

A Commentary on Religion

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Chapter 1

Are Religious and Political Ideas Delusional¹

Different ideas that humans hold help shape their psyche over time. Some ideas occur simply- for instance the interaction between cognition and emotion can influence a single thought in a few seconds or minutes. Other ideas are much more complex and can influence a person over a long period of time. These ideas can be political, religious and spiritual or just common ideas related to how they manage their lives.

The different types of ideas that people hold can be grouped into different categories. I already mentioned how there are religious ideas and common daily ideas - but there are more categories that can be described such as delusional ideas, ideas related to emotional speculation and ideas that are more concrete and mathematical.

People can make instinctual and deliberative decisions, and similarly, there are deliberative and instinctual ideas. A deliberative idea can be more or less concrete (like mathematics) and an instinctual idea can also be more or less concrete. The question then

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m57421/1.1/>>.

is what combination of deliberative and instinctual classifies the different ideas, and how much emotional speculation is involved.

If an idea is held and it becomes reality then how it influences the person changes significantly usually. For instance, someone may have the idea that they want freedom of speech, however obviously if the government is restricting their actual freedom of speech it might greatly impact their emotions. So the interaction between the ideas and goals that people have with how these goals occur in reality is significant for a persons psychological, spiritual and emotional well-being.

1.1 Are Religious Beliefs Political Ideas?

Religious beliefs are different from political beliefs - although in order to incorporate some beliefs into society they might need to be political policies.

For instance, Jesus's message of an earthly and heavenly kingdom could be viewed politically as democratic or 'positive' governments to take over the earth. Jesus's message was just a religious way of phrasing a political message - there are different ways of thinking about certain concepts. One way is religious - but that often relates to more practical beliefs that people think about every day.

Maybe the trinity in Christianity of God, the Son and the Holy Ghost can be seen as a division of power like how the government of the united states tries to have a balance of power between the presidency, the congress and the supreme court.

However, how God influences peoples lives is very different from how the government influences peoples lives. God created the world, Jesus was sent to bring a kingdom to God's world - and the holy spirit resides in each person.

So does an earthly kingdom mean that all government policies could come from god? What about the ways in which people treat other people - perhaps that could be considered to be like the holy spirit - something that guides our actions and behaviors. God creating the world at the beginning of the universe is very different from a current earthly kingdom or a spirit residing in each person.

Perhaps someone can be just spiritual and reach their own conclusions of how they should act and interact and the values they hold instead of being taught by a religion. That could be classified as personal values with spirituality and religious values if they follow the values of their religion.

1.2 What Religious Ideas Mean

Religious ideas such as immortality and a spirit can actually be translated into more common or practical words or terms. I already mentioned how religious ideas were just a different way of thinking of things. Being in touch with your spirit or with reality could be described in a different way that is more understandable to people - such as how in scientology people can repeat painful experiences on purpose people who are Hindu could get in touch with the 'ultimate reality' through suffering and sacrifice.

1.3 Pain and the Unconscious

Pain is an important part of the unconscious mind. If you think about it, since emotion is unconscious then pain is extremely unconscious because pain is both physical (instead of intellectual) and emotional.

Many religions involve dealing with pain and pleasure and the influence of those feelings on people's lives.

1.4 What exactly is a religious idea, a value, or a political policy?

Religious ideas can be political policies. But the important question really is - what kind of ideas are religious ideas? Are they psychological ideas or morals that guide someones life? Not all religious ideas can be described exactly as values. I am not just suggesting a debate about the definitions of the words 'political policy or theory' 'value' 'moral' and 'religious idea' but I am also suggesting that entire doctrines can be described in that fashion.

Chapter 2

Are Religious Values Psychological Constructs?¹

In order to start this essay first I need to ask the question - what is a mental construct? The unconscious mind can construct or manifest many ideas that the conscious mind holds. A humans imagination is largely unconscious because it is too difficult to think clearly about such things. Dreaming is unconscious and uses a significant amount of imagination, but I am not suggesting that the conscious minds ideas that come from an unconscious imagination are false or not accurate.

An example of an unconscious motivation generating a mental construct is a religious value - a religious value can mean different things to different people and be interpreted in different ways because it is an abstract concept. There are many ideas and concepts that people think about every day that are abstract; however some are very powerful concepts and have a long term hold over a persons mind. A single value can tilt or modify how more regular emotions are felt throughout a day. An example of such a value could be depriving oneself of excessive amounts of pleasure - there

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m57399/1.7/>>.

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is the real emotional effect (the reality) - and there is how that person thinks about that experience, both could both help determine the feelings involved.

So there are different religious values. Different religions value different things, ideas and values. They also have different ways of worship. Ideas about how much pleasure someone is supposed to experience in life is one of the major concepts. What is a spirit? What is reality? Who is god? These are some of the important religious questions that different religions ask,

Sacrifice is an important part of religious values because it relates to how much pleasure people experience in life. If someone sacrifices, then their understanding and experience of pleasure can change. This could include personal sacrifice and sacrificing something to god - sacrificing something to god is a more historical form of sacrifice, possibly because those objects were more valued and scarce and activity in life was different so more attention and value was placed on rituals. However, personal sacrifice such as fasting is also difficult and something that changes someones values and forces them to think.

So there must be some combination of perspective and reality that is constantly interacting and changing. The different types of reality are emotional reality, physical reality, and intellectual reality. Physical reality is extremely powerful and emotions are physical in many ways - and that is perhaps why they are so potent. It is subjective to label an experience as being physical, emotional or intellectual. However, if those three classifications can be related to religion then more detail can be found.

For instance sacrifice or fasting or prayer worship could be considered to being physical realities because all involved a lot of physical effort. Prayer worship is a physical effort because it involves speech. Obviously, since the intellectual and emotional combine those physical activities could also be extremely intellectual. It is

easy to see how they are physical = however the important and even spiritual question is to ask how they are intellectual.

2.1 Spirituality

Saying that the intellectual is spiritual is comparing ghosts to spirits - a ghost is like a spirit because it has no physical form, and similarly, the physical is extremely real and emotionally potent.

What is the definition of spirituality? I like this definition: predominantly spiritual character as shown in thought, life, etc.; spiritual tendency or tone. Something needs to be added to that what this "spiritual" character is, however. I would say that it is the same attitude that a religious person would have about being religious, that is, by "spiritual character" they mean someone who is likely to be religious. Spirit is someone's soul, so spirituality would be focused on the self, but focused on the self in a manner in which they can understand it more deeply than just standard cognitive thinking about it, so religion might help you understand yourself in that "higher" manner. That is, it is almost like faith to believe in yourself like that, so it is like religion. The relationship between faith/religion and spirituality then is that both are "higher" methods of understanding the world. Spirituality is just focused on the self, while religion is focused on god. So there is an inner peace that spirituality brings because spirituality is about yourself. You can also say it is about your soul, not just your state of being, because soul is who you really are, the core of yourself, and if you are more connected to the core of yourself you are going to be more at peace, and therefore have more of that spiritual connection, which is one that is a "higher" connection to yourself, like how religion is a "high" connection to god. This "high" connection is higher because it is connected to who you really are, which is the spirit part of spirituality which implies a soul, because when you imagine someone as being a spirit or a ghost you take away

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their physical form and focus more on who they are mentally, or the core of their being or soul. Also use of the word soul, like that is using energy from your soul, appeals more to your higher morals which you would consider to be more consistent with who you are at the core.

So people can compare reality with intellectual and religious questions that they can ask themselves. Does it matter how a person perceives how much pleasure they experience? If someone experiences a certain experience (which would be a combined emotional, physical and intellectual reality) then how would it matter how it is perceived? It can be perceived over the long term and over the short term by a person - and perceived cognitively and emotionally.

Chapter 3

Connecting Religion, Politics and Psychology¹

How could the study of Physics, religion and psychology be related?

Physics is about the connection of matter to matter - and psychology is about understanding abstract emotional concepts. It would seem that it would hard to find a connection between the two subjects. However it is probably easy to find a connection between religion and psychology and politics.

Politics consists of political theories that governments use to govern their populations. These ideas and political policies can help influence the lives of the people in the population of their respective governments.

Could a person want their government to tell them what to do with their life? Not all religions don't necessarily tell someone what to do with their lives - if someone has freedom of religion then they can decide whatever beliefs they want to follow - whatever religion or religions those beliefs come from.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m57420/1.2/>>.

But that certainly doesn't relate to the study of physics. Physics is simply physical objects interacting with each other - while politics and religion are both about the ideas that people hold about life - such as how to live their lives and what to think about life in general and their individual lives and how they are being led.

This raises the question of the point of such thinking - how would it matter if someone thinks that they are being sinful (in Christianity for example) - or how would it matter if someone thinks that they are living a peaceful and pleasure-less life (in Buddhism and Hinduism for example)?

Religions certainly have a set of ideas that they follow - if you link up all of their studies, worship rituals and sacred texts then a more concise set of ideas about their beliefs could be formed that is easier to understand. Religions do a ton of stuff that could be reinterpreted into a more simple form or set of ideas that describes what those religions do for each person who follows that set of beliefs - if that is the best way to describe a religion anyway - as a set of beliefs.

Maybe someone could simply believe in the policies of their government instead of believing in a religion. At least the policies of their government have a real impact on the persons life. However, perhaps some religious ideas have a real impact on a persons life also - each religious idea would have to be analyzed and thought about - then the impact of that idea on the persons life could be further explored.

Chapter 4

A Physics work in progress - the Beginning¹

I have only studied physics a little - however theoretical or philosophical physics is a subjective topic that could be speculated upon by lay people - some of this article could relate to how the universe was formed.

It would seem to me that physical particles have to combine in manner that makes sense, but the question is - what is logical physical connection? Is it logical for one particle to bond or interact with a different particle?

What is inside empty space? Could it be that there are small particles in empty space that aren't visible or have any interactions with other particles?

Maybe I can say that a 'particle' is the smallest unit of matter or the smallest unit of something that can be physically observed or actually exist - I don't know if someone else has defined something like that before.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m57415/1.1/>>.

There are different ways that different particles interact - they have charges and strong and weak forces - however, are those all the ways in which they can interact, bond, attract and repel each other, and so on and so forth?

What is the difference between energy and matter then? Energy is matter (or could be viewed as being matter), and matter is energy because both are physical substances. I could define the smallest particles as physical substances - but if they don't exist anywhere then maybe they can be transformed into different types of matter because they are pure energy - but does that statement even make any sense - all energy has to be matter because it has to physically exist.

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This essay is a personal commentary on all of the major religions and their religious viewpoints.

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