

Lecture 2

Conceptualising Religion & Spirituality

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Definitions of Religion - 1

- “A man’s religion is what he would die for rather than abandon.” (H. Bosanquet) (Meaning: whatever man believes in, he holds firm on to...)
- “A body of samples which impede the free exercise of our faculties” (Salomon Reinach)
- “[T]he feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine” (William James).

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Definitions of Religion - 2

- Religion is the “opium of the people” (Karl Marx).
- “The essence of religion consists in the feeling of an absolute dependence. Religion is the consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us ” (F. Schleiermacher 1768-1834).
- “Religion is the quest of life by means of symbols” (Lord Raglan).

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Definitions of Religion - 3

- “Religion is morality tinged with emotion” (Mathew Arnold).
- “Religion is a set of beliefs, practices and institutions which men have evolved in various societies” (T. Parsons).
- “Religion is the recognition that all things are manifestations of a power which transcends our knowledge” (Herbert Spencer).
- Human recognition of a superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship (Concise Oxford Dictionary).

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The Seven Dimensions of Religion (Ninian Smart)

- *Ritual*: Forms and orders of ceremonies (private and/or public) (often regarded as revealed)
- *Narrative and Mythic*: stories (often regarded as revealed) that work on several levels. Sometimes narratives fit together into a fairly complete and systematic interpretation of the universe and human's place in it.
- *Experiential and emotional*: dread, guilt, awe, mystery, devotion, liberation, ecstasy, inner peace, bliss (private)
- *Social and Institutional*: belief system is shared and attitudes practiced by a group. Often rules for identifying community membership and participation (public)

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The Seven Dimensions of Religion (Ninian Smart)

- *Ethical and legal*: Rules about human behaviour (often regarded as revealed from supernatural realm).
- *Doctrinal and philosophical*: Systematic formulation of religious teachings in an intellectually coherent form.
- *Material*: Ordinary objects or places that symbolize or manifest the sacred or supernatural

Smart, Ninian. *Secular Education and the Logic of Religion* New York: Humanities Press, 1968

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Five dimensions of Religion

- (1) *ritual* activities (including, but not only, "church" attendance);
- (2) *ideology* or adherence to the principal beliefs of the religion;
- (3) *experience* or the "feeling" aspect of religion;
- (4) the *intellectual* side of religion, which involved religious "knowledge" and was frequently measured by such activities as reading religious publications (including, but not only, sacred texts);
- (5) the *consequential* dimension, which attempted to measure the "effect" of an individual's religion in its other dimensions upon his or her "life."

C. Y. Glock and R. Stark, *Religion and Society in Tension* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965)

Religion versus spirituality

- **Religion:** Creed, Code, Cult, Community
- **Spirituality:** "a search for meaning, for unity, for connectedness, for transcendence, and for the highest of human potential" (Emmons, 1999/2003, p. 5).

Spirituality may not include faith in God



I am Rafikil

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Spiritual-but-not-religious

- 40% of American respondents and 20% of German respondents identify themselves this way (Csof, Hood, & Keller, 2009).

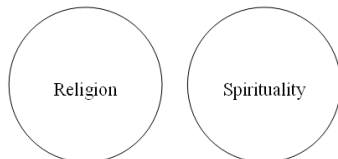


Figure 1: Either/Or model

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Both/And Model



Figure 2: Both/and model 1.

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Figure 3: Both/and model 2.

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Interactive Model

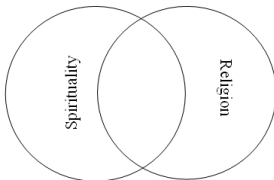


Figure 4: Interactive Model

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Religiosity & Spirituality

High Spirituality Low Spirituality	1	2
	Spiritual-but-not-religious <i>Quest</i> Sacred or Secular Search for significance	Religious Spirituality <i>Intrinsic Religion</i> Sacred & Secular Search for significance
	3	4
	Neither religious nor spiritual Secular Searching OR no search for significance	'Empty' Religion <i>Extrinsic Religion</i> Sacred No search for significance
	Low Religiosity	High Religiosity

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Thanks to Dr. Joanna Collicutt

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Religious Spirituality as Intrinsic Religion

- **Differentiation:** The individual expresses an internal order of religious sentiments which are maintained in a multiplicity.
- **Dynamism:** The mature religious sentiment exhibits a willingness to break out of the comfort zone of magical thinking and self-justification.
- **Consistent morality:** Intense religious sentiment is able to transform character.
- **Comprehensive:** Since mature faith just knows 'God is' but does not narrowly insist 'God is precisely this', it is tolerant and inclusive.
- **Integral:** Mature religious sentiment expresses harmony that brings about freedom.
- **Fundamentally heuristic:** "A heuristic belief is one that is held tentatively until it can be confirmed or until it helps us discover a more valid belief."

Allport, *The individual and his religion*.

Religious Spirituality as Mature Faith (Fowler)

James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981).

Mature faith could emerge in the last two stages of development as Conjunctive Faith and Universalising Faith:

- **Conjunctive Faith** = recognition of the paradoxes of one's faith going beyond reason; although one may not uncritically accept contradictions, "God" is seen to include mystery and paradox; an attempt to integrate religious symbols and the truths that the symbols signify.
- **Universalizing Faith** = that seeks inclusiveness while still maintaining firm and clear commitments to values of universal justice and love. They are able to live their lives to the full in the service of others.

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3D Religious Spirituality

a movement towards the self, a movement towards the transcendent (God), and a movement towards others and the world.

Joanna McGrath proposes the same in relation to posttraumatic growth after brain injury:

"upwardly directed 'vertical spirituality'",
 "inwardly directed 'interior spirituality'", and
 "outwardly directed 'horizontal spirituality'."

Joanna McGrath, "Posttraumatic Growth and Spirituality after Brain Injury", *Brain Impairment*, 12,2 (2011): 82-92.

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3D Religious Spirituality

