

HARMONY AND TENSION: NAVIGATING SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Abstract

Navigating Science, Religion, and Mental Health, this book chapter explores the complex interrelationships among these three fields. It examines how people and communities balance religious convictions, scientific advancements, and mental health procedures while recognizing that conflicts may occasionally arise. The chapter explores historical precedents, current issues, and future opportunities for combining science, religion, and mental health to support holistic well-being. It does this by drawing on multidisciplinary viewpoints and empirical research. This chapter intends to foster productive debate among researchers, practitioners, and the larger community by offering case studies, theoretical frameworks, and practical insights.

Keywords: Spirituality, Reincarnation, Dissociative Disorder, Societal trust, Supernatural experience, Thomas Edison, Vedic.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Both science and religion equally influence human life. Science is based on facts and experiments, while religion is based on faith and belief. Both serve as vast sources of human power. Where science leads humans to the attainment of all physical pleasures, religion brings spiritual power. Albert Einstein, a great scientist in the field of science, stated that without religion, science is blind, and without science, religion is lame. In this context, Swami Vivekananda mentioned that where science ends, there spirituality begins. Can we choose one over the other? If yes, which one should it be? Before choosing a side, consider this: every year in Nepal, during the Gadhimai Festival, nearly two lakh fifty thousand animals are sacrificed. However, in scientific clinical trials, many animals are killed or rendered incapacitated every day. So, if both are violent, which one is right, and which one is wrong? Reflecting on what is right and wrong, NASA scientists claim that the universe's birth occurred due to a big explosion. On the other hand, Hinduism states that Lord Brahma created the universe through the formation of a lotus. So, who is making claims based on evidence, and who is merely relying on tradition? We know that both are important, but which side is more crucial? Today, we will face both head-on and seek answers to all the questions.

According to Hinduism, as mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita and the Vedas, we are currently living in the first day of Lord Brahma's fifty-one-year cycle. Interestingly, you might not understand this thought right away. According to Hinduism, our universe's birth happened with Lord Brahma, and its end will also be with him because he is the one who created all forms of life on Earth.

However, unlike other gods, Lord Brahma is not immortal; his lifespan is only a total of one hundred years. This might seem confusing, as a hundred years would have long passed by now.

So, how is he alive even after death? Well, when I said a hundred years, I wasn't talking about human years. According to Hinduism, one year of Lord Brahma is equivalent to three hundred and sixty billion human years. So, based on this calculation, our universe was created approximately fifteen billion trillion human years ago, and its total lifespan will be three hundred eleven trillion human years. If we discuss the knowledge taught in these scriptures during that era, people were taught essential things like astronomy, astrology, self-defense, Ayurveda, and how to live life in Gurukuls.

Are we learning these things today, or do we only learn something when we have already mastered it? These teachings are present in our history, but are we incorporating them into our present? The answer is probably a resounding no. And if we are not making them a part of our present, how will the coming generations know about these things? Perhaps, by that time, these teachings will fade away, just as the knowledge imparted in Gurukuls has vanished and remains confined to the pages of history.

Now, let's shift to the perspective of science. When was our birth, and when will be our death? Why not consider the viewpoint of science? According to the Big Bang theory, widely accepted in science, our universe was formed approximately thirteen point eight billion years ago, and during its creation, all matter was intensely dense and compacted at a singular point

known as singularity. One day, a massive explosion occurred in this singularity, and rapid expansion began, causing the universe and all matter to expand rapidly outward, and this expansion continues forever.

Regarding the end of the universe, science doesn't provide a definitive answer like religion. However, based on research, the atheist's claim about the beginning of the universe is founded.

Because in 2016, NASA discovered the oldest galaxy ever found with the help of the Hubble Ultra Deep Field's HD images, named GN-z11. This galaxy is approximately 13.4 billion years old, and scientists estimate that the Big Bang occurred about 13.8 billion years ago based on its rapid movement away from us. It's almost like rewinding and determining when the bomb exploded if you know the speed of debris from bomb explosions and the age.

So, viewed from this perspective, atheist science says, 'Now let's move on to the next factor; let's discuss the purpose of religion and science.' Three hundred thousand years ago, our ancestors, Homo sapiens, used traditional methods to bury the bodies of their deceased in controlled ways. This indicates that even at that time, religious thoughts existed. But then the question arises: How and why did religion come into existence?

Well, in response to this question, the psychologists of Queen's University say that when our ancestors started living in groups, they had to work together without chaos. Therefore, some rules and regulations were established. The group leader, whom we now call the religious leader, played a crucial role. For example, in Hinduism, we find mythological stories like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. These stories teach us about love, courage, truth, violence, hatred, honesty, and provide lessons on various emotions. It also explains the consequences if we let these emotions dominate us. These lessons are still relevant today and guide our lives. In reality, religion was created to establish socialization and harmony among people.

Does science also teach these qualities? Well, Frankly speaking, not exactly. Science's roots and Mesopotamia date back to around 3,200 BCE. Science emerged from the need to tackle all the irregularities of nature. The boundary between humans and nature was drawn because of science.

Maybe, so far we can predict nature's behavior. In fact, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle argued that science has three forms: practical, political, and theoretical, and there are no restrictions or limits in any of them. According to him, scientific human curiosity was a way to satisfy the hunger for knowledge, keeping the mind healthy. Extreme curiosity indicates low depression levels. People who are extremely curious perform anti-serum work for depression. So, basically, science equals curiosity.

This curiosity drives humans to go beyond their limits, like Stephen Ludwin, who injected snake venom into his body for thirty years to become immune to it. So, basically, science provides equal tools for curiosity. Now, when it comes to purpose, religion had a relatively easy purpose. And for sure, religion gave it a point. Religion gives a purpose to many people that science may not be able to provide.

At the end of the day, the purpose depends on your perspective, and there is no purpose that you cannot create for your life. For those who do not want to or cannot create a purpose for their lives, religion provides a way. Religion and science - we have learned where they came from, so let's see how far their branches extend so that we can also discuss the impact of these two in today's times.

Positive impact of science and religion: Many religions in this world teach worshipping all aspects of nature. For instance, Hinduism has around 33 million deities, and almost all of them are associated with an animal. People worship these deities and their animals, and thus, it instills a sense of respect for animals. This idea comes from the fact that at least once in our history, animals were associated with deities. This thought inevitably comes to mind. However, do all the things mentioned in religion work so well or do we interpret those things according to our convenience? Because, as I mentioned earlier, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience? Because, like I said, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience? Because, like I said, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience?

These questions arise. But whether all the things mentioned in religion are so good or not, the fear of them persists in everyone's mind. This thought comes naturally. But do all the things mentioned in religion work so well or do we interpret those things according to our convenience? Because, as I mentioned earlier, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience? Because, like I said, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience? Because, like I said, when we started living in society, some rules and laws were made to run that society properly. And our sages wrote all those laws in books, turning them into stories and passing them on to the next generation. But is everything mentioned in religion so good, or do we interpret its meaning according to our convenience?

So, where is this all going? Science with time has become involved, but religion has not. Religion does not want to bring about a change in itself with time, and perhaps one example of this is seen. The great scientist Galileo, in 1632, published a book stating that the Earth does not orbit the sun but all the planets orbit the sun. However, this idea was not accepted in the church and among religious people because, according to the Bible, the center of the universe is Earth, and everything else orbits around Earth. They followed the geocentric model at that time. So, based on this religion opposing idea, the church accused Galileo of vehement suspicion of heresy or simply put, misunderstanding.

And he was sentenced to house arrest for the rest of his life. Now, such rigidity was never present in science and might never happen. In science, there is no bias for color, black or white, rich or poor, normal or disabled, upper caste, lower caste, etc. Science is not so rosy all the time. Science's logic is simple. As long as you have evidence and can prove it mathematically or logically, everything is acceptable. These scientific questions are tested if confirmed or disproved through experiments, research, and innovation. So, science is updated based on experiments, research, and innovation, but religion. And that's why, my friends, this Science conducts numerous trials to prove its experiments, involving a variety of subjects such as mice, frogs, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, monkeys, fish, viruses, bacteria, etc., all of which are sacrificed for the purposes of biology and training. So, isn't this similar to the sacrifices made in religion? Where we kill innocent animals for our benefit. Here, both religion and science are sailing in the same boat, as in Nepal, the Gadhimai Festival is celebrated every five years, where more than two hundred thousand animals are sacrificed, as mentioned in this article.

Let me tell you, this is not the only festival or ritual of its kind. There are many traditions worldwide where innocent animals are sacrificed. If you check the share numbers, you'll see that science has taken more lives or made them disabled in clinical trials. In this perspective, science may be considered cruel for a positive purpose. But maybe that's also wrong. Taking a life for our benefit is wrong. We need to find a way to conduct trials without causing harm. Nowadays, the scientific community is also adopting this mindset. So, in conclusion, I would say that both science and religion are two sides of our lives, and we need to look at them from different perspectives. Just like science, if religion evolves with time, its shortcomings can also be eliminated. What are your thoughts on this?

Regarding the origin of humans according to religions, there are various beliefs across different religions. If you're curious about the Hindu perspective, it is said that Brahma, the creator, emerged from the navel of Vishnu. Brahma then created the first man, Manu, and the first woman, Shatarupa. From their offspring, the human race expanded, and different deities and sages were born.

According to the Quran - Human life began with the creation of Adam and 99 (Eve), two individuals, one male and one female. The Quran describes how Allah created Adam: "We created man from dried clay, from molded mud..." (15:26).

According to the Bible - The book of Genesis narrates the story of creation, including the sea, sky, birds, and animals, and ultimately, Adam. In Chapter 2, Verse 7, it is written: "Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground..."

Origin and history of humans according to science - Approximately seven million years ago, during the Pleistocene period, significant changes occurred as Earth transitioned into a new ice age. This event led to the emergence of humans on Earth. The process involved the gradual cooling of Africa, transforming dense jungles into cooler and drier environments. This led to a decline in large trees, making way for grasslands. The shift affected primate species, and some adapted to walking on two legs. This separation from other primate species marked the emergence of Homo species.

Around 6.7 million years ago, the Australopithecus species, which were earlier similar to other primate species, evolved into Homo species. This evolutionary process continued, and approximately 2.4 million years ago, Homo erectus emerged. Over time, various hominin species underwent transformations, leading to Homo sapiens, the modern humans we are familiar with today.

The period before recorded history is referred to as prehistory. Approximately seven million years ago, hominins, the ancestors of modern humans, diverged from other primate species. The Australopithecus species, such as Sahelanthropus thropus, survived for millions of years, adapting to changing climates and environments. Eventually, Homo species emerged, including Homo habilis, Homo erectus, and others.

The evolution of Homo sapiens involved significant changes, with the development of cognitive abilities, the control of fire, and the improvement of stone tools for hunting and gathering. The transition to Homo sapiens occurred around 1.8 million years ago, marked by the Homo erectus species developing the ability to control fire. This led to changes in diet and cooking methods, impacting brain size and cognitive abilities.

The story explores various stages of human evolution, including the cognitive revolution, agricultural revolution, industrial revolution, and digital revolution, as detailed in the book "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind." The evolution of Homo species involved adaptability, tool development, and changes in diet, ultimately leading to the diverse and complex human societies we see today.

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Approximately 300 to 400 thousand years ago, two of the most intelligent Homo species emerged through evolution - Homo neanderthalensis and Homo sapiens. Both these species were quite curious, similar to modern humans. Therefore, living in a small area in South Africa was not sufficient for them. Around 80 to 100 thousand years ago, they began to step into other regions of Africa and beyond, spreading rapidly across the entire world. However, if one had to step into a dense forest, it could pose numerous challenges. There was the risk of encountering wild animals, and many other uncertainties. So, what could be the solution to this? This question haunted them day and night. They couldn't comprehend how they would hunt if they faced a dangerous animal. And if they couldn't find any prey, where would they get their food? Pondering over these questions, their perspective on their tools changed. They started sharpening the tips of their stone tools even more and began using them, along with wood or bones, to create spears. They also started fashioning some stones into rectangular, serrated knives, allowing them not only to kill an animal but also to cut its meat into smaller pieces. This made it easier to carry the prey over long distances and hide it from other animals. However, was modifying only their tools sufficient?

Animals like deer, which had a main source of nutrition in the form of Homo sapiens' hominids, were swift and required teamwork to catch. Teamwork could only develop when individuals could communicate with each other through some medium, fulfilling this need. Due to this necessity, approximately four to fifty thousand years ago, a language was developed that you can understand, which was not as complex as today's languages. But during the hunt, it was sufficient for them to coordinate with each other.

Something happened that remains unsolved to this day. Around 30 thousand years ago, Neanderthals suddenly disappeared. The reasons for this are still under investigation. However, after this time, only one Homo species survived, and that was us.

Don't start applauding Homo sapiens just yet, because in their fate, there were still many events to unfold. After the disappearance of Neanderthals, a mini ice age occurred on Earth, lasting almost 15 thousand years. Since Homo sapiens had learned to control fire from their ancestors, they didn't face much trouble dealing with this ice age. But the scarcity of food during this ice age taught them an important lesson. There was no guarantee of finding food

after a hunt, so around 10 thousand years ago, the tradition of agriculture began. This allowed them to focus on things other than just fulfilling their food needs.

Modernization progressed, and approximately 5 thousand years ago, holes were dug to store and preserve items. The spinning wheel was invented, fitting it into carts for transportation. But their minds wanted to expand beyond the Earth's boundaries. Therefore, about two and a half thousand years ago, people started taking an interest in astronomy. During the industrial era in 1760, the bullocks in these carts were replaced by steam engines, bringing us to where we are today. In this entire journey, we have only scratched the surface of our history.

The god of science in ancient Egyptian mythology is commonly considered to be Thoth. Thoth is associated with knowledge, writing, and science. In Greek mythology, the god Apollo is also linked to science, medicine, and knowledge.

In the context of modern science, Galileo Galilei is often referred to as the "father of modern science." He played a leading role in promoting the scientific method and made significant astronomical discoveries using the first telescope.

It's important to note that in the realm of science, the acceptance or denial of the existence of a higher power or deity is a matter of personal belief. Science, as a discipline, does not provide evidence for or against the existence of a divine being. The exploration of the fundamental particles, as mentioned, is a scientific endeavor that seeks to understand the underlying principles of the universe but does not address questions of the divine directly.

II. THE CONCEPT OF REBIRTH IN SCIENCE VERSUS RELIGION

What is reincarnation? Is there really something like reincarnation? After a person dies, do they take another birth? This is a question that must have crossed the mind of every individual at some point in their life, and many people, regardless of their faith, often contemplate the idea of reincarnation. Almost all religions, except for a few, acknowledge the concept of reincarnation.

However, from a scientific perspective, those who believe in science might say that I am talking nonsense. There is no such thing. It depends on what you believe in. Still, I am going to tell you about reincarnation to compel you to think. Understanding reincarnation will come to us when we understand what birth is.

If you believe in science, you might know that energy exists in the entire universe. Now, you might wonder what energy I am talking about. For anything to operate, to maintain the momentum of anything, we need energy. Let's take a simple example: your vehicle, whether it's a car or a bike, requires energy to move. Similarly, our bodies, this organism, needs energy to function, and we obtain that energy from food. Now, you may ask, where did the energy in the food come from? Everything we consume, all the food and drink, comes from natural resources like air, water, sunlight, and the earth.

These resources collect energy, transform it into fruits, flowers, and leaves, and that energy is what we consume as food. All living beings, whether animals or plants, derive energy from these natural resources. Thus, it is evident that energy exists throughout the universe. All

living entities, such as animals, plants, fruits, flowers, insects, humans, contain energy. Without energy, this body does not function.

If you have a good understanding of science, you might be familiar with the concept of energy conservation in science, where energy cannot be created or destroyed but can only be transformed. Similarly, our bodies have energy that allows them to function. Our bodies move, we can think, we can speak—all of this is possible because of energy. Our bodies cannot function without energy. When the body dies, this energy transforms, and it may enter another body, which we call reincarnation. So, energy doesn't go anywhere. When a body becomes unfit, the energy, not suitable for that body, exits and enters another body, which we call reincarnation or rebirth. Many cases like this have been documented in science as well.

Whether you believe in science or not, there are many things beyond the scope of science, and many people in the world have had experiences of life after death or taking another birth after death. When researchers investigated and found that all their statements were true, science was also surprised. So, somewhere today, science is forced to think that perhaps reincarnation exists. Science also accepts that energy changes its direction and takes another form. The energy within our bodies, which we call the soul or, in scientific language, energy, takes another birth. So, I hope you understand the concept of reincarnation.

The subject of reincarnation has been discussed for a long time. Did you know that behind reincarnation, there are not only spiritual aspects but also some facts connected not only with Hinduism but also described in other religions? According to Hindu scriptures, every living being harbors a soul considered a part of the Supreme Soul. When a person dies, only the body remains.

After death, the soul moves from one body to another. It is explained in scriptures that a person reaps the fruits of their past actions in the next life. Good deeds lead to positive outcomes, while negative deeds result in consequences in the subsequent life. Our present situation in life is believed to be a result of actions from past lives. Birth, death, and rebirth constitute the cycle of life, which continues until the soul attains liberation, known as moksha. These religions uphold the concept of reincarnation. Not only in Hinduism but also in Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, belief in reincarnation is prevalent. Additionally, ancient cultures like Egypt and Greece also embraced the concept. Scientific institutions have explored this, finding about 20% of adults expressing belief in reincarnation. Even prominent figures like Dalai Lama and scientist Thomas Edison have shown belief in it. The Vedas elaborate on reincarnation, outlining prayers in the Atharvaveda for acquiring virtues and spiritual wisdom in the next life. The ultimate goal is liberation from the cycle of life and death. The scriptures mention certain rules regarding reincarnation. In Vedic scriptures, it is stated that most of the time, reincarnation occurs in the human form. However, based on past actions, a person could also be reborn as an animal or a plant. Generally, one obtains three births of the same gender, and in each birth, a different gender is experienced. Performing good deeds in reincarnation helps resolve past negative actions, but one must endure hardships for past wrongdoings and find happiness through virtuous actions. It's important to note that immediate rebirth doesn't occur after death; the soul goes through seven stages, and based on karmic conditions, a human birth is obtained when appropriate circumstances arise. The Bhagavad Gita also emphasizes that only humans can attain liberation (moksha), and the soul undergoes a journey through 8.4 million life forms, with liberation being the ultimate goal of life.

III. THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE GODDESS'S ARRIVAL

If there were no soul, then why do people acknowledge and not deny these occurrences? In other words, the search for God continues – the arrival of the goddess, the presence of spirits, and who or what is that presence. This question is relevant for all of you because almost all of us have witnessed an incident where some individuals start behaving strangely. The way their heads move vigorously, the words spoken in a loud manner are said about them by people as if the person is possessed.

In rural areas, encounters with the spirit world are common, such as the recognition of goddesses, spirits, and entities. However, even in towns and cities, one can witness women shaking their heads vigorously during goddess worship or vigils.

And we have all heard about places where people claim to have supernatural experiences, like Mehandipur Balaji, where people supposedly start leaping and jumping upon encountering spirits. Observing all this, one begins to believe that there is something invisible around us. Ghosts, spirits, goddesses, and ancestral deities might exist, and that's what affects these people. However, some believe that it's all a hoax. You might be a bit surprised to hear that all this is not entirely a drama or a hoax. In reality, there is something unseen around us. Let's explore the influence of the upper air in the language of the village, the secret behind all this.

If you recall the Bollywood psychological thriller-comedy-horror film 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa' that came out in 2007, you might remember the character Avni played by actress Vidya Balan. She lives with her husband in a mansion where she hears about the presence of a spirit from the family members. The women of the family tell her about a beautiful spirit confined to a room, and the elderly king of the family fell in love with her, leading to the death of his lover at his own hands. Later, he too committed suicide by hanging. One day, fire opens the restricted room where a prohibition is imposed. After that, strange incidents start occurring in the mansion.

Despite efforts by family members and others, the events do not stop. Then comes actor Akshay Kumar, playing the role of a psychologist, who investigates the case. Slowly, as the curtain is lifted from the events, it is revealed that the one causing all the commotion is the spirit itself.

After this revelation, changes in her behavior start becoming visible during the day. Ultimately, when her true behavior is revealed, it turns out she is suffering from a serious mental disorder called Dissociative Disorder. This is a mental condition where an individual can experience different personalities within themselves. The causes can be various, such as childhood trauma, loneliness, or mistreatment by family or people around. In such cases, some people prefer the world of imagination over the physical world, and they develop affection for an imaginary character or someone who is no longer alive, whom they deeply love.

The same happened with the character Avni in the movie. Abandoned by her parents in her childhood, she was left with her grandmother. Her entire world revolved around her grandmother and her stories of kings, queens, and royals.

After marriage, when she came to live with her husband in the mansion, she heard about the tragic story of Manjulika, a character associated with the mansion. Avni felt deep empathy for Manjulika, who became apparent to her during the nighttime. Then she starts dancing, and the family members perceive it as the possession of Manjulika's spirit.

In conclusion, the film reveals that she was indeed affected by a severe mental illness, and during the night, she would embody the personality of Manjulika. The family misunderstood and feared Manjulika's soul.

The film serves as a reminder that sometimes, what seems supernatural or paranormal may have its roots in mental health issues, highlighting the need for empathy and understanding in such situations."

"Avni sees the reality of Manjulika in her husband and wants to take revenge on the king. Then, at the end of the film, the hero of the movie, in a psychological way, fulfills the desire of Manjulika's character from within Avni, and she gets better.

I shared the story of the film with you because it's not just a cinematic tale. In reality, often symptoms of such mental illnesses are misunderstood by family members as the influence of spirits, black magic, or possession. Then, they immediately take the person to a tantric, and the game of financial and physical exploitation begins in the name of exorcism and magic removal.

In the delusion of the presence of a ghostly goddess, there are other mental illnesses as well, such as acute psychosis. In this illness, the patient becomes suddenly aggressive, suspects others, and exhibits strange behaviors like spinning their heads. Conversion disorder includes symptoms like sudden seizures resembling epilepsy, fainting, headaches, chest pain, rapid breathing, breath-holding, sudden loss of vision, dizziness, and more. Dissociative disorders involve talking about things from another life instead of personal life, speaking like others, changing personality, going into the character of another person.

These illnesses are major reasons, as shown in the movie. Talking excessively, excessive anger, excessive spending, considering oneself the biggest and always right, interpreting things silently, not getting involved in any work, staying in stress, losing oneself, giving more attention to being alone, talking to oneself in isolation, and laughing at weird things without any factual basis are symptoms of these disorders. Multiple personality disorder involves living in various characters. You will also find this topic in the film 'Don.'

Even well-educated people may not know about these illnesses. So, think about rural people; what do they know? Then, all the ghosts, goddesses, and signs in the village mostly come to women. We should also understand the reason for this.

Most Indian women are living in a society where they are suppressed from childhood. Their desires are rarely considered. Every decision is imposed on them. Everything, from their clothes to choosing their husbands, is done without asking for their preference. From childhood to marriage, parents do not ask them about their wishes. After marriage, in-laws often do the same. Sometimes, suppressing their desires makes them mentally ill, and the words like ghosts, spirits, or goddesses become terms that represent their voice against oppression and exploitation."

"Indian social system has never reached a point where a woman's troubles, her happiness, and her leadership could be considered as an important issue. She doesn't even have the freedom to express her desires and pains. In such a scenario, she forms a relationship with her stress, trying to survive in this traditional society. And our male-dominated society never wants to accept that it is due to his oppressive behavior that she is forced to become someone else. In reality, her desires, her struggles, were never acknowledged by her family in this traditional society. She was never given attention, and nobody ever listened to her. But when the goddess arrives, everyone bows down to her, and her husband falls at her feet, uttering words of praise.

After the goddess arrives, demands are made in the name of the goddess, which she, living in fear, kept hidden. If the ghost comes, everyone trembles, and sometimes, she starts liking this illness. In the beginning, she might feel that all this is happening on its own, but after happening three or four times, she understands. She has control over it, and depending on the situation, the goddess or the ghost starts appearing. Then, taking her to the Ojha (traditional healer), she finds support and a conducive environment. Special kinds of music, bright lights, incense, and the continuous chanting by the tantric create an atmosphere where her personality becomes dominated by the deity or ghost.

Because this is a mental illness, sometimes the psychological aspect of the tantric works, and the family of the victim feels that the tantric has expelled the ghost. It has pacified the goddess. Many times, if the atmosphere of the (environment) doesn't suit her, the personality of the goddess or ghost does not manifest. At that time, she pretends to act to escape from that environment. Since there is no effective treatment for this mental illness, she is sometimes taken to another tantric. Although these remedies provide some relief to the woman, she is not completely successful in getting rid of these behaviors. Due to the husband's tyranny, loneliness, work pressure, illness, depression, and lack of treatment resources, her struggles continue. The knee remains bent due to these issues. Sometimes, due to the distance in the family because of the fear of her personality, the situation worsens even more."

"Tantrik babas and family members, together, continue to attribute her mental issues to supernatural entities, be it ghosts, deities, or ancestral spirits. They treat her not like a patient but as if possessed by demonic or divine powers, making most of these mental illnesses reach a dangerous state. Some individuals feel an affinity towards their condition, making them feel powerful in this state. Due to this, they start receiving respect and service. Eventually, some of them become tantrik babas or healers themselves. Whether they are ghosts or not, it's just a chemical imbalance in their minds.

In the history of humanity, millions of people must have died, and around every living person, there are hundreds of wandering spirits. Let's assume all souls aren't good; still, all good souls must be enjoying bliss in heaven or paradise. But the deities of the household who were killed, whom we call gods or ancestors, are indeed their own. A doll with a little mercy calling out to the goddess or deities might get as much compassion and trust as no one else would. But why don't these greedy deities come otherwise? Why are they so demanding and greedy that they only come for offerings and worship? By using the names of these entities, tantrik ojha babas exploit innocent people financially and physically, turning them into victims of this illness. Many times, this illness goes beyond the limits of treatment.

When it comes to women, the arrival of a goddess, possession by spirits, or experiencing some kind of supernatural presence often results from mental illnesses and the suppression of women's desires. Until the status of women in our society changes, equality among humans will remain a distant dream. This illness may be mental, but its root cause lies in the social structure. Until we change society, nothing will truly change."

"Science does support some religious beliefs and practices, and one such example is the tradition of bathing in the Ganga river. The act of throwing coins into rivers during rituals is also supported scientifically. This practice is not merely a superstition; scientists also endorse it for bringing good luck. Let's explore this topic in detail.

Firstly, have you ever considered the scientific reason behind Sikhs wearing turbans? It turns out that tying a turban leads to the wrapping of 26 tiny E-bones in the skull. This not only helps in maintaining composure but also has several other benefits.

The world is home to over four thousand religions, each with its own rituals and practices passed down through generations. While not all beliefs are scientifically proven, some religious practices have scientific backing. For instance, the act of bathing in the Ganges has been associated with cleansing sins and diseases for thousands of years. Moreover, throwing coins into rivers during rituals is considered to bring good luck. In 2016, research conducted by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) in Nagpur, India, revealed that the Ganges River has exceptional antimicrobial, antifungal, and antibacterial properties compared to other rivers.

The Ganges River originates from the Himalayas, receiving water from the Himalayan range. Due to this, it contains three times the amount of bacteria than other rivers. The bacteria present in the water, including Escherichia, Enterobacter, Monella, Salmonella, Shigella, and Vibrio species, are three times more concentrated than in other rivers. This unique composition helps in eliminating diseases such as tuberculosis and diarrhea.

Religious scriptures often tell stories that symbolize deeper meanings. For instance, the legend of Lord Shiva allowing the Ganga River to flow through his hair represents the Milky Way falling from space to Earth. The Ganga River, considered sacred in Hinduism, is believed to have purifying properties.

However, it is crucial to understand that scientific reasons and religious beliefs often coexist. The scientifically proven properties of the Ganges water do not negate the spiritual and cultural significance attached to it. While these traditions were initiated with scientific reasoning, the current state of the Ganges, polluted with heavy metals and contaminants, has led to a decline in its purity. Despite this, the age-old customs and rituals continue, reflecting a blend of science and spirituality."

After coming from a funeral, it is necessary to take a bath. Now, when we are talking about bathing after attending a funeral, how can we leave behind the ritual of bathing after attending a funeral? Various religious books, including those of Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, and many others, mention that if someone comes into contact with a deceased person or comes from the cremation ground, they should take a bath without touching anyone or anything first. Following this ritual is considered a purification of the self

from a religious perspective, while scientists term the same process as sanitation and cleanliness.

From a common-sense perspective, when someone dies, their body cannot fight against bacteria, leading to the decomposition of the body. When the body is buried or cremated, everyone present comes in contact with those bacteria, which can spread deadly diseases.

For instance, in 1845, a young doctor named Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis in Vienna observed that women suffering from childbed fever, a disease affecting women during postpartum recovery, were only those who delivered in the hospital. Women who gave birth at home were not facing this disease. After various studies, Dr. Semmelweis discovered that doctors were delivering babies without washing their hands after postmortem procedures. Hospital rules were then changed to make handwashing compulsory before operations, and mortality rates dropped significantly.

I and many others have thrown coins into rivers like the Ganga, Yamuna, or Narmada several times because our religious beliefs suggest that doing so pleases the gods and brings blessings in the form of good luck and prosperity. While the belief may not be scientifically proven, science suggests that such practices may lead to good health. Historically, most currency coins were made of copper, which has beneficial properties like being antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic, and antioxidant. It helps balance thyroid gland function, manages hypertension, arthritis, and supports heart health and digestion while reducing the impact of aging on the body.

When people learned about the benefits of drinking water stored in copper vessels, they started throwing coins in rivers, creating stories like the Wishing Wells. Those who drank well water also received benefits. In my opinion, these beliefs originated from religious beliefs and continue to be followed today. It's a different story that now we are using stainless steel coins in the rivers, which have no benefits. Behind this, there may be a scientific angle.

"HoliBooks while pregnancy" means reading books during pregnancy. I claim that you must have heard somewhere that during pregnancy, mothers often read religious texts like the Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Purana, and other scriptures. So why do they do that? Can the baby listen to and understand these things during this time?

Yes, the baby can indeed hear. From a scientific perspective, during the eighth week of pregnancy, the baby develops hearing skills, and after some time, the baby can recognize sounds and initiate bonding by identifying those sounds, creating a connection between the mother and the child. Reading is essential for bonding, but another benefit is that during the development of the baby's brain, the child stores information, leading to future advantages.

An example of this is the character Abhimanyu from the Mahabharata. It is believed that he heard the story of the Chakravyuha in his mother's womb and learned from it. If you have doubts about this example, it is scientifically proven. The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America conducted research where they stated that talking to babies helps them learn language discrimination skills, vocabulary, speech perception, and understanding capacity.

You might argue that even reading a normal book would help in development. "HoliBooks" has its reasons. Our religious books provide detailed explanations, such as how God is. The description of the story is written in a way that not only does the child learn words but also learns to visualize words and can learn language discrimination skills, vocabulary, speech perception, and understanding capacity during the same process.

During pregnancy, when a mother ties a turban, it indicates that her head, thoughts, and mind are dedicated to her creator, meaning her God. Guru Gobind Singh Ji also said that "My Sikh will be recognized because his turban will be different from others." However, did you know that there could be a scientific perspective behind tying a turban? Yes, let me tell you. When a turban is tied, multiple wraps create pressure on the scales, and about twelve thousand Solen Boss bind. Also, some pressure points on the forehead are pressed, creating a nerve figure in the mind and keeping the mind relaxed and functional throughout the day. It may seem to you that these people carry a lot of weight on their heads, but it's all about the mind, not the actual weight.

And did you know that tying a turban is not only about learning but also about other religions? Yes, there are various religions in the world that wear turbans. In Islam, religious leaders wear black and white turbans, and Sufis wear green-colored ones. In Hinduism, Gujaratis wear white, and Rajasthani turbans are colorful, and there is science behind these choices.

The incident that occurred in a small village in Jharkhand on December 9, 2016, was a shocking and heart-wrenching tragedy. A senior woman named Susari Guru was publicly set on fire by her neighbor Anita Somasi. Anita Somasi blamed Susari for the tragic incident involving a well-known source of black magic called "Vellon Saaw." She believed that Susari was a witch who had performed black magic, leading to the unfortunate fate of Anita's twin children. Saddened and frustrated, right?

However, this case is not an isolated incident; it's not just one case among millions. There are many such cases in Jharkhand and across India where women fall victim to witchcraft, black magic, and various superstitions. In extreme cases, their lives are lost due to these baseless beliefs and superstitions, without any scientific reasoning or logic. It's all about the concoctions that fermented in the mind of some ignorant person centuries ago.

Such stories were created, and today millions of people accept them without applying their own logic or critical thinking. Leaving aside others, let's look at those around us. Despite considering ourselves modern and intelligent, have we not refrained from speaking ill of someone after mentioning a crow on Saturdays? Have you never seen a friend or relative in your family who hasn't looked at a newborn baby without putting a black mark on its forehead? Don't go near a peepal tree in the dark; there might be witches there, and placing lemons and chilies around your house will solve everything.

What is all this? If not superstition, then what is it? Peer pressure, even science won't speak after saying something bad, right? Have you not seen anyone in your family avoiding non-vegetarian food on Tuesdays or Saturdays after speaking something inauspicious?

The question I am going to ask you now, answer it honestly. Have you never spoken a lie after talking about bad things in the dark? Have you never seen any friend or relative avoiding non-vegetarian food on Tuesday or Saturday? Has any new-born baby in your family not had a black mark put on its forehead after receiving a black vaccine? Don't go near a peepal tree at night; there might be witches there, and placing lemons and chilies around your house will solve everything.

What is all this? If not superstition, then what is it?

I did not say this sarcastically. I know the majority of superstitions are rooted in blind beliefs, but behind the shocking sound food superstition, there are perfectly explainable scientific reasons. In this video, we will debunk ten superstitions, and I will present the scientific explanations behind them. So, let's understand India's great beliefs, analyze scientifically, and then see what the whole affair is.

"Do not go under a peepal tree in the dark of night, as there is a witch (chudail) there. Now, if there really is a witch, why does she only come out to harm you at night? Because we are scared at night, and it is this fear that gives rise to such superstitions. But if we look closely, there is indeed a hardcore scientific fact behind it. Any tree, during the day when it undergoes photosynthesis, releases a significant amount of oxygen. But at night, without sunlight, photosynthesis cannot occur.

Of course, it cannot perform photosynthesis. Therefore, its normal respiration, meaning breathing, continues, and through this, the tree takes in oxygen from its surroundings. It releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) outside. Hence, generally, it is not advisable to sleep under any tree at night. Specifically, not under a peepal tree. The reason is that the peepal tree is so vast and large that sleeping under it can lead to your body taking in a heavy amount of carbon dioxide, potentially causing breathing problems, suffocation, and even death.

And perhaps our ancestors developed this tradition due to concerns about breathing problems. Placing lemons and chilies on doors, new houses, shops, or bikes - logic is applied to protect oneself from the evil eye. If you want to delve a bit deeper into this logic, there is a story that relates to the goddess Lakshmi's sister, who is responsible for poverty and misfortune. She prefers sour and spicy food, hence placing lemons and chilies on doors would keep her away. While it's not scientific, people follow this logic for protection. If you put lemons and chilies on your door, Lakshmi will eat them, be pleased, and leave without entering. White bhringraj oil may not be scientific, but I've done a bit more in-depth research and brought some probable scientific reasons for you. In ancient times, when people had to travel from one place to another, either on foot or by bullock cart, it took them several days to reach their destination.

Their path often led through jungles. In such situations, people would carry lemons and chilies with them. Lemons were chosen because they are hydrating agents and have various health benefits when mixed with water."

"Including prevention of dehydration, but not chili. In the jungles behind, there are many snakes. We all know that if there are snakes, snake bites are also common. So, how will you differentiate a venomous snake bite from a non-venomous one? In such cases, our ancestors

used to eat a chili. If the chili tasted spicy to them, it stimulated their nervous system, indicating that the snake was not venomous. If the chili did not taste spicy, it meant the snake was venomous, and they needed medical attention.

Now, friends, I don't know about you, but whenever I crave chicken, it always happens on Saturdays, and everyone knows the reason behind chicken. Monday is considered Lord Shiva's day, Tuesday is for Lord Hanuman, Thursday for Sai Baba, and Saturday again for Lord Hanuman. Now, some people consider Saturday as Lord Shani's day, and since consuming meat is considered impure, it is prohibited on these auspicious days. But some believe that there is a scientific reason behind it, stating that eating chicken and meat is not good for our physical and mental well-being.

We tend to become more aggressive due to the nature of the work. And now you can't understand a non-vegetarian, because they just can't give up chicken. So, if we can't stop their craving, we can at least impose a bit of restraint. Perhaps that's why our ancestors created these traditions.

Black mark on newborns - Now, in Hindu general belief in India, it is considered essential to apply a black mark on a newborn, especially on a Saturday, to protect them from the evil eye. The scientific reason behind it is that a black mark makes the child look a bit unattractive, which prevents the evil eye from affecting them. Now, to be honest, this reason is not very scientific. You may not believe it, but it tells us something important. In today's time, many people may not genuinely believe in these things, but they still participate in these superstitions. Why?

The simple answer in plain words is fear. Fear is the first need of humans, and fear precisely hijacks this need. Applying a simple black mark can dispel your fear. If you can keep yourself away from trouble, what harm is there in applying a black mark? Apart from that, there is one more thing that tricks you to the extent that you can't even recognize that thing yourself."

"Before doing any important work, you should eat yogurt and sugar. We all have this ritual, whether it's an exam, a school presentation, or a job interview, our mothers don't let us go without eating yogurt and sugar. Now, this thing gets integrated into your mind in such a way that you also feel that if you don't eat yogurt and sugar, the exam won't go well. Therefore, to avoid any risks, you eat, and surprisingly, your day turns out to be good. But can you really conquer the world by just eating yogurt and sugar? Is there any magical power in yogurt and sugar? It is believed so.

As I mentioned earlier, in the olden days, people used to travel either on bullock carts or on foot. Here, during the hot season, there is scorching heat, and the impact of yogurt, meaning nature, is to cool you down. It provides instant glucose, giving you energy. The logic is correct, but there is one more thing, and that is feeling good. By following these superstitions, you actually feel good. Right. You are in a mental peace, and your day goes well. You are not reactive and frustrated because you have faith in those things.

Maybe that's why when you believe in something, it's important to ask yourself a question mentally. The question is, 'Am I really believing in this?' Is there any scientific reason behind

it or not? Perhaps there might be a scientific reason behind it, or maybe fear is the only reason. In the state of fear, the human brain becomes desperate, and numerous beliefs start to create in the mind. The more illogical, unreasoned an individual is, the more superstitious thoughts they might have.

Perhaps when you believe in those things out of fear, it takes your mindset in the wrong direction. You'll engage in fear-based thinking that will make you weak and vulnerable, and your freedom will be restricted.

Scientific thinking makes you courageous and free. To explore the heights and depths of this world, you live fearlessly. Breaking the boundaries of fear, you become free and adopt the mindset of a free person.

IV. CONCLUSION

Different opinions are heard around the world regarding religion and science. While science relies on facts and reasoning, religion connects people through stories and beliefs. In this context, it is essential to ask the question: should humans trust more in science or religion? According to a study conducted by researchers from the University of Amsterdam, the arguments of scientists are more influential than religious beliefs.

In this study, researchers from the University interviewed scientists and spiritual leaders from 24 countries on approximately 10,000 subjects. The responses on different subjects were then compiled to prepare a report published on February 7, 2022, in "Nature Human Behavior." The study included several countries worldwide, such as India, the United States, England, Ireland, Chile, Belgium, Romania, Australia, Lithuania, Singapore, Brazil, Spain, Japan, Israel, Turkey, Canada, Denmark, China, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Morocco, Germany, and Croatia.

The study found that people in countries like India, China, Japan, Turkey, and Brazil tended to trust science more. On the other hand, in countries like the Netherlands, people were uncertain about whether to trust science or spirituality. Generally, Western Christian countries showed less trust in spiritual beliefs. In conclusion, the study suggests that most countries worldwide trust science more than spirituality.

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