



Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions

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Includes CD with 40 selections of music and chants. See Table of Contents for CD track playlist.

This innovative book explores religion through music, one of the most universally recognized forms of human experience. The only art form named after a divinity, music has been documented from prehistory to the present age in virtually all known cultures. For many, music is a vehicle for spiritual growth and community empowerment, whether it's understood as a gift of the gods or simply a practice for achieving mental states conducive to enlightenment.

Traditionally, when religious scholars talk about music, it's as a kind of aesthetic supplement to the important spiritual content of a religion, analogous to stained-glass windows or temple paintings. In contrast, *Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions* acknowledges the critical role of musical activity in religious life. Music, including chant and vocal utterance, is not incidental in religious practice but a sacred treasure that is central to the growth and sustenance of religions throughout the world. Musical sound is sacred in most religions because it embodies the divine and can be shared by all participants, enduring among diverse communities of people despite theological differences.

Covering six of the major world religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism—the book is accompanied by a CD of forty selections of music and chant. Contributors are respected scholars in religious studies and musicology and provide insight from both disciplines. The first book of its kind, *Sacred Sound* is a milestone in the growing cross-disciplinary study of religion and music.

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