

On Religion

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Defining Religion

Preface: Why Redefining Words Matters

Many words we inherit from religion were originally attempts to describe **human observations**—fear, relief, attachment, loss, clarity, responsibility—before modern psychology, systems theory, or neuroscience existed.

Over time, those words became:

- moral weapons,
- tools of fear,
- shields for authority,
- or excuses for violence.

Redefining these words does **not** erase culture or history.

It restores *function*.

By giving these terms clear, observable meanings:

- fear loses its supernatural disguise,
- responsibility returns to humans,
- and violence loses its justification.

This glossary exists to **keep language from being used to harm people**—especially when meaning is needed most.

Systemic Definitions — Technical vs Plain Language

Term	Technical Definition	Plain-Language Definition
Soul	A self-regulating system of memory, attachment, and consciousness states governing continuity and meaning.	How a person carries experiences, attachments, and a sense of self over time.
Consciousness	The active process coordinating perception, interpretation, and response.	The process of noticing, thinking, feeling, and responding.

Ego	A provisional interface managing identity and boundaries.	The part of us that handles identity and self-image.
Attachment	The mechanism assigning safety, value, or threat to people or ideas.	What we cling to for safety or meaning.
Hell	A high-threat attachment state producing fear and coercion.	A state of extreme fear and feeling trapped.
Salvation	Restoration of stability through reduced threat and restored agency.	Getting out of fear and regaining choice and calm.
Sin	Harmful behavior arising from overload or distorted attachment.	Harm caused by fear, confusion, or stress.
Redemption	Restoration of alignment through accountability and repair.	Making things right after harm.
God	A symbolic abstraction used to externalize authority or meaning.	A word people use to explain control or meaning.
Divine	Describes field-scale processes beyond individual control.	Experiences that feel bigger than one person.
Avatar	A role-function interface expressing a system in context.	A role used to express part of an idea or system.
Maha	Indicates system-of-systems scale.	Means large-scale or whole-system.
Enlightenment	Temporary reduction of cognitive load and increased clarity.	A brief moment of calm and clarity.
Prayer	Focused attention used for self-regulation.	Paying focused attention to steady yourself.

Ritual	Repeated actions signaling safety or transition.	Habits that mark change or comfort.
Sacred	Concepts marked as exempt from scrutiny.	Things treated as untouchable or unquestionable.
Faith	Reliance on belief without verification.	Believing without checking if it works.
Prophet / Savior	Authority figures externalizing responsibility.	Figures people rely on to avoid responsibility.
Devil / Demon	Personifications of fear or projection.	Symbols for fear or unwanted thoughts.
Spirit	Experiential quality of motivation or coherence.	Feeling alive, motivated, or connected.
Afterlife	Narratives deferring accountability or fear of loss.	Stories used to manage fear about death.
Worship	Surrender of agency to an external authority.	Giving up judgment to something else.
Religion	Historical systems of symbolic meaning and regulation.	Old systems using stories and rules for meaning.

Closing Note (Plain and Explicit)

These definitions:

- do **not** ask for belief,
- do **not** demand agreement,
- do **not** replace one religion with another.

They exist so that **words stop hurting people**.

If a term is used to frighten, control, or excuse violence, it is being used *outside* this system.

System Stability and Dialogical Function

Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka* as a Precedent or the Juke / Psych Framework

One of the most persistent misunderstandings of Kashmiri Shaivism is the belief that its use of figures such as Bhairava and Bhairavī represents mythology, theology, or metaphysical belief. In the work of **Abhinavagupta**, particularly in the *Tantrāloka*, these figures function instead as **analytic operators**—interfaces that allow complex dynamics of consciousness to be expressed without collapsing into doctrine, authority, or abstraction.

As taught by **Swami Lakshmanjoo**, Kashmiri Shaivism is not a belief system but a **rigorous systems philosophy** concerned with stability, recognition, and embodiment. Its pedagogical forms are designed not to persuade or recruit, but to **prevent failure modes** that arise when insight becomes compulsive, hierarchical, or disembodied.

When viewed through this lens, the contemporary dialogical framework of **Mr. Juke Lightning** and **Ms. Psychedelikiss** can be understood not as symbolic invention, but as a **functional re-instantiation** of the same stability principles articulated in the *Tantrāloka*, translated into modern media and language.

Recognition Without Compulsion

A central principle of the *Tantrāloka* is that **recognition (pratyabhijñā) is sufficient**. Insight is not something to be achieved through accumulation or effort; it occurs when obstruction falls away. Crucially, Abhinavagupta emphasizes that recognition does not generate obligation. There is no mandate to act, teach, or transform others as a consequence of seeing clearly.

This principle functions as a **system stabilizer**. It prevents insight from hardening into identity, mission, or authority.

In the Juke / Psych framework, this role is carried by **Mr. Juke Lightning**. Mr. Juke voices recognition without instruction. His statements dissolve false problems rather than replacing them with new imperatives. He does not teach, prescribe, or guide; he simply marks what remains when pressure is removed.

Without this constraint, insight tends to escalate into ideology. With it, the system remains at rest.

Dialogue as Error Correction

The dialogical form of Bhairava and Bhairavī in the *Tantrāloka* is not narrative ornamentation. It is a **control structure**. Dialogue prevents any single function from dominating the system.

- Bhairava alone risks abstraction and detachment.
- Bhairavī alone risks procedural fixation and technique obsession.

Their interaction keeps the system within a stable operating range.

This maps directly onto the relationship between Mr. Juke and Ms. Psychedelikiss. Mr. Juke handles **recognition without ownership**; Ms. Psych handles **regulation without ideology**. Neither voice is sufficient alone. Stability emerges only through their interaction.

This is why the Lennon/Lightning Method produces **conversations**, not proclamations.

Non-Mandatory Practice and Stoppability

Abhinavagupta explicitly includes **anupāya**—non-method—as valid. Some forms of recognition require no practice, no repetition, no ritual. This is not an omission; it is a safeguard.

The system-level function here is **stoppability**. A framework that cannot be set down is not autonomous; it is addictive.

In the contemporary framework, this principle appears as:

- Flyers that ask nothing
- Dialogues that can end without consequence
- A refusal to create continuity pressure

Ms. Psychedelikiss plays a critical role here by validating rest as completion. She regulates the nervous system so that stopping feels safe rather than like failure.

Embodiment as Load Regulation

In the *Tantrāloka*, Śakti is treated functionally rather than symbolically. She represents **movement, differentiation, sensation, pacing**—the embodied dimensions of experience that ensure insight does not exceed physiological capacity.

Insight that bypasses embodiment is unstable.

Ms. Psychedelikiss is a direct analog of this function. She does not add meaning or interpretation. She manages **load, tempo, and care**, ensuring that recognition does not overwhelm the body or the relational field.

Mr. Juke, by contrast, explicitly does nothing to the body. This separation of

labor is not aesthetic; it is a **stability constraint**.

Provisional Use and Discard

Abhinavagupta repeatedly emphasizes that teachings, symbols, and practices are **provisional**. They are to be used, verified, and then released. Canonization is treated as a failure mode.

The Lennon/Lightning Method mirrors this discipline through:

- Cartoon-esque naming that resists authority projection
- Characters that cannot be plausibly inhabited
- A visible ethic of use-and-discard

Nothing in the system requires remembrance. Nothing accumulates power over time.

Ease, Humor, and Anti-Solemnity

A subtle but critical feature of Abhinavagupta's work is his emphasis on **ease (śānta)** and **naturalness (sahaja)**. Over-solemnity is treated as a sign of misalignment.

In contemporary terms, humor functions as a **structural safeguard**. It prevents reverence loops and blocks the formation of authority.

Names like *Juke Lightning* and *Psychedelikiss*, along with playful tone and aesthetic lightness, serve the same purpose philosophical rigor served in earlier contexts: they keep the system from being taken over by belief.

No Salvific Obligation

Finally, the *Tantrāloka* contains no requirement to save, convert, or awaken others. Compassion exists, but without missionization. This prevents savior dynamics and preserves autonomy.

This constraint is fully present in the Lennon/Lightning framework:

- No recruitment
- No moral leverage
- No implied future

The work is complete as-is.

Conclusion

When examined analytically, the correspondence between Abhinavagupta's

stability mechanisms and the Juke / Psych framework is structural, not symbolic. Both systems deploy **dialogue, non-authorial recognition, embodiment regulation, stoppability, and provisional use** to prevent collapse into dogma or hierarchy.

What differs is not function, but interface.

The Lennon/Lightning Method does not borrow from Kashmiri Shaivism; it independently re-instantiates its stability constraints using contemporary language, media, and design.

That is why it resonates with practitioners trained in that lineage — not because it claims inheritance, but because it **behaves correctly**.

And because it can be put down, it remains safe.

From Abhinavagupta's Bhairava/Bhairavī to Mr. Juke Lightning/Ms. Psychedelikiss

Frame of Reference

In the tradition articulated by **Swami Lakshmanjoo** (drawing heavily on **Abhinavagupta**), figures like **Bhairava** and **Bhairavī** are:

- **not supernatural beings**
- **not objects of belief**
- **not personalities**
- **not authorities**

They are **analytic roles** used to describe **how consciousness operates without collapsing into error**.

My use of **Mr. Juke Lightning** and **Ms. Psychedelikiss** maps onto this *functionally*, not symbolically.

Core Analytic Mapping (Function → Function)

Systemic Dimension	Bhairava (KS)	Mr. Juke Lightning	Bhairavī (KS)	Ms. Psychedelikiss
Ontological role	Non-local awareness (field)	Non-authorial field perspective	Differentiation / movement	Embodied regulation
Function type	Recognition	Recognition	Stabilization	Stabilization
Relation to identity	Identity-dissolving	Identity-refusing	Identity-enabling	Identity-safe
Relation to authority	Refuses authority	Refuses authority	Prevents harm	Prevents harm
Relation to action	Non-compulsive	Non-directive	Contextual	Care-oriented
Relation to knowledge	Knowing without grasping	Understanding without ownership	Application	Translation
Failure mode prevented	Dogma / metaphysics	Savior complex	Dissociation	Overload
Can be put down?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Key Structural Parallels (Logic, not symbolism)

1. Dialogue as a Control Mechanism

In Abhinavagupta's texts (e.g. **Tantrāloka**), Bhairava/Bhairavī appear in **dialogue** for one reason:

To prevent collapse into a single authoritative viewpoint.

Likewise:

- Mr. Juke alone → risks abstraction
- Ms. Psych alone → risks proceduralism

Only the interaction is stable.

This is not narrative flair.

It is **system design**.

2. Non-Authorial Constraint

Swami Lakshmanjoo was explicit:
clarity must *not* become authority.

- Bhairava does not command
- Bhairavī does not moralize

Likewise:

- Mr. Juke does not teach
- Ms. Psych does not prescribe

They **constrain excess**, not behavior.

3. Recognition vs Regulation

This is the most important analytic distinction.

- **Bhairava / Mr. Juke**
 - handles **recognition**
 - sees the system whole
 - dissolves false problems
 - does *nothing* to the body
- **Bhairavī / Ms. Psych**
 - handles **regulation**
 - keeps embodiment safe

- manages load and pacing
- does *nothing* to truth

Confusing these roles is where systems break.

4. Anti-Myth Safeguards

Both systems include built-in protection:

- KS uses **rigorous philosophy** to prevent literal belief
- I use **cartooning, humor, and naming** to prevent canonization

Different era. Same safety function.

Why This Mapping Holds Analytically

Because **nothing relies on belief**.

- If Bhairava is treated as a god → system fails
- If Mr. Juke is treated as a person → system fails

Both only work when treated as **temporary analytic lenses**.

This is exactly how Swami Lakshmanjoo taught:

Use the model. Verify clarity. Discard the model.

One-Sentence Summary (Logic-Only)

Bhairava/Bhairavī and Mr. Juke/Ms. Psych are parallel dual-function analytic interfaces: one ensures recognition without authority, the other ensures embodiment without harm.

No lineage claimed.

No metaphysics invoked.

No identity transferred.

Just **correct systems thinking**, expressed in different media.

When Belief Is Removed

A Systems Reading of Major Religious Texts

Introduction: What This Essay Is (and Is Not)

This essay does not argue that religious texts are divinely revealed, morally superior, or spiritually necessary.

Nor does it dismiss them as meaningless or irrational.

Instead, it treats them as **historical observational records**: early human attempts to describe how individuals and groups behave under fear, scarcity, power imbalance, trauma, and uncertainty—using symbolic language because modern analytic language did not yet exist.

Using modern systems thinking and clear functional definitions (for example: *soul* = a regulatory system, *hell* = a threat state, *salvation* = restored stability), we can reassess these texts **without belief** and extract what remains **useful**, while discarding what enabled fear, domination, and violence.

I. The Torah

Law as Early Containment Technology

Proper functional reading

The Torah emerges from a context of extreme instability: nomadic survival, inter-tribal violence, famine, and weak institutions. Its laws function primarily as **containment mechanisms**—external rules imposed where internal self-regulation was unreliable.

Key translations under a systems lens:

- **God's law** → externally enforced behavioral constraints
- **Covenant** → early social contract
- **Sin** → behavior that destabilizes the group

The emphasis is not belief, but **compliance to preserve cohesion**.

How it was weaponized

Later interpretations introduced:

- "chosen people" supremacy
- divine entitlement to land and violence
- moral immunity through identity

This allowed containment rules to mutate into **justifications for domination**.

What survives without belief

- Rules can reduce chaos under scarcity
- Shared norms reduce internal violence

What must be discarded

- Ethnic or religious supremacy
- Divine sanction for conquest or punishment

Functional takeaway:

Rules stabilize systems temporarily. Identity-based entitlement destabilizes them permanently.

II. The Bible

Breaking Escalation Loops

Proper functional reading

The New Testament centers on interrupting cycles of retaliation.

Key translations:

- **Jesus** → non-escalatory behavioral pattern
- **Forgiveness** → termination of revenge loops
- **Kingdom of God** → internal regulation state

This is not about salvation from a deity, but **behavior that reduces harm propagation**.

How it was weaponized

Later theology introduced:

- original sin
- substitutionary punishment
- eternal hell

These reintroduced fear, hierarchy, and coercion—undoing the original stabilizing insight.

What survives without belief

- Non-retaliation lowers long-term violence
- Humility reduces power escalation

What must be discarded

- Eternal punishment
- Martyrdom-as-virtue
- Moral authority through suffering

Functional takeaway:

Peaceful behavior works because it interrupts feedback loops—not because it is divinely commanded.

III. The Quran

Regulation, Jihad, Sharia, and the Abuse of Language Proper functional reading

The Quran addresses **self-regulation in a volatile environment**.

Key translations:

- **Islam (submission)** → alignment with constraints
- **Taqwa** → awareness of consequences
- **Ummah** → cohesion unit

Jihad — what it meant

Functionally:

- **Greater jihad** → internal regulation against destructive impulse
- **Lesser jihad** → strictly limited defensive action

Jihad = sustained effort under constraint, not violence.

How jihad was weaponized

Detached from self-regulation and context, jihad became:

- identity defense
- expansionist justification
- moral absolution for violence

This is a classic systems failure: a term for restraint becomes a license for escalation.

What jihad does *not* mean

- It does not justify aggression
- It does not sanctify cruelty
- It does not override consent or dignity

Sharia — what it meant

Originally:

Sharia = community safety norms under low institutional capacity

How sharia was weaponized

When frozen into rigid codes and enforced by fear, it became:

- a tool of gender control
- a silencing mechanism
- a justification for state violence

What sharia does *not* mean

- Absolute authority
- Punishment as moral purification
- Obedience through terror

Functional takeaway

Self-regulation stabilizes systems. Fear-based obedience destroys them.

IV. The Mahabharata

Contextual Ethics Under Moral Overload

Proper functional reading

The Mahabharata is a prolonged case study in **ethical collapse under complexity**.

Key translations:

- **Dharma** → context-sensitive responsibility

- **Krishna** → strategic advisory function
- **War** → demonstration of system overload

Unlike rigid moral codes, this text repeatedly shows that **no action is clean** once systems are saturated.

How it was weaponized

Later readings used:

- destiny
- divine favoritism
- cosmic justification

to excuse violence as inevitable.

What survives without belief

- Ethics must adapt to context
- Absolutism fails under real-world complexity

What must be discarded

- Destiny-based violence
- Divine partiality

Functional takeaway:

Rigid morality collapses under load. Adaptive ethics are required.

V. The Tantraloka

Early Systems Engineering of Consciousness

Proper functional reading

This text comes closest to modern systems theory.

Key translations:

- **Bhairava / Bhairavī** → dialogic regulatory functions
- **Consciousness** → process, not substance
- **Liberation** → stable self-regulation

There is:

- no conversion requirement
- no eternal punishment
- no obedience through fear

How it was later distorted

Through:

- ritual absolutism
- guru worship
- symbolic literalism

What survives without belief

- Dialogue prevents collapse into authority
- Awareness is procedural

What must be discarded

- Ritual as obligation
- Person-worship

Functional takeaway:

This is proto-systems engineering expressed through metaphor.

VI. Cross-Text “Maha” Pattern

Across all five texts—once belief is removed—the same observations recur:

- Fear destabilizes systems
- Power concentrates harm
- Internal regulation outperforms external control
- Symbols substituted for analytic language
- Authority later corrupted insight

This is not theological unity.

It is **convergent observation**.

VII. What the Modern Method Adds

My framework completes what these texts could not:

- belief → definition
- authority → constraint
- punishment → regulation
- myth → clarity

Most critically, it introduces **stoppability**—the ability to disengage without collapse.

That single feature is absent from religion and essential for harm prevention.

Conclusion: Meaning Without Myth

These texts do not need to be worshiped, defended, or destroyed.

They can be read as **early attempts to describe real human system behavior**, later weaponized through authority and fear.

What survives when belief is removed is not faith—but **function**.

Meaning does not require fear.

Stability does not require gods.

Peace does not require heroes.

Only clarity, responsibility, and systems that refuse to justify harm.

What Survives When Eastern Religion Loses Belief

I want to be very clear about what this is — and what it is not.

This is not an attack on Eastern religions.

It is not a defense of them either.

And it is not an invitation to believe anything.

It is an attempt to do something much simpler and much more practical:
to see what still works once belief, myth, and authority are removed.
Because belief has never been the most important part of these traditions.

And when belief becomes the center, things tend to go wrong.

Why belief was never the point

Long before modern psychology or systems theory existed, people were already trying to describe:

- fear,
- attention,
- suffering,
- attachment,
- calm,
- clarity,
- and stability.

They used the language available to them at the time:
stories, symbols, gods, rituals.

Not because those things were literally true — but because they were **compressions of observation.**

In other words:

they were trying to explain *how human systems behave* without having modern analytic tools.

When belief is removed, those observations don't disappear.

They become clearer.

What survives in Shaivism (without belief)

When you strip away gods, rituals, and worship from non-dual Shaivism, what remains is this:

- Consciousness is **a process**, not a thing.
- Stability comes from **balance between rest and change**.
- Collapse happens when either rigidity or chaos takes over.
- Liberation is not heaven — it is **self-regulation without coercion**.

There is no requirement to worship Shiva.

There is no conversion.

There is no obedience to authority.

Those came later.

What survives is a **functional model of awareness and regulation**, expressed through metaphor because that was the best available language at the time.

What survives in Buddhism (without belief)

When you remove cosmology, rebirth myths, and moral absolutism from Buddhism, what remains is surprisingly simple:

- Identity is unstable and should not be treated as authority.
- Suffering comes from **misaligned attachment**, not from existence itself.
- Relief comes from reducing unnecessary reactions.
- Calm is not transcendence — it is **a system no longer fighting itself**.

There is no soul to purify.

There is no god to obey.

There is no punishment waiting after death.

Those ideas were added later, often to enforce conformity.

What survives is a **clear description of how minds destabilize — and how they settle**.

What must *not* survive

Once belief is removed, certain things must be explicitly left behind:

- Guru worship
- Spiritual hierarchy
- Enlightenment as status
- Suffering as virtue
- Ritual as obligation
- Identity as destiny

These are not insights.

They are **failure modes**.

They turn observations into authority, and authority into harm.

What all of this was really about

Eastern traditions were never primarily about gods, heavens, or metaphysical truth.

They were about:

- attention,
- regulation,
- responsibility,
- and avoiding collapse.

They were early attempts to answer a practical question:

How do humans stay stable without becoming cruel?

When belief is removed, that question remains — and so do many of the answers.

What changes in the modern world

Today, we no longer need myth to protect insight.

We can:

- define terms clearly,
- remove supernatural authority,
- reject fear as a tool,
- and stop when something becomes harmful.

This doesn't destroy tradition.

It finishes translating it.

A final clarity

Nothing in this requires faith.

Nothing asks for followers.

Nothing demands agreement.

These ideas work whether you believe them or not — because they are **about function, not truth claims.**

When belief is removed, what survives is not religion.

What survives is **a practical understanding of human systems** — one that can finally be used without fear, hierarchy, or violence.

And that, to me, is where peace actually begins.

Two Texts That Don't Need Belief

What Survives When Nothing Is Taken on Faith

There are very few texts traditionally labeled "spiritual" that still function once belief is removed.

Most collapse when you take away gods, heavens, authority, or promises.
But a small number do not.

Two of the clearest examples come from different traditions and different centuries:

- the **Nirvana Shatakam**, and
- the **Heart Sutra**.

What makes them unusual is simple:

they don't ask you to believe anything.

They don't tell you what to worship.

They don't offer salvation.

They don't require obedience.

They do something far more practical.

The Nirvana Shatakam: removing false identity

The Nirvana Shatakam is often misunderstood as a mystical declaration — "*I am Shiva.*"

But if you actually read the text carefully, that's not what's happening.

The poem proceeds by systematically saying:

- I am not the body
- I am not the senses
- I am not the mind
- I am not memory
- I am not emotion
- I am not social role
- I am not moral identity

Line by line, it removes every candidate for a permanent "self."
This is not spirituality.

It is **elimination testing**.

The text is asking a very modern question:

Which of these components actually has stable control?

And the answer, every time, is *none of them*.

When the poem ends with "I am Shiva," it is not claiming divinity.

In its original context, "**Shiva**" means rest, stillness, non-reactivity.

So the conclusion is not "I am God."

It is:

When nothing falsely claims authority, the system settles.

That's it.

No belief required.

The Heart Sutra: removing false structure

Where the Nirvana Shatakam dismantles identity, the Heart Sutra dismantles structure.

The Heart Sutra famously says:

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form.

This is often mistaken for metaphysics or mysticism.

But functionally, it's a systems statement.

It means:

- Things exist
- They function
- But they do not have fixed, independent control centers

In other words:

structure exists, but sovereignty does not.

The sutra goes further than most texts by also dissolving:

- spiritual attainment,
- enlightenment as an object,
- and even Buddhism itself as an authority.

It leaves nothing standing that can be turned into hierarchy.

That's why it ends not with an explanation, but with a sound — a reminder that language itself cannot be made sovereign.

Again: no belief required.

Why these two texts survive when others don't

Most religious texts fail once belief is removed because they rely on:

- authority,
- fear,
- reward,
- punishment,
- or identity.

These two don't.

They don't tell you *what is true*.

They show you *what stops working* when examined carefully.

They are not asking you to adopt a worldview.

They are asking you to **stop mistaking parts of a system for its center**.

What must not be added back in

To keep these texts intact, certain interpretations must be refused:

- "I am God"
- "Everything is nothing"
- "Nothing matters"
- "This is enlightenment"
- "This makes me special"

Those interpretations reintroduce exactly what the texts dismantle.

The moment identity or authority returns, the insight is lost.

What remains, very simply

When belief is removed, both texts converge on the same observation:

- Stability comes from letting go of false control
- Suffering comes from insisting that something must be solid

- Peace is not transcendence — it is **non-reactivity**

No gods are required for this to work.
No metaphysics are needed.
No obedience is involved.

Why this still matters today

In a world saturated with ideology, certainty, and fear, these texts offer something rare:

- clarity without doctrine
- insight without hierarchy
- and calm without denial of reality

They don't tell you who to be.
They don't tell you what to believe.

They simply show you what happens when you stop forcing a system to be something it isn't.

And remarkably, that is still enough.

Final note

If every tradition had protected insights like these instead of mythologizing them, religion might never have become authoritarian at all.

These two texts didn't fail.
They were just buried under belief.

When belief is removed, what survives is not spirituality.

What survives is **a usable understanding of how humans remain stable without becoming cruel.**

And that doesn't belong to any religion.

