



SELINUS UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

**An Illumination of a Universal Spiritual Core Inherent
in Multiple Religious Paths
(for the Development of Peace and Progress in Multi-
ethnic, Cosmopolitan Societies):
A Comparative Analysis of African Traditional Religion,
Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism,
Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, and
Rastafarianism**

By Nkosi Omari Khalid Aberdeen

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of Religion
program at Selinus University

Faculty of Arts & Humanities
in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Religion

2025

Declaration

I do hereby attest that I am the sole author of this project/thesis and that its contents are only the result of the readings and research I have done. This is to certify that this research entitled ***An Illumination of a Universal Spiritual Core Inherent in Multiple Religious Paths (For The Development of Peace and Progress in Multi-Ethnic, Cosmopolitan Societies): A Comparative Analysis of African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, and Rastafarianism*** is my own original work and has never been presented anywhere for examination.

Abstract

The globalized, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, modern world has become increasingly psychologically & socio-economically stressed.¹ In many cosmopolitan societies, economic tensions amongst groups/classes of people are exacerbated by conflicts caused by the nature of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious composition of society. *Religion*, as a function, can be used to promote divisions in society; or alternatively, as this Research Dissertation attests, *Religion* (Religious Education-SIAB Pedagogy), can function as a catalyst for the unity and progress of diverse groups of people. This Research Dissertation seeks to highlight the potential positive role of *Religion* (*Comparative Religion* in particular) in the reduction of *Horizontal Inequality* (Inequality amongst groups) in contemporary, cosmopolitan, globalized society. The Dissertation will seek to provide an illumination of a *Universal Spiritual Core* inherent in multiple religious paths, which can be used functionally by (Comparative) *Religion* Educators and Humanitarians in general, for the development of peace and progress in multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan societies. The Dissertation, to achieve this objective, provides key, pertinent, general information and philosophical material from the following Religions: African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, and Rastafarianism.

¹ Especially, in recent times, after the Covid 19 Pandemic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To: GOD

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	1
Declaration.....	2
Abstract.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Table of Contents.....	5
Chapter 1 Introduction and Aim of Study.....	8
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	17
Chapter 3 Data and Methodology.....	26
Chapter 4 Contents and Results.....	27
4.1 African Traditional Religion.....	27
4.2 Native American Religion.....	40
4.3 Hinduism.....	46
4.4 Buddhism.....	66
4.5 Taoism.....	72
4.6 Confucianism.....	88
4.7 Christianity.....	94
4.8 Islam.....	113

4.9 Rastafarianism.....	121
Chapter 5 Discussion Part 1.....	129
5.1 Judaism— A Case Study Analysis of Contemporary Horizontal Inequality	
Chapter 5 Discussion Part 2.....	147
A Critical Analysis of a Cross Section of The World's Religions	
5.2.1 Introduction.....	147
5.2.2 Scientific Commonality.....	150
5.2.3 Circumstantial Commonality.....	153
5.2.4 Metaphysical Commonalities.....	160
5.2.5 Moral Commonality.....	169
Chapter 6 Conclusions.....	171
Subconscious Social Equality (SSE)	
6.1 Introduction: A New Enlightenment	171
6.2 Sociology of Religion.....	174
6.3 Culture & Religion.....	183
6.4 Peace & Prosperity in Multi-Ethnic, Religious, Cosmopolitan Societies.....	187
6.5 Pedagogy—Comparative & Universal Religion.....	190

6.6 SIAB-The Ultimate Commonality.....	200
6.7 Conclusion.....	203
Bibliography	204

Chapter 1 Introduction and Aim of Study

1.1 Background of the Study

Burridge (2018) makes the valid point that “intergroup violence has to do with identity: ‘Us’ defending ourselves against a threat from ‘them,’ the ones not like us. Religion enters the picture because it is the most potent form of identity yet discovered (Burridge, 2018: 30).” Jordan (2006) adds to Burridge’s (2018) assertions when he states that, “now, at the outset of the twenty-first century, many of those fears for our security, at the whim of large-scale influences beyond our control, have returned, and this time the emphasis is very much on religious differences. At first, in the West, we may have lulled ourselves into viewing these new conflicts based on religious ideology as ‘other people’s wars’, local fights taking place a long way off, generally in the Middle East (Jordan, 2006: v-vi).” “Israelis fought their neighbours, Iranian Shi’ites fought Sunni Iraqis, Afghan Taliban blew up giant Buddhist statues. In Britain we had the problems of Northern Ireland, yet those sectarian differences seemed less to do with religion, more social and economic in nature. The events of 9/11, however, brought violence in the name of God to the heart of the United States, and the wreckage of the Twin Towers became the most potent symbol of a new kind of vulnerability. In Britain the same reality hit us on a smaller scale in 2005 with the bombings of the London Underground (Jordan, 2006: v-vi).” Lincoln (1985) with regards to “the socio-political stance and effects of religion, Lincoln (1985: 4) states that “within revolutionary episodes such as the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64), the North American Ghost Dance (1890), the Kenyan Mau Mau (1952-1956), or the numerous Cargo Cults of Melanesia, indigenous religious traditions were reformulated by visionary leaders to provide the basis for powerful attacks on colonial rule (Lincoln, 1985: 4).” According to Popovski (2009), “today, more people in more countries exercise individual freedom of expression and decide independently whether to identify themselves through ethnic or religious characteristics or to resist predetermined affiliations (Popovski, 2009: 1-2).” “Yet many violent conflicts—Kashmir, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Darfur and Iraq—have been presented as inter-religious conflicts, and have generated discussions about how religious traditions would justify wars between states, and rebellions within states. Recent terrorist attacks, carried out all over the world—in Moscow, New York, Colombo, Bali, Madrid, Istanbul, London, Mumbai and Algiers, among others—by organizations claiming religious motivations, have raised further questions about religious attitudes to violence (Popovski, 2009: 1-2).” Popovski (2009) postulates sternly that, “to understand how religion and violence are connected, one must look at the original religious texts and at the subsequent teachings and interpretations within religious traditions. A fresh analysis of when and how world religions justify the use of force is necessary in order to avoid over-simplification in the explanation of

recent conflicts, terrorism, asymmetric warfare, genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity (Popovski, 2009: 1-2).” “The importance of examining such issues arises from the fact that religions continue to be the foundations of human civilization—the central anchors of human consciousness, motivation and behaviour (Popovski, 2009: 1-2).” Randall (2007) reminds us, sadly, that, for example, “especially as a result of the tragic events of 9/11, the term *jihad* is understood by most Americans as a *Holy War* commanded by Allah against all non-Muslims (Randall, 2007: 3).” “Further they believe the Qur’an teaches this *Holy War* as the religious obligation of all Muslims. In other words, for most Americans the Qur’an is little more than a manual for *Holy War*, and Islam is creating terrorists throughout the world (Randall, 2007: 3).” Because of this religious-type of historical and contemporary tensions, misunderstandings, and conflicts among people and groups of people in multi-ethnic places, this Research Dissertation was deemed absolutely necessary to be written.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of ‘**Difference**’ is that which this Research Dissertation seeks to address practically and solve urgently. The ‘**Difference**’ of Appearance—garb, physical features; the ‘**Difference**’ of Belief System that leads to wars, and genocides; The ‘**Difference**’ that leads to Socio-Economic Inhumanity—Privation & Poverty of ‘different’ groups of People due to limited, discriminatory resource allocation. This *wicked problem* of ‘**Difference**’; specifically as it relates to the Religious (multi-ethnic) Conflict in mixed, multi-ethnic societies is what, essentially, this Dissertation seeks to present a solution for.

People tire (don’t want to or it may not be politically-beneficial to them to voice concerns) of trying to find ways to unite people in general with ‘apparent differences’; and as history (and current, contemporary conflict) has shown, they (people) then attempt to eliminate/kill/eradicate (genocides and war) the problematic ‘difference’. For them there is no reasonable solution for the problem of ‘difference; it can’t be solved, and they decide to wipe it (‘**Difference**’) out completely. Their rationale: “If there is no ‘**Difference**’ in society, then there is potential for Societal Peace. However, this Dissertation makes the humane-point that, due to Globalization (many decades of global people—ethnic & religious—mixing), the World is too ethnically (& religiously) ‘mixed-up’ already for such wicked, crude, inhumane (aforementioned) solutions (genocide, war, conflict).

1.3 Research Objective/Aim

I am from Trinidad and Tobago; a multi-ethnic, multi-religious country, which is geographically situated in the multi-ethnic, multi-religious region of CARICOM. My family is multi-ethnic and multi-religious. Due to Love for GOD; and Love and Compassion for Human-Beings, and for Family, the spiritual-duty/obligation to conduct this study manifested. My

Region and the world in general have suffered in myriad psychological and socio-economic ways due to ethnic and religious tensions and conflicts (amongst individuals and groups of people). To ease past, present, and potential future suffering of People in general is the reason for this Study.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The globalized world today is stressed by religious polemics and violence. According to **CRISE** (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity), **inequality amongst groups—Horizontal Inequality (H.I.)** is an important theoretical factor to be considered when there is concern for/a drive towards the reduction of the potential for violent conflicts in society. Religious conflict is rooted in the differing **primordial apprehensions**² of each religion. Raimundo Panikkar (1984), in *The Metaphysical Challenge*³ states that “religions offer the locus of ultimate truth and point the way to it. They do not speak about it directly, but **a certain primordial apprehension of reality stands at the basis of each religion.**”⁴ Furthermore, Panikkar (1984) continues, “when these fundamental insights are spelled out in a universe of discourse, we discover divergent conceptions of reality.”⁵ “**The intellectual side (our primordial apprehensions) of religions**”, according to Panikkar (1984), is “**where the problem of religious pluralism arises.**”⁶ **Religious conflict is thus rooted in each religion's primordial apprehensions.**

Hopfe (2005) insists that “if we are to understand these conflicts fully, we must know that Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists have basic philosophical differences and if there is to be peace, these differences must be known and respected.”⁷ Hopfe (2005) calls for peace via an understanding of differences, however the idea espoused forthwith is such that **the need to identify and respect religious commonalities is also (or even more) important.** We are in the age of Globalization (economically driven) which “enhances ethnic and religious fragmentation, exclusion and conflicts in contemporary societies but also entails **tendencies towards more inclusive ethnic pluralism and religious-cultural citizenship.**”⁸

² Term used by Raimundo Panikkar to describe the intellectual side of religions.

³ See Leroy S. Rouner (1984) (ed.), *Religious Pluralism*, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

⁴ Ibid., p. 97

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 98

⁷ Hopfe, L. M. (1983) *Religions of the World, third ed.* NY: Macmillan Publishing Co.

⁸ Ibid.

Horizontal Inequality (H.I.) ⁹

Horizontal Inequality (H.I.) is defined as inequality amongst groups—*Group-Inequality*. Stewart et al (2005) in *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement* state that “most discussion and measurement of inequality concerns Vertical Inequality (**inequality among individuals – V.I.**) and is generally confined to a few economic variables such as income, consumption and sometimes assets; however Inequalities between groups tend to be ignored.” ¹⁰ The authors of this **CRISE** (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity) working-section argue that “it is important to measure **H.I.**, and that its measurement should extend beyond the variables commonly used to measure vertical inequality—not only to other aspects of economic resources, but also to social and political entitlements.”

Groups & Society

Stewart et al (2005) list three cases from which the ‘categorization’ inherent to group-forming emerge:

I. SELF IDENTIFICATION:

EG. I am a Hindu.

2. CLASSIFICATION FROM LEGAL FACTORS:

The State has listed you as ‘Hindu’ because your Mother is listed as ‘Hindu’.

3. CATEGORIZATION BY OTHERS:

He looks ‘Indian’ so we classify him in our minds as ‘Indian’ or ‘Hindu’ ¹¹

Group affiliation matters when: ¹²

1. Group boundaries are relatively tight, so people cannot move easily from one group to another (lack of fluidity).

⁹ Frances Stewart et al (2005), *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), Working Section, no. 19

¹⁰ Ibid., p.3

¹¹ Where ‘race’ and ‘religion’ are interchangeable entities in the perception of the average person

¹² Frances Stewart et al (2005) *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), Working Section, no. 19, pp.3,4

2. Being a group member leads to different treatment by others.

3. Members of the group feel that being part of the group constitutes a significant aspect of their identity—and thereby group achievements contribute directly to members' well-being.

“**People's well-being** may be affected not only by their individual circumstances, but also by how well their group is doing relative to others.’ Psychologists have shown, for example, that Afro-Americans suffer from many psychological ills due to the position of their group. This is summarized by the title of one article: ‘Being Black and Feeling Blue’ (Brown et al, 1999; Broman, 1997).¹³ Furthermore, ‘**group inequality can be a source of violent conflict.**’ Group inequality provides powerful grievances which leaders can use to mobilize people to political protest, by calling on cultural markers (a common history or language or religion) and pointing to group exploitation—This type of mobilization is most likely to occur when there is economic inequality and group leaders of impoverished groups are excluded from political power.”¹⁴

The reasons, thus, for *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter* are stated by Stewart et al as such:¹⁵

‘1) From the perspective of **the well-being** of individuals within groups, who are concerned about how their group is faring relative to others

2) Instrumentally, through the impact of group inequalities in reducing growth potential and provoking violence.

Instrumental Reasons for Concern with HI's¹⁶

Reducing HI's may be instrumental for:

1. A person's welfare function.

2. The promotion of efficiency nationally:

Any system in which a group is discriminated against is likely to lead to less efficiency than in the absence of discrimination, since talented people in the group discriminated against will be held back, while too many resources, or too high a position, will go to less talented people in the favoured group.

¹³ Ibid., p. 4

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 5

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 1

¹⁶ Frances Stewart et al (2005), *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), Working Section, no. 19, pp. 4, 5

3. **The prevention or amelioration of formal discrimination in education or employment** (and the limited opportunities that arise thereof).¹⁷

4. **The reducing of the potential for Violent Conflict.**

5. **In circumstances where it may not be possible to improve the position of individuals without tackling the position of the group.'**

Multi-ethnic (Heterogeneous) vs. Homogeneous Societies

'Ethnically diverse societies have been found to have lower economic growth than homogeneous ones,' due to the fact that 'in homogeneous societies there are less group characteristics that tend to trap people.'¹⁸ With respect to self-assessed happiness (personal well-being), Stewart et al (2005) state that,

"In homogeneous societies happiness (self-assessed) would be just a question of the individual's position relative to others; whereas, in heterogeneous societies, respondents tend to be more critical of their economic situation when they compare themselves to others in different groups compared to their own. The performance of a person's own identity group may affect their happiness positively while that of other identities (groups) may have a negative impact."¹⁹

Furthermore, the CRISE working-section makes two salient points:²⁰

1. **With regards to the achievement of social objectives in heterogeneous societies, group inequality (HIs) is a worse impediment to growth than is Vertical Inequality(VI).**

2. **In heterogeneous societies, group inequality (HIs) is also more likely to be associated with conflict.**

Horizontal Inequality and Multi-Religious Societies

The more defined (the less fluid) the group boundaries the greater possibility of HI's. Hence by making group-borders fluid (less defined) we reduce inequalities between groups, thus

¹⁷ Due to 'generations of relative impoverishment (possibly due to past discrimination) mean that the present generation of a group may suffer relatively to others without current overt discrimination. Furthermore, members of a 'poor group' have less advantageous social networks.

¹⁸ Frances Stewart et al (2005) *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), Working Section, no. 19, p.6

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 7

1) **Reducing the potential for polemics and the violence thereof.**

2) **Reducing the potential of group-identification (personally assessed or otherwise) in affecting ²¹ an individual's sense of well being.**

Stewart et al (2005) state that “given multiple identities and the social construction of identities, there are very few groups where boundaries are clear cut.”²² However, how easy is it to have multiple religious identities? Furthermore, when Race and Religion are intertwined and interchangeable in the perception, categorization and descriptive-vernacular of people in society, how easy is it to change groups?

David Little (1999) in *Rethinking Human Rights: A Review Essay on Religion, Relativism, and Other Matters* insists that “Religion has a unique role to play in legitimating and animating ethnic and nationalistic campaigns.” In support of his point, Little (1999) states that “there are so many examples of ethno-religious conflict—Sudan, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, Israel and the Palestinian authority, Bosnia, Burma, China, Algeria, & so on—that special attention must be paid to the ‘religious factor’, however complicated and subject to local influences it may turn out to be.”²³ Henry L. Ruf (2005) in *Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions* asserts that “polemics rather than dialogue has become the standard practice for many people engaged in what is called ‘religious talk.’”²⁴

“Cultural wars, fed by the mass media’s insatiable craving for ear-shattering polemics are waged between atheists and secularists on the one hand and “defenders of religious beliefs” on the other. Violent wars are waged between peoples trying polemically to use “religious talk” to legitimate claims to land & state power. Sectarian splits within established religious traditions get cemented into virtually irreconcilable differences because of polemics over literal vs. non-literal interpretations of religious texts.”²⁵

In multi-ethnic societies, Religion (different religious groups) is a definite cause of Horizontal Inequality because religious borders are well-defined (not fluid). “If a group is treated differently—by denial or privilege—its members become more self-conscious about their common bonds and interests.”²⁶ However, “If differences were to be minimized, communal identification becomes less significant as a unifying principle.”²⁷ Hence, an effort to analyze the commonalities between the different religions extant in a multi-religious society

²¹ Particularly negative affectations.

²² Frances Stewart et al (2005), *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), Working Section, no. 19, p.8

²³ David Little (1999) ‘Rethinking Human Rights: A Review Essay on Religion, Relativism, and Other Matters’, *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 27: 1, pp. 149-177

²⁴ Henry L. Ruf (2005) ‘Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions’, *International Journal on World Peace* 22: 3, 2005, pp. 25-49

²⁵ Ibid., p. 25

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9

²⁷ Ibid.

is a practical attempt at reducing Horizontal Inequality. **Commonalities make group-boundaries more fluid; and fluidity of group-borders in heterogeneous societies reduces the risk of group-violence;** and increases national systemic productivity.

The Universal Element : Making Borders Fluid

Yogananda (2008) insists that, “We cannot possibly universalize particular customs and conventions. Only the **element common** to all Religions may be universalized.”²⁸ He continues, “It is only the limited human point of view that overlooks **the underlying universal element** in the so-called different Religions of the world, and this overlooking has been the cause of many evils.”²⁹ Ideally, **Universal Religion** is a means by which *Horizontal Inequality* can be negated in multi-religious societies as the borders between all religions are made fluid by the universal idea of One ALL-connecting GOD/WAY. The socio-economic growth of All societies is encumbered because of religious H.I.’s. Multi-ethnic developing countries, due to Religious H.I.’s., are socio-economically encumbered. There are good people in every group, yet different names/terminologies/historical local settings/primordial apprehensions, etc. cause political friction, unnecessary tension, competition, rejection and obstruction (growth of the whole society is slowed). In cosmopolitan societies different religions are adhered to within the same geographical spaces. In the age of Globalization (universal transfer, and interaction of information, ideas, technology, and people) this trend will continue. Capitalism has grown more and more secular (and its adherents more and more atheist) in a practical quest to eliminate religious H.I.’s, which reduces full economic productivity in society. Religious violence, for instance, can affect business in areas where there are religious divides. GOD, and the natural inclination toward a relationship with GOD (however primordially apprehended), will never be eradicated. *Spirituality* (Universal Religion) has the potential to eliminate religious H.I.’s spurring socio-economic (humane—not just economic balance sheets) development in multi-ethnic/multi-religious societies. *Spirituality* because of its universal nature reduces religious H.I.’s; it softens the borders between the primordial apprehensions of different groups of minds.

1.4 Research Questions

Is there commonality among People? Humans (the majority) have ten toes, ten fingers, two hands, one head, two eyes and one mouth. Yet despite this universal commonality of Human-Form, People (in a competitive, capitalist world) more readily (are more psychologically-inclined to) perceive ‘Differences’. Is there an Aspect of the Function of

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, U.S.A: Self Realization Fellowship, pp.6,7

Religion that is able to efficaciously unite People, rather than divide them? Is this Aspect universal? Is it common to all Religions? Is there commonality between, amongst ‘different’ Religions?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This Research Dissertation has 1. **Psychological Significance**—it seeks to, via its information, stir Mental Peace in multi-ethnic, multi-religious Society; 2. **Socio-Economic Significance**—Often times Social Mental-Peace and Social Physical Harmony accompany each other, as a matter of course. Physical Peace generates and facilitates Socio-Economic Creativity and Productivity; 3. **Metaphysical Significance**—the author of the Research Dissertation believes that GOD, the Author of Creation (and of Human Beings) designed Humans to live in *Peace*. *Peace* is the main cornerstone of *Humanity*. The *Significance (Psychological, Socio-Economic, and Metaphysical)* of this Research Dissertation is a positive force/step towards *Human Progress*; A *Significance* with the possibility to effect a new ‘*Different Yet Equal*’ *Societal State of Mind (Subconscious Societal Equality-SSE)*; A Psychological, Socio-Economic, and Metaphysical Significance with an opportunity to effect *Human-Elevation* via *SIAB-Pedagogy*.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The Study covers nine (9) Religions as its Scope. These nine (9) Religions were selected for the Study because, in totality, they (their adherents) account for ALL ethnicities of the World, from ALL different parts of the Globe.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The Study addresses the nine (9) Religions in the following order/sequence: African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, and Rastafarianism. The Reasoning behind this organization of the Study is twofold: 1. Due to **Human Geographical/Historical-Chronology**; and 2. Due to **Composition of current, cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic, multi-religious Societies in the modern world**.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

The Research Dissertation utilized the following texts, primarily and extensively, for key information related to the nine Religions (African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, Rastafarianism) analyzed: Denise Lardner Carmody, and John Tully Carmody's (1984) *Ways to the Center. An Introduction to World Religions. Second Edition* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Lewis M. Hopfe's (1983) *Religions of the World. Third Edition* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Isma'il Ragi al Farruqi's (Ed.) (1974) *Historical Atlas of the Religions of the World* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Chad Meister, Paul Copan's (Eds.) (2010), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Stewart Sutherland's et al (Leslie Houlden, Peter Clarke, Friedhelm Hardy) (1988), *The World's Religions* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Islam**. John R. Hinnells' (Ed.) (1984) *A Handbook of Living Religions* provided key information on **African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Islam**. Robert S. Ellwood's (Ed.) (1998), *The Encyclopedia of World Religions* provided key information on **Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. John B. Noss' (1974), *Man's Religions (Fifth Edition)* provided key information on **Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Huston Smith's (1991) *The World's Religions* provided key information on **Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Myrtle Langley's (2002) *Eyewitness Religion* provided key information on **Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. Carl Hermann Voss' (1968) *In Search of Meaning. Living Religions of the World* provided key information on **Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. G. A. Barton's (1917,1919) *The Religions of the World*, NY: Greenwood Press, Publishers (USA: The University of Chicago Press) provided key information on **Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam**. J.N.D Anderson's (Ed.) (1950) *The World's Religions*, London: The Inter-Varsity Fellowship (Staples Printers Ltd.) provided key information on **Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam**.

REFERENCE	African Traditional Religion	Native American	Hinduism	Buddhism	Taoism,	Confucianism,	Christianity	Islam	Rastafarianism
Carmody (1984)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Hopfe (1983)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Farruqi (1974)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Meister (2010)	✓	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Sutherland (1988)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✓	○
Hinnells (1984)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✓	○
Ellwood (1998)	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Noss (1974)	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Smith (1991)	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Langley (2002)	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Voss (1968)	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Barton (1917,1919)	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	○
Anderson (1950)	○	○	✓	✓	○	✓	○	✓	○

General Theory of Comparative Religion³⁰

In order to frame a general theory of Comparative Religion, four Categories of Works have been identified by Bouquet (1962): 1. Radical Abandonment 2. Radical Exclusiveness 3. Radical Relativity and 4. Detached & Descriptive. This Dissertation may be categorized in Bouquet's (1962) fourth listed Category (Detached & Descriptive). Bouquet's (1962) four Categories are listed as follows:

1. Radical Abandonment

"All religions being based upon illusion, their study can be no more than a branch of anthropology, archaeology, psychology or sociology. This is the theory of Feuerbach, Frazer and Freud (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."

2. Radical Exclusiveness

"This need not be Christian. It may be Buddhist, Hebrew or Moslem, but its general method of classification is into 'true' and 'false (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."

3. Radical Relativity

"This is well exemplified in the Hibbert Lectures of L.P. Jacks, where he speaks of the religions of the world as hospitable caravanserais in which the traveller may rest for a brief space, and then awake refreshed to pursue his journey of exploration. It is also the view of Spengler (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."

4. Detached and Descriptive

"Of this there are many examples, some showing a belief in the adequacy of one special religion, others maintaining a measure of impartiality to the very end (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."
Bouquet (1962) highlights thirteen (A-M):

- A. "Tiele, for instance, began by adopting a classification according to date and distribution, and then abandoned it for a division into nature-religions and ethical-religions (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."
- B. "Hegel, and Principal Caird following Tiele, divided the field into three sections: (i) nature religions, (ii) religions of spiritual individuality, (iii) absolute or universal religion (Bouquet, 1962: 299)."
- C. "Siebeck also adopted a tri-partite division, into (i) primitive religion, (ii) morality religion, (iii) redemptive religion (Bouquet, 1962: 300)."

³⁰ See A. C. Bouquet (1962) *Comparative Religion*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd.

- D. "Orelli in 1899 divided the religions of the world into seven groups, Turanian, Hamitic, Semitic, Indo-Germanic, African, American and Oceanic. This was meant to be a racial classification, but even at that was open to serious amendment (Bouquet, 1962: 300)."
- E. "Bishop Gore, following the Canadian scholar, Dr Hamilton, discriminated between 'discovery' and 'revelation', and limited the latter to Hebraeo-Christian religion, involving 'a unique down-rush from the super-conscious (Bouquet, 1962: 300)."
- F. "A very neat and brief sub-division was that of Dr Oman, who based it upon the relations between the Natural and the Supernatural. When the latter is merged in the former, he says, we have idolatry; when the former is merged in the latter, we have pantheism; when the two are related by some kind of moral victory, we have at least some kind of theism (Bouquet, 1962: 300)."
- G. "The late Archbishop Soderblom, in his Gifford Lectures of 1931, after dealing with religion in its primitive stages, then discussed its greater creative developments under eight headings (Bouquet, 1962: 300):
1. As method: Yoga.
 2. As psychology: Jainism and Hinayana Buddhism.
 3. As devotion: Bhakti.
 4. As a conflict against evil: Zarathustra.
 5. As the practice of a good conscience: Socrates (also the Chinese sages and the Hebrew prophets).
 6. As revelation in history: Hebrew religion.
 7. As culminating in once-for-all revelation: Christianity.
 8. As ever-present revelation, continued and flowing forward from God (Bouquet, 1962: 300)."

H.

Existential Thinking (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2)

A.

"None of the foregoing theories takes any account of what is called existential thinking, i.e. reflection in which one is not detached and aloof from the matter reflected upon, but shaken to one's very depths by it, since one is one trial one's self, and in no position of security from which one can be an impartial critic (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2)."

"Willy-nilly, the thinker himself stands under judgment. It would be dangerously unfair to ignore this way of regarding religion, since, whether one agrees with it or not, it is certainly widespread today, and one has something to learn from it (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2)."

"According to this standpoint, all the religions of the world are forms of human, creaturely

activity, and, as such, faulty, infected with that basic infirmity of the human race, self-centredness. No one form has any advantage over another. There is, and can be, therefore no natural approach to Deity from the human side (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2).” “So-called discovery can discover nothing. Only Deity himself can make his nature known. This is the old radical exclusiveness in a new dress, with ‘vertical’ revelation as its central point (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2).”

B.

“Those who reject this last standpoint believe that human intelligence, though an imperfect instrument, is more to be trusted than its critics aver, and that the future will see the development of a new realism in which man’s quest for God may be as much appreciated as God’s approach to man. This they hold, will bring us back to a sympathetic and unprejudiced study of all forms of religion (Bouquet, 1962: 301-2).”

I. Religion in Series (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3)

1.

“A novel attempt has been made to place the ideas of the various religions in series. It is frankly a Christian one, and as such may be deemed biased, but, even if we take its system of classification, we are not necessarily bound to adopt its conclusions. The author is Dr F. H. Smith. Beginning with sacred literature and theories of revelation, he groups his data under six heads (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3):

- a. “Naturalistic records.
- ii. Records treated as revelation by a later age.
- iii. Records associated with an original claim to revelation.
- iv. Records associated with the belief in a personal theophany.
- v. Records associated with the belief in a divine personal or rational manifestation.
- vi. A record with an original claim to direct revelation involving the belief in a supreme revelation by Divine Incarnation.” (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3)

Smith then proceeds “to ideas of God and reality, he groups these under seven heads (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3):

- i. Elementary religion.
- ii. Advanced religion.
- iii. Personal idea of God.
- iv. Impersonal idea of reality.
- v. Impersonal tendencies within personal religion.

- vi. Personal idea of God within impersonal religion.
- vii. Triune Personality.

2.

Incarnation

“The plan of placing features of religion in series has been done in respect to the idea of Incarnation, somewhat as follows (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3):

- Incarnation of the Sacred in sub-human creatures of exceptional or terrifying form or power.
- Incarnation of the Sacred in men of unusual endowments.
- Incarnation of the Sacred in a king, or dynasty of kings.
- Incarnation of the Sacred in a priest or line of priests.
- Incarnation of the Sacred in a prophet or series of prophets.
- Discontinuous Incarnation in a number of unusual human beings.
- Discontinuous Incarnation once-for-all in Jesus Christ (Bouquet, 1962: 302-3).”

3.

“Professor van der Leeuw of Groningen, also regarding the world through Christian eyes, placed the various Types of Religion in *series*, as follows (Bouquet, 1962: 304):

- The Religions of remoteness and flight.
- The Religion of struggle.
- The Religion of repose.
- The Religion of unrest.
- The Religion of strain and form.
- The Religion of infinity and of asceticism.
- The Religion of nothingness and of compassion.
- The Religion of will and of obedience.
- The Religion of majesty and of humility.
- The Religion of love.

He then placed the various types of Founders of Religion as (Bouquet, 1962: 304):

- The reformer.
- The teacher.
- The philosopher and theologian.
- The example.

- The mediator.

He then classified *Religious Experience* into (Bouquet, 1962: 305):

- Avoidance of God.
- Servitude to God.
- Covenant with God.
- Friendship with God.
- Knowledge of God.
- Following of God.
- Being filled with God.
- Mysticism; The love of God; Being children of God; Enmity to God.
- Conversion, rebirth, and the unitive life of adoration.

J.

“By far the most attractive way of dealing with the problem of comparison is that proposed by the late Dr. K. J. Saunders in his *Ideals of East and West*. Here the question is asked: ‘what sort of human being does a particular human group admire?’ and the answer is expected to indicate not only its ethical ideals, but also its conception of deity. Taking up Dr Saunders’ suggestion and developing it, we get something like this (Bouquet, 1962: 305-6):

Group	Ideal Human Being Admired by Group
Greeks of Plato’s day.	The handsome and virtuous man.
Aristotle	The high-minded man who contemplates the universe (megalopsuchos).
Stoics	The wise man who is self-controlled.
Chinese	The princely man (chun-tz).
Japanese	The disciplined warrior (samurai).
Hebrews	The righteous man (as in Psalm 1 and Tobit).

Romans	The disciplined warrior (Much the same as the Japanese).
British	The gentleman.
Germans	The self-respecting man.
Indians	The ascetic (sadhu).
Christians	The Saint (who, penetrated by the spirit of Jesus, seeks to transform the world, and is yet at home in it).
Moslems	The man who is completely surrendered to Allah the omnipotent, as his slave or ' <i>abd</i> '.

K.

Another classification “which should be considered is Reinhold Niebuhr’s thought-provoking one (Bouquet, 1962: 306):

- i. Religions which expect no messiah.
- ii. Religions where a messiah is expected.”

L.

“An important work has appeared from the pen of Emil Brunner, the noted Swiss theologian of Zurich, entitled *Revelation and Reason* (Bouquet, 1962: 306).” “It is written from the standpoint of a neo-Protestant Christian, but it deals very fully with the general theory of Religion. The gist of its contents may be summed up as follows (Bouquet, 1962: 306):

- i. Knowledge which comes from God is different from the knowledge of God, e.g. mathematical or scientific knowledge comes from God, but is not the knowledge of God, though it may be knowledge about His works (Bouquet, 1962: 306).
- ii. Knowledge of God can be had only on God’s own self-disclosure, just as two human beings cannot know one another, as distinct from knowing facts about one another, except by mutual self-disclosure (Bouquet, 1962: 306).
- iii. The reception of man by such knowledge from God is rendered harder by man’s inherent taint of self-centred waywardness, which we call sin. Hence man’s quest for God, who desires Himself to be understood, is hampered and leads man

to ‘hold down the truth in unrighteousness’, as St Paul says. Knowledge of God through the works of His Creation tends in consequence to be a warped or distorted knowledge (broken lights, or fitful gleams of truth) (Bouquet, 1962: 306).

- iv. Fuller knowledge is possible only by God’s personal initiative, which is the content of the Christian revelation, but it is more than mere information about God, since man needs more than information, he needs Divine action to redeem him from his waywardness. Hence God discontinuously intervenes, and under particular spatio-temporal conditions enters history in order to free mankind from the domination of the evil circumstances in which it has entangled itself (Bouquet, 1962: 306).”

M.

“An additional classification is the three-fold one, into:

- i. Religions which seek to affirm the world.
- ii. Religions which seek to escape from the world.
- iii. Religions which seek to transform the world (Bouquet, 1962: 310).”

Chapter 3 Data and Methodology

One hundred and thirty-three (133) References were used overall to write the entire Research Dissertation; each Reference is listed at the end of the Dissertation. Thirteen (13) main Books, as aforementioned in the Literature Review, provided key information for various/multiple Religions. The Religions were studied from the oldest (African Traditional Religion) to the youngest (Rastafarianism). The Founders, Main Beliefs, and Spiritual Content were gleaned, and pertinent, key, information was then presented as the main content of this Research Dissertation.

After the Introduction (Part One) of this Dissertation, the Main Body (Part Two) presents nine (9) Religions (African Traditional Religion, Native American Religion, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Christianity, Islam, and Rastafarianism) from the oldest to the youngest, in sequence. In Part Three (3) of the Dissertation the Religion of Judaism is analyzed as a Case Study of contemporary Horizontal Inequality. In Part Four (4) the Research Dissertation proceeds with a Critical Analysis of a Cross-section of the World's Religions. Part five (5) concludes the Dissertation by highlighting the concept of *Subconscious Social Equality* (SSE) effected by *SIAB Pedagogy*.

Chapter 4 Contents and results

4.1 African Traditional Religion

Introduction

“Since the time of Pliny the Elder, who is reputed to have first used it, the term ‘Africa’ has been a bone of contention because it means different things to different people—for many people Africa is essentially a racial group; for some, Africa is a geopolitical entity, carved up in the last century at the Berlin Conference of 1884-85. For others, Africa is a linguistic-cultural entity that describes the life of the African peoples that belong to these communities; the Niger-Congo, the Nilo-Sahara, the Afro-Asiatic, and the Khoisan linguistic groups (Beverluis, 2000: 3).” “Generally, today we are conditioned to view Africa as a conglomeration of different ethnic groups bound together by the colonial divisions of Africa, which still persist today in Independent Africa (Beverluis, 2000: 3).”

The Concept of African Religion

“Related to this geopolitical and cultural view of Africa is the 19th century classification based on the so-called evolutionary theory of culture and religion. This classification of religions based on belief systems, puts African Religion and culture on the lowest level of the evolutionary ladder, because, it was believed, African primitive culture can only produce the most elementary and primitive belief systems (Beverluis, 2000: 3).” “Until recently, this treatment of African religions in the Western intellectual tradition has made it impossible for African Traditional Religion to speak for itself except in terms of 19th-century evolutionism or the Western anthropological theories of primitive religions and cultures (Beverluis, 2000: 3).” However, Opoku (1978) makes the stern point that, “a close observation of Africa and its societies will reveal that Religion is at the root of African culture and is the determining principle of African life. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that in traditional Africa, Religion is life and life, Religion (Opoku, 1978: 1).”

Religion: A Daily Way/Reality

“Africans are engaged in religion in whatever they do—whether it be farming, fishing or hunting; or simply eating, drinking or travelling. Religion gives meaning and significance to their lives, both in this world and in the next. It is hence not an obstruction but a part of reality and everyday life (Opoku, 1978: 1).”

Universal Yet Local

“African Traditional Religion is part of the religious heritage of mankind. There are elements in it that are universal, but there are also some distinctive features of local origin which give it

its discernible characteristic as African (Opoku, 1978: 8).” “African Traditional Religion deals with the holy and springs from man’s eternal quest to comprehend the universe and to come to terms with the forces that control his inner being (Opoku, 1978: 8).”

Truth

“Religion in Africa, like all Religions, is a profound expression of the apprehension of a truth which is not of man’s own making, a truth whose significance originates from the fact that its validity does not depend on the mind of man (Opoku, 1978: 8).”

Traditional Religion

“Africa is so vast and has a large number of societies which differ from each other, yet there is a common thread in indigenous values, views and experiences which shows a large measure of uniformity. Out of this emerges the African concept of the supernatural, ideas about man, society and nature. All these ideas form a system which gives meaning and significance to African life (Opoku, 1978: 8).”

Past & Present

“To call the Religion ‘traditional’ is not to refer to it as something of the past; it is only to indicate that it is undergirded by a fundamentally indigenous value system and that it has its own pattern, with its own historical inheritance and tradition from the past. At the same time, African Traditional Religion is practiced by millions of Africans in our time and it is therefore a contemporary reality which exists objectively and in fact (Opoku, 1978: 9).” African Traditional Religion “connects the present with infinite time; there is a sense in which it is practiced in time, it is essentially timeless (Idowu, 1973; Opoku, 1978: 9).”

African Human Origins

“In 1959 Dr. Louis S. B. Leakey made discoveries which were to imply the origin of humankind on the African continent. Dr Leakey discovered the remains of *Zinjanthropus Bosei* and *Homo Habilus* in association with a primitive stone culture at Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, dating back almost two million years. Since then further discoveries have been made in Ethiopia dating back 3-4 million years, among others (Kamalu, 1990: 1).” “With all of the evidence suggesting the origin of the human species on the African continent, we should not be surprised by the occurrence of any evidence in favour of an African origin of civilization (Kamalu, 1990: 1).” “Dr. Cheikh Anta “Diop says Egyptian civilization is the earliest history is able to record, and this was Black African in origin; which should surprise no one since Egypt is and always has been in Africa (Kamalu, 1990: 1).” “The earliest religious script known is African: popularly known as *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* and more fittingly named by its original title *The Book of Coming Forth By Day* (also Papyrus of Ani). According to E.A. Wallis Budge, this

book was in use among the Egyptians from at least 4,500 B.C. and it evidently inspired both the Holy Bible and the Torah (Torah approx. 800 B.C. and the Holy Bible approx. 100 A.D.) (Kamalu, 1990: 2).” “We see this particularly in the Old Testament and in St. John’s gospel in the New Testament. Substance will be given to these claims further on (Kamalu, 1990: 2).”

Unwritten History

“Traditional African Religion and Philosophy refers to those beliefs prevalent on the continent today for which no history of its development has been written. The ancient refers to the beliefs of the ancient Africans (Egyptians) (Kamalu, 1990: 2-3).” “In light of past misunderstandings propagated by European authors, it is vital to make the point, that the traditional is nothing but the latter-day form of the ancient. There are so many instances of similarity as to defy coincidence—they are mother and daughter. Furthermore, because of the unity of African culture, we know it makes sense to speak of African Religion and philosophy universally as a single body of knowledge (Kamalu, 1990: 2-3).”

African Traditional Religion General Beliefs

African Traditional Religion is made up of a set of beliefs, and practices which are a consequence of the beliefs:

- A) God B) Ancestral Spirits C) Supernatural entities of lesser deities. D) Totemism E) Mystical Powers F) Suman (Akan)—Charms, amulets and talismans (Opoku, 1978: 9).”

The Uniqueness of GOD

“In African Traditional Religion, God, or the Supreme Being, is outside the pantheon of gods. He is the eternal Creator of all the other gods, and of men and the universe. This makes Him absolutely unique, and He is differentiated from the other gods in having a special name (Opoku, 1978: 5).” “The name is always in the singular, and it is not a generic name, like *Obosom* (Akan) or *Orisha* (Yoruba). All the other divinities have a generic name in addition to their specific names. This is the Africans’ way of showing the uniqueness of God (Opoku, 1978: 5).”

GOD

“To West Africans, God is essentially a Spirit, a being without concrete form or body. He is therefore never represented in the form of images or worshipped through them. God is also thought of as different from all of the other spirits and divinities. His powers transcend theirs and He has the unique attribute of immanence (Opoku, 1978: 27).” “God is present everywhere and is involved in the affairs of men. He rules and sustains the universe, which he created, with Love, Compassion, and Justice. These ideas about God are succinctly expressed in the names

given to Him. For instance, the Bulu name for God is *Mebee*, which means ‘*God who bears or sustains the universe* (Opoku, 1978: 27).’ God is “recognized as the Creator of the world and all that there is in it. Power, justice, beneficence, omniscience and eternity are attributed to Him (Opoku, 1978: 9).” “He is the source of all power and has power over life and death. He rewards men and also punishes them when they do wrong. He may be likened to the Overlord of society for He is the Final Authority in all matters (Opoku, 1978: 9).”

Grandfather/Grandmother

“God is usually conceived of as Grandfather because Grandparenthood is held in the highest esteem by West Africans. Hence, to call God ‘Grandfather’, is to accord Him utmost reverence, and not necessarily to make Him into a human being (Opoku, 1978: 25).”

The Human

The Akan

“Man is conceived of material and immaterial substances, with the immaterial substance linking him directly to God and making him the possessor of a portion of the Creator (Opoku, 1978: 25-26).”

“In the *Akan* conception of man, each person has an *okra*, or soul, which comes from *Onyame*. It is the *okra* which links man to *Onyame* and makes Him the Grand Ancestor or Grandsire (Opoku, 1978: 26).”

The Yoruba

“Man is also believed in Yorubaland to be directly related to *Olodumare* by the breath which the Creator breathed into the bodies shaped by *Orisha-nla*. According to this belief, the possession of the divine breath gives life to man, and thus, the Giver of Life, *Olodumare*, is the Grand Ancestor of all mankind (Opoku, 1978: 26).”

The Mende

“To the *Mende* of Sierra Leone, GOD is the Grand Ancestor of mankind because He is the source of the life of man. Man, therefore, is directly linked to God, and even the dead retire to His bosom after death.

The Konkomba

This belief is similar to that of the Konkomba of Northern Ghana, whose dead members are supposed to go to live in *Uumbwardo*, God’s House (Opoku, 1978: 26).”

A Compound of Material & Immaterial

“It is generally held in West Africa that man is a compound of material and immaterial substances. In other words, man has a body, which is tangible, and a spirit which is intangible. The body is the part which perishes when a man dies, but the Spirit survives, and links him with the Creator (Opoku, 1978: 91).” “These two parts if man may be further divided into a complexity of material and immaterial substances by different West African societies; but in spite of this, there is a fundamental assumption among all of them (The Yoruba, Mende, Akan etc.) concerning the unity of man’s personality (Opoku, 1978: 91).”

The Ancestors

“The most commonly recognized spiritual forces in African religions are ancestors. Many Africans believe that departed family members continue to live in the spirit world and that the ancestors unlike the High God, take an active interest in the well-being of those who live in this world (Hopfe, 2009: 56).” “The ancestors are thought of as being part of a ‘Cloud of Witnesses.’ They are believed to watch the spectacle of life and actively participate in the affairs of the living. They can help a person, a family, and even a nation if they wish (Hopfe, 2009: 56).” “Ancestors are often consulted before the birth of a child, at the beginning of the agricultural season, and even prior to battles or political conflicts. In some areas no one may eat the first fruit of the harvest before a portion of it has been offered to the ancestors. It is the ancestors’ ability to harm as well as to help that makes them such a potent force in African religions (Hopfe, 2009: 56).” “The rites performed in connection with the ancestors, such as libation and the offering of food to the ancestral spirits, are religious acts, but they are not necessarily an expression of worship. They express the esteem and feeling of hospitality the practitioners have for their ancestors, and constitute a manifestation of the firm belief in the unbroken relationship that exists between the living and the dead (Opoku, 1978: 5).”

The Yoruba

GOD

“African Religion, both ancient and traditional, is fundamentally monotheistic; yet it incorporates many symbols of the one God. Africans believe and always have believed in one and only one God whose many aspects are seen in the many aspects of nature as lesser gods of nature. Ancient and traditional religions similarly have gods of the sky, the earth, the sun and the rain among others (Kamalu, 1990: 9).”

The Human

“African Religion considers the Human Being to be the centre of the universe. This makes it ascribe human attributes to God. Not that women and men see God as human, but that God is

beyond human experience and the conception of God as human is merely an aid to the limited human understanding (Kamalu, 1990: 9).” “Bodily parts and activities are attributed to God. Some say God has eyes which, in traditional religion, are thought to be the sun, moon or firmament. And some picture God as having a long beard (Kamalu, 1990: 9).” “Most prevalent of all is the idea of God as the potter who fashioned man out of clay. Similarly, in ancient Africa, God’s eye was the ‘eye of Ra’; in hieroglyphics He is symbolized as having a beard; and the God *Khnum* or *Khnemu* is the potter who fashioned humans out of clay in the creation (Kamalu, 1990: 9).” “Despite all these attributes God was conceived as immaterial and invisible (Kamalu, 1990: 9).” “Although the African worldview is human-centred it does not excise the human being from the ecological system. Human beings are very much part of the animal kingdom and of nature. It is recognized that human survival depends on the maintenance of an equilibrium or harmony in human beings’ relationship with other life-forms (Kamalu, 1990: 14).”

Ara, Emi & Ori

“In the Yoruba conception of human personality, a person may be said to consist of three parts viz, *ara* (body), *emi* (soul/spirit) and *ori* (inner head). As an important aspect of a person, *ori* is responsible for human destiny. Its function, like that of the soul, is a metaphysical one (Makinde, 2007: 154).” “It would appear, therefore, that apart from the western conception of a person as body and soul the inclusion of *ori* as a third element of a person in the Yoruba thought makes the conception of a person broader and more complicated than in the Western thought (Makinde, 2007: 154).” “Since *ori* is an essential component of a person, the choice of good or bad *ori* after re-incarnation becomes an important factor in a person’s future life. Re-incarnation of a just or good soul into a future life does not necessarily mean that such a soul would be able to keep to his just acts in his next life (Makinde, 2007: 154).” “The soul gives body (*ara*) its life while *ori* controls human destiny. *Emi* is regarded as the offspring of *Olodumare* (Omo *Olodumare*) which accounts for its spirituality and immortality (Makinde, 2007: 155-6).” “Notice that *Ajalorun* or *Olorun* is another name for *Olodumare* (God). After death, *emi* (soul) goes back to *Olodumare*, its creator. But *ara* (body) perishes on earth as it does not leave the earth, a situation which explains why people may acquire different bodies on coming back to earth at reincarnation (Makinde, 2007: 155-6).” “*Ori* (inner head) which performs a metaphysical function presumably leaves the body after death, and back to heaven where it was originally moulded, waiting to be used by souls at another cycle of reincarnation. This means that, unlike the physical body (*ara*), *ori* does not perish on earth (Makinde, 2007: 155-6).” “That *ori* does not perish is borne out by the fact that we continue to worship the *ori* of our ancestors, just as we worship their souls or spirits. In Yoruba we say, “*bo ori enti o ku* i.e. *oku orun*” (worship the inner head of the departed soul), like “*ori baba*” (Ori of a departed

father or grandfather) or “ori iya” (Ori of a departed mother or grandmother) (Makinde, 2007: 155-6).”

Ori

“Altogether our analysis shows that *ori*, like *emi* (soul), lives a separate existence of its own. Both are metaphysical entities (Makinde, 2007: 156).” “Since *Ajala*, the moulder of *ori*, lives in the house of *Olodumare*, it may be said that *ori* goes back to *Olodumare* in much the same way as *emi* does. And, like *emi*, *ori* may not come back to earth with the same person. This, of course, must be true since a person who chooses a bad *ori* now may be lucky enough to choose a good *ori* in his next life or vice-versa (Makinde, 2007: 156).” “This is why the Yoruba usually say, ‘If I am coming back to this world next time, may I choose a better *ori* than the one I have now’. It resembles what one would call a prayer, wish or desire, for there is no indication that an individual has knowledge of the kind of *ori* he would choose in heaven for his next life. So, each time an *emi* (soul) is reincarnated, it may choose a different *ori* (Makinde, 2007: 156).” “But rarely do people say ‘If I am coming back to this world again, may I have a pretty face, long arms, good eyes and well cut legs’. This is probably because the Yoruba believe that *emi* (soul) and *ori* (inner head) are more important to human personality than *ara* (body) which is known to perish on earth and which is not materially different from any other physical object like a log of wood (Makinde, 2007: 156).”

Self-Knowledge

Ancient Africans

“The ancient Africans clearly had a philosophy of human striving for perfection through self knowledge. It might appear that Traditional African Religion has no counterpart of this; but such profound knowledge is often masked by esoteric symbolism (Kamalu, 1990: 10-11).” “A similar situation does arise in traditional as in ancient Africa, where such knowledge is confined to members of the community initiated into the priesthood. It was understood that such knowledge in the wrong hands could be used to the detriment rather than the benefit of the community; thus the exclusion of all but a few to certain kinds of knowledge was based and still is based on moral considerations (Kamalu, 1990: 10-11).” “The initiate had to be proven a person of morally conscientious and wise character (Kamalu, 1990: 10-11).”

The Dogon & The Bambara

“The *Dogon* of Mali and the *Bambara* of Guinea similarly have systems whereby only initiates are admitted to esoteric knowledge. In traditional and ancient Africa, this esoteric knowledge is

not only found in writings (as in ancient scripts), it is found in art and in architecture (Kamalu, 1990: 11).” “In the ancient art, architecture and writings there lie hidden a wealth of knowledge about ourselves and the world (Kamalu, 1990: 11).”

Ancient African Philosophy

In ancient African philosophy, the quest for self-knowledge is seen as a struggle to resolve inner conflict within ourselves. This conflict exists between the soul and the intellect. Intellect, because it believes itself to be all-powerful, is stupid (Kamalu, 1990: 13).” “It is this stubbornness of intellect to accept its own limits which prevents man from liberating his spirit. The soul which was regarded as a prisoner within the body was often symbolized as a bird trapped in a fishing net. In order to be free the soul or spirit had to overcome the finiteness of the body (Kamalu, 1990: 13).” “This was achieved through a resolution of the conflict with the body, with the soul or spirit and intellect becoming one (Kamalu, 1990: 13).” Kamalu (1990) continues, “Traditional and ancient African (Egyptian) religions have in common the belief that the person is made up of physical and spiritual entities (Kamalu, 1990: 68).” “The Yoruba believe that, apart from the disappearance of *ara* (body) into dust, the soul as the indestructible element of a person must continue to exist either in the form of a spirit or re-incarnated in a different body in a different place, or reborn again into the same family. It is this kind of belief that makes the continuity of life after death, or what is known also as eternal life, credible (Makinde, 2007: 148).” “The belief among the Yoruba that dead persons are sometimes reborn into the same family is borne out of such names like Babatunde (the father comes back to life again), Iyabo or Yetunde (mother comes back to the world again) and such names that are usually given to children by parents who suffered repeated death of infants (*abiku* in Yoruba, and *Ogbanje* in Igbo) e.g., Malomo, Kokumo (Don’t die again, or born not to die again, as infant) (Makinde, 2007: 148).”

Death & Ancestors

“It is believed that after the death of young people, there is no immediate rest. Rather they move from place to place in search of new lives. It is said that this is so because these young people must complete the required number of years (the life span) they ought to have lived had they not died before their time (Makinde, 2007: 149).” “This means that they may die again in their new places, but would certainly complete the required number of years when put together before they can rest in a place, like those who die in their old age. After death in old age, there exists a period of rest without the kind of movement from place to place that seems to characterize the souls of dead, young people (Makinde, 2007: 149).” “Of particular interest, therefore, is the death of old people (i.e., *Oku agbalagba*). Because they died at the ripe age, they do not wander from place to place like the young people who died prematurely through accidents, war, poison

or some other various devices by which Africans, through what is known as African Science, and which is hardly understood by Europeans, do kill their enemies without physical contact with them (Makinde, 2007: 149).” “Rather, these people who die at their ripe age go in groups to some places and live a quiet life there. In all cases, they leave their home-towns and settle in other places. According to oral evidence, many of them live in Ile-Ife. They are called ‘Oku ti o n simi’ (the dead that rest) (Makinde, 2007: 149).” “In all, there is the theory that a person comes back to life sixteen times, from the time of his first restful death, either as a human being, or as an animal; if he was a good person, he comes back as a good person; if a bad person, his soul may be put into that of a goat or other animal, at least for the time being (Makinde, 2007: 149).” “According to Odu Ogbese, it is after the 16th time that the cycle of re-incarnation proper begins (Makinde, 2007: 149).”

Immortality

“Immortality in Yoruba language means ‘aiku’. *Emi* (soul) is immortal. The creator of *emi* is *Olodumare* (Ajalorun, Olorun, or God, etc.) (Makinde, 2007: 150).” “Thus while *emi* (soul) is immortal, its creator, *Olodumare*, is also immortal. Both are also spirits (Makinde, 2007: 150).” “While the soul as an immortal spirit is known as *aiku*, *Olodumare* is known as Oba aiku, i.e. the deathless or immortal king (Makinde, 2007: 150).” “His breath as breathed into the lifeless body of man makes him (man) a living soul. It is the breath of this immortal king in the human body that really represents his own image in man—the ever-living spirit. The Yoruba language is lavish with the number of names given to the same immortal king otherwise known as *Olodumare* or God (Makinde, 2007: 150).” “An important aspect which traditional African religions seem to have retained from their Ancient Egyptian roots is the belief in immortality. In traditional African religions there are in general two kinds: collective immortality and personal immortality (Kamalu, 1990: 69).”

The Ancestors

“Personal immortality, that which is linked to reverence for our ancestors, consists in the memory of the deceased. The deceased is thought to live on in the memories of family, friends, acquaintances, etc. Remembrance by posterity is either by virtue of deeds alone or name alone (Kamalu, 1990: 71).” “When there are none left living who remember the deceased, personal immortality is lost and the deceased becomes ‘completely dead’. The ancient Egyptians attached the same importance to the preservation of the name as do traditional Africans. Blotting out of the name was also thought to destroy the deceased (Kamalu, 1990: 71).”

Reincarnation

“The process of re-incarnation in Yoruba thought shows that the giver of a new life after death is Ajalorun (Olodumare, Olofin Orun, Olorun, Eledaa, Oba Igbehin, Oba Aiku, God). According to the Odu Ifa we cannot tell or describe what Ajalorun looks like. He is invisible even to those serving him (Makinde, 2007: 150-2).” “His words are commands. He is seen only as lightning (manamana) (Makinde, 2007: 150-2).” “There are seven heavens (orun meje) and Ajalorun lives in the seventh and last heaven. At the time of re-incarnation Ajalorun is said to receive reports on each person’s activities in his former life. From this report, just and unjust souls are judged according to their deeds on earth (Makinde, 2007: 150-2).” “In the Yoruba theory of seven heavens, each of the heavens serve as a stop (ibuso), and a transmitting station to the next stop, in that order, until the message finally gets to Ajalorun, the occupier of the seventh heaven (Makinde, 2007: 150-2).” “The heavens, in their order, are as follows: Orun kere, Orun Kere, Orun Oluwonranwonjiwon, Orun Sedo, Orun Akaso, Orun Ilaja and Orun Iseda (the heaven of the Designer). Each of these heavens has an Iko or Iranse (ambassador/messenger) who reports on individual human activities through each of the seven heavens (Makinde, 2007: 150-152).” “It is said that the distance of one stop to another is 1,400 miles. Thus the distance from the first stop (orun kere) to the last stop (orun iseda) is 8,400 miles. The first, third, fifth, and sixth heavens deal directly with human beings (i.e., iko ti o je mo ise eniyan julo) (Makinde, 2007: 151).” “Thus while Oluorogbo in the first heaven acts as the ambassador between earth and the seven heavens, the third heaven is occupied by the elderly and powerful people (ibugbe awon agba) who also deal with human beings. They take care of pregnant women and infants and do all sorts of good things to man (Makinde, 2007: 151).” “In the fifth heaven are the orisas (deities). They also deal with human beings who worship them for one thing or the other (Makinde, 2007: 151).” “Finally, in the sixth heaven, Olalore, which is another name for water, deals with human beings because people drink water (Makinde, 2007: 151).” “It is also to be noted that the servants of the heavens live in the fourth heaven, just about midway between the first and the seventh heaven. They are said to be very close to Ajalorun and are therefore free to give him anytime for consultation, and may be sent to any of the ambassadors in other heavens as Ajalorun pleases. However, they never see Ajalorun face to face, as nobody could do so, and could only hear his voice (Makinde, 2007: 151).” “It is also interesting to note that Ajalorun never refuses to take the advice of each of his ambassadors (iko) for the purpose of passing his judgement over a person a person’s previous deeds on earth. He relies on them for accurate information which he always gets. This is said to have made his own job less difficult as a King of the heavens (Makinde, 2007: 151).”

The Seventh Heaven

“The seventh Heaven, *Orun Iseda*, is where the process of re-birth takes place. After the report on each individual is sent by *Oluorogbo* through each of heavens, it gets to *Ajalorun* in the seventh heaven, attended by servants to whom he is invisible (Makinde, 2007: 152).” “In the Yoruba myth only *Ajalorun* dictates the kind of life an individual would live, depending on his previous life. Hence the soul of a wicked person may be caused to enter into the body of a snake, a tree or a goat while the soul of an oppressed person or a slave may be caused to enter into the body of a king or queen. In all cases, the souls of just persons are rewarded with the possibility of good life after death, while those of unjust persons are ably punished by being re-incarnated in the forms of some despicable beings or the other (Makinde, 2007: 152).”

The Mask

The African mask deserves special attention as it is the chief implement of the ritual. Through the masks unseen spirits were cast into the visible world and the masks were seen as their abode. Masks were thus symbolic of the spirits, they were not identified with the spirits (that is, African people do not believe the sculptures themselves to be the spirits) (Kamalu, 1990: 90).” “In looking at the mask it is vital to look at the art dynamically in the context of its function in ritual as opposed to looking at it as a static work of art as is unfortunately the case for some of the stolen African masks that grace western museums. The ritual celebrates the oneness of human beings with nature and forms a bridge between the visible and invisible worlds through the invocation of unseen spirits. The ritual also served as a means of restoring social cohesion and the standard of morality and order handed down by ancestors hence maintaining the balance or equilibrium in the society (Kamalu, 1990: 90).” “This might involve the call for guidance in one of the passing rites (i.e., birth, initiation, marriage, death) or the call for rain or protection from disease. The mask, which harbours the spirit-force is used to call the spirits of the gods and ancestors for guidance and protection. This could also be achieved through carved wooden figures of the ancestors which contained the spirit of the ancestor and were the visible and tangible means by which the spiritual force or power of the ancestor was contacted (Kamalu, 1990: 90).”

Phenomenon Calendars

“Instead of numerical calendars representative of the Western linear concept of time Africans possess ‘phenomenon calendars’ which are dictated by events. For instance, in Africa when older people without formal education are asked their age they do not give a date, but relate their age to a significant event which took place about the same time (Kamalu, 1990: 115).”

The Dagara

Malidoma Some's (1994) '*Of Water & The Spirit*' provides the reader with an in-depth, personal rendition of African Traditional Religion (Philosophy, History & Real Practice) as lived and practiced by the Dagara, with particular reference to the Dogon tribal customs. This section follows with key selected information from Some's (1994) rendition.

The Dagara Tribe (Birifor Clan)

The *Birifor* clan was comprised of seventeen families. The Dagara tribe consisted of roughly ten clans encompassing over half a million people, covering a surface perhaps the size of Massachusetts (Some, 1994: 30). "Today, colonialism, new and old, has displaced the Dagara tribe in three sovereign nations: **Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Burkina Faso** (Some, 1994: 30)."

Colonialism and Totemism (Fetishes)

"Colonists came in and settled. They built hard houses and large roads all over the area, and forced our men to do the work. They even asked us to pay them taxes (Some, 1994: 42)." "They had infiltrated our territory and we could do nothing. They told us that our fetishes were disempowered and that we must cleanse our houses of them. Many heads of family did so in fear for their lives (Some, 1994: 42)." "My father was among the few who refused to obey their orders. That's why today our family is one of the largest left (Some, 1994: 42)." "Those who threw away their fetishes died shortly after. The families who obeyed the white man were dispersed. Dozens of families were thus wiped out in no time (Some, 1994: 42)."

Totemism

"Grandfather's space housed the pharmacy of the entire *Birifor* clan—an array of roots, daily collected, nightly prepared, to face emergencies of all sorts. These little dwellings contained the prosperity—spiritual, material, and magical—of the *Birifor*. Some of these roots were good for physical illness, but most of them were good for illness of the soul (Some, 1994: 31)." "These little buildings held the spiritual destiny of every member of the family. There, each one of us existed in the form of a stone, silent, docile, available. The stones represented the birth certificate of every person in the clan (Some, 1994: 31)." "This is where Grandfather went to examine the physical and spiritual energy fields of the people under his care. Through this magical means, Grandfather could check on each of us at his leisure (Some, 1994: 31)." "He took care of people outside of the family too. Strangers used to come now and then to seek medical help, and Grandfather would begin long ceremonial rites that took most of the day (Some, 1994: 31)." "Sometimes the strangers would bring chickens and, speaking breathlessly in an unintelligible magical language, he would cut their throats and direct the spurting blood onto some statues, representing different spirits, carved out of wood or built against the wall.

He never tired of rituals (Some, 1994: 31).” “The purpose of ritual is to create harmony between the human world and the world of the gods, ancestors and nature (Some, 1994: 32).”

Elders

“If one obediently walks their life path, they will become an elder somewhere in their late forties or early fifties. Graduating to this new status, however, depends on one’s good track record (Some, 1994: 23).” “A male elder is the head of his family. He has the power to bless, and the power to withhold blessing. This ability comes to him from his ancestors, to whom he is very close, and he follows their wisdom in counseling his large family (Some, 1994: 23).”

Magic

“For a full fifty years, my grandfather had been the priest, the leader, and the counselor of a family of over fifty souls (Some, 1994: 24).” Grandfather’s greatest fame came from his spiritual accomplishments. In the village everyone knew him as the “upside-down arrow shooter.” If he wished to destroy an enemy, he would retire to the quiet of his chambers, place an arrow upside down on his bow (the *Pintul*), and magically hit his target (Some, 1994: 24).” “The arrow would kill whomever or whatever he named, then rematerialize in his chamber ready for more. The slightest scratch from such a weapon is mortal (Some, 1994: 24).” “He displayed the upside-down arrow as a persuasive weapon to warn evil-doers away from our family, the Birifor (Some, 1994: 24).” Other tribes did not dare get into conflict with ours because they did not possess the secret of such deadly magic. Consequently, Grandfather rarely had a chance to demonstrate to the tribe his power in battle (Some, 1994: 30).” “The arrow did have peacetime uses, however. Grandfather used it to protect our family farm from the nocturnal raids of wild beasts. Although he could no longer work the fields, Grandfather could still in this manner contribute to our food supply (Some, 1994: 24).” “At night, when everyone was asleep, Grandfather would watch over the farm and the compound from his room. Through the use of complex and magical security devices, his thoughts were constantly tuned in to the vibration of the farm, and he could always determine whether the fields were being raided by wild animals (Some, 1994: 25).” “The device he used to keep vigil consisted of a clay pot filled with “virgin water,” rainfall that had never touched the earth in its fall from the sky. He saw everything that happened throughout the farm by looking into this water. The precision of vision it afforded superseded the simplicity of this device (Some, 1994: 25).” “Grandfather’s magical guardianship had enabled our family to always have enough food to eat (Some, 1994: 24).”

The Ancestors

“Grandfather was the guardian of the house, the link between the dead and the living. The first male of the family has responsibilities that are predetermined. The first male must be prepared to take charge of the family shrine when his father, the current priest, dies (Some, 1994: 36).”

Children

Respect and Love for children was universal in the tribe. To the Dagara, children are the most important members of society, the community most precious treasures (Some, 1994: 23).” “We have a saying that it takes the whole tribe to raise a child. Homes have doorless entrances to allow children to go in and out wherever they want, and it is common for a mother to not see her child for days and nights because he or she is enjoying the care and love of other people. When the mother really needs to be with her child, she will go from home to home searching for it (Some, 1994: 23).”

Initiation

“When a child grows into an adolescent, he or she must be initiated into adulthood. A person who does not get initiated will remain an adolescent for the rest of their life, and this is a frightening, dangerous, and unnatural situation (Some, 1994: 23).”

“After initiation, the elders will pick a partner for the young person, someone who is selected for their ability to team up with you in the fulfillment of your life purpose (Some, 1994: 23).”

Witches and Nature

“Two majestic green baobab trees, witches of all sizes illuminated their branches at night, burning the leaves with a milky fire that did not consume them. These witches possessed the secret of separating their souls from their bodies at night, and of turning their souls into light expanding into infinity (Some, 1994: 38).”

4.2 Native American Religion

Introduction

“While people of other lands were locked in philosophical discussion, on the native American continent, conclusions were made with certainty about what it is to be human, what nature is, and what the cyclical laws are that unite them in the eternal movement with its measure (Men, 1990: 25).” “The answers to these questions were found in the understanding of the intimate bond among God, humans, and numbers. For indigenous Americans, religion is more than a simple belief to be fanatically adhered to. Their religious understanding explains clearly and simply the truths of human existence as a living reflection of cosmic consciousness,

wherein energy---the spirit---conveys to all beings life, material existence (Men, 1990: 25-6).”
 “This conviction came from simple observation of the surroundings, the great environment wherein vibrates the essence of the Absolute Being, *Hunab K’u*, the *One Giver of Movement and Measure* that has empowered the human being (Men, 1990: 25-6).”

The Supreme Being

Wakan Tanka

“Many forms of Native American Religion hold that, in addition to the multiple spirits of nature, there is a single Supreme Being. They believe in the Supreme Being in a manner found in many basic religions. These religions take the position that that, above, and beyond all the lesser deities, there is a High God (Hopfe, 2009: 32, 33).” “However, this High God is separate from the concerns of Earth. Matters of daily life are the business of the nature spirits and sometimes the ancestors. It is to these spirits that one prays and gives attention (Hopfe, 2009: 32, 33).” “Some Native Americans think of the High God or Great Spirit as a personal God. Others understand the High God in a more abstract way. For them, the High God is not a personality, but rather a divine or sacred power that is revealed in humans, nature, and the spirit world (Hopfe, 2009: 32, 33).” “The Dakota (Sioux) belief in *Wakan Tanka* is an example of this abstract understanding of the High God. *Wakan Tanka* or the ‘Great Mysterious’ is a creative force found in all beings and spirits. Any object or being that has influence over the course of life is seen as a manifestation of this divine power (Hopfe, 2009: 32, 33).”

Measure & Movement

“Pre-conquest Mayan ancestors, through deduction and synthesis, came to a monotheistic conclusion, with a mathematical sense. Their concept of Absolute Being was defined as measure and movement—measure of the soul and movement of the energy which is spirit (Men, 1990: 24).”

Hunab K’u

“*Hunab K’u* symbolizes form and energy, that is the soul and the spirit. This unique Giver of Movement and Measure represents the Absolute Being, the architect of the universe (Men, 1990: 24-5).” “The Sun is one of *Hunab K’u*’s most powerful sources of information. It is for this reason that the spirit-energy was called *k’inan*, the *solar factor*. The Maya knew that, within the scientific realm, the Sun, the astral king, was the governor of all forms of life, without whom nothing was possible (Men, 1990: 24-5).” “The Maya did not have a mythical concept of deities, but instead maintained that lords represented the forces of nature, with a sense of symmetry, a redundancy of plurality in unity and unity in plurality. Thus, the Mayan thinker maintained that lords, humans, and numbers were one and the same. And all, without exception, were dependent

on the Absolute Being, Hunab K'u, whose symbolic representation is found on the pyramids as the Giver of Movement and Measure, in the geometric form of a square within a circle (Men, 1990: 25).” “The Maya seeks not the destruction of humankind, but instead its exaltation, since love for one’s own kind is love for one’s Self and, by extension, love for the Absolute Being—*Hunab K'u* (Men, 1990: 26).”

The Human

The Law of Compensation

“The lives of the lords and human beings were intimately linked by the cosmic fraternity represented by the Law of Compensation. This law was based on human values in firm connection with the rest of creation, although not in the sense of a co-ordinating element emanating from synergism, since, for the Maya, humans are an integral part of nature, and hence, part of God(Men, 1990: 26).” “The gods need human-beings and human beings need the gods.’ This statement, a fundamental precept of Mayan theology, refers to gods, humans and numbers as a single entity (Men, 1990: 26).” “The human being is simultaneously an addition, a subtraction, a multiplication, a division, and a common denominator. We are the total result of the *Law of Compensation* based on these mathematical values, results obtained in accordance with our conduct. Reciprocity with God and the lords basically explains our presence on this planet (Men, 1990: 26).” “We are a projection and a reflection of that cosmic consciousness which is Hunab K'u, the Absolute Being upon which all of life depends (Men, 1990: 26).”

K'inan —Solar Energy

“In the initiation to Mayan culture, the student must learn to use basic solar energy, and, in other instances, the forces which come from the Milky Way, from other planets, and even other solar systems (Men, 1990: 120).” “The Maya refer to the spirit as *k'inan*, meaning ‘of solar origin.’ Since the Maya innately defined spirit as originating from this source, they understood the law that governs the essence of the human being. To be *Kukulcan* or *Quetzalcoatl* is to know how to transform that sacred energy in our minds and bodies (Men, 1990: 120).”

Soul: A manifested form of Spirit: *k'inan*

“The indigenous American possesses the virtues or faculties of intuitive reason, free will, and determination which result in a sense of logic. These faculties were used in the observation of nature, which became their guide and master (Men, 1990: 24).” “As the Maya acquired further experience of their environment, they came to recognize that they, too, were part of nature and that everything has a soul. The soul, as defined by our Mayan ancestors, has material form due to the fact that everything has form (Men, 1990: 24).” “Soul was not confused with spirit, which was perceived as energy—solar energy. Spirit was named *k'inan*, derived from the word for the

Sun—*k'in*—and the suffix *an*, which is a conditional form of the verb ‘to be.’ Thus, *k'inan* is spirit or solar energy, and by inductive reasoning, soul is a manifested form of spirit (Men, 1990: 24).”

Death

“Our indigenous American ancestors arrived at the conclusion that, upon death, our soul or physical form remains on Earth, tenuous material that it is; our spirit, however, as igneous energy, reintegrates with the great cosmic focus which is the Sun. Thus, if the departed has earned a reward, it is here on Earth that it will be enjoyed. Likewise, if punishment is merited, Earth will be the scene of the suffering (Men, 1990: 27).” “While this may seem a simple solution to the question of eternal reincarnation, the thought warrants profound meditation. Our Mayan ancestors achieved a scientific definition of the formidable fact that only here on Earth, and in no other place, can the human being be what it is, and as it is, possessing the qualities and value of being human (Men, 1990: 27).” “Their conception of the world, based on education, is neither abstract, unknowable, mysterious, nor enigmatic. They attained a perfect understanding of life and their oneness with the Earth (Men, 1990: 26).” “The Maya developed human values but knew that they remained to be perfected, just as precious stone requires polishing and refinement to enhance its value. So it is with human beings: their innate qualities and virtues need the teacher’s guidance to reach perfection. It can be said that the Maya were not ones to ignore their value and worth as human beings (Men, 1990: 26).”

Oneness

“Despite their marvelous knowledge, the Maya did not repudiate their sense of spirituality and fall into materialism. On the contrary, their ethics and aesthetics were highly spiritual, establishing a binding truth based on the conviction that each individual was one with every other being—the very same entity. Hence, ‘you’ was declared nonexistent, leaving the notion that ‘you are me’ and ‘I am you’ (Men, 1990: 25).” “This conjugation of human with human is the *human being*. Thus, ethics were based on the law of mutual respect elevated to the category of religion, but religion in the highest scientific sense—mathematical, rather than merely metaphysical (Men, 1990: 25).”

Mayan Elements

G

“The Maya took the symbolic ‘G’ from our universal memory, from the place where we came as seeds. But Mayan sages made this symbol, as religion and science, part of their consciousness. Their people still live this consciousness (Men, 1990: 31).” “The ancient grandparents knew the *Logos* was there, and as such, the Maya observed its form and they saw

it. It is this form which is imprinted in the codices and sculpted on the pyramids. The Maya lived integrally worshipping that which is represented by the ‘G’ (Men, 1990: 34).” Men (1990) makes the point that, “the Ancient Maya were always searching for a more accurate description of observed reality. The symbology of the Milky Way included another graphic form besides the spiral representation. From persistent observation of the cosmos, the Maya knew precisely and scientifically the positions and movements of the planets and other astral bodies (Men, 1990: 34).” “Astronomy and astrology were the foundations of their philosophy. For this reason, they also understood that our galaxy had another graphic configuration, which they adopted and began to use as the mathematical symbol for the *Milky Way* (Men, 1990: 34).” “This new symbol was that of the egg, visible in the Mayan hieroglyphs. They called it ‘G (Men, 1990: 34).”

Panche be

“The cultural core of Mayan existence was *panche be*—the search for the root of the truth. Using logic, they found the true nature of things and understood the *Milky Way*, naming it *ge* in Mayan. The form of the ‘G’ was not developed as a whim, but was based on the original form of the Milky Way and its primordial configuration—the *spiral* (Men, 1990: 52).” “With this knowledge, the Maya emblazoned their sacred sites with graphic celebration of the symbol and revered its essence. They lived in harmony with the natural laws which govern us and which emanate from the cosmic ‘G’ (Men, 1990: 52).”

Q

“For the Maya, wherever the symbol of zero is marked, its value is known, for it represents the essence of the beginning, the *Logos*. It is the form of the seed. Thus it is said that in order to understand the sacred *Hunab K’u*, the *Only Giver of Movement and Measure*, one must venerate the origin of the zero, the Milky Way, for it is there that the mold for the most ancient things was located (Men, 1990: 34).”

Ge

“The first element, for the Maya, is the visible element, the physical body. We all know that it is made of visible material which is tangible and palpable. Any normal human being can detect this with the five senses (Men, 1990: 47).” “The second element consists of more tenuous or ethereal material. It is invisible under ordinary circumstances. Third, the element of spirit or personality is mental and is nourished by psychological energies. Fourth, vital essence is pure essence. The Mayan *ge* represents the essence of energy. It can be said that everything is made of energy (Men, 1990: 47).”

The Tree

“The Mayan word for Tree is pronounced *te*, and its symbol, which adorns pyramids, codices, and pottery is the ‘T.’ All the circumstances related to religious aspects of the tree offer evidence of the relationship between the name of the Creator—*teol*, the tree, and human existence. These are the fundamental links between humans and the supreme architect (Men, 1990: 61-2).” “This was well understood by the Mayan philosopher who associated the tree with the Great Spirit through the word *teol* (*te* meaning ‘tree’, and *ol* meaning ‘consciousness’ or ‘spirit’)(Men, 1990: 61-2).” “The consideration and respect which the Maya had for the tree was not only because they used its fruits for nourishment, but also because they were convinced that trees are life-forms with reactions similar to those of humans (Men, 1990: 62).” “The Tree is conceived of as a projection of intelligent energy, and as such, we deem it natural that it possesses psychological qualities similar to those of humans; *teol*—*spirit of the tree*. Mayan teachers and sages aware of the sensory and extrasensory characteristics of trees accepted that plants and trees had such capabilities as a logical result of the energy they possessed (Men, 1990: 64).” “They also knew that the tree possesses psychic faculties (the *ol*—‘spirit’) similar to those of a human being. Does it seem strange that a tree can produce, via its energy, echoes, visions, screams, cries, and moans, or even evoke apparitions such as *x’ta-bay*, the trickster, who always appears near to a tree and tempts the solitary off-road traveler? All of this leads to a Mayan phrase which states, ‘We live in an environment surrounded by echoes and images which can be materialized by our mental force (Men, 1990: 65).”

Seven Powers

“*Hunab K’u* gave us seven powers. They are distributed in our bodies. The ancient peoples of Mesoamerica knew how to use these seven forces (Men, 1990: 119).” “These seven powers, taken into our consciousness, help us become *Quetzalcoatl* or *Kukulcan*. *Hunab K’u*, as the *Only Giver of Movement and Measure*, taught us to understand these qualities. We came to know that everything in existence has movement and measure; we were aware of our true cosmic faculties as children of *Hunab K’u*. Thus it was taught by the *Hau K’inoob*, and they said, ‘All that exists is only movement and measure in the memory of *Hunab K’u* (Men, 1990: 119).”

Mayan Yoga

“Men (1990) thinks that it is important to mention the other ancient cultures, like those of India, where we find roots of words similar to peninsular Mayan (Men, 1990: 111).” “There are notable similarities between Indian culture and the cultures of the Maya of Yucatan and other indigenous people of America (Men, 1990: 111).” “There is clear evidence that,” the Mayan, “practiced this system of meditation (Yoga) in Mexico. Furthermore, the very word yoga exists

in Mayan. Written *yok'hah*, it combines *yok*, 'above' or 'on top of,' and *hah*, 'truth.' The sacred book, *Popol Vuh*, mentions the fasts of the Maya while awaiting the rising of the parent Sun. It is probable that the Maya kept this vigil while in the meditative posture (Men, 1990: 111)."

4.3 Hinduism

4.3.1 Introduction

"Hinduism is the largest religion in South Asia and the third in the world after Christianity and Islam. Approximately 950 million Hindus live in India, 40 million in other parts of South Asia and approximately 10 million are ethnic or diaspora Hindus living outside South Asia, from California to Bali (Ghiloni, 2015: 153)." "The total figure includes 150 to 200 million Dalits, today's scheduled castes, who were previously known as untouchables and denied entrance to Hindu temples. Their affiliation to Hinduism and their identity as Hindus is actively contested within their communities (Ghiloni, 2015: 153)." "Hinduism is not *one* 'religion' but a highly complex network of religious traditions that have developed in close association with one another through centuries, resulting in a tightly woven religious net that shares a large number of ritualistic, philosophical and cosmological concepts and symbols. A certain degree of unity within Hinduism can be observed in shared literatures such as the Puranas, the use of Sanskrit as ritual language and a common frame of philosophical discourse, while diversity can be observed in the miscellaneous regional traditions, the well-marked social boundaries and the plurality of ritual practices (Ghiloni, 2015: 153)." "The word *Hindu* has been the object of extensive discussion. It is a foreign term used first by the ancient Iranians to refer to those indigenous people who lived on the other side of the river Sindhu in today's Pakistan (Ghiloni, 2015: 154)." "It was later taken over by the Greeks, and then the Muslims, who gave it a more religious connotation. The term was soon embraced by Hindus to distinguish their communities from those of non-Hindus and then passed on to the British Raj and the Christian missionaries (Ghiloni, 2015: 154)."

Sanatana Dharma

"Despite its alien origin, the word *Hinduism* has been accepted as a religious designation by a large majority of Hindus, although many upper-caste persons still prefer to call themselves followers of *Sanatana Dharma* (eternal order of existence, and duties related to it (Ghiloni, 2015: 154-5)."

Hinduism

"*Hindu*, which simply means Indian, is an adjective which has been used to refer to what has been believed and practiced by some four hundred million people and their forbears for some five thousand years, none of whom refer to any one single teacher acknowledged by all or recite

any one creed accepted by all. Taken as a whole, the Hindu tradition is one of the oldest religious traditions in the world. But it is exceedingly difficult to take it as a whole, for it is one of the most diversified religious traditions in the world (Lewis, 1966: 22).” However, Lewis (1966) insists that, “some distinctive features of Hindu Religion, however, may be named, such as the caste system and the concept of Absolute Brahman. There are also certain basic assumptions which must be known before there can be any kind of understanding of the Hindu outlook (Lewis, 1966: 22).”

Basic Ideas

1. Samsara

“Among these basic ideas is the view of life indicated by the term samsara (migration) which means that the Hindu is far from thinking, as do most people in the West, that his life began with this birth on the planet. On the contrary, he thinks of this present span of life as only one in a succession of lives, taking various forms, not all of them human and not all of them lived on this earth (Lewis, 1966: 22-3).”

2. Karma & 3. Dharma

“Another basic idea is the idea of karma which denotes the conception of moral causation, a conception which means that what a man is and where he is today is largely determined by what he has done in many yesterdays with regard to dharma (sacred, eternal law) (Lewis, 1966: 23).”

4. Moksha, 5. Avidya, & 6. Maya

“There is the conception of salvation named by the term moksha, which signifies emancipation from the bonds of present existence. To attain this emancipation it is necessary to transcend avidya (ignorance) or maya (illusion) (Lewis, 1966: 23).”

Hindu Scriptures

“First, there are the *Vedas* (Veda meaning knowledge or wisdom). These are texts written during the course of some fifteen hundred or two thousand years before the Christian era (Lewis, 1966: 23-4).” “We may begin with the *Rig Veda*, the collection of hymns addressed to the gods introduced by the Aryan invaders who swept into India at the beginning of this period—hymns to *Indra*, the god of war and storm; to *Varuna*, the universal ruler and guardian of the law (dharma); to *Agni*, god of fire; and many others, most of them now forgotten (Lewis, 1966: 23-4).” “Included in the *Vedas* there are prose texts dealing with sacrificial rituals (Brahmanas) and later, the more philosophical texts, the Upanishads. The Vedic texts thus constitute what might be called a bible of primary scriptures, *sruti* (that which is heard) (Lewis, 1966: 223-4).” “In addition, however, there is a second body of authoritative scripture, *smriti* (that which is

remembered) which includes the great Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, manuals and law books such as the *Code of Manu*, the *eighteen major Puranas* and the *eighteen minor Puranas*. The *Puranas* alone amount to a vast mass of sacred literature full of stories and legends with popular appeal (Lewis, 1966: 23-4).”

Basic Hindu Beliefs

“Nearly all Hindus assent to certain general principles or articles of faith (Morgan, 2001:16-7):

- They believe that their sacred scriptures, the Vedas, are divine works that manifest the glorious primal energy of both creation and eternity.
- They believe in a supreme Ground of Being, the Brahman, who is uncreated, unborn, changeless, incorruptible, and utterly holy.
- They believe that each person has divinity within him or her. They believe that the universe exists through endless cycles, and that individual souls pass through incarnation after incarnation.
- They believe in karma (that our lot in this life is a result of past deeds in other incarnations, and that our future happiness depends on how we live here and now).
- They believe that all life is holy and that eventually every single soul, including the souls of animals, will achieve liberation, peace, and freedom in the knowledge of the Brahman.
- They believe that all religions, rightly understood, can bring their followers to salvation (Morgan, 2001:16-7).”

4.3.2 What Is Yoga?

Introduction

K. S. Joshi (1967) in *Yoga and Personality* makes the point that Yoga is a word that has great prestige value.³¹ Furthermore, according to Swami Chidananda, “the study of Yoga is the study of the higher Self within a person; it is the study of that science which has something to tell you about your unchanging real identity.”³² Swami Chetananda (1986) states that “the word Yoga signifies the union of the individual soul with the Cosmic soul.”³³ Huston Smith (1991) in *The World’s Religions* makes the solemn point that “all of us dwell on the brink of the infinite ocean of life’s creative power; we carry it within us.” With regards to this creative power, Smith

³¹ K. S. Joshi (1967) *Yoga and Personality*, Allahabad: Udayana Publications, p.1

³² Swami Chidananda (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*, Himalayas: The Divine Life Society, p. 191

³³ Swami Chetananda (1986) *Swami Vivekananda. Vedanta: Voice of Freedom*, NY: Philosophical Library Inc, p.17

asks the question, “What if we could bring it to light and draw from it unceasingly?”³⁴ For Joshi (1967), Chidananda (1984), Smith (1991) and Chetananda (1986), Yoga is the apt “chart to guide people to higher states of being—it is Hinduism’s specific directions for actualizing the human potential.”³⁵ Smith (1991) defines Yoga as “a method of training designed to lead to integration or union.”³⁶ He believes that Yoga is “designed to unite the human spirit with the God who lies concealed in its deepest recesses.”³⁷ The word *yoga* derives from the same root as does the English word ‘yoke’.³⁸

1. To unite (yoke together)

2. To place under disciplined training (to bring under the yoke, or “take my yoke upon you”)³⁹

Hence, via the practice of Yoga, one’s individual Spirit can be yoked together with the Great Spirit which is God. Swami Atmananda (1966) in *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment* stresses the point that “the vast and wonderful powers and potentialities latent in man express themselves occasionally.”

“Yoga gives a proper interpretation of these mysterious powers and prescribes a course of discipline, which, if strictly and fully carried out, will bring about the unfoldment of what were regarded as mysterious powers, which is but the core of his constitution. As a small seed contains the potentiality to manifest itself as the giant of a banyan tree, so also men without exception have in them a latent potency, which can in course of a long time make them sages and saints.”⁴⁰

Swami Chidananda (1984) makes the point that “men of wisdom discovered that the outer personality of the human is but a mask that one takes upon oneself; the real/true being is hidden inside and not subject to change and ultimate destruction like that of the apparent outer personality.”⁴¹ Swami Atmananda (1966) supports Chidananda’s (1984) point when he states that, “Yoga is the great effort for the transformation of one’s character in the line of mental purity and strength; One’s worldly activity is the field for the cultivation of the transformation.”

⁴² Joshi (1967) informs us that “Vedic seers are known to have aspired 1) to reach the Heavens

³⁴ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 26

³⁵ Ibid., p. 26

³⁶ Ibid., p. 27

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 1

⁴¹ Swami Chidananda (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*, pp. 191,192

⁴² Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 9

and/or 2) to attain to Brahman.”⁴³ “To this effect,” Joshi (1967) continues, “they developed various practices which were in a more or less fluid form lacking elaborate classification. Later on, they were organized into a magnificent system having also a philosophical background and the name ‘Yoga’ came to be associated with it.”⁴⁴

Drawing from various sources, Joshi (1967) highlights twelve definitions of the term ‘Yoga’:

1. A state of equipoise wherein one looks equally upon success and failure—one does not get elated by success or disheartened by failure.⁴⁵
2. A state which is eternally free of sorrow and craving.
3. The art of performing acts skilfully—yet completely detached from the desire to reap the consequences of the acts.⁴⁶
4. The state par excellence which is a state of perfect steadiness.
5. A state of steadiness of the mind along with the five senses and the intellect. The highest state which makes the individual unoffending and faultless.
6. A state in which the mind is no more taken away by the objects of experience.⁴⁷
7. A technique or device that makes for successfully reaching the other shore of the stream of sorrow.⁴⁸
8. Yoga is the unity of the three aspects of an individual’s personality (i. the senses ii. the mind iii. the life force) in which one ceases to be under the sway of conflicting thoughts and cravings.⁴⁹
9. The unity of the individual soul with the cosmic soul—this means that yoga is a state in which one becomes aware that although one exists as an individual in day-to-day life, one is intrinsically a part of a larger whole of existence from which he is not in any way separate or isolated.
10. The union of the purified mind with Brahman.

⁴³ K. S. Joshi (1967) *Yoga and Personality*, p.4

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.4

⁴⁵ Bhagavad Gita 2:48

⁴⁶ Bhagavad Gita 2:50

⁴⁷ K. S. Joshi (1967) *Yoga and Personality*, p.7

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.6

⁴⁹ K. S. Joshi (1967) *Yoga and Personality*, p. 6

11. The elimination of the modifications of the mind.⁵⁰

12. A method of making the mind silent.

Sri Aurobindo (1972) in *The Synthesis of Yoga* makes the definitive statement that “Yoga is a methodized effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in the being and a union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent Existence we see partially expressed in man and in the Cosmos.”⁵¹ Chidananda (1984) lends support to Aurobindo’s definition when he states that “the philosophy of Yoga puts forward, in non-technical or non-metaphysical terms, the thesis that one is essentially an all-perfect entity, totally free from any imperfection and not subject to any undesirable, imperfect, negative experiences whatsoever.”⁵² In succinct fashion, Swami Atmananda (1966) summarizes the aforementioned by stating that: “Yoga puts man in the company of God.”⁵³

Real Religion

“Yoga is the vital part in the practice of religion.”⁵⁴ It is “the process leading to the culmination of true religious practice, by which man transcends his mind and gets established in the super-consciousness.”⁵⁵ Swami Atmananda (1966) states that, “All acts of religion, be they rituals or Yoga are based on the belief of the existence of a supernatural power—God.”⁵⁶ However, Atmananda (1966) continues, “rituals constitute the first stage of religious practice in each religion whilst, the most evolved forms of these practices have culminated in the Yogic practices.”⁵⁷ “**Real religion**,” according to Atmananda (1966), “belongs to the sphere of the super-consciousness in man; it is a phenomenon beyond the sphere of the senses and mind of man which is brought about by the practice of Yoga.”⁵⁸

Independence From Prakriti

According to Chidananda (1984), “Phenomenal nature (Prakriti), in all its variations, acts as the factor which limits one into a certain range of experience which is its own area/territory.”⁵⁹ Swami Nikilananda (1946) in *Self Knowledge* informs us that Prakriti (nature or matter) consists of three gunas (“qualities”) known as sattva, rajas and tamas; tamas stands for inertia or

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.8

⁵¹ Sri Aurobindo (1972) *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Pondicherry (India): Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Publication Department, p. 2

⁵² Swami Chidananda (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*, p. 2

⁵³ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 67

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 1

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 5

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 3, 4

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 8

⁵⁹ Swami Chidananda (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*, p. 6

dullness; rajas for activity or restlessness; and sattva for balance or righteousness. Chidananda (1984) postulates that “by its (prakriti/the three gunas) proximity and close association with one, it transfers its varying experience into one as it were.”⁶⁰ Hence, “the philosophical thesis at the basis of the science of Yoga is: ‘Stop this association with Prakriti and be yourself. Establish yourself in your pristine isolated position.’”⁶¹ Chidananda (1984), using the analogy of a crystal, illustrates the philosophy of Yoga:

“Yoga philosophy offers the analogy of a perfectly clear crystal which is transparent and pure, but becomes filled as it were with some colour if some coloured object is brought forth near it. This proximity of something having some characteristic brings about a seeming transference of that characteristic from that something into the pure, transparent, clear crystal. It is the proximity to something that is the cause for the apparent change in the otherwise attribute-less crystal ball. Similarly, one’s true Self is also in a similar state of proximity to something (the body and senses) and has become involved with come and taken possession of the True Self. ⁶²Yoga is like ‘bringing about a cessation of the proximity that is there between the crystal and the object by separating the two. If the proximate object is taken away and the crystal is once again isolated from that object which has been superimposing all its qualities upon it, then, once again the crystal is pure, clear and transparent; once again it stands in/regains its own nature.’”⁶³

The Four Yogas

Christopher Isherwood (1947) in *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination* states that “four main Yogas (ways to union with God) are generally recognized in Hindu religious literature—*Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, and Raja*.”⁶⁴ Smith (1991) reasons that “the four different yogas suit different temperaments/ four basic spiritual-personality types:

1. Reflective 2. Emotional 3. Active 4. Experimentally Inclined.”⁶⁵

Swami Atmananda (1966) asserts that “the four different sets of practices are meant to suit the four marked differences in the psychology of man.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, Atmananda (1966) continues, “in all the Yogas, the effort to conquer one’s passions, desires, anger, greed, envy and intolerance etc. is the preliminary sine qua non.”⁶⁷ Lending support to Atmananda’s (1966) assertion, Smith (1991) claims that “as the aim of the yoga is to render the surface self transparent to its underlying divinity, it must be first cleansed of its gross impurities.” As such, “all four paths begin with moral preliminaries:

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Swami Chidananda (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*, p. 5

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Isherwood, Christopher, Prabhavananda, Swami (1947) *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, California: Vedanta Press, p. 32

⁶⁵ Smith, Huston (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 28

⁶⁶ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 4

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 9

Non-injury

Truthfulness

Non-stealing

Self-control

Cleanliness

Contentment

Self-discipline

& A compelling desire to reach the goal.”⁶⁸

JNANA YOGA—Yoga of Pure Discrimination⁶⁹

I.K., Taimni (1961) in *The Science of Yoga* states that “**the human soul** or the **Jivatma/Atman** is a facet or partial expression of **the Over-Soul** or **Paramatma**, the Divine Reality which is the source of the manifested universe.”⁷⁰ Taimni (1961) believes that “although in essence **the two are the same and are indivisible**, the Jivatma has become subjectively separated from Paramatma and is destined, after going through an evolutionary cycle in the manifested Universe, to become united with the Over-Soul again in consciousness.”⁷¹ “This state of unification of the two: 1) in consciousness, as well as 2) the mental process and discipline through which this union is attained are both called Jnana Yoga.”⁷² In Jnana Yoga, “the attempt is to get over the false identification with the body and the senses.”⁷³

“The Jnana Yogi clears the mist round the Atman until, at last, nothing but Atman remains. In the beginning, one identified oneself with the body and Atman was a mere matter of belief; then Jnana Yoga shifts the centre of gravity more and more inside until it has gained its right place—The Atman.”⁷⁴

According to Chander (1977), “Yoga means concentration of the mind on the Supreme Soul only.” Chander (1977) states that “a mind, steady and stable in awareness of the Soul becomes endowed with a super-sensuous state of bliss, effulgence, might and joy before which the sum total of all worldly pleasures and delights seems mere trash.”⁷⁵ Smith (1991) insists that “the key to the project of Jnana Yoga is *discrimination*—the power to distinguish between the surface self

⁶⁸ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 9

⁶⁹ Christopher Isherwood (1947) *Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, p. 32

⁷⁰ I.K. Taimni (1961) *The Science of Yoga*, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.: The Theosophical Publishing House, p. 7

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 7

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ B. K. Jagdish Chander (1977) *The Way and the Goal of Raja Yoga*, Delhi: God-Fatherly University of Brahma Kumaris, p.1

that crowds the foreground of attention and the larger self that is out of sight.”⁷⁶ Atmananda, in an effort to describe the process of Jnana Yoga makes the points that it involves three stages: ⁷⁷

- 1) **Hearing**—Jnana Yogis saturate themselves with ideas regarding Atman
- 2) **Reasoning**—using their reasoning Jnana Yogis convince themselves that the strange Truth about the Atman must be correct
- 3) **Practice** (Sadhana)—then a test is done by meditation and raising one’s self to the Super-conscious state which alone can experience it as true.⁷⁸

Karma Yoga—Yoga of Work & Action

Swami Prabhavananda (1947) postulates that by,

A. “working selflessly for our neighbours,

B. regarding all action as a sacramental offering to God,

C. doing our duty without anxiety or concern for success or failure, praise or blame,

one can annihilate the ego-idea, and in the process, through Karma, transcend Karma & experience the Reality which is beyond all action.”⁷⁹

Detachment/Non-Attachment

“In the Bhagavad Gita, Sree Krishna counsels to mankind that every one living in the world should discharge his social responsibilities in a scientific manner to purify his mind.”⁸⁰ In this vein, Swami Nikhilananda (1946) insists that “work (karma) in order to produce a spiritual effect must be performed as Yoga”:

“If the Soul is identified with action even to the slightest degree, It has not realized Its true nature. The doer must regard himself as an instrument in the hand of God, surrender to God the results of action and remain unruffled by love or hate. Work performed in this spirit purifies the heart and makes it inclined to the cultivation of meditation and self-knowledge. Gradually outer action drops away, reduced to a minimum sufficient only for the maintenance of the body. The actor remains satisfied with what comes of its own accord, without feeling attachment to the

⁷⁶ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p.29

⁷⁷ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 161

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 162, 164

⁷⁹ Isherwood, Christopher, Prabhavananda, Swami (1947) *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, p. 32

⁸⁰ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 4

agreeable or aversion for the disagreeable, devoting himself heart and soul to the contemplation of Atman, which is the sole Reality.”⁸¹

Swami Atmananda (1966) stresses the fact that “as long as one lives in the world, one has to discharge one’s social responsibilities with one’s full mind in them; but one is asked to be quite detached as to the success or failure—for the greater aim here is the acquisition of purity of mind rather than the reward itself.”⁸² In Karma Yoga, one is expected to “carry out one’s duties to wife/husband, children, neighbours, etc. without incurring mental taint by anger or greed.”⁸³ Then, and only then, according to Atmananda (1966), “Karma (action) becomes Karma Yoga if non-attachment to the fruits of action is cultivated’ whilst one is engaged in action.”⁸⁴

Bhakti Yoga—Yoga of Devotion/ Yoga of The Religious Sacraments

Huston Smith (1991) believes that “life is powered less by reason than by emotion; and of the many emotions that crowd the human heart, the strongest is love.” Given this fact, Smith (1991) believes that “the aim of Bhakti Yoga is to direct toward God the love that lies at the base of every heart.”⁸⁵ In this Yoga, “the Bhakta will strive not to identify with God, but to adore God with every element of his or her being.”⁸⁶ Atmananda (1966) reminds us that “the sage Narada affirms that the particular attitude to be developed in Bhakti Yoga is “no thought in the mind than of God.”⁸⁷ Furthermore, Isherwood (1947) suggests that “Ritual plays an important part in Bhakti-Yoga as a physical aid to concentration. The acts of ritual bring the mind back repeatedly from its distractions and help to keep it steadily upon its object.”⁸⁸

Huston Smith (1991) highlights the three features of Bhakti Yoga:⁸⁹

1. **Japam**—“The practice of repeating God’s name—this frequent service of the lips imperceptibly becomes a genuine appeal of the heart.”⁹⁰

2. **Ringling the Changes on Love**—“There are different modes of love: 1) Love of parent for child 2) Love of friends 3) Conjugal love of woman and man. All of these modes have their

⁸¹ Swami Nikhilananda (1946) *Self Knowledge (Atmabodha)*, p. ix

⁸² Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 5

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 4

⁸⁵ Huston Smith (1966) *The World’s Religions*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991, p.32

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.33

⁸⁷ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 4

⁸⁸ Isherwood, Christopher, Prabhavananda, Swami (1947) *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, p. 32

⁸⁹ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, pp.35, 36

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.35

place in strengthening the love of God and the Bhakta is encouraged to make use of them all—Love God as friend, master, spouse, child etc.”⁹¹

3. Worship of God in the form of one’s chosen ideal—“The Hindus have represented God in innumerable forms. This, they say, is appropriate for each is but a symbol that points to something beyond; and as none exhausts God’s actual nature, the entire array is needed to complete the picture of God’s aspects and manifestations.”⁹²

Raja Yoga—The Yoga Of Meditation⁹³

In Raja Yoga, “all attention is towards restraining the surging thoughts that rush into one’s mind; this is done by making the mind dwell on the most beloved thought to the exclusion of all others.”⁹⁴ The Raja Yogi can “see for his/herself whether the mind wanders and strays away from the chosen idea; and with devoted efforts the strayings become less and less and concentration becomes firmer and firmer.”⁹⁵ In the *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda (2009)*⁹⁶ Raja Yoga is conveyed/divided into eight steps:

1. YAMA

Non-killing

Truthfulness

Non-stealing

Continence

Non-receiving of any gifts

2. NIYAMA

Cleanliness

Contentment

Austerity

Study

⁹¹ Ibid., p.36

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 7

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 7

⁹⁶ Swami Vivekananda (2009) *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda*, Delhi: Vijay Goel Publishers.

Self-surrender to God

Swami Vivekananda's (2009) explains that the first two steps—**YAMA & NIYAMA**—are **moral trainings**, without which as the basis no practice of Yoga will succeed.⁹⁷

3. ASANA: posture

Vivekananda (2009) suggests that “it is quite necessary that we should find a posture in which we can remain long;” His recommendation is that one should ‘sit erect and hold the three parts—the chest, neck and head—in a straight line as the main part of the activity will lie along the spinal column.”

3. PRANAYAMA—control of Prana

Prana & Akasha

Vivekananda (2009) teaches that the whole universe is composed of two materials—**Prana** and **Akasha**.⁹⁸ He states that “Prana is the sum total of all forces in the universe (mental or physical) when resolved back to their original state.”⁹⁹ “Prana is the material by which ALL are composed—**ALL are parts of the same ocean of Prana—they differ only in their rate of vibration.**”¹⁰⁰ “Prana can be specifically observed in energy, force, motion, gravitation, magnetism, actions of the body nerve currents and thought force.”¹⁰¹ Akasha is the infinite, omnipresent material of the universe which is manufactured by the power of Prana.¹⁰²

With regards to human beings, “the Prana is the vital force in every being, and *Thought* is the highest and finest action of Prana (Instinct/unconscious thought is the lowest plane of action).”¹⁰³ “The mind can exist on a still higher plane, the superconscious—all manipulations of the subtle forces of the body, the different manifestations of Prana, if trained, give a push to the mind, help it to go up higher, and become super-conscious, from where it acts.”¹⁰⁴ Vivekananda postulates that the “**part of Pranayama** which attempts to control the physical manifestations of the Prana by physical means is called physical

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 109

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 115, 116

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 124

¹⁰¹ Swami Vivekananda (2009) *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda*, Delhi: Vijay Goel Publishers, pp. 115, 116

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 118

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 118

science; and the part **which tries to control the manifestations of the Prana as mental force, by mental means is called Raja-Yoga.**" ¹⁰⁵

5. PRATYAHARA—restraint of the senses from their objects

6. DHARANA—fixing the mind on a spot

7. DHYANA—meditation

8. SAMADHI—superconsciousness

Vivekananda (2009) stresses the point that "when the mind has attained to that state, which is called **Samadhi (perfect concentration, super-consciousness)** it goes beyond the limits of reason, and comes face to face with facts which no instinct or reason can ever know."

Conclusion

In the words of Sri Aurobindo (1972), "**All life is Yoga; all life is trying to move towards self-perfection—evolving upwards.**" ¹⁰⁶ Within this realm of thought, Swami Vivekananda (2009) insists that "**the ideal of the Yogi—the whole science of Yoga—is directed to the end of teaching men how to shorten the time for reaching perfection by intensifying the power of assimilation**—instead of slowly advancing from point to point and waiting until the whole human race has become perfect." ¹⁰⁷

"All life when we look behind its appearances is a vast Yoga of Nature attempting to realise her perfection in an ever-increasing expression of her potentialities and to unite herself with her own divine reality.

¹⁰⁸Man is precisely that term and symbol of a higher Existence descended into the material world in which it is possible for the lower to transfigure itself and put on the nature of the higher and the higher to reveal itself in the forms of the lower." ¹⁰⁹

Aurobindo (1972) believes that "Yoga must bring about an inner perfection in the midst of/in harmony with the outer world." ¹¹⁰ He concludes that "no synthesis of Yoga can be satisfying which does not reunite God and Nature in a liberated and perfected human life; or in its method, not only permit but favour the harmony of our inner and outer activities and experiences in the divine consummation of both." ¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 125

¹⁰⁶ Sri Aurobindo (1972) *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 2

¹⁰⁷ Swami Vivekananda (2009) *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda*, p. 123

¹⁰⁸ Sri Aurobindo (1972) *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 2

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 4

¹¹⁰ Sri Aurobindo (1972) *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 3

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 4

4.3.3 GOD and the Upanishads

Introduction

Something From Nothing?

Can *Something* be born from nothing? Or, according to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz ¹¹², the first question which should rightly be asked is, “**Why is there something rather than nothing?**”¹¹³ William Lane Craig in ‘Philosophical and Scientific Pointers to Creatio ex Nihilo’, makes the point that ‘unless we are prepared to believe that the universe simply popped into existence uncaused out of nothing, then the answer must be something exists because there is an eternal uncaused being for which no further explanation is possible.’¹¹⁴ Furthermore, as William Paley points out, the order that is found in the ‘something’ called ‘the universe—the order underlying its disorder—is proof that creation is a contrivance of a *Supremely Intelligent Designer*.’¹¹⁵ Thomas Aquinas, in ‘The Five Ways’ refers to God as ‘The Supreme Intelligence.’¹¹⁶ In lucid fashion, Aquinas states that ‘whatever lacks intelligence cannot move toward an end unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence—as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer.’¹¹⁷ But who is the *Archer*? ‘Who or what is this *eternal, uncaused being*?’¹¹⁸ Who or what is this ‘*intelligent being that exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end*’¹¹⁹ ‘Who or what is this *Great Big Creator of the Universal Something*? Who or what is this *Supremely Intelligent Designer*? ‘Leibniz identified it with **God**.’¹²⁰

The Upanishads

Ram Chandra Jha (1973) in *The Vedantic and the Buddhist Concept of Reality as Interpreted by Samkara and Nagarjuna* states that the ‘Supreme Reality has been understood by the early Upanishads as *satyam* or **Truth** or *jnanam* or **Consciousness** and *anantam* or **Infinity**; the later Upanishads call it *sat* or **Existence**, *cit* or **Consciousness**, and *ananda* or **Bliss**.’¹²¹ The Upanishads, according to Suren Navlakha (2000), ‘were composed between 900 and 600 BC; they are the concluding part of the Vedas, and hence, are also called **Vedanta**—

¹¹² G. W. Leibniz (1951) ‘The Principles of Nature and of Grace, Based on Reason’ in P. P. Wiener (ed.) *Leibniz Selections*. The Modern Student’s Library, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, p. 527

¹¹³ *GOD* (2002) Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, pp. 56, 57

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57

¹¹⁵ William Paley (1802) ‘The Teleological Argument’, *Natural Theology*, pp. 37-55

¹¹⁶ *GOD*, p. 35

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ William Lane Craig (2002) ‘Philosophical and Scientific Pointers to Creatio ex Nihilo’ in *GOD*, p. 57

¹¹⁹ *GOD*, p. 35.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57

¹²¹ Ram Chandra Jha (1973) *The Vedantic and the Buddhist Concept of Reality as Interpreted by Samkara and Nagarjuna*, Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, p. 15

that with which the Vedas end.’¹²² Stating that ‘**Vedanta is synonymous with the knowledge of God,**’ Navlakha (2000) provides the information that ‘the Upanishads are purely philosophical works which have the knowledge of the ultimate reality, and of man’s relationship with it as its main metaphysical concern.’¹²³

Sat Chit Ananda

D. C. Mathur (1972), in ‘The Concept of Self in the Upanishads: An Alternative Interpretation’, postulates that God is ‘**a Trinity of Existence.**’¹²⁴ Whilst Swami Krishnananda (2010), in *The Realisation of the Absolute*, defines God as ‘**Existence which is infinite Consciousness of the nature of Bliss.**’¹²⁵ Extracting the following pertinent statements made in the Upanishads,

God is Existence, Consciousness, Infinitude. (Taittiriya Up., II. 1.)

God is Consciousness, Bliss. (Brihadaranyaka Up., III. 9. 28)

God is That which is Infinitude is Bliss and Immortality. (Chandogya Up., VII. 23, 24)

Krishnananda (2010) makes his opinion clear that these sentences give the best definition of that which is the ‘**Highest Reality.**’¹²⁶ In *Vedanta for the Western World*, God is described as “**Existence itself (sat), Consciousness itself (chit), and Bliss itself (ananda).**”¹²⁷ Hence, according to Mathur (1972) and Krishnananda (2010) (with relation to MacIntosh’s point that God is **that upon which we are all ultimately dependent**) our individual existence and consciousness; our individual (or even collective) joys—all are ultimately dependent on “**Existence itself, Consciousness itself and Bliss itself.**” Our very existence, our very ability to perceive of this existence (our consciousness), and our participation in this existence and the vast array of feelings/emotions thereof (our Bliss), are all ultimately dependent on God. Swami Chetananda (1986) states that God is “**the ultimate reality, the one without a second; the unchanging Truth beyond time, space and causation.**”¹²⁸ Furthermore, Chetananda (1986) espouses the fact that God can be ultimately seen as ‘**Existence—Consciousness—Bliss Absolute**’—absolutely “beyond name and form; devoid of qualities and without beginning or

¹²² Suren Navlakha (2000) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd., p. x

¹²³ Ibid., pp. x, xi

¹²⁴ D. C. Mathur (1972) ‘The Concept of Self in the Upanishads: An Alternative Interpretation’ in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, (pp. 390-396), p. 393, 394

¹²⁵ Swami Krishnananda (1972) *The Realisation of the Absolute*, Himalayas, India: The Divine Life Society, p. 58

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Christopher Isherwood (ed.) (1963) *Vedanta for the Western World*, London: Unwin Books, pp. 9, 10

¹²⁸ Swami Chetananda (1986) *Swami Vivekananda. Vedanta: Voice of Freedom*, NY: Philosophical Library Inc., p.16

end.”¹²⁹ With reference to the **Sat** (Existence) element of God, Mathur makes the point that God is ‘the *Unifying Source* of the whole universe.’ “The whole of nature,” Mathur (1972) continues, “is a temporal manifestation of this *Unifying Source* and can be traced to this one *Unifying Principle*.”¹³⁰

“Existence can never change, never perish, though things in which also it is, perish. Hence existence is the nature of Reality and is different from the things of form and name. Existence is secondless and has no external relations or internal differentiations. It is unlimited by space, time and individuality. It is related to nothing, for there is nothing second to it. It has nothing similar to it, nothing dissimilar, for **That** alone is.”¹³¹

With regards to the **Chit** (Consciousness) element of God, Mathur (1972) asks the cogently apt question: “**How could man with his consciousness ever owe his existence to an unconscious principle?**”¹³² Lastly, in relation to the third element of the Absolute, **Ananda** (Bliss), Mathur (1972) warns that it is ‘not to be mistaken with the ordinary concepts of joy and happiness, for one who attains a conscious unification with God is supposed to be transported to a plane of experience which is “out of this world;” **It is Bliss itself.**’¹³³

Brahman

‘The Upanishads use a linguistic word to denote the Supreme Reality—**Brahman**.’¹³⁴ According to Navlakha (Hume, 1921), the word Brahman “is derived from the root *Brih*, which means to grow, to burst forth, to expand, suggesting that which is eternal and which grows ceaselessly.”¹³⁵ Furthermore, Navlakha (Hume, 1921) postulates that:

“Brahman as the absolute reality is purely impersonal, and is not to be confused with a personal God. The significance of Brahman is metaphysical, not theological. **Brahman is the featureless absolute, which unless a contextual necessity otherwise demands, is most appropriately referred to as ‘It’.**”¹³⁶

Krishnananda (2010) asserts that “Brahman is **that which is permanent in things that change; It** is without name and form, which two are the characteristic natures of the world of appearance, and is essentially existence-absolute.”¹³⁷ Isherwood (1963) adds to this point when he states that “Vedanta asserts that the universe which is perceived by our senses is only an appearance; it is not what it seems; the flower, the rock, the waterfall—each is merely a different

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ D. C. Mathur (1972) ‘The Concept of Self in the Upanishads: An Alternative Interpretation’, p. 393

¹³¹ Swami Krishnananda (2010) *The Realisation of the Absolute*, India: The Divine Life Society, p. 57

¹³² D. C. Mathur (1972) ‘The Concept of Self in the Upanishads: An Alternative Interpretation.’ *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 32(3), 390–396. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2105571>pp. 393,394

¹³³ Ibid., p. 394

¹³⁴ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads.*, p. xi, in R. E. Hume (1921) *The thirteen principal Upanishads translated from the Sanskrit, with an outline of the philosophy of the Upanishads and an annotated bibliography*. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., pp. xvii, xix

¹³⁷ Swami Krishnananda (2010) *The Realisation of the Absolute*, p. 57

arrangement of identical units.” Furthermore, Isherwood (1963) emphasizes the fact that “the universe is other than its outward aspect which is subject to perpetual change. Beneath this appearance, this flux, there is **an essential, unchanging Reality**, which is called Brahman.”¹³⁸

Intuition

“Brahman is beyond all sense-perception.” Isherwood (1963) makes the logical yet valiant point that “the scientist cannot possibly detect Brahman, because scientific analysis depends, necessarily, upon the evidence of the five senses.”¹³⁹ In similar vein, Jha (1973) makes the point that the “Upanishads say that **the Infinite** is impossible to be comprehended by our finite mind; one can only approach **It** via intuition or supra-sensible experience.”¹⁴⁰

Neti Neti

The “Shvetashvatara Upanishad (5.10) states that no term truly applies, not masculine, not feminine, not even neuter: only ‘whatever body it takes, with that it is joined.’”¹⁴¹ Furthermore, as Navlakha (1921) points out, “often in answering questions as to the nature of Brahman, recourse is finally taken to a negative method, ‘neti neti’ (not this, not this) to notify its indefinability.”¹⁴²

“As a lump of salt has neither inside nor outside, but is altogether a mass of taste, thus indeed has that Self neither inside nor outside, but is altogether a mass of consciousness—only when there is as it were any duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one hears the other, one perceives the other, one touches the other, one knows the other. But when this self is all this, what should see whom, what should hear whom, what should touch whom, what should know whom? With what should one understand that by whom indeed one understands everything? That Self is only to be described as not this, not this! It is incomprehensible... (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.5.13-15)”

“It is unknown to those who know it. It is known to those who do not know it. (Kena Up., II. 3.)”

1)”
“The eye does not go thither, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know it, we do not understand it; how can anyone teach it? It is other than the known; it is also above the unknown... (Kena Up.,

“The Atman is not that which is inwardly conscious, not outwardly conscious, not bothwise conscious, not a consciousness-mass, not conscious, not unconscious; it is unseen, unrelated, ungraspable, indefinable, unthinkable, indeterminable, the essence of the consciousness of the One Self, the negation of the universe, peaceful, blissful, non-dual. (Mandukya Up., 7)”

¹³⁸ Christopher Isherwood (ed.) (1963) *Vedanta for the Western World*, p. 9

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 10

¹⁴⁰ Ram Chandra Jha (1973) *The Vedantic and the Buddhist Concept of Reality as Interpreted by Samkara and Nagarjuna*, p. 16

¹⁴¹ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p.xx

¹⁴² Ibid.

The Self & The self

“The identification of the **Brahman** (supreme Self) with **atman** (individual self) is a basic premise of the Upanishads.”¹⁴³ Vedanta teaches that “the eternal essence that upholds, pervades and at the same time encompasses the universe is the same essence which dwells in the spirit of man.”¹⁴⁴ Isherwood (1963) makes the point that the Atman is God immanent, whilst Brahman is God Transcendent. “Atman and Brahman,” Isherwood (1963) asserts, “are one.”¹⁴⁵ In support of Isherwood’s assertion, I highlight the view of Radhakrishnan (1968), who believes that ‘Brahman, **the first principle of the Universe**, is known through atman, the inner self of man.’ Radhakrishnan (1968), in *The Principal Upanishads* states that ‘God is both **the wholly other**, transcendent and utterly beyond the world and man, and yet he enters into man and lives in him and becomes the inmost content of his very existence.’¹⁴⁶ To this effect, Navlakha (1921) makes the point that ‘the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and others among the principal thirteen repeatedly assert that the highest knowledge is the realisation of the self as one with eternity and infinity, unconditioned and self-existent, beyond space and time, beyond causation.’¹⁴⁷ To add to this point Krishnananda (2010) states concisely that “the knowledge of the Self is the knowledge of Brahman.”¹⁴⁸

“That which is the subtle essence, in it is the Self of all that exists. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou art it (Chandogya Up., 4.10.1-3).”

Symbols For God

Mircea Eliade, in ‘The Phenomenology of Religion’ states that “objects or acts acquire a value because they participate in a reality that transcends them; sacred objects appear as the receptacles of an exterior force that differentiate them from their milieu and give them meaning and value.”¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, Rudolf Otto, in ‘The Idea of the Holy’ makes the point that “the feeling of consciousness of the ‘**Wholly Other**’ will attach itself to, or sometimes be indirectly aroused by means of objects which are already puzzling upon the natural plane, or are of a surprising or astounding character—such as extraordinary phenomena or astonishing occurrences or things in inanimate nature, in the animal world, or among men.”¹⁵⁰ Robert M. Baird (1989) in ‘Picturing God’ explains that “as finite creatures, we try to anchor God in the life of the mind by creating images, but these are only symbols, more or less adequate, pointing

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. xiii

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Christopher Isherwood (ed.) (1963) *Vedanta for the Western World*, p. 10

¹⁴⁶ S. Radhakrishnan (1968) *The Principal Upanishads*, London: George Allen & Unwin, p. 77

¹⁴⁷ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads.*, p. xiii

¹⁴⁸ Swami Krishnananda (2010) *The Realisation of the Absolute.*, pp. 57, 58

¹⁴⁹ *God.*, p.300

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 293, 294

to God.”¹⁵¹ Whatever may be our “picture of God, It is beyond it,” Baird believes. Nevertheless, “without these anthropomorphic images, God becomes an empty abstraction.”¹⁵² In this vein, the Upanishads are renowned for its use of sacred objects/symbols etc. to describe and explain the nature of God. Navlakha (1921) states that “the Upanishadic discourse is very rich in the use of analogies and symbols for conveying various ideas about Brahman.”¹⁵³ Hence, with the basic ‘sat-chit-anandic’ and ‘atmanic’ premises of the Upanishads previously outlined, the paper now proceeds to highlight some other ideas about God which manifest in conjunction and consequently:

The Chariot

Know the Self as one sitting in the chariot, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind as the reins. The senses they say are the horses, the objects of the senses their path. When the Highest Self is in union with the body, the senses, and the mind, then the wise people call him the Enjoyer. (Katha Up., 1.3.3-4)

OM: The Fittest Sound-Symbol for God

In the *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda* (2009) an excellent explanation of OM is provided and I highlight as follows:

“This Sphota has one word as its only possible symbol, and this is the OM. The Sphota is the real meaning of the OM hence it is the holiest of all holy words; it is the mother of all names and forms. The three letters AUM pronounced in combination as OM may well be the generalized symbol of all possible sounds. It represents the whole phenomenon of sound production. All articulate sounds are pronounced in the space within the mouth beginning with the root of the tongue and ending in the lips. The throat sound is A; M is the last lip sound; U represents the rolling forward of the impulse which begins at the root of the tongue till it ends in the lips. If properly pronounced this OM will represent the whole phenomenon of sound-production—no other word can do this. The Sphota is the material of all words, yet it is not any definite word in its fully formed state. If all the peculiarities which distinguish one word from another be removed, then what remains will be the Sphota. This Sphota is called the Nada-Brahma, the Sound Brahman.”¹⁵⁴

Prana

Navlakha (1921) explains that Prana “is the vital principle, the subtlest form of energy that pervades the cosmos as well as the individual being;”¹⁵⁵ Navlakha (1921) continues,

“Vayu (air) is the cosmic breath, so that breath of the individual is but a part manifestation of the cosmic breath. Prana is the source of all the senses, into which they all return at the time of deep sleep; and likewise at the cosmic level, it is the source of

¹⁵¹ Robert M. Baird (1989) ‘Picturing God’, *Journal of Religion and Health* 28:3, pp. 233-239, p. 235

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. xxi

¹⁵⁴ *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda* (2009) Delhi: Vijay Goel Publishers, p. 84

¹⁵⁵ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. xxii

all the divinities and deities (natural powers which keep the cosmos functioning) into which they all return at the end of a cosmic cycle or kalpa.”¹⁵⁶

Hence, “signifying the vital principle that pervades and sustains the universe and the individual being alike, Prana is thus used as a symbol of Brahman.”¹⁵⁷

Akasha (Space)

Navlakha (1921) points out that “the word closest to Akasha is *space*; both as the indefinable infinite space, and as the intangible, minutest form of substance which imparts to all the tangible objects their manifest form.”¹⁵⁸ “It is often likened to Brahman,” Navlakha (1921) postulates, “owing to its priority and formless pervasiveness—it is from Akasha that objects and all beings take their rise, and into it they all return; it is said that Akasha is prior to all, and is their ultimate end.”¹⁵⁹

Aditya (Sun)

The Sun is another symbol used for God in the Upanishads due to the fact that “it is the centre of our planetary space.”¹⁶⁰ As Navlakha (1921) explains,

“Its life-inducing rays dispel darkness, and fill men’s world with drive and energy. Its rise is like spiritual awakening and its light is like spiritual light. In a manner of speech, therefore, Brahman is the Sun of the universe and the natural sun is only a phenomenal form of Brahman.”¹⁶¹

Conclusion

Navlakha (1921) states that “the desire to know the Brahman comes from the very presence of Brahman within us.”¹⁶²

“It is the working of this presence within us that we wish to know, and it is by giving heed to this presence that we may know. Brahman resides in the spirit of man and can only be known through spiritual experience, not by logic. Its revelation or realisation comes the moment the experienter, experience and the experienced presence blend into one single whole, melting away the barriers that separate the subject and the object.”¹⁶³

This desire to know God arises because, according to Vedanta, **It** is within us; **It** is all that is without; **It** is beyond all that we know/all that we ‘think’ exists; **It** is everything. Hence, as Navlakha (1921) puts it superbly, “if we succeed in knowing the Brahman, it is because the Brahman knows itself in us.”¹⁶⁴ Douglas Clyde MacIntosh, in ‘The Meaning of God in Modern

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Suren Navlakha (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. xxiii

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. xii

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. xi, xii

Religion', states that "God is the Supreme Power in reality; God is **that upon which we are all ultimately dependent.**"¹⁶⁵ According to Thomas Aquinas, in 'The Five Ways', God is "**The First Mover; The First Efficient Cause; The Maximum of the universal genus; A Being, having of itself its own necessity and not receiving it from another but rather causing in others their necessity.**"¹⁶⁶ How did Aquinas arrive at his definitions of God? By what means did Aquinas use to meditate on the nature of/existence of God? He used his mind. And this is why the Upanishads say "meditate on mind as Brahman." Navlakha (1921) makes the point that "the mind is the cause of deliberation—it no doubt causes bondage to the worldly objects, but also, when awakened by meditation, it becomes the means of realising Brahman."¹⁶⁷ For Aquinas's mind, the word 'God' signifies "**that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived.**"¹⁶⁸ Whilst for Yujin Nagasawa (2011) (highlighting St. Anselm of Canterbury's definition) God is "**that-than-which-no-greater-can-be-thought.**"¹⁶⁹ The Mundaka Upanishad asserts that God is "**that through which, if it is known, everything else becomes known.**"¹⁷⁰ In connection with which, Swami Krishnananda (2010) explains that the "the whole universe is a spiritual unity and is one with the essential Brahman."¹⁷¹ He states aptly that "it (the universe) has no difference within and without; Brahman is alike throughout its structure, and hence the knowledge of the essence of any part of it is the knowledge of the Whole."¹⁷² The Upanishads purport that the devas love the cryptic; I believe that this is so because God is not only *All that is* but is quintessentially **the Something that performs all somethings**; it is **the Thing behind all things**; the *It buttressing all its*; It is "the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of the speech, the breath of the breath, and the eye of the eye." (Kena Up., 1.1)

4.4 Buddhism

Introduction

"Gautama, or Shakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, appears to have lived in India sometime around the sixth or fifth century BCE. Buddhologists customarily accept several formulas as representative of his teachings. Most famous of these are the so-called **four noble truths** (Watson, 1993: x)." "These teach that 1. All existence in the world is marked by suffering; 2. That suffering is caused by craving. 3. That by doing away with craving one can

¹⁶⁵ Douglas Clyde MacIntosh (1926) 'The Meaning of God in Modern Religion', *The Journal of Religion*, 6:6, (pp. 457-471), p. 458

¹⁶⁶ *GOD*, pp. 34,35

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xxiii

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Aquinas, "The Five Ways", (pp. 30-36), in *God*, p. 31

¹⁶⁹ Nagasawa, Yujin (2011) *The Existence of God. A Philosophical Introduction*, London & NY: Routledge, pp.3, 5

¹⁷⁰ Mundaka Up., 1.1.4

¹⁷¹ Swami Krishnananda (2010) *The Realisation of the Absolute*, p. 57

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

gain release from suffering and reach a state of peace and enlightenment, often called nirvana; (Watson, 1993: x).” “4. That there is a method for achieving this goal, namely, the discipline known as the eightfold path. This is a set of moral principles enjoining one to cultivate: 1. Right views; 2. Right thinking; 3. Right speech; 4. Right action; 5. Right livelihood (way of life); 6. Right endeavour/effort; 7. Right Mindfulness; 8. Right meditation (Watson, 1993: x).” “Another doctrine is that of the twelve-linked chain of causation or dependent origination, which illustrates step by step the causal relationship between ignorance and suffering. The purpose of the doctrine, like that of the four noble truths, is to wake one to the true nature of reality and help one to achieve emancipation from ignorance and suffering (Watson, 1993: x, xi).”

Biography

“The story of the Buddha is the story of a heretic. In fact, Buddhism is still considered a heresy by orthodox Hindus. It’s a heresy that enlightened the world. Siddhartha Gautama, the man who became the Buddha, was born a Hindu in Kapilavastu, a city located in the mountainous border region between India and Nepal. He was the only son of a royal family (Morgan, 2001: 99).” “The year of the Buddha’s birth is argued among Buddhists; most Indian and Western scholars date him from 566 to 486 B.C.E., or possibly 563 to 483. Southeast Asian Buddhists choose a later period, 448 to 368 B.C.E. That he lived to eighty years old is fairly certain, though (Morgan, 2001: 99).” “It was a time of prosperity, trade expansion, and material wealth, at least for the upper castes. During this same period, however, the ancient Vedic religion had become rigid, unyielding, and legalistic. Bloody sacrificial rites took place of ethics and spiritual development. In response to this unhappy state of affairs, religious seekers, wandering philosophers, and spiritual reformers, of whom the Buddha was the most noted, began popping up all over the place (Morgan, 2001: 99-100).” Morgan (2001) informs us that, “the Buddha left the site of his great awakening and traveled west to the city of Benares, where he delivered his famous first sermon. This discourse took place at a deer park on the outskirts of the city, on the full moon of July. His small but knowledgeable audience consisted of the five ascetics who had left his company when Siddhartha abandoned asceticism (Morgan, 2001: 105).” “His first sermon is called the ‘*Sutra of Setting in Motion the Wheel of Righteousness*.’ In it he preached the doctrine of the Middle Way, wherein he explained that neither self-indulgence nor severe asceticism served the purpose of finding enlightenment. But the *Middle Way*, he said, leads to bliss (Morgan, 2001: 105).”

Biography--Conclusion

In sum, according to Morgan (2001), “Buddha lived his early life as a pampered prince. He escaped from his palace and saw the four sights that made him renounce his life of pleasure to

seek truth. Buddha wandered for six years, until he achieved enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree (Morgan, 2001: 117).” “With his awakening, he discovered the *Middle Way*, the *Four Noble Truths*, and the *Noble Eightfold Path*. During his long life, the Buddha taught all over northeastern India and established the first Buddhist monasteries. Later, especially under the Emperor Ashoka, Buddhism expanded over the entire region (Morgan, 2001:117).”

A Middle Way

“From the start, the teaching of the Buddha was a middle way. In ethics it taught a middle way avoiding the two extremities of asceticism and hedonism. In philosophy it taught a middle way avoiding the two extremities of externalism and annihilation (Beverluis, 2000: 11).”

Theravada Buddhism

Southeast Asia

“Theravada Buddhism is the form of Buddhism that prevails at present in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos (Lopez, 2004: xii).” “Theravada Buddhism, the Way of the Elders, is popular in southeast Asia. Theravada Buddhism emphasizes the life of the monks more than the lives of layfolk. The primary virtue of Theravada Buddhism is wisdom(Morgan, 2001: 131).” “Theravada Buddhists find the refuge in the Three Gems: the Buddha, the *dharma* (teachings), and the *sangha* (the monastic community). Theravada Buddhists practice two kinds of meditation: *samatha* meditation, which aims at tranquility, and *vipassana*, which aims at insight (Morgan, 2001: 131).”

The Teachings of the Elders

“It was thought all but imperative that one leave secular life and become a member of the Buddhist Order, which consisted of both monks and nuns. There, free from family entanglements and worldly concerns, one could devote oneself to a life of poverty, celibacy, and religious study and discipline, supported by the alms of the lay community (Lopez, 2004: xi).” “Lay believers could acquire religious merit by assisting the Order, observing the appropriate rules of moral conduct, and carrying out devotional practices such as paying obeisance at the stupas or memorial towers that housed the relics of the Buddha. But it was thought that they would have to wait until future existences before they could hope to gain full release from suffering (Lopez, 2004: xi).”

Mahayana Buddhism

The Great Vehicle

“Mahayana Buddhism is known as the *Great Vehicle*, and it concerns itself with everyday people as well as monks. The chief virtue of *Mahayana* Buddhism is compassion (Morgan, 2001: 144).” “The greatest philosopher of *Mahayana* Buddhism was *Nagarjuna*, who taught the *Doctrine of emptiness*. *Mahayana* Buddhism developed the concept of the *bodhisattva*, a future or heavenly *Buddha*. The Chinese were introduced to Buddhism during the first century C.E. They were early followers of *Ch’an* (Zen) Buddhism (Morgan, 2001: 144).”

India

“The Mahayana movement appears to have begun in India around the first or second century of the Common Era. In part it was probably a reaction against the great emphasis upon monastic life that marked earlier Buddhism and against the arid psychological and metaphysical speculations that characterize much of early Buddhist philosophy (Lopez, 2004: xii).” “It aimed to open up the religious life to a wider proportion of the population, to accord a more important role to lay believers, to give more appealing expression to the teachings and make them more readily accessible (Lopez, 2004: xii).”

The Highest Level of Enlightenment

“In earlier Buddhism the goal of religious striving had been to achieve the state of arhat or ‘worthy,’ one who has ‘nothing more to learn’ and has escaped rebirth in the lower realms of existence. Even to reach this state, however, it was believed, required many lifetimes of strenuous exertion. But Mahayana urged men and women to aim for nothing less than the achievement of the highest level of enlightenment, that of Buddhahood (Lopez, 2004: xi).” “Enormous help in reaching this exalted goal,” of Mahayana Buddhism, “it was stressed, would come to them through figures known as *bodhisattvas*, beings who are dedicated not only to attaining enlightenment for themselves but, out of their immense compassion, to helping others to do likewise (Lopez, 2004: xi).” “Earlier Buddhism often described *Shakyamuni Buddha* as a *bodhisattva* in his previous existences, when he was still advancing towards enlightenment. But in Mahayana texts such as the *Lotus Sutra* the *bodhisattvas* are pictured as unlimited in number, all-seeing and all-caring, capable of extending boundless aid and succour to those who call upon them in sincere faith. Indeed, this great emphasis upon the role of the *bodhisattva* is one of the main characteristics that distinguish Mahayana thought from that of earlier Buddhism (Lopez, 2004: xi).”

China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam

“At first the proponents of these new Mahayana beliefs seem in many cases to have lived side by side in the same monasteries as the adherents of the earlier teachings, their religious practice centering around the worship of the Buddha’s relics housed in the stupas or memorial towers. But doctrinal clashes arose from time to time and the two groups eventually drew apart. The Mahayana doctrines appear to have dominated in northwestern India, where they spread into the lands of central Asia and thence into China (Lopez, 2004: xiii).” “As a result, Chinese Buddhism was from the first overwhelmingly Mahayana in character, and it was this Mahayana version of the faith that in time was introduced to Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, where it continues in existence today (Lopez, 2004: xiii).”

The 3 Refuges

“The recitation of the formula ‘I go for refuge to the Buddha. I go for refuge to the dharma. I go for refuge to the sangha’ (recited three times) is the most fundamental Buddhist practice, the Buddhist correlate to the confession of faith (Lopez, 2004: 101).” “The practice of taking refuge is said to derive from the days following the Buddha’s enlightenment. He had remained in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree meditating for seven weeks, without eating. A deity informed two passing merchants that a nearby yogin had recently achieved *buddhahood* and suggested that they pay their respects (Lopez, 2004: 101).” “They offered him his first meal as a buddha (some honey cakes), which he received in a bowl provided for him by the four gods of the cardinal directions. They then bowed down before him and said, ‘We take refuge in the Buddha and in the *dharma*.’ (Because the Buddha did not yet have any disciples, there was no sangha.) The Buddha presented them with a lock of his hair and his fingernails and instructed them to enshrine them in a stupa (Lopez, 2004: 101).” “The refuge formula itself was prescribed by the Buddha shortly thereafter. After the conversion of his five old friends, all of whom became *arhats*, the Buddha taught the dharma to the wealthy merchant’s son *Yasa* and fifty-four of his friends. They also became monks and arhats (Lopez, 2004: 101-2).” “The Buddha then sent them out to teach, explaining that a monk could admit a layman into the monkhood if he shaved his hair and beard, donned a yellow robe, bowed at the monk’s feet, and then, sitting on his heels with joined palms, said three times, ‘I go for refuge to the Buddha. I go for refuge to the *dharma*. I go for refuge to the *sangha* (Lopez, 2004: 101-2).”

The 3 Jewels

The Buddha

“The Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *sangha* are called *the three jewels (Triratna)*, because they are rare and of great value (Lopez, 2004: 102).” “The Buddha is mentioned first because he is the teacher of refuge; the *dharma* is mentioned next because it is the actual refuge; the *sangha* is mentioned third because it is they who help others to find that refuge (Lopez, 2004: 102).”

The Dharma

The word *dharma* is derived from the Sanskrit root *Vdhr*, meaning ‘to hold’. It is explained, then, that the *dharma* is that which upholds those who follow the path and holds them back from falling into suffering (Lopez, 2004: 102).” “Exactly what the *dharma* is, is much discussed, with some holding that the true *dharma* is only *nirvana*, others saying that it includes both *nirvana* and the path to it. Others speak of the *verbal dharma*, the spoken explication of the path, and the *realized dharma*, the manifestation of those teachings in one’s mind (Lopez, 2004: 102).”

The Sangha

“The *sangha* is the term that is used loosely to include the community of Buddhists. In the refuge formula it is used more exclusively to include those who have achieved at least the first level of the path and are destined to achieve nirvana (Lopez, 2004: 102).”

Karma

“Buddhism took over from earlier Indian (Hinduism) thought the belief in Karma. According to this belief, all of a person’s moral actions, whether good or bad, produce definite effects in the person’s life, though such effects may take some time before manifesting themselves (Lopez, 2004: xi). According to the Indian (Hindu) view, living beings pass through an endless cycle of death and rebirth, and the ill effects of an evil action in one life may not become evident until some future existence; but that they will appear eventually is inescapable. Hence only by striving to do good in one’s present existence can one hope to escape even greater suffering in a future life (Lopez, 2004: xi).”

4.5 Taoism

4.5.1 Introduction

Three Branches of Taoism

According to Smith (1991), there are three Branches of Taoism:

1. Philosophical Taoism
2. Vitalizing programs for increasing one's individual ch'i
3. The Taoist Church (Smith, 1991:206-7)."

"All three Branches have the same concern—how to maximize the Tao's animating *te*—and the specifics of their concerns fall on a continuum. The continuum begins with (Smith, 1991: 207):

1. interest in how life's normal allotment of *ch'i* can be deployed to best effect (Philosophical Taoism).
2. From there it moves on to ask if that normal quotient can be increased (Taoist vitalizing programs) (Smith, 1991:207)."
3. "Finally, it asks if cosmic energies can be gathered to be deployed vicariously for the welfare of people who need help (popular or Religious Taoism) (Smith, 1991: 207)."

4.5.2 Philosophical Taoism

Introduction

"Philosophical Taoism is essentially an attitude toward life; it is a self-help program."¹⁷³ Huston Smith (1991) in *The World's Religions* informs us that Philosophical Taoism is "called *School Taoism* in China, and it is associated with the names of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu."¹⁷⁴ H. G. Creel (1956) in '*What is Taoism?*' states that "Taoist philosophy got its name from the fact that it used the term *Tao* to denote the whole of reality."¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, Creel (1956) continues, Philosophical Taoism stipulates that "to live wisely is to live in a way that conserves life's vitality by not expending it in useless, draining ways, the chief of which are friction and conflict."¹⁷⁶ Referring to it as 'Contemplative Taoism' Creel (1956) believes that the "poise and inner calm that may be derived from the attitude it espouses elevates one who holds it above

¹⁷³ Huston Smith (1991) *The World's Religions*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 200

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ H. G. Creel (1956) 'What is Taoism?', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 76, No. 3, July-Sept., pp. 139-152

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p.150

the struggling mass of harried men, and may even give a psychological advantage in dealing with them.”¹⁷⁷

Tao

With reference to defining the *Tao*, Smith (1991:198) describes it as follows: ¹⁷⁸

1. **The ineffable, transcendent Way of Reality.**
2. **The immanent Way of the universe.**
3. **The way of human life when it meshes with the Tao of the universe.**

Using Smith’s (1991) three modes of the Tao as a guideline for the paper, I now attempt to shed more light on Philosophical Taoism:

1. An Ineffable And Transcendent Way

“Tao is a word that means ‘way’ or ‘method’ and by extension ‘rule of life’ or ‘process.’”¹⁷⁹ Isabelle Robinet, in *Taoism. Growth of A Religion* (1997), makes the point that “in the *Tao Te Ching*, the word Tao takes on for the first time the meaning ‘Ultimate Truth.’” “This Ultimate Truth,” Robinet (1997) confirms is “one and transcendent; is invisible, inaudible and imperceptible.”¹⁸⁰

*“The way that can be spoken of
 Is not the constant way;
 The name that can be named
 Is not the constant name.
 The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth;
 The named was the mother of the myriad creatures.
 Mystery upon mystery-
 The gateway of the manifold secrets.”*
 (Lao Tzu Chapter 1)

Beyond Words

By using the Terms ‘ineffable’ and ‘transcendent’ Smith (1991) suggests that the *Tao* cannot be uttered or expressed. It is inexpressible, unspeakable, and being beyond matter, it has a continuing existence outside the created world. “this Tao cannot be perceived or even clearly

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p.151

¹⁷⁸ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 198

¹⁷⁹ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, California: Stanford University Press, p. 26

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

conceived, for it is too vast for human rationality to fathom.”¹⁸¹ Smith (1991) highlights the first line from chapter fifty-six of the *Tao Te Ching*:

One who knows does not speak; one who speaks does not know. (*Tao Te Ching*, 56: 1)

He believes that this line can be perceived as the epigram of Philosophical Taoism—albeit a paradoxical one—for though the Tao may be ineffable and transcendent, in the words of Lao Tzu, “nevertheless it is the ground of all that follows; The Womb from which all life springs and to which it returns.”¹⁸² Lao Tzu calls it the mystery of all mysteries, and the *Nei-Yeh*, chapter six has similar remarks:

“As for the Way:
It is what the mouth cannot speak of,
The eyes cannot see,
And the ears cannot hear.
It is that with which we cultivate the mind and align the body.
When people lose it they die;
When people gain it they flourish.
When endeavours lose it they fail;
When they gain it they succeed.
The Way never has a root or a trunk,
It never has leaves or flowers.
The myriad things are generated by it;
The myriad things are completed by it.
We designate it the ‘Way.’”
(*Nei-yeh Chapter 6*)

A. C. Graham (1989) in *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* quite aptly states that “it might seem that Lao-Tzu had only to tell us straightforwardly that the Way is inexpressible in words, is the source of all things, and is discovered in ridding oneself of desire.” However, Graham (1989) continues, “that is not quite what it wants to say. The trouble with words is not that they do not fit at all but that they always fit imperfectly; they can help us towards the Way, but only if each formulation in its inadequacy is balanced by the opposite which diverges in the other direction.”¹⁸³

“What cannot be seen is called evanescent;
What cannot be heard is called rarefied;
What cannot be touched is called minute.
These three cannot be fathomed
And so they are confused and looked upon as one.
Its upper part is not dazzling;
Its lower part is not obscure.
Dimly visible, it cannot be named

¹⁸¹ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 198

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ A. C. Graham (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Company, pp. 219, 220

*And returns to that which is without substance.
 This is called the shape that has no shape,
 The image that is without substance.
 This is called indistinct and shadowy.
 Go up to it and you will not see its head;
 Follow behind it and you will not see its rear.
 Hold fast to the way of antiquity
 In order to keep in control the realm of today.
 The ability to know the beginning of antiquity
 Is called the thread running through the way.”
 (Lao Tzu Chapter 14)*

Robinet (1997) stresses the point that ‘the Tao is not usable and not nameable.’ She insists that the Tao is ‘an unmarked trail that one must travel to know.’¹⁸⁴ Robinet (1997) continues:

“It is located beyond all relationship of differentiation, all judgment, and all opposition, it is neutral. As such its truth cannot be approached except apophatically, by negative statements. It is the source of all life, fertile, widespread and universal, rich in ‘promises,’ and the only sure reference point: in this it is no longer neutral but a positive way.”¹⁸⁵

2. An Immanent Way

The Tao is “the norm, the rhythm, the driving power in all nature, the ordering principle behind all life; it is behind but also in the midst of all life.”¹⁸⁶ According to Smith (1991) the Tao is ‘nature’s orderer—the eternal law that structures the world,’ and when it enters this immanent second mode “it ‘assumes flesh’ and informs all things.”¹⁸⁷ Leaning upon the words of Lao Tzu and in a fashion imbued with clarity, Smith (1991), with regards to the nature of the Tao, continues:

“The Tao is the Spirit of the universe—uncontrived and flowing with purpose; it is the integrating principle of the whole. Ultimately it is of a kind disposition, auspicious, and infinitely generous; giving life to all things it may be called the “Mother of the World.” Basically, spirit rather than matter, it cannot be exhausted; the more it is drawn upon, the more it flows, for it is that fountain ever on.”¹⁸⁸

Donald S. Lopez (1996) in *Religions of China in Practice* (1996), states that “the Way is the ultimate power in the cosmos, paradoxically transcendent yet immanent.”¹⁸⁹ “As a unitive principle,” Lopez (1996) continues, “beyond the grasp of any specific thing in the cosmos the

¹⁸⁴ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, California: Stanford University Press, p. 26

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 26, 27

¹⁸⁶ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 198

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 198, 199

¹⁸⁹ Donald S. Lopez (ed.) (1996) *Religions of China in Practice*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.126

Tao mysteriously operates within the cosmos to facilitate the generation of all phenomena and to serve as the inner guiding force throughout every moment of life.”¹⁹⁰

4. The Way Of Human Life When In Accordance With The Universal Tao

Te (Power)

Central to Philosophical Taoism is Lao Tzu’s **Tao Te Ching** which Graham (1989) translates as “The Classic of the Way and of Potency.”¹⁹¹ Smith (1991) assures us that “**Philosophical Taoism** is connected with **Power (Te)** in the sense that philosophy seeks knowledge, and knowledge is power.”¹⁹² Smith (1991) buttresses his point when he states that “for example, knowing how to repair a car is to have power over it. **Philosophical Taoism** is concerned with **the repairing of life, and the knowledge that empowers life we refer to as wisdom.**”¹⁹³ “The *Tao Te Ching* illustrates the Way the sage walks and the Potency in him which empowers him to walk it.”¹⁹⁴ Graham (1989) insists that “Lao Tzu holds that we discover the Way by abandoning the prescribed courses of conduct which people try to formulate in words, unlearning the rigid divisions fixed by names, and training the spontaneous harmonizing of the ch’i which sets us on the course of heaven, earth and the myriad things which are ‘so of themselves.’”¹⁹⁵ Hence, in the words of Lopez (1996), “although the Tao is ineffable and so cannot be known as an object, it can be merged with, accorded with, or directly experienced.”

¹⁹⁶

Philosophical Taoism & Relativism

Introduction: The Yang in Heaven

“In Taoist thought, the yin and yang, which have temporarily combined in the human body during life, separate. The yang goes to heaven, and the yin goes back into earth. Then everything is ready for recycling (Morgan, 2001: 240).”



¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ A. C. Graham (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, p. 216

¹⁹² Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 200

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ A. C. Graham (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, pp. 218, 219

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Donald S. Lopez (ed.) (1996) *Religions of China in Practice*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.126

According to Smith (1991), “in Philosophical Taoism good and evil are not head-on opposites;” Smith (1991) quite excellently supports this point with a well-known Taoist story (Smith, 1991: 215):¹⁹⁷

The Farmer Whose Horse Ran Away

“His neighbour commiserated, only to be told, “Who knows what’s good or bad?” It was true for the next day the horse returned, bringing with it a drove of wild horses it had befriended. The neighbour reappeared, this time with congratulations for the windfall. He received the same response: ‘Who knows what is good or bad?’ Again, this proved true, for the next day the farmer’s son tried to mount one of the wild horses and fell, breaking his leg. More commiserations from the neighbour, which elicited the question: “Who knows what is good or bad?” And for a fourth time the farmer’s point prevailed, for the following day soldiers came by commandeering for the army, and the son was exempted because of his injury.”¹⁹⁸

Robinet (1997) lends support to Smith’s (1991) point when she states that ‘the *Tao Te Ching* has a relativistic Tendency—the paired ideas of beauty and ugliness, good and evil, being and non-being, all imply and support each other, and each term has no meaning except in relation to the other.’¹⁹⁹ Robinet (1997) believes that all opposing logical concepts in the *Tao Te Ching* and in Philosophical Taoism, for that matter, ‘exist only correlatively with every opposition implying correlation and membership in a common whole.’²⁰⁰ Smith (1991) in turn lends support to Robinet (1997) when he makes the point that ‘an important feature of Philosophical Taoism is its notion of the relativity of all values and, as its correlative, the identity of opposites.’²⁰¹ ‘Philosophical Taoism,’ Smith (1991) believes, ‘eschews all sharp dichotomies. It believes that no perspective in this relative world can be considered as absolute.’²⁰²

Robinet (1997) continues:

“The *Tao Te Ching* deduces that thought based on oppositions cannot arrive at the Ultimate Truth, which is One. Ultimate Truth works spontaneously with no need for conscious human intervention. Thought cannot reach it because thought is by nature dualistic; one can reach it only by letting it operate naturally.”²⁰³

‘Philosophical Taoism is thus tied in with the traditional Chinese yin/yang symbol.’²⁰⁴ According to Smith (1991), “those who meditate on the profound yin/yang symbol will find that it affords better access to the world’s secrets than any length of words and discussion.”²⁰⁵ Smith (1991) then proceeds to offer a profoundly lucid explanation:

¹⁹⁷ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 215

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 215, 216

¹⁹⁹ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*. California: Stanford University Press, p. 27

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 214

²⁰² Ibid., p. 215

²⁰³ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, p. 28

²⁰⁴ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 214

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 215

“Its polarity sums up all of life’s basic oppositions: good/evil, active/passive, positive/negative, light/dark, summer/winter, male/female. But though the halves are in Tension, they are not flatly opposed; they complement and balance each other. Each invades the other’s hemisphere and takes up its abode in the deepest recess of its partner’s domain. And in the end both find themselves resolved by the circle that surrounds them, the Tao in its eternal wholeness. In the context of that wholeness, the opposites appear as no more than phases in an endless cycling process, for each turns incessantly into its opposite, exchanging places with it. Life does not move onward and upward toward a fixed pinnacle or pole. It bends back upon itself to come, full circle, to the realization that all is one and all is well.”²⁰⁶

The Void

Another feature of the cosmology espoused by Philosophical Taoism is the precept, “Cease all thinking.” Robinet (1997) informs us that “the idea in the *Tao Te Ching* is that it is the interstitial void that permits movement; and on the human level, it is mental and affective emptiness, the absence of prejudices and partialities, that let things play out freely.”²⁰⁷

*Thirty spokes
Share one hub.
Adapt the nothing therein to the purpose in hand,
and you will have use of the cart.
Knead clay in order to make a vessel.
Adapt the nothing therein to the purpose in hand,
and you will have the use of the vessel.
Cut out doors and windows in order to make a room.
Adapt the nothing therein to the purpose in hand,
And you will have the use of the room.
Thus what we gain is Something, yet it is by virtue of Nothing that this can be put to use.
(Lao Tzu Chapter 11)*

Wu Wei

“The object of Philosophical Taoism is to align one’s daily life to the Tao, to ride its boundless tide and delight in its flow.”²⁰⁸ The basic way to do this is to “follow the recommendations of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu and perfect a life of *wu wei*—which translates literally as *inaction* but in Taoism the phrase means *pure effectiveness*.”²⁰⁹ “Action in the mode of *wu wei* is action in which friction is reduced to the minimum.”²¹⁰ Creel (1956) makes the point that “morally Taoist philosophy is completely indifferent; all things are relative. ‘Right’ and ‘wrong’ are just words which we may apply to the same thing, depending upon which partial viewpoint we see it from.”²¹¹ Creel (1956) continues,

²⁰⁶ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, pp. 214, 215

²⁰⁷ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, p. 28

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 207

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ H. G. Creel, (1956) ‘What is Taoism?’, p. 140

“For each individual there is a different ‘true’ and a different ‘false’. From the transcendent standpoint of the Tao all such things are irrelevant. What then should one do? Wu wei, the Chuang-Tzu says, “Do nothing, and everything will be done.”²¹²

Creative Quietude

Huston Smith (1991) theorizes that a better rendering of *wu wei* (than ‘doing nothing’) is **creative quietude**. “Creative quietude,” Smith espouses “combines within a single individual two seemingly incompatible conditions—supreme activity and supreme relaxation. These seeming incompatibles can coexist because human beings are not self-enclosed entities.”²¹³ What are we then? Smith’s (1991) poetic response is that we human beings “ride an unbounded sea of Tao that sustains us through our subliminal minds”²¹⁴ He suitably describes *wu-wei* as the “embodiment of suppleness, simplicity and freedom—a kind of pure effectiveness in which no motion is wasted on bickering or outward show.”²¹⁵ Furthermore, Smith (1991) believes that “*wu wei* is the supreme action, the precious suppleness, simplicity, and freedom that flows through us when our private egos and conscious efforts yield to a power not their own.”²¹⁶ Crowning his explanation of *wu wei*, Smith (1991) states smoothly that it “is **life lived above Tension—one simply lets the Tao flow in and flow out again until all life becomes a dance where there is neither feverishness nor imbalance.**”²¹⁷

Water: The Prototype of Wu Wei

“Highest good is like water. Because water excels in benefitting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be, it comes close to the way.”²¹⁸ Commenting on the aforementioned, Smith (1991) comes to the conclusion that ‘water is the closest parallel to the Tao in the natural world, and it is the prototype of *wu wei*.’²¹⁹ Smith (1991) makes the solemn point that Philosophical Taoists noticed the way water:

1) Adapts itself to its surroundings and seeks out the lowest places

2) Holds a power unknown to hard and brittle things

3) Is infinitely supple, yet incomparably strong

4) Attains clarity through being still (Smith, 1991: 209-10)²²⁰

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, pp. 207, 208

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 208

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ *Tao Te Ching* 8:1

²¹⁹ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 209

²²⁰ Ibid., pp. 209, 210

Tao Te Ching chapter seventy-eight lends ample authority to Smith's (1991) assertions:

*"In this world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water.
Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing can surpass it.
This is because there is nothing that can take its place.
That the weak overcomes the strong,
And the submissive overcomes the hard,
Everyone in the world knows yet no one can put this knowledge into
practice."*

Spontaneity

According to A. C. Graham (2001), "all works that espouse the message of Philosophical Taoism share one basic insight—that, while all other things move spontaneously on the course proper to them, man has stunted and maimed his spontaneous aptitude by the habit of distinguishing alternatives, the right and the wrong, benefit and harm, self and others, and reasoning in order to judge between them."²²¹ Graham (2001) believes that, in order for one to recover one's spontaneous aptitude, one must learn to "reflect one's situation with the unclouded clarity of a mirror, and respond to it with the immediacy of an echo to a sound or shadow to a shape."²²² Robinet (1997) insists that 'the *Tao Te Ching* introduces a vision of the world that has remained the ideal of the Taoist sage: serene withdrawal from the "affairs" of the world, and rejection of established values as too abstract, relative, and incomplete, too conscious and artificial, in favour of a spontaneous way of life with none of those virtuous efforts at imitation that engender competition and vanity.'²²³ To this effect, Smith (1991) purports that Philosophical Taoism Teaches its adherents to "get the foundations of the self in tune with *Tao* and let behaviour flow spontaneously." He makes the unassailable point that according to the *Tao Te Ching*, "the way to do is to be."²²⁴ Robinet (1997) adds to Smith's (1991) point superbly when she states that "if we let Nature operate in us and outside us, the world will go along very well on its own, since the hand and spirit of man only introduce disturbances into it."²²⁵

"One way to create is through following the calculated directives of the conscious mind. The results of this mode of action, however, are seldom impressive. **Genuine creation comes when the more abundant resources of the subliminal self are somehow tapped. But for this to happen, a certain dissociation from the surface self is needed.** The conscious mind must relax, stop standing in its own light, let go."²²⁶

²²¹ A. C. Graham (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., p. 6

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, p. 27

²²⁴ Huston Smith (1991) *The World's Religions*, p. 208

²²⁵ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, p. 27

²²⁶ Huston Smith (1991) *The World's Religions*, p. 208

In *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, Graham (1989) insists that “for Chuang-Tzu, to pose alternatives and ask ‘Which is beneficial, which harmful?’ and ‘which is right, which wrong?’, and try to formulate the Way as a set of rules for ordering Empire, family and individual, is the fundamental error in life.”²²⁷ Graham (1989) believes that “people who really know what they are doing, such as cooks, carpenters, swimmers, boatmen, cicada-catchers, do not go in much for analysing, posing alternatives and reasoning from first principles, they no longer even bear in mind any rules they were taught as apprentices; they attend to the total situation and respond, trusting to a knack which they cannot explain in words, the hand moving of itself as the eye gazes with unflagging concentration.”²²⁸ A point which Chuang-Tzu chapter thirteen illustrates:

“The carpenter said to Duke Huan, “When I chisel a wheel if the stroke is too slow it slides and does not grip, if too fast it jams and catches in the wood. Not too slow, not too fast; I feel it in the hand and respond from the heart, the tongue cannot put it into words, there is a knack in it somewhere which I cannot convey to my son and which my son cannot learn from me.”

It seems that Chuang-Tzu’s message is such that ‘with the abandonment of fixed goals, the dissolution of rigid categories, the focus of attention roams freely over the endlessly changing panorama, and responses spring directly from the energies inside us.’²²⁹ Graham (2001) makes the point that, “for Chuang-Tzu, this is an immense liberation, a launching out of the confines of self into a realm without limits.”²³⁰

Rejection of Logic / An Assault on Reason

Philosophical Taoism teaches that ‘one cannot make spatial and temporal divisions without contradiction.’²³¹ For examples, ‘the sun at noon is simultaneously declining; and simultaneously with being alive a thing dies.’²³² Graham (2001) informs us that Chuang-Tzu stresses the point that “since division leads to self-contradiction everything is one, therefore one should abandon reason for the immediate experience of an undifferentiated world, transforming ‘All are one’ from a moral into a mystical affirmation.”²³³

Names & Disputation

²²⁷ A. C. Graham (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, p. 186

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ A. C. Graham (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, p. 8

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid., p. 9

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

Graham (2001) makes the point that “names have only a conventional relation to objects; in principle anything might be called anything.”²³⁴ “What is ‘it’ for me and what is ‘other’ than it depend on my choice of standpoint, and when I say ‘That’s it’ I am merely announcing that the thing in question is the thing to which I have chosen to give the name.”²³⁵ In this vein of thought, Graham (2001) insists that one “cannot name the undifferentiated, since names all serve to distinguish, and even to call it ‘Way’ reduces it to the path which it reveals to us. According to the Outer chapters of Chuang-Tzu, the Term ‘Way’ is “borrowed in order to walk it.”²³⁶ Lao Tzu’s twenty-fifth chapter illustrates Graham’s (2001) point:

“There is nothing confusedly formed,
Born before heaven and earth.
Silent and void
It stands alone and does not change,
Goes around and does not weary.
It is capable of being the mother of the world.
I know not its name
So I style it ‘the way’.
I give it the makeshift name of ‘the great’.
Being great it is further described as receding,
Receding, it is described as turning back.
Hence the way is great; heaven is great; earth is great; and the king is also great.
Within the realm there are four things that are great, and the king counts as one.
Man models himself on earth,
Earth on heaven,
Heaven on the way,
And the way on that which is naturally so.”

Graham (2001) quite rightly makes the stern point that ‘there is a discrepancy between what men say of things and what things actually are.’²³⁷ He believes that “the logic and rationale of man is an imperfect vehicle with which Truth is attempted to be transported.” Hence, for Chuang-Tzu and Philosophical Taoism, “the result of disputation is simply that those with the same starting-point agree and those without differ.”²³⁸ Furthermore, as Graham (2001) postulates, “since all language differentiates, distinguishing by names the things of which one says ‘That’s it’ or ‘That’s not’, the sage cannot find words for the totality that he experiences.”²³⁹ Lao Tzu, a master of the cryptic, styles the unnameable as the uncarved block—the block belongs to Heaven and it is made available for man to carve—yet Ultimate Truth and the Ultimate Way rests within the unspeakable realms of the block uncarved:

“The way is forever nameless.
Though the uncarved block is small
No one in the world dare claim its allegiance.
Should lords and princes be able to hold fast to it

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 10

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 21

²³⁷ A. C. Graham (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, p. 11

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 20

*The myriad creatures will submit of their own accord,
Heaven and earth will unite and sweet dew will fall,
And the people will be equitable, though no one so decrees.*

Only when it is cut are there names.

As soon as there are names

One ought to know that it is time to stop.

Knowing when to stop one can be free from danger.

The way is to the world as the River and the Sea are to rivulets and streams.”

(Tao Te Ching Chapter 32)

Graham (2001) highlights the fact that “Chuang-Tzu derides all claims that reason can give us certainty. The only assurance one can have or should want is that of organic process and unanalysed knacks and skills, of whatever one confidently does without knowing how one does it.”²⁴⁰ According to Chuang Tzu, one has to “know how to know by depending on that which the wits do not know”; otherwise one is projected into ‘the ultimate uncertainty.’²⁴¹

*The myriad things have somewhere from which they grow but no one sees the
root, somewhere from which they come forth but no one sees the gate. Men all
honour what wit knows, but none knows how to know by depending on what his wits
do not know.*

(Chuang Tzu Chapter 25)

Graham (2001) believes that a crucial point in Philosophical Taoism is the fact that “words have no fixed meanings except in the artificial conditions of intellectual debate, in which one may as well accept the opponent’s definitions, since they are no more or less arbitrary than any others.”²⁴² In *The Sorting Which Evens Things Out* Chuang-Tzu states that:

*“Saying is not blowing breath, saying says something; the only trouble
is that what it says is never fixed.’ Do we really say something? Or have we
never said anything? If you think it different from the twitter of fledglings, is
there proof of the distinction? Or isn’t there any proof?”*

The Unknown Factor in The ‘Whole’

The Philosophical Taoist knows about the unknown yet leaves it unknown. A. C. Graham (2001), in *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, feels that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts—that analysis always leaves something out; that neither side of a dichotomy is wholly true.”²⁴³ Hence, taking into account the unknown factor of the whole, “the sage sorts everything within the cosmos but does not assess it, assesses the actions of the great men of history but

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 11

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² A. C. Graham (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, p. 26

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 12

does not engage in disputation over them; and as for what is outside the cosmos he locates it but does not sort it.”²⁴⁴ Furthermore, the sage knows that “words do order themselves in speech, not according to any rules of disputation, but by that unanalysable knack which he discerns at the bottom of all successful behaviour—which is the sign that Heaven is working through us.”²⁴⁵

Heaven, Man & The Sage

Philosophical Taoism espouses via Chuang-Tzu the idea of a ‘True Man’—someone in whom ‘Heaven’ and ‘Man’ abide harmoniously²⁴⁶. “The True Man lives the life generated by Heaven; however, one does not possess this ability from birth—that selfless mirror-like objectivity which ensures that every prompting is the impulse from Heaven. It is by the training of the nature that we recover the Power.”²⁴⁷

“When thinking and putting our thoughts into words we are behaving as men; when attending and responding in ways which we can never fully express in language or justify by reasons, our behaviour belongs with the birth, growth, decay and death of the body among the spontaneous processes generated by Heaven. We are then doing, without knowing how we do it, what Heaven destines for us.”²⁴⁸

In *The Signs of Fullness of Power* Chuang-Tzu states that the sage has a shape of a man yet is without what is essentially man.

He has the shape of a man, and therefore congregates with men; he is without what is essentially man. He has the shape of a man, and therefore congregates with men; he is without what is essentially man, and therefore “That’s it, that’s not” are not found in his person. Indiscernibly small, that which attaches him to man! Unutterably vast, the Heaven within him which he perfects in solitude! ... The Way gives him the guise, Heaven gives him the shape, how can we refuse to call him a man? But since we do call him a man, how can he be without the essentials of man?

Graham (2001) explains Chuang-Tzu’s point aptly when he states that “as long as one is thinking as a man, one differentiates self from other and thing from thing; but in surrendering to Heaven one treats everything as one.”²⁴⁹ Furthermore, Robinet (1997) makes the point that ‘in an ideal human society the Sage does not intercede; natural law operates spontaneously and without impediments so that order is established harmoniously among human beings as well as between humans and Nature, and humans and Heaven.’²⁵⁰ It is in this light that Kirkland (2004)

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 26

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 16

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ A. C. Graham (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., p. 20

²⁵⁰ Isabelle Robinet (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*, California: Stanford University Press, p. 28

believes that the *Tao Te Ching* in particular and Philosophical Taoism in general ‘work to persuade one to trust one’s self to certain subtle processes at work in the world, rather than foolishly believe that one can control life’s events through one’s personal choices and actions.’²⁵¹

Inward Cultivation

In a survey of the full range of Taoist Texts, Harold Roth (1999) identifies three categories under which the distinctive ideas of these Texts could be subsumed:²⁵²

1. **Cosmology:** a cosmology based on the Tao as the predominant unifying power in the cosmos;
2. **Inner cultivation:** the attainment of the Tao through a process of emptying out the usual contents of the conscious mind until a profound experience of tranquillity is attained;
3. **Political thought:** the application of this cosmology and this method of self-cultivation to the problems of rulership.

Roth (1999) describes *Inner cultivation* as “a mystical practice whose goal is a direct apprehension of the *Tao*—the all-pervading cosmic force.”²⁵³

*The vital essence of all things:
It is this that brings them to life.
It generates the five grains below
And becomes the constellated stars above.
When flowing amid the heavens and the earth
We call it ghostly and numinous.
When stored within the chests of human beings,
We call them sages.
(Nei-yeh Chapter 1)*

Ch’i

Huston Smith (1991) points out that the word **ch’i** literally means breath, but with specific regards to Philosophical Taoism, it means ‘**vital energy**’.²⁵⁴ ‘Adapted to cosmology,’ Graham (2001) points out, ‘ch’i means the universal fluid, active as Yang and passive as Yin, out of which all things condense and into which they dissolve; however in its older/primary sense it is

²⁵¹ Russell Kirkland (2004) *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, NY, London: Routledge, p. 60

²⁵² Harold Roth (1999) *Original Tao: Inward Training and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 7

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 11

²⁵⁴ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, p. 201

the energetic fluid which vitalises the body, in particular as the breath, and which circulates outside us as the air.’²⁵⁵

Ching

Graham postulates that ‘at its purest and most vital it (ch’i) is **Ching**, the quintessential, which above is perfectly luminous as the heavenly bodies, circulates in the atmosphere as the **kuei shen** (the ghostly and daimonic), and descends into man as his **shen** ‘daimon’, rendering him **shen ming** ‘daimonic and clear-seeing’, so that he perceives the myriad things with perfect clarity.’²⁵⁶ Using the Philosophical Taoist’s organ of thought (the heart) the ch’i is to be guided so that one is filled with *ching*, and ‘the body flourishes in good health to a ripe old age, and by the inward maturing of Potency (Te) one spontaneously accords with the Way.’²⁵⁷ *Ching*, Graham declares, ‘if present, ensures health and clears the passages through the nine orifices of the body, opening the senses for clear perception.’²⁵⁸ With reference, thus, to the Taoist exercise of inward cultivation, Graham purports that by its function of ‘*stilling personal desires*’ it ‘**opens one’s self** (one’s heart) **to the inflow of spontaneous forces from outside** (the self), **and one becomes the quintessential**—which as the purest and most freely circulating ch’i pervades and unifies everything in the universe, and one’s insight into things meets no obstruction anywhere.’²⁵⁹ ‘In the perfect awareness of the sage spontaneous motivation will coincide with the Way.’²⁶⁰ Ultimately, according to Graham, the combination of *creative spontaneity* with the ‘practice of *familiar moral virtues*’ is the essence of Philosophical Taoism.²⁶¹

Philosophical Taoism: Conclusion

William James in ‘The Reality of the Unseen’ states that if one were ‘asked to characterize the life of religion in the broadest and most general terms possible, one might say that it consists of the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto.’²⁶² Philosophical Taoism can be analyzed using James’s yardstick, for Kirkland makes the fitting point that ‘all three Texts—the Tao Te Ching, Nei-yeh, and Chuang-Tzu—share the idea that one can live one’s life wisely only if one learns how to live in accord with life’s unseen forces and subtle processes (Tao), not on the basis of society’s more prosaic

²⁵⁵ A. C. Graham (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, p.101

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.101, 102

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p.103

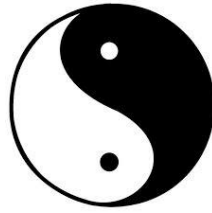
²⁵⁹ Ibid., p.104

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid., pp.104, 105

²⁶² William James (2002) ‘The Reality of the Unseen’, in **God**, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, (pp. 277-298), pp. 277,278

concerns.’²⁶³ Smith reminds us that Lao Tzu’s (Philosophical Taoism’s) message to the reader is “**anywhere, at every time, the Tao is within us.**” How does Lao Tzu know this? By means of this...



4.5.3 Religious Taoism

“Influenced by Buddhism, which entered China around the time of Christ, the Taoist church—in Chinese the *Tao Chiao*, ‘*Church Taoism*’ or ‘*Taoist Teachings*’—took shape in the second century A.D. It was anchored in a pantheon whose three originating deities included Lao Tzu (Smith, 1991:205).” “From these divinities sacred texts derived, which (by virtue of their divinely revealed origin) were accepted as true without reservation. The line of ‘papal’ succession in the Taoist church continues down to the present in Taiwan (Smith, 1991:205).” Smith (1991) informs us that, “the Taoist priesthood made cosmic life-power available for ordinary villagers. The texts of this school are crammed with descriptions of rituals that, if exactly performed, have magical effects, and the word magic here holds the key to sacerdotal, specifically religious, Taoism (Smith, 1991: 205-6).” “Traditionally, magic was understood as the means by which higher, occult powers are tapped for use in the visible world. Proceeding on the assumption that higher powers exist—the subtle rules the dense; energy rules matter, consciousness rules energy, and super-consciousness rules consciousness—magic made these powers available. It was under the rubric of magic as thus traditionally conceived that the Taoist Church devised ways to harness higher powers for humane ends (Smith, 1991: 205-6).”

4.5.4 Taoist Yoga

Like the Hindu Yoga of Patanjali, there exists a Taoist yoga, which has been described as internal alchemy. It too has eight steps, although they differ from the eight steps of Patanjali. The eight steps of Taoist yoga are (Morgan, 2001: 246-7):

1. Conservation of the *ching* (essence)
2. Restoration or reparation of the *ching*
3. Transmutation of the *ching*
4. Nourishing the *ch’i* (energy)
5. Transmutation of the *ch’i*
6. Nourishing the *shen* (spirit)

²⁶³ Russell Kirkland (2004) *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, NY, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 59

7. Transmutation of the *shen*
8. Transmutation of the voided *shen* to make it one with the void (Morgan, 2001: 246-7)."

"Taoist practitioners became convinced that the ingredients for immortality were spiritual rather than physical substances. Instead of using real mercury or lead or arsenic, Taoist alchemists began talking about the 'souls' of these various substances. This became known as *nei-tan* or *secret alchemy*. The basic procedure is this: you have to turn your *ching* into *ch'i*, then you turn the *ch'i* into pure cosmic *shen* (Morgan, 2001: 246)." "*Wei Po-Yang*, a Taoist master of the second century C.E., combined studies of the five elements with a Taoist interpretation of the *I Ching*. He wrote a book called *Ts'an T'ung Ch'i*, a title that may mean 'the union of the three'. The 'three' are presumably essence (*ching*), energy (*ch'i*), and spirit (*shen*), which constantly interact and form a 'spirit body' (Morgan, 2001: 246)." Morgan (2001) insists that, "the real Taoist trinity is *ching*, *ch'i*, and *shen*. These elements are present in all of nature, and in the human body as well. In Taoist thought, the body is a microcosm of the universe. Within us are the three treasures (Morgan, 2001: 250-1)."

4. 6 Confucianism

Introduction

According to Sahadat (1998), "Confucius is a Latinized version of K'ung Fu-tzu. He came from a poor family background, but was able to obtain employment in government service. Though he displayed outstanding abilities and potentials, he never rose to positions beyond a junior bureaucrat (Sahadat, 1998: 96-7)." "Although he did not rise to higher levels in the service of his government, he did, however, rise to great heights of respect and admiration in the eyes of his students and, through the centuries, in the estimation of the world. He played a major role in shaping Chinese civilization and in formulating a doctrine of humanism, which comprises a major dimension of Chinese philosophical reflection (Sahadat, 1998: 96-7)." "His main concern was a good society based on good government and harmonious human relations. He believed that a good government made virtue and moral conduct the basis of its rule, not fear or force. Righteousness and not profit was the norm for goodness; filial piety the norm for healthy family relationships; and for society at large it was propriety, *li* (Sahadat, 1998: 96-7)."

According to Wilhelm (1972), "Confucius was born in the state of Lu, in the District of *Ch'ang P'ing*, in the city of Chou. His ancestor was from the state of Sung and was called *K'ung Fang-shu*. *Fang-shu* begat *Po-shia*. *Po-shia* begat *Shu-Liang Ho* (Wilhelm, 1972: 3-4)." "Late in life, *Ho* was united in matrimony with the daughter of the man, *Yen*, and begat *Confucius*. His mother prayed to the hill, *Ni*, and conceived *Confucius*. It was in the twenty-second year of *Duke Hsiang* of *Lu* that Confucius was born (551 B.C.). At his birth, he had on

his head a bulging of the skull, whence he is said to have received the name 'Hill' (Ch'iu). His style or appellation was *Chung Ni*, his family name *K'ung* (Wilhelm, 1972: 3-4)."

According to Morgan (2001), "Confucius was an ugly baby born in poverty to an unwed mother. Confucius's great and unfulfilled desire in life was to obtain a high governmental post where his advice would be heeded. Like Buddha and Jesus, Confucius spent most of his life as a wandering teacher. Confucius considered himself a transmitter of culture rather than a creator of new ideas (Morgan, 2001: 196)."

According to Lau (1979), "*K'ung Ch'iu* or *K'ung Chung-ni*, commonly known in the West as *Confucius* was born in either 552 or 551 B.C., and was orphaned at a very early age. Of his youth little is known except that he was poor and fond of learning. He said, 'I was of humble station when young. That is why I am skilled in so many menial things', and 'At fifteen I set my heart on Learning (Lau, 1979: 9).'" "It was in the time of Duke Ting of Lu (r. 509-494 B.C.) that he became the police commissioner of *Lu*. During his term of office two events took place which are recorded in the *Tso chuan*. First, he accompanied the Duke to a meeting with Duke Ching of Ch'i and scored a diplomatic victory (Lau, 1979: 9-10).'" "Second, he was responsible for the abortive plan to demolish the main city of each of the three powerful noble families. It was probably in 497 B.C. that Confucius left Lu, not to return until thirteen years later (Lau, 1979: 9-10).'" "Confucius first went to Wei, and during the next few years visited a number of other states, offering advice to the feudal lords, and, meeting with no success, returned to Wei in 489 B.C. It is not possible to determine how long Confucius stayed in each state as what little evidence there is tends to be conflicting (Lau, 1979:10).'" "Confucius finally returned to Lu in 484 B.C. when he was sixty-eight. At last realizing that there was no hope of putting his ideas into practice, he devoted the rest of his life to teaching. His last years were saddened by the death first of his son and then of his favourite disciple, Yen Hui, at an early age. He himself died in 479 B.C (Lau, 1979: 10)."

Sahadat (1998) makes the point that, "the dynamism of the man, Confucius, and his teachings must be seen in light of the conditions of his time. It was an era that the Chinese historians referred to as the 'Period of the Warring States (Sahadat, 1998: 95).'" "It was a time characterized by warfare, social and political injustice, intrigues, ruthlessness, social anarchy, and disharmony. There did not seem to be much moral and spiritual resourcefulness to counteract the evils of the day, or to contribute in any significant manner to the social well-being of the people (Sahadat, 1998: 95).'" "The uncertainties and restlessness of the time, however, led many reflective individuals, some of whom were teachers and statesmen, to raise questions concerning the nature and meaning of existence. This intellectual exercise gave rise to the so-called 'age of the hundred philosophers' in the sixth century B.C.E. It was in such a

milieu of disharmony and the flowering of ideas that the great optimistic humanist, Confucius, lived (551-479 B.C.E.) (Sahadat, 1998: 95-6).”

The Five Confucian Concepts

1. Jen

“Perhaps best rendered as human-heartedness, Jen was the virtue of virtues in Confucius’ view of life. It was a sublime, even transcendental, perfection that he confessed he had never seen fully incarnated. Jen involves simultaneously a feeling of humanity toward others and respect for oneself, an indivisible sense of the dignity of human life wherever it appears. Subsidiary attitudes follow automatically: magnanimity, good faith and charity. In the direction of jen lies the perfection of everything that would make one supremely human. In public life it prompts untiring diligence. In private life it is expressed in courtesy, unselfishness, and empathy, the capacity to ‘measure the feelings of others by one’s own (Smith, 1991: 172).”

2. Chun tzu (The accommodating Yogi)

“It has been translated the *Superior Person* and *Humanity-at-its-Best*. Perhaps the *Mature Person* is as faithful a rendering of the term as any. The *chun tzu* is the opposite of a petty person, a mean person, a small-spirited person. Fully adequate, poised, the *chun tzu* has toward life as a whole the approach of an ideal host or hostess who is so at home in his or her surroundings that he or she is completely relaxed, and, being so, can turn full attention to putting others at their ease. Armed with a self-respect that generates respect for others, one approaches other people in the environment wondering, not, ‘What can I get from them?’ but ‘What can I do to accommodate them? It is the only person who is entirely real, Confucius thought, who can establish the great foundations of civilized society. Only as those who make up society are transformed into *chun tzus* can the world move toward peace (Smith, 1991: 173).”

3. Li (Way)

“Li was Confucius’ blueprint for the well-conducted life. Its first meaning is *propriety*, the way things should be done. Confucius thought it unrealistic to think that people could wisely determine on their own what those ways should be. They needed models, and Confucius wanted to direct their attention to the finest models their social history offered, so all could gaze, and memorize, and duplicate (Smith, 1991: 174).”

“The other meaning of the word is *ritual*, which changes right—in the sense of what it is right to do—into *rite*. Or rather it infuses the first meaning with the second; for when right behavior is detailed to Confucian lengths, the individual’s entire life becomes stylized in a sacred dance. Social life has been choreographed. Its basic steps have been worked out, leaving little need for improvisation. There is a pattern for every act, from

the way thrice-yearly the Emperor renders to Heaven an account of his mandate, right down to the way you entertain the humblest guest in your home and bring out the tea (Smith, 1991: 177).”

4. **Te**

“Literally this word meant power, specifically the power by which men are ruled. The power of moral example (Smith, 1991: 177-8).”

5. **Wen**

“This refers to ‘the arts of peace’ as contrasted to ‘the arts of war’; to music, art, poetry, the sum of culture in its aesthetic and spiritual mode. Confucius valued the arts tremendously. He considered people who are indifferent to art only half human. Still, it was not art for art’s sake that drew his regard. It was art’s power to transform human nature in the direction of virtue that impressed him—its power to make easy (by ennobling the heart) a regard for others that would otherwise be difficult (Smith, 1991: 178).”

The Five Classics

1. The Book of History (Shu Ching) (The Book of Documents)
2. The Book of Poetry or Songs (Shih Ching)
3. The Book of Changes (I Ching)
4. The Book of Rites (Li Chi)
5. The Spring and Autumn Annals (Ch’un Ch’iu) (Morgan, 2001: 205)

“By tradition, The Five Classics were written or at least edited by Confucius, but the Confucian canon didn’t become well established until the Song dynasty (960-1279). This literature became the basis for all learning for about 600 years—from 1313 until 1912 (Morgan, 2001: 205).”

The Four Books

1. The Great Learning
2. The Analects
3. The Book of Mencius (Meng-Tzu)
4. The Doctrine of the Mean (Morgan, 2001: 207-9)

“The Four Books, all Confucian texts, were systematized by the Sung dynasty scholar and philosopher Chu His and other Neo-Confucians. They were the basis for the competitive Chinese civil service examinations that were mandatory for hundreds of years (Morgan, 2001: 207).”

Four Dimensions of Humanity

“One of the major concerns of Confucianism is to follow a path of life for becoming fully human. That does not mean the development of an individual in isolation or in opposition to any of the modalities of existence (Sahadat, 1998: 97).” “On the contrary, the process of becoming fully human in the Confucian tradition involves a deepening growth that will bring

to realization the interrelatedness of all the factors of existence that characterize and define the human being (Sahadat, 1998: 97).”

“Faith in the transformation of the human being is a major feature of the humanism that Confucius teaches, and this includes a combination of the following ‘Dimensions of Humanity’: 1. Self, 2. Community, 3. Nature, and 4. Heaven (Sahadat, 1998: 98).”

Shu, Jen, Li, 5 Relationships

“The basis of Confucian philosophy is *shu*, the principle of reciprocity. Confucius also laid great stress upon the value of *jen*, or human-heartedness, and *li*, or correct ceremony. For Confucius, harmony depends on the Five Great Relationships: father-son; husband-wife; older brother-younger brother; friend-friend; ruler-subject. Confucius believed that people had the potential for goodness and merely needed cultivation. Confucius thought that government would improve if more philosophers worked in the political arena (Morgan, 2001: 209).”

Moral Character

For Confucius “Nobility was not a matter of heredity, but a question of morally sound character. His aim of education was the cultivation of character rather than vocational training. He believed that education should be open to all who desired it, and that the nobility and perfection of man were possible for all who were prepared to undergo a course of training (Sahadat, 1998: 97).”

The Sage

“For Confucius there is not one single ideal character but quite a variety. The highest is the *sage* (sheng jen). This ideal is so high that it is hardly ever realized (Lau, 1979: 13).”

Benevolence

According to Lau (1979), the answer that Confucius responded to a “question about benevolence was, ‘Love your fellow men (Lau, 1979: 16).” “Behind Confucius’ pursuit of the ideal moral character lies the unspoken, and therefore, unquestioned, assumption that the only purpose a man can have and also the only worthwhile thing a man can do is to become as good a man as possible. This is something that has to be pursued for its own sake and with complete indifference to success or failure (Lau, 1979: 12).” “Whilst giving men no assurance of an afterlife, Confucius, nevertheless, made great moral demands upon them. He said of the Gentleman of purpose and the benevolent man that ‘while it is conceivable that they should seek to stay alive at the expense of benevolence, it may happen that they have to accept death in order to have benevolence accomplished (Lau, 1979: 12).”

Wisdom, Courage

“Besides benevolence there is a host of other virtues which the gentleman is supposed to possess. There are two virtues which are often mentioned together with benevolence. They are wisdom or intelligence (*chih*) and courage (*yung*). For instance, Confucius said, ‘The man of wisdom is never in two minds; the man of benevolence never worries; the man of courage is never afraid (Lau, 1979: 22).’”

Optimistic Humanism

“The ethical thinking of Confucius evolved from a twofold awareness. First, that China in his time was in a state of moral decadence, as though the standards of exemplary living in the past had never existed. Corruption seemed to have overtaken virtue. Second, even though the moral situation had reached its lowest point, Confucius believed that it was not beyond the scope of reformation (Sahadat, 1998: 101-2).” “Society had reached a state of moral decay because, as Confucius believed, people deviated from the Way of their ancestors, who had upheld as their ideal, the common good, and lived in accordance with it. As long as there was a remnant of people in society, there was hope as far as Confucius was concerned; and it is in this regard that we see the nature of Confucius’ *Optimistic Humanism*. It was an all-inclusive humanism incorporating the anthropological as well as the cosmological, hence *anthropocosmic* in which the Human, the Earth, and the Heaven comprised a trinity or the fundamental constituents of reality (Sahadat, 1998: 101-2).” According to Sahadat (1998), “though Confucius was a reformer, he was also a traditionalist in so far he believed that the virtues of the ancients could play a major role in shaping the present. Confucius’ vision is tri-dimensional. It reflects on the wisdom of the *past* to capture the Spirit of the *Tao* in order to meet the demands of the *present*, and to shape the course of the *future* (Sahadat, 1998: 102).”

Conclusion

Heaven

“In Confucianism, Heaven has a prominent place. It is regarded as a source for moral creativity, meaning of life and ultimate self-transformation. From this point of view Confucianists are deeply religious (Sahadat, 1998: 100).” “They have a profound sense of reverence for life, loyalty to duty, and dedication to ultimate self-transformation. Their attitude to life, duty, and self-transformation is based on the presupposition that Heaven is omniscient, omnipresent, if not omnipotent (Sahadat, 1998: 100).” “As human beings we do not act in a vacuum, hence whatever we do is not without its implications for ourselves, obviously, and also for our community, as well as for nature and Heaven. We cannot escape from the Way of Heaven. It is here and now, constantly present in every aspect of our everyday life (Sahadat, 1998: 100).” According to Morgan (2001), “Confucius acknowledges that Heaven’s Mandate is the ultimate

guiding principle,” yet, “he focuses his teaching on what that means in the real world of work, relationships and responsibility (Morgan, 2001: 197).”

The Hun in Heaven (The Mandate)

“Confucius steered clear of metaphysical discussion. Still he apparently believed that heaven had ultimate control over human affairs, and probably agreed with traditional Chinese concepts about the soul. In Chinese theory, the human person has not one, but two, souls. One soul is the *hun*, an intellectual entity that becomes a *shen* or spirit when the person dies. The lower soul is *po*, which becomes a ghost when the human person dies and goes with him down into the grave (Morgan, 2001: 204).”

The Way & Virtue

“Both the Way and virtue were concepts current before Confucius’ time and, by then, they must have already acquired a certain aura. They both, in some way, stem from Heaven. It is perhaps, for this reason that though he said little of a concrete and specific nature about either of these concepts, Confucius, nevertheless, gave them high precedence in his scheme of things (Lau, 1979: 12).” “He said, ‘I set my heart on the Way, base myself on virtue, lean upon benevolence for support and take my recreation in the arts. Benevolence is something the achievement of which is totally dependent upon our own efforts, but virtue is partly a gift from Heaven (Lau, 1979: 12).”

Ordained by Heaven

“His moral sensitivity and quest for order and harmony propelled him against the tides. He was the victim of intrigue and defamation of character (Sahadat, 1998: 96).” “That, however, did not inhibit him from teaching about the manners and customs required for becoming a gentleman, and about the rules of good government. He never changed his course from the moral and humanistic path no matter what he suffered. He believed that no one could derail his mission because it was ordained by Heaven itself (Sahadat, 1998: 96).”

4. 7 Christianity

4.7.1 Introduction

Love

According to the Reverend Dr. Thomas A Baima, S.T.L.—Catholic Priest, “the origin of Christianity begins in the heart of God. The divine nature is *Love*. *Love* is not something that comes from God. *Love* is God and God is *Love*. If a Christian were to name the Divine in English, the best term would be simply ‘God-Love’ (Beverluis, 2000: 18).”

The Primary Elements of Christianity

“The primary elements of the teaching are: There is one God who is almighty whom Jesus called Father. This one God is the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Jesus is the divine and human, only son of this Father, and as we call God ‘Lord’, we call Jesus ‘Lord’, for the Father is in him and he is in the Father (Beverluis, 2000: 19).” “The miracle of Jesus’ virgin birth attests to this. Jesus suffered at the hands of the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate giving his life in the process. He died and was buried as we all shall be. But he did not remain in the tomb, for God raised him up out of death. His suffering and death broke the chains of sin for all who died before his coming, again making God-Love available to them (Beverluis, 2000: 19).” “He rose from the dead making life with God now and forever our blessed hope. He ascended, returning into the presence of God-Love from which he came. He sent the Holy Spirit to create the assembly of believers and to be its constant guide in faith, hope, and love (Beverluis, 2000: 19).” “He will return to bring time to an end, to judge the living and the dead, and to complete creation with the inauguration of the eternal kingdom of, with, and in ‘God-Love’ (Beverluis, 2000: 19).”

The Jewish Origins of Christianity

“Christianity was in origin one of several Jewish sects. Consequently, its religious ideas are fundamentally Hebrew. Belief in one personal God, the creator of the universe, the director of history, who at once loves men and expects moral obedience of them, is implicit in the teaching of Christ. The Sermon on the Mount has echoes of the Old Testament and of the Jewish rabbis; but Jesus is original in proclaiming the Kingdom of God in a universal, spiritual sense (Gundry, 1966: 144-5).” Gundry (1966) makes the point that, “the uniqueness of Christianity derives more from the person of Christ than from his ethic. He claimed to be—and his followers claimed him to be—God’s revelation in human personality. But the first Christians were naturally Jews, for whom it was difficult to separate the new religion from the old (Gundry, 1966: 145).” “The controversy as to whether Christianity should be bound down by Jewish law and custom is recorded in St Luke’s second volume, *The Acts of the Apostles*. St Paul and his sympathizers, who saw that the Church must include all men, won the day, and in so doing obeyed Christ’s teaching, classically presented in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, that all men should love one another (Gundry, 1966: 145).”

The Bible

“The Christian Bible consists of the Hebrew Scriptures, comprising the Old Testament, the Jewish Apocrypha, and the specifically Christian books, the New Testament. The latter consists of the Four Gospels, outlining the life and teaching of Jesus, the Acts of the Apostles telling of the spread of the Apostolic Church, the letters of St Paul to the churches in the chief cities of

the Mediterranean world, other letters, mostly attributed to St Peter and St James, and the Revelation of St John the Divine, otherwise known as the Apocalypse, a tract written in strange imagery to encourage Christians suffering persecution (Gundry, 1966: 145).” “All these books were written in the second half of the first century, with possibly one or two small exceptions; and it is well to remember that the earliest of them all were Paul’s epistles, composed within the twenty years A.D. 45 to 65. These were only some of many early Christian writings composed in the first century; and a process of sifting took place, which ended with the establishment of the New Testament canon as we know it by the end of the fourth century, though most of the books had been acknowledged as authoritative by the end of the second (Gundry, 1966: 145).” “Many papyrus fragments of the Gospel dating back as far as the second century have come to light; but the oldest complete manuscript of the Greek Bible is the fine Codex Sinaiticus of the fourth century, now in the British Museum (Gundry, 1966: 145).”

The Sacraments

“An important feature of the Christian Church, except among some Protestants, is its sacramentalism. A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The two sacraments instituted by Christ, which have been observed ever since, are Baptism, the Christian form of initiation, and the Lord’s Supper, variously known as the Eucharist, the Mass and the Holy Communion (Gundry, 1966: 148-9).” “Ordination, marriage, penance, confirmation and the unction of the sick are also regarded by some branches of the Church as lesser sacraments. The virtue of the sacramental system is that it bridges the gulf between the material and the spiritual worlds: most people, without such means of grace, would find their religion far too abstract. Sacramentalism also reminds the Christian that the material world is God’s creation; the Christian regards the material world as the means whereby he can express through his actions Christian values (Gundry, 1966: 148-9).”

4.7.2 The Church: The Council of Florence

In the history of Christendom the break between Byzantium and Rome was probably the major tragedy (Runciman, 1957: 181-182). Hence, when a ceremony of union between the two took place “on the sixth of July 1439 in the cathedral of Florence, with Cardinal Cesarini reading the decree in Latin and Bessarion in Greek (Geanakoplos 1955: 324-346),” it would seem as an occasion for great celebration. Had not the Council of Florence (1438-1439) finally solved the schism between the Greek and Latin Churches? Indeed, a majority of the Council’s discussions focused on the following “perennial dogmatic and liturgical questions”:

1. The nature of the pains of purgatory
2. The use of leavened or unleavened bread in the Eucharist
3. The precise moment at which the Eucharistic miracle occurs

4. The procession of the Holy Spirit: '*Filioque*' (Geanakoplos 1955: 332)."

The *Filioque* issue trumped the rest in significance as it took eight months for a concluding solution to be arrived at. Based on its belief that the three persons in the Godhead were not only of the same substance but of equal attributes, the West argued that the Holy Spirit emanates from the Son as well as the Father. The East, on the other hand, felt that such a belief was fundamentally flawed as it would "entail for the Holy Spirit the existence of two archical principles instead of one. Eventually a formula was approved identifying the Latin *Filioque* 'from the son' with the Greek phrase 'through the son (Geanakoplos 1955: 332)."

In the year 1054, four hundred years prior to the Council of Florence, the "Latin customs of priests' shaving and fasting on Saturday were the causes of disputes between Michael Cerularius and Cardinal Humbert" which led to an official schism in Christendom John (Binns, 2002: 214). John Binns (2002) in *An Introduction to the Christian Orthodox Churches* insists that the participants on both sides were "deeply concerned for the integrity and purity of their respective churches;" However, both fractions were uncompromising in their attitudes toward the other, hence the dispute led to mutual excommunication.

"In 1054 Pope Leo IX had insisted that Greek churches in parts of Italy ruled by the Norman Angevins should follow Latin liturgical practice and customs, while the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael I Cerularius ordered Latin churches in Constantinople to conform to Greek practices and, when they declined to do so, he closed them. A group of three papal legates were invited by the Patriarch to try to settle the quarrel. Their discussions did not go well, and one afternoon the three legates went to the Great Church of Haghia Sophia just as a service was starting, marched to the altar, placed a Bull of Excommunication on it and then left."⁶

The Council of Florence marked the first occasion in four centuries that East and West assembled in ecumenical council to debate the differences separating their two churches (Geanakoplos, 1955).⁷ Geanakoplos (1955) makes the point that it was 'the last great opportunity to close the gap separating Eastern from Western Christendom.'⁸ Hence, one is tempted to assume that the news of the Union would have delighted Christians in East and West alike. This was not the case, for 'on the return to Constantinople by the Greek Emperor and his clergy the great majority of the Greek people repudiated the union.'⁹ What was the cause of this repudiation? Why did the Greek people support the departure of seven hundred of the Eastern Church's ecclesiastics and laymen? Why did the contingent, headed by the Emperor John VIII Palaeologos, the Patriarch Joseph of Constantinople, and representatives of the three other patriarchs, set out for Italy? Why board the Pope's ships to spend almost a year in heated debate, in search for a 'union' that (by implication of the repudiation) seems not to be quintessentially desirable?¹⁰ This paper is an attempt to find pertinent responses that shed light on the underlying basis of the 'Greek repudiation.' The thesis of the paper is such that the

underlying factors of the Eastern repudiation to the decree of union at the Council of Florence (1438-1439) can be used to explain the general nature, history and future of the schism between Eastern & Western Christendom.

Aleksei S. Khomyakov believes “that the schism between the Latin and Byzantine Churches is a consequence of the diverse historical origins of the peoples of the Eastern and Western ends of the Mediterranean world.”¹¹ This diverse history is the basis behind Runciman’s (1957) assertion that the schism was effected by an intricate contexture of “non- theological factors;” He posits that the ‘schism’ was not only a split “in the Church,” in a strictly theological sense. It was a split in the world at large. It was a cultural, and political, separation, and not only a “separation of Churches.”¹² Khomyakov “depicts the contrast between Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Christianity as the contrast between peoples whose historical peculiarities and cultural physiognomies are reflected in their religious psychologies.” He insists that in order to “understand the schism one must comprehend the differences between the nations that have received their historical inheritances from Rome and Aachen and those that have been influenced similarly by Constantinople and Kiev.”¹³

⁶ John Binns (2002) *An Introduction To The Christian Orthodox Churches*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 214

⁷ Deno J. Geanakoplos (1955) ‘The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches’, *Church History* 24: 4, p. 324

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid. p.335

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 329

¹¹ Ibid., p.292

¹² Steven Runciman (1957) ‘The Eastern Schism. A Study of the Papacy & the Eastern Churches during the XI th and XII th Centuries’, *Church History* 26:2, p. 181

¹³ Joseph L. Wiczynski (1969) ‘Khomyakov's Critique of Western Christianity’

The Greek population of Constantinople disliked the Latins; this “deep-rooted antagonism was more than religious in scope, but it tended, in the spirit of the age, to find expression in the church.”¹⁴ “The question of the *Filioque*,” according to Geanakoplos (1955), “so bitterly debated at Florence, masked the vital, underlying problem of the hostility between Greeks and Latins;”¹⁵ “The deep-rooted antagonism for the Latins felt by the Greek population of Constantinople was more than religious in scope, but it tended, in the spirit of the age, to find expression in the church.”¹⁶ Underlying the debates at the Council of Florence was hostility so real and potent that the Greeks feared that ‘union’ with the West would lead to assimilation and destruction:

“To the anti-unionist Orthodox, union was the prelude to **assimilation** by the Latins. As one Orthodox polemist of the fifteenth century said, “Let no one be deceived by delusive hopes that the Italian allied troops will come to save us. If they pretend to rise to defend us, they will take arms only to **destroy** our city, our race, and our name.”¹⁷

Latinization & Destruction

The Greeks regarded themselves as a people very distinct from the Latins and as such a Greek supporter of the union was looked upon as a traitor.¹⁸ Geanakoplos (1955) insists that the Greeks held a keen memory of the following (Geanakoplos, 1955: 33-4):

1. “Fifty-seven years of Latin occupation in Constantinople.
2. Continuing Western domination of their islands and other Byzantine areas.
 - A. Certain feudal practices characteristic of the Latin Church had been imposed upon the Greek clergy such as the compulsory personal oath recognizing papal authority through the clasp of hands within those of a Latin superior.
 - B. A Papal legate had been dispatched to Constantinople to dictate ecclesiastical, and influence political, decisions.
3. After the fourth crusade of 1204 the Greeks had been
 - A. Dispossessed of their ecclesiastical properties
 - B. Forcibly converted to the Latin faith
 - C. Required to recite the creed with the *Filioque*
 - D. Required to celebrate the liturgy with unleavened bread”¹⁹

¹⁴ Deno J. Geanakoplos (1955) ‘The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches’, *Church History* 24: 4, p. 325

¹⁵ Ibid., pp 333, 334

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 325

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 324

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 333

¹⁹ Ibid., pp.333, 334

The Crusades

Peter Charanis (1952), in ‘Aims of the Medieval Crusades (1095 – 1444) and How They Were Viewed by Byzantium’ states that “the motivating forces which promoted the various crusading expeditions were many and complex.” The first Crusade was in the name of Christianity as a whole; Christians, both from West and East, who lost their lives while participating in it, were supposedly absolved of their sins (Charanis, 1952, 123-4). Called, organized and conducted under the auspices of the papacy, the first crusade of 1095 was a holy war having as its objective the liberation of the Holy Land. At the suggestion of Pope Urban, negotiations for a crusade, between himself and the Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus, began in 1088. These negotiations envisaged the union of the churches, but political considerations, as Charanis (1952) posits, were doubtlessly involved (Charanis, 1952, 123-4). The two parties enjoyed cordial relations, hence the Pope’s appeal at Clermont for the need of a crusade (and the union of the Churches thereof) attracted the attention of a Byzantine Emperor “who was no less anxious to come into some kind of agreement” (Charanis, 1952, 125). Charanis (1952) posits, however, that “the big problem which stood in the way was the fact that for almost seventy years there had been no communion between the church of Constantinople and that of Rome (Charanis, 1952, 125).” He lists the following two factors as the extant obstacles to the communion between the Latin and Greek Churches at that time:

1. Deep-rooted attachment of the Greeks to their ecclesiastical autonomy
2. The universalism of the papacy

“The negotiations between pope and emperor were crowned with success at least temporarily;” and Charanis (1952) highlights the fact that “the excommunication, which had been imposed on the Byzantine emperor by Gregory VII, was removed and the Latin churches in Constantinople were reopened.” “Pope Urban’s name was then ‘temporarily inscribed in the diptychs of the church of Constantinople pending the holding of a council which, it was hoped, would settle the difference which separated the two churches and so bring about their union (Charanis, 1952, 125).” For the Greeks, the inscription of the Pope’s name in Constantinople must have been yet another example of Latin encroachment. Why was it necessary for the Pope’s name to be inscribed at Constantinople? What was the intangible significance of such an action? For apt responses to the aforementioned, Khomyakov suggests that one inspects the nature of Western civilization itself. “Western civilization has derived from two primary sources: the Roman Empire and the Germanic tribes that eventually superseded it (Wieczynski, 1969: 292).”²⁵ Khomyakov believes that “these two sources blended to form the Western cultural synthesis;” Hence, this ‘Romano-Germanic cultural synthesis’ must be analyzed in order for one ‘to understand

the essential characteristics of Western institutions, customs, culture, beliefs and biases.²⁶

Joseph L. Wiczyński (1969) in *'Khomyakov's Critique of Western Christianity'* states that “the great supranational state that Rome created throughout the entire Mediterranean area was held together not merely by force of arms but by Roman administrative skill and legislation.”²⁷

“In time the institutions became more important than the men they were created to serve. Rome became the world’s first bureaucracy, and the Roman citizen became the first in history to experience the evil, dehumanizing effects of bureaucratization. In order to achieve the semblance of external unity, Rome sacrificed the internal freedom of its members. And here were planted seeds, the fruit of which was later harvested in all regions that received their basic cultural determination from the Roman Empire.”²⁸

Furthermore, Wiczyński (1969: 293) continues, “when Christianity became the official faith of the Empire, the legalism of the Roman mentality quickly affected its character: one-sided preoccupation with external unity, strict adherence to central authority and undeviating obedience to the officially proclaimed ecclesiastical legal code became the primary and vital duties of the Western Christian.”²⁹

“Bureaucratization of the Church in the West followed. Western Christians, like the legalists of their secular empire, approached Christian truths with the clinical attitude of the Roman jurist. The values of the Empire became the values of the Church; it had become a state, patterned on the institutions and values of the fallen Roman Empire.”³⁰

Wiczyński (1969) makes the conclusive assessment that the Church in the West was no longer an embodiment of merely religion; instead it had become an institution tantamount to a state—a state within itself. “The Western Church had its own language of diplomacy (Latin), its military contingents (the militant monastic orders), its elite ruling class (the religious hierarchy) and considerable skill in conducting political and military operations against foes both foreign and domestic.”³¹ The crusade (1095) which pope Urban mounted at Clermont and immediately after became an institution which for centuries to come would be used to agitate Europe and the Near East (Charanis, 1952: 129).

John Gordon Rowe (1959) in *'The Papacy and the Greeks (1122-1153)'*, states that “there was mutual animosity between East & West after the crusades of 1096 and 1101 (Rowe, 1959: 115-30).” “Relations

²⁶ Joseph L. Wiczyński (1969) *'Khomyakov's Critique of Western Christianity'*, *Church History* 38:3, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 294

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 293

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

between Rome and Constantinople had not improved during the period 1122-1153; instead there had been a progressive deterioration.’³⁴ Rowe (1959) suggests that the “the Greek resentment of the West and of the Papacy in particular was revealed by a member of the Greek legation to Lothair III in 1137:”

“The ambassador publicly arraigned Latin Christendom in head and members; He declared the Western Church excommunicate for its addition of the “Filioque” clause to the Creed, and described the Papacy as an institution devoted to worldliness, warmongering and militarism.”³⁵

In ‘The Papacy and the Greeks (1122-1153) (Part II)’ Rowe (1959) states that the Greeks “increasingly regarded the Papacy not as the symbol of spiritual unity or even as the bearer of a great ecclesiastical tradition but rather as a political power.” Rowe (1959) supports this claim by highlighting the Greek Ambassador’s declaration at Lake Pesoli that “the Papacy was an institution of this world and should be treated as such.”

Andrea J. Alfred (1970) in ‘*Pope Innocent III as Crusader and Canonist: His Relations with the Greeks of Constantinople, 1198-1216*’ posits that the ‘schism’ between the Latins and Greeks which, normally manifesting itself within the religious milieu, “did not become apparent to the vast majority of Christendom until the twelfth century (Alfred, 1970: 133-4).” Alfred (1970) cites the ‘flurry of canonical activity in both East and West’ during that period as that which ‘hardened their different ecclesiologies.’ Furthermore, in Alfred’s (1970) opinion, “the economic, cultural and political clashes which occurred with ever increasing frequency and bitterness’ added fuel to the schismatic fire (Alfred, 1970: 133-4).” Alfred’s (1970) thesis is such that Pope Innocent III is largely responsible for promulgating the mutual animosity through time. His policies set canon law of the thirteenth century into an ‘ultrapapalist framework’ as the lawyers of the Roman church who dominated the thirteenth century chair of St. Peter propagated the strong papalist teachings of the Western canonical tradition (Alfred, 1970: 133-4). The capture and pillage of Constantinople by the Western army of the fourth crusade (1202-1204) was indeed the straw that broke the camel’s back as it “created an insurmountable barrier of hatred between Greeks and Latins (Alfred, 1970: 133-4).” The crusade as an institution became in time an instrument of absolutism; According to Khomyakov, this negative evolution of the crusade was inevitable due to the fact that the “desire by Western man for domination and his insatiable hunger for conquest so manifest

³⁴ John Gordon Rowe (1959) ‘The Papacy and the Greeks (1122-1153) (Part II)’, *Church History*, 28: 3 1959, pp. 310-327

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-130

in all Western history was inherited from the Germanic tribesmen that overran and destroyed the empire of the Caesars and served as the intermediary between Rome and the states of modern Europe.”⁴⁰ Thus, ‘the *papal apparatus* that the East had helped to fashion eventually came to be viewed by the Greeks either as a dangerous thing or as a means of aid in their struggle to preserve their empire.’⁴¹ Charanis (1952) identifies and highlights the following uses/ misuses of the Crusades by the Papacy:

1. **Against infidels**
2. **Against schismatics**
3. **To extirpate heresies**
4. **To fight secular rulers**
5. **Against personal enemies of the Pope**⁴²

Constant conflicts resulted due to the crusades and all of the myriad conflicting religio-socio-econ elements extant between the Latins and the Greeks. “During the Crusades, the whole contest had reached the ‘mass level’ and ever since the tension has been not only between theologians and ecclesiastics, but between masses and nations (Runciman, 1957: 181).” In this vein, “each side resorted to church union as a method of achieving its objectives, and thus inevitably church union became a weapon of political offence and defence for both the Papacy and Byzantium in their dealings with each other (Rowe, 1959: 323-4).”

Hence, with regards to the question posed earlier in the paper: “**Why board the Pope’s ships to spend almost a year in heated debate, in search for a ‘union’ that (by implication of the repudiation) seems not to be quintessentially desirable?**” Geanakoplos (1955), in regards to the Council of Florence (1438-1439), explains that “to the papacy, union was the most effective way to extend its ecclesiastical authority over East as well as West; whereas for the Byzantine emperors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, union with the Latin Church seemed the sole means to insure papal aid against the peril of either a Latin crusade or Turkish attack against Constantinople (Geanakoplos, 1955: 324).” Geanakoplos (1955) insists that for both Eastern and Western Emperors and Religious authorities “union was less a matter of merging two spiritual bodies than a means for the satisfaction of political ends (Geanakoplos, 1955: 325).”

⁴⁰ Joseph L. Wiczyński (1969) ‘Khomyakov’s Critique of Western Christianity’, *Church History* 38:3, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 294

⁴¹ Peter Charanis (1952) ‘Aims of the Medieval Crusades (1095 – 1444) and How They Were Viewed by Byzantium’, *Church History* 21: 2 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.130

⁴² Ibid., p. 129

“In the thirteenth century union was declared on three separate occasions—though each time only ephemeral and without lasting effect (Geanakoplos,1955: 325).” The Council of Florence was fated to suffer the same pattern, as despite the eventual signing of union, **fundamentally**, “the Greeks expected the papacy to conform to conditions before the schism of 1054, while the Holy See, on its part, insisted upon subordination of the Greek Church in the manner to which it had become accustomed from the Latin churches of the West (Geanakoplos,1955: 330).” For a major debate issue such as the *Filioque*, “the Latins could not accept as invalid an addition to the creed used for centuries by the West, without appearing as heretics (Geanakoplos,1955: 332).” Whereas for “the Greek mentality, the criterion of ecclesiastical truth, apart from Holy Scripture, was **solely** adherence to the doctrines and traditions established by the first seven ecumenical councils (Geanakoplos,1955: 330).”

Furthermore, with regards to the problem of *Papal Primacy*, Geanakoplos (1955) maintains that the pope as “Vicar of Christ and successor to Peter, first of the Apostles,” had power to sanction development in ritual and even dogma. The Greeks, on the other hand, holding firm to pentarchic theory “insisted on the essential quality of the bishops of Constantinople and Rome (Geanakoplos,1955: 330).” This fact that the Eastern Church has no Pope, according to Huston Smith (1991), is the epitome of the difference between the two churches. The Greeks are adamant that “God’s truth is disclosed through the consensus of Christians generally which is ‘focused’ by the ecclesiastical councils (Smith, 1991: 353).” Smith (1991) explains that Eastern belief is such that “when the Bishops of the entire Church are assembled in Ecumenical Council, their collective judgment establishes God’s truth.”

At the council, the papal throne of Pope Eugene IV was elevated above all others including that of the Emperor John VIII Palaeologos; the seat, however, of the Patriarch of Constantinople was placed below both that of the Pope and Latin & Byzantine Emperors. I conclude the paper with the response of the Greek mentality to the seating arrangement at the council: On first entrance, “Patriarch Joseph refused to salute the Pope in the Western manner by genuflecting and kissing his foot; He said,

“Whence has the Pope this right? Show me from what source he derives this privilege and where it is written? The Pope claims that he is the successor of St. Peter. But if he is the successor of Peter, then we too are the successors of the rest of the Apostles. Did they kiss the foot of St. Peter?” **“This is an innovation and I will not follow it;** if the Pope wants a brotherly embrace in

accordance with ancient ecclesiastical custom, I will be happy to embrace him (Geanakoplos,1955).”

The schism lasted until 1965.

4.7.3 Arius & The Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed

“In the year 325 the Emperor Constantine convened the council of Nicaea to decide whether Christ was of the same substance as God or only of like substance; the decision was made that Christ was “of one substance with the Father.”²⁶⁴ The council produced the Nicene Creed, which, according to John Alfred Faulkner (1910), is “the first deliberately formed creed in history:”²⁶⁵

“We believe in the one God Almighty Father, the creator of all things visible and invisible, and in the one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the one only begotten from the Father, and of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things exist which are in heaven and which are on earth, who for us men and our salvation came down and became flesh, took on the form of a man, suffered, and on the third day rose from the dead, and went up into heaven, and comes again to judge the living and the dead, and in the Holy Spirit.”

Faulkner (1910), in ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, postulates that “the Nicene Council and Creed saved the Christian religion.” He makes this assertion based on the fact that “at that council two conceptions of Christianity were in a death struggle—one that a created mediator was given to help men; the other that the eternal Son of God himself was incarnated to redeem men and to unite men and God.”²⁶⁶ Faulkner (1910) regards the “formulation and enforcement of the creed of Nicaea as necessary in order to preserve Christianity in the world.”²⁶⁷ A point to which Archibald Robertson (1953) writing about sixteen hundred years later, in *The Origins of Christianity* (1953), adds that “the dogmas contained in the Nicene Creed were enforced on Europe during the Middle Ages. A public denial of its truth is a risk which few politicians, whatever their private beliefs, are

²⁶⁴ Huston Smith (1991) *The World’s Religions*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991, p. 341

²⁶⁵ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, *The American Journal of Theology*, 14: 1, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 47-61, pp. 56, 57

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p.61

²⁶⁷ Francis A. Christie (1910) ‘The Significance of the Nicene Creed: A Reply to Professor Faulkner’, *The American Journal of Theology*, 14: 2, The University of Chicago Press, (pp. 266-271), p. 266

prepared to take, and the defence of Christian civilization is used along with other pretexts to justify present-day warmongering.”²⁶⁸ Indeed the Creed did end with the anathema:

*“Those who say, there was when he was not, or, He was begotten out of another substance or essence, or, The Son of God (is created or) is changeable or alterable—these the Catholic (and apostolic) church anathematizes.”*²⁶⁹

The doubtful, criticizing politicians of the twentieth century, who Robertson (1953) may have alluded to in his work, can be seen as longer-term successors to the fate of Arius—“the heretic”. The anathema that concluded the Nicene Creed was deliberately meant for him and those with Arian’ thought; as possessor of one of the ‘two views that were in mortal conflict at the conference—the Athanasian and the Arian’—his was defeated.²⁷⁰ **What really was the view of Arius that so necessitated an anathema to conclude the council proceedings?** Furthermore, **how important was an anti-Arian creed in saving Christianity?** The paper proceeds thus to shed light on these intrigues.

Arius

The Son: Homoiousios

Maurice Wiles (1996), in *Archetypal Heresy. Arianism Through the Centuries*, makes the point that “the primary feature of Arianism is that **the status of the Son is not one of essential Godhead**—neither eternal nor immutable, he has no exact vision, understanding or knowledge of the Father; he is a creature brought into being from nothing.”²⁷¹ According to William P. Haugaard (1960), “Arius insisted that whatever divinity Christ might possess, it was not the full Godhead of the Unoriginate.”²⁷² In support of their claim, Haugaard (1960) informs us that the Arians cited:

273

²⁶⁸ Archibald Robertson (1953) *The Origins of Christianity*, London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1953, p. 63

²⁶⁹ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, pp. 56, 57

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48

²⁷¹ Maurice Wiles (1996) *Archetypal Heresy. Arianism Through the Centuries*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 7

²⁷² William P. Haugaard (1960) ‘Arius: Twice a Heretic? Arius and the Human Soul of Jesus Christ’, *Church History* 29: 3, (pp. 251-263), p. 254

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

- 1) **Texts which mention gifts received by Jesus Christ from the father.**
- 2) **Texts which describe Jesus as troubled in spirit.**
- 3) **Texts which state the growth of Jesus and depict him seeking information from others.**
- 4) **Texts which demonstrate his ignorance of the Day of Judgment; his abandonment on the cross; his acquisition of glory; and his prayers to the Father.**

Quoting from the writings of Adolf Harnack (1898) (*History of Dogma* Vol. IV, London: Speirs and Millar), Haugaard (1960) states that “Arianism consists, thus, of ‘two entirely disparate parts:’²⁷⁴

1. **The cosmological necessity of the Logos to mediate between the inexpressible remote Deity and the world.**
2. **An Adoptionism in which Christ gradually becomes God and develops “in moral unity of feeling with God, progresses and attains his perfection by divine grace.”**

Logos

Faulkner (1910) makes the point that “Arius held that Christ had no eternal pre-existence with God, who alone is eternal, unchangeable. God is separated by an infinite chasm from man. God cannot create the world directly, but only through an agent, the *Logos*, who is himself created for the purpose of creating the world.”²⁷⁵ Faulkner (1910) continues,

“But this creature is before all time and before the world. The Logos is higher than all creatures, is the middle being between God and the world, the image of the Father, his executor, and the creator of the world. He might in a secondary sense be called ‘God,’ but he is a creature, made out of nothing by the will of the Father, and is changeable and imperfect.”²⁷⁶

According to Harry A. Wolfson (1958) in ‘Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism’ “Arius sees the Logos as an instrument by which God created the world;” and in this vein he “described **two stages of existence—two Wisdoms or Logoi:**”²⁷⁷ “The Logos or Wisdom of **the first stage** is described as ‘**a property coexistent with God;**’ whilst the Logos or

²⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 254, 255

²⁷⁵ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, pp. 48,49

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Harry A. Wolfson (1958) ‘Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12, pp. 3; 5-28

Wisdom in **the second stage** is described primarily as ‘**the Son**’ and is said to be **named ‘Wisdom and Logos’ only because of its participation in the Wisdom or the Logos of the first stage.**”²⁷⁸

Furthermore, Wolfson (1958) writes that “the Logos himself, because he is through whom all things were made, is described by Arius as ‘under-worker and assistant’ or as “**co-worker or under-worker.**”²⁷⁹

Philosophical Dualism

Barnard (1970) in ‘The Antecedents of Arius’, postulates that “Arius was an eclectic thinker who took elements from earlier thinkers and pushed them to extremes in working out his system; his idea of God strongly resembles that of Athenagoras.”²⁸⁰ Athenagoras emphasized the ‘**Oneness**’ of **God** and, according to Barnard, “this emphasis is also found in Arius.”²⁸¹ Barnard (1970) believes that this idea of Athenagoras can be defined as **Philosophical Dualism**—where God is viewed as being “radically distinguished from the world and matter.”²⁸²

“Now when we make a distinction between matter and God and show that matter is one being while God is quite other completely separated from the former—for the divine is unbegotten and invisible, beheld only by mind and thought, while matter is subject to generation and corruption. God is separated from matter by a vast gulf and alone reigns in his unique Oneness.”²⁸³

“We hold God to be one, unbegotten, eternal, invisible, suffering nothing, comprehended by none, circumscribed by none, apprehended by mind and reasoning alone, girt about with light and beauty and spirit and power indescribable, Creator of all things by his Word, their embellisher and master.”²⁸⁴

‘Central to the philosophy of Arianism,’ hence, as C. A. Patrides (1964) puts it, ‘is an uncompromising monotheism, best summed up in Arius’ conception of God as “alone ingenerate, alone everlasting, alone unbegun, alone true, alone having immortality, alone wise, alone good, alone sovereign.”²⁸⁵ Patrides (1964) makes the point that ‘starting from this premise, Arius went

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p.16

²⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 16, 17

²⁸⁰ L. W. Barnard (1970) ‘The Antecedents of Arius’, *Vigiliae Christianae* 24: 3, Brill, pp. 172-188

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 174

²⁸² Ibid., p. 187

²⁸³ Ibid., pp. 173, 174

²⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 174

²⁸⁵ C. A. Patrides (1964) ‘Milton and Arianism’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 25: 3, pp. 423-429

on to affirm that God is utterly incommunicable and absolutely isolated from His entire creation, whether physical or spiritual, animate or inanimate.”²⁸⁶ Patrides (1964) continues,

“Before the advent of time, Arius further maintained, God created the Son, of Whom it must be properly said that “there was once when He was not.” The Son was produced not of the Father’s divine nature, but out of nothing. The two Persons, in fact, are utterly alien and dissimilar in substance or essence and totally unequal in every respect, even glory. The Son may indeed on occasion be termed “God,” but this is merely a nominal concession; in reality, He is not “true God.”²⁸⁷

Arius’ Trinity thus, according to Patrides (1964), consisted of a:

1. **“Father** both invisible and ineffable to the Son;
2. **Son** whom is like all rational creatures, mutable and indeed peccable—keeping in mind however the idea that Christ assumed a body without a soul;
3. **Holy Spirit** which does not partake of the Son’s substance, and still less of the Father’s.”²⁸⁸

Returning to the question that I posed earlier in the paper—*“What really was the view of Arius that so necessitated an anathema to conclude the council proceedings?”*—I quote a response from Wolfson, who states that ‘it is not his adoption of the twofold-stage theory, nor his use of the term “created” by the side of the term “generated,” nor his use of the expression “the Word as yet was not,” nor his description of the Logos as “underworker” or “assistant” or “co-worker,” but rather what he meant by all this, that has brought about his anathematization.’²⁸⁹ **The fact that Arius insisted that ‘the Logos came into existence “out of things that were not” is what roused opposition,’**²⁹⁰ The Nicene Creed insists that **‘the generation was out of the essence of God—that the pre-existent Christ was “begotten of the Father”; “of the substance of the Father”; “begotten not made.”’**²⁹¹ Arius believed, however, that **‘the Logos was not generated from the essence of God, but was created ex nihilo;’** hence, Wolfson points out, **‘as a corollary of this view, the Son or Logos was no longer God; he was only divine.’**²⁹²

The Motive Of Arius

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 424

²⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 424, 425

²⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 426, 427

²⁸⁹ Harry A. Wolfson (1958) ‘Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism’, p. 18

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid.

Wolfson believes that Arius was attempting to preserve two principles which he thought were fundamental to Christianity: ²⁹³

1. The principle of the unity of God in its absolute sense.

‘Proclaimed in the Old Testament in the verse, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;” and reaffirmed by Jesus, when he said that it constituted the first of all commandments. (Mark 12:19)—this unity of God was to exclude any kind of logical or metaphysical divisibility, such as divisibility into two substances, even when inseparable from each other, or divisibility into matter and form, or divisibility into genus and species. The unity of God meant absolute unity.’

2. The (Old Testament & post-biblical) concept of God as an artisan and not as a begetter—God is a creator of things, not a begetter of things.

Athanasius & The Council

Faulkner (1910) believes that “in the year 325 the church was in no mood to accept Arianism.”²⁹⁴ At the council, “an Arian creed was instantly rejected—it was not allowed to be read in its entirety, it was snatched out of the Arian’s hand, and torn to pieces.”²⁹⁵ A strong Athanasian Creed consequently “won the assent of nearly every member of a council in which only two men stood by Arius and refused to sign.”²⁹⁶

The Son: *Homousios*

In contrast to Arianism, Faulkner (1910) makes the point that, “the Athanasian held that in some mysterious sense Jesus Christ existed as Son or Logos eternally with the Father, and that he came forth for our salvation at the incarnation.”²⁹⁷ In addition to this fundamental fact, Faulkner (1910) highlights six factors which contributed to the success of the Athanasian Creed: ²⁹⁸

1) “The Arians had a cosmology but they had no soteriology (no philosophy of salvation).

²⁹³ Ibid., pp. 18, 19

²⁹⁴ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, p. 54

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 57

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 48

²⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 57-59

2) **Athanasius' theology was built on the background of Calvary. It was interwoven with his soteriology."**

"It is necessary to religion," he argued, "that an actual real connection or union should exist between man and God, between heaven and earth. There is no help for us in a God who is over us in a vast universe, without taking hold of us. If we should express the faith truly we must declare the actual incarnation of God, that Jesus Christ really went out from the highest Lord of the heavens. Only then can we be confident in our redemption." ²⁹⁹

3) **The Athanasians had men of positive influence** present at the council itself. ³⁰⁰

4) **The Athanasian party possessed the apostolic seats**—Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome.

³⁰¹

5) **The convincing of the assembly that the older and sounder tradition was on that side.**

"Eusebius, in an epistle to his church in Caesarea, said that Athanasius "did well to assent" to the idea that Christ was one in essence with the Father because "we were aware that even among the ancients some learned and illustrious bishops and writers have used the term 'one in essence' in their theological writings concerning the Father and the Son." ³⁰²

6) **Emperor Constantine advised all present to agree to the Creed."**

Conclusion

How important was an anti-Arian creed in saving Christianity?

Smith (1991) makes the point that "among the many possible meanings the word '**God**' carries, none is more important than '**that to which one gives oneself without reservation.**'"³⁰³ The Athanasians at the council, and quite possibly the majority of the members of the Council probably believed that for a religion to be successful or to be long-lived it requires a central-deity that is powerful enough to be reposed in by the masses without reservation. Smith (1991) adds that "in its own world, where the dividing line between the human and the Divine was perforated to the point that even emperors routinely claimed to be divine, a struggling sect's claim that its founder was divine raised few eyebrows—what else is new would have been the common retort."³⁰⁴ The

²⁹⁹ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) 'The First Great Christian Creed', p.58

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p., 59

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Huston Smith, *The World's Religions*, p. 341

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

Arian Jesus, though divine, was too akin in concept to the idea of God in Gnostic or Hindu settings for instance, and quite possibly for the religious adherents etc. of those groups and persons in the wider society, the opportunity to quip “**what else is new**” would have been easier to come by than the fully-divine Athanasian Christ. According to Faulkner (1910), “**it was the feeling of Athanasius that the very existence of Christianity as a religion of redemption was bound up with the acknowledgement of Christ as truly divine;**”³⁰⁵ Continuing, Faulkner (1910) writes that “**if the first step is a letting-down of Jesus’ divinity the second step is bound to be an explaining away of his atonement; hence it was this tremendous religious interest—‘for us men and our salvation’—which made the Athanasians victorious at Nicaea.**”³⁰⁶ Furthermore, according to Harnack (1961), “it was only from the certainty that the divinity manifest in Jesus Christ possessed the nature of deity (unity of being) and was on this account alone in a position to raise us to a divine life that faith was to receive its strength, life its law, and theology its direction.”

307

Robertson (1954) informs us bluntly that “when we turn from the creeds to the New Testament, on which they are said to be based, we are confronted by the writings of disputed dates and contradictory tendencies.”³⁰⁸ Furthermore, Robertson (1954) states that, “of the dogmas of the traditional Creed, that of the deity and incarnation of Jesus Christ is found only in the Fourth Gospel, the latest of the four to be accepted as authoritative; **the first three Gospels call Jesus the Christ, the Son of Man, even the Son of God, but never God.**”³⁰⁹ And even though “there were Christians of note who rejected the Fourth Gospel even in the third century,”³¹⁰ Christianity, whether espousing the idea of either an Arian or Athanasian Christ, was destined to survive as a religious pathway, due to the fact that from conception it “(the Messianic idea) was the projection of the hopes of a revolutionary movement which had taken root among simple and ignorant people, attaching itself to leader after leader and able to survive the death of many such.”³¹¹ Robertson

³⁰⁵ John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, p.58

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Adolf Harnack (1961) *The History of Dogma*, quoted in John Alfred Faulkner (1910) ‘The First Great Christian Creed’, p.58

³⁰⁸ Archibald Robertson (1954) *The Origins of Christianity*, New York: International Publishers, p. 63

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 65

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 65

³¹¹ Ibid., pp. 95, 96

(1954) advises that “we need not wonder that it survived the death of Jesus;” and to this I add in conclusion: we need not wonder why Christianity is still well-adhered to in current times.

4.8 Islam

Introduction

Biography

“Mohammed was the posthumous son of a certain Abdulla, a member of the Arabian tribe called the Quraish, to which was entrusted the guardianship of the national sanctuary at Mecca, with its sacred megaliths. The Quraish were not pastoral nomads, but an urban community, engaged in commerce and handicrafts. Mohammed was born about A.D. 570, but of his early youth and manhood little is known that can be called history (Bouquet, 1967: 270).” According to Bouquet (1967), “we learn that he was brought up by his uncle Abu Talib, and from the age of twelve onwards accompanied him on journeys into Syria. Up to the age of forty he lived in Mecca, a comparatively obscure individual, engaged in trade and business, and conducting the affairs of a certain wealthy widow, Khadija, whom after a time he married. She bore him six children (Bouquet, 1967: 270).”

Anderson (1950), with regards to the biography of Muhammad, states that he was “born about 570 A.D. at Mecca, Muhammad was the posthumous son of an almost unknown father, and his mother died when he was only six. He was brought up by his grandfather and then by his uncle Abu Talib, worthy members of the family of Hashim and the tribe of Quraysh. Little is known with any certainty of his early life (Anderson, 1950: 53-4).” “The traditions tell us that his mother gave him to a Bedouin woman to suckle and that he passed his earliest years among nomad tents; that when twelve years old he went with his uncle to Syria, where he met a Christian monk named Bahira; and that he was later employed by a rich widow named Khadija, who put him in charge of her caravans and finally rewarded his fidelity with her hand in marriage (Anderson, 1950: 53-4).” “The marriage seems to have been surprisingly successful, for Muhammad took no second wife until Khadija’s death some twenty-five years later. A number of children were born to them, but only one daughter Fatima, survived (Anderson, 1950: 53-4).”

Muhammad’s Influences

“There is evidence in a Tradition that Muhammad suffered in early life from fits. Be that as it may, the adult Muhammad showed signs of a markedly religious disposition. He would retire to caves for seclusion and meditation; he frequently practiced fasting; and he was prone to dreams (Anderson, 1950: 54).” “Profoundly dissatisfied with the polytheism and crude superstitions of his native Mecca, he appears to have become passionately convinced of the existence and transcendence of one true God. There can be no manner of doubt, that at some period of his life he absorbed much teaching from Talmudic sources and had contact with some form of Christianity; and it seems overwhelmingly probable that his early adoption of monotheism can be traced to one or both of these influences. Mecca, too, was a considerable market for foreign merchants, while the number of Ethiopic loan-words in the Qur’an is also significant (Anderson, 1950: 54).”

Arabia

Mecca

“The *Mecca* of the seventh century where Muhammad was born and where he taught is seen today as no mean city. It was a thriving commercial town at the juncture of caravan routes crossing the Arabian desert (Lewis, 1966: 86-87).” “It was also a religious centre renowned throughout Arabia. The *Ka’bah* sanctuary in the heart of the city attracted many pilgrims. It reflected the complex pattern of Arabian paganism, a paganism best described as a nature worship verging on polytheism, a worship which included the veneration of sacred stones, natural phenomena, and particular places associated with divine powers or agencies (Lewis, 1966: 86-87).” “The pilgrims who came to the *Ka’bah* from all parts of tribal Arabia might have special regard for the famous *Black Stone* set in one of the walls of the central building. This was an object of immense veneration. But there were many other sacred stones in the *Ka’bah* as also the shrines of the three goddesses of Mecca, *Al-Izzat*, the goddess of power, *Manat*, the goddess of fate, and *Allat*, the goddess of fertility. There was also some recognition of a Supreme Being named *Allah*, the creator of Heaven and earth. It was this naming of *Allah* which gave Muhammad his starting point (Lewis, 1966: 86-87). “

Pre-Muhammad: A Time of Ignorance in Arabia (the desert)

“The world into which Muhammad was born is described by subsequent Muslims in a single word: ignorant. Life under the conditions of the desert had never been serene. People felt almost no

obligation to anyone outside their tribes (Smith, 1991: 223).” “Scarcity of material goods made brigandage a regional institution and the proof of virility. Drunken orgies were commonplace, and the gaming impulse uncontrolled. The prevailing religion watched from the sidelines, providing no check (Smith, 1991: 223).” “Best described as an *animistic polytheism*, it peopled the sandy wastes with beastly sprites called jinn or demons. Fantastic personifications of desert terrors, they inspired neither exalted sentiments nor moral restraint. Conditions generally could hardly have been better calculated to produce a smoldering undercurrent, which erupted in sudden affrays and blood feuds, some of which extended for half a century. The times called for a deliverer (Smith, 1991: 223).”

Allah

“Muhammad therefore had no need to argue for the existence of Allah and he did not do so. What he emphasized was the reverence due to Allah. The worship of Allah, he argued, should be the only worship. All other worship was idolatrous. Nor was he the first to maintain this view. Besides mentioning Jews and Christians, ‘the people of the Book’, the Qur’an refers to an obscure, pre-islamic tradition of monotheism represented by the so-called Hanifs, who believed that Allah was the only God and apparently shared Muhammad’s conviction that *Allah* and none else was the *Lord of the Ka’bah* (Lewis, 1966: 87).”

“Neither the name Allah nor the belief in one Supreme deity was entirely new to Arabia. Nevertheless, the Hanifs seemed to be comparatively few and far between, the Jews and Christians were aliens, and the great majority of Muhammad’s fellow countrymen in Mecca and beyond Mecca were pagans in practice and belief (Lewis, 1966: 87).” “The *Ka’bah* in Muhammad’s day was the citadel of a confused idolatry. While, therefore, Muhammad could appeal to a vague belief in one supreme God named *Allah*, he was something more than a reformer. He was not merely calling upon men to be logical and put into practice what they already believed (Lewis, 1966: 87).” “To all intents and purposes, the faith he preached meant a parting of the ways. It challenged the whole complex of pagan belief wedded to tribal custom which found expression in the Ka’bah rituals as well as the privilege and profits of the Meccan guardians of the shrine (Lewis, 1966: 87).” “The measure of the man, therefore, must be taken in the light of the measure of the light of

the force of this challenge, the resistance it was bound to arouse, and Muhammad's achievement despite this resistance (Lewis, 1966: 87)."

According to Anderson (1950), "God of orthodox Islam maintains the whole creation in being, moment by moment, by a continual miracle: even the impression of choice present to the mind of men is His creation. He is the source of both good and evil; His will is supreme, untrammelled by any laws or principles, whatever they may be; whom He will He forgives, and whom He will He punishes (Anderson, 1950: 79)." "His nature and qualities are chiefly revealed in His ninety-nine 'most beautiful Names', frequently repeated by the pious as they finger their Rosaries. In popular Islam the rosary is regularly used 1. As an aid to prayer 2. As a talisman to indicate whether some proposed action is propitious (istikhara), and 3. As a magical agency for healing (Anderson, 1950: 79)."

Smith (1991) makes the point that "as the other historical religions, everything in Islam centers on its religious Ultimate, God. God is immaterial and therefore invisible. For the Arabs this cast no doubt on his reality, for they never succumbed to the temptation to regard only the visible as the real; one of the tributes the Koran pays to Muhammad is that 'he did not begrudge the Unseen (Smith, 1991: 236)."

Fear of Allah

"Power of this order—it is infinite, for God is omnipotent—inspires fear, and it is fair to say that Muslims fear Allah. This, however, is not cringing fear in the face of a capricious tyrant. Rather, Muslims argue, it is the only appropriate emotion when human beings face up to the magnitude of the consequences that follow from being on the right or wrong side of an uncompromisingly moral universe; one, moreover, in which beliefs and convictions are decisive because they generate actions (Smith, 1991: 237)."

The Call & The Qu'ran

"The blend of admiration, respect and affection that the Muslim feels for Muhammad is an impressive fact of history. They see him as a man who experienced life in exceptional range. Not only was he a shepherd, merchant, hermit, exile, soldier, lawmaker, prophet-priest-king, and mystic; in all of these roles he was exemplary (Smith, 1991: 231)." "All this in the mind of Muslims

as they add to the mention of his name the benediction, ‘Blessings and peace be upon him.’ Even so, they never mistake him for the earthly center of their faith. That place is reserved for the bible of Islam, the Koran (Smith, 1991: 231).”

According to Bouquet (1967), “while wandering in the desert Mohammed heard a voice which said: ‘You are the chosen one, proclaim the Name of the Lord (Bouquet, 1967: 270).” Bouquet (1967) continues, “one night he had a kind of seizure in a cave, where a voice called to him, ‘Iqra’, ‘recite’. Then came the vision of Sura I, written in fiery letters on a cloth, spread out. Mohammed, when it vanished, stepped out into the open, and then believed that he heard the voice of the archangel Gabriel, and saw his two great eyes. He fled in terror, and seemed incapable of shaking off the visual hallucination of these eyes, until he was embraced in bed by Khadija, when the paroxysm ceased (Bouquet, 1967: 270-1).” “Shortly after this night in the cave, the second sura was revealed to him in the wilderness, and from that time onwards he came to expect that he would receive at intervals these strange intuitional ‘openings’ (Bouquet, 1967: 271).” Bouquet (1967) informs us that after some time, “his feverish attack came to an end and he resumed his ordinary dress and mode of life as a merchant of Mecca, though he continued to talk to a few of his associates (including his wife) about certain ideas which had come to him, chiefly with regard to (Bouquet, 1967: 271)”:

1. The unity and absolute sovereignty of Deity,
2. The fear of hell,
3. The iniquity of idolatry,
4. The reward of the faithful in *Paradise*.

Anderson (1950) makes the point that “it was at the age of about forty that the first revelation of the Qur’an (the ‘Reading’ or ‘Recitation’) is said to have come to him. It is recorded that a voice three times bade him ‘Read (or recite) in the name of thy Lord’. Thereafter no more revelations came for some two years, then suddenly, when passing through a period of spiritual depression, he is said to have seen a vision of the angel Gabriel which sent him home trembling to Khadija for comfort and covering, only to hear the Voice saying, ‘O thou enwrapped in thy mantle, arise and warn...(Anderson, 1950: 54-5)’.” “The earliest Suras of the Qur’an reveal a marked simplicity of concept. They urge the moral response of man created by Allah, foretell the Day of Judgment, and graphically depict the tortures of the damned and the seductive delights of a very sensual Paradise.

Increasingly, however, the unity and transcendence of the one true God becomes the overriding theme (Anderson, 1950: 55).” “It seems, however, that Muhammad himself was at first doubtful of the source of these revelations, fearing that he was possessed by one of the Jinn, or sprites, as was commonly believed to be the case with Arab poets and soothsayers. But Khadija and others reassured him, and he soon began to propound divine revelations with increasing frequency (Anderson, 1950: 55).” Smith (1991) stresses that “the Koran did not introduce the Arab to the unseen world of spirit, nor even to monotheism, since certain sensitive souls known as hanifs had already moved to that position before Muhammad. Its innovation was to remove idols from the religious scene and focus the divine in a single invisible God for everyone. It is in this sense that the indelible contribution of Islam to Arabic religion was monotheism (Smith, 1991: 236).”

Divine Books

Islam teaches that the “prophets brought some hundred and four divine books. A hundred of these, of minor length, were vouchsafed to Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Abraham, but are now lost; while of the four major Scriptures the Law was ‘sent down’ to Moses, the Psalms to David, the Gospel to Jesus, and the Qur’an to Muhammad. All originally corresponded to a heavenly prototype and all comprised the same central message (Anderson, 1950: 81).”

Iman, Islam & Ihsan

“It is possible to observe Islam in its three principal dimensions, *iman*, *islam* and *ihsan*. *Islam* is the dimension of devotional practice and specifically described with the five pillars; *iman* is the dimension of faith and theology comprising five essentials of belief (belief in God, Angels, Apostles, the Last Day, and in Divine Destiny); and *ihsan* is the dimension of spiritual excellence, which reaches its ultimate level in attaining an immediate experience of God. Hence, the religion conveyed in the Qur’an and taught by Prophet Muhammad is about possessing *right belief*, *right practice* and *right spiritual focus* (Ghiloni, 2015: 184-5).”

The Seal of the Prophets

“Following Ishmael’s line in Arabia, we come in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. to Muhammad, the prophet through whom Islam reached its definitive form, Muslims believe. There

had been authentic prophets of God before him, but he was their culmination; hence he is called ‘The Seal of the Prophets.’ No valid prophets will follow him (Smith, 1991: 223).”

The Five Pillars (Al-Arkan) of Islam

“A Muslim must believe in God, and His Angels, and his Books, and His Messengers, and in the Last Day, and his Angels, and His Books, and his Messengers, and in the Last Day (Anderson, 1950: 79).” Most importantly, as Hylton (2002) informs us, a Muslim must adhere to the Five Pillars of Islam as prescribed by Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets:

1. All Muslims must pray five times daily, at dawn, mid-day, mid-afternoon, sunset, and before retiring to sleep, with their face turned in the direction of Mecca (towards the East).
2. All adult male Muslims are expected to attend prayers at the Mosque.
3. All Muslims are required to perform zakat, i.e., the giving of alms to the poor and needy.
4. During the holy month of Ramadan, all Muslims, except pregnant women and the sick, are obliged to fast.
5. Every Muslim is expected, unless it is impossible, to make a pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca at least once in his or her lifetime (Hylton, 2002; 245-6).”

Heaven/Paradise

“The last day (the resurrection and the judgment) figures prominently in Muslim thought. The day and hour is a secret to all, but there are to be twenty-five signs of its approach. All men will then be raised; the books kept by the recording angels will be opened; and God as judge will weigh each man’s deeds in the balances (Anderson, 1950: 81).” “Some will be admitted to Paradise, where they will recline on soft couches quaffing cups of wine handed to them by the *Huris*, or maidens of Paradise, of whom each man may marry as many as he pleases: others will be consigned to the torments of Hell (Anderson, 1950: 81).”

Angels

“A belief in Angels is absolutely enjoined on the Muslim: he who denies them is an infidel. Orthodox Islam acknowledges four Archangels (Anderson, 1950: 79-80):

1. Jibril or Gabriel, the messenger of revelation

2. Mika'il or Michael, the guardian of the Jews
3. Israfil, the summoner to resurrection
4. Izra'il, the messenger of death (Anderson, 1950: 79-80)."

"Orthodox Islam acknowledges an indefinite number of ordinary angels. They are created of light, do not eat or drink or propagate their species, and are characterized by absolute obedience to the will of God (Anderson, 1950: 79-80)." "Two Recording Angels attend on every man: the one on his right records his good deeds, and the one on his left his sins. There are also two angels called *Munkar* and *Nabir*, who visit every newly buried corpse in the grave. Making the corpse sit up, these angels examine it in the faith: if the replies are satisfactory it is allowed to sleep in peace, but if it does not confess the Apostle they beat it severely, some say until the day of resurrection. Animals are said to hear its cries, although mortals cannot (Anderson, 1950: 79-80)."

Jinn

"Between angels and men there are also a multitude of creatures called *jinn*. They are created of smokeless flame, eat and drink, propagate their species, and are capable of both belief and unbelief. Muhammad was sent to them as well as to men, and good jinn now perform all the religious duties of Muslims (Anderson, 1950: 80)." "The disbelieving *jinn*—who are often called *afarit/ifrit*, *shayatin/shaytan*, etc were turned out of the first three heavens when *Jesus* was born, and out of the last four when Muhammad was born: they still, however, sometimes go eavesdropping to the lowest heaven, whence they occasionally pass on information to human magicians; but are chased away by the angels with shooting stars if observed. The *qarina* or *shaytan* is believed to dog every mortal's footsteps and tempt to evil (Anderson, 1950: 80)." According to Anderson (1950), "the jinn often appear as animals, reptiles, etc., or possessed by one of them—as all poets and soothsayers were held to be; and in such circumstances relief is frequently sought in exorcism, particularly by the incense, dance and sacrifice of the *Zar* ritual. The devil (*iblis* or *al shaytan*) is normally regarded as a fallen angel, or jinn, who disobeyed God's command to the angels to do homage to Adam. He is now the arch-tempter of mankind and the chief of the *shaytans*, *ifrits*, and all evil *jinn* (Anderson, 1950: 79-80)."

Conclusion

“Starting in 610 CE with only Prophet Muhammad, Islam has now reached a population of more than 1.6 billion people spread across 57 countries as majority and the rest of the world as significant minorities (Ghiloni, 2015: 183).”

4.9 Rastafarianism

Introduction

“The year, 1930; the month, November. In the remote kingdom of Ethiopia, then known as Abyssinia, kings, princes and heads of state from all over the Western world assemble to witness the elevation of *Prince Tafari Makonnen* as the new emperor of Ethiopia, *Haile Selassie I*. ‘Haile Selassie’ means ‘power of the Trinity’ (Chevannes, 1998: 9).” “This event was for Africans, both on the continent and in the Americas, a significant event. Not only is Ethiopia one of the earliest countries to have adopted Christianity, but a part of the Ethiopian nobility, including the *Makonnens*, had at least since the Middle Ages claimed descent from *King Solomon of Judah* and the *Queen of Sheba* (Chevannes, 1998: 9).” “Self-consciously, therefore, the new Emperor in appropriating as his title ‘King of Kings’, ‘Lord of Lords’, ‘Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah’, was reaffirming the ancient roots of Ethiopian civilization and its independent place in *Judeo-Christian* traditions (Chevannes, 1998: 9).” Chevannes (1998) makes the point that “in Jamaica the coronation occasioned the rise of a new religion, the Rastafari—from Ras, the Ethiopian for ‘prince’ and Tafari. Haile Selassie’s appellations were thought to have biblical references. The ‘Conquering Lion of Judah’ was imagery used by the prophet Isaiah, to refer to the messiah, as also was the description ‘King of Kings’ and ‘Lord of Lords’ by the apocalyptic visionary in the Book of Revelation (Chevannes, 1998: 9-10).”

Marcus Garvey

John The Baptist

“Tenets of Rastafari were made possible by a most important development in the history of Blacks in the Western hemisphere, the rise of Marcus Garvey as a great visionary and teacher. Although his back-to-Africa scheme failed, his Shipping Line and other economic enterprises foundered and his years of involvement in Jamaican politics came to naught, Garvey positively and permanently laid the foundation for a transformation in the thinking of Blacks through his tireless teachings on

their past achievements and future possibilities and through the respect he won by the magnitude and daring of his schemes (Chevannes, 1998: 29).” “He identified ‘race’ as the defining characteristic of a Black nationality, thereby giving a sense of common identity to millions in the new and old worlds, and a new sense of power. The early Rastafari, leaders and followers alike, all considered themselves Garveyites. To them he was John the Baptist, leading them to the one to come who would be greater than himself (Chevannes, 1998: 29).’

Jesus Christ (The Coming Of)

“That some Jamaicans could regard this man as the promised messiah, as Jesus Christ in fact, is insufficiently explained by the biblical references. It required other pre-determining factors. Among the most important of these was the impact of the work and ideas of Marcus Garvey in the form of a heightened Black, pan-African consciousness (Chevannes, 1998: 10).” “Garvey had succeeded in galvanizing millions of Black people in the United States, the Caribbean, Central America and Africa into his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). His newspaper, *The Negro World*, which enjoyed a very wide readership, served not only as the main vehicle for his ideas, but also as a means of educating Blacks about their African past and thus of correcting racial prejudices and stereotypes of inferiority, some of which had been internalized (Chevannes, 1998: 10).”

Afrocentricity

“The Afrocentricity of Garveyism would of itself have made his followers in Jamaica turn their attention to the momentous event in Ethiopia. But, regarding Garvey as a prophet, they claimed that he had indeed prophesied about it when he had told the people to ‘look to Africa for the crowning of a king to know that your redemption is nigh’(Chevannes, 1998: 10-11).” “Looking to Africa, looking also to the Bible, a few followers of Garvey concluded that Ras Tafari must be the messiah come back to redeem his people. The titles he bore, the homage paid by the White world through the heads and representatives of state, the antiquity of Ethiopia and its mention in both Old and New Testaments of the Bible, the Solomonic claim—like so many rivulets building up into a mighty river, all swept them away with the powerful conviction that Ras Tafari was none other than Jesus Christ (Chevannes, 1998: 10-11).”

Rastafari Origins

Nicholas (1996) makes the point that “a primary objective of Rastafari is to revitalize and natural styles and forms of life among black Jamaicans (Nicholas,1996: 28).” However, in nature, Chevannes (1998) stresses the point that “Rastafari is an acephalous movement. There are groups, quasi-groups and individuals, who while sharing the core beliefs, nevertheless remain separate and independent. Consequently, the fortune of the movement as a whole is not tied to the fate of any particular leader or group, and it has been able not merely to survive the ups and downs of its relations with the society over the years, but also to influence it (Chevannes, 1998: 31).”

Founders

“Three men are credited with being the first to begin preaching that Ras Tafari, or Haile Selassie, was God, having arrived at this conclusion independently of one another: Leonard Howell, Archibald Dunkley and Joseph Hibbert. These three, plus Robert Hinds, whose first days in the new faith were spent as an associate of Howell, were the main architects of the Rastafari movement for the first twenty years. Stretching Garvey’s Back-to-Africa Programme, they all saw redemption as ‘Repatriation’, the return of all Africans to Africa (Chevannes, 1998: 11).”

Independent Teachers

“From the very inception there were several men all preaching the same thing but doing so independently of one another. There was one exception: Robert Hinds first began preaching with Howell but soon went his separate way. Thus Howell, Hinds, Hibbert, Archibald Dunkley, Brother Napier, Brother Powell and a few others were preaching Rastafari on the highways and byways of the city and countryside, and organizing the converted into churches which they gave the name ‘King of Kings’, all at the same time, and without reference to any one as leader, even *primus inter pares* (Chevannes, 1998: 31-2).”

Haile Selassie Speech 1964

“The Rasta focus on Haile Selassie can be easily understood if one studies a speech he made in 1964 which contributes to the Rastafarian world-view. Entitled ‘*What Life Has Taught Me on the Question of Racial Discrimination*,’ the address states (Nicholas,1996: 33):

That until the philosophy which holds one race superior, and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned; that until there are no longer first- and second-class citizens of any nation; that until the color of a man's skin is of no more significance than the color of his eyes; that until the basic human rights are guaranteed to all without regard to race; that until that day the dream of everlasting peace and world citizenship and the rule of international morality will remain in but a fleeting illusion to be pursued but never attained; and until the ignoble and unhappy regimes that hold our brothers in Angola, in Mozambique and in South Africa in subhuman bondage have been toppled and destroyed; until bigotry and prejudice and malicious and inhuman self-interest have been replaced by understanding and tolerance and goodwill; until all Africans stand and speak as free human beings, equal in the eyes of the Almighty; until that day, the African continent shall not know peace. We Africans will fight, if necessary, and we know that we shall win, as we are confident in the victory of good over evil (Nicholas, 1996: 33)."

Rastafari Beliefs

Tenet One

"According to Rasta belief, the spirit of Rastafari is universal and eternal—Haile Selassie's death in 1975 has not diminished their faith in his divinity (Nicholas, 1996: 33)."

"The most important belief of the Rastafari is that Haile Selassie, the late Emperor of Ethiopia is God. This alone was enough for the general public to identify them by *Ras* (the Ethiopian for Prince,) and *Tafari* (The Emperor's personal name), although they originally called themselves the 'King of Kings people' (Chevannes, 1998: 26-8)."

Tenet Two

"A second major tenet of the Rastafari is the conclusion that God is Black. It derives from the racial characteristic of Haile Selassie himself, and gives to Black people a sense of being one with, of sharing in an attribute of God. Black man is thereby elevated in status. Two things follow: First is the rejection of the hegemonic system of values whereby 'if you are White, that's right; and if you are Black, you stay back'. Second, the alienation between God and Man need no longer exist, because there is a profound way in which God shares a part of his being with those who were once

poor. Man, that is Black Man, is also divine (Chevannes, 1998: 28).’ Chevannes (1998) clarifies the aforementioned point when he informs us that, Rastafari does NOT adopt ‘the mythology that makes Whiteness an attribute of the devil;’ instead the Way ‘allows for the possibility of salvation for Whites, based on inward acknowledgement and rejection of the evil of White Slave-society (Chevannes, 1998: 29).”

Tenet Three

“A third major tenet is that ‘Rastafari resist speaking of becoming converted. One does not become converted, one begins to *manifest* Rastafari, thereby implying the evolution or unfolding of something already within (Chevannes, 1998: 28).”

Man Free

“Except among three very specific sects—the influential *Twelve Tribes of Israel*, the *Bobo* led by Prince Emmanuel Edwards and the remnants of *Claudius Henry’s church*—the Rastafarian refuses to surrender his freedom and autonomy by joining any organization, Rastafari or not. A common explanation of the brethren is, ‘wa jain kyan brok!’ (what is joined together can be broken). But in truth it is their ethical value of complete freedom from the force of unnatural rules which informs this resistance (Chevannes, 1998: 32).” “If one acts, it should be out of inner conviction, rather than out of the need for outward conformity. ‘Man free’ is another common expression, which means ‘Do as you feel justified to do’.” As a result, “there have been repeated attempts in the past to forge a united body, to no avail (Chevannes, 1998: 32).”

Repatriation

“Rastafari transposes Africa from the bottom to the top politically, aesthetically, and culturally. Rastas want black people to be their natural selves without fear, to have dignity, to know who they are and where they came from. Rastas would say that the forced transportation, or ‘smuggling,’ of millions of blacks from the continent of Africa to be slaves on the islands and mainland of the New World provoked an imbalance that has not yet been set straight (Nicholas, 1996:28).” “The results of the direct use of techniques by slave traders and masters to disconnect the slaves from their social and cultural heritages are seen in the breakup of families, the destruction of shared rituals—the dance, the drums—the outlawing of traditional African religious

ceremonies, and the separation from each other of slaves speaking the same language. These experiences, however long ago they occurred, have taken a severe toll of the health of the black psyche, and the Rastas advocate present usage of direct and specific techniques to reclaim a lost and marvelous heritage (Nicholas, 1996:28).” “These techniques permeate Rastafarian reality. Through their diet, dress, hair style, speech, language, and political and spiritual beliefs, most Rastas believe they are redressing a wrong, reversing a pattern, reclaiming the past (Nicholas, 1996:28).”

According to Chevannes (1998), “Repatriation is a theological, not a political, concept. There are three aspects to it (Chevannes,1998: 30):

1. Repatriation is a divine not a human act. It is different from migration, Rastafari insist. Many Rastafari believe that while governments could bring about migration, only JAH could bring about Repatriation. In gratitude for their generous support of Ethiopia in the anti-fascist war, Emperor Haile Selassie made available through the Ethiopian World Federation several hundred acres of land for Blacks who wish to settle there.
2. Repatriation means the return of Africans not to any country of Africa, nor even to West Africa, but specifically to Ethiopia. When Rastafari sing and speak of Zion, Ethiopia is meant. Zion is where God dwells.
3. Repatriation also includes the concept of justice, by which Europeans would give up the lands they have seized from the Amerindians and return to Europe. As a theological concept Repatriation serves as a critique of White racism against Africans and other ‘coloured races’ and a call for a new order of justice in the world (Chevannes,1998: 30).”

Word-Sound & Power

“*Wordsound* is power.’ In Genesis, Jah created life, the heavens, and the earth simply by saying so, by speaking words. According to one Rasta, ‘By speaking, Rasta recreates the universe, striving for compassion, humility, love, and harmony (Nicholas, 1996: 38,39).”

I & I

“For the Rastafarians, the most powerful and significant letter of the alphabet is also a word and a number: ‘I.’ I is part of His Imperial Majesty’s title—Haile Selassie I. It is the last letter in Rastafari. (Nicholas, 1996: 38,39).” “I’ is so important that a Rasta will never say ‘I went home,’ but would say instead ‘I and I went home,’ to include the presence and divinity of the Almighty with himself every time he speaks. ‘I and I’ also includes bredren, who also say ‘I and I.’ In this simple way, through language, Rastafari is a community of people all the time. ‘I and I’ reminds the Rastafarian of his own obligation to live right and at the same time, it praises the Almighty (Nicholas, 1996: 38,39).” Furthermore, Nicholas (1996) makes the point that “I’ is also used in combination with other words to glorify them: by substituting ‘I’ for a syllable, the Rastas create their own meanings. The word ‘power’ becomes ‘I-ower,’ ‘thunder’ ‘I-under,’ ‘total’ or ‘vital’ ‘I-tal,’ and so on. The word ‘irie’ (pronounced eye-ree), is an ultimate positive. ‘All is irie’ means nothing could be better; the ‘irie heights’ or ‘ites,’ in Rasta talk, are tantamount to heaven or a strongly uplifting spiritual feeling (Nicholas, 1996: 39).”

Ritual Instruments

“A bank of drums and a rhythm, called nyabinghi, peculiar only to Rastafari. The drums are of three types: a huge *bass* struck with the padded end of a stick; the *funde*, which establishes the rhythm; and the *repeater*, which pronounces the variations. The latter two are played with the hands and fingers. These drums are central to all Rastafari gatherings (Chevannes, 1998: 34).”

Magic

“To ‘dance nyabinghi’ against an identified oppressor was, Rastafari believed, to invoke in a sure and compelling way the power of God to destroy him. Rastafari threaten to dance nyabinghi for public personalities they consider oppressive to Rastafari. The dreadlocks are also believed to have magical properties, not to be used to harm the owner, but to be able to wreak destruction on Babylon (Chevannes, 1998: 34).”

Divination

“Rastafari believe in the power of the Bible to expose evil.” Sometimes Rastafari use “the Holy book to distinguish the guilty from the innocent (Chevannes, 1998: 35).”

Herbs

“Rastafari place heavy stress on nature as a gift of the Father ‘for the healing of the nation’. This attitude applies not only to ganja but to all of nature. Thus, with almost the force of doctrine, they reject artificial things pertaining to life, preferring the natural: herbal medicinal cures, herbal teas, natural spices and flavouring such as pepper and coconut milk (Chevannes, 1998: 35).”

Visions

“Rastafari distinguish dreams from *visions*. Dreams are the images and fantasies which appear in sleep. Visions are dreams of particular significance, usually rich in symbolic meaning, and regarded as encoded messages from the world of spirits. Although not believing in spirits other than the Father, the Rastafari nevertheless believe in His communication through visions (Chevannes, 1998: 35).”

Immortality

“As a result of not believing he will die, the Rastafari will have nothing to do with death: he attends no funerals, takes no part in their arrangement, no matter how close the deceased, does not mourn or even discuss the event (Chevannes, 1998: 37).”

Good Works

For the Rastafari, “to do good means to allow the God in you to perform his work, just as to do evil means allowing satan to perform his (Chevannes, 1998: 38).”

Chapter 5 Discussion Part 1

Hard Border Religion—Judaism: A Case-Study Analysis of Contemporary Horizontal Inequality

What is a Jew? An Analysis of the Concept of Soul Citizenship

"What is it that makes a Jew a Jew, and a non-Jew a non-Jew?"³¹²

In my humble opinion, Cohen's (1999) question is an excellent one. There are millions of people around the world who are currently exposed to the Old Testament and have subconsciously identified themselves with the God of the Torah. In fact, generations of humans in the entire world have made contact with the Old Testament via Colonial Christian missionaries. A central thesis/understanding of this section is that the morals and values espoused in the Old Testament not only have universal appeal; but also have had profound universal effects on the sub-conscious SELF-DETERMINED identity of millions of people for centuries. Furthermore, this self-determined identity makes people (groups of people worldwide) susceptible to the belief that they are "soul citizens" of the State of Israel. ***"Soul citizenship"*** asserts the right of individuals and groups to match their self-defined identities with existing states."³¹³ Specifically, ***Soul Citizenship*** made many diverse individuals and groups worldwide susceptible to the belief that they could hearken to the call of the Law of Return.

***"The Law of Return*, legislated in 1950, provides for the unrestricted immigration of Jews to Israel and is the legal expression of Israel as a Jewish state."³¹⁴**

The law was framed as a 'natural right' of every Jew in the world. Eligibility for the right of return is both restrictive and expansive. It is constrained by the religious law of *halakha* that defines a Jew as a person born of a Jewish mother or a convert to Judaism. However the *Law of Return* also applies to the

³¹² Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 2

³¹³ Sara Helman, Fran Markowitz, Dafna Shir-Vertesh (2003) 'Soul Citizenship: The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel', *American Anthropologist* 105: 2, (pp. 302-312), p. 302

³¹⁴ Fran Markowitz (1998) 'Israel as Africa, Africa as Israel: "Divine Geography" in the Personal Narratives and Community Identity of the Black Hebrew Israelites', p. 309

children and grandchildren of Jews, any Jew's spouse, and the spouses of the children and grandchildren of Jews.”³¹⁵

Furthermore, with respect to *The Nationality Law*, Markowitz (1998) informs us that it “**denies citizenship to children born in Israel to parents who are not Israeli citizens.**” Furthermore, “neither the Reform and Conservative movements have contested the double necessity of 1) **converting to Judaism** and 2) **relinquishing other religions if one is to be considered a citizen.**”

³¹⁶ This section reflects on the varying experiences of three groups of ‘Soul Citizens’ who emigrated to Israel: 1. The Bene Israel (Indian Jews) 2. The Beta Israel (Ethiopian Jews) and 3. The African Hebrew Israelite Community (AHIC)/ The Black Hebrews (African-American Jews). Prior to their emigration, all three groups lived in isolation from the wider Jewish world; did not have an extensive command of/need for the use of Hebrew; did not subscribe to Jewish Oral Law (The Talmud); subscribed fully to the Torah for self-identification basis--based on their acceptance and love for the Lord of Abraham and Moses etc.; and traced their lineage from the Biblical Israelites. Despite their God-given right to Soul Citizenship, these three groups were extremely disappointed with their actual reception of the wider ‘Jewish’ community upon emigration to Israel. The Bene Israel were accepted as Jews even prior to their arrival in Israel; whilst a majority of the Beta Israel pioneer immigrants were subjected to a process of ritual conversion. “**Even according to the most liberal currents within Judaism, the Black Hebrews,**” however, “**did not meet the criteria for inclusion as Jews.**” ³¹⁷ They exist today as a ‘tolerated illegal presence’ in Israel, many of whom were born in Israel. All three groups, have not received the equality that they envisioned by the ‘Call of Return’ socio-economically; and all three groups have had to ‘turn inward’ and embrace their ethnic/sub-ethnic identities in order to survive in Israel; and all three groups have had to suffer the ‘soul shock’ that the equality that they expected to emanate from the idea of *Soul*--a ‘Jewish’ soul--only existed in theory but not necessarily (to the disappointment of the soul) in the practice of men and law in Israel.

The section, at first delves into the mission of ascertaining a definition and understanding of the ‘Jew’ in antiquity. It then proceeds to historically delineate the actual experiences of the

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Fran Markowitz (1998) ‘Israel as Africa, Africa as Israel: "Divine Geography" in the Personal Narratives and Community Identity of the Black Hebrew Israelites’, p. 309

³¹⁷ Ibid.

three afore-mentioned groups in an attempt to expose the dialectical nature of Soul Citizenship in Israel.

The Jew In Antiquity

According to Cohen (1999), “there was no single or simple definition of a Jew in antiquity.”³¹⁸ He posits that “the Greek *Ioudaios*, Latin *Iudaeus*, and the Hebrew *Yehudi* are almost always translated as 'Jew', but in all occurrences of the term before the end of the second century B.C.E. this translation is wrong, because before that point these words always and everywhere mean ‘Judaean’, and not ‘Jew.’” Cohen (1999) continues,

"Judaean' is an ethnic-geographic term: A Judaean is a member of an association of those who hailed originally from the ethnic homeland; a person might be a Judaean even if he or she had not been born in Judaea or even set foot there. Like all other ethnic-geographic groups, Judaeans have their own language, customs, institutions, dress, cuisine, religion, and so on, but no one of these characteristics is necessarily more important than any other in defining a 'Judaean.' Texts describing Judaeans may deal with their religion or way of life, but this fact does not change the primary meaning of the concept 'Judaean.'"³¹⁹

In the latter part of the second century B.C.E., the word ‘Judaean’ is supplemented by a ‘religious’ or ‘cultural’ meaning: "Jew." What is a "Jew"? In chapter three of Cohen's (1999) publication³²⁰ entitled '*Ioudaios, Iudaeus, Judaean, Jew*', he posits that “in contrast to the word ‘Judaean’ the word ‘Jew’ (at least in English) is a religious term: a Jew is someone who venerates the God of the Judaeans, the God whose temple is in Jerusalem (the capital of Judaea).”³²¹ Cohen (1999) summarizes that “‘Jew,’ then, denotes culture, way of life, or ‘religion,’ not ethnic or geographic origin; and in the Hellenistic period, virtually all ‘Judaeans’ will have been Jews--all of the members of the Judaean ethnos will have worshipped the God whose temple is in Jerusalem.”³²²

Martin Goodman (2007) in *Rome and Jerusalem. The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*, with reference to the question, "Who is a Jew?" makes the point that it is a question that was difficult

³¹⁸ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 3

³¹⁹ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley: University of California Press, Ibid., pp. 104, 105

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid., p. 105

³²² Ibid.

to answer in the early Roman Empire.³²³ Goodman (2007) believes that “the relationship between Rome and Jerusalem was complicated by the fact that a Roman could be Jewish and a Jew could be Roman.”³²⁴ Goodman (2007) supports his point using the example of the 'Apostle Paul, a Jew from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia, whom in the late fifties C.E. could ensure (at least temporarily) his physical inviolability when arrested in Jerusalem by letting slip his status as a Roman citizen.’³²⁵ “Jewish identity” states Goodman (2007), “was both religious and ethnic, and the root cause of uncertainty was, for Jews as for Romans, the liberal extension of this to outsiders.”³²⁶ Cohen (1999) purports that “the universalism of Hellenism”³²⁷ is largely to blame for the confusion. He explains to the reader that 'one of the well-known hallmarks of classical Judaism is its prohibition of sexual union, whether marital or non-marital between Jews and non-Jews.’³²⁸ However, Cohen (1999) continues, during the Hellenistic period, with the “philological shift from ‘Judaean’ to ‘Jew’, a major development in Judaism occurred, with the emergence of the possibility that **a gentile could be enfranchised as a citizen in the household of Israel, either politically or religiously.**”³²⁹

“Under the influence of Hellenistic culture and politics the Hasmoneans refashioned the Judaean state into a league that would allow the incorporation of non-Judaeans. At more or less the same time, the progression from ethnicity to religion had advanced to the point where individual Gentiles who came to believe in the God of the Jews were accepted as Jews themselves. These two models of conversion: 1) Political enfranchisement and 2) Religious change are the products of the Hasmonean period.”³³⁰

Cohen (1993) states that “the Romans, and the Greeks before them, noted that foreign peoples often looked different from themselves: they were particularly tall or short, hairy or smooth, dark

³²³ Martin Goodman (2007) *Rome and Jerusalem. The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*, New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, p. 168

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 163

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 168

³²⁷ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, p. 4

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, p. 3

³³⁰ Ibid., pp. 3, 4

or fair.”³³¹ “The Romans,” Cohen continues, “also noted peculiar styles of hair and beard; But not a single ancient author comments on the distinctive size, looks, or coiffure of the Jews.”³³² Cohen (1993) makes the stern point that “Jews were not distinctive either by their looks or their clothing.” He insists that “Jews of Antioch looked Antiochene, Jews of Alexandria look Alexandrian, Jews of Ephesus looked Ephesian, and the Jews of Rome looked like just another exotic group from the east.”³³³ Furthermore, Cohen (1993) states that the Jews “spoke Greek like everyone else and were not distinctive because of their occupations.” In support of his postulation, Cohen (1993) summarizes that “Jews and Gentiles in antiquity were corporeally, visually, linguistically, and socially indistinguishable--**Romans could pass as Jews without difficulty and even the sages of the rabbinic academy could not discern Romans in their midst.**”³³⁴

Having highlighted the question of the "Jew" in antiquity, the section now proceeds to discuss the experiences of three groups of "Soul Citizens" of Israel. The Indian and Ethiopian Jews are discussed under the heading "Chosen;" whilst the African-American "Jews" are considered under the heading "Not-Chosen."

"CHOSEN"

The Bene & Beta Israel

“The Bene Israel and Beta Israel came to Israel with a cultural personality and a core of group symbols and value orientations, often religiously defined.”³³⁵ “In fact,” Abbink (2002) argues that, “more than the immigrant authorities and others in Israel were prepared to admit, the immigrants aimed at retaining these symbols and values relating to their Jewish faith and culture as they saw they had kept them, as a minority in a non-Jewish environment. They expected their

³³¹ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1993) *Diasporas in Antiquity*, Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, p. 4

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid., pp. 10, 11

³³⁵ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', *Anthropos* 97: 1, (pp. 3-19) p.5

values and identity to be ‘fulfilled’ in the context of a Jewish society where they were no longer a Jewish minority.”³³⁶

The Bene Israel—“Indian Jews”

“The Bene Israel are said to have descended either from refugees from ancient Israel (Samaria), after the Assyrian conquest (8th century BCE), or from a later migrant group.”³³⁷ Abbink (2002) explains that “part of these Israelite ancestors arrived near the Konkan coast (western India near Bombay) where they were shipwrecked in 175 BCE. Only seven men and seven women survived and they were received by the local Hindus.”³³⁸ The Bene Israel were then “more or less incorporated in the local caste system, although they were strictly speaking ‘out of caste,’ because not of Hindu belief.”³³⁹ Abbink (2002) states that “they had an irrefutable claim to Israelite-descent yet they never called themselves “Yehudi” (Jews).” “Until the 18th century,” Abbink (2002) continues,

“they lived as “Toranic” Jews in isolation from other Jewish communities and unfamiliar with the Oral Law (Talmud).”³⁴⁰ They knew no Hebrew except the important *Shema* prayer (a statement of belief), had no strong religious or other leaders, and did not celebrate all the common Jewish religious festivals. They thus ‘deviated’ from mainstream Judaism in belief, ritual, and cultural orientation.”³⁴¹

The Beta Israel/Falashas—“Ethiopian Jews”

The Beta Israel (Falashas) also claim descent from the Israelites of the Bible. Abbink (2002) informs us that “various stories were presented to outsiders:

1. They claim descent from the firstborn Israelites who accompanied Menelik--the legendary son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba--back to Ethiopia in the 9th century BCE, or

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', *Anthropos* 97: 1, (pp. 3-19) p.5

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p.6

³⁴¹ Ibid.

2. Descent from Israelites coming from Egypt--either after the Exodus, or after the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BCE, or
3. Descent from the lost tribe of Dan.”³⁴²

Abbink (2002) tells us that “the Falashas lived in the north-western highlands of Ethiopia and were reputed to have their own kingdom in the Middle Ages. They demonstrated no demonstrable contacts with other Jews until the mid-nineteenth century; and thought that they were **"the only Israelites left in the world."**³⁴³

“Since the 14th century, they fought a long series of wars against the emerging Christian empire. They were finally vanquished and reduced to a state of servitude. They lost their land rights and were forced to take up despised crafts like smithing and pottery, and later building and weaving. They came to form an involuntary occupational caste living in small villages, working as tenant-peasants and practising a Toranic Judaism, based on the Orit or Pentateuch (in the Ge'ez translation). They knew no Hebrew and no Jewish Oral Law and viewed their Judaism as an ancient pre-Talmudic, original form.”³⁴⁴

The Law of Return & The Bene & Beta Israel

“The Bene Israel arrived in Israel in the 1950's and 1960's whilst the Beta Israel arrived in the 1980's and 1990's.”³⁴⁵

Bene Israel

Abbink (2002) posits that “for the Bene Israel, the decision to migrate came in 1947, when India approached independence. **Before 1947 the idea of emigration to Israel was stimulated by Zionist emissaries who were active in India,** but only two Bene Israel had actually emigrated.”³⁴⁶ Abbink makes the point that “a spontaneous identification with Israel emerged among the Bene Israel in 1948 when the State of Israel was proclaimed. After that year, a steady flow of emigration started.”³⁴⁷ Abbink states that although “**the Bene Israel were treated as fully**

³⁴² John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', *Anthropos* 97: 1, (pp. 3-19), p. 6

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5

³⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 8

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 8

Jewish by the immigration emissaries of the Jewish Agency active in India in the 1930's, when arriving after 1948, they had no easy time in getting themselves accepted.” He states that,

“their first problems were more related to their difficult social and economic integration than with their religious status as such. Considered to be relatively less educated they had problems in receiving decent housing and respected jobs, as most immigrants of non-Western origins at that time. Later in the 1950s and 1960s, they received housing in the new "development towns.”³⁴⁸

“In 1951 three hundred and forty (340) Indian Jews demanded repatriation to India due to severe disappointment caused by both material and immaterial reasons.”³⁴⁹

Abbink (2002) explains that “the Bene Israel felt they were misunderstood and that they suffered from prejudice and discrimination by ‘white Israelis,’ all of this contrary to their expectations of Jewish equality in Israel.”³⁵⁰ Abbink (2002) informs us that,

*“the complaint that cropped up again and again in all their conversations was: ‘they don’t esteem us; that is, the people that count in this country do not esteem us at all. The white skinned Israelis from Europe do not love our Bene Israel. But in India we were loved and esteemed.’”*³⁵¹

“Soon afterward,” continues Abbink (2002) “the same group when in India applied again to return to Israel: India had changed too much for them to be able to re-adapt to it.”

“They felt excluded, had no money, could not find jobs in the new conditions of Independent India. After the return of virtually all the protesters in 1954 their social and other problems were certainly not resolved. They remained a low-prestige ‘Oriental group,’ increasingly withdrawn from the mainstream of Israeli society.”³⁵²

Beta Israel

The Beta Israel, Abbink (2002) posits, had a “religiously couched though abstract and stylized ideal of ultimate return to the land of the fathers—‘Yerusalem’ (not Israel) expressed in many prayers and stories.”³⁵³ “This ideal of a return,” Abbink believes, “was undoubtedly also

³⁴⁸ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', p. 9

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 10

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid., p. 8

stimulated by the attitude of their Orthodox Christian neighbors that the Falashas were ‘exiled, landless strangers,’ remnants of a vanquished people.”³⁵⁴ However, Abbink (2002) makes the point that **“in the early policy reports of the Jewish Agency concerned with immigration policy, the Beta Israel were not deemed suited for massive immigration to Israel like the Indian Jews; and they were discouraged by the Israeli embassy in Ethiopia.”**³⁵⁵ The *Falashas* nevertheless went to Israel as “individual migrants--often male, unmarried, relatively educated youngsters, several of them sailors, who disembarked in the Israeli Red Sea port of Eilat.”³⁵⁶ Abbink (2002) states that **“in 1975 there were only some 160 Beta Israel in Israel, often having arrived on tourist visas or with a temporary residence permit, and then opting to stay in the country.”**³⁵⁷ “Massive emigration,” Abbink (2002) continues, “only began in the 1980's in a period of severe crisis in Ethiopia. **Nearly all Beta Israel left Ethiopia illegally by way of Sudan and for them there was no way back.**”³⁵⁸

Abbink (2002) is of the opinion that the emigration of the Ethiopian Jews was “due to a combination of deteriorating conditions in Ethiopia (disease, famine, drought, war, intergroup tensions, political crisis), prospects of improving their lives, and the desire to realize their vision of a ‘return’ to what they saw as their original homeland.”³⁵⁹ “About four-thousand (**4,000**) Beta Israel,” Abbink (2002) informs us, “are estimated to have died on the road due to exhaustion, armed robbery, disease, hunger, and thirst.”³⁶⁰

Conversion of The *Falashas*

Abbink (2002) states that “in 1973, the Sephardi Chief Rabbi Ovadiah Yossef had accorded them recognition as Jews, and ‘descendants of the lost tribe of dan’.” For ‘Jewish-legal reasons,’ however, Abbink (2002) explains “it was required that, once in Israel, the Falashas would undergo

³⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 8

³⁵⁵ John G. Abbink (2002) ‘Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the “Bene Israel” and “Beta Israel” Communities, 1950-2000’, p. 9

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 10

³⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 10, 11

³⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 9, 11

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 11

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 9

a token conversion: symbolic circumcision and immersion (tewilah) in a ritual bath (mikweh). This was to be done "in order to remove any doubts" on their origin and personal status."³⁶¹

"The rabbinic definition of conversion is exemplified by the rabbinic conversion ceremony: The point of the ceremony is to provide a means for society to verify that the formal requirements for conversion (as established by the rabbis) have been met. By accepting the people of Israel and the commandments of the Torah a Gentile could become a Jew (Israelite in rabbinic terminology). The precision that the rabbis introduced, or attempted to introduce, into the definition of conversion contrasted with the social reality of the preceding centuries, and perhaps of their own period as well."³⁶²

Abbink (2002) makes the point that **"many Falashas agreed to the conversion requirement** (though others refused) and in **1975** the then Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren subscribed to the view of Rabbi Yossef, hence **the Israeli government decided to recognize the Ethiopians as Jews under the Law of Return.**"³⁶³ "As the population of the Beta Israel community began to increase' however, Abbink (2002) explains that "the issue of conversion became more and more controversial' (The new immigrants were unaware of the 'conversion' criteria before their arrival); and "in the ensuing years, the conversion issue grew into a full-blown controversy, significantly affecting the relationship of the community with Israeli society. In **1985**, after a month-long demonstration of a large section of Beta Israel against the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem the demand for symbolic conversion was amended."³⁶⁴

"This issue was the first big public crisis marking the relations of the Beta Israel edah and the wider Israeli society. They saw the conversion demand as insulting their status and honour as a community. It was also seized upon by many Beta Israel to express their general dissatisfaction with Israeli society on other problems related to their social integration, housing, employment, perceived social discrimination, and education policy: there was a "cluster effect."³⁶⁵

"In **1996** there was a second public conflict with a huge and violent demonstration in Jerusalem when it became accidentally known in January of that year that the blood of Ethiopian Jews who donated to hospitals was routinely but secretly put aside and never used, for fear of AIDS contamination."³⁶⁶ Abbink (2002) argues that "the highly symbolic 'discarding of blood' was

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 9

³⁶² Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, p.4

³⁶³ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', p. 11

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 11, 12

interpreted as a physical rejection of the Ethiopian community as part of the body of the Jewish people.”³⁶⁷

The *Soul Citizenship* of the Bene & Beta Israel: A Summary

Abbink (2002) makes the point that 'both groups were stereotyped as marginal and different; and both communities can also be said to have gone through some similar phases of engagement with Israeli society.'³⁶⁸ As “ethnic communities,” Abbink (2002) postulates, “the Indians as well as the Ethiopians, despite the time lag between their immigration and integration paths, faced specific and in many respects similar problems not faced by other groups.”³⁶⁹

- “Immigration and culture shock as a ‘coloured’ minority immigrant group with low formal education or professional skills.
- Frustration of ideals of religious (Jewish) equality and of expectations of material improvement and advancement in society.
- Retroactive in-group orientation and cohesion to strengthen collective claims to equal status as Jews and citizens and in order to gain access to resources.
- An ambivalent, dual identification with, on the one hand Israel as a Jewish state, and with *edah* traditions as the core of personal and group "identity" on the other--this is an *inversion* of their experience of stigma. As a result sub-ethnic group identification has grown in importance for both communities, and is being reproduced among the younger generation.”³⁷⁰

In sum, the *Soul Citizenship* of Jews of Indian and Ethiopian heritage did not entail the same experience as that of the Ashkenazi Jew living in Israel per se. Abbink (2002) points out the important facts that:

1. **They were socially and economically disadvantaged groups with a very unfavourable starting position in Israeli society due to a low level of formal education, and a lack of economic and language skills.**³⁷¹

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 12

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', p. 12

³⁷¹ Ibid.

2. They were carriers of a historical-religious stigma, symbolized in the colour of their skin, which declared them to be of dubious Jewish descent.³⁷²

"NOT-CHOSEN"

The AHIC & Soul Citizenship

The African Hebrew Israelite Community (AHIC) “emerged from a pre-existing Black Hebraic group in Chicago at the height of the Civil-Rights movement. The men and women of the AHIC stressed that when striving for a ‘piece of the American pie’--civil rights, economic gain, and well-being--a long dormant, but never extinguished, corner of their souls was receptive to a different message: the voice of truth.”³⁷³ Markowitz (1998) states that their quest for truth began “in the soul; and this soul truth would eventually lead them out of the United States and beyond Eurocentric definitions of humanity that denied black people kinship in the family of man and refused them a place in history.”³⁷⁴ “Soul,” according to Shir-Vertesh et al (2003) is a “highly charged symbolic field, powerfully packed with overlapping double messages that index blacks' specific history of racialized oppression at the very moment that it conjures up transcendence of the oppression necessarily imposed by an embodied colour line.”³⁷⁵ Furthermore, “the confrontation of a traditional African worldview with the Judeo-Christian context has resulted in African Americans' belief that the human soul transcends material reality, the firm commitment to the triumph of the human spirit over adversity, and the certainty that there is a God on high.”³⁷⁶ Markowitz (1998) makes the point that “in the **mid-1960s**, such notions of soul were among the central motifs that mobilized African-American groups and individuals into collective action.”³⁷⁷

“U.S. blacks coupled the spiritual qualities of soulful transcendence with the secular concerns of citizenship to fight for civil rights and imagine alternatives to the unjust society in which they lived. During that time 'Martin Luther King Jr. overtly melded Christian universalistic notions of the human soul and redemptive suffering with the specifically

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Sara Helman et al (2003) 'Soul Citizenship: *The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel*', pp. 302, 303

³⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 303

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

black experiences of slavery and struggle to create a morally compelling, integrationist, colour-blind vision of U.S. society.”³⁷⁸

Israel As Africa

Markowitz (1998) makes the stern point that **“the Black Hebrews rejected the United States to soulfully embrace Israel.”**³⁷⁹

“Toward the **end of the 1960s**, the Black Hebrews rejected America-as-Babylon and began to trickle into Israel. After centuries of slavery followed by decades of being reduced to what many in the AHIC call ‘no-identity, no-grow Negroes’ they believe that finding the way back to their Hebrew origins is nothing short of miraculous. Inspired by the prophetic moment of the foundation of the State of Israel and its call for the ingathering of the exiles, these Black Hebrews ‘returned’ to the Holy Land to claim their place in the nation.”³⁸⁰

Conversion of The Black Hebrews

Helman et al (2003) posit that “the State of Israel rejected the assertions of the Black Hebrews, because, unlike the thousands of Jews from throughout the world who claimed rights and citizenship via the Law of Return, the Black Hebrews had been born and raised in Christian families and never converted to Judaism.”³⁸¹ “In **1978**, Joseph Burg, then Minister of the Interior, appointed a special commission to investigate the ideology and living conditions of the Hebrew Israelite Nation.”³⁸² Markowitz (1998) states that

“The Committee for the Examination of the Problem the ‘Black Hebrews Cult’ was headed by Jerusalem lawyer and Knesset member David Glass. He produced a report that blamed the “problem” on the “mishandling by the government of Israel during an entire decade”(Glass 1981:29) and noted that **the men and women of the Hebrew Israelite Community should have been denied entry into Israel, or deported soon after their arrival.** Glass concludes that because of the government's efforts not to appear racist in the eyes of the world, it adopted an ‘ostrich-like policy’ (1980:30) and never dealt directly with the roots of the problem of the Black Hebrews' presence in Israel.”³⁸³

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Sara Helman et al (2003) 'Soul Citizenship: *The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel*', p. 305

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

“The report's final recommendations were to allow the men and women of the Community to remain in Israel and grant them legal status in accordance with the 1952 Law of Entry.”³⁸⁴

Markowitz (1998) states that **“the recommendation was not implemented in full**, for as with the exception of giving the Dimona community the opportunity to move into a deteriorating apartment complex, the government continued its ‘ostrich-like policy.”³⁸⁵ Helman et al (2003) believe that “it is difficult to ascertain what Israeli officials hoped to achieve by these small tactics; maybe they believed that isolation in the Negev Desert in barely tolerable conditions, the Black Hebrews would abandon their efforts and return to the United States.”³⁸⁶

Shir Vertesh (2003) et al claim that “the Black Hebrews were astounded when their claims of belonging were challenged by officials of the state.”³⁸⁷ This astonishment was probably due to the fact that **“Ben Ammi and his community asserted that the Black Hebrews were the exclusive heirs to the legacy of Israel.”**³⁸⁸

“The Black Hebrews challenged conventional wisdom by providing proof positive that Israel belongs not to Asia but to Africa. They announce through their ceremonies and in books written by their leaders that the term “Middle East” is a capricious geographic label with no historical or Biblical connection to Israel. Instead they proclaim that Israel is an African land, originally populated by dark-skinned, African people.”³⁸⁹ The Black Hebrews believe that prior to the excavation of the Suez Canal (1859-69) the entire Arabian Peninsula and what has become known today as the “Middle East” were connected with the African continent. They posit that African people lived and moved freely throughout that region of the world.”³⁹⁰

“This narrative,” in Markowitz's (1998) opinion, “obviously clashed with that of the Jewish State, and after a few years of deliberations the Israeli government denied the Black Hebrews all rights and benefits, including citizenship.”³⁹¹ Hence, as Shir-Vertesh (2003) informs us, **“from 1973 until the late 1980's the Black Hebrews were left to fend for themselves in the**

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 306

³⁸⁹ Fran Markowitz (1998) 'Israel as Africa, Africa as Israel: "Divine Geography" in the Personal Narratives and Community Identity of the Black Hebrew Israelites', in Alexander Paul Hare (ed.) (1998) *The Hebrew Israelite Community*, Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, (pp. 193-204), p. 193

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 193

³⁹¹ Sara Helman et al (2003) *Soul Citizenship: The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel*, p. 305

peripheral desert towns of Dimona, Mitzpe Ramon, and Arad.” Yet **“despite their illegal status and a lack of social services, the community became a self-sufficient, self-governing ‘tolerated presence’ in Israel.”**³⁹² Helman (2003) posits that “hundreds of men and women from Chicago and other major U.S. cities were attracted to Israel, and over the years the Black Hebrew community in the Negev grew from a dozen few families to some two-thousand individuals, many of whom were born in Israel.”³⁹³

“Although the State of Israel rebuffed them, the Black Hebrews supported the state by, for example, entertaining Israeli army troops during the **1973** Yom Kippur War.”³⁹⁴ “However, by **1986** Israel's Minister of the Interior, Yitzhak Peretz, started to deport the Black Hebrews. Over fifty men were arrested, thirty-six of whom were deported.”³⁹⁵ “In **1989** the Minister of the Interior, Aryeh Deri, went to Dimona and met with Ben Ammi. They drew up an oral agreement of principles and in return, the Black Hebrews would be given legal recognition and the health, welfare, and education benefits that go along with it.”³⁹⁶ Helman et al (2003) make the point that “when it seemed to the AHIC that progress was being made with Israel policy makers, aggressively anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic slurs and autochthonous claims of preceding and superseding (white) Jews all but disappeared from their publications and press releases.”³⁹⁷

“Since the **early 1990's**, the Black Hebrews concede in their narrative that after the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem some Israelites fled northward into Europe, North Africa, and Asia, where they became the ancestors of today's Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews. Consequently every sort of Jew, no matter of what history or colour, holds a rightful place in present-day Israel.³⁹⁸ With these emendations the Black Hebrews, while still asserting their own special place in history, have adopted the Zionist discourse that urges the Jews to return to Israel but have interpreted "Jews" to mean everyone with a **soulful connection** to the land of Israel.”³⁹⁹

Despite the theory of Soul Citizenship being ‘practicalized’ by the actual presence of an African-American Hebrew community in Israel for decades, “following the Minister's visit, top government officials considered ‘ridiculous’ the idea of granting citizenship to the Black

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 307

³⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 305

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 306

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Sara Helman et al (2003) *Soul Citizenship: The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel*, p. 306

Hebrews.”⁴⁰⁰ Furthermore Shir-Vertesh et al (2003) highlight the fact that “during the summer of 2000, a high official in the ministry informally stated, “**There is no way that the Black Hebrews will get citizenship. They're not Jews. We don't know what to do with them, and the Americans don't know what to do with them.**”⁴⁰¹ Hence the reason, according to Markowitz (1998), why “at the end of **2001** (as twice in the **1990s**), when the Black Hebrews' temporary residence visas were due to expire, and though eagerly awaiting award of permanent residency (which they believed would put them on the citizenship track and officially re-unify land, language, culture, and soul)⁴⁰² they were utterly disappointed by the Israeli government.” “In January **2002**, the Minister of the Interior decided once again to extend their temporary residence status.”⁴⁰³

After careful analysis of the Black Hebrew situation, Helman et al conclude that 'the Black Hebrew Israelite Community, despite assertions of having the "**power to define**," remains susceptible to "**being made**" by the up-and-down cycle of expectations and despair in their quest for belonging to a state that matches their soul.'⁴⁰⁴

Conclusion

For certain groups of "Jews" the State of Israel has not administered the rights that are supposed to accompany *Soul Citizenship* in equal measure to that which has been imparted to the rest of the 'Jewish' population. Sergei Sedov (1984) argues that “Zionist leaders were convinced that the Jew was more industrious and abler than the average European, not to mention the **moribund** Asiatic and African.”⁴⁰⁵ If Sedov's (1984) argument is indeed truthful, then it is unsurprising that the Indian, Ethiopian and African-American Jew have had to face such ***soulful disappointment and embarrassment*** in Zion. When the fairer-skinned ('Oriental-looking') Indian Jews first arrived in the State of Israel, Abbink insists that “***there was ignorance among other Israelis of the backgrounds of the Bene Israel as there was no visible evidence that they were***

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 307

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 307, 308

⁴⁰² Ibid., p. 307

⁴⁰³ Sara Helman et al (2003) 'Soul Citizenship: The Black Hebrews and the State of Israel', p. 307

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 308

⁴⁰⁵ Sergei Sedov (1984) *Zionism. Counts on Terror*, Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, p.

‘deviant.’⁴⁰⁶ However, they too found themselves near to the bottom of the *Soul-Citizenship barrel*. Whilst they still have the luxury of moving back and forth to India (where the thousands of ‘Indian Jews’ still living in India undoubtedly face some sort of ‘out of caste’ caste problems), the Falashas 'kissed Ethiopia Goodbye' when they emigrated in the 1980's and 1990's. The Black Hebrews, most probably will never be desirous of a move back to America; however the longer they reside in Israel as ‘illegal aliens,’ the more chance of them siding with Sedov (1984) in the opinion that “Zionism is anti-Semitism in reverse.” Sedov (1984) argues that “the Zionist ideologues impute to other people the same characteristics anti-Semites attribute to the Jews.” “Both theories,” in Sedov's (1984) opinion, “Zionism and anti-Semitism, have a common source in racism.”⁴⁰⁷

With reference to the question, "What Really is a Jew?" Cohen (1999) states that “considering the facts that 1) during the nineteenth century, there was the emancipation and restructuring of European society which meant the collapse of the intellectual, political and social boundaries that traditionally had kept Jews ‘in’ and gentiles ‘out’ coupled with 2) the extraordinary growth of marriage in the United States, **makes answering the question in today's world extremely problematic to answer.**”⁴⁰⁸ Hertzberg (1961) provides us with Edmond Fleg's (an historical mystic) ‘answer’--with which I choose to conclude this section as a Universal Creed for Soul Citizens:

**"People ask me why I am a Jew. It is to you that I want to answer,
little unborn grandson...**

I am a Jew because the word of Israel is the oldest and newest.

I am a Jew because the promise of Israel is the universal promise.

I am a Jew because, for Israel, the world is not yet completed; men are completing it.

I am a Jew because above the nations and Israel, Israel places Man and his Unity.

⁴⁰⁶ John G. Abbink (2002) 'Ethnic Trajectories in Israel, Comparing the "Bene Israel" and "Beta Israel" Communities, 1950-2000', p. 8

⁴⁰⁷ Sergei Sedov (1984) *Zionism. Counts on Terror*, p. 22

⁴⁰⁸ Shaye J.D. Cohen (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, p. 4

I am a Jew because, above Man (image of the divine Unity) Israel places the divine Unity, and its divinity..."⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁹ Arthur Hertzberg (1961) *Judaism*. London: Prentice-Hall International, pp. 41, 42

Chapter 5 Discussion Part 2

A Critical Analysis of Some Commonalities Between a Cross-Section of the World's Religions

5.2.1 Introduction

In the words of Gundry (1966), “religion is much more than a view of the world; it is much more than a code of conduct; and it is much more than going to church or saying one's prayers; it is all these things together and embraces life as a whole.”⁴¹⁰ In an effort to pose an objective definition of religion, Gundry (1966) states that “it (religion) is 1) a way of thinking about the world, including man himself; 2) a way of behaving; 3) a way of feeling.” In other words, Gundry (1966) is making the point that “there is an intellectual, a moral and an experiential element in religions;”⁴¹¹ and with this concept as a base, he makes the further assertion that “it is almost impossible not to have a religion; for even a denial of the commonly accepted teachings of the great religious systems by an individual leaves him still with a way of looking at things, a way of behaving and a way of feeling.”⁴¹² To stress his point, Gundry (1966) claims blatantly that even “atheism itself is a kind of religion, though a negative one,” because “for the atheist the truth about the world is that there is no God; and he must, if he is intellectually honest, live accordingly.”⁴¹³ According to Clyde Kluckhohn, “the universality of religion suggests that it corresponds to some deep and probably inescapable human needs.”⁴¹⁴ “Wherever people are found,” Hopfe (1983) writes, “there too religion resides.”⁴¹⁵

“Occasionally religion is hard to find or pin down, but in the great metropolitan capitals and in the most primitive areas of the world, there are physical and cultural temples, pyramids, megaliths, and monuments that societies have raised at tremendous expense as an expression of their religion. Even

⁴¹⁰ D. W. Gundry (1966) *Religions. A Preliminary Historical and Theological Study*, London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1966, p. 7

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 5

⁴¹² Ibid., pp. 5, 7

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ William A. Lessa (1958) *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, p. ix

⁴¹⁵ Lewis M. Hopfe (1983) *Religions of the World*, NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., p. 4

when we explore the backwaters of time in prehistoric civilizations, we find altars, cave paintings, and special burials that point our religious nature. Indeed, there is no other phenomenon so pervasive, so consistent from society to society, as the search for gods (Hopfe, 1983: 4).”⁴¹⁶

For Hopfe (1983), the harsh reality, however, is that “major political conflicts have at their roots religious differences.”⁴¹⁷

“Catholic Christians war against Protestant Christians; Muslims war against Eastern Orthodox Christians; Hindus war against Muslims; Buddhists war with Christians; and Jews struggle with Muslims. Certainly, these conflicts have other dimensions, but the religious differences are imposing.”⁴¹⁸

Hopfe (1983) insists that “if we are to understand these conflicts fully, we must know that Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists have basic philosophical differences and 'if there is to be peace, these differences must be known and respected.’”⁴¹⁹ This section agrees with Hopfe's (1983) call for peace via an understanding of differences, however the idea espoused forthwith is such that the need to identify and respect religious commonalities is also (or even more) important. We are in the age of Globalisation (economically driven) which “enhances ethnic and religious fragmentation, exclusion and conflicts in contemporary societies but also entails tendencies towards more inclusive ethnic pluralism and religious-cultural citizenship.”⁴²⁰ This section is an example of such a tendency. 'Differences' plague modern society, and it is my opinion that health can be more efficaciously restored to society's social fabric when commonalities (religious or otherwise) are highlighted and respected. And although (despite its universality) religion is 'tremendously varied' in its real practice, “certain common features can nevertheless be detected.”⁴²¹

Lewis et al (1966) in *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues* (1966) state that “philosophy has played a very important part in the development of the great religions over a long period; In a developing culture, and in our present state of sophistication, philosophical thinking

⁴¹⁶ Lewis M. Hopfe (1983) *Religions of the World*, p.4

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., p.2

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Eliezer Ben-Rafael et al (eds) (2010) *World Religions and Multiculturalism. A Dialectic Relation*. Boston: Brill, p. 81

⁴²¹ D. W. Gundry (1966) *Religions. A Preliminary Historical and Theological Study*, p. 5

about religion becomes more than ever an integral part of the true life of religion and a condition of its effective renewal and perpetuation in a form we can wholeheartedly acknowledge and find adequate to the needs of our times at all levels.”⁴²²

“It will be evident to anyone who knows anything about Christianity how much this religion has owed, for example, to Greek philosophy. Nor can any informed person doubt the place of philosophy in Indian religions. Hinduism and Buddhism had extensive philosophical elements within them almost from their earliest known history, and there has rarely been a time when the philosophical element has not been prominent in those religions. Much that is maintained about God in Islam and the Islamic concept of revelation has depended much on the work of philosophers who also incidentally had a great deal to do with the course of thought and culture in Christendom. Chinese religions, in spite of their dominant concern with practice, have had as their background distinctly philosophical notions, like those involved in the concept of Tao, which have had a formative influence on the ways of life they commend.”⁴²³

Raimundo Panikkar (1984), in *The Metaphysical Challenge*⁴²⁴ states that “religions offer the locus of ultimate truth and point the way to it. They do not speak about it directly, but a certain primordial apprehension of reality stands at the basis of each religion.”⁴²⁵ Furthermore, Panikkar (1984) continues, “when these fundamental insights are spelled out in a universe of discourse, we discover divergent conceptions of reality.”⁴²⁶ “The intellectual side (our primordial apprehensions) of religions”, according to Panikkar (1984), is “where the problem of religious pluralism arises.”⁴²⁷ Religious conflict is thus rooted in each religion's *primordial apprehensions*.

This section now embarks on a concise intellectual discourse highlighting some quintessentially-common categories in religion that, I believe, have the potential to counteract religious conflict (and HI's in general) at root level--intellectually:

Horizontal Inequality (HI) is defined and discussed; then *Universal Religion*, as espoused by Paramhansa Yogananda (2008), is outlined with respects to its positive potential for reducing HI.

⁴²² H.D. Lewis et al (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, pp. 117, 118

⁴²³ H.D. Lewis et al (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, pp. 117, 118

⁴²⁴ See Leroy S. Rouner (ed.) (1984) *Religious Pluralism*, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 97

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 98

Then *Fundamentalism*, *Pluralism* and *Secularism* are discussed in relation to *Horizontal Inequality* and *Universalism*; Also, *Religious Pluralism* is argued to be the extant practical counteraction to the problem of *Horizontal Inequality*. The *Metaphysical Commonalities* between the world's religions is then highlighted in a two-pronged manner: the *Macro* (God) and the *Micro* (Spirit). The *Moral Commonality* between the world's religions is highlighted in conclusion.

5.2.2 SCIENTIFIC COMMONALITY

Universal Religion : A Scientific Commonality

Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) in *The Science of Religion* states that “there have been different religions in different ages. There have been heated controversy, long warfare, and much bloodshed over them.” Yogananda (2008) continues, “One religion has stood against another, one sect has fought with another. Not only is there a variety in religions, but there is also a wide diversity of sects and opinions within the same religion.”⁴²⁸ Identifying God as the universal element in all religions, Yogananda (2008) proceeds to ask the question, “When there is one God, why should there be so many religions?”⁴²⁹

“If by religion we understand only practices, particular tenets, dogmas, customs, and conventions, then there may be grounds for the existence of so many religions. But if religion means primarily God-consciousness, or the realization of God both within and without; and secondarily a body of beliefs, tenets, and dogmas, then strictly speaking, there is but one religion in the world for there is but one God. Everyone may follow the same religion, for there is but one—the universal element in all religions being one and the same (Yogananda, 2008: 6).”⁴³⁰

Yogananda (2008) insists that, “As God is one, necessary to all of us, so religion is one, necessary and universal.’ He continues, ‘We cannot possibly universalize particular customs and conventions. Only the element common to all religions may be universalized.”⁴³¹

“It is illogical to say that there are two religions, when there is but one God. Only the roads to it may differ in some respects at the beginning. There may be two denominations or sects, but there is only one religion. What we now call different religions should be known as different denominations or sects under that one universal religion. It is only the limited human point of view that overlooks

⁴²⁸ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, U.S.A: Self Realization Fellowship, p. 5

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. 6

⁴³¹ Ibid.

the underlying universal element in the so-called different religions of the world, and this overlooking has been the cause of many evils (Yogananda, 2008: 6-7).⁴³²

The Science of Religion has as its purpose the outlining of “what should be understood by religion, in order to know it as universally and pragmatically necessary.”⁴³³ Yogananda’s (2008) outline “gives a psychological definition of religion, not an objective definition based on dogmas or tenets; it seeks to make religion a question of our whole inward being and attitude, and not a mere observance of certain rules and precepts.”⁴³⁴ Yogananda (2008) believes that “in order to understand the real necessity of God and religion we must throw emphasis on the conception of that which is most relevant to the chief aim of our daily and hourly actions.”⁴³⁵ In this vein he highlights two fundamental concerns of universal religion:

1) The avoidance of pain and want.

2) The attainment of permanent bliss.

These two aims represent, in Yogananda’s (2008) opinion, “the common and universal end of all the actions of all the people of the world.”⁴³⁶ He asserts strongly that “in all our actions we obviously try to avoid pain and to gain pleasure.”⁴³⁷ He continues,

“We attempt to fulfil all our wants, because pain (at not having what we want) will thereby be removed and happiness be gained. The ultimate motive is really Bliss, which we feel inwardly; but happiness—or pleasure—has taken its place, through our misunderstanding, and pleasure has come to be regarded as the ultimate motive (Yogananda, 2008: 8-9).”⁴³⁸

Yogananda (2008) argues that “the avoidance of pain and want and the attainment of permanent bliss is the ultimate end, which all other ends merely subserve.”⁴³⁹ He states,

“No matter what we do—enter a business, earn money, seek friends, write books, acquire knowledge, rule kingdoms, donate millions, explore countries, look for fame, help the needy, become philanthropists, or embrace martyrdom—The fulfilment of some want; removal of some pain, physical or mental, from the slightest to the acutest; and the attainment of Bliss form our ultimate end. Millions may be the steps, myriad may be the intermediate acts and motives; but the

⁴³² Ibid., pp.6,7

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 3

⁴³⁴ Ibid., p. 7

⁴³⁵ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, U.S.A: Self Realization Fellowship, p. 3

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p. 8

⁴³⁷ Ibid., pp.8, 9

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., p. 8

ultimate motive is always the same—to attain permanent Bliss, even though it be through a long chain of actions (Yogananda, 2008: 9).⁴⁴⁰

Yogananda (2008) postulates that “what is universal and most necessary for man is religion to him; hence the actions that we must adopt for the permanent avoidance of pain and the realization of Bliss or God are called religious.”⁴⁴¹ He is of the firm belief that “if we understand religion in this way, then its universality becomes obvious.”⁴⁴² Furthermore, Yogananda (2008) insists that “it must be universally admitted that no one can deny that they want to avoid pain permanently and attain permanent Bliss—none can gainsay its truth; Man’s very existence is bound up with it.”⁴⁴³

Ideally, *Universal Religion* is the best means by which *Horizontal Inequality* can be negated in multi-religious societies as the borders between all religions are made fluid by the universal idea of One God. Any or every individual belonging to any or every religious group present in a heterogeneous society can have an equal religious footing with any other individual in the entire society because “in a certain sense every man in the world is religious, inasmuch as everyone is trying to get rid of want and pain, and to gain Bliss.”⁴⁴⁴ The harsh reality, however, is the fact that the staunch presence of religious fundamentalism renders Yogananda's (2008) prescription as unrealistic; each religion per day welcomes its share of religious fundamentalist converts--attracted by its particular primordial apprehension; or due to traditional/ancestral coercion. Furthermore, the globalized world has an atheist dimension (a rapidly growing secular section), which can only expand in numbers and in conviction as nations subscribe more and more to the Globalization mandate: "separate the state from the church/mosque/temple etc."

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., p.9

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., p. 11

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, U.S.A: Self Realization Fellowship, p.12

5.2.3 CIRCUMSTANTIAL COMMONALITY

Fundamentalism, Pluralism & Secularism

Fundamentalism (Exclusivism)

Gavin D'Costa (1996) in *The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions* defines religious fundamentalism (exclusivism) as “the type that holds that only one single revelation is true or one single religion is true and all other revelations or religions are false.”⁴⁴⁵ The fundamentalist is not concerned whatsoever with analysing the commonalities of the world's religions. From inception, the fundamentalist is of the staunch belief that religious Truth and the true revelation are within its own religious walls. Other religions and the religious adherents thereof are basically ‘wrong’ whilst the fundamentalist is ‘right.’ Fundamentalist borders are very well-defined (not fluid) hence its existence in a multi-religious society is often the cause and the maintainer of *Horizontal Inequality*. The fundamentalist points a criticizing finger at individuals (belonging to groups) outside of its fold, thus harassing the ‘other’s’ sense of well-being. The fundamentalist, if in political power, distributes its resources more willingly and healthily to the people amongst its own network. The fundamentalist, thus, has a divisive quintessential nature, and as a matter of course, causes friction and violence in multi-ethnic societies. Lewis et al (1966) in *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues* (1966), make the point that “initially, the western religious outlook went no further than the dominant Christian tradition, and any discussion of the meaning and credibility of religious beliefs was against this background.”⁴⁴⁶

“A change came with the exciting pace of discovery in the nineteenth century. Trade and travel between East and West, together with the Christian missionary enterprise, brought increasing knowledge, first of the religious life and thought of India and next of the Far East. One by one, the scriptures of other religions were translated into European languages and made available to western readers. Philosophers and others studied this newly discovered wisdom of the East with growing interest. Some of them made swift and free use of it to advance their own speculations. Christian

⁴⁴⁵Gavin D'Costa (1996) ‘The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions’, *Religious Studies*, 32: 2, pp. 223-232

⁴⁴⁶ H.D. Lewis et al (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, p. 3

theologians for the most part, conceived it as a new challenge calling for a new defence of their faith (Lewis, 1966: 3).”⁴⁴⁷

If Horizontal Inequality is to be reduced in order to improve individual well-being and national productivity, then religious fundamentalism needs to be dialectically contested by a religious ‘ism’ with a quintessentially more inclusive ethos. The advance of fundamentalism in multi-religious societies is directly proportional with the advance of Horizontal Inequality in said milieus. The article *Exclusive Salvation* published by the *Catholic Layman* (a Protestant publication)⁴⁴⁸ is an excellent critique of Christian fundamentalism. The author begins the article by giving a definition of exclusive salvation: The belief that there is no salvation out of the Church of Rome.⁴⁴⁹ The author then proceeds to delve into the mindset of those who believe in exclusive salvation (fundamentalists) by stating, firstly, that “the belief itself is one which is very likely to make those who hold it uncharitable”:

“Indeed a man penetrated with real love to his fellow Christians, and having just notions of the infinite love of that God who spared not to give even His own Son as a sacrifice for the souls of men, is not likely to believe without very good reason that that same God consigns men to everlasting perdition for being unable to believe doctrines not contained in Scripture, and which the ancient Church never taught as essential to salvation.”⁴⁵⁰

The doctrine of *exclusive salvation* is one that naturally perceives the religions (the adherents thereof) of others in society negatively. *Exclusive salvation*, as a hallmark of fundamentalism, goes hand in hand with the instigation of religious polemics and violence. As the *Catholic Layman* states, “one who has persuaded himself that those who hold opinions different from his own are enemies of the Supreme God, whom He will punish with eternal misery, is under strong temptation to entertain bitter and unkind feelings towards those whom he regards as the enemies of God.”⁴⁵¹ The author continues,

“He will, at least, think himself justified in inflicting any amount of temporal punishment, even to tortures and death, if he supposes that by such punishments in this life he can repress opinions which will be visited with eternal misery in the next. He will regard the propagator of these erroneous opinions, however sincere he may be in the belief of them, with an intensity of hatred far beyond

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ ‘Exclusive Salvation’, *The Catholic Layman*, 7: 75, 1858, pp. 25-26

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 25

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ ‘Exclusive Salvation’, p. 25

that which he feels towards the poisoner and the assassin; for he will reason that those who plot the murder of men's bodies are not deserving of so much hatred as those who aim at the destruction of men's souls."⁴⁵²

The author believes that not only has "the Roman Catholic doctrine of exclusive salvation led to grievous breaches of Christian charity on the part of those who hold it, but it also limits the mercy of God with restrictions which He has not Himself imposed on it."⁴⁵³ *The Catholic Layman* (1858) then proceeds to criticize "The church of Rome for holding this dogma of exclusive salvation without any proof of it":

"We Protestants are asked to secure our own salvation by abandoning all hopes of the safety of those nearest and dearest to us. We are asked to believe that the mother whose tender care nursed our earliest years; the father whose wise counsels guided our entrance into manhood; the brothers and sister with whom for so many years we have shared all our joys and sorrows; the friends whose love and esteem we most value: that these are all hated by God, and that such of them as have been removed from this world are consigned to irrevocably to perdition."⁴⁵⁴

The dogma of exclusive salvation is the anti-thesis of universal religion; the fundamentalist dogma, as the *Catholic Layman* (1858) suggests, can cause unwarranted friction and hate amongst even family members. Furthermore, if the common feature of all religions is God (the quest for God) then how can one section not only claim exclusive rights to God, but also speak of potential 'violence' to be administered by God? The fundamentalist whilst supposedly on a quest for God (who is personally biased towards him/her) seems to be on an equal quest to promote *Horizontal Inequality*, and the violence thereof. The *Catholic Layman* (1858) states that, "we are asked to believe in the eternal damnation of those whom we have known to have lived not in forgetfulness of God, but in constant desire to do His will; not in dissipation and vice, but in acts of charity and beneficence to their fellow creatures."⁴⁵⁵ Furthermore, the *Catholic Layman* (1858) continues in evident astonishment, "when we see men obtaining repeated victories over selfishness and other besetting sins; when we see them gaining fresh conquests over the world, the devil, and the flesh, it appears to us almost blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to deny that this is His work."⁴⁵⁶ The author then surprises the reader with his honesty about the Christian religious mindset in general.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ 'Exclusive Salvation', *The Catholic Layman*, Vol. 7, No. 75 (Mar. 18, 1858), p. 25

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

After criticizing the fundamentalist heavily albeit justly, the *Catholic Layman* (1858) makes the point that “Christians in general maintain that beside the name of Jesus there is none other given in heaven or in earth by which men can be saved—Yet it is not for us to limit the mercy of God, nor can we say whether the salvation which Christ has purchased may not be extended to those who have not heard His name.”⁴⁵⁷ In the ethos of universal religion where God is not only the common, unifying essence but the central religious authority, the *Catholic Layman* humbly states,

“We leave it to One wiser than we to pronounce on them a sentence of condemnation. As we grow older and more thoughtful we grow more tolerant in our judgments. It costs the child or the uneducated person no struggle to believe in the eternal damnation of all that do not think precisely as he has been taught. As our years and judgment grow more mature our requirements become less severe, and we learn at length the wisdom of not imposing on others any conditions of salvation, unless it can be clearly shown that God Himself has imposed the limitations in question.”⁴⁵⁸

Pluralism & Comparative Religion

There is an effect of knowing on the knower, according to Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1981). “Modern awareness, in making possible a truer and more intimate apprehension by the outsider of communities that once seemed alien leads the learner into truer apprehensions of one's own world—which is in process of becoming recognizably the one world in which we all live.”⁴⁵⁹ *Comparative religion* is a tool of modernity; it is “an intellectual study of religion” which has, in the words of Smith (1981), “enabled Christians, for example, not merely to see 'Islam' and 'Hinduism' as reified systems but, secondly, to see the world from Islamic and Hindu viewpoints; and thirdly, have enabled them to see their own system as others see it, externally.”⁴⁶⁰

“The study of comparative religion is the process, now begun, where we human beings learn, through critical analysis, empirical inquiry, and collaborative discourse, to conceptualise a world in which some of us are Christians, some of us are Muslims, some of us are Hindus, some of us are Jews, some of us are sceptics; and where all of us are, and recognize each other as being rational men and women.”⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1981) *Towards a World Theology. Faith and the Comparative History of Religion*, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., p. 81

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 100

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., p. 101

Gavin D'Costa (1996) in *The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions* defines this *Religious pluralism* which results from *Comparative religion* as “the type that holds that all the major religions have true revelations in part, while no single revelation or religion can claim final and definitive truth.”⁴⁶² D'Costa (1996) states that for the pluralist, “all religions are viewed as more or less equally true and more or less equally valid paths to salvation.”⁴⁶³ “The advantage of pluralism,” D'Costa (1996) continues, “is that it renders genuine respect and autonomy to the various different religions.”⁴⁶⁴ He further highlights two major grounds on which Pluralists criticize fundamentalists (exclusivists):⁴⁶⁵

1. That they cannot deny the evidence of good, holy and loving people in other religions.
2. That exclusivists have incorrect readings of their own sacred texts which misguidedly lead them to exclusivism.

Pluralism is not as ideal as Universal Religion in the reduction of HI's in multiethnic societies; however it may be the most practical means toward reducing the potential for polemics and violence. The pluralists, however, just as those who seek to foster positive social cohesion in multiethnic societies (Universalists) must tackle fundamentalism head-on in order to ‘clear vital operational space’ for the pluralist idea. Woodbridge O. Johnson (1963) in *Non Christian Salvation*,⁴⁶⁶ in a theoretical response to the third century statement made by Bishop Cyprian that “there is no salvation outside the Church,” asks the pertinent question, “Is salvation the exclusive prerogative of Christians, or is it an inclusive human experience available to all men in all cultures at all times, and mediated by all religions?”⁴⁶⁷ Identifying salvation as “a kind of feeling state” Johnson (1963) asserts that “we may epitomize the feeling of salvation as ‘religious peace,’ defining this as:

1. One's sense of victory over alienation from God.
2. One's sense of victory over guilt with its fear of divine punishment.

⁴⁶² Gavin D'Costa (1996) ‘The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions’, p.224

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Woodbridge O. Johnson (1963) ‘Non-Christian Salvation’, *Journal of Bible and Religion* 31: 3, pp. 216-224

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 216

3. One's sense of victory over the fear of death (ontological anxiety)."⁴⁶⁸

Johnson (1963) furthers his argument by suggesting that "in considering the possible universality of religious peace, we must ask the question, "If such peace is found outside the Christian church, may we not conclude that Christianity has no monopoly of salvation?"⁴⁶⁹ In support of his pluralist thesis, Johnson (1963) asks, almost rhetorically, the questions, "If the Buddhist finds bliss in enlightenment; if the Vedantist finds it in union with Brahman; if the Bhakti finds it in blessed fellowship with Shiva, Vishnu, Amitabha or Vairocana, what right do we have to say that since such people do not find bliss in Jesus, they have not really found it? Is not their testimony decisive?"⁴⁷⁰ Furthermore, Johnson (1963) asks, "Who is to say whether the activist, moralistic, Christian or the passive, mystical Hindu has found the deeper peace—who but God alone?"⁴⁷¹ Johnson (1963), to further buttress his point, states resolutely that "the plain truth remains that the Jew, the Buddhist, and the Hindu have overcome ontological anxiety and found religious peace even as the Christian has."⁴⁷² Using marriage as an analogous tool to support his pluralist position, Johnson (1963) asserts,

"Because I love my wife supremely and find emotional peace in our marriage, I am not thereby justified in saying to another man, "Since you are not married to my wife, then no matter how happy you claim to be with your wife, you are not really happy." I am no more justified in saying to a Buddhist, "Since you have not found peace through my Jesus, then no matter how religiously at peace you claim to be in the Buddha, you have not really found peace."⁴⁷³

In realization and affirmation that "there is simply no other court of appeal than that of sincere testimony," Johnson (1963), quoting Hocking, states that "in the last analysis, a religion has no domain other than that of the heart's peace; and the individual heart is the sole judge of its own peace."⁴⁷⁴ In addition, Johnson (1963) makes the indefatigable point that "the universality of religious peace and brotherly love authenticates the fact that saving grace is found "outside" Christ."⁴⁷⁵ William Penn advances the pluralist position excellently when he states that "the

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 216, 217

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 217

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., p. 218

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., p.221

humble, meek, merciful, just, pious, and devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death has taken off the masks, they will know one another, though the diverse liveries they wear here make them strangers.”⁴⁷⁶

Fundamentalism, Pluralism & Secularism

Diana Eck (1993) in *In the Name of Religions* asserts that “both fundamentalism and pluralism are responses to modernity, with its religious diversity and competing values.”⁴⁷⁷ Eck (1993) observes the facts that “fundamentalists reaffirm the exclusive certainties of their own traditions, with a heightened sense of the boundaries of belonging that separate ‘us’ from ‘them;’ whilst pluralists, without giving up the distinctiveness of their own traditions, engage the other in the mutual education and potentially, the mutual transformation of dialogue.”⁴⁷⁸ Eck (1993) continues: “To the fundamentalist, the borders of religious certainty are tightly guarded; whilst to the pluralist, the borders are the good fences where one meets the neighbour.”⁴⁷⁹ Furthermore, Lewis et al (1966) in *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues* stress the fact that “account must be taken of an increasing number of secularists who, the world over, have rejected ancestral faiths and perhaps find it easier to say what they do not believe than what they do believe.”⁴⁸⁰

Eck (1993) postulates that “to many fundamentalists, *secularism*, seen as the denial of religious claims, is the enemy whilst to pluralists, *secularism*, seen as the separation of government from the domination of a single religion, is the essential concomitant of religious diversity and the protection of religious freedom.”⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁶ Woodbridge O. Johnson (1963) ‘Non-Christian Salvation’, *Journal of Bible and Religion* 31: 3, p. 219

⁴⁷⁷ Diana Eck (1993) ‘In the Name of Religions’, *The Wilson Quarterly* (1976-), 17: 4, pp. 90-100

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 92

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ H.D. Lewis; Robert Lawson Slater (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, pp. 1, 2

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Pluralism, Fundamentalism & Universalism

‘At present, there are tensions between the fundamentalist and the pluralist in each and every religious tradition.’⁴⁸² Furthermore, Eck (1993) believes that, “Universalism is now challenged by fundamentalists and pluralists alike.”⁴⁸³ For the fundamentalist, Eck (1993) insists,

“The very idea that all religions have a common kernel and core undermines the particularity of one’s faith and reduces these well-defended boundaries to mere husks. The pluralist does not expect or desire the emergence of a universal religion, nor does the pluralist seek a common essence in all religions, though much that is common may be discovered. The commitment of the pluralist is rather to engage the diversity, in the mutually transformative process of understanding rather than to obliterate it.”⁴⁸⁴

Whereas *Religious pluralism*, according to Leroy S. Rouner (1984), “as a historic fact, poses the fundamental philosophical problem of the One and the Many in regard to religious truth, it also poses social and political problems.”⁴⁸⁵ Rouner (1984) believes that “inter- and intra-religious conflict is responsible for much current warfare; and even benign forms of religious diversity present major difficulties for nation building.”⁴⁸⁶ Hence, the section proceeds to attempt to intellectually support the positive potential of pluralism in the reduction of H.I. by presenting some metaphysical commonalities between a cross-section of the world's religions.

5.2.4 METAPHYSICAL COMMONALITIES

The Great Spirit/GOD [Macro]

Due to the fact that religions have a “relationship to something or somebody outside man himself, and usually outside even the world around us”, Gundry (1966) asks the metaphysically hypothetical questions, “*Where do religious ideas and all other ideas, come from? Is there a transcendent origin of religion?*”⁴⁸⁷ His questions appear to be hypothetical as Gundry (1966)

⁴⁸² Ibid., p. 93

⁴⁸³ Ibid., p.100

⁴⁸⁴ H.D. Lewis; Robert Lawson Slater (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, p. 100

⁴⁸⁵ Leroy S. Rouner (1984) *Religious Pluralism*, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, p. 1

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ D. W. Gundry (1966) *Religions. A Preliminary Historical and Theological Study*, London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, pp., 8, 9

proceeds to state that, “the most important kind of origin of religion is the metaphysical. This is the transcendent source, which is God himself.”⁴⁸⁸ Convincingly, Gundry (1966) postulates that “knowledge of God is not obtained primarily as a result of inductive reasoning but is a given fact.”

⁴⁸⁹Gundry (1966) continues:

“No-one comes to believe in God because they have weighed up certain evidence which convinces them of God's existence. People believe first. They may then corroborate their belief afterwards by submitting it to reasonable tests, if it needs such corroboration; and this process is known as natural theology.”⁴⁹⁰

In the majority of the world's religions, an unknown power beyond and superseding the scope and power of humankind is believed to exist; and this belief is what Gundry (1966) coins as “*a given belief*.”

Western Religious Thought

This *given belief*, according to Gundry (1966), is embedded in the roots of “the great monotheistic religions Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam”, all of which “claim that God exists.”⁴⁹¹

“Belief in God is not the only given belief. In practice we believe without question that it is better to do good than evil, that the universe makes sense and not nonsense, that the world around us exists and is not a figment of our imagination. We can, if we wish, justify these beliefs rationally, but we do so only after accepting them in the first place. And so it is with our belief in God.”⁴⁹²

Eastern Religious Thought

This *given belief* reveals itself in African Traditional Religious thought via the *Gye Nyame* ('except God') concept: An Akan aphorism professes that:

"this great panorama of creation dates back to time immemorial; no one lives who saw its beginning, and no one will live to see its end, *except God*."

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 25

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

This *given belief* reveals itself in the Upanishads⁴⁹³ of Hinduism where God is described as “Existence Itself (sat), Consciousness Itself (chit), and Bliss itself (ananda).”⁴⁹⁴ This *given belief* also reveals itself in the Lao Tzu (*Tao Te Ching*)--a central and integral writing of Philosophical Taoism. This philosophy does not use the word/name 'God' per se, instead citing 'Tao' (Way) as a make-shift appellation⁴⁹⁵; this Way, this “ineffable, transcendent Way of Reality”⁴⁹⁶ Lao Tzu teaches is both nameless and named:

The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth;

The named was the mother of the myriad creatures.

(Lao Tzu--chapter 1)

Furthermore, with regards to the *Tao*, the *Nei-yeh*⁴⁹⁷ states:

The myriad things are generated by it;

The myriad things are completed by it.

We designate it the "Way."

(Nei-yeh--chapter 6)

Individual Spirit [Micro]

Contrary Thought⁴⁹⁸

All religions in their own manner postulate that the human is *Spirit* performing the body—that the man in the mirror is a vehicle and the unseen driver is “you.” Even in a so-called *atheistic religion* such as *Buddhism*, what is it that outlives the physical body that is in danger of being trapped in the 'round of becomings', if not detached from (cautious of) desire? This 'thing' that is able to re-incarnate, what is it? Is it not an allusion to *Spirit*? The body is what dies is the intellectual assertion of these religious traditions, hence, even for those which espouse doctrines

⁴⁹³ *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, London: Woodsworth Editions Limited, 2000

⁴⁹⁴ Christopher Isherwood (ed.) (1963) *Vedanta for the Western World*, London: Unwin Books, pp. 9, 10

⁴⁹⁵ 'Tao' can be intellectually conceptualized as a synonym for 'God'

⁴⁹⁶ Huston Smith (1991) *The World's Religions*, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 198

⁴⁹⁷ See Harold Roth (1999) *Original Tao: Inward Training and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*, NY: Columbia University Press.

⁴⁹⁸ See Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

on reincarnation, there is acknowledgment of something other than the body which is what is primarily *you*. Lewis (1966) supports this point with information about the Hindu when he states for instance that,

“There are certain basic assumptions which must be known before there can be any kind of understanding of the Hindu outlook. Among these basic ideas is the view of life indicated by the term *samsara* (migration) which means that the Hindu is far from thinking, as do most people in the West, that his life began with his birth on the planet. On the contrary he thinks of this present span of life as only one in a succession of lives, taking various forms, not all of them human and not all of them lived on this earth (Lewis, 1966: 22-3).”⁴⁹⁹

Hinduism refers to this Spirit that takes various physical forms as *Atman*, and as purported by Swami Atmananda (1966), “the deepest analysis, made by the Rishis of the Upanishads is regarding the Atman, the innermost background of man.”⁵⁰⁰ Atmananda (1966) informs us that, “the Upanishads exhaust themselves in delineating this Atman, and the great discovery made by the Upanishads is that the innermost core of man and the background of the Universe, are not different, but are the same and identical.”⁵⁰¹ Atmananda (1966) espouses 'contrary thought' when he states that “man has to understand and convince himself of the existence of Atman first, before he can be expected to take up the clearing of the obstacles on the way to Atman and persist till he gains his end.”⁵⁰²

Contrary Thought and Hinduism

The thirteen principal Upanishads are noted for describing God *contrarily*:

1. Neti neti (Not this, not this)

God is not anything physical, or finite or thinkable that we can point and say, “here this is IT”—God is the Great Infinite Spirit whose true form cannot ever be beheld via finite means.

This understanding and convincing of the existence of Spirit is a universal religious phenomena, expressed directly by the Eastern (older) religions, and indirectly by the Western (younger)

⁴⁹⁹ H.D. Lewis (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, pp. 22, 23

⁵⁰⁰ Swami Atmananda (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 162

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid., p. 163

religions (such as Christianity and Islam) which stress that they are vehicles to *Heaven*. According to Lessa (1958), “all religions also represent a response to the wonder and the terror of the ineluctable process of nature; they supply some answer to the profound uncertainties of experience, most especially to the homogeneity of death.”⁵⁰³ For the Christian and Muslim alike, “death means a homecoming to God the creator who has given man certain opportunities and capacities that will judge him accordingly.”⁵⁰⁴ Hence, the Christian and Muslim physical body dies, yet the individual still exists and will be judged; and will make his/her way to Heaven or Hell; but whilst the *he/she* (the body) is in the grave, is it not the *It* (the Spirit) that prevails?

Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) in *The Science of Religion* makes the salient point that “religion’ is derived from the Latin *religare*, to bind. It binds us by rules, laws, injunctions in order that we may not degenerate, that we may not be in misery—bodily, mentally or spiritually.”⁵⁰⁵ Religion binds us to Bliss—the Universal Spirit—via contrary thought. This ‘binding’ is absolutely essential amongst the pain and suffering of people in the secular world. Winston King (1970), in *Eastern Religions: A New Interest and Influence*, insists that “many westerners are deeply depressed by the mechanized environments in which they work, the routinized nature of their occupations, and the impersonal exteriority of the relationships to fellow human beings that are forced on them by technology—and they do many foolish and desperate things to escape this prison.”⁵⁰⁶ This prison—spiritual suffering of the mind—according to Yogananda (2008), is occasioned when one is ‘in ignorance of the Spirit.’ When one’s quintessential thought is not contrary one experiences pain. The secular world’s thought is contrary to *contrary thought*, being detached from the Spirit and attached to the body (matter). Its thought is ‘suffered’ as it is due to its separation from religion which is meant to bind us to the Spirit and detach us from the body (teach us *contrary thought*) causing us to ‘join’ with the permanent Bliss that is the Universal Infinite Spirit.

⁵⁰³ William A. Lessa (1958) *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, NY: Harper & Row Publishers.

⁵⁰⁴ H.D. Lewis (1966) *World Religions. Meeting Points and Major Issues*, London: C.A. Watts & Co. Ltd, p. 101

⁵⁰⁵ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, p. 13

⁵⁰⁶ Winston L. King (1970) ‘Eastern Religions: A New Interest and Influence’, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, pp. 66-76

Yogananda (2008), in an astute analysis of ‘pleasure’ highlights the fact that it is “a double consciousness that constitutes its charm”.⁵⁰⁷

- 1) Excitation consciousness: of possession of the thing desired
- 2) Contrast consciousness: “I felt pain when I did not have the desired object, and as I have obtained the thing I now have no pain.”

“Pleasure is a creation of the mind—a deluding excitation consciousness, depending upon the satisfaction of the preceding state of desire and upon present contrast consciousness,” suggests Yogananda (2008). He continues, “If objects were pleasurable in themselves, then the same dress or food would always please everyone, which is not the case.”⁵⁰⁸ Yogananda (2008) insists that,

“When a want is fulfilled, man gets a pleasurable excitement and, through a sad mistake fixes his eye solely upon the objects that create this excitement, and supposes them to be the main causes of his pleasure. He entirely forgets that he had formerly an excitation in the form of desire or want in his own mind, and that later he had another excitation in his mind superseding the first one, in the form of pleasure, which the coming of objects seems to produce. So, as a matter of fact, one excitation arose in the mind and was superseded by another in the same mind (Yogananda, 2008: 31).”⁵⁰⁹

Yogananda (2008) stresses the point that ‘pleasure and desire depend on the state of mind and not on outward objects; outward objects are only the occasions –they are not causes!’⁵¹⁰ He defends his point stoutly using the following example:

“A poor person’s desire for delicacies may be satisfied by an ordinary sweetmeat, and this fulfilment will give rise to pleasure. But the desire for delicacies on the part of a rich person may perhaps be satisfied only by the best of pastries, and the fulfilment will also give the same amount of pleasure (Yogananda, 2008).”

The alienated, depressed westerner in his/her secular world can only really avoid or ameliorate pain and suffering via *contrary thought*; all or any other attempts to achieve this goal of repose via material devices or avenues will only increase the mental pain felt. Yogananda’s (2008) statement supports this point:

⁵⁰⁷ Paramahansa Yogananda (2008) *The Science of Religion*, p. 22

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 23

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 31

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

“If we are really to lessen pain, we are, as far as possible, to free the mind gradually from all desire and sense of want. But instead of lessening or decreasing the sense of want, we habitually increase it and create new and various wants in the satisfying of one, resulting in a desire to fulfill them all (Yogananda, 2008: 32).”⁵¹¹

Henry L. Ruf (2005) in *Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions*⁵¹² argues that, “*encounters with the infinite* is the common core at the heart of the world’s religions.” And by “encountering the infinite,” Ruf (2005) means “encountering the non-finite—the other to all socially constituted objects and subjects; encountering the absence of the exhaustiveness of the finite; encountering that which is not a socially constituted being.”⁵¹³

“All objects of thought, speech and experience and all thinking, speaking and experiencing subjects are socially constituted. Words and concepts are social tools and among the things we do using them, we talk and think about objects and events and we experience such objects and events—Their use is constituted by our social practices of classification and individuation. People who speak, think and experience are what they are because they have been socially trained to think, speak and experience as they do. All objects and subjects, all linguistic, conceptual, symbolic, and experiential worlds are social all the way down.”⁵¹⁴

Ruf (2005) postulates that different religions are:⁵¹⁵

1. Socially constituted ways of responding to these encounters with the infinite.
2. Different faithful responses which the common core requires to be respected and cherished.

Encountering the infinite via *contrary thought* is an experience that will actively reduce *Horizontal Inequality*—making religious barriers extremely fluid. Ruf (2005) supports this point when he states that, “encountering the infinite provides motivation for respecting and cherishing different religions and for entering into cross-religion dialogues which can strengthen creatively the fundamentals in each religion.”⁵¹⁶ Making an excellent case for *Religious pluralism*, Ruf (2005) insists that, “in seeking to faithfully respond to these encounters and mandates, different religious

⁵¹¹ Ibid., p. 32

⁵¹² Henry L. Ruf (2005) ‘Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions’, *International Journal on World Peace* 22: 3, pp. 25-49

⁵¹³ Henry L. Ruf (2005) ‘Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions’, *International Journal on World Peace* 22: 3, p. 26

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., p. 30

communities have constituted themselves in different ways.”⁵¹⁷ Ruf (2005) continues: “At the core of each, however, there remains the call not to confuse a specific form of faithful response with the infinite that is encountered—that would be worshipping a graven image.” In support of the section’s thesis that *Universal religion* and *Religious pluralism* have the potential to reduce *Horizontal Inequality* and promote much-needed peace in the midst of a turmoiled, multi-ethnic secular world, Ruf (2005) states that, “between individuals in different religious communities, justice and compassion call for rejecting polemics and initiating dialogue that can creatively enrich each religious community’s historically and socially unique way of responding faithfully to encounters with the infinite.”⁵¹⁸ In analysing Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Ruf (2005) insists that “the core in these religions remain the same.”⁵¹⁹ Encounters with the infinite which prevent absolutizing the finite.

Contrary Thought and Taoism

The following ten points illustrate succinctly the contrary nature of the cosmology of Chinese Philosophy: ⁵²⁰

1. Chi (Spirit) is the basic material of the universe.
2. Chi is constantly solidifying or dissolving.
3. The universe began with the condensation of the ch’i out of the void.
4. The relatively light and pure chi rose to become heaven.
5. Heavy and impure chi fell to become earth.
6. Moving, opening, expanding, the chi is called Yang.
7. Returning to stillness, closing, contracting, the chi is called Yin.
8. Between heaven and earth the Yang and Yin alternate like breathing out and in accounting for:
 - a) all pairs of opposites

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ A.C. Graham (1991) *The book of Lieh-Tzu. A Classic of Tao*, London: HarperCollins publishers.

- b) movement and stillness
- c) light and darkness
- d) male and female
- e) hardness and softness

9. Solid things are begotten by the active, rarefied, Yang breath of heaven and are shaped by the passive, dense, Yin breath of earth and in due course dissolve back into nothingness from which they came.

10) The human body is dense chi which has solidified and assumed shape, activated by the purer, free moving chi present inside it as breath, and as the vital energies which circulate through the limbs.

The Uncarved Block⁵²¹

In the *Tao Te Ching*, a central scripture of Chinese thought, ‘what is’ is contrarily-described as the uncarved block because ‘what is’ is Spirit-which precedes and will proceed all ‘carved’ finite objects and ideas.

By Means of This...

In the *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu cryptically teaches that ALL things finite and carved exist and are performed by means of the Way (the known aspect of Infinite Chi).

Contary Thought and African Traditional Religion

⁵²¹ Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1963.

Professor Kofi Asare Opoku (1978) in *Traditional West African Religion* states that, “There is a reality which runs through African culture. The unseen is as much a part of reality as that which is seen;”⁵²² Opoku (1978) continues,

“In other words, the spiritual is as much a part of reality as the material, and there is a complimentary relationship between the two, with the spiritual being more powerful than the material. The African concept of man, for example is that he is made up of body and spirit, but by far the greater part of man is made up of the spirit (Opoku, 1978).”

5.2.5 MORAL COMMONALITY

In analyzing Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Ruf (2005) insists that ‘the core in these religions remain the same: Ethical mandates for justice and compassion.’⁵²³ Furthermore, at the core of the world religions are encounters with the infinite that: 1) Require acting justly and opposing injustice. 2) Call for compassionate and loving care for all people.⁵²⁴

Lessa (1958) supports Ruf's (2005) points when he insists that 'there is the need for a moral order.'⁵²⁵ Lessa (1958) purports that,

“Human life is necessarily a moral life precisely because it is a social life, and in the case of the human animal the minimum requirements for predictability of social behaviour that will ensure some stability and continuity are not taken care of automatically by biologically inherited instincts, as in the case with the bees and the ants. Hence there must be generally accepted standards of conduct, and these values are more compelling if they are invested with divine authority and continually symbolized in rites that appeal to the senses.”⁵²⁶

Lessa (1958) makes the solid point that “Religion has meaning in the sense of ultimate meaning of the central values of a society, and it has power in the sense of ultimate, sacred, or supernatural

⁵²² Kofi Asare Opoku (1978) *Traditional West African Religion*, Singapore: FEP International Private Limited, pp. 8, 9

⁵²³ Henry L. Ruf (2005) ‘Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions’, *International Journal on World Peace* 22: 3, p. 29

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ W. A. Lessa (1958) *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*. NY: Harper & Row Publishers., p. 1

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

power which stands behind those values.”⁵²⁷ Continuing, Lessa (1958) states that “it has important integrative functions for groups and for individual personalities.”⁵²⁸

“At the same time religion is concerned with the threats to these central values, or to social or individual existence it has important defence functions in providing ways of managing tensions and anxieties. Thus, religion both maintains the ultimate values of a society and manages tensions in the personalities of individual members of a society.”⁵²⁹

S. Mark Heim (2010) in *'Interfaith Relations and the Dialogue of Human Need'* asserts that “the driving motive for interfaith relations must be a practical, ethical one; it must be oriented not toward common understanding of transcendent things but toward confrontation of a common worldly task.”⁵³⁰ This section's thesis is such that the common worldly task that *WE* are faced with today is the promotion of peace and tolerance in the globalized society via the reduction of *Horizontal Inequality*. Smith (1981) believes that “one of the most determinative characteristics of any human being is whom he or she means in saying 'we;' neither the academic intellectual, nor the person of faith,” in Smith's (1981) opinion, “can any longer be content to mean less than 'we human beings', across the globe.”⁵³¹

“It requires imaginative sympathy and penetrating understanding; it takes time, effort and dedication; but it is now possible, and therefore now requisite, to learn to say, and to mean, that we human beings on earth are diverse but not incongruous.”⁵³²

I conclude the section with an excellently pertinent quote from Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1981):

“Comparative religion postulates that we see ourselves as participants in one community, the human community. The first step is to recognize the faith of other men. Once that step has truly been taken, the next step is the recognition that *there are no other men.*”

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ Deidre King Hainsworth; Scott R. Paeth (eds) (2010) *Public Theology for a Global Society*, Michigan: Wim B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 140

⁵³¹ Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1981) *Towards a World Theology. Faith and the Comparative History of Religion*, pp. 102, 103

⁵³² Ibid.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

Subconscious Social Equality (SSE)

6.1 Introduction: A New Enlightenment

Why focus on Religion in a western, secular, modern time? Religion is important. It has an important function in human society and has (needs to be) been studied in the Academic Discipline of Sociology for example. In modern, secular times, in western areas of the World, one may see no need for Religion (or for the Study of Religion); but in Reality, Religion and Human Culture are inseparable. This wish to separate an undividable, integral, phenomenon is (and has been) a great source of social tension, especially in multi-ethnic regions. We have no choice but to focus; look at Religion; use Religion to effect Peace and Prosperity, Social Cohesion and Unity, Horizontal and Vertical Equality; and not social tension, war, conflict, stress and the general presence of Horizontal Inequality in Human Society.

Western Modernity & Religion: Modern Horizontal Inequality

According to Bruce (2003), “the Enlightenment can be read as a long struggle against the regime of truth that was centered in and championed by the medieval church. Weakened by the Reformation and Wars of Religion, the church and the faith it represented retained their connection to—and considerable control over—all aspects of social, political, intellectual and economic life (Bruce, 2003: 2).” “The goal of those who waged this struggle was to constrain and deprivilege this hegemon, opening space for secular arts and sciences, not to speak of political economy. Kant (1960)⁵³³ brought this struggle to an end with a compromise formulation, whereby ‘religion’ was acknowledged as the only means to engage lofty metaphysical issues like the immortality of the soul, but inappropriate for all other matters. For everything save metaphysics, reason is both necessary and sufficient, and it is with this division of intellectual labour that Western modernity was founded (Bruce, 2003: 2).” This Research Dissertation seeks to spark a new enlightenment: that Religion (& SIAB Pedagogy) is appropriate for all matters.

⁵³³ Kant (1960) *Religion Within The Limits Of Reason Alone*. New York: Harper & Row.

6.1.2 Contemporary Conflict—Modern Societal Tension

Religion & Politics

“Historical circumstances reveal a common pattern in which religion, be it Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Buddhist or Hindu, has typically, but not uniformly, maintained a prescriptive claim over the workings of the political sphere (Moyser, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 450).” “In Hinduism, for example, the religion of some 800 million adherents mainly in India, there is also a tradition of very close associations with the political realm. Indeed, as in Islamic and Buddhist thought, Hinduism sees no clear distinction between the two. Both are part of a common overarching set of cultural assumptions (Moyser, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 449-50).” “Politics is seen as a moral activity and morality is a matter of religion. Hence, religion has a legitimate claim over the political order. In Hindu thought, this comes about through the concept of the *purushartha*—that all action should conform to a set of moral or spiritual values that form the controlling framework for individual economic, social and political pursuits (Moyser, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 449-50).” Moyser (2010) stresses the point that “Religion has carried a relatively high degree of cultural power. Religion’s social and cultural saliency has historically drawn the attention of the political realm. For the exercise of power, even if primarily social and cultural, is the business of politics. The study of the way that realm has reacted to such power also adds to our understanding of religion (Moyser, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 457).”

The West (America) vs Islam

“American power has impinged on the Muslim world and resentment has grown, along with a more aggressive discourse that constitutes the United States as the antithesis of Islam and of religion in general. In that discourse America becomes the great Satan, a monstrous entity responsible for a global flood of impiety and profanation, as witnessed in the blatant sexuality and random violence of the popular culture it so happily (and profitably) exports (Bruce, 2003: 16).”

6.1.3.1 Osama bin Laden, Videotaped Address, October 7, 2001 (Bruce, 2003: 102)

“A million innocent children are dying at this time as we speak, killed in Iraq without any guilt. We hear no denunciation; we hear no edict from the hereditary rulers. In these days, Israeli tanks rampage across Palestine, in Ramallah, Rafah and Beit Jala and many other parts of the land of

Islam (dar-al-Islam), and we do not hear anyone raising his voice or reacting. But when the sword fell upon America after 80 years, hypocrisy raised its head up high bemoaning those killers who toyed with the blood, honour and sanctities of Muslims. As to America, I say to it and its people a few words: I swear to God that America will not live in peace before peace reigns in Palestine, and before all the army of infidels depart the land of Muhammad, peace be upon him. God is the greatest and glory be to Islam (Bruce, 2003: 102).”

6.1.3.2 George W. Bush, Address to the Nation, October 7, 2001 (Bruce, 2003: 99-100)

“Good afternoon. On my orders the United States military has begun strikes against al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. We are joined in this operation by our staunch friend, Great Britain. Other close friends, including Canada, Australia, Germany and France, have pledged forces as the operation unfolds. More than 40 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and across Asia have granted air transit or landing rights. Many more have shared intelligence. We are supported by the collective will of the world (Bruce, 2003: 99-100).”

“Today we focus on Afghanistan, but the battle is broader. Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict there is no neutral ground. If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocents, they have become outlaws and murderers themselves. And they will take that lonely path at their own peril. I’m speaking to you today from the Treaty Room of the White House, a place where American Presidents have worked for peace. We’re a peaceful nation. Yet, as we have learned, so suddenly and so tragically, there can be no peace in a world of sudden terror. In the face of today’s new threat, the only way to pursue peace is to pursue those who threaten it (Bruce, 2003: 100-1).” “We did not ask for this mission but we will fulfill it. The name of today’s military operation is Enduring Freedom. We defend not only our precious freedoms, but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear. Since September 11, an entire generation of young Americans has gained new understanding of the value of freedom, and its cost in duty and in sacrifice. The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail. Thank you. May God continue to bless America (Bruce, 2003: 100-1).”

6.2 Sociology of Religion

6.2.1 Introduction

“Religion refers to those processes and institutions that render the social world intelligible, and which bind individuals authoritatively into the social order. Religion is therefore a matter of central importance to sociology (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 284).” “Sociology of religion became a rather marginal field within sociology since it predicted the decline of its object of study, scholars understandably doubted its significance. “If we want to define what religion is, we must meditate at great length in order to arrive at conclusions that are essentially ethical in nature (Men, 1990: 23).” “It is also necessary to recognize that humans alone have the capability of formulating ideas and concepts regarding religion that correspond to feelings and sensibilities. The word itself—religion—is derived from the Latin expression *religare*, meaning ‘to reunite (Men, 1990: 23).” “Religion’ is a European word, and it is a European convention which has led to its employment as a general term to embrace certain human interests all the world over (Bouquet, 1941: 15).” “In Latin it was usually spelt ‘rel(l)igio’, and from very early times scholars have been divided as to its basic meaning. Of Roman writers Cicero held that it came from a root ‘leg-’, meaning ‘to take up, gather, count, or observe’, i.e. ‘to observe the signs of a Divine communication or ‘to read the omens’ (Bouquet, 1941: 15).”

“Servius, on the other hand, held that it came from another root, ‘lig-’, ‘to bind’, so that ‘religio’ meant ‘a relationship’, ‘a communion between the human and the Super-Human’. Subsequently it seems to have carried both meanings, for St Augustine the Great uses it in both senses. It is, however, most likely that the earlier one (whether or not we dislike it) was the original, since it is the exact counterpart of a Greek word (*parateresis*) which means ‘the scrupulous observation of omens and the performance of ritual’. Most significantly the historical Jesus is reported as saying ‘the Kingdom of God cometh not with *parateresis*, which may mean, ‘not by looking for omens will you discern its approach’, or ‘not by ritual observance will you bring it nearer’. He adds ‘the Kingdom of God is *entos humon*’, which may be interpreted as ‘already realized in your midst’, or as ‘realized inwardly, and not by outward ceremonies’. Both make equally good sense (Bouquet, 1941: 15).”

“For most Europeans, at any rate, ‘religion’ has come to mean a fixed relationship between the human self and some non-human entity, the Sacred, the Supernatural, the Self-Existent, the Absolute, or simply, ‘God’ (Bouquet, 1941: 15-6).” “From Suez eastward, however, such a

relationship seems as often as not to be described or describable in terms of movement, as a ‘Way’. Thus we have the *hodos*, or way, of the Pharisees. Early Christianity in the Book of Acts is called ‘that Way’; Buddhism is described as ‘the noble eight-fold Path’; and Japanese nationalist religion (if we must use the European label) is called Shinto, ‘the Way of the Gods’. Confucius’ message is called by him ‘The Way’ (Bouquet, 1941: 15-6).” “If we use the generic term ‘religion’ to describe the various species of a certain world-wide phenomenon, we must remember that the activities we observe are the expression of beliefs in some existing relationship between Deity and human beings, while if we are not Western Europeans, and are concerned with Process rather than with a Person, let us recall that a ‘way’ is not simply meandering, but implies direction, and therefore relation to a goal or purpose. Such purpose implies a Directive Mind, though not necessarily one of the human order (Bouquet, 1941: 16).”

“There has been a dramatic resurgence of religion in which it (religion) has re-emerged as a relatively autonomous public force, a marker of ethnic identities, and a shaper of modern subjects and their ways of life (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 145).” With the global resurgence of religion, however, the sociology of religion not only seems to have a future—it also has a responsibility to make attempts at cognitively ordering and explaining the role religion plays in our present world (Hinnells, 2010: 158).” Hinnells (2010) makes the point that “on the one hand, the resurgence of religious movements and personal piety on a large scale has shed serious doubt on the secularization thesis, which has strongly shaped most previous sociological theories of religion. But, on the other hand one cannot deny that secularization, as a process of institutional differentiation, has actually taken place (Hinnells, 2010: 158-9).” Hinnells (2010) continues when he states that, “modern states are widely secular, and neither capitalism and bureaucracy, nor modern science and modern culture, are based on religious principles; at times they are not even compatible with them. At the same time, almost no society has consistently separated church and state, especially not European ones (Hinnells, 2010: 158-9).” “Privileged churches still exist in many European countries; for example, state universities entertain Protestant and Catholic theology departments where appointments have to be approved by the churches, and the German state collects taxes for all large religious denominations. Obviously, even institutional differentiation is rather incomplete (Hinnells, 2010: 158-9).”

6.2.2 The Sociology of Religion—Three Classic Paradigms

Marx, Durkheim & Weber

“Three classical paradigms had the strongest impact on the discipline of Sociology of Religion: the approaches of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 146).”

1. Marx (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 146-7)

“For Marx, in early socioeconomic stages, religion consists mainly in a response to the mysteriousness of nature and expresses humanity’s lack of understanding and control. But in more advanced stages, religion increasingly distorts the understanding of the true nature of social relations by expressing the alienation inscribed into class structures (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 146-7).” “Religion, by creating the illusion of a transcendental power of perfection which demands submission to the status quo, also prevents social actors from collectively establishing a social order that would allow them to realize their full potential as social and creative human beings (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 146-7).” “In Marx’s theory of ideology, religious beliefs were representations of the particular economic conditions of specific modes of production. Thus, Roman Catholicism was well suited to the political and economic structures of feudalism, whereas the individualistic beliefs of Protestant Christianity were seen to be an expression of the possessive individualism of competitive capitalist economies. Marx, adopting an evolutionary view of religious beliefs, assumed that religion would evaporate once exposed to ‘critical criticism’ and scientific socialism. The social crisis of Victorian Britain that produced the sociology of religion included the erosion of Christianity, (and) the political threat of working class socialism (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 285).”⁵³⁴ “Unlike Marx, neither Durkheim nor Weber expected religion to disappear, but both certainly assumed that it would be transformed in the modern world (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 149).”

2. Durkheim (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 147)

“Durkheim’s understanding of history and humanity is based on social order and its civilizing, moralizing, and socializing mission. According to Durkheim, human beings have a double nature

⁵³⁴ See Burrow, J. W. (1966) *Evolution and Society: A Study of Victorian Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

consisting of body and soul. On the one hand, they are driven by bodily needs, following their egoistic natural drives and desires; on the other, they have souls, which are social and moral (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 147).” “Durkheim’s sociology of classification was the basis of his sociology of religion, in that religion is a method of apprehending reality in terms of the force of the classificatory principle: sacred/profane (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 288).”

3. Weber (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 148)

“Weber’s sociology of religion begins with an inquiry into the religious sources of modern capitalist culture and ends with a cross-culturally comparative study of rationalisms embedded in the religious traditions of China, India and ancient Judaism. Weber draws the conclusion that the modern West is the result of a unique rationalization process, which has affected not only its economic system and its principles of bureaucratic organization but also its culture (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 148).” “According to Weber, religious ideas and interests are mediated by institutions, which develop their own dynamics in conjunction with the everyday needs of their followers (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 148).” For Weber, “a process of disenchantment and secularization removed the religious ethic from central economic, political, and cultural institutions, freeing them from religious control. Whoever chooses to live a life based on religious principles can do so only against the institutionalized logic of ‘unbrotherly’ bureaucratic regimes that no longer recognize religious morality but instead value efficiency, performance, and utility (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 149).” “Therefore, in Western modernity, religion can only survive in more central social institutions if it adapts to their logics and more-or-less sanctifies them. It is only in small voluntary associations at the social margins that religion can preserve an ethos of universal brotherhood (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 149).” “According to Weber, there exists the possibility of new charismatic upheavals that can change people’s inner attitudes—but given the rigidity and efficiency of bureaucratic systems, these revolutionary possibilities are rather unlikely to succeed in the modern West (Riesebrodt, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 149).”

Religion, Politics & Force

Weber—Sacred Force vs Secular Force

“This interweaving of religion and politics, brotherly love and violence constituted the tragic vision of Weber’s sociology. Politics requires authoritative methods for the distribution of resources and must resort to coercive means to establish order (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 289).” “In the last analysis, politics is about the prudent use of force in society to preserve order. For Weber, religious institutions are channels of symbolic (charismatic) violence that coerce behaviour through sacred force, while political institutions require secular force (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 289).” “While political institutions must exert violence, religious communities are based on ‘brotherly love’ and therefore politics and religion must exist in a state of mutual tension. Paradoxically, they are both required for the creation of social order (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 289).”

The Religious Supermarket

“Denominational competition often meant that the demands of religion were reduced in order to make membership a comfortable experience. Peter Berger (1969) in *The Social Reality of Religion* and Thomas Luckmann (1967) in *The Invisible Religion* argued that in modern society denominational pluralism had come to resemble a spiritual marketplace in which the laity could pick and choose whatever beliefs and practices satisfied their individual needs. The result was a gradual erosion of orthodox belief and religious discipline (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 291).”

Christian Fundamentalism in the United States⁵³⁵

“The growth of fundamentalism in the United States has been in part a critical response to the spread of liberal theology in the churches, to feminism in education and secular culture in the media (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 291).”

“In the market-place of seekers, five major subcultures have been identified (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 292):⁵³⁶

1. Dogmatists (for example fundamentalists and neo-traditionalists)

⁵³⁵ See Armstrong, K. (2001) *The Battle for God. Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. London: HarperCollins.

⁵³⁶ See Roof, W.C. (1999) *Spiritual Marketplace. Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion*. Princeton, NJ/Oxford: Princeton University Press.

2. Mainstream believers
3. Born-again Christians (including evangelicals, Pentecostalists and charismatics)
4. Metaphysical believers and seekers
5. Secularists (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 292)

Western European Religion

“The political history of religion in Western Europe was dominated by two issues, namely church-state relations and the cultural divisions between Protestantism and Catholicism (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).” “This historic pattern has been slowly broken by migration, the globalization of the European economy and the emergence of multicultural politics. Postwar European economic prosperity has combined with a greying population to produce a multicultural society that has satisfied its labour market needs by encouraging migrant labour (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).”

Migrants & Religion in Europe

“Economic dependency on foreign labour has drawn in significant numbers of non-Christian migrants, whose presence is permanently changing the cultural map of Europe. In many European countries the foreign migrant community represents 10 per cent of the host population (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).” “The most significant group, both in numbers and influence, is Muslim. There are 10-13 million Muslims in Europe, and in Germany foreigners will make up 30 per cent of the population by 2030 (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).”

General Economic Migration & Religion

“Ageing populations and labour shortages in the developed world will ensure that immigration and religion remain on the political agenda of European societies. Migrants from Pakistan to Britain, from Turkey to Germany, from the Middle East and North Africa to France, from Indonesia to the Netherlands have produced a diasporic politics that has raised fears about the impact of Islamic fundamentalism on cultural and political institutions (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).” “In Germany, Turks and Kurds entered the labour market in the 1960s and 1970s and these ‘guest workers’ now constitute a more or less permanent second generation, amounting to approximately

2 million people. While many of these migrants are secular, Islamic organizations play an important part in their social and political organization (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).”

French Secular Culture vs Islamic Fundamentalism ⁵³⁷

“In France, there is a strong nationalist feeling that North African Muslims cannot assimilate to the secular culture of the French republic (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).” “The *hijab* case (*l’affaire des foulards*) in 1989 caused a divisive public debate over the desire of Muslim girls to wear the *hijab* (headscarf) in state schools. The French intellectual left regard secular schools as important for personal liberation from religious ideology, while the right interpret the *hijab* as an attack on French national custom (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).”

English Culture vs Islamic Fundamentalism

“In English culture, where there has been a historical tradition of distrust towards Islam, a fatwa against Salman Rushdie for his publication of *The Satanic Verses* in 1989 polarized British public opinion, and reinforced the public perception of Muslims as fanatics whose culture is fundamentally incompatible with parliamentary democracy and liberal values (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 294).”

Fundamentalism & Contemporary Sociology of Religion

“In the popular press, fundamentalism is normally equated with radical Islam, and Islam is understood to be hostile to modernity. Fundamentalism has a number of defining themes. The emphasis on scripture requires a literal belief in the inerrant nature of the fundamental scriptures, and the quest for legitimacy and authority by reference to those scriptures (Luhmann, 1984: 296).”

“There is an emphasis on seeing the relevance of traditional scriptures to contemporary issues. In addition, there is a personal quest for purity in an impure world, and an attempt to reject the division between the sacred and the profane. Fundamentalism involves confrontation with the secular world by violent means if necessary, and a world-view that understands the modern world in terms of an endless struggle between good and evil (Luhmann, 1984: 296).” According to

⁵³⁷ See El Hamel, C. (2002) ‘Muslim diaspora in Western Europe: The Islamic headscarf (Hijab) in the media and Muslims’ integration in France’, *Citizenship Studies*, 6 (3): 293-308.

Hassan (2002)⁵³⁸, “The study of fundamentalism has therefore become a major pre-occupation of contemporary sociology of religion (Luhmann, 1984: 296).” “In classical sociology, the main issues were the impact of the capitalist economy on organized religion, and the capacity of organized Christianity to contain radical working-class politics. In contemporary sociology, the issues are the place of religion in globalization, the tensions between fundamentalism (in Judaism, Christianity and Islam) and modernity, and the role of religion in providing an ideological conduit for the frustrations and anger of alienated youth (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 295).”

Secularism, Pluralism, & Religious Resurgence

“In a purely descriptive sense, religious pluralism is synonymous with the phenomenon of religious diversity or plurality, what is ‘religiously other’ within a given social context (Barnes, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 426).” “Differences in the extent to which the religious is imbricated with, or penetrates and controls other aspects of culture, often becomes evident in moments of cultural contact (Bruce, 2003: 3).” “By the late 1970s it had become apparent that a resurgence of religion was taking place globally, evident from the United States to the Middle East, from South Asia and Africa even to parts of Europe. A revitalization of religion was underway in the US, as new religious movements spread across the Bay area in California and conservative religious forces—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon—got organized in order to be saved from the 1960s (Hervieu-Leger, 2000: 154).” “At the same time, religious revivals were taking place across the globe: Islam returned as a public force in the Middle East and beyond, religion was playing a forceful role in the shaping of ethnic identities and the fueling of ethnic conflicts from India and Sri Lanka to the Sudan and Ireland, and religious movements challenged the secular state in several areas of the world (Hervieu-Leger, 2000: 154).”

Secularization

“Many sociologists of religion in the 1970s believed that the world was becoming increasingly secular, and that fewer people were religious than before. This view was consistent with the predictions of some theologians. Western cultural commentators often talked of the ‘death of God’. And this seemed to fit with a growing indifference to established religion in Western Europe (Fox,

⁵³⁸ Hassan, R. (2002) *Faithlines. Muslim Conceptions of Islam and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2010; Hinnells, 2010: 306).” “Those making the argument explained that social forces associated with ‘modernity’ were responsible for the progressive secularization occurring. Since then, however, increasing numbers have questioned the validity of this thesis. Today, only a minority support the view that progressive secularization is taking place. Yet the whole issue of secularization has by no means been settled, and still manages to generate substantial debate (Fox, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 306).”

Globalization Culture—Secularization or Religious Fundamentalism

“Luckmann (1967) proposed a theory of secularization as privatization which claimed that religion was not disappearing in modernity, but that its locus had shifted from the public sphere to the inner personal experience of individuals. In Luckmann’s (1967) view, religion arises as a necessary part of the social-psychological, meaning-making process in which humans are individuated and selves created (Hinnells, 2010: 153).” “Although religious institutions are historically common, it is not necessary that religion be institutionalized for it to endure. Rather, religion endures in human history because it is a constitutive element of the formation of selves; it is the anthropological conditions giving rise to religion that are indeed universal (Hinnells, 2010: 153).”

Private Sphere Religious Belief

“Institutional religion became progressively emptied of meaning, and the erosion of public religion was replaced by its increased importance in the private sphere. In modern societies, then, religions exist in ever more privatized forms and their meanings become properties of individual selves, and thus ‘invisible.’ In this view, secularization is the process of religious institutions’ decline, but religion still endures as its social locations shift (Hinnells, 2010: 153).” “Grace Davie’s (1994,2000) *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing Without Belonging* has built on this perspective by analyzing the discrepancy between believing and belonging. She shows that the majority of Europeans, and the British in particular, are neither secular nor atheist. Quite the contrary, many do believe in a God or other higher powers, and membership in religious associations is rather high. It is Davie’s view that it is not Europeans’ religious believing, but only their relatively infrequent participation in religious practices compared to those in non-European countries, that has declined.” Hervieu-Leger (2000) “observes that, although religion has declined in modernity because of scientific rationality and the concomitant autonomy and importance

accorded to the self, questions of meaning and desire for experiences of sacredness are still common among modern societies.”

Post-Secularity

“The emergence of contemporary forms of eclectic ‘religiosity’ in the Western world and the increasing popularity of the term ‘spirituality’ as an indicator of many people’s sense of the ‘transcendent’ in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is seen by some as the development of a kind of ‘post-secularity’ and has begun to attract the attention of sociologists of religion, seeking to map, classify and understand such contemporary trends in a way that moves beyond the secularization debates of a previous generation of scholars (King, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 337).”

6.3 Culture & Religion

Social Hybridity & Global Religious Cultures

“There has been an important revival of the study of religion in contemporary sociology, but with a different intellectual agenda. Fundamentalism and modernity, globalization and inter-cultural conflict, religion and politics, religious movements and ethnic identity are the key issues for sociological analysis (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 295).” “Changes in the nature of the study of religion are thus reflections of the growth of global religious cultures (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 295).”⁵³⁹ “In addition to the growth of Islam, there has been an important growth in sectarian and cultic religion. European governments have frequently attempted to curb the development of such sects by legislative means. In 1995 the British Home Secretary refused entry to the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, who had planned to enter the UK to hold services for the Unification Church, and in Germany, the federal government has identified 25 ‘sects’ that are seen to be a threat to ‘democratic values’ (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 295).” “These religious tensions of a multicultural society are now a persistent aspect of European politics, and are an indication of the fact that the traditional Protestant-Catholic division of European politics has been further complicated by social hybridity (Turner, 2005; Calhoun, 2005: 295).”

⁵³⁹ See Robertson, R. (1992) *Globalization, Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: Sage.

Religion & Western Media

“Despite sometimes well-supported claims about the growing secularization of society, religion remains embedded in the media and cultures of everyday Western life. Religious figures and issues attract substantial interest in news media (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” “Religious debates generate considerable interest through interactive media such as online discussion forums and blogs. Entertainment media continue to represent traditional religious figures and narratives in a variety of ways ranging from the reverent to the ironic, as well as addressing alternative spiritual traditions and broader forms of the supernatural (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” “The rise of new media, and cheaper forms of media production and distribution, have supported the growth of a range of niche religious media including film, popular music and educational materials. The internet, and other mobile communications technology, have also provided new opportunities for religious communication and the development of religious networks spread over wide geographical areas (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” Continuing, Lynch (2010) states, “Religious lifestyle media and products have continued to evolve with the emergence of new religious lifestyle magazines and branded religious drinks, games, clothing and jewellery (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” According to Hinnells (2010), “whilst the numbers of active participants in religious services and institutions may therefore be low, and falling, in many Western societies, religion therefore remains a powerful presence in media and popular cultures. Public awareness of religion is framed through media, and some of the deepest controversies around contemporary religion are bound up with the content and uses of media (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” “The controversy over the publication of the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad was both a dispute over the content of particular media publications, but was also fuelled by media that circulated the cartoons around the world with the intention of encouraging Muslim protests or rallying people around support for principles of freedom of speech (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” Hinnells (2010) stresses the point that “understanding how religion is bound up with media and cultures of everyday life is therefore essential for making sense of contemporary forms of lived religion, as well as how religion is encountered and negotiated by people who are not themselves active religious adherents (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 543).” “Sociologists of religion have been interested in how media and popular culture serve as mechanisms for the transmission and development of religious ideologies and identities. Scholars

in media studies have been interested in the religious uses that audiences make of popular media, the production and use of media to different religious ends, and the ways in which media act as a public space for the construction and discussion of particular religious questions and concerns (Lynch, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 548).”

Religion & Culture

“The entrance into modernity has brought religions to confront cultures which resist their influences, and ever since they have been subject to chronic crises of authority. Arguments with secular, individualistic, and democratic values challenge many of their old truths, and set off the questioning of dogmas, the desire to keep a distance from cults, and velleities to re-formulate credos. It is a conflictual endemic condition, that has become the plight of religions in modern times, despite their no less undeniable continuing and pervading influence (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 2).” Furthermore, “racial and religious prejudices are major issues in the contemporary world. They are often interwoven so it is not clear whether someone is discriminated against for being, say, from Pakistan or because of prejudice against Islam, and either can be the excuse for violence (Hinnells, 2010: 9).” “Multiculturalism relates to the degree of intra-religious and inter-religious tolerance. Each religion, and especially so each world religion, has an endemic aspect of exclusiveness and intolerance. This is echoed in Huntington’s (1993) words⁵⁴⁰: ‘Even more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 353-4).’ Hinnells (2010), thus, asks the pertinent question, “*Is it possible to understand another culture without looking at the appropriate religion practiced there, be that in Ancient Egypt or modern America?* It is often difficult to say which came first, the religion or the values and ideals—but basically it does not matter; they are now of an intricate network (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “In pre-modern times most artwork was produced for use in the relevant religion. How can one study the art without understanding its use and context? Whether the student/teacher/writer is religious or not, one cannot—should not—fail to study the religion of the culture (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “A study of the history of Gothic churches or of artefacts from primal societies in North America or Africa or the

⁵⁴⁰ Huntington, S. P. (1993). “The Clash of Civilizations?”, *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3): 22-49.

Pacific without setting them in their religious context is inevitably going to fail to understand their importance and ‘meaning’. The artist may or may not have been inspired by the religion of his region but it is important to know something of the culture in which the object was produced and used, and religions are commonly an important part of that culture (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” Hinnells (2010) continues, “in the contemporary world, interaction with other cultures is inevitable, with trade, in the news, when travelling or just watching television; meeting a different cultural tradition is inevitable for most people. To understand a religion, it is essential to have an awareness of the different sets of values and ideals, customs and ethical values. Even if the people one meets from the ‘other culture’ are not religious, nevertheless their principles, values and ideals will commonly have been formed by the religion of their culture (Hinnells, 2010: 9).”

A Multicultural World-Disorder?

“Carriers of given religious convictions, rites and ways of life do not remain the same once they insert themselves in new societies; they cannot but alter their ways of thinking of themselves and of the world. This transformation, moreover, adopts diverse patterns according to place, social context, and cultural encounters. Hence religions, as global entities, can hardly retain a monolithic or even coherent image of themselves (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 2-3).” “In brief, religions today greatly contribute to a world disorder that is multicultural both when viewed as a whole, and from within most societies that compose it. It is a development that contrasts both with the assumption that globalization implies one-way homogenization and convergence to Western modernity, and the expectation that globalization would be bound to polarize homogeneous Western and non-Western civilizations (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 2-3).” “In the discussion about the major impacts of the globalization process on recent and contemporary religious life, a prominent place is given to consequences of the increase in various global flows, and especially in migration flows, such as deterritorialization, delocalization, trans-nationalization and the emergence, in an unprecedented scope, of virtual religious communities (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 353).” “This does not mean that the importance of the local and the territorial aspect in human life, in general and particularly in religious life, is necessarily diminishing or fading away. The continuous importance of territory for religions and religious life should not surprise us, given the historic connection between religion and ‘sacred spaces’ (Ben-Rafael, 2010: 353).”

6.4 Peace & Prosperity in Multi-Ethnic/Religious, Cosmopolitan Societies

“Major international events have rocked societies and their religions: the attack on the Twin Towers in New York and on the Pentagon on 9/11; the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, ever more brutal battles between Palestinians and Jews appear to have pitched Christianity, Islam and Judaism against each other (Hinnells, 2010: 1).” “Bombs in Bali, Kenya and London, terrorist attacks in Mumbai, wars in Sudan and Somalia, crisis in Zimbabwe and the global credit crunch have turned societies upside down as fears of nuclear war grow with tensions rising and falling between Indian and Pakistan and with developments in North Korea and Iran, the world appears under threat. With the break-up of the old Soviet Union, countries have been opened up to Christian missionaries and New Religious Movements, so religions have become more prominent on the world stage (Hinnells, 2010: 1).” Hinnells (2010) makes the point that “the ease of travel, large migrations to and from many countries and the growth of the internet and the media have resulted in the interaction of cultures at a global level. The ‘other’ is encountered more often, more closely and by more people than ever before. Whereas some religions were remote and exotic, now they are part of the local scenery for many (Hinnells, 2010: 2).” This contemporary social situation, thus, poses societal danger. Hinnells (2010) stresses that “Religions are dangerous because more people have been tortured and killed for religious reasons than for any other motive. Persecution, the torture and killing of heretics and people of other religions have been major themes running through much of world history (Hinnells, 2010: 5).” Hence, “the study of religion is vital because of the massive power that religions have wielded, something that no one can deny. I question whether one can understand any culture and history—political or social—without understanding the relevant religions (Hinnells, 2010: 6).” “This is true not only of the ‘Holy Roman Empire’ or the Islamic conquest of Iran, i.e. in past history; it is true in the twenty-first century as well. Although the situation in Northern Ireland is complex it cannot be denied that there are strong religious motives involved in the conflict there; there is a sectarian hatred (Hinnells, 2010: 6).” “Christian Serbians were killing Muslims in the former Yugoslavia; Muslims in many countries believe that the West is anti-Muslim and many fear that if there is another World War it will be between Islam and the Christian world (Hinnells, 2010: 6).”

Religion & Politics

“The former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, once argued strongly that religion was a private matter of belief (therefore bishops should not get involved in political debates as they were doing). But Hinnells (2010) believes that in this assertion she was completely wrong (Hinnells, 2010: 7).” According to Hinnells (2010), “Religions and religious leaders have rarely been outside politics, be they Jesus, Muhammad or Gandhi. Christianity was a driving force in Spanish, Portuguese and British empire-building. With the first two there was a powerful urge for converts as well as fortunes. The British came to stress ‘the white man’s burden’ of ‘civilizing the natives’ (though fortunes and converts were also welcome!) (Hinnells, 2010: 7).” Hinnells (2010) further informs us that “partition in South Asia in 1947 sought to create separate Muslim and Hindu nations. These countries have been to war, or on the brink of it, many times in the following decades (though, now that there are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan, the religious divisions no longer follow the original policy). The showing and sales of video of the two Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata stoked (probably unwittingly) the fires of Indian nationalism, and the radical BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) party came to power (Hinnells, 2010: 7).” “A touchstone was the Hindu claim to the site of the mosque at Ayodhya, which they claimed was built over an important Hindu temple (Van der Veer). Many looked on in horror at the Hindu attacks on Muslims, the mob violence and the torching of Muslim homes in Bombay and Gujarat by Hindu militants in the early 1990s. The sorry tale of religious violence extends all over continents (Hinnells, 2010: 7).” Hinnells (2010) continues, “In the contemporary world the various religions seem to be even more prominent: the Israeli conviction that the land of Israel is God’s gift to them has led to attempts to eject or impose themselves over the Palestinians (who respond with suicide missions). The reason why it is thought American governments ignore Israel’s breaking of UN resolutions is due to the powerful Jewish lobby in the US; rightly or wrongly many Muslims believe it be an anti-Islam stance (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “The Shah was overthrown in 1979 for various reasons, but a major factor was the popular uprising led by Ayatollah Khomeini on the grounds that American influence had become more important to the government than Islam. It is difficult to believe that the invasion of Iraq in 2003/4 is legitimately explained simply by the terrible massacre of thousands in the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11 (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “It is not only that there is little evidence of Iraqi government involvement in al Qaeda activity; it is highly unlikely because Saddam Hussein was not a particular ally of a movement that opposed his

secularizing tendencies. President Bush and Prime Minister Blair, both of whom have made public their Christian religious position, sought 'regime change' through invasion or 'a crusade' as Bush called it (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “For Muslims in many countries this was seen as a Christian assault on Islam and the consequences will almost certainly be with us for many years and may well have brought al Qaeda’s ideology into Iraq and provoked more militant Muslims in many countries. Many fear it might bring nearer a war between the Christian ‘West’ and Islam. Terrorist activity in America, England, India and Spain, for example, has increased since 9/11 and increases the concern about such a war, and the invasion of Afghanistan raises wider concerns prompting some Muslims to see this as a further Christian-Western invasion of Muslim countries (Hinnells, 2010: 8).”

Good Reason for Studying Religion

“Some writers suggest such acts (of terrorism) are not the outcome of ‘real’ or ‘true’ Christianity/Islam, etc., rather they suggest this is people using a religion to justify their violence; it is not, they say, that religion is the cause of the problems. Even the fighting in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants is often put down to other causes (Hinnells, 2010: 8).” “Doubtless there are a variety of factors in most conflicts, but religions are often potent factors in the explosions of violence. Of course religions can also be at the forefront of movements for peace and justice (Hinnells, 2010: 8)”; “for example Gandhi’s non-violent campaign; Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa; the Reverend Martin Luther King with his dream in America; and the bishops’ stand taken against the corrupt dictators in South America with ‘Liberation theology’.

How can anyone doubt the importance of studying religions when they are such potent forces (Hinnells, 2010: 8)?”

A Psychological Unity

Human history has also been plagued with religious struggles and warfare motivated by a passion to impose guidelines for salvation on those whose rites and ceremonies were deemed false (Men, 1990: 22).” “Such conflicts confirm disparate interpretations of religious sentiment. Yet, despite this diversity of sentiment, we actually all take the same path, sharing certain ideals. Which path? That which seeks God. However, we each travel our own way, according to our personal theological interpretations (Men, 1990: 22).” “The psychological unity of man is one of the most

striking results of modern investigation. There are, of course, details in which the religion of any people differs from that of every other people (Barton, 1919: 2).” “Indeed, in some respects the religion of every individual is peculiarly his own; it differs in some details from the religion of everyone else, for the facts of the universe impress each mind differently. Nevertheless, the variations are far less than one would expect (Barton, 1919: 2).” “The surprising fact is that in all parts of the world the minds of men, as they react to the fundamental facts of existence, work in so nearly the same way. The likeness of the psychological processes of man is one of the most striking discoveries of modern times (Barton, 1919: 2).” “While, then, early religions differ in innumerable minor details, in the great fundamental conceptions they are the same. Of many secondary conceptions too it may be said that they are all but universal (Barton, 1919: 3).”

6.5 Pedagogy—Comparative & Universal Religion

6.5.1 Introduction

“In religious contexts, formal, non-formal, and informal learning can be found, and their manifold overlaps.”⁵⁴¹ With specific reference to a type of ‘Religious Learning Site’ that has the potential to efficaciously effect SSE via effective teaching and learning, this Research Dissertation would like to highlight the IROG. “The Inter-Religious Organization of Guyana (IROG) is an organization whose members include representatives of the Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Rastafarian, and Baha’i faiths. The organization conducts interfaith efforts and its constituent religious groups lead and participate in programs promoting interfaith tolerance and religious freedom¹. The IROG publishes messages in support of religious tolerance.”⁵⁴² Furthermore, this Research Dissertation would like to highlight a particular annual event conducted by the IROG and Formal Academia (The University of Guyana), so as to demonstrate a type of avenue/initiative/collaboration with great potential to teach SIAB; and in so doing, reduce Horizontal Inequality subconsciously and definitively in multi-ethnic society; positively effecting a profound Subconscious Social Equality (SSE).

⁵⁴¹ Terhi Utriainen, Ville Husgafvel, Kim Knott (Eds) (2024) ‘Religion and Spirituality as Sites of Learning’, *Approaching Religion* 14:2. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30664/ar.144834>

⁵⁴² U.S. Department of State (2021) ‘Report on International Religious Freedom: Guyana’ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/guyana/>

‘UG collaborates with IRO Guyana to promote harmony among religious groups’⁵⁴³

“The University of Guyana (UG) and the Inter-Religious Organization of Guyana (IRO) have collaborated to host another interfaith panel discussion on Friday, February 5, 2021, virtually. The University supported and partnered with the IRO to facilitate the event that formed part of the activities that the latter had developed in observance of the United Nation’s World Inter-Faith Harmony Week. This observance has been a yearly feature usually held in the first week of February since 2010 to promote harmony among all religions, faiths, and beliefs in the various places of worship around the world.

This year’s panel discussion was the first to be held virtually, with the University assuming the role of the virtual host using the Zoom webinar platform. The University’s Supplies and Logistics Officer, Mr. Adrian Sam, who is an advocate for youth and religion in his community, facilitated the programme. The 2021 panel discussion theme was “The Role of Religion in Creating Harmonious Societies.”

There were presentations from esteemed members of society, the likes of which included representatives of the Baha’i community, Dr. Laureen Pierre, President of the Guyana Council of Churches, Reverend Andrew Morris-Grant, Head of the West Demerara Arya Samaj, Pandit Dhanrajie Haimraj, and President of the Al-Mustafa Islamic Trust, Maulana Tasdeeq Aabidi.

Furthermore, The Guyana Chronicle (2021), in the article entitled ‘UG collaborates with IRO Guyana’,⁵⁴⁴ states that, **“the IRO had expressed the importance of programmes aimed at developing social cohesion and including young people who aspire for spiritual and intellectual growth, in order to make contributions to social progress. As such, the university community, a fertile environment to foster discussions in a manner that promotes respect and tolerance for different beliefs while promoting peace and harmony among members, was deemed an apt one within which to hold such an event.”**

6.5.2 Comparative Religion

“There can be no systematic study of religion as a subject matter without cross-cultural perspective. Lacking this, studies of religion would amount either to separate collections of unrelated historical data, or to speculative generalizations based only on the perspective of one

⁵⁴³ Guyana Standard (February 8, 2021) ‘UG collaborates with IRO Guyana to promote harmony among religious groups’ <https://www.guyanastandard.com/2021/02/08/ug-collaborates-with-iro-guyana-to-promote-harmony-among-religious-groups/>

⁵⁴⁴ The Guyana Chronicle. The Nation’s Paper (February 7, 2021) ‘UG collaborates with IRO Guyana’ <https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/02/07/ug-collaborates-with-iro-guyana/>

culture (Paden, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 225).” “Modern generations of scholars have therefore tried to build an objective, or at least transcultural, vocabulary for describing a subject matter that is found in very different times, places and languages (Paden, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 225).” “The comparative study of religions (usually abbreviated, conveniently if unfortunately, to comparative religion) is to encourage knowledge and understanding between religions and cultures, based on the assumption that prejudice will be overcome if each knows more about the other (Hinnells, 2010: 9).” “The media and many sections of society have stereotypical images of ‘the other’.” The hope is that “knowledge will result in understanding, and thereby better relations between peoples. If someone can develop an empathetic understanding of one other culture, the result will be that they are more ready to empathize with other cultures as well (Hinnells, 2010: 9).” “Comparative religion originated as an academic movement in the late nineteenth century. It signified then, as today, the cross-cultural study of all forms and traditions of religious life, as distinguished from the study or exposition of just one (Paden, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 225).” “As such, it entails the disciplined, historically informed consideration of any commonalities and differences that appear among religions (Paden, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 225).” Several developments made it possible for Comparative Religion to be put forth as a modern academic field of knowledge; together these factors created a broad, new canvas for the (comparative) study of religion (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 229):

1. The expanding knowledge of Asian religions, particularly through access to translations of their scriptures.
2. The emerging knowledge of pre-literate cultures, produced partly by the new field of anthropology.
3. A new idea of history, namely that the whole of human culture had undergone a long evolution from primitive origins.
4. The general trend toward classifying and mapping the data of the world’s various subject matters (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 229).

F. Max Muller (1823-1900)

“The most influential nineteenth-century advocate of Comparative Religion was F. Max Muller (1823-1900). He edited an important 50-volume translation series termed *The Sacred Books of the East*. He urged that the study of religion should no longer be limited to the religions of the

Mediterranean and that the great civilizational religions of the East, and their scriptures, should be taken seriously (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 229).” “Asian religions were to be brought into a horizon of respectful comparability with biblical religions. Here the older, parochial Western view of religious history as a simple contest of biblical vs. pagan traditions was to become obsolete (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 229).” “Muller and others held that Comparative religion is to any one religion as comparative philology is to the study of any particular language, and as comparative anatomy is to the anatomy of any one species. As the life sciences made progress through application of this method, so too would religious inquiry. The study of one religion would throw light on the study of another (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 229).”

In Response to Protests & Objections to Comparative Religion

Radhakrishnan (1933) states that “when we speak of Comparative Religion, we do not mean that it is a special kind of religion; it is only a particular method of treating religion (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 15).” “Protests are heard now and again against a comparative study of religion. One reason for this is that the scientific study of religion is imagined to be a danger to religion itself. For a scientific student of religion is required to treat all religions in a spirit of absolute detachment and impartiality. To him one religion is as good as another; but such an attitude of cold neutrality in matters of religion does not appeal to the majority of mankind. Religion, it is argued, is nothing if not partisan and particularist (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 15-6).” “To compare the sacred books of the East with the holy scriptures of the West is to ignore the feeling of warmth and reverence which each individual has for his own religion. To such an objection it must be replied that truth is higher than any religion and a truly scientific attitude in these matters will ultimately result in gain immeasurably greater than any loss we may incur in the process. At the same time, while we may surrender our exclusive claims, the religion in which we were brought up will still exert a peculiar charm and fascination over us (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 16).” “Another objection is that comparison means resemblance; and if one religion is like another, what happens to the claims of superiority and uniqueness? Certainly, Comparative Religion notes the facts of resemblance as well as difference. But a recognition of the points of similarity does not mean that the points of difference are negligible. Even if we wish to set forth the superior claims of one religion, it is necessary for us to know and appreciate the claims and contents of others (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 16).”

“Comparative Religion postulates that all our faiths have some value. In the end, therefore, those who are disturbed by the results of the study of Comparative Religion will thank it for its labours. For it proves beyond doubt that while there are innumerable changes in religious forms, religion itself is found to be a universal phenomenon. Right round the world, distributed more or less uniformly, we find a mass of faith and ritual which, in spite of apparent variations and individual forms, seem to cohere with respect to certain essential features (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 18).” “The general consent of mankind, the universal longing of human souls which has been used as a proof of the existence of god, receives impressive ratification by the results of Comparative Religion (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 18).” “To study Religion means to be confronted by a bewildering variety (Lewis, 1966: 2)” Yet Radhakrishnan (1933) stresses the fact that, “behind all the varied expressions, *Brahman*, *Yahweh*, *Ahuramazda*, *Allah*, there is the same intention, the same striving, the same faith. All religions spring from the sacred soil of the human mind and are quickened by the same spirit (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 19).” According to Radhakrishnan (1933), “the different systems are tentative adjustments, more or less satisfactory, to spiritual reality. Comparative Religion accounts for their similarities by affirming that the human spirit feels after the same spiritual reality and is in some manner acted upon by it. Thus, while Comparative Religion may not support orthodoxy, it does not shelter unbelief (Radhakrishnan, 1933: 19).”

6.5.3 Universal Religion: Pedagogy to Combat Horizontal Inequality

An Imperative Duty to Teach Universal Religion

“Most troubling is the inevitable gulf, often vast, between the ideals of any religious tradition and the way it is actually practiced. Too often, when comparing religions, we are inclined to value our own religion by its ideals, while denigrating other religions based on the habits of their practitioners. For example, Christians may hold up their religion as a religion of peace and point accusing fingers at the wars fought between Muslims and Jews, while conveniently forgetting the bloody battles Christians have fought throughout the ages—and still do (Morgan, 2001: xi-ii).” “Some people, bewildered by the rival bigotries, fanatic cries, and bitter hostilities, indulged in by misguided persons, in the name of religion, ask: What right have we to impose upon our children, such evil things, such religions as create enmity between man and man, darken and make foolish the minds, and blind the eyes, of all? (Bhagavan, 1932: 55-6).” “We have to answer the question

by saying that we have as much right, nay, as much imperative duty, to teach religion, as we have to teach arithmetic, geography, history, science. Nay, more right and duty; for these other things, however desirable, however useful, are not so indispensable for comfort of soul (Bhagavan, 1932: 55-6).” “We teach these other things to our children for their good, out of our love for them. And we try to teach them what we have ascertained, by our best lights, to be good and true and useful for them. If we make mistakes, it is because we are human and liable to err (Bhagavan, 1932: 55-6).” “Because food now and then disagrees, we cannot stop all eating. We must make only greater efforts to ensure its healthiness of quality and quantity. So in Religion we must make the greatest efforts to ascertain what is most indubitable, most in accord with the best science, and, more than all else, is most approved and agreed in by all concerned, and most likely to promote good-will and active sympathy between all human beings (Bhagavan, 1932: 55-6).” “This is the very and the only way to allay those dazing and amazing cries and bigotries and hostilities (Bhagavan, 1932: 55-6).”

The Possibility of a Common World-Faith?

“We may adopt what is called the theory of polymorphous truth, and say that each religion is suitable to the people among whom it has developed, but is an exotic elsewhere. This, of course, would exclude the possibility of a common world-faith of any sort (Bouquet, 1962: 301).” “As an alternative, a federation of existing faiths has been proposed, with the idea that their mutual tolerance and improved acquaintanceship may pave the way for a new common world-religion in the future, even though this may not as yet have arisen above the horizon (Bouquet, 1962: 301).” “It is urged that the advent of such a new faith need not be the source of apprehension, since it would not involve the loss of any real truth already in the possession of mankind, but would merely put such truth in a larger setting (Bouquet, 1962: 301).”

Essential Religion

Bhagavan (1932) makes the point that, “it is indisputable that the vast majority of human beings are born into their religions, inherit them, and cling to them exactly in the same way and for the

same reasons as they do to inherited property. If a new-born Muslim child and a new-born Hindu child were exchanged and brought up, the one in Hindu, the other in Muslim surroundings, they would grow up and feel and think and behave as Hindu and as Muslim respectively, and not as Muslim and Hindu (Bhagavan, 1932: 56-7).” “The same would be the case if the landholder’s baby were exchanged with a banker’s or a peasant’s. At the same time, it is equally indisputable that anyone and everyone can withdraw his faith from any religion and put it in any other, whenever he likes, can put off one and put on another at will. Yet also, the vast majority of human beings crave, indeed everyone in the secret depths of his heart somewhere yearns, for religion in its deepest sense—of contact with, assurance of, support by, refuge and rest in, the Immortal (Bhagavan, 1932: 56-7).” “All this clearly signifies that Religion is necessary to man; that no *particular form* of Religion is indispensable; that there are two alternatives open to us, either to reject all religions or to accept all religions; that both are impracticable; and that, therefore, the only practical, as also the best, most satisfying, and wise course, is to sift out the elements of *Essential Religion* from the non-essential (though, for their time, place and circumstances, useful) forms, of all the great particular religions extant, and feed the younger generation with those vital grains, instructing them that the husks are useful only for preserving and storing the grains in, and not for eating and assimilating (Bhagavan, 1932: 56-7).”

Agreement of Religions

“It has been said before that the new proclamation of *Universal Religion* has to be made on ‘democratic’ lines, i.e., the lines of ‘majority-rule,’ speaking broadly and generally. On these lines, those truths and practices which receive, not only the greatest number of, but unanimous, votes from the living religions, those beliefs and observances on which all are agreed, should obviously be regarded as constituting Universal Religion. That there is agreement between the great religions, that all teach the same *essential truths*, their promulgators themselves are all agreed (Bhagavan, 1932: 59-60).” According to Bhagavan (1932), “the one purpose of Religion is to bind the hearts of human beings to each other and to God; and the realization of the Self in all as the God in all, and the consequent service of all as the service of God, is the perfection and completion of Religion (Bhagavan, 1932: 558).”

The Four R’s

Bhagavan (1932) makes the point that “Religion falls from its high estate, becomes utterly perverted away from the essentials into non-essentials, and then into gross and cruel superstitions; separates the hearts of men instead of uniting them; and instigates mutual torture and murder instead of peace on earth and good-will among men. It does so, for a time, to rise again, by **re-action, re-pentance, re-generation, re-formation** to a higher station. Paradise is lost, in order that it may be regained with fuller and firmer appreciation (Bhagavan, 1932: 559).”

Universalism

“In contrast to Christian comparisons, there is another religious approach that may be termed universalism. This affirms that all religions refer to the same underlying spiritual reality, but do so through different cultural forms and languages (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 228).” “Universalism has variants. For some, it is motivated by a sense that all humans are basically alike. Many find a common set of precepts undergirding the world’s religions, such as the need to honor a divine being and assume ethical responsibility. Some look for common affirmations about peace or nonviolence. Still others understand the universal basis of religion in terms of a core spiritual experience or revelation of the divine. In that outlook, institutional and doctrinal differences are merely seen as the secondary, outward elaborations of a shared, intuitive sense of the ‘wholly other’ mystery that grounds all life (Paden, 2010; Bruce, 2010: 228).”

An Attempt to Define Universal Religion

Asad (1993) believes that “there cannot be a universal definition of Religion, not only because its constitutional elements and relationships are historically specific, but because that definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes (Bruce, 2003: 2).”⁵⁴⁵ However, Sharma (1998) makes the point that “the concept of **Universal Religion**,” though “hard to apply, as a great many ‘**Religions**’ and ‘**Alternatives to Religion**’ can be seen as performing the same function” can indeed be defined.⁵⁴⁶ Sharma investigates six (6) different types of **Approaches** taken in the attempt to define **Universal Religion**:

⁵⁴⁵ Asad, Talal (1993) *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

⁵⁴⁶ Arvind Sharma (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought*. NY, U.S.A.: PALGRAVE, p. 5

1. The Definitional Approach

Substantive vs Functional Definitions of Universal Religion

Sharma (1998) believes that “if defined *functionally*, **Universal Religion** is no different to any particular Religion or other *socio-cultural phenomena* such as communism etc. which serve/provide to people the same functions. For example, ‘**social solidarity, anxiety reduction, confidence in unpredictable situations etc.** are *functions* which may be served by any or all cultural phenomena.”⁵⁴⁷ Sharma (1998) insists that “unless **Universal Religion** is defined *substantively*, it would be impossible to delineate its boundaries.”⁵⁴⁸

- ❖ *Substantively*, what is **Universal Religion**?
- ❖ Does **Universal Religion** have a firm basis in **Reality**?
- ❖ Is **Universal Religion** even required by people, if they already have access to functional services provided by the many ‘**Religions**’ and ‘**Alternatives to Religion**’?

2. The Dialogical Approach

This Approach deems that there are three (3) ways of achieving **Universal Religion**:

1. via **Displacement**: One existing Religion displaces all other religions.
2. via **Synthesis**: A new Religion comes into being reflecting the best insights of all religions.
3. via **Re-conception**: Each Religion reconceives itself upon encountering other religions by going back to its essentials quintessentially in search of “a way to be found in all the great Religions”⁵⁴⁹.

3. The Missiological Approach

“In a missionary context ‘World Religion’ or ‘Universal Religion’ mean—a Religion which aims at extending its sway over the whole globe.”⁵⁵⁰ The Missiological Approach defines **Universal Religion** as follows:

⁵⁴⁷Ibid., p.4

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ William Ernest Hocking (1956) *The Coming World Civilization*, NY: Harper.

⁵⁵⁰ Arvind Sharma (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought*, p.5

- A. **A Religion to which, in principle, anyone in the world can convert;**
- B. **A Religion which aspires to convert everyone in the world.**

4. The Denominational Approach

The Denominational Approach revolves around the concepts of:

- A. **Universal Salvation**—that salvation is open and accessible to all of Humankind.
- B. **Universal Religious Inspiration**—that all Religions are divinely inspired.

5. The Philosophical Approach⁵⁵¹

- A. **Nominalism:** The fact that *Religion*, as a general word, is used for particular Religions does not mean that a universal or general entity like Religion exists.
- B. **Conceptualism:** There are definitely **Universal Concepts** that exist in i. **Abstract** and ii. **Abstracted** (the *common element* from the particulars of a given class) **forms**.
- C. **Realism:** Definite **Universals** exist either as *separate entities*⁵⁵² or “not separately from particulars but *in* them.”⁵⁵³

The Philosophical Approach attempts to define the real location of **Universal Religion** from two (2) standpoints:

- i. **As a *Universal Religion* existing distinct and apart from the particular religions—which would then be mere imperfect reflections/embodiments of it.**
- ii. **As a *Common Element* existing and residing within the various particular religions.**

6. The History of Religions Approach

The Archetype

⁵⁵¹ Arvind Sharma (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought*. NY, U.S.A.: PALGRAVE, p. 1

⁵⁵² The opinion of Plato

⁵⁵³ The opinion of Aristotle

*The Archetype*⁵⁵⁴ is the **key concept** involved when the *History of Religions Approach* is adopted with regards to the *substantive definition* of **Universal Religion**. An **Archetype** is described as a **primordial image, character or pattern that recurs through the religious experience of mankind consistently enough to be considered a universal concept of the situation**. This Approach asks two (2) fundamental questions:

- ❖ 1. “If *Archetypes* are universal and associated with Religion, is not Religion thus universal? Does the existence of *Archetypes* make Religion a universal phenomenon?”
- ❖ 2. “Is Universal Religion an *Archetype*?”

According to Joseph D. Bettis, ‘religious symbols and images provide the **Fundamental Archetypes** or **Paradigmatic Models** for organizing and shaping the religious man’s environment.’ However, if modern globalized man lives in a totally profane secular world void of concerns or regard for the sacred, “has Religion ceased to be universal in the sense that the *fundamental archetypes* provided by religious symbols and images have ceased to have influence?”⁵⁵⁵

6.6 The Ultimate Commonality (SIAB)

The Holy, Non-Rational SIAB

Rudolf Otto (1869-1937) published *The Idea of the Holy* in 1923 in “an attempt to outline the central features of mystical and religious experiences. Otto believed that the core of religion resided in experience; more specifically, the experience of the holy or the sacred (Latin: *numen*) (King, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 328, 329).” “Otto characterized this ‘numinous feeling’ using the Latin terms *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. Religious experiences involve a sense of being overpowered by a wholly other or transcendental presence. They induce in the subject a sense of mystery, awe, dread and fearfulness and yet at the same time are strangely attractive and fascinating (King, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 328, 329).” “These features of the religious impulse are neither rational nor irrational, Otto argued, but constitute the non-rational feeling that provides the

⁵⁵⁴ Arvind Sharma (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought*, p. 2

⁵⁵⁵ Arvind Sharma (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought*. NY, U.S.A.: PALGRAVE, p. 3

basis for all subsequent religious expression. Otto believed that the non-rational dimensions of religion were too easily overlooked in theological discussions about the notion of God. Indeed, it is this non-rational aspect which constitutes **the essential core** of all religious experiences (King, 2010; Hinnells, 2010: 328, 329).”

Spirit In A Body (SIAB)

The Illumination of a Spiritual Core

Religion	SIAB (Inherent Spiritual Core)
African Traditional Religion	• <i>Emi/Ori/Okra</i> • <i>Ancestors—Spirit is implied</i>
Native American Religion	• <i>K’inan</i> • <i>Ancestors—Spirit is implied</i>
Hinduism	• <i>Atman</i> • <i>Ancestors—Spirit is implied</i>
Buddhism	• <i>The Spirit that Transmigrates into different forms/The Individual Spirit that becomes one with the One, Universal Spirit upon reaching Nirvana/Enlightenment/Buddhahood</i> • <i>Ancestors—Spirit is implied</i>
Taoism	• <i>Inner Ch’i/Individual Spark of the WAY</i> • <i>Ancestors—Spirit is implied</i>
Confucianism	• <i>Individual Spark of Heaven/The Spirit that returns to and is ordained by Heaven</i>
Christianity	• <i>Spark of Heaven/The Spirit that may either return to Heaven or go to Hell upon death of the physical body</i>
Islam	• <i>Spark of Heaven/The Spirit that may either go to Heaven or Hell upon death of the physical body</i>
Rastafarianism	• <i>The I / I&I</i>

SIAB & Universal Religion

- ❖ **SIAB** is the *Common Element* (re Philosophical Approach).
- ❖ **SIAB**—its existence before, beyond and apart from human conception implies strongly that **Salvation is indeed spiritually open to all; All Religions/Spiritual Movements with M.N.S. are divinely inspired** (re Denominational Approach).

- ❖ F. Max Muller believed that “Non-Missionary Religions are dying or dead and that the decisive battle for the dominion of the world will be fought between *Buddhism, Islam* and *Christianity*.”⁵⁵⁶ In FACT, none have died and the three (*Buddhism, Islam* and *Christianity*) co-exist, at its minimum ethic, by force of secular law. ***Globalisation & Secularism*** is the “**Alternative to Religion**” which is gaining the most ground via means of Media and general ***Popular Culture Mechanisms*** (re Missiological Approach).
- ❖ Neither ***Displacement*** nor ***Synthesis*** nor ***Re-conception*** ‘seem to promise the prospect of one World Religion; the prospect on the religious scene is one of a pattern of coexistence of the major Religions of mankind.’⁵⁵⁷ Hocking makes the point that “**of the great World Religions none of them is professed by ALL the people in the world.**”⁵⁵⁸ The universal presence and TRUTH of SIAB, however, lends support to Hocking’s view that there is indeed a **WAY** to be found within the Religions (re Dialogical Approach).
- ❖ **The Universal Spirit (SIAB) is The Archetype that exists regardless of sacred or profane times/environments.**
 - i. For instance, not seeing the **Sun** at night does not mean that the very thing that sustains and promotes the life of the Earth (and the Human Individual/Humanity thereof) does not exist.
 - ii. Religion loses its power and influence in a globalized secular world YET **UNIVERSAL TRUTHS, THE UNIVERSAL ESSENCE & THE MAIN SUBJECT/CENTRAL THESIS OF RELIGION (GOD/WAY) STILL EXIST** (re History of Religions Approach).

The Universal SPIRIT (SIAB): “THE ARCHETYPE”

- ❖ ***The Universal SPIRIT (SIAB)*** is a **Universal Archetype** central to the existence of ***Universal Religion***.
- ❖ ***This Universal Spirituality (SIAB) phenomenon*** can be either **abstract** or **abstracted**.

6.7 Conclusion

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 5

⁵⁵⁷ Professor Slater’s opinion, in William Ernest Hocking (1956) *The Coming World Civilization*, p. 208

⁵⁵⁸ William Ernest Hocking (1956) *The Coming World Civilization*, p. 214

Subconscious Social Equality (SSE) – The Illumination of An Inherent Spiritual Core

There is a universal spiritual core inherent in the World's Religions. This universal spiritual core, that is inherent, can spur peace and progress in multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan societies, via education to/which will reduce Horizontal Inequality (H.I.). From this universal spiritual core springs forth i. the settings of each particular Religion & ii. The effectiveness of the settings. This universal spiritual core is a universal cause for the effectiveness of the function of Religion. In particular local settings, a (particular) Religion has an effective function; and is effective due to a universal cause and principle; due to a universal spiritual core inherent to it, causing the conditions (local settings & particular features of Religion). To effect Subconscious Social Equality (SSE) Academia and other Comparative Religion Educators can teach SIAB. Teaching SIAB can cause a positive subconscious social effect; a Subconscious Equal Social State of Mind; an SSE. SIAB, the illumination of a spiritual core inherent in Religions, thus is a Subconscious Teaching via Comparative Religion to reduce Horizontal Inequality in multi-religious, cosmopolitan societies; and in Human Society in general. Subconscious Social Equality (SSE), via SIAB, will soften/reduce both religious and secular extremism. SSE will then naturally, as a matter of inevitable course, facilitate and generate peace and harmony in the Human milieu. Subconscious Social Equality (SSE) will negate the conflict caused by 'conscious' differences in 1. Appearance (Physical & General) and 2/History; subconsciously enabling Social Equality, and the Peace, Progress, and General Human Development thereof.

Bibliography

- Alfred**, A. J. (1970) 'Pope Innocent III as Crusader and Canonist: His Relations with the Greeks of Constantinople, 1198-1216', *Church History* 39: 1, pp. 133-134.
- Anderson**, J. N. D. (Ed.) (1950) *The World's Religions*. London: The Inter-Varsity Fellowship (Staples Printers Ltd.).
- Armstrong**, K. (2001) *The Battle for God. Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. London: HarperCollins.
- Asad**, T. (1993) *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Atmananda**, S. (1966) *The Four Yogas. The Four Paths to Spiritual Enlightenment*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
- Aurobindo**, Sri (1972) *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Pondicherry (India): Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Publication Department.
- Baird**, R. M. (1989) 'Picturing God', *Journal of Religion and Health* 28:3, pp. 233-239.
- Barnes**, M. (2010) 'Religious Pluralism' in J. Hinnells (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Barton**, G. A. (1917,1919) *The Religions of the World*. NY: Greenwood Press, Publishers (USA: The University of Chicago Press).
- Ben-Rafael**, E.; Sternberg, Y. (eds) (2010) *World Religions and Multiculturalism. A Dialectic Relation*. Boston: BRILL (Koninklijke Brill NV).
- Berger**, P. L., Luckmann, T. (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
- Berger**, P. (1969) in *The Social Reality of Religion*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Beverluis**, J.(ed) (2000) *Sourcebook of the World's Religions*. Novato, California: New World Library.
- Bhagavan**, D. (1932) *The Essential Unity of All Religions*. Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.; Madras, India; London, England: The Theosophical Publishing House.
- Binns**, J. (2002) *An Introduction To The Christian Orthodox Churches*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bouquet**, A. C. (1967) *Comparative Religion. A Short Outline*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd.

- Burridge**, R. A., Sachs, J. (eds) (2018) *Confronting Religious Violence*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press.
- Burrow**, J. W. (1966) *Evolution and Society: A Study of Victorian Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Calhoun**, C., Rojek, C., Turner, B. (eds) (2005) *The SAGE Handbook of Sociology*. London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Carmody**, D. L., Carmody, J. T. (1984) *Ways to the Center: An Introduction to World Religions. Second Edition*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company (Wadsworth, Inc.).
- Chander**, B. K. Jagdish (1977) *The Way and the Goal of Raja Yoga*. Delhi: God-Fatherly University of Brahma Kumaris.
- Charanis**, P. (1952) 'Aims of the Medieval Crusades (1095 – 1444) and How They Were Viewed by Byzantium', *Church History* 21: 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 123-134.
- Chetananda**, S. (1986) *Swami Vivekananda. Vedanta: Voice of Freedom*. NY: Philosophical Library Inc.
- Chevannes**, B. (1998) *Rastafari and Other African-Caribbean Worldviews*. New Brunswick, New Jersey, U.S.A.: Rutgers University Press.
- Chidananda**, Swami (1984) *The Philosophy, Psychology and Practice of Yoga*. Himalayas: The Divine Life Society.
- Cohen**, S. J. D. (1993) *Diasporas in Antiquity*. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press.
- Cohen**, S. J. D. (1999) *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*. California, U.S.A.: University of California Press.
- Creel**, H. G. (1956) 'What is Taoism?', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 76, No. 3, July-Sept., pp. 139-152.
- Davie**, G. (1994, 2000) *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing Without Belonging*. Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.
- D'Costa**, G. (1996) 'The Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions', *Religious Studies* 32: 2, pp. 223-232.
- Edmunds**, J., Turner, B.S. (2002) *Generations, Culture and Society*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- El Hamel**, C. (2002) 'Muslim diaspora in Western Europe: The Islamic headscarf (Hijab) in the media and Muslims' integration in France', *Citizenship Studies*, 6 (3): 293-308.

Ellwood, R. S. (ed.) (1998), *The Encyclopedia of World Religions*. NY: Book Builders Incorporated.

Eck, D. (1993) 'In the Name of Religions', *The Wilson Quarterly* 17: 4, pp. 90-100.

'**Exclusive** Salvation', *The Catholic Layman* 7: 75, 1858, pp. 25-26.

Farruqi, I. R. (ed.) (1974) *Historical Atlas of the Religions of the World*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co.; London: Collier Macmillan Publishers.

Fox, J. (2010) 'Secularization' in J. Hinnells (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.

Geanakoplos, D. J. (1955) 'The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches', *Church History* 24: 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 324-346.

Ghiloni, A. J. (ed.) (2015) *World Religions and Their Missions*. New York, U.S.A.: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Graham, A. C. (1989) *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*. Illinois: Open Court Publishing Company.

Graham, A.C. (1991) *The book of Lieh-Tzu. A Classic of Tao*. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Graham, A.C. (2001) *Chuang-Tzu. The Inner Chapters*, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

Gundry, D. W. (1966) *Religions. A Preliminary Historical and Theological Study*. London/NY: Macmillan & Co. Ltd./St Martin's Press.

Guyana Standard (February 8, 2021) 'UG collaborates with IRO Guyana to promote harmony among religious groups' <https://www.guyanastandard.com/2021/02/08/ug-collaborates-with-iro-guyana-to-promote-harmony-among-religious-groups/>

Hainsworth, D. K.; Paeth, S. R. (eds.) (2010) *Public Theology for a Global Society*. Michigan: Wim B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Hare, A. P. (1998) *The Hebrew Israelite Community*. U.S.A.: University Press of America.

Harnack, A. (1961) *The History of Dogma*, Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library.

Hassan, R. (2002) *Faithlines. Muslim Conceptions of Islam and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hervieu-Leger, D. (2000) *Religion as a Chain of Memory*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Hinnells, J. R. (Ed.) (1984) *A Handbook of Living Religions*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd.; NY: VIKING Penguin Inc.

Hinnells, J. (Ed.) (2010) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second Edition*. New York & Canada: Routledge.

Hocking, W. E. (1956) *The Coming World Civilization*. New York, U.S.A.: Harper.

Hopfe, L. M. (1983) *Religions of the World. Third Edition*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.; London: Collier Macmillan Publishers.

Hopfe, L. M., Woodward, M. R. (Ed.) (2009) *Religions of the World. Eleventh Edition*. NY, San Francisco, Boston, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Cape Town, Hong Kong, Montreal, Singapore, Madrid, Mexico City, Munich, Paris: Vango Books (Pearson Education LTD).

Huntington, S. P. (1993). "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3): 22-49.

Huntington, S.P. (1997) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hylton, P. (2002) *The Role of Religion in Caribbean History*. Washington, D.C.: Billpops Publications/ Morris Publishing.

Isherwood, C., Prabhavananda, S. (1947) *Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*. California: Vedanta Press.

Isherwood, C. (ed.) (1963) *Vedanta for the Western World*. London: Unwin Books.

James, W. (2002) 'The Reality of the Unseen', in *God*, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, pp. 277-298.

Jha, R. C. (1973) *The Vedantic and the Buddhist Concept of Reality as Interpreted by Samkara and Nagarjuna*. India: Mukhopadhyay.

Johnson, W. O. (1963) 'Non-Christian Salvation', *Journal of Bible and Religion* 31: 3, pp. 216-224.

Jordan, M. (2006) *In the Name of God. Violence and Destruction in the World's Religions*. Phoenix Mill, UK: Sutton Publishing Limited.

Joshi, K. S. (1967) *Yoga and Personality*. Allahabad: Udayana Publications.

Kant, I. (1960) *Religion Within The Limits Of Reason Alone*. New York: Harper & Row.

King, W. L. (1970) 'Eastern Religions: A New Interest and Influence', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, pp. 66-76.

- King, R.** (2010) 'Mysticism and Spirituality', in J. Hinnells (2010) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Kirkland, R.** (2004) *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*. NY, London: Routledge.
- Krishnananda, S.** (2010) *The Realisation of the Absolute*. India: The Divine Life Society.
- Langley, M.** (2002) *Eyewitness Religion*. London, NY, Munich, Melbourne, Delhi: Dorling Kindersley Ltd.
- Lao Tzu.** *Tao Te Ching*. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1963.
- Lau, D. C.** (1963) *Lao Tzu. Tao Te Ching*. London: Penguin Books.
- Lau, D.C.** (1979) *Confucius. The Analects*. London, England: The Penguin Group (PENGUIN BOOKS).
- Lessa, W. A.** (1958) *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*. NY: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Lewis, H. D., Slater, R. L.** (1966) *World Religions: Meeting Points and Major Issues*. Oxford: Alden Press.
- Lincoln, B.** (2003) *Holy Terrors. Thinking About Religion After September 11*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lincoln, B.** (1985) *Religion, rebellion, Revolution. An Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Collection of Essays*. London, UK: The Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Little, D.** (1999) 'Rethinking Human Rights: A Review Essay on Religion, Relativism, and Other Matters', *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 27: 1, pp. 149-177.
- Lopez, D. S. Jr. (ed.)** (2004) *Buddhist Scriptures*. London, England: Penguin Books.
- Lopez, D. S. (ed.)** (1996) *Religions of China in Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Luckmann, T.** (1967). *The Invisible Religion. The Problem of Religion in Modern Society*. New York: Macmillan.
- Luhmann, N.** (1984) *Religious Dogmatics and the Evolution of Societies*. New York/Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Lynch, G.** (2010) 'Religion, media and cultures of everyday life', in J. Hinnells (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.

MacIntosh, D. C. (1926) 'The Meaning of God in Modern Religion', *The Journal of Religion*, 6:6, (pp. 457-471).

Malidoma, P. S. (1994) *Of Water and the Spirit. Ritual, Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman*. New York, U.S.A.: The Penguin Group.

Markowitz, Fran (1998) 'Israel as Africa, Africa as Israel: "Divine Geography" in the Personal Narratives and Community Identity of the Black Hebrew Israelites', in Alexander Paul Hare (ed.) (1998) *The Hebrew Israelite Community*, Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Mathur, D. C. (1972) 'The Concept of Self in the Upanishads: An Alternative Interpretation.' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 32(3), 390–396. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2105571>.

Meister, C., Copan, P. (eds) (2010), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. London & NY: Routledge.

Men, H. (1990) *Secrets of Mayan Science/Religion*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Company Publishing.

Morgan, D. (2001) *The Best Guide to Eastern Philosophy & Religion*. New York: Renaissance Books.

Moses, A. M. (2007) *African Philosophy: The Demise of A Controversy*. Ile-Ife, Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited. (Chapter 7) Reprinted from *Journal of Cultures and Ideas* (ALADA CIRCLE), University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Vol. 1, December 1983, pp. 31-59.

Moyser, G. (2010) 'Religion and Politics' in J. Hinnells (ed) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.

Nagasawa, Y. (2011) *The Existence of God. A Philosophical Introduction*. London & NY: Routledge.

Navlakha, S. (1921) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, in R. E. Hume (1921) *The thirteen principal Upanishads translated from the Sanskrit, with an outline of the philosophy of the Upanishads and an annotated bibliography*. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.

Nicholas, T. (1996) *Rastafari. A Way of Life*. Chicago, IL, U.S.A.: Research Associates School Times Publications & Frontline Distribution Int'l, Inc.

Nikhilananda, Swami (1946) *Self Knowledge (Atmabodha)*. NY: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center.

Noss, J. B. (1974) *Man's Religions (Fifth Edition)*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.; London: Collier Macmillan Publishers

- Opoku, K.A.** (1978) *Traditional West African Religion*. Singapore: FEP International Private Limited.
- Paden, W.E.** (2010) 'Comparative Religion' in J. Hinnells (ed) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Popovski, V., Reichberg, G. M.** (2009) *World Religions and Norms of War*. Tokyo, NY, Paris: United Nations University Press.
- Radhakrishnan, S.** (1933) *East and West In Religion*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Randall, A. B.** (2007) *Holy Scriptures as Justifications for War. Fundamentalist Interpretations of the Torah, The New Testament, & the Qur'an*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Riesebrodt, M., Konieczny, M. E.** (2010) 'Sociology of Religion' in J. Hinnells (ed) *The Routledge Companion to The Study of Religion. Second edition*. London and New York: Routledge. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Robertson, A.** (1954) *The Origins of Christianity*, New York: International Publishers.
- Robertson, R.** (1992) *Globalization, Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: Sage.
- Robinet, I.** (1997) *Taoism. Growth of A Religion*. California: Stanford University Press.
- Roof, W.C.** (1999) *Spiritual Marketplace. Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion*. Princeton, NJ/Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Roth, H.** (1999) *Original Tao: Inward Training and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rouner, L. S. (ed.)** (1984) *Religious Pluralism*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Rowe, J. G.** (1959) 'The Papacy and the Greeks (1122-1153)', *Church History* 28:2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 115-130.
- Rowe, J. G.** (1959) 'The Papacy and the Greeks (1122-1153) (Part II)', *Church History* 28:3, 1959, pp. 310-327.
- Runciman, S.** (1957) 'The Eastern Schism. A Study of the Papacy & the Eastern Churches during the XI th and XII th Centuries', *Church History* 26:2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957, pp. 181-182.
- Ruf, H. L** (2005) 'Encounters and Responses: Sameness and Difference in World Religions', *International Journal on World Peace* 22: 3, pp. 25-49.
- Sahadat, J.** (1998) *Ways to Meaning and A Sense of Universality*. Mississauga, Ontario: Canadian Educators Press.

Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination. California: Vedanta Press, 1947

Sharma, A. (1998) *The Concept of Universal Religion in Modern Hindu Thought.* NY, U.S.A.: PALGRAVE.

Smith, H. (1991) *The World's Religions.* NY: Harper San Francisco (HarperCollins Publishers).

Smith, W. C. (1981) *Towards a World Theology. Faith and the Comparative History of Religion.* London: The Macmillan Press Ltd.

Stewart, F.; Brown, G.; Mancini, L. (2005) *Why Horizontal Inequalities Matter: Some Implications for Measurement.* Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, CRISE (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.), 2005, Working Section, no. 19.

Sutherland, S., Houlden, L., Clarke, P., Hardy, F. (1988), *The World's Religions.* London, UK: Routledge.

Taimni, I.K. (1961) *The Science of Yoga.* Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.: The Theosophical Publishing House.

The Guyana Chronicle. The Nation's Paper (Feb. 7, 2021) 'UG collaborates with IRO Guyana'. <https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/02/07/ug-collaborates-with-iro-guyana/>

The Thirteen Principal Upanishads. London: Woodsworth Editions Limited, 2000

Turner, B. (2005) 'The Sociology of Religion' in C. Calhoun, C. Rojek, B. Turner (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Sociology.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

U.S. Department of State (2021) 'Report on International Religious Freedom: Guyana'. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/guyana/>

Utriainen, T. Husgafvel, V. Knott, K. (Eds) (2024) 'Religion and Spirituality as Sites of Learning', *Approaching Religion* 14:2. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30664/ar.144834>

Vivekananda, S. (2009) *Complete Book of Yoga by the Veteran Swami Vivekananda,* Delhi: Vijay Goel Publishers.

Voss, C. H. (1968) *In Search of Meaning. Living Religions of the World.* Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Company; Canada: Nelson, Foster & Scott Ltd.

Watson, B. (1993) *The Lotus Sutra.* Chichester, NY: Columbia University Press.

Wieczynski, J. L. (1969) 'Khomyakov's Critique of Western Christianity', *Church History* 38:3, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 291-299.

Wiener, P.P. (ed.) (1951) *Leibniz Selections. The Modern Student's Library*. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Wiles, M. (1996) in *Archetypal Heresy. Arianism Through the Centuries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press.

Wilhelm, R. (1972) *Confucius and Confucianism*. London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Yogananda, P. (2008) *The Science of Religion*. U.S.A: Self Realization Fellowship.