions, relieving tension and loneliness, and stimulating feelings of mental and physical ecstasy. According to Newberg, turning to religion or spirituality can be of great help in the fight against addiction, but secular interventions like music can also ease the pain:

*"When people become addicted, they have a lot of very negative ideas about themselves. They feel like they are immoral and doing the wrong thing and turning to a religious or spiritual tradition that aids in feeling better about themselves - aids in the process of self-forgiveness - those things can be very effective as part of that whole therapeutic process. It certainly seems very reasonable to make that connection and again whether it is music, whether it is some other type of secular thing that people do - it could be motorbiking, it could be surfing, it could be hang gliding, it could be playing sports - it could be becoming religious. Those are all different aspects of what can help people to transform out of that addictive process."<sup>169</sup>*

Meditation is another technique in which the Music can certainly contribute to produce fruitfulness of spirit as well as reassemble, reconstitute, and review life patterns. "Music ties us back to life and ties us back to our memories. A gospel song - a song about a man going home to God". Another important issue amongst the dying is the idea of presence. This does not have to mean that words are spoken, but that

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<sup>169</sup> Newberg, Andrew. Interviewed by Richard Cezar. Villanova, Pennsylvania. February 20, 2019.

the person does not feel isolated. Because of its universal nature, music can help establish this notion of presence as it can stimulate the senses to invoke images, emotions, and thoughts. O'Connor writes,

*"Music at its best is pure beauty; and there is only one being that is pure in the universe and that being is God, and he who has experienced music has taken his first steps toward God."*<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> O'Connor, Patrice. "Kaleidoscope of Palliative Care" in *The Next Step Forward: Music Therapy with the Terminally Ill* edited by Martin, Jenny A. New York: Calvary Hospital. 1989. Page 86.

## **Chapter-11**

### **SACRED SOUNDS: GOD EXPERIENCE**

#### **11.1. Introduction**

Reflecting the widespread and growing public awareness of and interest in religious beliefs and spiritual meaning in everyday life, the philosophy of Music has a vital role to play in the experimentation of the Omniscient Power. Through performances and experiences from Old Regular Baptist communities in Kentucky, hip hop Christian worshipers from The Bronx, New York, African-American gospel choirs and quartets, representatives of South African indigenous-Christian blends of worship and popular music, and practitioners of Islamic and Judaic traditions in Jerusalem, among other religious and cultural communities, share their perspectives and feelings about the intrinsic nature of their sacred cultures and the musical extensions of their faiths into the secular world.

Throughout world history sacred sounds have served as a medium for human cultures to raise queries, advance beliefs, give praise, and inspire others to join in exploration of the mysteries of earthly existence and the greater universe. These sacred sound traditions encompass a broad range of expressive forms: melodic and repetitive vocalizations called chants; sharp, passionate, emotion-filled hums, groans, shouts; percussive, rhythmic hand claps and foot stomps; and extended song, sermon, and instrumental arrangements. Instrumental music, sung prayers, and mystical chants have been used to communicate with the divine, to unite religious communities, and to express moral, political, social, and economic aspirations.

Sacred sounds in many traditions are the central means for invocation of the spirits. The utterance of particular sounds is thought by many cultures to form a connection to all the elements of the universe. In some belief systems music and sound vibrations are pathways for healing body, mind, and spirit. Among the wide range of human expressive behavior, the capacity to infuse the joys, sorrows, and humility that characterize religious and spiritual beliefs into oral poetry, chants, songs, and instrumental music is certainly one of the most powerful and inspirational ways all peoples and cultures acknowledge the spirit of the Supreme in their lives.

Although secular and sacred are terms used to distinguish worldly and temporal concerns from the realm of the universal and the eternal, sacred sounds are not necessarily restricted to formal settings in which religious rituals are performed for

followers. Civil rights struggles, national democratic liberation movements, and union picket lines are a few of the non-sacred spaces where religious music has been consistently and meaningfully incorporated into worldly affairs.

In the United States the predominance of Christianity and its related sacred text may readily bring to mind familiar references to sacred sounds and its experience: *"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord"; "Come before his presence with singing" (Psalm 100: 1-2); "My Lord, He calls me by the thunder... the trumpets sound within my soul..."* (from "Steal Away" =African American spirituality). Inside and outside of the United States many other religious and spiritual traditions in diverse cultural communities also express profound beliefs through sacred sounds. For example, the Upanishads - Vedic sacred treatises of ancient India - teach that "the essence of sacred knowledge is word and sound, and the essence of word and sound is 'OHM'. Although the languages of many religious texts and spoken rituals may be inaccessible to different cultural communities, sacred sounds are generally well received and understood as a means by which all cultures acknowledge higher states of wonder, consciousness, and order that transcend everyday thoughts, actions, and activities and connect one and all to the deeper recesses of the universe. Plato referred to;

*"Music as moral law ... the essence of order, [that] leads to all that is good, just and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form."*

Physical migrations and telecommunications bring the world's religious cultures into new mixed worship spaces: increasingly, different religious services are held in the same place of worship at different times, and diverse religious services and styles of sacred music come into homes via radio and television. New encounters that bring previously isolated community worship traditions face to face sometimes challenge Plato's *"Essence of Order"* and literally jar the religious and spiritual assumptions, and the very ears, of those of us unfamiliar with other sacred traditions and expressive cultural behavior. For example, according to a recent Washington Post report, one of the long-time parishioners of Calvary Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia, took offense at a

*"Particular African-style service" in which Ghanaian immigrants in the congregation brought forth "Offerings with song and swirling dance, accompanied by drums, synthesizer and electric guitar."*

On the other hand, the spiritual awareness of one of the church elders was expanded through the observance of a different cultural community's approach to their faith.<sup>171</sup>

## **11.2. The Relationship Between Technology and Religion**

Many secularists and nonbelievers of various sorts tend to regard religion and science as fundamentally incompatible. This incompatibility is also imagined to extend to the relationship between religion and technology, since technology is a product of science and science cannot proceed without technology, especially today.

### ***11.2.1. Mixing Technology and Religion***

Why do we witness widespread enchantment with technology and at the same time a worldwide resurgence of religious fundamentalism has occurred? We shouldn't assume that the rise of both is simply a coincidence. Instead of presuming that the education and training behind science and technology should always result in more religious skepticism and even a bit more atheism, we should wonder if perhaps empirical observations are actually disconfirming our ideas.

Atheists are often ready to criticize theists for failing to deal with evidence that doesn't meet expectations. Perhaps there are religious impulses underlying the drive of technology which has characterized modernity — religious impulses which might affect secular atheists, too, if they aren't self-aware enough to notice what's going on. Such impulses might prevent technology and religion from being incompatible. Perhaps technology itself is becoming religious on its own, thus also eliminating incompatibilities.

Both possibilities should be explored. Both have possibly been happening for hundreds of years, but the clear religious foundations for technological advancement are either ignored or hidden away like embarrassing relatives. The enthusiasm so many people have had with technology is often rooted — sometimes unknowingly — in religious myths and ancient dreams. This is unfortunate because technology has

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<sup>171</sup> <https://music.si.edu/story/sacred-sounds-belief-society>



proven itself capable of causing terrible problems for humanity, and one of the reasons for this may be the religious impulses people are ignoring. Technology, like science, is a defining mark of modernity and if the future is to improve, certain elemental premises will have to be identified, acknowledged, and hopefully eliminated.

### ***11.2.2. Religious and Technological Transcendence***

The key to it all is transcendence. The promise of transcending nature, our bodies, our human natures, our lives, our deaths, our history, etc. is a fundamental part of religion which is often not explicitly recognized. This goes well beyond the common fear of death and desire to overcome it and results in a negation of all we are in an effort to become something else entirely.

For a thousand years in Western culture, the advancement of the mechanical arts — technology — has been inspired by deep religious desires of transcendence and redemption. Although currently obscured by secular language and ideology, the contemporary resurgence of religion, even fundamentalism, alongside and hand-in-hand with technology is thus not an aberration but simply the reassertion of a forgotten tradition. If you don't recognize and understand how religious and technological transcendence have developed together, you'll never be able to successfully counter them — much less recognize when they might be developing within you as well.

### ***11.2.3. Medieval Science and Medieval Religion***

The project of technological advancement is not a recent development; its roots can be traced in the Middle Ages — and it is here also that the link between technology and religion develops. Technology came to be identified specifically with Christian transcendence of a sinful world and Christian redemption from a fallen human nature.

Early in the Christian era, nothing like this was considered. In *The City of God* it's written that "Quite apart from those supernatural arts of living in virtue and reaching immortal beatitude," nothing humans can do can offer any sort of solace for a life condemned to misery. The mechanical arts, no matter how advanced, existed solely to aid fallen humans and nothing more. Redemption and transcendence could only be achieved through the unearned Grace of God.

This began to change in the Early Middle Ages. Although the reason is uncertain, historian Lynn White has suggested that the introduction of the heavy plow around the late 8th century into Western Europe may have played a role. We are accustomed to the idea of humanity's subjugation of the environment, but we need to be reminded that people didn't always see things this way. In Genesis, man had been given dominion over the natural world, but then sinned and lost it, and thereafter had to earn his way "*by the sweat of his brow.*"

Through the help of technology, though, humans could gain back some of that dominance and accomplish things they never could have alone. Instead of Nature always being one up on humanity, so to speak, the relationship between humanity and Nature was reversed — the capacity of the machine to do work became the new standard, allowing people to exploit what they had. The heavy plow might not seem like a big deal, but it was the first and important step in the process.

After this, machines and mechanical arts began to be depicted in the monastic illumination of calendars, in contrast to the previous use of solely spiritual images. Other illuminations depict technological advancements aiding the righteous armies of God while the evil opposition is depicted as technologically inferior. It may be here that we see the first tendrils of this attitude shift taking hold and technology becoming an aspect of Christian virtue.

#### **11.2.4. Monastic Science**

The primary movers behind the identification of religion with technology were the monastic orders, for whom work was already effectively another form of prayer and worship. This was especially true of the Benedictine monks. In the sixth century, the practical arts and manual labor were taught as vital elements of monastic devotion by the purpose at all times was the pursuit of perfection; manual labor was not an end in itself but was always done for spiritual reasons. Mechanical arts — technology — fit easily into this program and so itself was also invested with spiritual purpose. It is important to note that according to the prevailing patristic theology, humans were divine only in their spiritual nature. The body was fallen and sinful, so redemption could be achieved only by transcending the body. Technology provided a means to this by allowing a human to achieve much more than was otherwise physically possible.

Technology was declared by Carolingian philosopher Erigena (who coined the term *artes mechanicae*, mechanical arts) to be part of humanity's original endowment from God and not a product of our later fallen state. He wrote that the arts are "man's links to the Divine, [and] cultivating them a means to salvation." Through effort and study, our pre-Fall powers could perhaps be regained and thus we would be well along to achieving perfection and redemption. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of this ideological shift. Mechanical arts were no longer simply a raw necessity for fallen humans; instead, they had become Christianized and invested with a spiritual significance that would only grow over time.

#### ***11.2.5. Mechanical Millenarianism***

The development of millenarianism in Christianity also had a significant impact on the treatment of technology. For Augustine, time was plodding and unchanging — the record of fallen humans not going anywhere, in particular, any time soon. For so long, there was no clear and tangible record of any sort of progress. Technological development changed all this, especially once it was identified as having spiritual importance. Technology could, in ways everyone saw and experienced first-hand, give assurance that humanity was improving its position in life and was succeeding over nature.

A "*new millennium*" mentality developed, making explicit use of the fruits of technology. Human history was redefined away from Augustine's concept of tiresome and tearful time and towards an active pursuit: attempts to achieve perfection. No longer were people expected to face a bleak history passively and blindly. Instead, people are expected to consciously work on perfecting themselves — partially through the use of technology.

The more mechanical arts developed and knowledge increased, the more it looked like humanity was coming closer to the end. Christopher Columbus, for example, thought that the world would end around 150 years from his time and even regarded himself as playing a role in the fulfillment of end-times prophecies. He had a hand in both the broadening of marine technology and raw knowledge development

with the discovery of new continents. Both were regarded by many as important milestones on the path to perfection.<sup>172</sup>

### **11.2.6. Modern Science and Modern Religion**

In the contemporary world, the religious impulses underlying technological advancement take two general forms: using explicit religious doctrines, particularly Christianity, to explain why technology should be pursued and using religious imagery of transcendence and redemption removed from traditional religious doctrines but without their losing any motivating power.

An example of the first can be found in modern space exploration. The father of modern rocketry, Werner Von Braun, made use of Christian millenarianism to explain his desire to send humans into space. He wrote that the world was "*turned upside down*" "*the same thing can happen again today*" by exploring space. Science did not conflict with his religion, but instead confirmed it: all the first American astronauts were devout Protestants. It was common for them to engage in religious rituals or reveries when in space, and they generally reported that the experience of space flight reaffirmed their religious faith. The first manned mission to the moon broadcast back reading from Genesis. Even before astronauts stepped out onto the moon, Edwin Aldrin took communion in the capsule — this was the first liquid and first food eaten on the moon. He later recalled that he viewed the earth from a "*physically transcendent*" perspective and hoped that space exploration would cause people to be "awakened once again to the mythic dimensions of man."<sup>173</sup>

### **11.2.7. Artificial Intelligence**

The attempt to divorce thinking from the human mind represents another attempt to transcend the human condition. Early on, the reasons were more explicitly Christian. Descartes regarded the body as evidence of humanity's "*fallenness*" rather

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<sup>172</sup> Yaron Ezrahi, Everett Mendelsohn, and Howard P. ed., *Pessimism, and Postmodernism*. Segal, Technology

<sup>173</sup> A.C. Crombie, *Medieval and Early Modern Science*, Volume II.

than divinity. Flesh stood opposed to reason and impeded the mind's pursuit of pure intellect. Under his influence, later attempts to create a "*thinking machine*" became attempts to separate immortal and transcendent "*mind*" from mortal and fallen flesh.

Edward Fredkin, an early apostle and researcher in the field of Artificial Intelligence, became convinced that its development was the only hope for prevailing over human limitations and insanity. According to him, it was possible to view the world as a "*great computer*" and he wanted to write a "*global algorithm*" which, if methodically executed, would lead to peace and harmony. Marvin Minsky, who directed the AI program at MIT, regarded the human brain as nothing more than a "*meat machine*" and the body as a "*bloody mess of organic matter.*" It was his hope to achieve something more and something greater — some means of transcending what his humanity was. Both brain and body were, in his opinion, easily replaceable by machines. When it comes to life, only the "*mind*" is really important and that was something he wanted to achieve by technology.

There are common desires among AI community members to use machines to transcend their own lives: download their "*minds*" into machines and perhaps live forever. Hans Moravec has written that intelligent machines would provide humanity with "*personal immortality by mind transplant*" and that this would be a "*defense against the wanton loss of knowledge and function that is the worst aspect of personal death.*"

### **11.2.8. Cyberspace**

There isn't enough time or space to address the many religious themes behind nuclear weapons or genetic engineering, the development of cyberspace and the internet can't be ignored here. There is no question but that the progress of the internet into people's lives is having a profound effect on human culture. Karen Armstrong has described the mystic's experience of communion as "*a sense of unity of all things... the sense of absorption in a larger, ineffable reality.*" Although she had traditional religious systems in mind, it is worth remembering this description as we look at ostensibly non-religious statements from secular apostles of cyberspace. John Brockman, a digital publisher and author, has written: "*I am the Internet. I am the World Wide Web. I am information. I am content.*" Michael Heim, consultant and philosopher, has written: "*Our fascination with computers... is more deeply spiritual*

*than utilitarian. When online, we break free from bodily existence. We then emulate the 'perspective of God', an all-at-oneness of "divine knowledge."* Michael Benedikt writes: "Reality is death. If only we could, we would wander the earth and never leave home; we would enjoy triumphs without risks and eat of the Tree and not be punished, consort daily with angels, enter heaven now and not die."<sup>174</sup>

### **11.2.9. Technology and Religion**

What should concern secularists and nonbelievers more is the fact that those religious aspirations are not always obviously religious in nature — and if they aren't so obviously religious in the traditional sense, one might not recognize a growing religious impulse within themselves. Sometimes, the desire of technological progress has stemmed from the fundamental religious impulse to transcend humanity. While the traditional religious stories and mythology may have since fallen away, the impulse remains fundamentally religious, even when this is no longer recognizable to those actively engaged in it.

For all the other-worldly goals of transcendence, however, very worldly powers have benefitted. Benedictine monks were among the first to use technology as a spiritual tool, but eventually, their status depended upon their loyalty to kings and popes — and so labor stopped being a form of prayer and became a means for wealth and taxes. Francis Bacon dreamed of technological redemption, but achieved the enrichment of the royal court and always placed the leadership of a new Eden in the hands of an aristocratic and scientific elite. The pattern continues today: the developers of nuclear weapons, space exploration and artificial intelligence may be propelled by religious desires, but they are sustained by military financing and the results of their labors are more powerful governments, a more pernicious status quo, and a more preeminent elite of technocrats.

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<sup>174</sup> . Douglas Rushkoff, *Cyberia: Life in the Trenches of Hyperspace*.

### ***11.2.10. Technology as Religion***

Technology causes problems; and whether it also to use technology to solve our problems? People keep wondering why new technologies have not solved our problems and met our needs; perhaps now, we can suggest one possible and partial answer: they were never meant to.

For many, the development of new technologies has been about transcending mortal and material concerns completely. When an ideology, a religion, or a technology is pursued the purpose of escaping the human condition where problems and disappointments are a fact of life, then it shouldn't be at all surprising when those human problems are not really solved, when human needs are not entirely met, and when new problems are produced.

This is itself a fundamental problem with religion and why technology can be a menace — especially when pursued religious reasons. For all the problems which we create for ourselves, only we will be able to solve them — and technology will be one of our principle means. What is required is not so much a change of means by abandoning technology, but a change in ideology by abandoning the misguided desire for transcending the human condition and taking flight from the world.

This won't be easy to do. Over the past couple of centuries, technological development has come to be seen inevitable and essentially deterministic. The use and development of technology has been removed from political and ideological debates. The goals are no longer considered, just the means. It has been assumed that technological progress will automatically result in an improved society — just witness the race to install computers in schools without any consideration of how they will be used, much less any attempt to consider who will pay for technicians, upgrades, training, and maintenance once the computers are purchased. Asking about this is seen as irrelevant — and worse, irreverent.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> David F. Noble. *The Religion of Technology: The Divinity of Man and the Spirit of Invention*.

## **Chapter-12**

### **GOD EXPERIENCE ON MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE IN PHILOSOPHY**

#### **12.1. Introduction**

“To thine own self, be true,” is a popular admonition. In other words: *‘Don’t try to be someone else, Be yourself’*. But who am I and how do I discover my true self? Is my true self who I think I am? Or it’s what others say? Which of the many voices that seek to define are accurate? We are Made for Connection with God. We are born with a body, soul and spirit, and our spirit longs for connection with God. We are made in God’s image, with capacities that reflect some of His nature, including self-reflection, intelligence, creativity, moral responsibility, and a need for relationship. All people have the capacity for love and for doing good, together with a universal bent to go our own way apart from God, or to sin and do evil. Each human being has a unique personality, temperament, and strengths. We are all raised in a particular context, namely, that of our family of origin or household and, as such, each of us has a back story that continues to influence us today.

#### **12.2. What Is God experience?**

God Experience is a call to higher consciousness and deeper mental awareness. The process of God Experience brings about personal transformation and a shift in one’s worldview. When someone goes through a God Experience, he/she experiences a shift in his/her mental framework with God.

#### **12.3. What Causes a God Experience?**

For many, a God experience is brought about by a life changing event. For others it is a gradual and subtle shift. Here is a list of common catalysts for God Experience.

##### ***12.3.1. A traumatic experience***

This is one that has a profound, detrimental impact on our physical or emotional wellbeing. It is often followed by a long period of healing. Examples of a traumatic experience can be suffering from one form of abuse or surviving a serious accident.



### ***12.3.2. Major life-changing events***

These are events that have the potential to change the entire course of life. A divorce, the death of a loved one, or a serious illness can classify as a life-changing event to identify the true God Experience.

### ***12.3.3. An existential crisis***

Also known as the Dark Night of the soul. During an existential crisis, an individual begins to question the meaning and purpose of life. It is often accompanied by depression or followed by a life-changing experience but is not always the case. Out of which can attain God experience.

### **12.4. Near-death Experience (NDE)**

This is pretty self-explanatory. Many people who've reported having an NDE also discuss coming into contact with beings from the other side. As you can imagine, such an experience profoundly transforms one's outlook on life.

### **12.5. A Natural Awakening**

This is an involuntary process of awakening. It takes place after engaging in a practice that produces a shift in conscious awareness. Practices that can activate a greater conscious awareness are:

- ✓ Meditation
- ✓ Mindfulness
- ✓ Developing a deep sense of connection with caring for plants or animals
- ✓ Self-transformational practice.

### **12.6. What Is the Process Like?**

It is important to note the process of God Experience is different for everyone. Yet, here's an idea of what you may experience.

#### ***12.6.1 | The Initiation***

At the onset of God Experience, we may begin to encounter inner turmoil or a sense of feeling disconnected from this world. We will also develop an awareness of the ego as separate from the self, and acknowledge a greater energy at work within this universe. This initiation into the journey of awakening often occurs after a life-

changing event or experience. During this time, we will feel a call to look inward and begin the process of self-evaluation.

### **12.6.2 | *The Query***

A God Experience may open our eyes to the areas of our life in need of healing. After the process has started, we may move into a period of questioning as we confront limiting beliefs and negative behavioral patterns. If we were following a religious path may also experience a dismantling of this belief system as we seek to make sense of this world.

### **12.6.3 | *The Quest***

On the path to God Experience, we may begin to inquire about various spiritual practices as a means to gain a sense of divine wisdom and deepen our understanding of this world. This can be through attending spiritual centers of worship, reading sacred texts or doing research on other religions. Religious belief systems provide us with many paths to God Experience. Many religions provide us with a perfect place to start until we are able to stand on our own two feet. For instance, ‘The Noble Eightfold Path’ in Buddhism outlines steps towards perfect peace (Nirvana). The knowledge and depth of this universe are far beyond what can be contained by any one religion. This may lead us on a quest through many religious traditions before we choose to commit to one or we may even take a hybrid approach by adopting principles from a variety of faiths.

### **12.6.4 | *Integration***

During the God Experience, journey light is shed on the wounds within our soul in order to seek healing. As these wounds are revealed, we’ll feel compelled to seek support through the form of traditional therapy, spiritual guidance, coaching services and spiritual healing practices. As we seek healing and guidance, we are clearing out negative thought patterns and making room for divine knowledge and wisdom to flow through. Healing helps to shift into a new paradigm and elevate the conscious mind.

### **12.6.5 | *Oneness with The Universe***

At this point, we can experience a sense of oneness with the universe. we may lose our sense of self-identity (or separateness from the universe). In psychology this is described as the death of the ego.

## 12.7. The Symptoms - What Does a God Experience Feel like?

As we go through a spiritual awakening, we may feel a variety of symptoms from time to time. Especially, each time we experience a shift or up-leveling in our consciousness. Here are some symptoms we may experience:

**Hypersensitivity & Heightened awareness** - An increase in intuition and sense of awareness. Becoming more in tune with the environment around and becoming more empathetic.

**Overwhelming feelings of love** - God is love. As we are experiencing an elevation in our conscious awareness will be in increased contact with this divine love.

**Lucid Dreams** - These are dreams in which we are aware of the fact that we are dreaming or feel as if we are awake within the dream.

**Synchronicities** - These are simultaneously occurring events that appear to be related to each other.

**Feelings of De Ja Vu** - This is having an experience that feels as if it occurred before or feels familiar.

**Extreme peace and calm** - Feeling a profound sense of inner peace. Through music and sports, we can cross this process until one can receive it as their passion.

**Disillusion** - This is a feeling like we are in a dream-like state while awake in the current reality. We know that we are awake, but yet we feel as if our life is a dream. This feeling is brought on by the dismantling of previous perceptions of reality.

**Loneliness** - Having difficulty connecting with family and peers on a deeper level. Feeling as if they don't understand may bring about feelings of isolation.

**Superiority Complex** - Being caught up in a state of judgment of others. Feeling better or more enlightened than the people around.

**Disconnected** - This is feeling a lack of attachment to this world. we may desire to find a new spiritually fulfilling career or devote our life to sacred endeavors. Or, we may lack interest in our peers.

## **12.8. How long does the God Experiencing process take?**

It is important to note this is a maturational process much like aging. According to Buddhist principles, we will continue to learn and grow until we achieve nirvana.

**Nirvana**, *‘as defined by the Oxford dictionary, is a transcendent state in which there is neither suffering, desire, nor sense of self, and the subject is released from the effects of karma and the cycle of death and rebirth’.*

It represents the final goal of Buddhism. My journey towards spiritual awakening is a cyclical and ongoing process, for as long as one self is in this life.<sup>176</sup>

## **12.9. Stages in God Experience**

The following three stages outline a Christian understanding of experiencing God, as we come to greater self-knowledge.

### ***12.9.1) God Takes the Initiative***

The journey toward God Experience begins with God and with His initiative to reveal Himself to us. What is true about God can begin to be discerned in the beauty, symmetry, complexity, and wonder of the physical world. The knowledge of God’s majesty, creative power, and existence is innate to us, although the acquisition of language gives us the words to describe what we know. Scripture also describes an inborn morality that points to God. In spite of our human suppression of this intrinsic knowledge of God, He stirs or awakens a spiritual thirst or hunger to know Him.

### ***12.9.2) Our Response to God***

The next stage of God Experience involves dissatisfaction and desperation. We find ourselves dissatisfied with living life on our own terms and come to acknowledge our need for God. Our desperation for peace and friendship with Him provides the impetus for responding to His invitation to life, forgiveness, and meaning in the

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<sup>176</sup> <https://asoulfulrebellion.com/blog/what-is-a-spiritual-awakening>

omniscient God. Once we are connected with God, then His descriptions, interpretations, and understandings become definitive for us.

### ***12.9.3) Growth in Deeper Intimacy with God***

A deeper intimacy with God often occurs as a result of suffering. This may come as a result of our own choices or those of others, but the processing of our disappointments and losses can lead to healing, freedom, redemption, and the discovery of a deeper meaning to life. This growth is also experienced through God's continued initiative, as well as our engaging in spiritual practices, including mentorship, community, and spiritual friendship, all of which led us to greater intimacy with God.<sup>177</sup>

## **12.10. The Path of Experiencing God.**

Everyone has within themselves the potential of total awareness, of self-realization, of God-consciousness. It goes by a lot of names, like cosmic consciousness, God, Allah, Brahma, self-realization, or whatever other term we'd like to use. It doesn't matter what we call it, as long as we can move into that place. The discovery of our true self can be the most exciting and rewarding adventure we could ever hope to make. This planet is a classroom, and each of us is here to gain experience and to become aware of the Divinity within ourselves – to awaken to and fulfill our spiritual promise. Awakening to the Soul is not an intellectual process; it is a state of being and doing. The heart knows the truth, and it is through the heart that we perceive Spirit. The very thing we are after – the essence – is inside of our all the time. All that we want to be, we already are. All we have to do is move our awareness there and recognize the reality of our own Soul. We do not have to go anywhere to be in the Soul. We are already there. We have only separated ourselves in consciousness from the Soul because of confusion through identification with our mind, our emotions, our body, and the material world.

## **12.11. God Experience through Soul Transcendence**

Soul Transcendence is the process of moving our awareness beyond our body, mind and emotions and awakening to the consciousness of our Soul – who we truly

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<sup>177</sup> Larry Mark [larrym@seattlechristiancounseling.com](mailto:larrym@seattlechristiancounseling.com)

are. Soul consciousness is a positive state of being. As we awaken more to the consciousness of our Soul we naturally experience and express more of the qualities of our true nature – loving, peace, joy, wisdom, compassion, and abundance. Once we are established in Soul consciousness we are no longer bound or limited by this world and we are able to complete the cycle of reincarnation in this lifetime. The practice of Soul Transcendence has been taught and referenced throughout history in a variety of spiritual teachings. In the East it is called ‘*Shabda yoga*’. Soul Transcendence involves attuning to the sound current – the audible energy that flows from the source of all creation. The sound current is the spiritual energy on which a person returns to the heart of God.

## **12.12. The Practice of Soul Transcendence**

The two primary practices of Soul Transcendence are a meditation practice and a course of study called Soul Awareness Discourses.

### ***12.12.1. Meditation***

The meditation technique of Soul Transcendence comes from a very long tradition of spiritual teachings and is an active meditation technique of holding the mind steady and quieting the emotions by using a spiritual tone or mantra to connect to the sound current – the audible energy that flows from the source of all creation. The purpose of this meditation technique is to lift up into higher, more subtle, refined states of awareness and perception, to awaken spiritually until we break through the illusions of this world into the consciousness of our Soul.

### ***12.12.2. Soul Awareness Discourses***

Discourses are a course of study designed to support and complement our meditation practice and spiritual awakening. They are a point of spiritual attunement and provide practical techniques for Soul Transcendence.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> <https://msia.org.au/spiritual-awakening/>

### **12.13. Conclusion**

Music is a uniquely human experience, Music has been associated culturally with religion and spirituality, and as a form of art and entertainment, music has spoken to multitudes of individuals at deeply personal, and yet universally human, levels. Therefore, these three elements: spirituality, religion, and emotions have been key to understanding music's psychological effects. Yet as intertwined as these elements are, human responses to music have been challenging to trace back to the original source, and more research is required to understand the spiritual, religious, or emotional cause of music's power over the human psyche.

This part also has the critical analysis of the philosophy of religion. Philosophy of religion addresses the existence of God and seeks to find out what God is like. The most important aspect of philosophy of religion is if God exists and what God means to us. Each one of us ponders these questions in life, and the philosophy of religion has tried providing answers. The experience through music, is only the way to know the existence of God. In order to experience the existence of God, music and sports should cross the extreme level, when it reaches the ecstasy level or the meditative level, we can experience the existence of God. There are people like atheists, who are not at all believers in the existence of God, but are believers in music and arts as their path to attain God. Listening music and feeling the spirit of sports are the physical and mental awareness of God. So, the Philosophy of religion should be viewed from the perspective of its mother discipline; philosophy. For instance, we define philosophy as the analysis of ultimate concepts. Likewise, we should think of philosophy of religion as being the analysis of concepts encountered in religion. Metaphysical aspects are the central focus of traditional philosophers of religion. This is correct although some critics oppose this idea because concepts like God are crucial to metaphysics.

There is something profound, powerful, phenomenal, unfathomable, mesmerizing, mysterious, and just simply amazing about music. Music does inexplicable things to the human beings. The hills are alive with the sound of music. Music moves us. It sways us and causes us to tap our fingers or bob our heads as we listen to the rhythm and beat of any music. These below mentioned findings are the outcomes of this Philosophical Musical knowledge.

**A, Music has the power to transport our minds and imaginations to another time or place.**

Music creates the personal mood and sometimes it creates to go back to the past life according to the musical situation which the person is hearing.

**B, Music heals us.**

It helps ease our pain and our hurts. The ancient Greek philosophers believed that music served a therapeutic purpose. Today's science gives us the evidence that it's true. Many of the people have probably heard of the "Mozart effect." One scientific study found that Mozart's Piano Sonata in D Major decreased epileptiform activity in patients even in comatose state. Music therapy has now become a well-known practice in helping not only make us feel good but also in the treatment of different disorders such as Parkinson's disease, memory loss, traumatic brain injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

**C, Music shields us from bad, harmful stuff.**

In ancient Israel, when Saul was being tormented by a harmful spirit, he asked his servants to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre. They brought in David to be at his service. *"And when the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him"* (1 Samuel 16:23).

**D, Music changes us and transforms us.**

It changes our mood from sad to happy or even from happy to sad. Music brings us joy and sometimes move us to tears. It lifts up the spirit. As Plato said, *"Music is an art imbued with the power to penetrate into the very depths of the soul."*

Music has profound effects on us physically, cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually. Ancient civilizations knew the role of music in our lives. The Ancient Greek philosophers philosophized about it. Many verses in the Old Testament refer to music, singing, and playing the stringed instruments. In battles that date back to the earliest part of human history, music was used to inspire and energize the



warriors. During the American Civil War, there are accounts of the use of music to aid in the healing of the wounded soldiers.<sup>179</sup>

In these chapters, we've come to know that music has the power to impact our daily lives but it's only in recent decades, through advances in modern science and technology, that we have captured, imaged, and measured the evidence of the complexities of the impact of music on us. Our blood pressure rises, the pupils in our eyes dilate, the hairs in our arms stand, and chills run down our spine. Through neuroimaging and other advanced technological devices, scientists can track some of the physiological changes—including the neurological activities and rewiring in our brain—when we listen to music.

Music touches our lives in fascinating ways. One important window in our lives where music profoundly impacts us is our developmental years, particularly during our teenage years going into our early 20s when we are firming up our sense of identity. According to research analysis using Spotify\_usage data, our music taste evolves rapidly from age 14 to 25, then a little slower from age 25 to 33, and then it flattens out after that. Our teenage years going into our early 20s is a period of restless exploration and rapid development and the music that enters our lives during this period gets embedded in those neural wirings, staying in our memory for the rest of our lives.

Musical nostalgia, according to the latest scientific research and findings, is real. Hearing those songs again brings back all kinds of emotional memories, including heartaches, love, exhilaration, individual expression, passion, happiness, anger, hatred, and frustration. From Nirvana to Snoop Dog, the music spoke to the young adolescents. The messages weren't always positive and uplifting but the songs spoke to our cultural identity nonetheless.

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<sup>179</sup> <http://mindspirit.com/music-leads-god/>

*“Music is one of the most powerful symbols and artistic forms to inspire people’s imagination...to bring people back to God experience. So, I have always believed that music is one of the most important tools for welcoming the God to very near”.*

*‘Music is a gift. It’s a wonderful gift’.* We offer back this gift to our Creator also as a gift by our singing and praising. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the familiar quote by Saint Augustine: *“He who sings prays twice”*. Music, with our voices singing, our ears listening, and hands creating music, enables us to physically express the spiritual joy of our heart. Music has the power to bring the mind, body, and spirit in unison as we reach out to God.

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**Part-II**

**GOG EXPERIENCE ON SPORTIVE KNOWLEDGE:  
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

## **Part-II**

### **Chapter-1**

#### **GOG EXPERIENCE ON SPORTIVE KNOWLEDGE:**

#### **A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

##### **1.1 Introduction**

Sports in the twenty first century has become an essential component of education. Recreational athletic activities have a great role in perfecting human spirit. Through the healthy competition sports influence the cultivation of will, perseverance, responsibility, ability to eliminate the inconvenience and many more. Moreover sport is a great tool which gathers people together towards the common objective, regardless of their nationality, race, religion or beliefs – both on the field and in the stands. Today the era of technology and media changed professional sport into business. For a player, coach - training is a profession. For the audience it is the consumer market. Therefore, the athlete's road is full of temptations, which deals with many ethical dilemmas.

More often we hear about competitors forgetting about the rule "*Fair play*" while getting into scandals regarding doping, selling matches, or inappropriate behavior. The pedagogical aspect of recreational sport is undeniable, however in the presence of professional sports with elements of fighting and rivalry it would be simply difficult to say that sport is a physical activity, aimed at education for the recognition of moral values. Ethics is a scientific discipline, which deals with recognition of morality. The ultimate attempt of ethics is to distinguish between what is good and bad, just and unjust, right and wrong.

Human communities have engaged in sport for reasons as diverse as amusement, religious worship and political stability. Ancient Sumerians and Egyptians practiced sport to prepare themselves for war. So too did ancient Greeks and Romans, for whom sport also had important religious and social signification. For instance, in Classical Greece, athletic contests (*Gymnikoi Agones*) provided an arena for the cultivation and demonstration of excellence (*arete*). This pursuit of excellence through sport played a major role in Hellenistic culture, where striving for perfection in body and mind served as one of the society's principal unifying activities. Likewise, in the Mayan civilization, ballgames served religious, social, and political purposes such as

providing a common bond while downplaying differences and conflict arising from local diversity.

Philosophers have reflected on the nature of sport at least since Ancient Greece. Plato and Aristotle viewed sport as a key component of education and, by extension, human flourishing. An educated Greek must find harmony between body and mind by, among other things, engaging in athletic contests. Reflection on the role sports play in human life and culture continued during Roman times and the medieval era. In Rome, sports were understood instrumentally as tools to train warriors. For instance, the fifth book of Virgil's *Aeneid* is devoted to the celebration of contests of speed and strength with an emphasis on preparing Romans for war. In medieval times, despite losing relevance in the public sphere, sport played a significant role in Christian imagery.

*'For example, in City of God, Augustine<sup>180</sup>referred to the apostle Paul as 'the athlete of Christ'. Thomas Aquinas, like Plato and Aristotle, advocated for the need to cultivate body and soul to flourish as human beings.'<sup>181</sup>*

In early modernity, sport regained prominence in public life, not least on account of its potential to cultivate human excellence and promote the good life. Renaissance schoolmasters included sport in their curricula. Even Protestant thinkers, often thought to have been opposed to leisurely activities such as sports, embraced the practice of athletic activities for formative purposes. Martin Luther and John Milton advocated for the utilization of sport activities to educate individuals and train Christian soldiers. During the Enlightenment, drawing on the empiricists' emphasis on the cultivation of bodily capacities to achieve accurate sensory data, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued for the need to exercise and develop body and mind harmoniously. Rousseau's pedagogical theory, along with several others, was implemented in the 19th-century Victorian England and Germany, where sports were valued as character-building activities. Inspired by these pedagogical philosophies, Baron Pierre de

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<sup>180</sup> Augustine, [c. 413–26], *City of God*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

<sup>181</sup> Kretchmar, R. S., 1975, "From Test to Contest: An Analysis of Two Kinds of Counterpoint in Sport," *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 2(1): 23–30.

Coubertin founded the Olympic Movement, regarding Olympic sport as a ‘philosophy of life which places sport at the service of humanity’<sup>182</sup>

In contemporary society, sport plays a central role in the lives of countless players, coaches, officials, and spectators. The teaching of sport is part of national school curricula, sports news forms part of our national media, and sport has been deployed as a public policy measure to address everything from anti-social behavior to obesity. However, despite the role sport has played throughout human history, the philosophy of sport as an academic sub-discipline did not develop until the middle of the 20th century.

In this realm writing of God Experience on Sportive Knowledge is high task of review. But there are people who are very enthusiastic to explore the goodness of God through sports knowledge. In this section I would like to explore the religious and spiritual aspects which has helped to experience the true God.

## **1.2 Philosophy of sport**

A philosophical perspective on sports incorporates its metaphysical relationships with art and play, ethical issues of virtue and fairness and more broadly sociopolitical.<sup>183</sup> Philosophy of sport is an area of philosophy that seeks to conceptually analyze issues of sport as human activity. These issues cover many areas, but fall primarily into five philosophical categories: metaphysics, ethics and moral philosophy, philosophy of law, political philosophy, and aesthetics. The philosophical perspective on sport originated in Ancient Greece, having experienced a revival in the latter part of the 20th century.<sup>184</sup>

Ancient Greece is considered the birthplace of both ancient philosophy and Olympic sport. Hellenistic philosophies hung great significance on athletic performance. A leader's athletic prowess, according to the view of the times, reflected their ability to lead.<sup>185</sup> Sport was seen as an epistemic inquiry, a

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<sup>182</sup> Baron Pierre de Coubertin, IOC 2019; see also McFee 2012; Parry 2006).

<sup>183</sup> Reid, Heather (September 2012). *Introduction to the Philosophy of Sport (Elements of philosophy)*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. ISBN 0742570622.

<sup>184</sup> Quinton, Anthony (August 21, 1969) Locker Room Metaphysics. nybooks.com

<sup>185</sup> Hardman, Alun; Jones, Carwyn, eds. (2010). *Philosophy of Sport*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. ISBN 1-4438-2516-6.

methodological process by which we learn the objective truth of a person's athletic potential by actualizing it in athletic competition. Athletics as a measure of individual worth was seen as a cure to social inequality. Sport was even seen as moral education, with Plato advocating the participation of women in sport for their moral enrichment. Aristotle emphasized physical activity as an ethical responsibility.

The resurgence of interest in philosophy of sport was marked by philosopher Paul Weiss' publication '*Sport: A Philosophical Inquiry*' (1969), considered the first book-length text in philosophy of sport. In it, Weiss explains the dearth of work in philosophy of sport as a reflection of academic elitism. Sport was always considered vulgar or common, according to Weiss.<sup>186</sup> Long before this, however, philosophical considerations of sport and physical activities were discussed as a subset of educational reform in the late 19th century, as the link between physical education, health and well-being gained appreciation among scholars. To many of the time, the health and educational benefits of physical activity were a component of public life. Inadvertently, many non-philosopher proponents of physical education took on philosophical positions on teleology, mind-body dualism and metaphysics as part of their model of human agency and personhood. In a broader context, political philosophy entered the picture as thinkers of the time, in response to pressing social and political issues of the day associated civic duty, responsible citizenship and other political features to sport. While much of the focus has been on the work done in the West, philosophers of sport acknowledge the importance of work done in the East, particularly Japan.<sup>187</sup>

Important questions in philosophy of sport are concerned with the social virtues of sport, the aesthetics of sporting performances and display, the epistemology of individual and team strategy and techniques, sporting ethics, the logic of rules in sport, metaphysics of sport as a component of human nature or instinct, etc. However, some writers have composed a philosophy of sport in terms of the body, art and its

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<sup>186</sup> Shouler, Kenneth (2003) If Life is Finite, why am I Watching this Damn Game? *Philosophy Now*

<sup>187</sup> Resource Guide to the Philosophy of Sport and Ethics of Sport. Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network, October 2008

intersections with generation into sports, such as bouldering, surfing, skateboarding.<sup>188</sup>

### 1.3 What is Sports?

Very briefly I would like to narrate, what it is meant by the term sport. As Howard Slusher posits in *'Man, Sport, and Existence'*, "Sport, for many individuals, is a cult that fulfills generalized and specific need gratifications. It represents a specific and externalized value system that inculcates its own form of good and evil, rewards and punishments, as well as a complete matrix of individualized normative outcomes. In a way it can be said that sport determines its own situation in the context of culture."<sup>189</sup> Sport simply possesses a meaning of its own. When involving oneself in the act of sport, it will require time, effort and energy. It will express one's individuality but, as one approaches the act internally, one is extremely social in their endeavors. Sport frees man, not from other activities such as work, but by it. "*Sport is more than simply what one does in his leisure; it is more than an escape from everyday life; and certainly, it is more than a mere socially desirable avenue for release of one's aggressions.*" Sport is full of so many varying emotions, including devotion, care, respect, concern, sacrifice, work, suffering, despair, hope, stress, intimacy, joy, exhilaration, fear. It is more than just play; it is serious and throughout centuries it has evolved into a task of living. Therefore, to conceive of sport as simply games, activities, or even a value is to say less than what it is.

Sport is a place for these emotions which vary from happiness to grief and includes the pleasures of success and the afflictions of defeat, but they are nothing but what is involved in daily life. Sport has provided man with an "arena for living." However, sport must be conceived in its own context, without a superimposed value structure which means that sport has meaning for each person who engages in the specified activity. "Sport provides us with a potential form for meaning, authenticity,

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<sup>188</sup> Sanzaro, Francis. *The Boulder: A Philosophy for Bouldering*. ISBN 0954877993.

<sup>189</sup>Howard Slusher, *Man, sport, and existence; a critical analysis* (Philadelphia: Henry Kimpton, 1967), 4.



and reality—all leading to being-in-self. Thus, sport is more than a link with life, it is a vital aspect of existence, one which opens the self to the mystery of being.”<sup>190</sup>

Sport includes all forms of competitive physical activity or games which, through casual or organized participation, at least in part aim to use, maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing enjoyment to participants, and in some cases, entertainment for spectators. Philosophy of sport is an area of philosophy that seeks to conceptually analyze issues of sport as human activity. These issues cover many areas, but fall primarily into five philosophical categories: metaphysics, ethics and moral philosophy, philosophy of law, political philosophy, and aesthetics. <sup>191</sup> A philosophical perspective on sports incorporates its metaphysical relationships with art and play, ethical issues of virtue and fairness and more broadly sociopolitical.

Philosophical theories of sport take descriptive or normative forms. Broadly speaking, descriptive theories attempt to provide an accurate account of sport’s central concepts, and normative theories attempt to provide an account of how sport should be. Normative theories of sport are broadly classified as either ‘*Externalist*’ or ‘*Internalist*.’ Externalist theories of sport understand sport as a reflection of larger social phenomena. Heavily influenced by Marxism and structuralism, externalist philosophers take the nature of sport to be determined by principles from other practices or the larger society. William J. Morgan (1994) identifies three types of externalist theories: ‘*Commodification theory*,’ ‘*New Left theory*,’ and ‘*Hegemony theory*’. In Commodification theory, sport is understood as a commodity with use- and exchange-value. When sports are commodified, they are viewed not as having inherent characteristics worthy of protection, but solely according to the economic profit that they can generate.

The main proponents of the New Left theory are Bero Rigauer (1981), Jean-Marie Brohm (1978), Rob Beamish (1981), Richard Lipsky (1981), and Paul Hoch (1972). They understood sport materialistically by focusing on the role that sport plays

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<sup>190</sup> Slusher, Man, sport, and existence; a critical analysis, 8.

<sup>191</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy\\_of\\_sport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_sport)

in the genesis and reproduction of social history, mostly by exploring the connection between labor, economic infrastructure, and sport. Hegemony theories of sport attack the reductive and deterministic character of the New Left's analyses of sport. Hegemony theorists such as Richard Gruenau (1983) and John Hargreaves (1986) explore the role that cultural practices and processes play in shaping the nature of sporting practices, while emphasizing the value of human agency.

Externalist accounts of sport tend to be regarded as deflationary because they deny, or overlook, that sport has independent value. They understand sport's value solely in instrumental terms (Ryall, 2016). Internalist theories of sport do not analyse sport based on other social practices or historical processes. Rather, they aim to identify the distinctive values and purposes of sport that differentiate it from other social practices. Proponents of Internalist acknowledge the influence on sport of other practices and the larger society, but internalist argue that sport is a practice with its own distinctive value and internal logic. Thus, the primary goal of Internalist is to uncover the intrinsic normative principles of sport. A central task within the philosophy of sport has been to develop an adequate internalist normative theory of sport. At a minimum, such a theory should articulate sport's non-instrumental value and it should provide guidance on appropriate standards of both conduct within sport, and sporting rules and practices themselves. Internalist views are typically classified into the following three categories: formalism, conventionalism, and broad Internalism (or interpretivism). We examine each in turn now.

#### **1.4 Characteristics of Sports**

The first characteristic is commonly termed "*Competition*". This means that one has an interest that is contended by the opposition, which can be another man or even nature. The second characteristic dealing with sport is Consistency of Role. This means that one must have a consistent and structured pattern to achieve a certain outcome, therefore maintaining a consistency of role expectation. This characteristic carries with it the need for decision-making which divides into:

**(a)** decisions made by the individual

**(b)** decisions made by the group.

*"The dilemma of individual decision making is crucial to sport."* Utilization-Actualization is the next characteristic, which is relevant to maximization of individual

effort toward utilitarian ends. In sport, participants will participate and put forth as much effort as possible to achieve a certain outcome. Participants will engage in the activity with intent to better their ability. For example, many participants will have a strict workout regime to sharpen their skills. The last characteristic of sport that we must discuss in this section is Variable Predictability. This relates to the problem of variables and how it is impossible to program all the chances that could occur in a specific game such as a tennis match. This eliminates all forms of dice games and card games from being considered as a sport. For example, one cannot enter into a football game with a mathematically determined factor of variable predictability.<sup>192</sup>

Sport cannot be completely understood from a rational foundation, so to attach any absolute structure to the world of sport is to deny limitations to its known reality. It can only best be described by its factors or traits. These may appear unconventional or perhaps even limiting when describing sport but as Howard Slusher advocates, *“It provides a structure within which the reader can focus his attention.”* Moreover, these are not the totality of elements that are found within sport but they are constructs that are located within that which is the spirit of the concept of sport. Sport cannot be completely understood from a rational foundation, so to attach any absolute structure to the world of sport is to deny limitations to its known reality.

### **1.5 Ethical Issues in the Philosophy of Sports**

Ethical issues in philosophy of sport predominantly center on athlete behavior in relation to rules of the game, other athletes, spectators, external factors such as socioeconomic issues among supporters and communities, and issues of doping. Issues of doping in sport focus on the ethics of medical intervention on athletic performance: what is acceptable versus what is not, and how boundaries can be drawn. Particular attention is given to the question of what factors ought to be taken into consideration when banning certain medical interventions. These and other issues are usually compared and contrasted through the lenses of three significant moral theories: consequentialism, deontology and virtue ethics.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Slusher, Man, sport, and existence; a critical analysis, 48.

<sup>193</sup> McNamee, Mike. Ethics and Sport. [philosophyofsport.org.uk](http://philosophyofsport.org.uk)

## 1.6 History of the Philosophy of Sport

The philosophy of sport was pre-dated and inspired by the philosophy of play. Sport is a distinctive type of play and not every instance of sport is an instance of play. So, sport requires independent philosophical analysis. In the philosophy of sport literature, myriad characterizations and definitions of the nature and scope of the field have been proffered. For Paul Weiss, the philosophy of sport provides an ‘examination of sport in terms of principles which are to be at once revelatory of the nature of sport and pertinent to other fields – indeed, to the whole of things and knowledge’.

From the 1870s to the 1990s, the philosophy of sport evolved from being a sub-branch of the philosophy of education to being a field of study in its own right. During this time, the field went through three phases: the *‘Eclectic’* phase, the *‘system-based’* phase and the *‘Disciplinary’* phase. In the eclectic phase, also referred to as *‘Philosophy-of-education period,’* philosophies of education laid the ground for the philosophical study of sport. Challenging the dominant intellectualist pedagogical tradition, philosophers such as William James, Edward L. Thorndike, and John Dewey emphasized the value of play, games, and sport in preparing human beings for achieving good lives. Physical educators Thomas D. Wood and Clark Hetherington, among others, built upon these philosophers to develop what was called *‘The New Physical Education,’* a pedagogical movement aimed at showing that physical education should become an integral part of overall human education. These educators, despite contributing little to philosophical discussion, helped to generate an era where physical education was required in most educational programs.

In the *‘System-based period,’* pedagogical concerns motivated the philosophical analysis of sport and physical exercise. However, the protagonists of this phase, such as Elwood Craig David and Earle Ziegler, relied on a method that placed greater weight on philosophical modes of analysis. They began by describing and comparing different philosophical systems, distilled them to the basic concepts and positions that related to physical education, and finished by drawing practical implications and pedagogical recommendations. Their emphasis on philosophical systems created a fertile ground for the development of the philosophy of sport. As

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William J. Morgan notes, this shift in emphasis led to the progressive displacement of science and pedagogy as the main pillars of physical education curricula, and it facilitated a broader approach to the study of physical exercise and sport that gave pride of place to cultural and historical dimensions.

This evolution within physical education departments during the *'Disciplinary phase'* facilitated the emergence of the philosophy of sport as a discipline in its own right. The Philosophic Society for the Study of Sport (PSSS) was formed during the celebration of the 1972 Eastern Division conference of the American Philosophical Association (APA) in Boston; the organization's name was changed to International Association for the Philosophy of Sport (IAPS) in 1999. The Society founded a scholarly journal, the *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport (JPS)*, and established that the mission of the Society and the Journal was *'to foster interchange and scholarship among those interested in the scholarly study of sport'*. Weiss' contribution to the formation of the discipline in its early stages was crucial. With the publication of *Sport: A Philosophic Inquiry* in 1969, Weiss, a philosopher of international repute, demonstrated that sport provided a fertile ground for philosophical inquiry. Along with Weiss, other pioneers of the philosophical analysis of sport were Eleanor Metheny (1952, 1965) and Howard S. Slusher (1967), who also helped to consolidate the nascent sub-discipline by publishing monographs in the philosophy of sport.

Early philosophy of sport divided along *'Analytic'* and *'Continental'* lines. Klaus V. Meier (1988), Bernard Suits (1977), and Frank McBride (1975, 1979) focused on the possibility of providing individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for something to be a *'Sport'*. They drew on tools from analytical philosophy to analyses the use of the term *'Sport'* and to attempt to identify traits common to all sports. Early philosophers of sport also examined sport phenomenologically. R. Scott Kretchmar, Drew H. Hyland, and Robert G. Osterhoudt, among others, drew on the works of Eugene Fink, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Georg W. F. Hegel, Martin Heidegger, and Edmund Husserl to study the nature of sport by focusing on the lived experiences of those individuals engaged in it.

More recently, the philosophy of sport has transitioned into a *'Hermeneutic'* or *'Applied Philosophy'* phase. The field took a *'practical'* turn in the 1990s. The work of Alasdair Macintyre, especially his seminal work *'After Virtue'* (1984), played a key role in this shift among philosophers of sport towards normative issues. Drawing on Macintyre's concept of *'social practice,'* philosophers of sport aimed to identify the

intrinsic goods and excellences of sport in order to assess and critique sport and related ethical issues such as doping, cheating, and sportsmanship.

Classic debates concerning the nature of sport and the phenomenology of participants' experience have not been abandoned, however. As we will show later, the debate on the nature of sport remains central. Indeed, the rise of electronic games has reignited discussion of the defining elements of sport and, more broadly, the contrast between traditional games and digital games. In particular, philosophers of sport have explored the question of whether 'E' sports test physical skills and the implications of the institutionalization of 'e' Sport competitions, and moral engagement in digital gaming.<sup>194</sup>

Still more prominent is the phenomenology of sport. The rapid progression of computational science and neuroscience has had a profound influence in the philosophy of sport, encouraging exponential growth in publications concerning skill acquisition in sport, the mind-body relationship, and sport experience. The aesthetics of sport has also flourished in recent decades by focusing on two themes: the nature and relevance of aesthetic qualities e.g., beauty, ugliness, grace, and strength to the experience of practicing and watching sport and the consideration of sport as an art and its relationship to art. So, while still an emergent field, the philosophy of sport has progressed quickly in developing central methods and preoccupations.

### **1.6.1 Sportsmanship**

Sportsmanship is the quit essential sporting virtue. It has also been thought important to civic and cultural life beyond sport. Nevertheless, the concept has received little philosophical attention. The literature on sportsmanship converges on the view that this virtue requires more than mere compliance with formal rules. However, there are two principal disputes in the literature: whether sportsmanship is a virtue at all levels of sport or just at the recreational level and whether sportsmanship is a unified concept or a cluster of distinct virtues<sup>195</sup>.

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<sup>194</sup> Edgar, A., 2012, "The Aesthetics of the Olympic Art Competitions." *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 39(2): 185–199.

<sup>195</sup> Abad, D., 2010, "Sportsmanship," *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 4(1): 27–41.

The traditional point of departure in the sportsmanship debate is James W. Keating's '*Is Sportsmanship a Moral Category?*' (1965). On this account, there is a moral distinction between '*Sport*' (recreational sport) and '*Athletics*' (competitive sport). Standards of ethics appropriate to sport at the recreational level are not equivalent to those appropriate at the competitive level. Indeed, conduct appropriate to the recreational sport may be morally objectionable at the competitive level and vice versa. This moral discontinuity between recreational and competitive sport extends to sportsmanship. Specifically, as the goal of recreational sport is '*Pleasant Diversion*', the essence of sportsmanship in that context is '*Generosity*'. This requires the participant always to try to increase the enjoyability of the activity both for themselves and for other participants. In athletics, where the overriding goal is '*Honorable Victory*', sportsmanship requires '*Fairness*'. The type of fairness in question is formal fairness – '*Equality before the Law*'.

An equal and impartial application of the rules, as dictated by formal fairness, purportedly helps to ensure that competition fulfills its purpose as a test of athletic excellence and that victory correctly tracks athletic superiority. Sportsmanship should not, as typically assume, be treated as a unified concept. Instead, sportsmanship is constituted by four irreducible elements: fairness, equity, good form or honor, and the will to win. These elements are not only analytically distinct but also potentially incompatible. However, it argues that such conflict between these values can be resolved by striking an appropriate '*Balance*' between the conflicting elements.

### **1.6.2 Cheating**

In contrast to sportsmanship, cheating represents, at least prima facie, the chief form of moral failure in sport. Cheating has proved to be a notoriously difficult concept to define. A commonsense understanding of cheating as the '*intentional violation of the rules to gain a competitive advantage*' is replete with difficulties. For example, if cheating is necessarily a type of rule violation, what of the violation of conventions and other norms not captured by the formal rules? If cheating must be aimed at the attainment of competitive advantage, what of intentional rule-breaking that aims to rectify an earlier injustice that advantaged one's opponent?

Leaving aside definitional issues and turning to the moral status of cheating, moral objections to cheating typically rest on two principal arguments. The first invokes the logical incompatibility thesis – the idea that rule-breaking is not

compatible with game playing, because game playing requires strict adherence to the rules. This argument could justify a prohibition of only forms of cheating that involve rule-breaking: it could not ground an objection to cheating that involves the violation of conventions or broad internalist principles. The second argument relies on the idea that cheating is an attempt to gain an unfair advantage, that is, an advantage not permitted under the agreement between players or the set of norms by which players are expected to abide. Fairness-based objections may not ground a prohibition to 'Retaliatory' or 'Compensatory' cheating that is undertaken to re-establish fairness following an injustice that has placed a competitor at an unfair disadvantage.<sup>196</sup>

The moral impermissibility of cheating has been challenged from several directions. The case of cyclist Lance Armstrong has provided a focal point for some of this debate: cheating wrong if one's competitors or at least a significant proportion of one's competitors are also cheating? That is, does one's duty not to cheat cease if one's competitors do not discharge their duty not to cheat? Here the problem of ethics in non-ideal theory arises in sport. Cheating can become part of the skill and strategy of a game, thereby adding to the game's excitement and interest for both players and spectators. If cheating is accepted as part of the game such that all competitors recognize cheating as an option, then concerns over equality and justice do not arise <sup>197</sup> In these circumstances cheating would be morally permissible.

Hugh Upton (2011) has gone further to suggest not only that cheating may be morally permissible in certain circumstances but that one may be morally required to cheat. This moral requirement arises specifically in team sports where, from a duty of loyalty, a player may owe her teammates maximum effort to win the game subject only to the requirements of fair play that are routinely observed in the sport. To observe standards of fair play that are not usually observed in the sport may be 'Self-indulgent', demonstrating an undue concern for one's own ethical propriety at the expense of one's

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<sup>196</sup> Kirkwood, K., 2012, "Defensive Doping: Is There a Moral Justification for 'If You Can't Beat 'Em – Join 'Em'," *Journal of Sports and Social Issues*, 36(2): 223–238.

<sup>197</sup> Lehman, C. K., 1981, "Can Cheaters Play the Game?" *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 8: 41–46.



teammates. On this view, the duty not to let down one's teammates may imply a duty to cheat.

Finally, it is worth noting the related discussion of '*Gamesmanship*'. This is a term used to denote conduct that falls short of cheating (as it does not violate the formal rules) but is morally dubious nonetheless. Such acts might include the intimidation of one's opponent, the manipulation of officials, or the intentional disruption of an opponent's preparations. Gamesmanship may add a test of one's psychological robustness to the sporting contest, but this may diminish the contest as a test of athletic excellence. While such conduct is not formally proscribed, it speaks to a question that every athlete must ponder: what should I be prepared to do to win?

### ***1.6.3 Performance Enhancement***

Athletes have attempted to improve their performances by deploying a variety of different performance enhancers, ranging from pharmaceutical substances (e.g., anabolic steroids) to equipment (e.g., full-body 100% polyurethane swimsuits), with genetic manipulation seemingly just around the corner. Which, if any, performance-enhancing methods should be allowed in sport? Is there any good reason to restrict their use, or should athletes be free to use whatever methods they choose? These are the few questions discussed under performance enhancement.

The most widely discussed form of enhancement is the use of performance-enhancing drugs (i.e., 'doping'). There are three sides in the doping debate:

- a) Pro-doping
- b) Anti-doping
- c) Anti-anti-doping

Those who regard doping as a morally acceptable practice that should not be banned from sport are pro-doping. For them, the use of performance-enhancing methods or substances is justified because it aligns with the idea that a central purpose of sport is to strive to be better or, more broadly, it aligns with a natural human impulse to create tools to achieve our goals.

*'Far from being against the spirit of sport, biological manipulation embodies the human spirit – the capacity to improve ourselves on the basis of reason and judgment.'*

Pro-doping arguments typically rely on the claim that doping is morally equivalent to the use of other sports technology or medical interventions that are widely accepted in sport. If we are willing to allow their use, so the argument goes, then it would be irrational to preclude the use of performance-enhancing substances.

The anti-doping side argue that restriction on the use of performance-enhancing methods is justifiable. They typically appeal to any of the following arguments:

(a) Performance enhancement runs counter to the intrinsic nature of sport by undermining its central purpose.

(b) Performance enhancement compromises the fairness of competition by providing its users with an unfair advantage.

(c) Performance enhancement exerts a negative and dangerous influence on society, especially young people, by spreading acceptance of drug use.

(d) Performance enhancement is intrinsically immoral as it is the expression of a morally corrupt character or violates a moral value.

(e) Performance enhancement is harmful to participants.

Finally, proponents of the anti-anti-doping view object morally to the practical implications of anti-doping regulations especially with regard to policing the use of performance enhancing drugs. On this view, a ban on performance-enhancing drugs should not be imposed, even if justifiable in principle, because the implementation of such a ban would necessarily involve morally objectionable practices. Anti-anti-doping arguments criticize the fight against doping on the grounds that it costs too much and secures insufficient benefit in terms of the promotion of compliance and the identification of non-compliance with anti-doping rules. Advocates of this view may endorse principled objections to doping but believe that the institutional requirements for policing such a ban are not morally justifiable. Such an objection includes concerns that the institutional framework associated with anti-doping involves the violation of athletes' rights that anti-doping policy too closely resembles a criminal justice system and that the normative assumptions that underpin anti-doping campaigns are morally problematic. Anti-anti-doping advocates propose alternative regulations that often involve the legalization of currently banned substances and methods.

### **1.6.4 Violent and Dangerous Sport**

Exposure to the risk of significant physical harm is intrinsic to participation in many sports. The category of '*dangerous sport*' includes non-violent sports such as free solo rock-climbing and downhill skiing, collision sports such as American football and rugby union, and combat sports such as boxing and mixed martial arts. What is the value of dangerous sports, and how, if at all, should the state regulate such activities through public policy?

Russell argues that dangerous sports manifest distinctive forms of value. Their value lies in the perfectionist ideal of '*Self-affirmation*', whereby we challenge and resist the ordinary bounds of our lives and attempt to extend those boundaries to surpass the apparent limits of our being. Russell further argues that these kinds of sports can be of particular practical benefit for children. Such activities place children in a context in which they must confront danger, thereby preparing the child for adulthood, as well as helping the child to discover and affirm aspects of her selfhood.<sup>198</sup>

### **1.6.5 Sex, Gender, and Race**

Sporting competition has traditionally been sex-segregated along the binary 'male/female' distinction, and challenges to the prevailing understandings of sex and gender have been heard within the sporting community since. Two principal questions with regard to sex and gender arise in sport: is sex segregation in sporting competition morally justifiable? If so, in what category should trans and intersex athletes compete?

The starting point for the sex segregation debate is Jane English's '*Sex Equality in Sport*'. English considers what equality of opportunity between the sexes requires in sport. She argues that a just society would incorporate a greater variety of sports than at present. Specifically, sports that reward '*women's distinctive abilities*' flexibility, low center of gravity would be more numerous. On grounds of self-respect, women should enjoy roughly half of the 'basic benefits' of health and recreation. This includes the right to equal facilities. This would require significant re-ordering of how resources are

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<sup>198</sup> Russell, J. S., 1999, "Are Rules All an Umpire Has to Work With?" *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 26(1): 27–49.

distributed between the sexes within sport. Ultimately, however, English advocates a qualified retention of binary sex segregation in sport. The contours of this distinction have been challenged by intersex, trans, and non-gendered athletes who do not fit comfortably into either category.

To police sex segregation in competition, sports authorities have adopted a variety of approaches to sex verification at different times since the 1930s. These have included visual tests, chromosome tests, and testosterone tests. The prevailing approach to the eligibility of trans women to compete in women's events does not preclude those who are biologically male from competing in women's sport, but it requires that their testosterone level remains below a certain threshold for a period prior to and continuously throughout their time competing in women's competition. The requirement that trans, as well as intersex, women whose natural testosterone level is above the permitted threshold must undergo hormone treatment to bring their level below that threshold has been criticized as the unnecessary medicalization of healthy athletes and a violation of the principle of beneficence in medical ethics.

Critics have suggested that athletes should not be required to meet certain physiological criteria to be eligible to compete in a particular gender category. Proposals sympathetic to this view have included that athletes should be allowed to compete in the gender category with which they identify that trans women athletes should be allowed to compete in women's sport but, to mitigate unfair advantage, should be subject to a handicap based on effective testosterone levels and, finally, that eligibility should be determined by legally recognized gender.

A more fundamental challenge has been levelled at the very institution of sex segregation in sport. It has been proposed that the organization of sport should be indifferent to an athlete's sex, so men and women should compete with and against each other. On this view, rather than retaining sex segregation, which involves discrimination against women as well as complex questions concerning the proper categorization of intersex, trans, and non-gendered athletes, we should eliminate sex segregation altogether, and sport should either be open not segregated at all or segregated along dimensions other than sex such as weight, height, hemoglobin level, or testosterone level.

Aside from the sex segregation question, there has been much discussion of sport as a site of gender politics. The role that sports plays in the construction of gender

including gender hierarchies was taken up in Iris Marion Young's classic paper '*Throwing Like a Girl*' which explores the modalities of feminine bodily existence for women in contemporary society. Young's central claim is that such modalities of feminine movement, motility, and spatiality have as their source not anatomy or physiology but the particular situation of women, which is shaped by sexist oppression. The framework developed by Young has inspired phenomenology of female embodiment in particular sports such as surfing and climbing, which delineate the oppression of women within these sporting communities arising from prevailing sexist notions of the female body. Young has also argued that, as long as women's bodies are understood as objects, they are excluded by the culture from sport. This cultural exclusion of women from sport, in turn, creates a masculine bias within sport, which precludes the exhibition of sport's potential humanity. There has also been discussion of whether the very nature of competition – a central feature of sport – is masculinist and inherently incompatible with feminism. Compared to the well-developed literature around sex and gender in sport, issues around race and sport have received surprisingly little attention in the philosophy of sport literature.<sup>199</sup>

Several Foucauldian post-structuralists and existentialists have explored the connections between hegemonic racial power structures and sport. For instance, writers such as Grant Farred, Erin C. Tarver, and Kathryn E. Henne, have explored themes around sports and white hegemonic interests. They have examined whether sport and the engagement of minorities in sport perpetuates and promotes white privilege and white interests. They have also critiqued the hegemonic forces purportedly used by the institutionalized and corporate structure of sport to discipline and exploit minorities, especially in professional sport and American college sport.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Brackett, L., 2017, "Kaepernick Flips the Script: Empowering the Silenced Black Athlete Kaepernick Flips the Script: Empowering the Silenced Black Athlete," *Fair Play: Journal of Philosophy, Ethics, and Sports Law*, 10: 5–25.

<sup>200</sup> Hawkins, B., 2001, *The New Plantation: The Internal Colonization of Black Student-Athletes*, Winterville GA: Sadiki.

### **1.6.6 Fans and Spectators**

What is the best way to watch sport? Is our fascination with and admiration of elite sportspeople morally defensible? The debate about the most valuable form of spectatorship has revolved around whether the *'Purist'* model of spectator is superior to the *'Partisan'* model. Purists derive aesthetic pleasure from good play. They appreciate a virtuoso performance irrespective of the performer, that is, irrespective of which team or athlete delivers it. Purists have no allegiance to any particular team but appreciate feats of athletic excellence on their merits only. They appreciate good play, as one might appreciate a work of art without knowing or caring about the identity of the artist. For purists, a proper appreciation of the spectacle is paramount, and allegiance to a particular team threatens to undermine a proper appreciation of sport. Chief among the criticisms of purism is its neglect of partisanship. Partisans espouse the virtue of supporting a particular team, even when that team plays poorly. Loyalty is paramount to partisans, and they follow their team through good times and bad. Partisans typically support their favored team zealously, and they cheer for their team's success. For partisans, it matters that their team wins, even if they display less, or a lower form of, athletic excellence than the opposition.

Some have argued that the admiration of individual sporting heroes, characteristic of purist spectators, is morally problematic. On this view, enthusiasm and awe surrounding the achievements of elite athletes are not morally respectable. Indeed, such attitudes reflect a fascistic ideology.<sup>201</sup> Admiration for winners in sport involves the celebration of strength and, inevitably, the expression of contempt for weakness. Strength is understood as a trait for which one is not responsible but which has its origin in genetics, so admiration for athletes based on their strength is thought fascistic. On this view, in admiring the victors, we cannot but demonstrate contempt

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<sup>201</sup> Tännsjö, T., 2000, "Against Sexual Discrimination in Sports," in Claudio Tamburrini and Torbjörn Tännsjö, *Values in Sport: Elitism, Nationalism, Gender Equality and the Manufacture of Winners*, New York: Routledge, 101–115.

for the losers: admiration for the former and contempt for the latter are two sides of the same coin.<sup>202</sup>

### **1.6.7 Disability Sport**

*'Disability sport'*, also referred to as *'Paralympic sport'* or *'sport for athletes with disabilities or impairments'* contrasts with sport for able-bodied persons. The two principal ethical questions that arise regarding disability sport are:

1. *What criteria should be used to classify disability athletes in competition?*

And

2. *Should disability athletes, specifically those with prosthetic limbs, be allowed to compete with able-bodied athletes?*

Who may be considered a Paralympic athlete? In order to compete in disability or Paralympic sport, one must be classed as having a disability. The notion of disability is a contested concept. It is unsurprising, then, that, what counts as a disability for the purpose of sport and how-to categories those with disabilities for the purpose of competition are matters of some dispute. For example, for an athlete to qualify as a disability athlete, must their disability be permanent, or could it be temporary? Could the disability be only somewhat impairing or must it be profoundly impairing?

Central to this dispute is whether it is preferable to adopt a *'functional classification system'*, which would group together athletes with different disabilities but similar ability levels, or a *'disability-specific classification system'*, which would group together athletes with similar types of disabilities despite different capabilities. At least for the purposes of the quadrennial Paralympic Games, this question cannot be addressed adequately in isolation from the proper aims of the Paralympic Movement, including whether these aims are in contrast with, or even in tension with, those of elite able-bodied sport.

The second question concerns the appropriate relation between disabled and able-bodied sport. Specifically, should disabled athletes who use prosthetic limbs be

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<sup>202</sup> Persson, I., 2005, "What's Wrong with Admiring Athletes and Other People?" in Tamburrini, C., and Tännsjö, T. (eds.), *Genetic Technology and Sport*, New York: Routledge, 70–81.

allowed to compete in able-bodied sport? Oscar Pistorius was controversially permitted to compete in the 400m at the Olympic Games in 2012 despite using carbon-fiber prosthetic legs. Some objected that his prosthetic legs conferred him with an unfair advantage while others questioned whether the prosthetics precluded him from ‘*running*’ in the relevant sense at all.<sup>203</sup>

Finally, the practice of Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) operates in elite able-bodied and disability sport to allow athletes with chronic or temporary illness to use medication for therapeutic as opposed to enhancement purposes that they would otherwise be prohibited from using. This practice has proved controversial as the therapy/enhancement distinction is difficult to specify with precision, and the system has been criticized as open to abuse. However, if the use of such substances were denied across the board, athletes with chronic conditions, for example, would effectively be excluded from sport on account of being unfairly disadvantaged.

### ***1.6.8 The Aesthetics of Sport***

While the ethical analysis of sport has been the central preoccupation of recent philosophy of sport, the last two decades has seen a revived interest in the aesthetic analysis of sport. The study of aesthetics and sport has focused on two principal areas. The first concerns the relevance of aesthetic qualities to the experience of playing and watching sport. Does sport elicit aesthetic values? If so, what are these values and are they inherent to or only incidental to sport? The second examines the relationship between sport and art. Is sport one of the arts? If so, what makes sport an art? An early precursor of these discussions is C. L. R. James’ classic, ‘*Beyond a Boundary*’. In his seminal analysis of cricket, James explores the identity between sport and art, arguing that both yield aesthetic pleasure because they have been created to be beautiful.

Unlike aesthetic experiences, sport cannot be experienced disinterestedly. To do so, one must bracket an essential feature of sport: competition. If athletes and spectators focused on the aesthetic aspects of sport, their preoccupation would be the

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<sup>203</sup> Edwards, S. D., 2008, “Should Oscar Pistorius be Excluded from the 2008 Olympic Games?” *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 2(2): 112–125.



observation and creation of art in movement rather than on scoring and winning. The main purpose of sport is to meet physical challenges and to compare oneself to others in doing so. For instance, in the high jump, the goal is to clear the bar by jumping over it. Athletes compete to see who can jump the highest, not the most beautifully. Dick Fosbury introduced the *'flop'* not because it was more beautiful than previous techniques scissors, western roll, and straddle jump, but because it was more effective.

To ignore the essential competitive elements of sport in favor of aesthetic principles is to fail to take sport seriously. To strengthen this claim, some sporting events have little or no aesthetic value. Often, athletes play dirty and achieve ugly victories. In support of this view. The most athletes prefer an ugly victory than a defeat where they have performed gracefully. On this view, not only is aesthetics inessential to sport, but the pursuit of aesthetic purposes can undermine the achievement of sport's main goals. The goddess of sport is not Beauty but Victory. Creating beauty should never be the main goal of sport. Aesthetics is incidental in sport, whereas, in art, it is the principal aim. Therefore, sport is not an art.

A further challenge to the idea that sport can be art is that art concerns something beyond itself, whereas sport concerns play and nothing in real life beyond play. For instance, an actor playing Hamlet is not Hamlet in real life. They represent the modern individual's existential struggle. By contrast, a point guard in basketball is actually a point guard; point guards do not represent anything outside the game of basketball. Like art, sports convey values and meanings external to sport that represent, or present an alternative to the case of non-traditional sports such as climbing and surfing, the culture in which sport practitioners find themselves. Athletes are 'strong poets.' They express something about the life situation as embodied agents. Philosophers such as Edgar, Breivik, and Krein understand sport as worldmaking, that is, sport embraces and refigures symbolic worlds outside of sport, opening up new ways of describing, or making, such non-sporting worlds. Sport provides resources for re-describing the non-sporting world. Building upon this view of sport, argues for a shift

from sport aesthetics to sport hermeneutics, that is, to the interpretation of the meaning of sport and how that meaning is interpreted.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Lopez Frias, F. J., & Edgar, A., 2016, "Hermeneutics and Sport." *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 10(4): 343– 348.

## Chapter-2

### SPORTS AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

#### 2.1 Introduction

Sports and religion have a conflicted relationship. At times, sport has served the objectives of religious authorities and has been imbued with a morality and philosophy derived from religious doctrine. At others, it has been rejected for its secular, corporeal emphasis and its capacity to divert attention from godly activities. Sport has been utilized as a means to evangelize and to convert non-believers, and yet it has also represented a threat to the social and moral order. As such, religion has had an indelible impact on modern sport, and sport has been both embraced and rejected by religious authorities across the centuries.<sup>205</sup>

#### 2.2 The historical Background

The Ancient Greek Olympic Games are perhaps the most renowned example of the inclusion of physical contests in a religious festival. The Ancient Olympics emerged from the ritual celebration of Zeus, the king of the Ancient Greek pantheon of Gods, with the first event, the state, recorded as part of the festivities in 776 BC. In other regions, religious or ritualized practices influenced athletic contests, including the ancient 'Mayan culture' in Central America, where priests presided over ball games on playing grounds adjacent to their temples. In Japan, the ritualized aspects of 'Sumo wrestling' borrow extensively from the national religion, Shinto. Christianity, however, has most influenced modern conceptions of sport.

The relationship between Christianity and physical activities has not always been congenial. The Christian church has regarded sport with suspicion, owing to its emphasis on the profane body and its potential to lure its followers away from their godly responsibilities. While the Catholic Church included many popular physical activities into its religious and festive occasions, the rise of Puritanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries heralded an era where many sporting activities were

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<sup>205</sup> Hoffman, S. J. (Ed.) (1992) Sport and Religion. Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL.

regarded as sinful. While the Puritans did recognize the political and military utility in many physical endeavors, recreations popular among the peasant classes were prohibited as they were invariably accompanied by drinking and gambling and other dubious pursuits. Nevertheless, since the mid-nineteenth century, there has been a shift in the relationship between the two institutions, beginning with the incorporation of games in the education of the elite classes in the English public schools. The inclusion of a physical education curriculum to complement the intellectual and moral training already in place elevated sport from a mere corporeal activity to one with a moral and ethical philosophy. In short, sport was employed specifically to teach boys qualities that would transfer to other aspects of life, and as such became a training ground to produce morally and physically competent civic leaders.<sup>206</sup>

Using sport to construct generations of strong, fit, muscular religion was the mission of many organizations that feared the feminization of the male youth as a result of industrialization and urbanization. The closer relationship between religious and sporting ideologies was in part responsible for the reconfiguration of God from effeminate and fragile to strong and robust, a more inspiring athletic figure. Since the rapid expansion of the sports industry through the twentieth century, it has not been uncommon to hear popular commentators refer to sport as a contemporary religion. In this conception, stadia are said to be Ersatz Cathedrals, while athletes fulfill the role of modern deities.

Harry Edwards (1973) pointed to the close structural relationship between sports and religion, identifying saints and Gods, ruling patriarchs, high councils, scribes, shrines, houses of worship, symbols of faith, and seekers of the kingdom as features of both. His typology is, on one level, appealing, though he himself regarded sport as quasi-religious rather than an outright religion. Yet the similarities he identified have inspired a number of authors to declare categorically that sport is a

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<sup>206</sup> Higgs, R. (1996) *God in the Stadium: Sports and Religion in America*. University of Kentucky Press, Lexington.

religion, though this controversial statement is not without its opponents.<sup>207</sup>

### **2.3. Arguments for Sports and Religion**

In arguing that sport is an actual religion, researchers have examined the emotional and devotional aspects of sport and suggest that sport holds meaning for fans in a way that traditional religions are unable to do. The structural similarities between sports and religion, as identified by Edwards, are not solely what define sport as a religion, but rather the passion, commitment, agony in defeat, and elation in victory reveal a transcendent experience in followers that provides sacred, communal moments between players and fans. For them, a religion delivers a sense of ultimacy, and sport is capable of providing a means of ultimate transformation that alters people's lives.

Others are not convinced, but recognize that there is more than a coincidental relationship between sports and religion. These researchers argue that sport is similar in structure to a revealed religion and that the two share many ritualized and sacred aspects. But sport itself is also regarded as religious as it represents in tangible form epic human and spiritual struggles, the quest for perfection, an intrinsic drama, and the explication of moral attributes. The ritualized engagement with and in sport, it is argued, serve to deliver a religious experience to their participants, feeding a "*deep human hunger*"<sup>208</sup>.

Sport may also be considered a folk religion, which can be understood as the result of shared moral ideals as well as behaviors, and emerges from daily life experiences to provide a means to integrate society, legitimate national values, and communicate societal ideologies. In this conception, sport is accepted as a product of its social, political, and economic context and as an institution that is complicit in reproducing these ideologies. In declaring sport to be a folk religion, researchers

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<sup>207</sup> Edwards, H. (1973) *Sociology of Sport*. Dorsey Press, Homewood, IL.

<sup>208</sup> Novak, M. (1976) *The Joy of Sports*. Basic Books, New York.

recognize its mythic, collective, and historical elements, without necessarily suggesting it is a transcendental experience.

By contrast, those who challenge sport's elevation to the status of a religion argue that the objects of each institution are not consistent, and thus to equate the two would be to ignore fundamental philosophical differences. Religion, they suggest, is derived from the divine realm, while sport is firmly located in the human experience. One offers truths about life beyond our own experience; the other is simply a corporeal activity embedded in the profane. There is concern that to equate the two might secularize religion and diminish its value.

Essentially, the argument that sport is not a religion rests on the recognition that the intentions underpinning the two institutions vary significantly. Rather than examining sports and religion in terms of structure, it is perhaps more revealing to analyze each from the inside out. Such an analysis reveals the key difference to be the role of religion to proffer answers to, or explanations about, the mysteries of human existence. Sport has no such stated purpose, and even the most ardent sports fan would disagree that devotional activities will reveal anything about people's lives, destinies, or significance. Sport may well embody and reflect social values and ideologies, they argue, but it does not offer any deeper meanings about this world beyond the activity itself.<sup>209</sup>

For others, the contention that sport is a religious experience is problematic. The mere physical act of playing or watching sport, they suggest, has little relationship to rituals of worship. At the same time, they identify a difference between having a religious experience when playing sport and playing sport for the actual purpose of glorifying a God. While these researchers may recognize that many of the rituals, passions, and even myths within sport can take on a religious like significance for participants, they maintain that the actual sporting performance is not a religious act. Thus, the symbolic links between physical movement and the expression of a religious

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<sup>209</sup> Magdalinski, T. & Chandler, T. (Eds.) *With God on their Side: Sport in the Service of Religion*. Routledge, London.

doctrine are questioned. As such, some have suggested it is best to examine the moments when sport and religion serve each other's interests rather than trying to define one as the other.

A final way of examining this phenomenon is to regard sport as a cultural vehicle through which religious communities may disseminate their faith or reinforce their beliefs to their existing members. This approach suggests that sport may not be divine in and of itself, but as an institution that reproduces cultural meanings and values, it might also serve the interests of religious groups. Cultural activities that rest upon ritualized performances are significant ways to reproduce hegemonic ideologies, and sport is no exception. There are numerous examples where sport has been used as one of a number of cultural means to reinforce the collective identity of a religious community. In South Africa, the Muslim population of Cape Town used rugby as an avenue through which their religious and cultural identity could be consolidated. While not using sport as a direct means to proselytize, rugby nevertheless provided social opportunities for members of the community to interact and reaffirm their sense of belonging. Similar outcomes can be seen among Jewish Americans who used physical recreations as both a means to maintain their faith and cultural heritage, and also to integrate themselves into a new national community. In this way, sport contributes to the reproduction of the religious community's social arrangements, particularly in new or rapidly changing cultural contexts as members engage in repetitive, ritualistic cultural practices.<sup>210</sup>

## **2.4 The use of Sports in Religion**

The use of sport has not been as pronounced in Eastern or traditional indigenous religions as it has in the Judeo-Christian religions, though there is certainly much evidence that movement cultures are incorporated into religious or sacred

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<sup>210</sup> Overman, S. J. (1997). *The Influence of the Protestant Ethic on Sport and Recreation*. Avebury, Aldershot.

practices. The primary point of divergence for many Eastern philosophies, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, is a rejection of the material world in preference for the attainment of a higher spiritual order. An emphasis on the body merely for the sake of gaining material rewards in the secular world is antithetical to the quest for enlightenment, and as such, modern, rational, quantified sport does not serve a purpose in the transcendence of the material world and the development of spiritual awareness.

The relationship between sport and religion has been influenced by differing perceptions of the body, the significance of sporting practices in the expression of religiosity, as well as the structure of both institutions. Christianity has had the most pronounced impact on the philosophy of modern sport, though the various Christian churches have not always regarded sport as a suitable activity for their followers. The emphasis on the corpus was thought to be at the expense of the spiritual, a division that remained until the rise of the Muscular Christian movement in the nineteenth century, which provided a new model of the sport/religion nexus, one that led to the proliferation of evangelist practices in sport throughout the twentieth and early twenty first centuries. The popularity of modern sport and the devotion that fans display to their teams has led some to regard sport as a contemporary religion, one that holds more meaning for their followers than traditional religions; however, this standpoint has been challenged by those who regard the inherent natures of sports and religion to be fundamentally different.<sup>211</sup>

## **2.5 Sport is like Religion?**

We all have heard it said that sport is like religion. The annual cycle of sporting events mimics the yearly sequence of rituals by which traditional religions transform “*profane*” time and space into “*sacred*” moments and places. Such regular and repeated experiences lift athletes and fans alike beyond everyday concerns. Clearly, most team sports elicit a sanctity between the players and their fans. However, there is more to connect sport and religion than transcending daily life. If we focus less on team sports

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<sup>211</sup> Greg S. Smith, *Sports Theology: Finding God's Winning Spirit* by Dog Ear Publishing - 2010



and more on sport as an individual challenge, personal faith appears on the horizon. Sport is a call to spiritual adventure.

Motorbike riders, like the sprinter and the cross-country runner, the lone mountain climber and the hang glider, are individual athletes. They are not caught up in the collective excitement of team sports that mimic the pomp and ceremony of high religious rites. The individual faces the possibility of success or failure alone, usually deep within the self. In effect, an athlete puts his or her life on the line, at least as a rehearsal of victory and personal renewal and its polar opposite, namely, physical and emotional failure. These represent variations on the all-encompassing theme of human existence writ large: to live and be reborn whilst hurtling inexorably toward death. One motorbike rider has spoken of his sport as a “*dance*” that fuses together time and space:

*“The attraction of riding comes from achieving total presence on the bike. At these moments, the past only contains the last few curves, the future exists just as far ahead as I can see, and the present consists of me, the motorcycle and the road.”*



Sometimes sportspeople confront death in a literal sense. Base jumper Omer Mei-Dan leaps from fixed structures like tall buildings, with only seconds to safely open his parachute. with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency,

*“I like being afraid, I like the fear, I enjoy it ... In base jumping, every small thing dictates life or death. It makes me feel vibrant.”*

Knowing when to rejoice is one thing, but wisely knowing when to give up trying is another. Such is the journey of faith, the grist of a human spiritual life. Being

Buddhist, Christian, Muslim or any other kind of religious practitioner is, from this point of view, somewhat beside the point. Athletes move toward their own spiritual confession without the usual trappings associated with traditional religions or religious practice. This kind of faith, based on vitalizing experiences of spirituality, is thoroughly secular. Sport can increase spiritual awareness in so far as athletes embrace the tension between renewal and failure from moment to moment, which makes sport a ritual activity.

Rituals are highly significant for both athletes and fans. Valentino Rossi, one of the most successful motorcycle racers of all time, famously starts every race by kneeling beside his bike.



But rituals are not only about personal ceremonies. Risk-taking deepens and intensifies the experience, creating a ritual encounter with the power of life and death at each “*bend*” of bike and rider into the turns of the course. Record-breaking performances and “*personal bests*” are one thing. However, in times of heightened awareness – spiritual insight is possible, a transcendent perspective on life itself. Great religious leaders have shown us how to address the tension between renewal and failure in all experience, especially when personal stakes are high: Jesus “played the game” of reckoning with mortality and went to his cross a failure. However, the cross itself has become a source of Christian renewal or resurrection.

The Buddha also struggled to come to grips with his failure to find contentment and happiness. Only when he gave up his quest for these things and embraced suffering as the intractable nature of existence did he, paradoxically, find spiritual renewal in

enlightenment, or nirvana. And Muhammad was at first anguished by self-doubt and poor self-esteem, feeling like a failure in life. However, he then accepted himself as he was and, again by a paradox, found spiritual renewal when he fully submitted his life selflessly to his God, Allah. Ritual, coming to terms with failure and suffering, and facing one's own mortality create faith and transcendent experiences. Religion does not have a monopoly on these experiences – under the right circumstances, sport can become a powerful secular spiritual practice.<sup>212</sup>

## **2.6 Five Essential Forces**

Sport may be the most powerful expression of these energies in the world today. Hence, the powerful hold of sport on human beings and the energy it evokes. Let us consider each of these forces in greater depth. The energy that breath creates is the first and essential manifestation of the original creative energy of the Creator. Without breath, we could not survive for more than a few minutes. How human beings expend this energy shows powerfully how they live out the essence of their creation and their Creator.

Sport expresses this energy through the athletes and the fans who support the teams. The games and competitions showcase some of the most powerful and artful ways in which gifted human beings can use and experience this energy. In sport, athletes can experience the manifestation of the Creator's energy most powerfully and intelligently by showing how they can overcome other players who share the same capacity.

The fans are connected to this energy through the imagery that the competition creates for them. So, for example, when their team wins, the fans feel powerful and important, even though they know they had nothing to do with the result. The team

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<sup>212</sup> Tracy J. Trothen, *Spirituality, Sport, and Doping: More than Just a Game*, Springer International Publish, 2018

<sup>213</sup>R. Scott Kretchmar-John B. White ed., *Sport and Spirituality* ISBN Published December 18, 2020.p. 126

has become a higher expression of themselves. Through this identification, the fans' lives are elevated to a higher symbolic level, on which the essential forces of creation are expressed. This connection can move then to feel closer to the original Creator. This accounts for sport's power over the imaginations of the fans.<sup>213</sup>

Another way that people experience the energy of the Creator is through music, which is the energy of the Creator as expressed in sound. The most material reaction to music is dance. Moving the physical body to music joins the breath of the Creator as expressed in music to the power of the human body to move. There is the obvious music that we hear, but there is also the deeper level expressed in the rhythm of creation that cannot be heard. In sport the athletes are "dancing" (moving in a ritualized fashion) to this hidden music of creation. There is a powerful essential rhythm to the games and competitions in which all participants are dancing<sup>214</sup>.

Through viewing the competitions, the fans participate in this essential dance by feeling its hidden music. This "rhythm" at the heart of the game allows fans to experience the deeper rhythm of the Creator as expressed through the game. The power of this rhythm joins the players and the fans into a dance, through which they are connected and together experience the energy of the Creator. This energy can feel like ecstasy when players and fans experience the highest form of this dance in an artful play or victory.

Physical activities are another way in which the essential energy of the Creator is expressed in sport. During sporting events, the players are using their original energy expressed through running, throwing, catching, seeing and coordinating with one another in the most powerful and effective ways. Thus, they show one another the higher possibilities of physical activities or functions. They have taken the capacity with which all humans are endowed and raised them to their highest physical potential. This is what inspires the fans and others. The players are accomplishing their highest

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<sup>214</sup> R. Scott Kretchmar-John B. White ed., *Sport and Spirituality* ISBN Published December 18, 2020.p. 128

potential, and the fans are experiencing this vicariously. This offers what most humans desire: the capacity for self-transcendence. Fans and their communities are no longer just themselves. They have become larger than themselves through identification with the players, the games and the community through this experience of the game.

Sport provides a real and symbolic means through which individual life potential can be realized and experienced. This experience of individual and communal self-transcendence is the deepest desire of human beings. The last essential way human beings express the energy of the Creator in sport is through what are called “*plays*”—the choreography of the original energy into a coherent and beautiful pattern. A well-executed play is akin to the great art forms that express the harmony in creation. When observing such a play, it is as if we are examining a great work of art or literature, a ballet or a symphony. In all these works, the harmony of all creation and its relationship to the Creator are expressed. When participating in or watching sports, people are experiencing the essential harmony of great art that is hidden behind its diverse expressions.<sup>215</sup>

## **2.7 Winning: Not the Only Thing**

Sport expresses the unity and harmony of the Creator, but it also expresses the diversity of life experience through winning and losing. How does this affect its capacity to connect the created to the Creator? There are two levels of human experience in this regard: competition and cooperation. Humans are attracted to both. One certainly understands that competition is only a subset of a higher unity that includes both opposing parts.

Since humans are limited, they want to succeed in materialistic terms. This dynamic is why winning a football game is important to the players and the fans alike. However, all participants understand that the game cannot be played unless common rules, which make the game possible, are agreed upon. These rules require winners and

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<sup>215</sup> Tracy J. Trothen, *Sport, Spirituality, and Religion New Intersections* Edited by Printed Edition of the Special Issue Published in *Religions*.2019

losers. The rules also require penalties. So even if people want to win, they know they can only win in the context that makes the game possible.

Yet after the game is over and the winning and losing have been decided, most people find their ultimate enjoyment in having participated in the game. They would certainly like to win, but they know that playing the game is the most important thing because in the act of playing they experience the deep energies of the Creator and can connect to these energies. They can also connect to the supporters or fans of the other team because they recognize they are connected by the higher energy expressed in the game. The fans are passionate during the game, and they bond after it is over. The individual and communal identification with the team provides a vocabulary for deeper bonding through which people can talk to each other about their loyalties to their teams. We need particular symbols to give unique expression to who we are as individual teams, cities or nations. But we also need ways to see how these symbols can be a means to relate to each other effectively. Sport provides this opportunity.

Perhaps the forces that draw us to sport can draw us back to religion, which, for many today, has become disconnected from the essential forces that connect us with our Creator. Perhaps religions can learn from sport: so many of the great expressions and themes of religion—prayer, sin, repentance, revival, salvation, community and eternity—can be examined through the metaphors and experiences that sport provides. By making these connections, the power of traditional religious activities and institutions can be renewed in more powerful ways that relate to the human experience in the world today.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/good-sports>

## Chapter-3

### SPORT AND FAITH FIT TOGETHER: CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

#### 3.1 Introduction

The ability to play sport is an aspect of God's creation that can be enjoyed for his glory. It is so important to emphasize this because many Christian sports people withdraw from sport due to misunderstood theology as well as the daily pressures of study, work, family and social commitments. Being a disciple of Jesus means worshipping him in every single aspect of our lives, every minute of the day. For those who spend a significant amount of time training and playing, this raises the question how we work out our discipleship in sport. We work particularly hard on this principle that we are "*born to play*" with young sports people from their teens to early twenties in order to establish a life-long habit.

#### 3.2 Genesis 1-2: Born to Play

The Bible is clear that God made us "*in his image*" (Genesis 1:26-28) and this is explained further in Genesis 2:15 and 2:18. In the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15) Adam and Eve are instructed "*to work (the garden) and take care of it*". God has put us in the world with the mandate to use the creative skills, the talents he has given us to make the world a great place to live. Further (Genesis 2:18) Adam and Eve are told that relationships are a crucial part of life "*It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him*". Adam and Eve are to combining their talents to build community, as they look after God's world. If God gave you the talent to run, jump or kick and you use that to play sport, he made you to do this in community, alongside others who share those skills to make his world a wonderful place. We could say that you were born to play.

#### 3.3 Genesis 3: The Foul

Humanity has committed a '*foul*' against the Creator. Genesis 3 tells the story of how we rejected his rule in favor of our own. The result of this rebellion has major consequences for sport. Think of the times when you are really angry with a team mate or opponent when something goes wrong in a game, particularly when you are not playing well or have lost, all the joy disappears.

### **3.4 Genesis 3:17-19: talents are less effective in making the world**

*“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”*

Life is tougher because of our rebellion. The breakdown in our relationship with God also impacted our relationships with each other. In Genesis 3:16 we observe that even the most intimate human relationship of marriage will be painful:

*“To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

We see this brokenness in the world of sport today. Our talents and our relationships fail to create an environment that is always good. We fail to stop ourselves and others being selfish, angry and proud on and off the field. We have fouled up. Sport is broken.

### **3.5 Romans 12: Back in the Race**

The first eleven chapters of Paul’s letter to the church in Rome explain how God paid the price for our rebellion against his rule through Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. In chapter twelve we read how, thanks to “*God’s mercy*”, there are terrific consequences for those who come into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We can now “*offer (our) bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God*”. A restored relationship with God means that we shall have new power to offer our “*bodies*”, meaning the physical, psychological and spiritual aspects of our lives, to our Creator. We have a new relationship with the one who gave us our sporting talents to express in the sports community. Indeed, Paul calls this “*true and proper worship*”, we have been given the capacity to use of sport, once again, to enjoy making his world a better place.



Worship is a matter for the whole of our lives not just Christian meetings. We understand this specifically from Romans 12:1-2 and the focus of the New Testament that there is no longer any sacred/secular distinction. Since sport can be an act of worship, we encourage sportspeople to worship God in their sport, to play for an audience of one. Worship is an attitude to every action - whether we're scoring a brilliant three pointer or missing an open goal, we're called to worship him with every gift and ability that he has given us in sport and every aspect of life. As sports people committed to honoring Christ in sport, we encourage them to share the gospel message with those they play alongside. The implications are that every moment of our lives, including being at the pool, on the court or in the stadium can be used to worship God.<sup>217</sup>

### **3.6 Three tips**

#### ***a, Remember how God made us to play sport***

We were made to reflect him by using our talents to build great communities that made the world a better place to live.

#### ***b, Reflect on how badly we've broken sport.***

Think about the frequency with which our pride has made us self-centered, using our skills for our own sake and so created tensions among our team mates and colleagues in our sport.

#### ***c, Rejoice***

When God's ability enters our lives, we are in a position where he will rebuild us so that our sporting ability becomes a source of joy instead of unhappiness such that those who compete with us or against us experience real joy in sport.<sup>218</sup>

### **3.7 God's Grace in Sports: Bible quotes of sports**

- ***Be a Gracious Loser.***

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<sup>217</sup> <https://www.christiansinsport.org.uk/resources/essentials/what-is-the-relationship-between-my-sport-and-god/how-sport-and-faith-fit-together/>

<sup>218</sup> Randolph Feezell, *Sport, Play, and Ethical Reflection* by University of Illinois Press - 2006

No one likes to come in last in the race, throw the pitch that seals the opposing team's victory, or fall a few yards shy of a key touchdown. Choosing an attitude of grace in the face of defeat lets us be a witness for Christ on the field, and helps us keep an eternal perspective when we are tempted to be caught up (and brought down) by a losing moment.

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”*

— Colossians 3:23-24

- ***Honor God through Diligent Training & Practice.***

Refine our skills and train for the game in honor of Christ, and in recognition of the blessings we enjoy from His mighty hand. Prepare for the game with deeper intention than we might for a paycheck, or a fleeting victory, or even personal glory.

*“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ‘Make level paths for your feet,’ so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.”*

— Hebrews 12:11-13

- ***Give God the Glory in All Things.***

Whether we are celebrating a big win, a faster time, or progress toward a goal, give thanks and plenty of credit to Jesus, and acknowledge Him as the source of our natural gifts, hard-won talents, and ability to engage in the sports you love.

*“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”*

— Philippians 4:13

*“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

— Colossians 3:17

- ***Cultivate Spiritual Strength.***

When we do all things for the glory of God, including our favorite sport, we will be less tempted to turn to pessimism and frustration, and more likely to seek out ways to learn and grow in the face of challenges. Our lesser human nature is weak, and easily falls prey to anger, disillusionment, and even throwing in the towel. With God as our coach, though, we can stay strong and remain steadfast when the going gets tough.

*“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.”*

— Isaiah 40:31

- ***Set a Good Example from the Sidelines.***

Those of us in the stands, or even fans watching the big game on the couch, play an important role in setting a standard of grace in the world of sports. Few armchair quarterbacks achieve fame or a media platform, but responding to the events of our favorite game with grace is a positive example for those around us. Do we hatefully boo and hurl insults at the opposing team from the bleachers, or malign the other side with gossip or harsh judgment? Or do we shout encouragement to *all* the kids on the soccer field or basketball court, thereby teaching our son or daughter to be a voice of encouragement on the team and to reach out in Christian love to every player? Do we take the opportunity to pray before a game, or, after the game, discuss the positive lessons learned (and opportunities to grow) that come from the mixed blessings of defeat? As a parent, coach, or role model among our teammates and peers, being an athlete or active participant in sports of any kind is an opportunity to show God’s love and extend grace to those around us.

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”*

— Hebrews 12:1

Holy, grace-filled moments abound in sports, even in the midst of the chaos and turmoil promoted by much of the media. When we approach sports with an

attitude of humility – and when seek to find, and *be*, God’s grace on and off the field – He is sure to show up.

### **3.8 Sports and Worship**

‘*Worship*’ is a term that we use frequently; a term that we probably feel we understand. Often, however, we automatically think of worship as singing, playing an instrument or an activity that takes place in church. I would guess that sport is not the first thing that we think of when it comes to worship. Of course, the worship which we partake in during church services is amazing and essential but there is another element of worship that we so often overlook.

God has blessed each of us with gifts and abilities. Not everyone can play in a worship band or be great at public speaking. We all have different gifts and this is so exciting. If we are gifted in sport this is because God has designed us in that way. It is not an accident. This is such an exciting truth for us; God designed our talents and our passions. He loves that we love to play sport because he made us that way. If this is true then what does this mean for our worship? God does not simply bless us with gifts for our own enjoyment or to fill our time. He wants us to use our gifts to bring glory to Him.

*“So, here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.”*

*--Romans 12:1.,*

This verse absolutely thrills us; Paul tells the Christians in Rome that they can worship God through offering their ‘normal’ activities as a sacrifice to him. How often do we do this? We know that so often we may go through the day bored and unfocused, just living for our self and certainly not worshipping God. If we stop, however, to consider what Jesus has done for us what can we do apart from worship him with everything we have? Worship is in every day. Worship is doing the things we love for God. Worship is playing a hockey match to glorify God. Worship is running in a race to glorify God. Worship is winning or losing but playing for God. When we grasp this truth, it completely changes how we live in every moment of our lives.

Finally, if our sport is worship this must change how we approach it. If we are playing in light of what Jesus has done for us this change everything; our attitudes, our actions and how we treat our teammates or opposition. Suddenly it is not just about winning but about worshipping God. Let this change how we view our sport. If we love to play tennis, do it because Jesus died for us; worship him. If we love to run, then run because God made us that way; worship him. Eric Liddell was a missionary but also an Olympic athlete. He worshipped God all over the world including on the running track. He said;

*‘I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. When I run, I feel God’s pleasure?’ What sport is it that you love to play? Go and play it to the best of your ability and feel God’s pleasure, as you worship him through using the gifts that he has given to you’.*<sup>219</sup>

### **3.9 How to Worship God Through Sport**

Sports are something that many in our world are involved in. As many as 73 percent of us will play a sport at some point in our lifetime. For many families, these commitments can take up quite a bit of time and thought, which can lead to a negative view of sports in some cases. However, just as sports can have a negative impact, they can also impact our life for the glory of God.

I had the benefit of playing football growing up and into college. The experience changed my life. How? I would argue that it taught me things about the Christian life that I wouldn’t have otherwise learned. Most chiefly: it taught me about worship. God is the giver of good gifts. Paul tells us in *Colossians 1:16-17*,

*“For by Him all things were created, in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether Thrones or Dominions or Rulers or Authorities – all things were created through Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”*

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<sup>219</sup> <https://www.moreprecious.co.uk/blog/2015/07/11/sport-as-worship>

If all things have been created by him, through him, and for him, that includes sports, too. And thought God created sports, he did not have to! In the same way, he didn't have to give us taste buds or good tasting food. He could had simply created food as means for survival, but he didn't. He loved us so much that he gave us the opportunity to enjoy stuff. That is why Paul says,

*“Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”*

--1 Cor. 13:31.<sup>220</sup>

### **3.10 Sports are the gift to reflect the glory of God.**

I wish, I had fully grasped this while playing football. I didn't realize what worship through sport was until the game was taken away from me. I endured a few knee injuries, which halted my ability to play the sport I loved—dreaming of division I football ever since I was a child. Football became my idol, and that was something I didn't realize until the doctor recommended that I hang up the cleats. When the game I loved was gone, I thought my life as gone too. I'd viewed the gift of sports as something I had earned and deserved rather than a blessing from God. In my bitterness, I viewed God as the punisher. That is why I am so passionate about helping others have a right view of sports. If sports are gifts, how do we avoid making them into idols? How do we instead worship God through sport? I think of the basic ways we teach children to receive gifts at Christmas:

#### **a. Recognize the Gift**

Treat this as a gift and not something that is earn or deserved. God didn't have to give us the gift of sports but he did.

#### **b. Thank the Giver**

This is an intentional gift. We shouldn't just tear the paper off the present and go on our way. We should look to see who it is from and give him thanks.

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<sup>220</sup> The Reason for Sports: A Christian Fanifesto by Ted A. Kluck Moody Publishers - 2009

### c. Enjoy the Gift

We can thank someone all we want for a gift, but it's only when we use and enjoy the gift that we truly show our thankfulness. God delights in our enjoyment of a gift—not a mere finger to the sky after a homerun. Sure, our enjoyment might be displayed in an outward gesture, but it can be as simple as having fun and playing to the best of our ability. If we play a sport, we have an opportunity. Will we open the gift, thank the giver, and enjoy the gift? If we learn how to enjoy glory of God through sports, our view of God will be transformed and the people around us will be able to see worship on display through the game we love.<sup>221</sup>

### 3.11 The ways to worship through sports

**Worship:** *“Reverent homage paid to God through formal or ceremonious adoration”*. By this standard definition, many have come to place a stereotype on worship. People often think of worship as what they do at church; things such as singing, reciting a benediction communion, or even missionary work outside of the church. Even these acts of worship are confined by their imaginations to how we perceive them from media, and from our ritualistic practices. It's against all commonality for someone to imagine worshipping God by playing a sport, or pushing themselves physically until they have exhausted their energy. Let me tell 5 simple ways to worship God through sport. These few ideologies of combining worship and sport helped me to take my game, and faith to a whole new level. With the right mindset we can do the same!

#### 3.11.1. Recognize where your strength is derived from

Whether we're an all-star football player, a newbie tennis player, or a weekend marathon junkie, anything we strive to do requires strength. Mental and physical, sometimes we feel we don't have enough, other times we're endowed with the ability to baffle even ourselves. We can hone in on our untapped potential or sharpen our skills by practicing, lifting, etc. but even that we can't do on our own. One of my favorite quotes comes from abortion survivor,

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<sup>221</sup> <https://churchleaders.com/worship/worship-articles/366205-how-to-worship-god-through-sport.html>

*Do we not realize that it cannot make our own heart beat?!...Any breath we take is a gift from God. -Gianna Jessen*

This statement couldn't be any more potent. We cannot make our own hear beat, nor can we control the way we die, all we can control is how we live. The strength to do so is a gift we're given.

### **3.11.2. Endure hardship**

Sports aren't always fun and games, we are going to lose, get injures, and face grueling training sessions. One way I take ownership of a tough training session is thinking about the brutality Jesus endured for us upon the cross. By looking at times given in the Bible of when his crucifixion started, it's estimated He hung from the cross between 4-6hrs. I personally believe Jesus was physically strong. To endure being beaten near death and then to have the strength to lift Himself on the cross for an afternoon is baffling. If Jesus can hang for hours on end for me, the least I can do is give him my all in a few second sprint/lift. There's always a bright side to hardship, healing is the next to follow. After a defeat, we crave to win. After a hard lift, we grow stronger. After an injury, our gratitude for health is greater. After Christ died, he rose from the dead, completing the salvation of mankind.<sup>222</sup>

### **3.11.3. Give it your all**

Jesus gave it all through his death, so let's give it all through our life. We'll never know what we can truly be if we habitually sell yourself short. Jesus didn't half-heartedly pursue us, He literally and bluntly stated He loves us so much He would die to save us. The most famous Bible verse states:

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, so that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life.”* (John3:16 and also, in John 15:13). *“Greater love has no man than this: that someone lay down his own life for his friends.”*

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<sup>222</sup> Annie Blazer, *Playing for God: Evangelical women and unintended consequences of Sports ministry* NYU Press 2015 p. 86



### **3.11.4. Enjoy His glory**

As stated in Psalms 19, God's glory is in everything, as everything is His and His creation. As we are part of His creation, we too are vessels of God's glory. Remember, we can't give God's glory because it already belongs to Him, but we can surely bear witness to it. How? Doing sport, we love to do and enjoying the fruits it brings to our life. For example, if our love to run, indulge in His creation and the intricacies of our surroundings. If we're part of a team sport, enjoy the friendships that build from the camaraderie.

*How clearly the sky reveals God's glory!*

*How plainly it shows what he has done!*

*Each day announces it to the following day;*

*Each night repeats it to the next.*

--Psalms 19: 1-2<sup>223</sup>

### **3.11.5. Celebrate in Victory, even if it doesn't belong to us**

It sure does feel great to win a competition, but finding the fruit of a defeat can be hard. Think about what we said in endure hardship. Just because we didn't win doesn't mean we won't ever win again. See the loss as God's way of building us up differently than our opponent. In that moment, God choses to thrive our opponent through victory. A defeat may very well be God's plan to thrive us. He may be using the loss to build up, and motivate us so when our victory does come, it will all the more enjoyable. Not even King David, the man after God's own heart won every battle. If we do recall, he spent time hiding in a cave before he could return to his position of power. After emerging from the cave his faith was stronger and God granted him a great victory by defeating the Philistines and saving the people of 'Keilah'.<sup>224</sup> (1 Samuel Ch. 22 & 23).

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<sup>223</sup> Stephen Altrogge, Game Day for the Glory of God: A Guide for Athletes, Fans, and Wannabes, by Crossway Publishing - 2008

<sup>224</sup> <https://bearfruitblog.wordpress.com/2014/03/06/5-ways-to-worship-through-sport/>

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### 3.13 Gift of Sports

***“Sports is its own religion”***

Sports can easily become an idol. But that does not make it an inherently bad thing. Money can be an idol. So can music; attend any concert and we will find worshippers there. Or family. Anything that we devote ourselves to can become an idol which can then become a religion; that is, Sports can give structure to our lives and determines our values. But the human ability to make idols out of anything does not make those things bad. And sports contain enormous good as a reflection of God’s creative power and the unique abilities he has poured into people as athletes, coaches, strategists, broadcasters, journalists, and more.

***“People should devote their excitement and energy to things of eternal value”***

Taken at face value, this sentence is true, but when we use it to parse sports out of life it creates a false dichotomy. Sports offer rest and refreshment. The energy poured into them is not draining a person from doing things that “matter” — it is restoring them for work. Sports also offer a kind of community and connection to people that is difficult to duplicate. Whether it’s regular pick-up basketball games, rooting for the same team, or being softball teammates, sports bring people together. And people together are where real eternal ministry is done best.

***“The money and time devoted to sports are better spent elsewhere, serving those in need”***

Such an objection is worthy of consideration as a matter of conscience at the personal level. It is always wise to ask whether I am giving what I ought, helping who I ought, and being generous as I ought. Am I misallocating my own resources to serve my idol? This idol could be sports or it could be lattes or books or cars. In most cases, this is not a question anyone can clearly answer from the outside. It is not wrong to spend money on any of the things. Usually, only God and the spender know whether it was wise or not. The money in sports is enormous. It is so because we as a culture demand to be entertained. Cost and demand are a basic economic principle. We are

better off examining our own lives to see if there is inequity or inconsistency than in arguing about the system as a whole.<sup>225</sup>

I believe sports are a gift, a good gift, that God gave through human creativity for our enjoyment. They should be participated in at every level and in every way as such. And just like all of life, we ought to approach them with thoughtfulness, discernment, and intentionality.

### **3.14. Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation)**

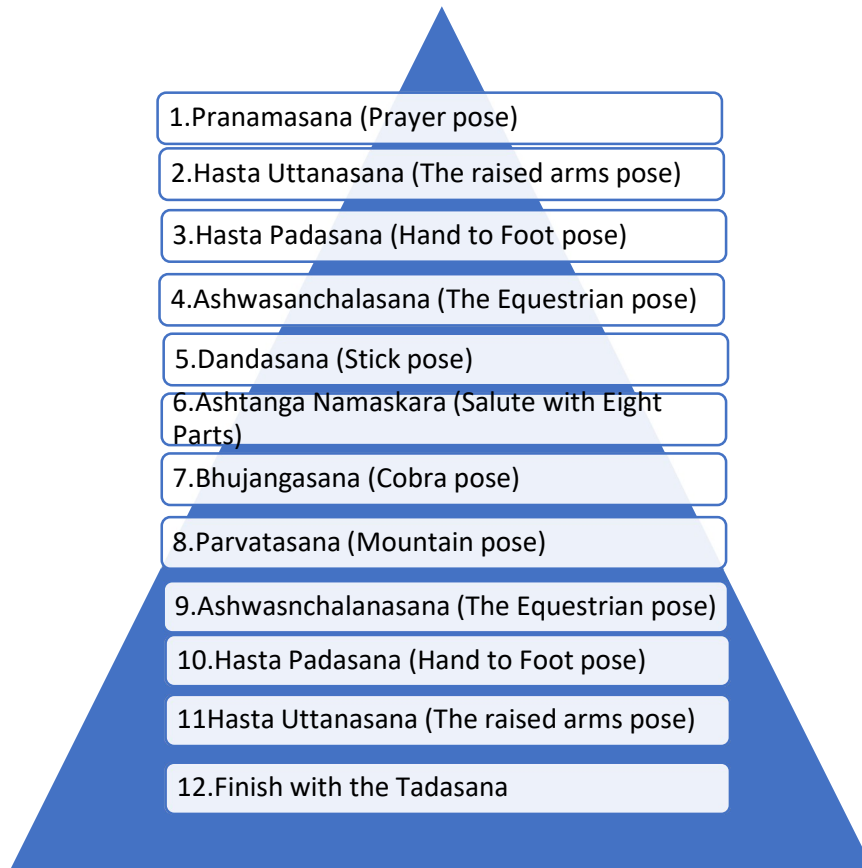
The Surya Namaskar yoga also called sun salutation sequence. Unlike the common notion that Surya Namaskar is for weight loss, it is designed for an overall physical and mental wellbeing. The Surya Namaskar steps consists of several kinds of poses or asanas that will free your mind from all kinds of pain and tension. It is also an opportunity to thank Surya or Sun God for his contribution to the life on earth. Surya Namaskar has a wide range of health benefits. Some of them are as follows:

- ✓ Helps to keep disease free and healthy
- ✓ Balance the body and mind
- ✓ Improves blood circulation
- ✓ Improves digestion system
- ✓ Strengthens the heart

It has a total of 12 yoga posters, that can improve your flexibility, both of the body and the mind.

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These are the twelve steps in the Surya Namaskar, usually it is done in the early morning of '*Brahma muhurta*'. The religious people do for the sake of religious purpose as a part of meditation. The sports people also do as the part of warm up relaxation. Originally it is practiced in Hindu culture but other religious people also practice for the sake of mental and physical benefits.

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## Chapter-4

### THE SPIRITUALITY OF SPORTS IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The view of sports and religion being intertwined varies. Most of the people felt that the relationship between sports and religion are most like 'sacralization or displacement'. Secularization is that sports has taken over religion in society while displacement is that sports and religion are competing against each other for the same position in society. The Universal Baseball Association and Friday Night Lights both show direct correlations between religion and sports. The Universal Baseball Association took a strange twist on religion involved in sports. The sports people should have, emotions, and conversations between each other.



The relationship between football and religion in Friday Night Lights can be seen in many different ways, for example, a player like Brain Williams has a more sacralization relationship between the two. Multiple scenes in Friday Night Lights show him going to church with his family. Even his mother showcases how God has given her son a gift and that it should not got to waste. Religion and sports just flow naturally for him because religion is such a large part of his life. Communities are not completely made at church in this show. For the most part, the communities are made and founded at the football games on every Friday. Some cases have this high school football team replacing their faith. An example could be how Buddy Garrity looks at football. He sees it as the best thing in the world. He puts football in front of everything and will do whatever he can to help them win, even if it is not morally right.



Religion and sports can be seen completely intertwined with each other or completely apart. After looking at these examples, I have come to the conclusion that the relationship between religion and sports is up to the person participating in the activity. Society may seem to be shifting one way, but I see every type of these relationships in our society. Religion and sports are connected based on how people raised and what their beliefs are.



#### **4.2 Sports & Spirituality**

The martial arts of East Asia, we do not usually think of sports in connection with the spiritual life. Some spiritual figures of ancient India were warriors and heroes, but we often associate spiritual practice with monastic life, and the term ‘*ascetic*’ with a world-renouncing ‘Monk or Yogi’ who devotes most of his or her time to meditation and study in seclusion. Many monastics, however, past and present, have maintained fitness through manual labour and walking long distances. The “*marathon monks*” of Mount Hiei, Japan, run great distances as a spiritual discipline, but this is a rare case.

The term ‘*ascetic*’ is derived from the Greek *askesis*, which meant ‘exercises and training’, as for an athlete who competes for a prize. The goals of such training include physical strength, stamina, agility and skill. Today it is widely recognized that children and young people need sports training, not only for general health and fitness but also to build discipline and concentration, cultivate virtues such as fairness and courage, increase self-confidence and teach teamwork.

On a practical level, our physical health is an important support for spiritual practice, since illness and weakness can impede meditation or even prevent it. Thus, acceptance of the body includes the care, diet and activity needed to keep the body as healthy as possible. Research has shown that besides being necessary for physical health, exercise reduces the probability of certain illnesses, can mitigate the effects of aging and may help prevent or overcome depression. It fosters dynamism, enthusiasm and inspiration.<sup>226</sup>

### **4.3 Self -Transcendence**

Sports is by no means just an individual practice. Often it is a group activity that can bring people together in powerful and meaningful ways. It offers a unique opportunity for self-transcendence, in which a person seeks to surpass his or her own limits and previous achievements. Self-transcendence is a central principle of sports philosophy. It is an expression of aspiration, the longing for a higher, fuller and better life, which he often speaks of as an inner hunger, a ‘*cry*’ or ‘a mounting flame’. Aspiration, whether conscious or unconscious, is the force that drives human progress and creativity and also impels cosmic evolution. At the highest level, self-transcendence is essential to God’s own Being, which constantly goes beyond Itself, and the evolving manifested creation expresses the nature of its ever-transcending Source. Our own inner cry is awakened in us by the Supreme: “*Self-transcendence / Is beckoned by / The ever-transcending Beyond.*”

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<sup>226</sup> Jim Parry, *Sport and Spirituality: An Introduction* Publisher: Routledge; 1st ed. ISBN-13: ,2007.



The body is the temple. The soul is the Deity therein. Any extraordinary activity we perform on earth in the outer world—whether it is a long-distance run or a short-distance run or jumping or throwing—shows that in the inner world that capacity does exist. It is only that we have to use it. The capacity that we appreciate, admire and adore on earth can be seen, felt and acquired in the inner world in infinitely greater measure. Another important experience is the oneness that is achieved when running as a group. Running serves as a vivid example of how sports can be part of the practice of spirituality. It brings together the outer and inner dimensions of life to support and feed one another.

Many people have discovered that running is a most effective way to bring about happiness. Running demands not only the fitness of the body but the fitness of the vital, mind and heart as well. Running also provides an opportunity to use one's breath to invoke "*Divine Energy*." "*Spiritual energy is the source of physical, vital and mental energy*." Distance running enables us to transcend ourselves, to establish oneness with others, to receive inspiration and dynamism, and to experience in a concrete and personal way an integral transformation in which the inner and outer realities unite.

The inspiration that we give to the outer world by exercising our extraordinary capacity comes from the ever-mounting aspiration of the inner world. Our achievements add to the receptivity of the outer world, to make the outer world eventually ready to accept the inner capacities of love, peace and bliss in infinite measure. There are Peace Run in the world, which bring together all the God-lovers—all the lovers of God's creation. And those who are inwardly getting the message to become God-lovers and to serve God's creation, Peace Run covers the length and breadth of the world, it's like, Heaven and earth can go together, carrying the same message of the Creator's infinite Joy, which is inside His eternal Peace."<sup>227</sup>

#### **4.4 Sports and self-knowledge**

Including sports in spiritual practice offers great and open-ended opportunities for self-knowledge, progressive awakening, living in the heart and the

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<sup>227</sup> William J. Baker, *Playing with God: Religion and Modern Sport* by Harvard University Press - 2007

creation of a better world. In a spirituality of integral transformation, acceptance of the world means acceptance of all physical existence including the whole natural world, the physical existence of others, and of our own bodies. Such an acceptance calls for care and respect. We must do what is needed to keep our own bodies well and fit, taking responsibility for ourselves with awareness and discipline, and must also care for the well-being of others with beneficence, kindness and concern. Building on this care and respect as a solid and indispensable foundation, the training or askesis of the physical body can be taken as a venue of self-transcendence. Involvement in sports teaches the lessons of self-transcendence in a distinctly concrete way.

Last but not least, the practice of sports understood as a part of spirituality brings people together in community, whether in highly organized ways or spontaneously sharing joy and achievement. Here the respect and care that we must show to ourselves are also given to others, and the inspiration of self-transcendence is expanded into the wider world. Runners achieve oneness with nature, with the running course itself, with each other, with their helpers and supporters, and with the world at large. Sports, we may surely say, can be a way of increasing love between people. This is true for athletic events and also for the Peace Run, which is dedicated to this very oneness rather than to athletic competition. Sports opens many paths of transformation and offers fulfilment and benefit on many levels.<sup>228</sup>

#### **4.5 Football and Religion**

Football (Soccer) is a central aspect of contemporary European and even global culture - as the build-up to big international events such as the European Championships and the World Cup shows. For those interested in understanding and exploring contemporary forms of religiosity, and what it is that makes people tick in terms of their daily orientation and meaning. One starting point is to look at those aspects of popular culture and experience which appeal to them and give them direction. Whether or not they are themselves interested in the sport, football is a significant feature of the culture in which most young people live in their countries. Perhaps this is why, despite the views of commentators who cite comparatively higher

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<sup>228</sup> <https://www.hinduismtoday.com/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=5854>

church than match attendance figures, the fact is that in school playgrounds one does not find children talking about what happened in church the day before. Few playgrounds and workplaces, however, will be completely immune from discussions of the weekend's football.<sup>229</sup>

Studying the links between football and religion is more than an amusing interlude; it contributes to that approach incorporated within sociology which locates religion within a multi-dimensional and socially grounded perspective. Clearly, for those who hold religiousness to be a purely metaphysical phenomenon, beyond the senses and not connected with what men think, or say, or do, our work will be totally irrelevant – mere materialistic concern with mundane appearances. But religion as we know it exists in the material world and cannot be comprehended wholly or even primarily in metaphysical terms.<sup>230</sup>

Religion has been influenced by social and economic forces in the wider context of secularization and globalization, so it is with football, which is increasingly shaped by the forces of commercialism and profiteering. The institutional links between football and religion in Europe are highlighted with a special focus on football and religion in Glasgow. The ways in which football might be understood as a religion are explored with particular reference to implicit religion and multidimensional models of religious commitment.

Many people find it easy to make comparisons between football and religion. Religion is often regarded and treated as a marginal subject area. Football, as a way of introducing them to the significance of such concepts within more traditional forms of religion. With theology students, too, I have explored themes within football and religion, to highlight the value of studying religion in applied social and cultural contexts. Most usefully, I use the idea of football as religion as a vehicle for exploring the different ways of defining and measuring religion and religiosity. Students respond in a variety of ways to the suggestion that football might, according to some definitions,

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<sup>229</sup> Fair Play: The Ethics of Sport (3rd Edition) by Robert L. Simon Westview Press - 2010

<sup>230</sup> In defending such an approach, Stark and Glock (1969: 255) have stated: football and religious Experience: Sociological Reflections

be considered a religion itself. Some have no problem with this; others vehemently defend what they consider to be authentic religion from such an association.

I explain to students that their initial attitude to this subject may well be telling them something about their assumptions about what real religion is, or ought to be, which may have an effect on their openness and ability to explore beyond their own sentiments and affiliations. In this way I move on to introduce students to a phenomenological perspective and the techniques associated with trying to identify and understand the views of a believer that might be very different from one's own. It is not always so easy to set aside our values, or even to be aware of the fact that they may, more insidiously than we think, be preventing us from having an open mind. Hence an examination of the links between football and religion can help students to identify their own values in the area of religion and how this might affect their approach to its study.

#### **4.6 Historical Development**

The historical development of football In Britain the standardized modern football code began to develop in the 1840s when, from an assortment, two codes evolved – the handling and the no-handling systems. In 1863 the Football Association was founded, from which comes the popular term “Soccer”; while the alternative code (permitting the handling of both ball and opponents) was developed by the 3 Rugby Football Union in 1871. It is interesting to note that the institutional churches played a key role in the development of football by spreading the game throughout the British Isles: In the case of association football the game was evangelized principally by employers and priests: many of the biggest and best-known English clubs began life in the last century either as works teams or as church sides. Arsenal, for example, took its name from a munition's factory in Woolwich; Sheffield United (funded at a cutlery firm) was nicknamed “*The Blades*” and West Ham United represented the Thames Ironworks. Other clubs evolved from parish teams, including Aston Villa, Bolton Wanderers, Everton (from which Liverpool evolved) and Southampton (The Saints).

Today in England and Scotland football has attained the status of a national sport. As with the privileged position of the Church of England, certain advantages accrue to being a national sport, such as certain key events being part of the national calendar, and funding opportunities. Stuart Cosgrove (1986: 99) has highlighted the high status of football, stating that it is: ... simply the most significant national activity

in Scotland. On the street corners, on television, at Hampden Park [the national football stadium in Glasgow] but most importantly on the biannual trips down to Wembley football is the respirator.<sup>231</sup>

The potential for sports such as football to kindle patriotic fervor and reinforce national pride can be seen on the occasion of international tournaments such as the European Championships and the World Cup. England's semi-final defeat by Germany in Euro '96 became the headline story in all the domestic newspapers, while television viewing figures reached record levels, surpassing the 22.8 million audience for the Princess of Wales's interview on Panorama. Indeed, football seems to have been much more successful in generating a sense of national feeling than the then government's erstwhile efforts to define the politics of the beef crisis in terms of national interests and European assaults on Britain.

Football, religion and community applying a functionalist perspective to social institutions, McGuire comments on the role of religion in reinforcing a sense of community: Religion is one contributing factor in societal integration. Religious symbols can represent the unity of the social group, and religious rituals can enact that unity, allowing the individual to participate symbolically in the larger unity they represent.<sup>232</sup>

In support of the view that football – with its symbols, rituals and social functions – can be considered in religious terms, the association between football and ideas of shared for community is easy to see. Where football clubs grew out of church or parish associations, there has also often been retained an explicit religious link between team and denomination. Nowhere is this more marked than in Glasgow. The religious and football-based sectarianism in that city reflects a further point made by McGuire, namely that consensus and conflict are both significant when it comes to

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<sup>231</sup> Moorhouse, H.F. (1991), "On the Periphery: Scotland, Scottish Football and the new Europe" in Williams, J. and Wagg, S. (eds.) *British Football and Social Change* Leicester University Press, Leicester

<sup>232</sup> McGuire, M. (1992), *Religion: The Social Context* McGraw-Hill, California

communities: *We must keep in mind that cleavage and conflict are, in many respects, merely the 'other side of the coin' of cohesion and consensus.*

There are two teams in Glasgow: Glasgow Rangers was founded in 1872 and has since then been identified with Protestantism. Glasgow Celtic originated in 1887 exclusively for Catholics, having been set up by Catholic priests as part of a campaign to raise poor relief for recent Irish migrants and keep them in the faith. The two teams have dominated club football in Scotland since the 1890s in a rivalry that has few parallels anywhere else in the world. Social conflict between Rangers and Celtic is also an expression of religious conflict, and antagonism is frequently expressed in religious terms.

In 1989, for example, there was uproar in the city when a Catholic player – Mo Johnston of Celtic – signed for Rangers. Reflecting efforts to end this harmful sectarianism, the Scottish press talked about the incompatibility of religious bigotry with the idea of the European Super League being discussed at the time. While Rangers' management appear to have embraced more effectively a modern and enterprising approach to football, Celtic appear to appeal more directly to traditional communal loyalties based on Irishness and Catholicism. According to Moorhouse, Celtic represents the older unregenerate sectarian Glasgow. Indeed, some have suggested that the identity of Rangers' supporters consists primarily of anti-Catholic feeling rather than a particular Protestant-based identity. The persistence of the Catholic/Protestant divide in Glasgow is probably exceptional but it is not the only example. South of the border in Liverpool, for example, the same historical pattern of Irish immigration is reflected in a traditional identification of Everton FC with Catholicism and Liverpool FC with Protestantism, though the link has much faded. In days gone by the schoolboys' team Liverpool Catholic Boys reinforced the link between football and religious identity -though, as an indicator of secularization, this team is today known as Merseyside Boys.

The association between religion, football and community is not unique either to Britain or to soccer. Alomes (1993) refers to Catholic, Protestant and Jewish affiliations within Australian Football. He outlines the history of a Protestant Churches' League in the northern suburbs of Essendon in the 1950s and '60s, which was matched by a Catholic equivalent in neighboring Collingwood. He also cites a recurring local folk tale. In 1966 when St. Kilda, with strong Jewish support from that suburb, won its first premiership by one point over Collingwood on the Day of

Atonement, many religious Jews forgave Ian Snyman for being at the center half back rather than in the synagogue, while the transistor radio allowed the good news to be brought to the doubly faithful. Sociologists such as Bryan Wilson (1982) have outlined the function of religion in reinforcing community by embracing a sense of ancestry, heritage and history as well as a sense of present identity and representing hopes for the future. Similarly, the sense of community in 5 footballs often carries themes of both individual and family identity, with children following the affiliations of their parents and, in days gone by, their locality.<sup>233</sup>

This reflects what Alomes refers to as “regeneration – individual and social” to be found in football. At the same time, and in line with McGuire’s analysis, expressions of both consensus and conflict are to be found in both religion and football. Indeed, the media and others frequently give disproportionate attention to the negative aspects of conflict in football in the form of hooliganism and violence. In seeking to understand the motivation behind such expressions of sectarian conflict, analysts of football might learn from interpretations of religious violence. McGuire states that, where a religion is particularistic or exclusivist the potential for expressed conflict is greater. As with religion, few football fans convert. The above examples have highlighted that, where footballing allegiance overlaps with other sources of identity, its ideological significance is stronger. In the Scottish context, an interesting theme for further research would be the future effects on footballing sectarianism within Glasgow of nationalist politics and moves towards devolution. In the case of Australia, analysts such as Alomes see football as functioning to unite rather than divide society. He refers to “*the politically hegemonic implications of a sport which pervades all classes and transcends gender*”.

In England and Scotland, however, social, religious and economic associations within football have meant that, historically, the opposite has often been true. Fishwick, for example, describes the football grounds of post-war England as ‘*The Labor Party at prayer*’.

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<sup>233</sup> Alomes, S. (1993), “Tales of a Dreamtime: Australian Football as a Secular Religion” in *Australian Studies* Nov 01 1993.

There is mileage in exploring further the idea of football as religion. So far, this paper has focused on institutional, community-based aspects of football and religion. However, just as religion is much more than institutional affiliation and identity, so it is with football. In 1969, the problem of defining and measuring religiosity and religious people by outlining five dimensions.

1. In football, the formal rules of the game have already been referred to. These are accepted as the benchmark for making judgements about right and wrong behavior on the pitch. Just as there is an element of faith beyond rational logic within religious belief. So, it is with believing a team or player to be *'The best'* - even when their performance and results defy such a conclusion.

2. The second dimension – religious practice – refers to acts of worship, ritual and devotion, including attending formal public acts and sacred practices. The regular ritualistic practice of going to every game can be identified as fulfilling this criterion. In recent years, however, as with church-going, attendance figures have fallen. In common with the phenomenon of *'believing without belonging'*, one has to be cautious in drawing conclusions about the degree to which commitment can be measured using attendance data. With football participation increasingly taking place through the medium of television and satellite channels, football offers an example of television evangelism extending beyond the traditional religious field. Other ritualistic aspects of football fandom which have been identified include the donning of the colors of the team – both by players and supporters – as symbolic of a common identity and goal. Many people who attend football matches on a regular basis would be able to identify both personal and shared elements of ritualistic behavior which is bound up in the hopes and prayers for success.

3. Glock and Stark also include as part of this dimension impromptu hymn-singing and contemplation. Teams in Britain aspiring to the ultimate accolade of playing at Wembley are encouraged throughout the season by the regular rendition of a range of football hymns, many derived specifically from Christian roots. The Road to Wembley takes on the symbolic significance of pilgrimage with pilgrims singing all year and, more specifically, in the final stages of the Cup 7 competitions: *'We're all going to Wembley!'*. This was reflected in the FA Cup competition's billboard advertisements encouraging television viewing of the closing rounds. Religious symbolism here also extends to the realm of language, with players and even managers often being



described as using religious terminology. Maradona's *'hand of God'* incident in the 1987 World Cup is now infamous.

In particular, Glock and Stark appear to be stressing here feelings, perceptions and sensations: in other words, the subjective aspects of religious experience. At first sight this appears to be where the analysis of football as religion breaks down. If concepts such as 'the ultimate' and 'transcendence' are intended to refer to phenomena which are specifically beyond this world, then clearly football – as a worldly phenomenon – cannot be understood as religion.

Alomes, for example, identifies the elements of transcendence offered to devotees as one of the major aspects of football as religion. Describing Grand Final day in Australian football, Manning Clark writes: It is a day for '*an emotional bath of agony and ecstasy*' with '*magical moments rather like an epiphany*' as well as 'all the absurdity of human passions there in excess'. And the religion could offer fear as well as hope, the prospect of heaven or hell, as the game enters the time-on period in the last quarter. Then none of the wisdom of the ages will help.

4. Glock and Stark's fourth dimension are that of knowledge dimension. Related to – but not necessarily synonymous with – belief, this dimension of religious commitment refers to knowing basic tenets of faith, rites, scriptures and traditions. Again, it is easy to apply this dimension to those football devotees who collect memorabilia and verbosely recite the facts about League appearances of players and team results. The growth in recent years in team and general football fanzines and magazines highlights the viability of tapping this interest for commercial gain.<sup>234</sup>

5. Finally, Glock and Stark discuss the consequences dimension. This refers to the effects of the first four dimensions on thought and action in everyday life, and is both part of and follows on from religious commitment. The key question here is the extent to which devotion becomes part of everyday life. Clearly, one needs to distinguish between degrees of commitment here, but there is certainly evidence that, for some individuals and communities at least, commitment to football is a very

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<sup>234</sup> Glock, C. Y. and Stark, R. (1969), "Dimensions of Religious Commitment" in Robertson, R. (ed.) *Sociology of Religion*, Penguin, Harmondsworth

significant part of daily thought and conversation. Describing “*the permeation of daily life by football*”, Alomes suggests that: ... the permeation goes beyond attendances and TV audiences.

Football’s commercial growth has also been extended through mass communications, particularly television. As stated earlier, there are clear parallels here between sport and religion, with football being a further example of the shift to televisual evangelism and privatized consumption in one’s own home, as opposed to the physical gathering of communities at a place of symbolic sacred status. Alomes has termed this the ‘*new world of private televisual spirituality*’. Symptomatic of the increasing commercialism in football was the establishment in 1992 of the Premier League involving the top clubs in England who can now make sponsorship and media deals beyond the control of the Football League.

Functions of football as religion in contemporary society the sense and significance of community embraced within football goes beyond just sporting passion. This is illustrated most graphically in exceptional situations such as when those communities are affected by the death of players and/or supporters. In the impact that can be seen when a prominent footballer dies. In describing the funeral of a young footballer in Australia, Alomes refers to the way in which his funeral had “*a deeper social resonance than that stemming merely from sporting passion*”.

The significance of both football and Christianity as part of the religious make-up of the community are reflected in the rituals and symbols of commemoration. This highlights a further important point – namely that, in discussing football and traditional religion, one need not necessarily exclude or compete with the other. Both football and Christianity are part of the religious culture of that and other cities. Football and religion, in the late twentieth century when the Judeo-Christian-derived teleology of both material progress for the society and career progress for the individual have lost some of their paradisaical sheen, other ideas of transcendence have become more important. Today traditional religion can seem to some institutional and out of date. In this situation it is perhaps inevitable that the more suburban transports of the

delights of football – even when mediated by television – will offer contemporary consolation for many.<sup>235</sup>

It is suggested here that we should think beyond a sense of competition between traditional meaning systems and alternative forms of religiosity, and the notion that one will necessarily replace the other. In the context of the secularization debate, studies of the dynamic nature of religiosity have shown that the reality is probably much more complex than this and that, instead, sport and religion can quite easily accommodate each other, operating alongside, and even complementing each other. In this way there are parallels here in terms of the coexistence of both denominational and civil religion; indeed, football may well in future retain a prominent place in the civil religion of societies like Britain where it is a national sport. In concluding this topic here as to whether football is itself religion, it is argued that the answer will depend on the definition of religion applied and the analytical tools used to measure it. In this part I have argued on the basis that religion is part of the overall quest for meaning and transcendence in contemporary society. That quest takes many forms – some more traditional, others more secular. In line with Alomes, I would want to state that today, *‘when the search for transcendence takes many forms, football offers one possibility’*.

#### **4.7 What does God have to do with Sports**

The Garrett Fisbeck/The New York Times it was *written ‘Prayers before Oklahoma City Thunder games are becoming a regular occurrence’*. And the report continuous;

*“We’ve all seen it in one capacity or another. Whether in our own locker rooms or on reruns of Friday Night Lights, we’ve inevitably witnessed the scene in which a football team is led in prayer before the big game. Sometimes they’re led by the coach, while other times the coach has brought in an actual priest to lead the student athletes in holy supplication. In most instances, this is presented as a normal occurrence, questioned by none of the characters whatsoever. But when we pause to*

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<sup>235</sup> Bailey, E. (1990), “The Implicit Religion of Contemporary Society: Some Studies and Reflections” in *Social Compass*. Vol.37, No.4, Dec 1990

*consider the multiple controversies that have arisen due to prayer in school, it comes as little surprise that prayer in sports have generated some controversy as well*".<sup>236</sup>

There is one particular question that seems to always come up: What does God have to do with sports? This question often leads to others like, "Does God care about who wins games?" and "How does praying help an athlete during a game?".



Some sports people directly express their faith on their religion. This explicit expression may influence the people because their worshipping hero makes the signs of his religious beliefs. The words of Jeremy Lin's sudden rise to super stardom coincided with the launch of Active Faith as he wore his in Jesus' Name, he says; *I Play bands on his wrists while taking the NBA and the world by storm*. It seemed in every interview or any chance they got, Tebow and Lin would make it a point to thank Jesus and give God the glory and praise.

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<sup>236</sup> <https://wepicksports.com/is-prayer-in-sports-a-big-deal/>



The NBA Superstar Stephen Curry write bible verses on his shoes before games and point up after every made shot. In fact, Stephen's new signature shoe, his favorite verse,

*'I Can Do All Things Through Christ'... Philippians 4:13*



To our knowledge there is no record or indication in the religious texts that states that worshipping God played any sports or had any interest in athletics at all. When we think of all of the issues the world faces and the interests that God has, we don't believe God really cares who wins or loses games and athletic competitions. So, if God has nothing to do with sports and if God doesn't care about who wins or loses games, why do players and teams pray before games? Why do athletes thank God for winning Championships and awards and accolades?



*The Bible says in Colossians 3:7 “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”*

All of us are blessed with some sort of talent or ability and we all have different platforms in which our talents and abilities are displayed. In our society, athletes have a platform that is unrivaled. People follow and admire athletes. Sports icons are trendsetters and are praised and treated as super heroes. It is the reason why companies and brands pay athletes millions of dollars to endorse their products and to use their platform to promote their businesses. To reach the level of a Stephen Curry or a Russell Wilson, it takes years of hard work, discipline and skill. But without God blessing them with the specific talents they have been given, none of those other things would matter. <sup>237</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> <https://activefaithsports.com/blogs/the-locker-room/17560132-what-does-jesus-have-to-do-with-sports>



Psychologists are closing in on the conclusion that sport has many of the same effects on spectators as religion does. *"The similarities between sport fandom and organized religion are striking. Consider the vocabulary associated with both: faith, devotion, worship, ritual, dedication, sacrifice, commitment, spirit, prayer, suffering, festival, and celebration."* It may seem odd, to equate religion with sport entertainment but it must be understood that prior to mass communications, religious ceremonies were a source of entertainment for ordinary people who rarely attended a theater or traveled to a sporting event. Sports and religion may get categorized separately but their intersection is difficult to miss.<sup>238</sup>

*"The spectator's worship other human beings, their achievements, and the groups to which they belong." And that sports stadia and arenas resemble "cathedrals where followers gather to worship their heroes and pray for their successes." <sup>239</sup>*

If ritual may be entertaining, then entertainment, as experienced in a sports stadium, may be ritualistic. Fans wear the team colors and carry its flags, icons, and mascots. Then there is repetitive chanting of team encouragement, hand-clapping, booing the other team, doing the wave, and so forth. The singing of an anthem at a sporting event likely has similar psychological effects as the singing of a hymn in

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<sup>238</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-human-beast/200911/is-sport-religion>

<sup>239</sup> Wann, D. L., Melznick, M. J., Russell, G. W., & Pease, D. G. (2001). *Sport fans: The psychology and social impact of spectators*. New York: Routledge.

church. Given that sports entertainment has obvious similarities to religious rituals, it is reasonable to ask whether the connection between fans and their preferred sport has psychological effects that are comparable to religious experiences - effects that account for religion as a worldwide human adaptation.

#### **4.8 Sports as a substitute for religion?**

As a group, sports fans are fairly religious, according to research. It is also curious that as religious attendance rates have dropped off in recent decades, interest in sport spectatorship has soared. Moreover, research has debunked several stereotypes about sports fans that seem incompatible with religiosity. Fans are not lazy, nor are they particularly prone to violence. Fans are highly committed to their favored stars and teams in a way that gives focus and meaning to their daily lives. In addition, sports spectatorship is a transformative experience through which fans escape their humdrum lives, just as religious experiences help the faithful to transcend their everyday existence.

From that perspective, the face painting, hair tinting, and distinctive costumes are thought to satisfy specific religious goals including identification with the team, escape from everyday limitations and disappointments, and establishing a community of fans.<sup>240</sup> Karl Marx famously declared that religion is the opium of the people. However, not all religions numb people to their social and moral responsibilities. One thinks of liberation theology in Latin America, for instance. No one ever claimed that sports had such redeeming qualities. According to one critic *"it has turned into a passion, a mania, a drug far more potent and widespread than any mere chemical substance"*. It is the new opium of the people.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Barber, N. (2012). Why atheism will replace religion: The triumph of earthly pleasures over pie in the sky. E-book, at: <http://www.amazon.com/Atheism-Will-Replace-Religion-ebook/dp/Boo886ZSJ6/>

<sup>241</sup> Harris, S. J. (1981, November 3). Sport is new opium of the people. *Democrat and Chronicle*, p. 3B.



## 4.9 Good Sports: Getting closer to God

If a millennium from now someone was to examine the artifacts of our civilization, he or she would discover that in many places, sports facilities were the largest and most prominent buildings. This discovery might lead to the conclusion that sports were one of the most powerful influences in our culture. And that conclusion would be correct. Past civilizations left behind colossal cathedrals to glorify God because for them ultimate power resided in religion. We will leave behind colossal sport stadiums, because these are, for many, our cathedrals. Sport is our shared religion.

What power does sport manifest that has made it the “religion” of many contemporary people? To answer this question, we need to examine those powers that connect all human beings to their Creator and that express the essence of that Creator in daily life. I would like to examine five of these essential forces: breath manifests the original energy of the Creator; music expresses the energy of the Creator as sound; nature is the most extensive manifestation of the Creator that humans can experience; physical activities are the part of nature through which the energy of the Creator is manifested most intimately for human beings; through symbolic intellect human beings create forms to express their deepest knowledge to themselves and to each other.

## 4.10 Sports spirituality in other religion

### 4.10.1 Sports in Hinduism



In Hinduism, the God for the Sports is Lord Hanuman. He is very strong and back then he was worshipped by wrestlers for strength. There is deity of sports offer

pooja (prayer) before going to the Olympiad by the Hindu sports persons! Lord Shiva can be the primordial teacher of dance and pro-pounder of these—called 64 arts (64 kalaas). Others may put forth Krishna for the purpose as his life in his childhood and early youth was colourful.<sup>242</sup>

#### **4.10.2 Sports in Islamism**

Is it acceptable for Muslims to play sports? It is the common question for the people of Islam. Allah prohibits that which is harmful to the physical, mental and spiritual health of individuals and to overall health of society. Because many Islamic scholars believe music is forbidden. However, Allah wants to have sound bodies, as well as sound minds and sound morals. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *“The strong (active) believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, while there is good in both.”* The Prophet himself participated in swimming, archery, running and horseback riding, and was said to have encouraged parents to involve their children in these sports.

Being physically fit and active enhances the body’s immune system and protects it from diseases. From daily prayers to fasting during Ramadan to the actions performed during Hajj, a Muslim who is in shape is better equipped to perform the duties of Islam. As in every activity in life, Muslims who play sports (and are sports fans) should conduct themselves respectfully and in a manner that pleases Allah. That means showboating, cheating and unnecessary roughness are discouraged. Humility and modesty should be a trait of all Muslims, and it’s no different for Muslims when competing in sports. As the Prophet Muhammad said: *“Almighty Allah has decreed that nothing shall have a permanent glory,”* which means every situation has its ups and downs, and no condition is permanent.”

Are Muslim women allowed to play sports? Is the second question emerging among the Muslims. The simplest answer is ‘Yes’. Because, Aisha, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them), competed against her husband in footraces. She said, *“I competed with the Messenger of Allah (in running) and overtook him. Later, when I had put on some weight, I once again competed with him,*

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<sup>242</sup> <https://www.quora.com/Who-is-the-Hindu-god-of-sports>

*but this time he overtook me and said: ‘We’re even now.’* Islam does not allow co-ed participation in some sports and does not allow men to watch women compete in certain sports, in order to close doors to seduction, temptation and corruption.<sup>243</sup>

#### **4.10.3 Is Yoga A Sport?**



From ancient times, yoga has been referred to as a spiritual practice as it helps in combating all sorts of mental, physical & emotional issues. In the western world, people have started referring to yoga as a sports activity as just like any sports, it requires high-skill techniques & great strength. However, many yogis believe that yoga is a spiritual practice that is in no way fits under the sports discipline. Many people wonder is yoga considered a sport as both of them are a physical activity & share some similar benefits but yoga not only involves physical aspect but also spiritual & philosophical aspects that are not present in sports. Sports are highly competitive whereas yoga doesn't involve any kind of competition.

Nowadays, people have become more conscious about their overall health & fitness. In modern society, fitness is always associated with sports/ physical activities. However, due to growing awareness about yoga among contemporary people, they've now started associating fitness with yoga. It has been over thousands of years that yoga

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<sup>243</sup> <https://ummahsports.net/sports-in-islam/>

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came in existence, and initially, it was only performed by yogis or monks to attain the spiritual & philosophical benefits. Nowadays, people are considering yoga as an athletic practice as it offers the same benefits as sports have. They don't emphasize the spiritual aspect of yoga as it is preoccupied in contemporary people's mind that yoga majorly helps in enhancing the fitness of their body.<sup>244</sup>

#### ***4.10.3, a. The modern-day belief of yoga as sports***

To be able to understand the perspective of contemporary people, first, we need to understand what sport is. Sport in today's world context is a competitive, leisure activity that is governed by sets of rules that decides victory or defeat. Participating in sports activities helps in achieving mental & physical fitness which can enhance overall health. Just like yoga, sport is un-harmful to all living creatures & helps in transforming the body & the mind which is why nowadays people often associate yoga with sports. Regular practice of yoga can help improving flexibility and reduce performance anxiety of the players. Most athletes practice yoga on a regular basis to improve their athletic performance. Practicing yoga before the sports event helps the players in achieving a mind-body connection & also reduce their anxiety level.

#### ***4.10.3, b. Yoga as a spiritual practice***

Yoga is a conventional spiritual practice that is performed over the centuries to unite the mind, body & soul. Unlike sports, yoga has nothing to do with defeat & winning and it helps in experiencing a sense of peace & joy. The yoga can transform the mind, body, and soul of a person, which is why it is a spiritual practice. It has come a long way but categorizing yoga into sports discipline isn't quite accurate as yoga has spiritual value added to it which is not present in sports. Considering all the factors, in my opinion, yoga shouldn't be categorized merely as a sport as yoga is beyond any competitive. By practicing yoga, one can attain happiness and peace of mind along with fitness. Categorizing it as a sport will only highlight its physical and mental aspect and not its spiritual aspect which is why yoga shouldn't be termed as a sport.

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<sup>244</sup> Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.



#### **4.10.4 Buddhism**

Boxing is incredibly popular among participants and spectators in Buddhism and it is not uncommon for boxers to be blessed by monks or to even have monks in the audience! Some may say that this interaction between Buddhism and boxing is a “*Cultural Phenomenon*”, which, teaches non-violence. The earliest monasteries in ancient India, it is interesting to see the important part wrestling and various other physical activities played in monastic life. It is clear that the historical ‘*sangha*’ took care of their bodies and certainly did not shy away from the rough and tumble of contact sports. Therefore, perhaps our understanding on the relationship between Buddhism and sports, especially contact sports, needs to be reassessed.

Buddhism and other forms of spirituality is almost antithetical to an interest in sport. Practitioners of Buddhism tend to prioritise the mind over the body. They are interested in meditation and the philosophy of Buddhism and sometimes are surprised by the physical activities they are made to do when they visit a monastery, whether it is helping with building work or helping in the monastery kitchen! It would be a surprise to many here to learn of the long historical connection of contact sports and Buddhism.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/is-there-a-place-for-contact-sports-in-buddhism>

## **Chapter-5**

### **IS SPORTS A RELIGION? A PHILOSOPHICAL NARRATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Sports and religion have a conflicted relationship. At times, sport has served the objectives of religious authorities and has been imbued with a morality and philosophy derived from religious doctrine. At others, it has been rejected for its secular, corporeal emphasis and its capacity to divert attention from godly activities. Sport has been utilized as a means to evangelize and to convert non-believers, and yet it has also represented a threat to the social and moral order. As such, religion had an indelible impact on modern sport, and sport has been both embraced and rejected by religious authorities across the centuries.

#### **5.2 Coincidental relationship between sports and religion.**

Sport is similar in structure to a revealed religion and that the two share many ritualized and sacred aspects. But sport itself is also regarded as religious as it represents in tangible form epic human and spiritual struggles, the quest for perfection, an intrinsic drama, and the explication of moral attributes. The ritualized engagement with and in sport, it is argued, serves to deliver a religious experience to their participants, feeding a “*deep human hunger*”<sup>246</sup>

#### **5.3 Sport may also be considered a folk religion**

It can be understood as the result of shared moral ideals as well as behaviors, and emerges from daily life experiences to provide a means to integrate society, legitimate national values, and communicate societal ideologies. In this conception, sport is accepted as a product of its social, political, and economic context and as an institution that is complicit in reproducing these ideologies. In declaring sport to be a folk religion, researchers recognize its mythic, collective, and historical elements,

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<sup>246</sup> Novak, M. (1976) *The Joy of Sports*. Basic Books, New York.

without necessarily suggesting it is a transcendental experience. By contrast, those who challenge sport's elevation to the status of a religion argue that the objects of each institution are not consistent, and thus to equate the two would be to ignore fundamental philosophical differences. Religion, they suggest, is derived from the divine realm, while sport is firmly located in the human experience. One offers truths about life beyond our own experience; the other is simply a corporeal activity embedded in the profane. There is concern that to equate the two might secularize religion and diminish its value.

Essentially, the argument that sport is not a religion rests on the recognition that the intentions underpinning the two institutions vary significantly. Rather than examining sports and religion in terms of structure, it is perhaps more revealing to analyze each from the inside out. Such an analysis reveals the key difference to be the role of religion to proffer answers to, or explanations about, the mysteries of human existence. Sport has no such stated purpose, and even the most ardent sports fan would disagree that devotional activities will reveal anything about people's lives, destinies, or significance. Sport may well embody and reflect social values and ideologies, they argue, but it does not offer any deeper meanings about this world beyond the activity itself.

#### **5.4 Sport is a religious experience is problematic.**

The mere physical act of playing or watching sport, they suggest, has little relationship to rituals of worship. At the same time, they identify a difference between having a religious experience when playing sport and playing sport for the actual purpose of glorifying a God. While these researchers may recognize that many of the rituals, passions, and even myths within sport can take on a religious like significance for participants, they maintain that the actual sporting performance is not a religious act. Thus, the symbolic links between physical movement and the expression of a religious doctrine are questioned. As such, some have suggested it is best to examine

the moments when sport and religion serve each other's interests rather than trying to define one as the other.<sup>247</sup>

### **5.5 Sport as a cultural vehicle.**

Sport as a cultural vehicle through which religious communities may disseminate their faith or reinforce their beliefs to their existing members. This approach suggests that sport may not be divine in and of itself, but as an institution that reproduces cultural meanings and values, it might also serve the interests of religious groups. Cultural activities that rest upon ritualized performances are significant ways to reproduce hegemonic ideologies, and sport is no exception. There are numerous examples where sport has been used as one of a number of cultural means to reinforce the collective identity of a religious community. In South Africa, the Muslim population of Cape Town used rugby as an avenue through which their religious and cultural identity could be consolidated.

While not using sport as a direct means to proselytize, rugby nevertheless provided social opportunities for members of the community to interact and reaffirm their sense of belonging. Similar outcomes can be seen among Jewish Americans who used physical recreations as both a means to maintain their faith and cultural heritage, and also to integrate themselves into a new national community. In this way, sport contributes to the reproduction of the religious community's social arrangements, particularly in new or rapidly changing cultural contexts as members engage in repetitive, ritualistic cultural practices.<sup>248</sup>

The use of sport has not been as pronounced in Eastern or traditional indigenous religions as it has in the Judeo-Christian religions, though there is certainly much evidence that movement cultures are incorporated into religious or sacred practices. The primary point of divergence for many Eastern philosophies, such as

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<sup>247</sup> Higgs, R. (1996) *God in the Stadium: Sports and Religion in America*. University of Kentucky Press, Lexington.

<sup>248</sup> Magdalinski, T. & Chandler, T. (Eds.) *With God on their Side: Sport in the Service of Religion*. Routledge, London.



Hinduism and Buddhism, is a rejection of the material world in preference for the attainment of a higher spiritual order. An emphasis on the body merely for the sake of gaining material rewards in the secular world is antithetical to the quest for enlightenment, and as such, modern, rational, quantified sport does not serve a purpose in the transcendence of the material world and the development of spiritual awareness.

The relationship between sport and religion has been influenced by differing perceptions of the body, the significance of sporting practices in the expression of religiosity, as well as the structure of both institutions. Christianity has had the most pronounced impact on the philosophy of modern sport, though the various Christian churches have not always regarded sport as a suitable activity for their followers. The emphasis on the corpus was thought to be at the expense of the spiritual, a division that remained until the rise of the Muscular Christian movement in the nineteenth century, which provided a new model of the sport/religion nexus, one that led to the proliferation of evangelist practices in sport throughout the twentieth and early twenty first centuries. The popularity of modern sport and the devotion that fans display to their teams has led some to regard sport as a contemporary religion, one that holds more meaning for their followers than traditional religions; however, this standpoint has been challenged by those who regard the inherent natures of sports and religion to be fundamentally different.<sup>249</sup>

## **5.6 Christian view of sportive knowledge**

Sports is a big part of life for many people, whether they're watching athletic events, driving their children to and from sports practice, or directly participating in sports themselves. Sports and athletic competitions have been popular since ancient times. The Bible draws several analogies of the Christian life from the sports world: 1 Corinthians 9:26 contains a reference to shadowboxing; the author of Hebrews likens

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<sup>249</sup> Overman, S. J. (1997). *The Influence of the Protestant Ethic on Sport and Recreation*. Avebury, Aldershot.

the Christian life to a race (Hebrews 12:1); and Paul admonishes us to “*run in such a way to win the prize*” (1 Corinthians 9:24).

Given the Bible’s positive use of sports-related analogies, there can be nothing inherently wrong with viewing or participating in athletic events. Following one’s favorite football team, playing a few rounds of golf, attending a volleyball match, or signing up for community softball is something Christians can and do enjoy. Christian athletes and coaches often have the opportunity to use their prominence in sports as a platform for advancing the gospel. Christians who play sports can attest to the many benefits that such involvement can provide, including stress reduction; weight control; camaraderie; and the development of accountability, leadership, and communication, goal-setting, and problem-solving skills. The endurance and perseverance required in athletic competition can be valuable in building and strengthening character.

One of the greatest benefits of competing in sports is the development of self-control: “*Every athlete exercises self-control in all things*” (1 Corinthians 9:25). In the crucible of competitive action, the presence of self-control—or the lack of it—becomes obvious to all observers. Some athletes (and fans) handle game-related adversity with grace and poise; others melt down in an adult temper-tantrum. The problem is not the sport; it’s the inner character of the athlete or fan. In many ways, a sporting event provides an occasion to test the character of both winners and losers. Christian athletes, coaches, and fans should be filled with the Holy Spirit and display the Spirit’s fruit, no matter where they are, be it on the court, on the field, or in the locker room.

As in all areas of life, we must have balance in regards to our involvement in sports. We must set priorities. It’s easy for a sports fan to overdo it, committing too much time, money, and other resources to what should be an entertaining diversion. It’s easy for an athlete wishing to succeed to devote an inordinate amount of time and energy to training, to the neglect of family, friends, or walk with God. The Bible helps us clarify our priorities: “*Physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come*” (1 Timothy:4:8)

Sports is good and beneficial when kept in perspective. Never should sports be allowed to crowd out time with God or become more important than seeking God’s kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33). Idols are not to be a part of the Christian

life (1 John 5:21). And in whatever we do, on or off the field, we are to do it all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

### 5.7 Can Sports Exist Without Religion?

Throughout history, humanity has invented sports primarily as a means to meet socially with others to display skills and physical prowess and to entertain or offer excitement. Many early cultures like the ancient Greeks and the Aztec Indians incorporated religious and political elements into their games but there was always a desire for recreational play that eventually inspired the codification of early games and the invention of new ones. Religion is defined as "*Human beings*" relation to that which they regard as holy, sacred, spiritual, divine. It is commonly regarded as consisting of a person's relation to God or to Gods or spirits. Worship is probably the most basic element of religion, but moral conduct, right belief and participation in religious institutions are generally also constituent elements of the religious life as practised by believers and as commanded by religious sages and scriptures. Functionalists have defined religion in terms of beliefs and actions related to ultimate concerns or symbols which formulate conceptions of a general order of existence<sup>250</sup>.

Religion is thus seen in one such model where all the rules, norms, values, dogmas, truth, denomination, conviction, and principles come out with one common meaning Beliefs, Creed, Doctrine, and Faith. "*Sport is an abbreviation; shortened form of disport meaning a diversion and an amusement. It has a rooted meaning in Latin which means carry away.*"<sup>251</sup> "*Sports and games are recreational or competitive activities that involve some amount of physical strength or skill*". Professionals define sports as an institutionalised physical activity in which rules are fixed externally and beforehand. In its broader concept it embraces athletics, games play, gymnastics and activities of an individual and team variety, competitive and non-competitive".<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Mann, M (1983) Macmillan Student Encyclopedia of Sociology. Macmillan Press.

<sup>251</sup> Brasch, R.O.B.E (1972) How Did Sports Begin? A Look at The Origins of Man. Longman

<sup>252</sup> Bennett, B.L (1975) Comparative Physical Education and Sports. Lea & Febeiger Publication

## 5.8 Role of Sports

Sports act as physical outlets; they allow participants to work out aggressive energies and emotions through involvement in the competitive recreational activity. Sports are accessible ways of gaining respect and admiration through the exhibition of skill and prowess. As entertainment, they provide diversion from the demands of day-to-day living and allow the spectator to enjoy much of the experience of play without actual involvement. Sports bring co-operation among individual groups and societies. It fosters friendship. It enhances discipline through the rules and regulations in a game. Sports contribute to social co-existence.

## 5.9 The Co-existence of Sports and Religion

The role of sport in the modern world may make it akin to the sacred, but it also highlights the role of the profane. In the Mediaeval period, sporting activities tended to remain part of the religious feasts and festivals until the Middle Ages when the sporting competitions began to be pursued on a regular basis outside the control of religious leaders. For many centuries, sport and games were under church control because of their concern for the body and soul. Sport competition was permitted only on holidays (holy days) associated with celebrations of religious rites or festivals (e.g., births, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, etc). Huizinga (1976) The French sports writer states that "the great competitions in archaic cultures had always formed part of the sacred festivals and were indispensable as health and happiness-bringing activities".

According to Brasch, (1972) *"the rainmaking priests of the primitive tribes were the first team of professional players whose sole task was to join in games of chance which they believed would force nature to precipitate rain"*.<sup>253</sup> Sports thus assumed a cosmic significance. During drought, people played particular games convinced that this would magically bring rain to enable their crops to grow. This association of prehistoric games with worship permeated with the classical period.

*"The Indian games of North America were essentially religious rites; they were more religion than play in today's meaning of the term. As such non-*

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<sup>253</sup> Brasch, R.O.B.E (1972) How Did Sports Begin? A Look at The Origins of Man. Longman

*Indians were not usually allowed to view these activities in their traditional form*"<sup>254</sup>.

Sporting pictures adorned the walls of Egyptian temples. The pharaohs and their nobles enjoyed sport, not merely as spectators but as participants. *"The Pythian games were closely linked with the oracle of Apollo and his shrine at Delphi"*. The Olympic games centred on the magnificent temple of Zeus at Olympia; and when the ancient Olympics begun in 776 B.C the Greeks offered sacrifices and took oaths in honour of Zeus to emphasise the games' religious significance. This religious phenomenon continued to be used by Pierre de Coubertin in his writings of the modern Olympic movement. The important source of this movement was the search for a *"humanistic"* or *"civil"* religion. Thus, the sentiments, themes, conceptions and actions pervading Olympism and the Olympic Games have religious connotations. The Rastafarian movement, which started in the West Indies in the 1930s, believes in spreading their religion through the reggae music and dance.

In the traditional African society, sports and religion were one functional unity. The wrestling contests of the Ibo of West Africa could not take place before the oracles of the hills gave their consent through the priests and priestesses of the clan. The elders of the two communities involved in the wrestling contest visited the shrines and consulted their Gods, offering sacrifices, led by their priests and priestesses, for blessings to ensure they won the contest. During the contest, the drummers beat their drums like those possessed and this it was believed signified the presence of the spirits who were the determinants in the results of the contest. In the modern society today, there are a number of interesting parallels between sports and religion, including the *"worship"* of athletes as Gods and heroes (e.g. Michael Jordan) the idolisation of former athletes in Sport Halls of Fame (Sebastian Coe), the daily *"reading"* of the sport pages by the *"devout"* fan, the collection of *"symbols of Faith"* such as trophies, baseballs, game balls, and sport-related souvenirs, and the charisma that is attached to the elites and leaders in the sport milieu. Sport and religion have often been used to

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<sup>254</sup> Coakley, J (1994) Sport in Society-Issues and Controversies. Mosby-Year Book Inc

create strong collective emotions and celebrate selected group values through rituals and public events.

Religious beliefs and rituals can provide athletes with physical and spiritual reinforcement, relieve anxiety, help them concentrate and face competition with confidence, and supply reasons for practising and developing physical skills. Willy White a former gold medallist in the women's long jump explained her success in the Olympic Games this way: *"I was nervous, so I read the New Testament. I read the verse about have no fear and I felt relaxed. Then I jumped further than I ever jumped before in my life"* (quoted in Life, 1984). Even though religion and sports have exhibited some form of social co-existence in many societies, it has not been without social inhibitions in other societies.

In 393 A.D the Christian Emperor of the Greeks; Emperor Theodosius, banned the ancient Olympic Games claiming it was a pagan festival. Among the Muslim and Hindu communities, religion control the extent to which women can participate in sports. This is manifested in international sporting events (e.g., the Olympics) Hindu and Islamic countries seldom have women athletes or women teams because women are not permitted to expose any parts of their bodies in public. The minority groups in Britain, came up with findings that Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists, do not participate in sports at all and the main reason is deeply rooted in their religious obligations. Hence physical activities among Muslims and Hindus are nearly always sex segregated; men are not allowed to look at women in certain settings and women must cover their bodies in certain ways even as they exercise. Norms such as these are very strong among fundamentals in each Religion.<sup>255</sup>

## 5.10 Conclusion

Sports have its beneficial effect not only on the human race's physical health and the promotion of modern skills, but also on its moral character. Sports is a *"quasi-religion"* because it shares with religion certain characteristics and social functions. Theologian Novak, M (1976) claims that sports are a form of *"natural"* religion because both are shaped by what they see as an impulse for freedom, respect for ritual limits, a

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<sup>255</sup> Verma, G.K & Derby, DS (1994) *Winners and Losers*. Burgess Science Press.

zest for symbolic meaning, and a longing for perfection. It is a type of godliness because they emerge out of the same quest for perfection in body, mind and spirit that leads people to form their conceptions of God-conceptions that always embody the ideals of a particular group or society. As described by Coakley (1994):

*"Religious rituals are increasingly used in conjunction with sport participation, and there are a few large non-denominational religious organisations that have been created for the sole purpose of attracting and converting athletes to Christian beliefs".*

Many critics would argue that in today's sports there is no direct link to religious beliefs or religious rituals. They are a means of entertainment rather than worship. They are not intended to transcend the material world; instead, they embody the immediacy and values of the material world. They are not part of the sacred even though many people may define them as important part of life. Despite all these sentiments, Sports became part and parcel of human social life. It is from these magical roots of primitive faith that our sport mainly grew. It owes its existence to the realm of religion. I talk of:

- Playing the game.
- Abide by the rules of the game
- Hitting below the belt.
- Being a spoilsport
- Global Institution

Studies of religions and sports in diverse cultural settings would not only increase our understanding of other cultures but they would also increase our abilities to reflect on our own experiences and ask critical questions that enable us to see more clearly the ways in which the cultural practices of religions and sports are integrated into our lives. Based on this observation, there is still a lot of evidence of a mutual interdependence between religion and sport. There are many religious values or practices present in sport, including ceremonies, rituals, and magic. These have remained a part of sport because it is commonly believed they are necessary for the continued institutionalisation of a sport or are somehow related to a particular sport.

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## Chapter-6

### THE SCOPE AND BENEFITS OF SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

#### 6.1 Introduction

Sport has become a growing phenomenon in our society and is one of the most prominent customs of prevalent culture throughout the world. Religion, on the other hand, has always been very prevalent throughout the world and has been the foundation of the world. We, as a society have shaped sports to be a form of religious devotion. The manifestations of traditional religion that are seen in the chapel are comparable to those seen in the stadium. The extreme fandom that we see as well as the rituals and formal procedures that are performed before, during and after sporting events resemble those performed for religious purposes. This part takes an in-depth look into some of the research into the connection between sport and religion as it takes the definition of religion and then compares it with sport.

In the mid-nineteenth century German philosopher Karl Marx in his Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right stated that "*Religion is the opiate of the masses.*" Now 150 years later in the start of the 21st century can it be posited that "*Sport is the opiate of the masses?*" This analogy has been asserted by many sociologists as well as psychologists today. Opiates are physically addicting drugs but also used in the field of medicine to ease suffering and has even helped to save many lives. Opium is the most effective drug in relieving pain, especially severe and excruciating pain. Although sport is not physically addicting, it can be psychologically addicting. Sport has become like an obsession in our society, therefore to proclaim that sport is an opiate would not be implausible.

Sport is capable of reducing the stress of everyday life for the fan by moving their attention from the pressures and struggles of daily life into the exhilaration and enjoyment of the game. Nevertheless, in recent years several scholars have compared sport to religion believing that sport has become a form of religious devotion. Worship, prayer, fellowship with others, ceremonies and rituals are all expressions of religion; however, we see all of these same types of expressions performed toward sport throughout the world. It should come as no surprise that the spirit or excitement, the activities and rituals that we see in sport today parallels that of religion.



People do not often think about religion when talking about sport. These two systems have never been linked to one another as much as they have in recent years. Normally, one would not connect sport which is fun, competitive, intense, and in some instances violent in nature, to that of religion, which in contrast is often viewed as somber, reverent, and sacred in nature. Not many would associate the attendance at church or a temple in traditional religion with one's attendance in the gymnasium or arena in sport. Many would not link the rituals performed in religion with rituals performed in sport, however *"there are numerous examples of identity between religion and sport rituals in the public sphere."*

Shirl Hoffman, author of *Sport and Religion*, compared sport to religion versus sport for entertainment. He stated that:

*'Sport is not merely fun and games, not merely diversions, not merely an entertainment. A ballpark is not a temple, but it isn't a fun house either. A baseball game is not entertainment, and a ballplayer is considerably more than a paid performer. No one can explain the passion, commitment, discipline and dedication involved in sport by evasions like these. Sport is more like religion than like entertainment. Believers in sport do not go to sporting events to be entertained; to plays and dramas, maybe, but not to sport. Sport is far more serious than the dramatic arts, much closer to primal symbols, metaphors, and acts, much more ancient and more frightening. Sport is a mystery of youth and aging, perfect action and decay, fortune and misfortune, strategy and contingency. Sport is rituals concerning human survival on this planet: liturgical enactments of animal perfection and the struggles of the human spirit to prevail. If sport was entertainment, why should we care? It is far more than that. So, when we see them abused, our natural response is the rise of vomit in the throat.'*<sup>256</sup>

## **6.2 Relation Between Sports and Religion**

Sport shares many similarities to religion so the displays that are seen in religion are also seen in sport. As striking as it may be, it is not hard to see the

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<sup>256</sup> Hoffman, *Sport and Religion*, 38.

numerous connections that exist between the two if the facts are examined. Michael Novak writes,

*“Sport is religious in the sense that they are organized institutions, disciplines and liturgies and also in the sense that they teach religious qualities of heart and soul. In the most literal of ways, words like sacred, devotion, faith, ritual, immortality, and love, which figure prominently in the structure of belief in religion, are also among those found in the language of the national pastime.”*

Both deal with dedication, sacrifice, commitment, suffering, pain, festival, and celebration. It also has been regarded as a shaper and reinforcer of values, such as developing character, hard-work habits, perseverance, commitment and more.<sup>257</sup> Sport has taken on properties of ritualistic behavior in a controlled environment in which strong emotion is visibly expressed. This is a social function that is normally attributed to religion, e.g., worship. *“The aspect of sport that so invites a comparison with religion is the intense excitement and the spirit of community it generates.”* It is not irrational to believe that the collective excitement, or as Emile Durkheim terms it *‘Effervescence,’* that is seen within sport is similar to religious ceremonies that take place. For many people, going to a stadium or ballpark is like attending church. Think about how the Olympics are constructed today, they begin and end with glorious ceremonies and rituals in massive stadiums. We can easily compare the Super Bowl to a religious festival as well.

- Sport has a body of formally stated beliefs, accepted on faith by great masses of people.
- Sport has its *"saints"* -- those departed souls who in their lives exemplified and made manifest the prescription of the dogma of the sport.
- Sport also has its ruling patriarchs, a prestigious group of coaches, managers, and sportsmen who exercise controlling influence over national sport organizations.
- Sport has its *"Gods"* -- star and superstar athletes who, though powerless to alter their own situations, wield great influence and charisma over the masses of fans.

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<sup>257</sup> Hoffman, Sport and Religion, 8.

- Sport has its high councils, controlled or greatly influenced by patriarchs who make and interpret the rules of sport involvement.

- Sport has its scribes -- the hundreds of sport reporters, sport telecasters, and sport broadcasters whose primary duties are to record the ongoing history of sport and to disseminate its dogma.

- Sport has its "*symbols of faith*" -- trophies; game balls, the bats, gloves, baseballs, and so forth that 'won' this or that game; the clothing, shoes, headgear or socks of immortal personages of sports.

- Sport has its "*seekers of the kingdom*", its true believers, devotees, and converts.

- Sport has its shrines—the national halls of fame and thousands of trophy rooms and cases.

- Sport has its "*houses of worship*" spread across the land where millions congregate to bear witness to the manifestations of their faith.<sup>258</sup>

Think about ballparks, stadiums and coliseums in sport in comparison to temples, sanctuaries, and chapels in religion. They are all houses of worship where believers come together in unison to celebrate their beliefs. These sport stadiums and arenas resemble those cathedrals and temples where followers gather to worship and pray for success. In both, there are many rituals that occur which are organized and structured. If one goes into any stadium or ballpark or any sporting event for that matter, they will notice the unity of handclapping, chants, encouragements and booing of the opponent. Attending a religious service, one will also notice the unity of handclapping, chanting and singing of hymns. On the other hand, there are many rituals that are "*spur of the moment*" or unstructured such as someone suddenly shouting in tongues in a sanctuary or the outbursts of fans toward a referee or opponent.

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<sup>258</sup> Hoffman, Sport and Religion, 41

### **6.3 More than a Game**

For sport to be considered a parallel to religion it cannot discard any of the elements that religion presents. Religion is more than playing games and, on the other hand, sport, for many fans, also is more than just playing games. In addition, if in fact the religious aspect is found in sport then sport cannot simply be condensed to playing games too. There must be something deeper found. If this is the case then sport shares a transcendent euphoria that religion entails. Just as those who adhere to religious faith because it connects them to the “*ultimate*” as well as it bringing them into a new consciousness, sport also can provide the fan with a transcendent experience. For these devoted fans, being dedicated to something greater than themselves gives them a new feeling, a feeling that connects them to a higher level or the “*ultimate*.” Sport contains a transcendent quality that gives devoted fans meaning to their everyday life, giving them a greater identity, and allowing them to see their self in a more positive way. It can provide hope to one but also can deliver misery and despair upon one. Sport would not be correctly portrayed if the transcendent quality of sport was not mentioned.

### **6.4 Legendary Figures**

The legends and historical accounts that are preserved through generations are what complete religious tradition. Religions need a strong legendary basis to complement the historical data of the faith. For instance, in Christianity there are stories of the parting of the Red Sea and the building of an ark due to the Flood, however these stories could not be absolute without their legendary figures, Moses and Noah. Legendary figures offer faithful believers a leader to emulate and model themselves after, and in some cases, to worship. These types of legendary figures are seen all throughout religious history; Jesus, Muhammad, Malcolm X, Dalai Lama, Joseph Smith, Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Samson, David. Sport is no different; it has its legendary figures, historical stories and myths. When discussing the legendary figures of sport, there is no doubt that it will include those figures like Michael Jordan, Babe Ruth, Pele, Lionel Messi, Zinedine Zidane, Ted Williams, Larry Bird, Joe Montana, Tiger Woods, Wayne Gretsky. These legends are worshipped throughout the entire

world as they provide for their respective sport an archetypical model that holds true for future generations, similar to those legendary figures in traditional religion.<sup>259</sup>

## 6.5 Sports and Philosophy of Religion

Looking at both sport and religion from a societal perspective, one can see the relation and similarities between the two. One can understand the religious nature of sport and how the elements that are found within religion are also found within sport. Sport has become an obsession in this society as it can be seen with the numerous billion-dollar industries in sport including fantasy sport. It has forced society to cater to the demand of fans that put the majority of their time, energy and focus into sport.

*“The parallel between religion and sport might not be so far-fetched as one might think. As a result of mystical commitments, sport and religion open man towards the acceptance and actualization of being”.*

A partial answer is now uncovered to our obvious difficulty in defining sport. Basically, sport, like religion defies definition. In a manner it goes beyond definitive terminology. Neither has substance which can be identified. In a sense both sport and religion are beyond essence.”<sup>260</sup> The comparisons are plenty when it comes to sport and religion. The spirit and rituals that are seen in sport today have become the same as seen in religious practices. Sport takes the form of religious devotion in many ways as it can be seen through the ceremonies and festivals like the Super Bowl, the rituals that fans perform such as face and body painting, or even the intense excitement and spirit of community generated. Even the jargon normally associated with religion is seen throughout sport. Words like faith, sacred, love, sacrifice, and dedication are now being associated with sport. Religion is a difficult term to define, however it can only be defined by its characteristics.

It is made up of beliefs that are held by group of people, which is the community or church. Religion involves that which is sacred and profound, rites, rituals, and ceremonies or festivals. Sport is also another term that is not exactly defined but described by its characteristics. The numerous connections that sport and

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<sup>259</sup> Hoffman, Sport and Religion, 49.

<sup>260</sup> Hoffman, Sport and Religion, 141.

religion have allowed for society today to notice the close parallel between sport and religion. The spaces that these systems occupy are even comparable. One can compare the religious importance that both Madison Square Garden and the Sistine Chapel have on their followers as they both are iconic houses of worship. The expressions performed in the “*sacred space*” of both systems are no different to one another.

One will experience the unity of clapping, singing, chants, and encouragement in both. The ritualistic behavior of the believers in both systems is a major reason why this comparison has been made. Rituals in traditional religion such as communion or the singing of a holy song have incredible significance just as the singing of the national anthem or the singing of “*Take Me Out to the Ball Game*” in baseball has. The festivals of Easter, Christmas, and Hanukkah bring together devout believers, no different than the way a championship game in sport brings together its followers. They both deal with shaping the individual and strengthening values.

As sport is similar to religion in these subtle ways, they both are similar in their radical ways as well. Religion, undeniably, has a well-documented history of radicalism however, as a result of its followers, sport shares religion’s fanaticism. Just as religion has religious wars, sport is no different with its soccer wars. In the same manner, just as religion has its followers sacrifice their life and commit suicide for what they believe in, sport likewise has had its followers sacrifice their own life for their sport. As powerful as religion is, sport is just as powerful on its followers as they commit their life to their sport or team. Followers endure pain and suffering but also the glory and the celebration that go with winning. The fandom of the followers in sport is another key reason to why this comparison is made. The extreme actions and ritualistic activities that fans partake in are similar to those that are participated within religion.

Whether that is aggressive behavior from fans toward one another or toward players or if that is praying during the last seconds of a big game hoping our team scores and win, it is no different than traditional religion. Murdering, persecuting, or harassing one for having a different belief in religion is similar to the murdering, persecuting or harassing that occur in sport because of one’s love for a different team. It would be logical to believe that this kind of identification with a team or sport or even player is unhealthy but researchers suggests that it gives fans meaning to their daily lives and is a buffer against depression while increasing self-esteem. This is not unlike those followers of traditional religion giving rise to the impressions of joy, interior peace, serenity, and enthusiasm as proof of their beliefs.

Looking at sport and recognizing that it parallels religion, can we determine that in this 21st -century society that “*Sport is the opiate of the masses?*” The similarities that are seen between sport and religion make it difficult not to concur with this statement since sport has the same effect on its community of followers as traditional religion has on its community of followers.

## **6.6 The Spiritual Benefits of Sports**

Keep our self-motivated knowing that we will be setting ourselves up to gain the following spiritual benefits of regular exercise. We can become the person God designed to be.

### ***a) Brain power***

There are numerous studies showing the benefits of exercise on the brain and its health. Exercise delivers a fresh supply of blood and oxygen to the brain. This clears the mind of stress, anxiety, depression, sadness, and anger. A well-functioning brain improves our ability to benefit from reading the Bible, to focus in prayer, and be sensitive to the needs of those around us.

### ***b) Physical agility***

A strong healthy body helps invigorate our spiritual life. It gives us the ability to help others in ways they can't help themselves. It aids our body in removing toxins and waste that can clog up our organs and make us slow, sick and tired. If we resign ourselves to sitting and lying around without regular vigorous physical activity, our muscles and body organs become weak. Illness will invade the inactive body like weeds invade an untended yard. Instead of helping others, we'll rely upon others to help us. While circumstances beyond our control may place some of us in the position of needing to be helped, it's not a position we should choose.

### ***c) A sense of purpose***

Mowing someone else's lawn, volunteering to clean a park, roadside or beach, or putting a fresh coat of paint on a community building are just a few ways to make ourselves useful and get exercise at the same time. Useful physical activity gives us a sense of accomplishment and gets us outside of ourselves. It adds purpose to our existence, enhancing our sense of well-being.

### ***d) Resistance to temptation***

We have heard it said, idle hands are the devil’s workshop. Although not found verbatim in the Bible, there’s truth to this familiar proverb. God commanded His people to work 6 days and rest of the seventh (Exodus 20:8). This happened all the way back in the Garden of Eden before Adam and Eve sinned (Genesis 2:3). Lack of exercise or useful physical activity frees up time for other less virtuous pursuits. On the flip side, regular exercise and useful physical activity helps to strengthen our character and helps us to say no to temptations to do things that could draw us away from God.

## **6.7 Benefits of Playing Sport**

- *Better Sleep*
- *A Strong Heart*
- *New Connections*
- *Improved Lung Function*
- *Increased Confidence*
- *Reduces Stress*
- *Improve Mental Health*
- *Sport Builds Leaders*

### ***6.7.1. Many athletes do better academically***

Playing a sport requires a lot of time and energy. Some people may think this would distract student-athletes from schoolwork. However, the opposite is true. Sports require memorization, repetition and learning — skillsets that are directly relevant to class work. Also, the determination and goal-setting skills a sport requires can be transferred to the classroom.<sup>261</sup>

### ***6.7.2. Sports teach teamwork and problem-solving skills***

Fighting for a common goal with a group of players and coaches teaches us how to build teamwork and effectively communicate to solve problems. This experience is helpful when encountering problems at work or at home.

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<sup>261</sup> <https://theconversation.com/why-sport-is-a-spiritual-experience-and-failure-can-help-65871>



### **6.7.3. Physical health benefits of sports**

Clearly, sports can help us reach our fitness goals and maintain a healthy weight. However, they also encourage healthy decision-making such as not smoking and not drinking. Sports also have hidden health benefits such as lowering the chance of osteoporosis or breast cancer later in life.

### **6.7.4. Sports boost self-esteem**

Watching our hard work pay off and achieving our goals develops self-confidence. Achieving a sport or fitness goal encourages us to achieve other goals we set. This is a rewarding and exciting learning process.

### **6.7.5. Reduce pressure and stress with sports**

Exercising is a natural way to loosen up and let go of stress. We can also make new friends who can be there for us as a support system. When we feel under pressure or stressed, we call up a teammate, head to the gym to talk and play it out.<sup>262</sup>

## **6.8 The advantages of Sports in Philosophy**

There are a number of advantages specifically associated with partaking in team sports. Team sports are by definition group pastimes, whether it's on the sports field or court, or at a more general collective event, such as a post-match meal. You can make a lot of friends through sports. It can also be a great way to network with the wider community.

➤ **Learning** - Playing in a team can be a great way to improve our sporting expertise. This can take the form of receiving informal advice from more experienced players, or it can be through more formalized team coaching. Either way, it's learning that we may not have got in a solo sport.

➤ **Motivation** - Turning up for practices and making ourselves available for matches, or other forms of competition can seem like a chore sometimes. If there's just ourselves to consider, we can find ourselves bailing out more often than we should. If we are committed to a team, there's more motivation, as we don't want to let the team down.

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<sup>262</sup> <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244019837460>

➤ **Working in tandem** - There is a certain sort of satisfaction that comes from participating in a co-operative group. It is also a wonderful way to learn how humans can work together in groups to maximize their achievements. The knowledge that is learned on the sports field can also be used in other areas of life, such as the workplace.

➤ **Shared skills** - In many teams, different members perform different roles. This means that our position in a team can reflect our individual set of strengths and weaknesses. We learn to value and respect people with other skill sets, and appreciate how each individual can help the team in different ways.

## 6.9 Exercise & Its Relationship with Spirituality



Spirituality can mean many things for many different people, it means self-reflection, acceptance, and understanding. Understanding exercise and its relationship with spirituality will allow to validate the fitness plan and help to change the standpoint in life continuously. The knowledge on how beneficial exercise can be when it comes to the spiritual health.

### ***A, Exercising Allows to Feel Alive and Happy***

Allowing to engage in fitness—more important than any physical results—will help to feel alive and happy. Not only can this benefit the mindfulness but also overall health! The better we feel from a physical perspective, the better we sense of well-being will be. So, while our well-being is at an all-time high due to exercising, we can certainly enjoy the perks of a healthy body, and attain the presence of Almighty too.<sup>263</sup>

### ***B, It Helps to Grow in Ways More Than Physical***

Exercise is a state where to engage not only the life but also the life's challenge. It's a great way to overcome the aspects of oneself and grow as a whole being. Involving in any physical practice can indeed help to mirror all of the:

- Fears
- Doubts
- And other hindrances in the life

### ***C, Exercising Expands the Comfort Zone***

While we may feel intimidated when stepping into a fitness venture, this can help to become a conqueror in our practice. Fitness practice is one of the perfect ways one can do to challenge and push the limits. Not only that, but this can also encourage to expand the physical and mental thresholds.

### ***D, It Tests the Will***

During a workout, there are two options that never cease to come up, and that is deciding whether to push through and finish what to start or just shy away. Each type of exercise will test our will. There will be times when part of one self wants to stop and quit already, but keep going anyway. As fitness practice tests the will, it exercises the intention and strengthens, determination, overriding the strength.

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<sup>263</sup> Anthony Maranise, *Sport & the Spiritual Life: The Integration of Playing & Praying* CMC, OblSB 2013.p.53

***E, Exercise Gives a Moment to Breathe***

Exercise also acts as active physical meditation, helping to have focus and have control of the breathing. Physical meditation also helps to feel at ease when under pressure and to further recover during and after a vigorous exercise, allows to breathe strength and intention.

***F, It Quiets the Mind Down***

Sports is one of the best things we can do to find a greater presence within our self. Fitness practice can make fully present and focused as well. Indeed, a regular fitness routine also serves as a spiritual practice, benefiting the mental health. This is a better way to help to stop worrying about the future, instead concentrate on the now, and what we can do.

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## Chapter-7

### THE RELIGIOUS SPORTS PEOPLE

#### 7.1 The few Most Religious Athletes in Sports

For as long as sports has been around, there have been many athletes open about their faith and not afraid to express it to the world. Whether it's been something as simple as thanking God after a tournament, a touchdown, or a player doing the sign of the cross before an at-bat, or expressing thanks after a game, spirituality has played a part in many athletes' lives. Many times, they're outspoken about it, and it could rub some people the wrong way. While it may not be as common today, religion still has its hold on athletes. Here are few of the most religious active athletes.

#### Clint Dempsey



He just captained the United States in their recent World Cup run. Clint Dempsey is open about his faith as a devout Roman Catholic. He has not been shy in saying he prays a lot for God to help him in his profession. Dempsey grew up going to church every Sunday and at 12 years old, had an experience that had him questioning his faith. His sister died from a brain aneurysm and he struggled for year to find faith. He says he did, and went to the bible for answers. *"I found that questioning Him and searching for answers through Scripture helped me grow and gave me direction,"* he said in an interview with the Huffington Post. *"Now my faith in Christ is what gives me confidence for the future. I know that through both good times and bad, He is faithful and will watch over me."*

## **Jimmer Fredette**



New Orleans Pelican Jimmer Fredette was raised by a Mormon father, who converted when he was 18. Fredette grew up going to church and was baptized as a Mormon at the age of 10. Fredette went on to play basketball at BYU, which is owned and operated by the LDS Church.

## **Josh Hamilton**



As is the case with many drug and alcohol addicts, Josh Hamilton turned to faith and spirituality to turn his life around. He has never been shy about expressing his belief that Jesus helped him recover and stay on the right path. He wrote an autobiography, *Beyond Belief*, which describes in detail his road to recovery and how God was the reason he was able to overcome his addictions. Hamilton went through a

relapse in 2009 and his first words about it publicly were that his relationship with God must come first.

### **Venus And Serena Williams**



Venus and Serena Williams have dominated women's tennis for years, and the two are both devout Jehovah's Witnesses. They were raised that way, homeschooled by their mother. In John 17:14 and other passages in the Bible, Jesus says of his followers: "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world".

### **Philip Rivers**



Philip Rivers is very active Catholics. Rivers has spoken to kids many times about the importance of faith and has tried to spread the message of abstaining from premarital sex. Once you're married though, all bets are off.

### **Ian Kinsler**



Ian Kinsler has become quite a prominent figure in the Jewish community, donating time and money to various causes. He's done all this while being one of the very best second basemen in the game today. His father is Jewish, while his mother is Catholic. In 2008, Kinsler won the Rangers' Jim Sundberg Community Achievement Award, which was a way of commemorating him for his devout work in the community.

### **Jake Peavy**



San Francisco Giants' pitcher Jake Peavy has described himself as a devout Christian since the age of seven. He has been interviewed many times about his faith.



In an interview with [cbn.com](http://cbn.com), he described the moment he first became a devout Christian. *"I remember I was at Moffat Road Baptist Church, where I grew up with all my friends and family, and probably didn't understand nearly enough, but I knew enough to understand I wanted to be saved and wanted Jesus to be Lord of my life,"* Jake said. *"What an awesome experience."* In that same interview, the former Cy Young Award winner says that God is who helps him with his baseball career. *"He's the reason that I believe I'm able to do what I do. There's no way I can tell you that on my own I can go out and be able to perform in some of these stadiums and some of these atmospheres."*

### **Dmitriy Salita**



Dmitriy Salita is a Ukrainian-born welterweight boxer. He is a practicing Orthodox Jew. So much so, that he doesn't fight on the Sabbath (Saturday) or any Jewish holidays and he keeps kosher. In total, there are over 70 holy days a year during which he refuses to fight. He holds a professional record of 33-1-1 with 17 knockouts. Salita says no matter how famous he gets; he would never compromise his beliefs. *"Never. It's not a question. I have a personal relationship with God that I won't compromise. My boxing is such a big part of my life, but it won't get in the way of my religion. It can't, and it won't."* He trains near a Synagogue, always within walking distance. He even enters the ring to Yiddish rap.

## **Manny Pacquiao**



Another man born in the Philippines, Manny Pacquiao was born and raised as a Catholic, and converted to Evangelicalism. Pacquiao actually recently made some news, when he threw down a Bible quote on Floyd Mayweather, warning him of God's mysterious ways. "He (Mayweather) should fear God," Pacquiao said, advising him to heed the biblical passage reading "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Great, so when will they fight? Anyway, Pacquiao has credited his newfound faith in turning his life around, saying he was spinning out of control with drinking, gambling and unfaithfulness to his wife.

## **Tim Tebow**



Tim Tebow hasn't played in the NFL since the 2012 season, but the fans have still made a connection with him, due to his polarizing nature and his outspoken demeanor on his religious beliefs. Tebow's parents were living as Baptist Missionaries in the Philippines at the time of Tim's birth. All the Tebow children were homeschooled

and raised as Christians. Tebow has spoken in many schools, prisons and churches sharing his faith. He has also taken a vow of abstinence until marriage. His act of "Tebowing" was all the craze three years ago. His series of miracle last-minute victories even had non-religious folks wondering if there really was a higher power helping him and the Broncos.

In the sports, each game has the prayer session to seek the help from their own beliefs. There are so many international players pray to God before the game and after the game. The Argentinian Football player Lionel Messi and Brazilian Football Player Neymar is the best example for this.





Some players make some pilgrimages to the religious places, like Belgium player Romelu Lukaku goes each year to Lourdes in order to pray mother Mary. Some players go to Mecca as a pilgrimage. German outstanding football players like Mesut Ozil and Franck Ribery pray before the game and their prayers are very famous.<sup>264</sup>

## **7.2 The Most Religious Athletes**

The round-the-clock media circus that surrounds Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow has pushed spirituality in professional sports into the spotlight. Tebow's on-the-field prayer and good-natured embracing of the "*Tebowing*" phenomena have been highlighted by every sports publication in the country at this point. Tebow might be the most high-profile religious athlete in the world at the moment, but he's certainly not the only athlete with an outspoken enthusiasm for his faith. There have been a number of professional athletes and coaches, past and present, who didn't shy away from the subject of spirituality. Here are 20 of the Most Religious Athletes in Sports

### **Philip Rivers**

Chargers quarterback Philip Rivers is very active in the Catholic church.

Rivers speaks to young people about spirituality and the importance of abstaining from premarital sex.

### **Tony Dungy**

Former NFL coach Tony Dungy is a deeply religious man who was appointed by former President George W. Bush to serve on the President's Faith Council.

Dungy doesn't often speak publicly on religion, but rather takes public positions on certain issues and steps in to mentor troubled NFL players.

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<sup>264</sup> Thomas A, *Champions of Faith: Catholic Sports Heroes Tell Their Stories*, O'Toole Rowman & Littlefield - 2001

**Josh Hamilton**

Josh Hamilton had a well-reported history with drug and alcohol abuse and called his recovery "a God thing."

He's been *mostly* clean since 2005 and takes every opportunity to share his stories of how Jesus brought him back from the edge and what keeps him going today.

**Dikembe Mutombo**

Retired NBA player Dikembe Mutombo is a devout Baptist who was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and has devoted most of his life to humanitarian work there.

He's a spokesman for the international relief agency CARE and has worked for the United Nations Development Program.

Mutombo was invited to the 2007 State of the Union Address and was specifically referred to as a "son of the Congo" by then-President George W. Bush.

**Jimmer Fredette**

Sacramento Kings guard Jimmer Fredette is the world's most popular Mormon.

Fredette had offers from 12 schools coming out of high school, but ultimately chose to attend Brigham Young University, which was his older sister's alma mater.

**Morgan Pressel**

LPGA star Morgan Pressel is only 17, but she's already one of the best female golfers in the world.

Pressel is Jewish and has said that her faith plays a huge part in her life; she even met her first boyfriend in Bible class at the private Episcopalian high school she attended.

**Chad Curtis**

Chad Curtis retired from baseball in 2001, but he was very outspoken about his religious beliefs during his time in MLB.

While he was playing for the Yankees, as many as 25 players attended weekly chapel sessions or daily prayer services led by Curtis, the chapel leader.

Curtis was very open with his teammates and urged those he felt were "heading down wrong roads" to reevaluate their lives and embrace religion.

### **Deion Sanders**

Retired cornerback Deion Sanders was one of the biggest superstar athletes in the world during his career, but has stated he had nothing until he found God.

Sanders has discussed not wanting to sleep in his \$10,000 bed, not wanting to come home to his 15,000 square-foot home, and not wanting to drive his collection of luxury cars, as his "Prime Time" persona left him feeling empty.

Today he finds meaning in mentoring troubled youth through programs such as those offered by the Boys & Girls Club of America.

### **Ian Kinsler**

Texas Rangers second baseman Ian Kinsler is Jewish and has become a prominent figure in the Jewish community in recent years; having donated a great deal of his time and money to various causes.

Kinsler's Jewish heritage makes him eligible to play for Team Israel in the 2013 World Baseball Classic, but has said that if he is invited to play for Team USA, he will have an extremely difficult decision on his hand.

### **Hakeem Olajuwon**

Retired NBA legend Hakeem Olajuwon was known as an undisciplined trash-talker who racked up technical fouls and scrapped with players during his early years in the league.

Later in his career, he took a greater interest in spirituality and became a more devout Muslim.

After retirement, Olajuwon and his family moved to Jordan to focus on Islamic studies, but he still returns a few times a year to visit former teammates and engage in various charitable endeavors.

**Jeff Kent**

Retired slugger Jeff Kent converted to Mormonism in 1989 and has said that it changed his life.

Kent said that, as a Mormon, he didn't engage in a lot of the off-field activities that are usually associated with professional athletes.

Kent was well-known for his strained relationship with teammate Barry Bonds while on the Giants and more recently for his generous donations to the Prop 8 campaign in California, a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage.

**Reggie White**

The late, great Green Bay Packer legend Reggie White was nicknamed "The Minister of Defense" because of his devout Christian faith. White was an ordained Evangelical minister.

White was impacted by the rash of arsons at African-American churches in the mid-90s when the Knoxville, Tennessee church, where he served as associate minister, was burned to the ground in 1996.

**Bill Goldberg**

Retired football player/wrestler Bill Goldberg is best known for his undefeated winning streak (174-1) in World Championship Wrestling and World Wrestling Entertainment.

Goldberg is Jewish and has said that he had a spiritual awakening later in his career, but even early on, he made his religious identity a cornerstone of his professional identifies.

Today he is active in a number of charitable causes and is one of the leading advocates for animal welfare and a spokesman for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

**Carl Everett**

Though it seems a fair amount of religiously outspoken athletes "practice what they preach" in their own lives, retired MLB player Carl Everett probably wouldn't be considered one of them.



Everett is very well known for his dinosaur-denial stance, saying:

*"God created the sun, the stars, the heavens and earth, and then made Adam and Eve. The Bible never says anything about dinosaurs. You can't say there were dinosaurs when you never saw them. Somebody actually saw Adam and Eve. No one ever saw a Tyrannosaurus rex."*

During his career Everett had numerous nasty altercations with umpires and had said of the possibility of having an openly gay teammate that he would "set him straight" because "Gays being gay is wrong" and that he "doesn't believe in being gay."

In 2011, Everett was arrested in Florida on charges of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and witness tampering, after reportedly holding a handgun to the head of his wife of 18 years.

It actually feels kind of wrong to call Everett "religious" after all that; more like intolerant psychopathic behavior masquerading as "religion."

### **Steve Young**

Retired quarterback Steve Young is a well-known Mormon who attended Brigham Young University.

And Young isn't just *any* Mormon, he's actually the great-great-great-grandson of the actual Brigham Young; the second President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

That's legit.

Young is also a humanitarian with his own charitable foundation, the Forever Young Foundation, which serves underprivileged children from all backgrounds and provides opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

### **Joe Gibbs**

Retired NFL coach and NASCAR team owner Joe Gibbs and his wife Melissa are devout Christians.

Gibbs addressed the 2008 Republican National Convention and spoke on behalf of John McCain and Sarah Palin, insisting their election would lead to a "spiritual awakening" in the United States.

Although, after the speech he said that partisan politics felt a little "awkward" for him.

### **A.C. Green**

Retired NBA player A.C. Green converted to Christianity while in high school in Hermiston, Oregon.

Green has insisted that he began and ended his NBA career as a virgin, despite teammates sending him women in an attempt to corrupt his morals.

He responded by calmly quoting scripture to the lucky ladies.

Today he runs the A.C. Green Youth Foundation which promotes abstinence until marriage.

### **Kurt Warner**

Retired NFL quarterback Kurt Warner and his wife Brenda are devout evangelical Christians.

After winning the Super Bowl with the Rams and being named the game's MVP, Warner famously thanked Jesus, his Lord and Savior, before answering any postgame questions.

Warner believes in faith healing and believes that God healed him from a serious concussion he suffered in 2000.

### **Muhammed Ali**

Retired boxing legend Muhammed Ali converted to the Nation of Islam in the mid-60s.

He became a lightning rod of controversy during the tumultuous time, and often took conflicting positions on issues like civil rights.

Ali converted to mainstream Sunni Islam in 1975 and in 2005 he embraced the spiritual practices of Sufism.

**Mariano Rivera**

Yankee's pitcher Mariano Rivera and his wife Clara, who he has known since elementary school, are devout Christians.

Rivera's upbringing wasn't particularly religious, but that all changed after becoming "born-again" in his mid-20s.

He believes that "everything happens for a reason" and cites the Yankees 2001 World Series loss as proof.

Had the Yankees won Game 7, teammate Enrique Wilson would have remained in New York a few extra days and would have flown to his home in the Dominican Republic on American Airlines Flight 587, which crashed after takeoff and killed all 260 on board.

Rivera's pitching glove is inscribed with the Bible verse "Phil. 4:13."

**Allyson Felix**

American track and field phenom Allyson Felix is the daughter of a Christian pastor and isn't afraid to talk about her faith.

At the London Olympics in 2012, Felix is expected to meet or exceed her multiple gold medal winning performance at the Beijing Olympics, but she says her main goal in life is becoming more "Christ-like" and that everything else is secondary.

**Curt Schilling**

Retired Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling is a born-again Christian who has been outspoken about his religious beliefs, as well as political leanings.

Schilling is very active in charitable causes and has donated time and money to organizations that support sufferers of ALS and Asperger's syndrome, and funds cancer research.

He and his wife each have their own charitable organization.

**Tim Tebow**

Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow is basically the poster boy for religion in professional sports.

Tebow was born in the Philippines to two parents serving as Christian Baptist missionaries and was the first home-schooled athlete to win the Heisman Trophy.

Tebow isn't shy about showing his faith and even embraced "Tebowing," the national sensation derived from his penchant for on-field prayer.

**Amar'e Stoudemire**

New York Knick Amar'e Stoudemire has said that his Jewish heritage is something "that has played a subtle but important role in (his) development."

In recent years he's visited Israel in order to further explore his heritage and it's been reported recently that Stoudemire is considering opening a Hebrew school. <sup>265</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> <https://bleacherreport.com/articles/962060-the-25-most-religious-athletes>

### **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

This Doctrinal thesis is all about constructing the God Experience on Musical and Sportive knowledge. The constructive way of this project is made on the basis of the critical analysis on philosophy of religion. Musical and sportive knowledge both offer great skills and benefits that not only improve one's lifestyle, but they complement each other so that a musician can find benefits from being athletic and an athlete can discover benefits for being musical. In my opinion, the musical training can increase physical co-ordination and motor skill ability, and vice versa, that being an athlete can improve a musician's skills and performances. Although there is currently no research on outcome measures of individuals who study both music and sport simultaneously. Here I could make intriguing findings that offer both musicians and athletes information that can help to take their performances to the next level i.e., spirituality. I assert that Music and sports are an essential activity for God experience as it so beneficial in finding the ultimate reality.

Sports can be seen as just a simple way of entertaining but they can be taken far away by making use of their real benefits. What kinds of benefits? There will be another fold dimension of spiritual attainment. When a person beyond this musical and sportive knowledge can attain inner peace that will pave the way of God experience. Sports work as an excellent physical exercise which provides a more positive body image to the people who practice them; it is not about who is thinner than the other but those who care about their own health exercise have the potential to improve the quality of long-duration performances. The spiritual path is humankind's virtuous attempt to navigate toward a life of personal fulfilment and ultimate discovery, embodied in human compassion. The religious texts prescribe various codes, practices, and rituals as learning guides on the sacred journey represented by the spiritual path.

The connection between sport and spirituality might seem hard to see at first. We may not see much evidence of spirituality at a soccer match, with 22 men running around a field chasing a ball and another 50,000 men shouting and gesticulating at them; or when we see two men throwing punches at each other in a boxing ring, or horses being whipped by jockeys as they race around a track. But there is a pronounced - thought usually hidden - psychic and spiritual aspect to sport, which the best sportsmen are familiar with, even though they may not use the word 'Spiritual' to describe it. There is a hidden spirituality of passion on every effort. And when they are engaged to regular, they will be in the stage of 'Ecstasy'. Ecstasy is the most prominent

element of the God experience. They are united with God in their event there they won't think of winning but only the participation of gaining the God experience. In fact, it's possible to say for some people the desire to experience spiritual well-being is one reason they play sports.

A chess player may tell that when he plays the game he has 'a general sense of well-being, a feeling of complete control' over his world. Similarly, a singer may tell: 'A strong relaxation and calmness comes over me. So, I have no worries of failure'. Whether these states are genuinely 'spiritual' or not is debatable, since they don't involve experiencing any transpersonal or transcendent reality. Perhaps we can think of them as a kind of 'base level' spirituality, the point when spiritual experience begins. The traditional Hindu philosophy eight-limbed path of yoga refers to as 'Dharana' usually translated as 'Concentration' which comes before the deeper spiritual states of 'Dhyana' (meditation) and 'Samadhi' (union with the divine). This same process happens in the field of sportive and musical knowledge.

Why is it that sportive and musical knowledge is important to generate spiritual states? Perhaps the best answer is to compare it to a more traditional method of inducing spiritual states, the practice of meditation. We can look at meditation as a method of intensifying - and purifying - what we could call our 'consciousness-energy'. This is the energy of our being, our vitality or life force. In our daily lives there is a constant outward flow of this energy. It's used up by the 'thought chatter' that continually runs through our minds, by the efforts we make to absorb and process the massive amount of sensory information we're bombarded with, and to perform the activities which our lives are filled with. As a result, there's usually little of this energy left inside us. This process is done through sportive and musical knowledge. As we've seen knowledge is the power. This power is the divine power which will be attained after a long period of meditation and passion.

When we meditate, all this happens by sitting in a quiet room on our own and closing our eyes. And if our meditation is successful, we plug the first and most significant 'energy leak': the thought activity that runs through our body and mind. As we concentrate on our 'mantra' this 'thought chatter' naturally fades away until - hopefully - it stops altogether, and we experience a sense of complete mental stillness and peace. And this means, of course, that there is a higher level of consciousness-energy than normal within us. We have retained it rather than letting it flow out of us. This process can be attained not only from the quiet room but also from the sportive

and musical knowledge. This is the finding which energises me to go deep into this research study. Something similar can happen when we play sports and music. The activity or music itself can have the same function as a ‘mantra’ in meditation: it focuses our attention. We turn our attention off to everything outside it, and as a result the level of consciousness-energy that we give away drastically reduces. And if we focus our attention well, then our ‘thought chatter’ subsides too. As a result, there is an intensification and purification of consciousness-energy inside us, which equates with states of attainment. Thus, sportive and musical knowledge can be a kind of spontaneous spiritual practice. We should try to integrate spirituality into every aspect of our lives. Even the most mundane aspects of our lives are potentially divine, and offer us the opportunity to taste spiritual well-being.

In this doctrinal thesis I was able to research that Musical and Sportive knowledge are the essence of life for God experience. Everything has rhythm. Our breathing also has a rhythm. When we engaged in sports this rhythm may beat fast and other time normally. Thus, we can say that there is music in every human being or living creature. Music has the ability to convey all sorts of emotions to people. Music and sports are the powerful means to connect with God. In the first part I could narrate with the musical knowledge that leads to God experience. The first chapter itself is about philosophical nuances of theoretical knowledge. In this first part I found that the knowledge of God is the response to the ultimate reality. It is very interesting to know the concept of God in the different religions. I could find that the means to attain God experience is different but, in reality, it is almost the same. In the study of the critical analysis on philosophy of religion, the religion is only the way to experience God, but there are some other means. Musical and sportive knowledge is another finding of this research. I can conclude my doctrinal research, asserting that Musical and Sportive knowledge is the purest form to worship God and to connect with our soul in order to get the God experience.

Whilst dissatisfaction and alienation from traditional religious practices is increasing, there is a continuing, if not growing interest in the concept of “spirituality”. The term “spirituality” is evidently an emotive and contentious one. “Some people, especially baby-boomers, reject the idea of religion, but believe they are ‘spiritual’”. This perception may require networks to allow individuals to develop their own concept of spirituality. In sports spirituality is cultivated through allegiance or commitment to a team, either as a fan or as a spectator. Themes within sport may also

typically include freedom and escape from normal life, discovery of meaning in life, commitment to a set of ethics and possibly a rediscovery of play in its purest sense.

People statistically may not want to go to worshiping places, but they do appear to question a purely materialistic view of life. They want to believe in something more, even if they do not know-or want to know – what that something is. The spectator of sports may fulfil individuals' spiritual needs to belong. That will be the self-actualization at the top. The need to belong is commonly regarded as a crucial part of an individual's support of a sports team. However, theoretically, when people fail at discovering meaning in their lives, they may use sports to fill this vacuum. Through sport individuals potentially find meaning in life. Philosophically, Sports and Music are the most successful ways of taking up time in an activity which forms a human value in life.

This research has allowed me to live a very interesting experience. I have had the chance to study the musical and sportive knowledge to attain the God experience. I paid special attention to gain the knowledge through the world most interesting and entertaining events from a philosophical point of view. The philosophy of religion is not only seeking the wisdom of spirituality but also can be attributed to God experience. This is, I think, the main lesson which the research work for this thesis has taught me. The philosophy of religion hosts spirituality. In another way the outcome of religion is God experience.

Today, in this modern era, people are more humanitarian than religious. The medium of approach is also changed due to the fast development of communication. So, the philosophy of religion is almost transmitting through deep knowledge. Here is the impact of experiencing the true reality. Perhaps, my research findings may value for the future generation by experiencing the interested nuances of their day today life. Musical and sportive knowledge is very important to attain the real experience. In order to attain God experience, what to do? Where to start from? How to do? These are the basic questions which I have gone through my research work. Moreover, this is a journey of attaining knowledge and wisdom in the perspective of the philosophy of religion. Above all, there is one observation – in my opinion - God experience on musical and sportive knowledge is the way to be a contemplative. When we pray, it gives us an inner peace and calmness and when engaged in music or sports the same peace and calmness is felt, while we do it in a proper way of substantive knowledge.



We can see this fact explicitly in the FIFA world cup, people are engaged in their favorite team and player, they may favor different country or different player, their player may be the hero for the time being, but there is the aspect of hope, passion and enjoyment in a moderate way. People are united together for their achievements, this is a kind of self-satisfaction, same as attaining through a religious ceremony. The street children may play during the religious ceremony nearby temple or church, in philosophically, they find their satisfaction through the game same as the satisfaction those who sit in the temple or mosque or in the church. So, we cannot blame the children because both are same. People cook, and cultivate, there is also a spirituality, when they eat and reap the fruits, the fulfillments of their efforts come to an attainment is the hidden satisfaction. Some people travel for their well-being, some others engaged in musical singing alone, even in the bathroom. All the activities are self-satisfaction and well-being. The same thing happens when we are in the stadium or a concert hall or even in a chapel room.

The intrinsic appeal of sport for many people are the uncertainty of outcome. Indeed, the emphasis upon victory in sport defies and corrupts the ethics of fair play. If sport does indeed offer a vehicle with which to fill the spiritual void left by the demise of traditional forms of religion, it may do well to adopt the religious philosophy which states that "Life is a journey". When sportive and musical spirituality are passengers, is the destination cynicism? Every journey requires an ending. So, in this doctrinal research thesis, I can assert that Musical and Sportive knowledge are the two great mediums to attain God experience, to experience God Personally and Philosophically. This is the way I wish to close my doctoral research.

**Thanks!**

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## **Abbreviations**

### **Particular philosophical terms and Word Meaning**

**Advita** – It is a Hindu term; means, “one or unique”, “first one”, “number one”, “lovely” etc...

**Alakh** – “One which cannot be seen” (Perceived).

**Apara** – “lower”, “inferior”, “boundless”, or “having nothing beyond or after”. The word is used in variety of terms and phrases linked to Yoga.

**Atma** – “Soul”; a spiritual part which some people believe continues existing after their body is dead.

**Bhagavan** – The “Ultimate Reality manifested” or “shown as a personal God”. Brahman is the Bhagavan in Hinduism; can be described as like the sun- millions of miles away, too bright to look at and impossible to approach.

**Bhairava** – It means “terribly fearsome form”. It is also known as one who destroys fear or one who is beyond fear. One interpretation is that he protects his devotees from dreadful enemies, greed, lust, and anger.

**Bhajan** – It is a Sanskrit word meaning “Sing to glorify God”. It is also the name of a Hindu genre of devotional songs and hymns. The term covers a wide range of devotional music, from a simple mantra the more complex Hindu dhrupad. Bhajan is typically lyrical and convey love for Divine. It can also refer to the inner music of the soul that yogis hear on their journey to oneness with the divine or higher self.

**Caksu** – Mesmerizing pair of eyes.

**Darsana** – ‘A glimpse or view’; in Hindu temple, the term refers to viewing the inner sanctum of the temple, which hosts the murti (image of God). Devotees taking Darshana of God in the inner sanctum of the temple.

**Dharmakaya**- one of the three bodies of a buddha in Mahayana Buddhism. It constitutes the unmanifested, ‘inconceivable’ aspect of Buddha out of which buddhas arise and to which they return after their dissolution.

**Dhikr** – A form of devotion, associated chiefly, with Sufism, in which the worshipper is absorbed in the rhythmic repetition of the name of God or his attributes.

**Din** – A lot of unpleasant noise that continues for some time a loud welter of discordant sounds.

**Dipika** – Hindu/Sanskrit Indian Feminine given name, which means “lantern” and “light”.

**Dukkha** – “Suffering”, “pain”, or “unhappiness”, is an important concept in Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism. Its meaning depends on the context, and may refer more specifically to the “satisfactoriness” or “unease” of mundane life when driven by craving/grasping and ignorance.

**Flageolet** – A very small wind instrument resembling a recorder like a tin whistle but with four finger holes on top and two thumb holes below.

**Granth** – In Sanskrit, it is literally ‘a knot’. It is a word that was used for books, and the script used to write them. This stems from the practice of binding inscribed palm leaves using a length of thread held by knots.

**Hadith-** a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Qur’an.

**Hakkai** – “Perfection, Majestic, sensual, and/or flawless”.

**Hypostasis** – In philosophy, an underlying reality or substance, as opposed to attributes or to that which lacks substance.

**Indriya-** It is a Sanskrit word and Pali term for physical strength or ability in general, and for the senses more specifically.

**Ion** – An atom or a molecule that has gained or lost one or more of its parts (electrons) and so has a positive or negative electric charge.

**Ishvara, Ishwar** - “Lord” in Hinduism.

**Jiva** – In Jainism it means, ‘The vital energy of life’, the individual soul, life monad or separate individual self.

**Jyoti** – “Divine Light”, “radiance”, and “brightness”. It is often used as a proper first name, a root word, and as part of compound words for important Hindu practices or concepts.

**Kanda** - A bulb is an onion-shaped root that grows into a plant.

**Kirtan** – A devotional song, typically about the life of Krishna, in which a group repeats lines sung by a leader. In Sanskrit, the root meaning is to call, recite, praise, or glorify, an act of praising and glorifying some form of divinity. In Carnatic music Kirtans are the top-level singing steps.

**Koti** – In Sanskrit it has two meaning, one is “supreme” and the other is Crore. The term ‘koti’ means ‘Supreme’, ‘pre-eminent’, ‘excellent’, that is, the 33 supreme divinities.

**Kumaris** – A maiden is a young girl or woman.

**Mahakala** – It is a Sanskrit word used in Buddhism, ‘Maha’ means ‘Great’ and ‘Kala’ refers to ‘Time’ or ‘Death’. Mahakala means “Beyond time or Death”

**Mantra**- Repeated motivating chant for meditation.

**Mevlovi** – This is a Turkish term, known as the “whirling dervishes” due to their famous practice of whirling while performing dhikr (remembrance of God).

**Moksa** – It means, Freedom or Liberation; liberation from rebirth or Samsara. This liberation can be attained while one is on earth or eschatologically.

**Murti** – In the Hindu tradition, it is a devotional image, statue or idol of a deity or saint.

**Nastika** – those who deny there is any “Self” in human beings and other living beings.

**Nirvana** – In Buddhism a transcendent state in which there is neither suffering, desire, nor sense of self, and the subject is released from the effects of karma and the cycle of death and rebirth. It represents the final goal of Buddhism.

**Nishta** – ‘Being in or on’, ‘situated on’, ‘depending or resting on’, ‘referring or relating to’, ‘devoted or attached to’, ‘practicing’, ‘intent on’, ‘skilled in’, ‘believing in’, ‘conducive to’, ‘effecting’, ‘position’, ‘condition’, ‘state’, ‘basis’, ‘foundation’, ‘fixity’.

**Paramatma** – It is the “Absolute Atman”, or “Supreme Self”; in various philosophies such as the Vedanta and Yoga schools in Hindu theology, as well as other Indian religions like Sikhism.

**Phaedrus** – Son of Pythocles, of the Myrhinus deme, was an ancient Athenian aristocrat associated with the inner-circle of the philosopher Socrates.

**Prajapati**- Lord and protector of creation, it is a Vedic deity of Hinduism.

**Prakriti**- “Nature”, “Source” in the Samkhya system of Indian Philosophy, material nature in its germinal state, eternal and beyond perception.

**Puja** – It is a kind of prayer; a ritual in honour of the Gods, performed either at home or in the Temple.

**Purusha**- “Spirit, Person, Self or consciousness” in Indian philosophy, and particularly in the dualistic system of Samkhya, the eternal, authentic spirit.

**Rasa** - Rasa means “flavour” and the theory of rasa is the primary concept behind classical Indian arts including theatre, music dance, poetry, and sculpture. There are nine rasas in the Indian culture of literature and music.

**Sadhana** – Disciplined and dedicated practice or learning, especially in religion or music.

**Samsara**- the cycle of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound.

**Sankhya** – it is a Sanskrit term; written abbreviation for number.

**Saraswati** – Is a Hindu goddess who represents education, creativity, and music. Also known Goddess of knowledge.

**Shabda** – It is the Sanskrit word for “Speech Sound”. In Sanskrit grammar, the term refers to an utterance in the sense of linguistic performance.

**Shenai** – An ancient reeded woodwind instrument from India with a long slim body and bulbous sound bowl, with or without keys.

**Siddhas** – an ascetic who has achieved enlightenment. The term is related with Ayurveda and practitioner advises the initial use of herbs.

Spiritual power or purification.

**Sringara** – it is one of the nine rasas, usually translated as erotic love, romantic love, or as attraction or beauty.

**Stasis** - A period or state of inactivity, or equilibrium, a long period of stasis.

**Sufi** - “Man of wool”. A Muslim who represents the mystical dimension of Islam; a Muslim who seeks direct experience of Allah; mainly in Iran.

**Svayam Bhagavan** – Refers to a Sanskrit concept in Hinduism, referring to the absolute representation of Bhagavan as the monotheistic God.

**Tabla** – A pair of small hand drums, one of which is slightly larger than the other, used in Indian classical music.

**Tapasa** – In Hinduism, ascetic practice voluntarily carried out to achieve

**Tawhid** -The Arabic word means “asserting oneness”, in Islam, the oneness of God, in the sense that he is one and there is no God but He, as stated in the *shahadah*(witness) formula: ‘there is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet’. It is also written as Tauhid.

**Thervada** – The more conservative of the two major traditions of Buddhism (the other being Mahayana), which developed from Hinayana Buddhism. It is practiced mainly in Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

**Veena** – An Indian stringed instrument with four main and three subsidiary strings, especially used in Carnatic music.

**Vishwa Karman**- In Sanskrit, ‘All accomplishing’. In Hindu mythology, the architect of the Gods. The name was originally used an epithet of any powerful god.

**Whirling Dervishes** – A member of a Turkish order of dervishes, or Sufis, whose ritual consists in part of a highly stylized whirling dance.

**Yhwh** – A name for the God of the Old Testament as translated from the Hebrew consonants YHWH. This is also used as JHVH, Jahvey, Jahweh,

Jehovah, Wahvey, YHVH, Yahve, Yahveh, Yahwe, Yahweh; these all terms are God, the supreme Being.





Thanks...