



## **A Comprehensive Analysis on Religion, Music, And Society: The Socio- Sacrophony Approach**

**Din, Müzik ve Toplum Üzerine Kapsayıcı Bir Analiz: Sosyo-Sakrafoni Yaklaşımı**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the relationship between religion, music, and society, focusing on how these three significant phenomena can be comprehensively analyzed together. Religion, as a fundamental element shaping individual and societal identities, deepens both personal spiritual experiences and social belonging through its connection with music. The study explores the role of music in expressing beliefs within religious rituals while investigating how it is shaped by religious norms and societal values. Practices such as hymns, the call to prayer, chants, zikir, and semah are considered intersections of music's religious and cultural functions. Additionally, the study examines how religious texts and symbols acquire meaning through artistic forms. Analyses of Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and other religions show that music serves not only as a component of worship but also as part of the social structure. From this perspective, the study adopts an interdisciplinary approach to examine music's multifaceted impacts, ranging from its role in rituals to the preservation and transmission of cultural identities. By analyzing historical and contemporary examples, the study aims to contribute significantly to the literature. Employing a qualitative methodology and document analysis as the data collection technique, the study introduces the socio-sacrophony approach to holistically address the music-religion-society equation.

**Keywords:** Society, music, religion, analysis, socio- sacrophony.

### **Öz**

Bu çalışma, din, müzik ve toplum arasındaki ilişkiyi ele alarak, bu üç önemli fenomenin birlikte nasıl kapsamlı bir şekilde analiz edilebileceğini konu edinmektedir. Din, bireylerin ve toplumların kimliklerini şekillendiren en temel olgulardan biri olup, müzikle kurduğu ilişki aracıyla hem bireysel manevi deneyimleri hem de toplumsal aidiyetleri derinleştirmektedir. Çalışma, dini ritüellerin bir parçası olarak müziğin bireylerin inançlarını ifade etmesindeki rolünü incelerken, aynı zamanda müziğin dini normlar ve toplumsal değerler çerçevesinde nasıl şekillendiğini de araştırmaktadır. İlahilerin, ezanların, zikir ve semah gibi uygulamaların, müziğin dinî ve kültürel işlevlerinin kesişim noktası olduğu ileri sürülebilmektedir. Ayrıca, dini metinlerin ve sembollerin sanatsal formlar aracılığıyla nasıl bir anlam kazandığı da bu çalışmanın ana başlıklarından biridir. İslam, Hristiyanlık, Hinduizm ve diğer dinler bağlamında yapılan analizler, müziğin yalnızca bir ibadet unsuru olmakla kalmayıp, aynı zamanda toplumsal yapının bir parçası olarak işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Buradan hareketle, müziğin ritüellerdeki rolünden kültürel kimliklerin korunmasına ve aktarılmasına kadar uzanan çok boyutlu etkileri, disiplinler arası bir anlayışla ele alınmıştır. Çalışmanın, müziğin dini pratikler ve toplumsal bağlamdaki rolünü tarihsel ve güncel örneklerle detaylandırarak literatüre önemli katkılar sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Araştırmada, nitel yöntem benimsenmiş olup, veri toplama tekniği olarak doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, literatüre müzik-din-toplum denklemini birlikte ele alabilmek için sosyo-sakrafoni yaklaşımı önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Toplum, müzik, din, analiz, sosyo-sakrafoni.

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## Introduction

Throughout history, the power of religion to shape individual and collective identities through music has left profound traces in nearly every society. Through the symbolic and emotional power of music, societies are able to intensify their religious and spiritual sensibilities, thereby experiencing a state of “reverence.” In this context, the role of music in this process is of considerable significance (Avan, 2023: 77). While music is universally regarded as a form of expression, each religion and culture has developed unique rituals, melodies, and hymns over time—whether through deliberate planning or improvisation—that serve to integrate individuals into the social structure. Especially in ancient times, in the religious rituals of Ancient Egypt that symbolized the death of the gods, music was used as an indispensable means of communicating with the sacred. From this, it can be understood that music in Egyptian civilization was regarded as a form of expression that deepened the dimensions of religious ritual (Yiğit, 2023: 130). In Ancient Egypt, the goddess Bastet, who held a prominent place in religious and cultural life, was regarded as a significant figure associated with music, dance, and festivity. Musical performances and rhythmic dances constituted the primary forms of worship during the ceremonial rituals dedicated to Bastet (Çiftçi, 2010: 39). However, when examining the music of the Hittite period, it is known that during death and burial ceremonies, musical instruments accompanied the vocal performances, and that the lyre was among the instruments used (Şahin, 2020: 38). In the Hittite civilization, numerous cult officials played active roles in religious ceremonies and celebrations organized in honor of the gods. They were also held responsible for the administration of temples, the preparation of sacrificial offerings, and the appeasement of divine beings through music and dance (Akdağ, 2018: 23). When examining another ancient civilization, one of the most remarkable aspects of the royal tomb excavations at Ur, from the Sumerian civilization, is the discovery of numerous musical instruments used in religious rituals. Archaeological findings indicate that the Sumerians regarded music not only as an element of earthly life but also as an integral part of existence beyond death. According to their beliefs, these instruments were thought to serve both a religious function and a consolatory role, alleviating the soul’s unease during its transition to the afterlife (Saygın, 2017: 5).

As observed, within the major civilizations of the world, the interrelation between religion and music has manifested as a profound medium that, through its diverse forms, nurtures religious expression and conveys it meaningfully to various audiences. From this perspective, analyzing the relationship between religion and music within the framework of time and space appears to be a more appropriate approach. Consequently, music can also be considered a significant medium for understanding religion and for conveying the sacred to different communities (Batuk, 2013: 46). While it is well-established that every religion has predefined rituals within its unique belief system, these rituals often serve to expand the spiritual realms of adherents and reinforce their sense of religious belonging through musical forms. Such religious musical practices not only foster harmony among members of a community but also ensure the continuity of a collective spirit and an understanding of solidarity. The use of music, rituals, instruments, and certain symbols provides individuals with the opportunity to sensorially reflect their beliefs, thereby making their faith more visible (Yiğit, 2023: 133).

Based on these explanations, it is evident that in early Judaism, music occupied a central role in religious life. Sources indicate that King David skillfully played the lyre, a fact that is believed to have paved the way for the widespread use of music in worship practices. The people regarded music as both a means of spiritual expression and a component of sacred communication during religious ceremonies, worship rituals, and liturgical practices. The religious ceremonies of the period were typically performed by an ensemble of twelve

musicians, consisting of nine harpists, two string players, and one cymbalist. Women were not permitted to serve as musicians in these ceremonies; instead, young boys known as “levites” were assigned these roles. (Kaya, 2022: 484-485). The instruments used in Jewish musical tradition exhibit notable similarities in both form and function to those found in the musical cultures of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. The dispersion of the Jewish people across various regions of the world due to successive exiles, along with the destruction of religious temples during periods of conflict, led to the gradual disappearance of many of the musical instruments once used in synagogues. The Shofar remains the only original instrument that has survived to the present day and continues to be used in religious rituals. Crafted from a ram’s horn and shaped like a curved trumpet, it is performed by individuals known as Tokea, who undergo specialized training for this purpose. The use of the Shofar in Jewish religious tradition and ceremonial practices has always been regarded as highly significant. Furthermore, sacred hymns within the Jewish tradition were typically performed not in choral form but individually (solo). This reflects an understanding of music not merely as a means of communal worship, but as a vehicle for personal prayer and spiritual contemplation (Gönül and Altıntuğ, 2014: 50-51).

In Christianity, the Psalms, hymns, and sacred chants performed during religious ceremonies constitute the fundamental components of the church music tradition. This musical structure not only reflects the influences of Jewish worship practices but also bears profound traces of the Ancient Greek culture with which early Christianity interacted. Different Christian denominations have developed various approaches regarding the role and function of music in worship. The Catholic Church, in particular, regards music as an indispensable element of liturgical practice, viewing it as a medium that complements both the spiritual and ceremonial integrity of worship. The origins of this understanding can be traced to the adoption of the Psalm tradition—an essential aspect of Jewish religious practice—by the earliest Christian communities. The music performed during liturgical ceremonies aims not only to glorify God but also to foster the individual’s spiritual tranquility, inner peace, and deepened connection with the divine. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that music enhances the aesthetic experience of the listener, thereby enriching the overall act of worship. In this context, Christian church music attains significance not merely as an accompaniment to ritual, but as an artistic expression of faith, emotion, and contemplation (Kızılabdullah, 2019: 313).

Throughout its historical development, Indian music has exhibited a structure grounded in religious and spiritual values. Within this musical understanding, the Brahmins regard music as the highest expression of devotion to God, interpreting musical performance as a manifestation of the sacred bond established between the musician and the divine. This perspective is not unique to Hinduism; similarly, within Islamic culture, music has been perceived as a spiritual medium through which one attains closeness to God. Over the centuries, rituals and ceremonial practices conducted in accordance with this sacred conception have ensured the continuity of specific musical traditions, preserving their spiritual essence across generations (Doğan and Maral, 2019: 21) In Indian religions, music holds a central place within religious ceremonies and ritual practices. The origins of music can be traced back to the Vedas, the oldest sacred texts of the Hindu tradition. Among these texts, the Samaveda provides detailed explanations regarding how hymns should be chanted during sacrificial rituals and the rhythmic patterns that should accompany these performances. The text also includes references to instruments used in religious ceremonies, such as the shankha (conch shell trumpet) and dholak/damaru (drum), as well as traditional Indian instruments like the sitar, tabla, and shehnai. This demonstrates that within the Indian belief system, music is regarded both as a sacred medium of communication and as a fundamental element that ensures the integrity of ritual practice (Kaya, 2010: 222).

When comparing the musical conceptions of pre-Islamic and Islamic periods across different religious traditions, it becomes evident that in pre-Islamic Turkish societies, music held a distinctly prominent military function. During this period, music was regarded not merely as an aesthetic form of expression, but as a strategic element that strengthened state and national unity, reinforced social cohesion, and maintained military discipline. Music served multiple purposes in times of war: it elevated the morale and motivation of soldiers, regulated marching formations, and conveyed commands for attack or retreat. Additionally, it was employed to demoralize enemy forces, psychologically compel them to withdraw, and thereby minimize human casualties. Beyond these functions, the rhythmic structure of music was also utilized as a mechanism to preserve order on the battlefield, facilitate communication, and provide alerts against unexpected threats (Pirgon, 2021: 124).

Before the adoption of Islam, Turkish communities used music not only as a military tool but also as a therapeutic element. In the Shamanic belief systems of Central Asia, music-based healing practices held a significant place and functioned as a form of spiritual purification ritual in which music and rhythmic dance were performed together. Through these practices, it was believed that individuals could be cleansed of “evil spirits” that negatively affected their bodies and minds, thereby achieving both physical and spiritual healing. This tradition was not confined solely to the Shamanic communities of Central Asia; throughout history, similar practices were observed among various Turkic societies that spread across different regions, reflecting the enduring connection between music, spirituality, and healing in early Turkish culture (Koç and Önal, 2023: 178). In the early period of Islam, music (*musiki*) took shape within a distinctly religious framework and became an inseparable part of worship practices such as Qur’anic recitation, the adhan (call to prayer), festive salās, takbīr, and tahlīl. During this era, music was regarded not merely as an artistic form of expression but as a spiritual medium that enhanced the transmission of the divine message through sound. Consequently, *musiki* functioned as a sacred language of communication, enriching the aesthetic dimension of worship while simultaneously nurturing the spiritual depth of the individual (Turabi, 2014: 229).

The Prophet Muhammad’s encouragement of reciting the Qur’an with a beautiful voice and his emphasis on the aesthetic performance of the adhan (call to prayer) played a decisive role in shaping the earliest foundations of Islamic religious music. Indeed, the Prophet’s choice of Bilal al-Habashi—renowned for his melodious voice—to perform the adhan highlights the significance of vocal beauty within acts of worship. The harmonious recitation of the Qur’an and the melodious delivery of the adhan not only provide auditory pleasure but also evoke a profound spiritual response, allowing the divine message to be felt more deeply. This aesthetic approach laid the groundwork for the perception of music in Islamic culture as a medium for religious contemplation and spiritual communication. The first systematic theoretical studies on music in the Islamic world emerged during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. During these eras, music developed both as a scientific discipline and as an artistic form of expression accompanying acts of worship, reflecting the integration of aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions within Islamic civilization (Koyuncu, 2011: 57).

When examining the Turkish-Islamic Sufi tradition, it becomes evident that in *Masnawi*, *Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī* (Hz. Mevlânâ) attributed a special value to music (*musiki*), regarding it as one of the highest forms of art that mediates the elevation of the human soul. According to Mevlânâ, Sufism represents a profound process of spiritual transformation in which human spiritual manifestations unite with divine inspiration, leading to a consciousness of *wahdat* (unity). Within this process, divine love permeates the entire being—body, soul, and life—culminating in an inner journey toward transcendence.

Mevlânâ evaluated the human being not by outward appearance but by inner essence. In this context, spiritual maturity, inner enlightenment, and moral perfection constitute the ultimate goals of Sufism. In his teachings, music, poetry, *samā* (the whirling ceremony), and other fine arts are not merely aesthetic instruments but spiritual means that purify the individual from worldly attachments and guide the soul toward divine truth. Within the Mevlevi tradition, *musiki* functions as a spiritual discipline that facilitates the individual's inner transformation. It serves both as a contemplative practice aiding in the purification of the self (*nafs*) and as a means of perceiving the divine order of the universe. Thus, in Mevlânâ's doctrine, all forms of art—particularly music—serve as spiritual bridges that direct the human being toward truth, purify the heart, and lead to divine love (Gönül, 2007: 80).

It is well-established that music contributes significantly to social cohesion through its ability to define and articulate religious beliefs or approaches, as well as the identity concept it generates based on these two features (Şahin, 2008: 276). In this context, religious approaches are often expressed through sacred music, hymns, and *dhikr*. These musical forms serve as symbols of religious unity, social belonging, and individual spiritual purification. Major religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism have utilized such music not only in worship but also within social life. Excerpts from sacred texts, hymns, and liturgical music reinforce religious doctrines while simultaneously strengthening believers' faith in the Creator and their social bonds. From this perspective, as exemplified by hymns and *dhikr*, while these are themes interwoven with music to promote religious and spiritual integration, they can also be seen as instruments for establishing social cohesion and strengthening societal structures. Beyond their function in worship, rituals—which may also be regarded as musical activities—carry significant meaning as central themes that consolidate faith under a single spiritual framework. Hymns and *dhikr* serving religious purposes act as a form of social contract, fostering collective memory and solidarity while reminding individuals of their connection to the social structure and to one another (Arslan, 2015: 104–105).

Music is utilized not only in Islam but also in various other religions as a significant tool for enhancing religious expression and reinforcing social identities. In Christianity, hymns and choirs have become an integral part of ritual practice, serving as a means of bringing believers closer to God. In Hinduism, sacred mantras and other texts continue to exist today as a way of achieving harmony with the universe and spiritual purification. Similarly, in Buddhism, meditation music emerges as a medium that facilitates individuals in attaining inner peace. Each religion has embraced music in harmony with its teachings, presenting it as a means of expressing social unity and spiritual depth within diverse cultural contexts. This diversity underscores music's role as a powerful universal tool for transmitting religious beliefs and fostering cohesion within communities (Şen, 2022: 453).

The classification of religions is conducted using various criteria and approaches, including geographical location, ritual practices, and beliefs in deities and other entities. One significant assertion regarding the relationship between music and religion is the idea that music originated for religious purposes. In this context, it can be suggested that the connection between human vulnerability in the face of nature and the instinct to believe subsequently evolved from a framework of belief into musical forms. In other words, human helplessness drove individuals toward faith as a means of empowerment, while the desire to embody that faith in life and in an aesthetic form established a significant connection with music. The motivation to experience religious faith more intensely and profoundly gave rise to the first type of music: religious music. From this perspective, there is a strong causal relationship between religious motivation and musical awareness (Yiğit, 2023: 96). Indeed, there are significant parallels between the motivation and focus observed in those striving to fulfill their acts of worship flawlessly and individuals interpreting musical works.

Although sacred texts have often been transmitted orally, they have also been recited in ways akin to musical forms. Thus, it becomes evident that there is a significant connection between sacred texts—representing the religious sphere—and music. This phenomenon can be observed even among tribal societies. For example, the Native American communities, particularly those referred to as Indians, offer a notable case. A sociological examination of the Navajo community reveals that tribal priests often possess considerable musical knowledge. Another example can be drawn from the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka, where, similar to the Navajo tribe, individuals with a religious background also demonstrate significant musical expertise. When focusing on the global interplay of religion and culture, further examples emerge. In Christianity, those who lead church services are often the same individuals who perform religious musical motifs during the rituals. In Buddhism, the *pusaj* plays a key role; in Islam, the call to prayer (*adhan*) is performed by religious officials in specific musical modes (*maqamat*); and in Hinduism, ceremonies and rituals are intricately intertwined. As these examples demonstrate, regardless of the geographical region, culture, religion, or ethnicity under consideration, there is a profound and close relationship between the domain of religion and the phenomenon of music (Batuk, 2013: 47).

In addition to being an artistic form of expression, music must also be considered as a cultural, social, psychological, and historical phenomenon. Accordingly, research on music encompasses the methodologies of various disciplines, including history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, ethnomusicology, and cultural studies. Ethnomusicology, in particular, emerges as a field that seeks to contextualize music in intercultural frameworks, exploring its social and ritual functions. Serving as a bridge between different scientific disciplines, music is widely recognized for its interdisciplinary approach, facilitated by its broad scope (Bayburtlu, 2017: 82–83).

Another point of convergence between music and religion emerges in the context of national identity. In this regard, the uniqueness inherent in the definition of a nation also manifests itself in the domain of music. Among the cultural dimensions of the concept of a nation, it is known that non-divisive religious values are included. Thus, a social equation arises, comprising national identity, religious values, and music. For instance, just as a Turk distinguishes themselves among other nations through their Turkish identity, a similar distinction is observable in Turkish music. Ultimately, there appears to be no functional difference between national identity, religious values, and musical structures in representing what is national (Odabaşı, 2006: 255). All these points collectively emphasize the social equation of music, religion, and society.

## 1. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research method. The qualitative approach is positioned to provide an in-depth understanding of the research problem. It aims to uncover the social context, individual experiences, and ultimately, the meanings of these experiences (Tavşancıl Tarkun, 2000: 29–30). In alignment with the theme of the study, the qualitative method is utilized to conduct a detailed analysis of the interwoven relationships among the phenomena of music, religion, and society. This method offers a comprehensive, flexible, and descriptive perspective to understand and interpret the multidimensional structure of the research problem. Rather than focusing solely on the superficial characteristics of the phenomena under investigation, the qualitative approach allows for the exploration of their intricate structures and the relationship between time and space. This approach provides an opportunity to delve deeply into the contextual and relational aspects of the subjects being studied.

Document analysis was selected as the data collection technique for this study. The

primary aim of document analysis is to systematically examine both written and visual sources, whether pre-existing or newly accessed, to enable the researcher to obtain relevant data (Kıral, 2020: 173–174). In this context, document analysis was employed to comprehensively examine the literature, historical records, cultural contexts, and forms of worship related to the relationship between music, society, and religion. The selection of sources during the research process was guided by the objectives of enhancing the study's reliability and enabling a thorough evaluation of the examined phenomena. This approach facilitated the detailed analysis of qualitative data in alignment with the research goals. Furthermore, it provided an opportunity to analyze the results within a contextual framework, ensuring a nuanced understanding of the findings.

## **2. Music/Religion/Society**

The social equation of music, religion, and society unites these three domains across various dimensions. The points of convergence between these disciplines can be categorized as follows:

1. Religious ceremonies and worship practices
2. Cultural identity and its transmission to future generations, social integration, societal change, and dynamism
3. Educational activities, art, and aesthetics

In this context, an analysis will be conducted based on these themes, and the social equation of music, religion, and society will be defined as an approach.

### **2.1 Religious Ceremonies and Worship**

Durkheim argues that to uncover the fundamental phenomenon at the core of religion, one must refer to primitive tribal social forms. According to him, isolating religious elements and tracing their origins within the complex structures of modern societies is exceedingly difficult. Therefore, Durkheim posits that observations conducted in primitive tribes, which possess relatively simpler social forms, are more likely to yield accurate results (Durkheim, 2009: 21–28). In this context, this study will also reference examples from African tribal life and their ritual practices to illustrate the first point of intersection in the social equation of music, religion, and society—namely, worship and religious ceremonies.

In the social equation of music, religion, and society, focusing on the example of worship and religious ceremonies brings us to the Isoma rituals of the Ndembu tribe, located in northwestern Zambia in Central Africa. As seen in the Ndembu tribe and other primitive structures in Central Africa, complex representations of worship are encountered. In tribal communities of this kind, there are rituals associated with ancestral spirits and sacred entities perceived as deities. These rituals are performed alongside dances and songs. Additionally, it has been observed that the Ndembu perceive the support provided by researchers observing them—for instance, in cases requiring medical intervention such as snake bites—as a religious act. Consequently, the tribal healers considered the researchers as healers themselves and permitted them to participate in the rituals. In this context, examples of the Ndembu tribe's ritual ceremonies include rites associated with the puberty transitions of girls (Nkang'a), ceremonies for hunters using firearms (Wuyang'a), and the Isoma ritual, which is related to female fertility. Focusing on the Isoma ritual, it is understood as a ceremony aimed at restoring the reproductive capabilities of men or women who have been punished by ancestral spirits for failing to show proper respect. The Ndembu refer to the obligation of respect toward ancestral spirits as muchidi and emphasize this obligation with the phrase, “Are they not the ones who have begotten or borne you?” (Turner, 1991: 4–11).

The selection and use of religious discourse are considered significant tools in defining and analyzing the boundaries of religion within society. Consequently, religious discourse is closely linked to phenomena such as power and authority relations, cultural identities, and social status. In this context, religious discourses and the structures they create and influence not only encompass sacred and spiritual meanings but also extend to social, political, and cultural dimensions. From this perspective, it becomes evident that religious discourses play a central role in constructing religious identity, reinforcing social norms, and maintaining mechanisms of authority (Yaman, 2022: 79). Indeed, the aforementioned religious discourses of the Ndembu tribe can also be interpreted within this framework.

Among the beliefs of the Ndembu tribe, certain sacred obligations for women are observed. According to these beliefs, women must be non-confrontational, harmonious, and married. By fulfilling these obligations, women are considered capable of achieving fertility in accordance with the tribe's faith. However, women who fail to meet these expectations—those who cause discord or fail to show the proper respect to their ancestors—are punished by the "offended shadow," which strips them of their ability to reproduce. The Isoma ritual aims to lift this punishment through a process comprising three stages:

- a.** Ilembi, which involves the woman's isolation from the profane world,
- b.** Kunkunka, which refers to the woman's partial seclusion from social life, and
- c.** Ku-tumbuka, a celebratory dance marking the removal of the shadow's punishment and the woman's reintegration into normal life (Turner, 1991: 11–14).

Beliefs similar to the perception of women in the Ndembu tribe can also be found in other cultures. For example, an ethnological study on Uzbek culture reveals folk beliefs that bear resemblance to those of the Ndembu tribe. Thus, from the perspective of folk beliefs, it becomes evident that similar belief motifs can be identified across different geographical regions (Juraev and Nurmuradova, 2010: 147–148).

It is known that the Ndembu tribe incorporates musical elements into their rituals. During the Isoma ceremony, the Ndembu tribe employs various religious songs, using them to create a spiritual atmosphere. These songs, performed exclusively by men without the inclusion of female voices, emphasize male strength and serve as significant components of the ritual in fulfilling biological needs. Ultimately, it becomes clear that music and dance elements are intricately intertwined within the religious rituals of the Ndembu tribe (Turner, 1991: 15–37).

In the ceremonies organized by the Ndembu tribe in Zambia for various purposes, the interconnection of the phenomena of music, religion, and society becomes evident. In the Isoma ritual, one of the tribe's significant ceremonies, a woman who has been punished is reintegrated into society through the ritual. The primary reason for her punishment is her display of discordant behavior towards her community and her lack of sensitivity towards her ancestors. Through the ritual, the woman is cleansed of these negative behaviors and restored to the community. During the ceremony, music emerges as a crucial instrument aimed at enhancing and elevating the spiritual dimension of the ritual. As observed, the rituals of the Ndembu tribe, along with the songs and dances employed during these ceremonies, provide a compelling and clear example within the framework of primitive societies for the music/religion/society social equation that this research focuses on.

In Hinduism, the function of involving individuals and communities in a sacred experience is often carried out in open worship spaces through a phenomenon that can be described as the sacred chanting of holy texts. This practice transcends the mundane aspects of daily life, offering a spiritual and divine dimension. The musical rendition of sacred texts brings individuals together, fostering a shared spiritual experience within the community. Moreover,

worship practices intertwined with music not only establish a direct sensory and symbolic connection with the deities but also serve as evidence of the profound integration of music and religion in Hinduism. Religious practices such as Seva, which fundamentally involve voluntary service aimed at contributing to the community for religious, spiritual, or social purposes, exemplify the close interconnection of music and poetry in Hinduism. Rituals infused with music, such as Haveli Sangit and Samaj Gayan, highlight communal worship where musical performances dedicated to the deities include prayers, expressions of love and devotion, and experiences of inner exploration. Examining the music/religion dynamic in Hinduism reveals that individuals offer music as a gift to their deities, cleansing sacred spaces of negative energies and influences. In ancient Sama-Gana hymns, musical instruments are described as having celestial origins, performed in heaven, and transmitted to the human realm as a means of salvation and forgiveness (Apurva). These elements underscore the deeply embedded role of music in the spiritual and religious practices of Hinduism (Beck, 2013: 200–202).

Catholic Christian religious music, over the course of history, has transcended its role as a mere instrument of worship to become a powerful form of expression that shapes aesthetic, cultural, and social values. From this perspective, distinctive musical elements such as choral music and early musical notation like neuma have not only become integral to Catholic religious rituals but have also emerged as a central force influencing social connections. This dynamic has also had a significant multiplier effect on the religious authority of the Vatican. Since the Middle Ages, choral music has become an inseparable component of Catholic worship. Church music began to offer a collective experience for both its listeners and performers. In particular, choral music, through the polyphonic arrangements of Gregorian chants, has demonstrated the unifying power of music within society. Choral music transformed individuals from mere recipients of a divine message into active participants in a collective practice of faith. By repeating and aiding in the transmission of these divine messages, they became integral parts of the religious system (Fassler, 2014: 9–10).

The organum form, recognized as the first polyphonic musical form, enriched and enhanced the traditional Gregorian melodies by adding parallel voices, resulting in a more dynamic and complex structure. Although the process of adding a new voice to an existing melody may seem superficially simple, this innovation opened the door to an entirely new world of technical and aesthetic possibilities for medieval musicians. Within this expanding musical universe, the functional role and unique identity of each added voice necessitated the development of new terminological definitions (Lord, 2008: 55). This evolution allowed church music to acquire a deeper spiritual dimension, enabling listeners to experience divine encounters more profoundly. Through this process, devout individuals were also able to enhance their religious experiences by discovering and understanding the meanings of the hymns they sang.

The motet form, unlike organum, further advanced polyphonic structures by creating complex harmonic arrangements where multiple voices were performed simultaneously. The polyphony in motets added greater emotional depth to Catholic rituals, enhancing the symbolic and mystical dimensions of the music. The musical function of the motet deepened the meaning of sacred texts, strengthening participants' connection with God. Additionally, by dividing hymns among different voices, the motet symbolically expressed God's multifaceted creativity and sacred plurality (Fassler, 2014: 186).

In the social equation of music, religion, and society, when Islam is considered, a distinct dimension emerges compared to other Abrahamic religions and belief systems. This is because, upon examining the revelation-based foundations of Islamic law and the practices of Prophet Muhammad, the relationship between Islam and music appears to be rooted in a unique framework. For example, the term "beautiful" used to describe the recitation of the Qur'an refers

not to an arbitrary reading but to a disciplined practice defined by the science of *qira'at* (recitation). The primary motivation behind this emphasis was to distinguish the melodic recitation of the Qur'an from Jewish chants. In this context, the act of reciting the Qur'an melodiously initially posed a challenging jurisprudential issue for Islamic scholars. They were deeply engaged with questions about how music could be integrated into worship and employed collectively in a manner consistent with Islamic principles. This reflects an effort to distinguish Islamic worship from the rituals and practices of other faiths. For instance, the performance of the *takbir* (proclamation of God's greatness) in a musical form using the human voice was initially met with hesitation by some segments of society. This reaction can be interpreted as a societal reflection of the theological dilemma faced by jurists in reconciling Islam and music. Ultimately, concerns stemming from the fear of trivializing worship were resolved by framing the reconciliation of Islam and music under the concept of *qira'at*, effectively placing music within an Islamic framework. This approach provided a structured solution to the integration of music into Islamic practice (Nielson, 2021: 39).

In Islamic culture, the *adhan* (call to prayer) is not merely an invitation to worship but also a distinctive phenomenon that elevates a spiritual invitation to a transcendent and sacred dimension. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) placed significant emphasis on the *adhan* being recited with a beautiful and harmonious voice, emphasizing that one of the most effective ways to touch the hearts of people is through the aesthetic quality of the voice and the harmony of its melodies. In this context, he advised that the *adhan* should be performed with knowledge of musical modes (*maqamat*) to create a profound resonance in the souls of its listeners. This perspective has allowed the integration of the aesthetic principles of Islamic art with the understanding of sound and *maqamat* in the practice of the *adhan*. As a result, the *adhan* has transcended being a mere call to prayer, evolving into an aesthetic and emotional experience (Özelçağlayan, 2017: 2).

While reciting the *adhan* (call to prayer) in a specific *maqam* (musical mode) is not a requirement in Islam, this practice stands out as a tradition with aesthetic and emotional dimensions in Islamic culture. Prophet Muhammad's encouragement to recite the *adhan* with a beautiful voice underscores its auditory impact, emphasizing its role in enhancing religious communication to be more effective, memorable, and emotionally resonant. The performance of the *adhan* in well-known *maqamat* such as *Sabā*, *Uşşāq*, *Rast*, *Segāh*, and *Hijāz* has been shaped by local musical traditions and societal perceptions in regions where Islam is prevalent. This practice can be considered a cultural preference aimed at enhancing the emotional impact of the *adhan*. Furthermore, it is known to assist individuals in fostering a deeper spiritual connection, thereby strengthening their closeness to their faith and values. This phenomenon serves as a compelling example of how religious rituals can intertwine with aesthetic elements and how local musical traditions can contribute to religious practices. It highlights the dynamic relationship between cultural expressions and spiritual experiences (Koca, 2015: 136).

The examples provided thus far highlight the necessity of the concept of socio-sacrophony, which serves as the encompassing framework for the music-religion-society equation that constitutes the central theme of this study. This is because the rituals and the activities required by these rituals are components that must be considered together. The comprehensive analysis of these components appears feasible only through the approach proposed as socio-sacrophony.

## **2.2 Cultural Identity and its Transmission to Future Generations, Social Integration, Societal Change, and Dynamism**

Music is intricately connected to the social structures, cultural codes, and historical trajectories of human communities. While it may superficially be perceived as merely an

arrangement of sounds or a technical system, a deeper examination reveals it as a phenomenon that reflects societal behavior patterns, ritualistic practices, and entrenched cultural habits. From this perspective, music transcends being solely an individual mode of creativity and expression, evolving into a tool that embodies the collective memory, identity, and shared experiences of societies. As an integral part of the spiritual and cultural fabric of communities, music shifts from the personal domain to become a form of collective representation and communication (Akgül Barış and Ece, 2007: 109).

Music, as one of the most powerful expressions of culture that shapes individual and collective identities, manifests itself through symbols and behavioral patterns. As a social being, humans have imbued words with meaning and harmonized them with sounds to express emotions, thoughts, and experiences, structuring them in parallel with the fundamental framework of music. This process has transformed music from merely an aesthetic creation into a social activity that brings people together and reinforces societal relationships. Music provides a platform for strengthening social bonds by uniting individuals in various roles, such as musicians, dancers, or listeners. When such a gathering aligns with the rhythm and melody of music, it allows social identity to be experienced in a tangible way. In this context, music emerges not only as a medium of entertainment or expression but also as a powerful tool for individuals and communities to sense, share, and solidify their identities (Kaplan, 2007: 114).

In Anatolian Alevism, various ceremonies and rituals, accompanied by specific musical forms, enhance religious motivation and foster communal integration. Examples include cem ceremonies, prayers, hymns (nefes) performed with instruments unique to Alevism, gender-inclusive semah dances, and religious meals, all of which fall under this category. These religious rituals are carried out within a structured plan and program. Under the guidance of a spiritual leader known as a pir, participants aim to achieve inner enlightenment as part of the ceremonial process. Through these rituals, individuals believe they attain purification and progress spiritually. One such path of purification, the cem, is considered a setting where an individual sheds their raw, unrefined self and discovers their desired and divine essence. This transformative experience is a fundamental aspect of the religious practice in Anatolian Alevism (Coşkun, 2014: 322).

Every Alevi participating in the cem finds an opportunity to fulfill their religious responsibilities, achieve spiritual purification, and strengthen their sense of social belonging. Thus, cem ceremonies serve an essential function in reinforcing the spiritual and moral foundations of both individual and communal life.

For example, in Alevi society, music emerges as an inseparable part of the belief system and cultural identity. In Alevism, music serves as a central element that reinforces the sense of belonging within the community, validates its identity, and ensures its continuity across generations. In Alevi culture and belief, deyişler, semahlar, and nefesler—where words and music merge—play a significant role in conveying the foundations of faith, values, and social order. These forms are not merely musical expressions but reflections of the community's inherited beliefs, ethical values, and way of life. The combination of words and melody creates a sense of collective identity within the memory of the community. In particular, through the repetitive practice of semah, it is believed that a shared sense of history and a strong bond among individuals are established. This social process not only enables the continuity of social dynamics through the remembrance of the past but also helps preserve the vibrancy of the community. Thus, in the Alevi community, music serves as both a cultural and spiritual bond, playing a vital role in the processes of identity formation and community integration. In this context, music transcends its role as a form of cultural expression to manifest as a multidimensional structure that encompasses social solidarity, identity construction, and collective memory. As exemplified by Alevism, the multifaceted function of music stands out

as an indispensable element in understanding social dynamics and preserving cultural identity (Kaplan, 2007: 114).

In the construction of musical culture, styles, attitudes, and techniques integrated with instrumental performance play a significant role in shaping cultural identity. For instance, the bagpipe, widely used across various regions of the world and known by different names such as "gayda," "tulum," "cimpoi," or "bagpipes" in areas like Thrace, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Scotland, has acquired a distinct character in each culture. This cultural diversity of the instrument illustrates how styles, attitudes, and performance techniques enable the same instrument to take on unique identities among different communities. In this context, the bagpipe serves as an example of the variety in meanings and functions attributed to the same instrument by different cultures. In Scotland, the bagpipe has become a national instrument and a powerful symbol of identity, often associated with male musicians. In contrast, in the Eastern Black Sea region of Türkiye, it is seen as an instrument that accompanies regional dance tunes and reflects the area's natural landscape. Furthermore, while the bagpipe has historically been linked to warfare in Scotland and Ireland, in the Balkans, it is more commonly associated with festivities and expressions of joy. The guitar offers another notable example, reflecting the global dimension of musical culture in the modern world. Although the guitar is present in nearly all societies, flamenco techniques have endowed it with a uniquely Spanish cultural significance. Similarly, microtonal guitar techniques developed for the performance of Turkish music pieces go beyond classical guitar traditions, creating a new playing culture and contributing to cultural diversity (Dağdeviren, 2022: 234).

The diverse techniques of saz (long-necked lute) performance in Anatolia exemplify the rich variety within the region's musical traditions. In the Konya region, the use of different strings with a pick reflects the area's unique musical perspective, while the distinct pick techniques specific to Silifke highlight an entirely different musical culture. A more detailed example can be observed in the Arguvan district of Malatya, where the coexistence of diverse cultural structures within the same geographical area is evident through variations in saz performance techniques. For instance, in the village of Ermişli, the "Emirler Pençesi" technique is commonly used, whereas the "Mineyik Pençesi" technique is preferred in Kuyudere. These localized variations underscore the significant extent of cultural diversity, even within a single region. In analyzing the evolution of musical culture, the styles, approaches, and techniques associated with instrument performance are as critical as the diversity of the instruments themselves. For example, the distinct sound of the harpsichord often evokes the music culture of the Baroque era, serving as a classic illustration of the strong association between historical periods and music. In this context, the historical and cultural diversity of performance techniques enriches musical culture and supports the preservation of the identities of various communities (Dağdeviren, 2022: 234).

As an integral part of Sufi life, music is not merely a form of artistic expression but also a cornerstone with profound influences on the shaping of religious and national cultures. While Sufi teachings support an individual's spiritual journey and inner transformation, music serves as a spiritual intermediary in this process. In rituals such as sema and forms like ilahis (hymns), music provides individuals with a mystical experience, fostering a sense of both spiritual and communal unity. Sufi music functions as a vehicle for transmitting religious teachings and beliefs, while simultaneously enriching the aesthetic and emotional dimensions of national culture. Through its melodic structure, rhythmic patterns, and lyrical expressions, this music reinforces individuals' religious faith and strengthens the collective cultural identity of society. For instance, works in Turkish Sufi music not only convey religious sentiments but also reflect the rich traditional structure of Turkish music, thereby instilling a sense of national belonging. Moreover, Sufi music creates a collective cultural memory passed down through generations.

As seen in Mevlevi ceremonies or Bektaşı hymns, spiritual and cultural values from the past are reinterpreted and preserved through music. This process positions Sufi music not merely as a relic of the past but as a dynamic element of culture. The intertwining of Sufi life with music thus plays a significant role not only in shaping religious identity but also in ensuring the continuity of national culture. This dynamic renders Sufi music a multidimensional form of expression that unites the aesthetic, spiritual, and social dimensions of culture (Çakıcı, 2023: 321).

Music has a profound influence on individuals' value systems and serves as a significant tool for accelerating processes of cultural change. In the transformation of societies' socio-cultural structures, music can function as a catalyst, enabling individuals to adopt new roles and explore alternative lifestyles. Beyond being an aesthetic form of expression, music also serves as an effective medium for education and communication, facilitating individuals' interaction with the social structure. In this context, music's role in aligning individuals with societal values and fostering their integration into the community underscores its significance within social and cultural systems (Göher, 2007: 306).

From the perspective of social constructivism, the meaning attributed to popular music stems not only from its intrinsic qualities but also from the dynamic interactions between the individuals consuming the music and the music itself. This interaction demonstrates that meaning is not a fixed phenomenon but rather a fluid process that is continuously shaped and reproduced. In other words, popular music actively contributes to the construction of individuals' identities while simultaneously being reconstructed through the meanings assigned to it by individuals. In this context, music can be regarded as a domain that supports the dual process of identity construction. From another perspective, music reflects societal norms, values, and aesthetic codes, enabling individuals to shape their identities. For instance, listening to or identifying with a particular genre of music can help individuals express themselves and foster a sense of belonging to specific social groups. Conversely, music listeners interpret the messages conveyed by music through their own personal experiences and perspectives, leading to the continuous reproduction of its meaning and impact. This bidirectional relationship transcends the notion of music as a static and immutable entity, positioning it as a phenomenon that is constantly evolving within its social context. For example, while popular music in a given society might reflect the cultural values and social realities of a specific era, the same music can acquire different meanings in another period. This highlights music's dynamic role in identity construction at both individual and societal levels. In conclusion, the meaning attributed to popular music emerges not only from its intrinsic characteristics but also from its interactions with those who consume it. These interactions play a pivotal role in understanding music's influence on individuals and social structures. Therefore, considering music as both an artistic form of expression and a social practice embedded in a continuous process of meaning production is imperative. This dual nature, wherein music both constructs identity and is reshaped through individual interventions, deepens its multidimensional field of study within the social sciences (Göktepe, 2021: 553–554).

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Culture, art, and particularly music, which originate and develop within society, are deeply intertwined with the conditions of the time and place in which they are produced. As a dynamic element of culture, music inevitably reflects the emotional world of humanity and is, therefore, profoundly influenced by the rapidly advancing technological developments of today. This influence transforms music from merely an individual form of expression into an integral part of cultural interaction and transformation processes. It is evident that technology acts as a bridge between geographically disparate communities, facilitating the rapid dissemination of diverse cultures. Whereas cultural interaction processes once took considerable time, the capabilities provided by technology now allow these exchanges to occur much more quickly, directly contributing to the evolution of cultural elements. However, more research is needed to understand the long-term effects and consequences of these limitless interaction processes on humanity. Findings from studies that examine the positive and negative impacts of cultural interaction and transformation on individuals and societies are expected to provide significant contributions to the future of humanity (Polat, 2020: 1759).

All these highlighted points underscore the necessity of addressing each element within the music/religion/society equation in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, which constitutes the central focus of this study.

### **2.3 Educational Activities, Art and Aesthetics**

Music, as an effective tool in learning-teaching environments, has the potential to create a productive and dynamic instructional atmosphere in the classroom. Instructional materials are essential components designed to enrich and enhance the effectiveness of education, facilitate the comprehension of learning content, and improve the instructor's performance. These tools engage multiple sensory modalities during the learning process, capturing students' attention more effectively. The use of music as an instructional material accelerates learning and contributes to the retention of information in a more lasting manner. Incorporating music into educational settings increases students' motivation, strengthens their interest in the topics, and transforms the learning process into a more enjoyable and impactful experience. Therefore, the planned and deliberate use of instructional tools such as music can be considered a vital strategy for improving the quality of learning processes (Babacan, 2019: 108).

Music, as an effective tool supporting learning processes, has been shown to have positive effects on the brain's cognitive functions. Particularly in language learning, music is regarded as a significant learning strategy for expanding vocabulary and improving

pronunciation skills. Additionally, it has been observed that music stimulates brain regions associated with attention and concentration, thereby supporting the development of these cognitive skills. Moreover, listening to music that individuals enjoy has been reported to reduce stress during the learning process and enhance motivation for learning. In the context of foreign language acquisition, music emerges as an effective tool for enriching vocabulary and aiding in the retention of grammatical structures. These findings highlight that music activates brain regions involved in memory, thereby enhancing the retention of information. With all these attributes, music stands out as a multifaceted and effective educational tool that enriches learning processes both cognitively and emotionally (Kılıç, 2023: 1504).

The educational function of music is evident in various domains, including religious education. The relationship between humans and music begins early in life, particularly in infancy, through lullabies. Lullabies have stimulating and guiding effects on children. The mother's loving and affectionate voice singing lullabies plays a critical role in the mental and emotional development of the infant. These musical expressions also serve as a tangible representation of the mother's love and protective instincts toward her child. The impact of lullabies can be observed in behavioral outcomes such as soothing the baby and regulating sleep patterns. This process is essential for fostering a sense of trust, safety, and attachment in the child. A care environment characterized by affection and stability positively influences a child's emotional development, while a child nurtured with lullabies gains a strong sense of being loved and protected. This contributes significantly to their self-perception as valued individuals, making educational processes more accessible and effective. In this context, lullabies can be regarded as both a tool that supports early emotional and cognitive development and a cultural element that facilitates educational processes (Aydın, 2013: 11).

Music therapy is a systematic treatment method in which music is professionally utilized to assist individuals with physical, psychological, or social challenges in achieving positive change. This approach provides a structured process aimed at addressing the needs of individuals experiencing psychological disorders, behavioral issues, and psycho-social difficulties. Observations made by therapists contribute to the evaluation of individuals' behaviors and abilities, not only in the context of music therapy sessions but also in non-musical environments. This process facilitates the development of a deliberate and informed treatment plan (Ak, 2006: 202–203).

Music therapists utilize music to enhance individuals' emotional well-being, physical health, social interactions, and communication skills. In this process, therapists tailor the use of music to meet the specific needs of individuals or groups. Methods such as listening to, interpreting, and evaluating written and aesthetic expressions through music contribute to the personal development of participants. Additionally, music performances, descriptive exercises, and lyrical critiques support the artistic and emotional aspects of individuals. Music therapy is applied within the framework of a carefully structured treatment plan designed to address the unique needs of each individual. As a systematic and intentional approach, music therapy facilitates positive changes in mental, physical, and emotional domains. The customization of the therapy process to suit individual needs and the integration of various aspects of music play a crucial role in the success of the treatment. This disciplined and evolving practice continues to contribute to the advancement of therapeutic methodologies (Ak, 2006: 202–203).

Music, as one of the oldest forms of expression in human history, has been utilized by various civilizations to intensify emotions, enhance the effectiveness of religious rituals, and serve as a tool for treating physical or psychological ailments. The multifaceted effects of music on individuals have, over time, shaped the concept of music therapy and facilitated the development of practices in this field. Throughout history, the rhythmic and melodic elements of music have been employed to improve psychological states, reduce stress levels, and support

overall health. In this context, music therapy is not merely an artistic practice but a therapeutic method built upon scientific foundations. It can be defined as an intervention strategy where music is systematically and purposefully used to support individuals' physical, emotional, and mental well-being. However, the diversity of music therapy practices makes it challenging to encapsulate the concept under a single definition. Factors such as the setting of the therapy, the target audience, the methods employed, and individuals' perception of music contribute to the multifaceted and dynamic nature of music therapy. Consequently, music therapy is approached through various definitions and methodologies, both in local and global contexts, reflecting its complex and adaptable characteristics (Yıldırım, 2021: 482–483).

Music therapy can be categorized in various ways depending on the context of its application. For instance, music therapy used in hospitals may aim to alleviate symptoms of physical ailments or provide comfort to patients during surgical procedures. In psychotherapeutic settings, it serves as a supportive tool for the treatment of mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety. Additionally, music therapy functions as an educational tool. When implemented in schools and rehabilitation centers, it aims to enhance individuals' social skills, improve attention and concentration, and strengthen emotional expression. Music therapy also varies based on individual perception and cultural context. Since the meaning and function of music differ across societies, music therapy must be adapted to these cultural variations. For example, a particular type of music may promote calmness and relaxation in one culture but evoke different emotional responses in another. This variability makes it challenging to approach music therapy within a universal framework, necessitating the development of practices tailored to the unique needs of each individual and culture. Music therapy stands out as a comprehensive discipline designed to support the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of individuals and communities. Encompassing diverse definitions and applications at both local and global levels, this field leverages the multifaceted power of music as a therapeutic tool. The complexity and diversity of music's effects on individuals ensure that music therapy continues to evolve as a flexible and dynamic domain (Kitirci, 2018: 4).

The points expressed in this section of the study highlight the correlation between music and its social context. In particular, the use of music in religious education addresses a distinct dimension of the socio-sacrophony approach.

### **3. Conclusion**

The relationship between religion and music has been an inseparable part of human experience throughout history. This study comprehensively examines the role of music in constructing religious identities, deepening spiritual experiences, and fostering social cohesion. The findings reveal that music functions not only as a form of artistic expression but also as a reflection of religious and social processes. It is emphasized that music enriches individuals' spiritual lives through religious rituals and creates a collective bond among communities.

The practices of the adhan and mevlit in Islamic culture, choral and hymn traditions in Christianity, and mantras and hymns in Hinduism exemplify how music serves similar functions as a universal tool across different religions. Furthermore, music holds critical importance in preserving social memory and ensuring the sustainability of cultural identities. In conclusion, music emerges as an indispensable element in the transmission of religious beliefs and the promotion of social cohesion. This study has examined the multifaceted relationship between religion and music, providing a detailed analysis within historical, cultural, and social contexts. The ritualistic and aesthetic effects of music demonstrate its significance as a tool for understanding the universality of religious values and cultural diversity. In this regard, this research on the relationship between religion and music offers significant contributions to the literature at both theoretical and practical levels.

The interaction between music, religion, and society represents one of the most profound and multilayered cultural phenomena in human history. These three elements form a dynamic structure that shapes meaning-making processes, determines value systems, and influences identity formation at both individual and societal levels. Therefore, analyzing the interrelationship among these domains requires not only an understanding of the aesthetic or functional dimensions of music but also an examination of the symbolic power of religion and the cultural organization of society.

The socio-sacrophony approach provides a new analytical tool for scholars who wish to examine the effects of secularization, cultural hybridization, and digitalization on religious music in modern societies. In this regard, the study establishes a research axis that enables a comparative analysis of both traditional and contemporary musical practices within the contexts of religious symbolism and social structure. By addressing the interaction between religion, music, and society through a holistic and interdisciplinary perspective, this study presents a theoretical framework that can offer significant contributions to future research in the field. Primarily, the proposed concept of “socio-sacrophony” allows religious music to be approached not only from aesthetic or theological dimensions but also from sociological, anthropological, psychological, and cultural perspectives. This concept enables future studies to interpret religious music as a social phenomenon, exploring its relationship with social identity, ritual practices, emotional belonging, and processes of cultural transmission. Moreover, this approach can be applied across a broad spectrum of disciplines—from musicology and theology to sociology, cultural studies, and psychology. In particular, new research conducted in subfields such as the psychology of ritual music, collective consciousness, musical memory, religious aesthetics, and the sociology of spirituality can further enhance the functional depth of the socio-sacrophony concept. Thus, this study not only introduces a new epistemological orientation in the study of religious music but also proposes an innovative research paradigm that unifies the sacred and social dimensions of music within a shared theoretical framework.

In this context, it is essential to approach the music—religion—society axis from a comprehensive, holistic, and interdisciplinary perspective. The lack of a conceptual framework that fully explains this interaction in the existing literature necessitates the development of a new approach. For this reason, the present study proposes defining this holistic perspective under the concept of “socio-sacrophony.” The concept of socio-sacrophony, an original term previously unused in academic discourse, aims to examine the interaction between social context (socio) and sacred sound or religious music (sacrophony) within a unified framework. This approach seeks to analyze not only the role of religious sound or music within worship and ritual contexts but also its broader influences on social structures, identity formation, collective consciousness, cultural transmission, and emotional belonging. Thus, socio-sacrophony can be regarded not merely as a theory of artistic expression, but as an integrative theoretical proposal aimed at explaining the sociological function of ritual sound in the construction of social order, belief systems, and cultural identity. This concept offers a new epistemological foundation for research on religious music and introduces an innovative analytical orientation that bridges the sacred dimension of music with social realities.

**Değerlendirme/Evaluation:**

Çift Taraflı Kör Hakemlik Sistemi  
*Double Blind Refereeing System*

**Etik Beyan Metni/ Ethics Declaration Text:**

Çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur. Bu çalışma, etik kurul izni gerektirmeyen nitelikte olup kullanılan veriler literatür taraması/yayınlanmış kaynaklar üzerinden elde edilmiştir.

*It is hereby declared that scientific and ethical principles were adhered to during the preparation of this study and that all studies used are cited in the references. This study does not require ethical committee approval, as the data used were obtained through literature review/published sources.*

**Etik Bildirim/Ethics Notification:** [info@esosder.org](mailto:info@esosder.org)

**Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı Beyanı/ Declaration of the contribution rate of the researchers:**

Birinci yazar %50, ikinci yazar %50 oranında katkı sağlamıştır.

*The first author contributed 50%, the second author 50%*

**Yapay Zekâ Kullanımı /Use of Artificial Intelligence:**

Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde yapay zekâ tabanlı herhangi bir araç veya uygulama kullanılmamıştır. Çalışmanın tüm içeriği, yazar(lar) tarafından bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri ve akademik etik ilkelere uygun şekilde üretilmiştir.

*No artificial intelligence-based tools or applications were used in the preparation of this study. All content of the study was produced by the author(s) in accordance with scientific research methods and academic ethical principles.*

**Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı/ Declaration of conflict of interest:**

Bu çalışmada herhangi bir potansiyel çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

*There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.*

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