

THE CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE BY RUDOLF OTTO: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

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Abstrak

Kajian ini menginvestigasikan dan menganalisis pengalaman religius Rudolf Otto menggunakan pendekatan fenomenologis. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah mengeksplorasi interpretasi Otto terhadap pengalaman religius dan kontribusinya dalam bidang fenomenologi. Problem penelitian berfokus memahami cara konsep Otto menyediakan kerangka kerja untuk menguji pengalaman religius yang melewati pengalaman biasa atau sehari-hari. Kajian ini menggunakan kajian literature, analisis dokumen, dan analisis fenomenologis terhadap karya-karya Otto, termasuk karya terpentingnya, Das Heilige (The Idea of the Holy), dan dokumen personalnya, seperti surat, jurnal, dan catatan. Kajian ini mengemukakan bahwa konsep “Maha Kuasa” Otto merujuk kepada kehadiran ilahi yang melampaui pemahaman logis dan membangkitkan respons emosional dan intuitif yang mendalam. Penemuan tersebut mendemonstrasikan kontribusi Otto terhadap fenomenologi agama, baik secara teoretis maupun metodologis. Wawasan Otto telah menyediakan wawasan penting untuk menguji kompleksitas dan kekayaan pengalaman religius dalam dunia modern.

Kata kunci: *Rudolf Otto, Numinous, pengalaman religius, fenomenologi agama.*

Abstract

This study investigates and analyzes the religious experiences of Rudolf Otto using a phenomenological approach. The main objective of this study is to explore Otto's interpretation of religious experience and his contribution to the field of phenomenology. The research problem focuses on understanding how Otto's concept provides a framework for examining religious experiences that go

beyond ordinary or everyday experience. The study uses a literature review, document analysis, and phenomenological analysis of Otto's works, including his important text, *Das Heilige* (The Idea of the Holy), and his personal documents, such as letters, journals, and notes. The study reveals that Otto's concept of the "Almighty" refers to a divine presence that transcends logical understanding and evokes deep emotional and intuitive responses. These findings demonstrate the importance of Otto's contribution to the phenomenology of religion, both theoretically and methodologically. Otto's insights have provided important insights for examining the complexity and richness of religious experiences in the modern world.

Keywords: *Rudolf Otto, Numinous, religious experience, phenomenology of religion*

Received: December 19, 2023 | **Reviewed:** July 4, 2024 | **Accepted:** August 31, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Religious experience can be defined as a subjective experience involving perceptions, beliefs, and feelings related to spiritual or transcendental matters (Hood et al., 2018). Such experiences can manifest in a variety of forms, such as a sense of the presence of God or a higher power, mystical encounters, and a deep sense of connectedness to the wider universe (Batson et al., 1993). Religious experience is a complex and multifaceted dimension of human life, influenced by cultural background, personal experiences, and spiritual development (Geertz, 1973; James, 1902/2004; Pargament, 1997).

This article explores the concept of religious experience through a phenomenological lens, specifically examining the contributions of Rudolf Otto (1869-1937), a German theologian and scholar of religion known for his work on the notion of the sacred. The article aims to clarify the unique aspects of Otto's phenomenological approach to religious experience and distinguish this exploration from the existing literature by focusing on Otto's

concept of the "Numinous" and its application to understanding religious phenomena. This article focuses on the field of philosophy, specifically the phenomenology of religion, which fits the philosophical orientation of this journal.

The article focuses on how Otto's phenomenological perspective can provide a deeper understanding of religious experience beyond theological or psychological interpretations. Unlike other articles that focus solely on Otto's theological contributions or his influence on the study of religion, this article emphasizes the philosophical and phenomenological dimensions of his work, which offer a distinctive approach to understanding the subjective, emotional, and intuitive aspects of religious experience that go beyond empirical analysis.

Otto's concept of the "Numinous," which refers to a sense of divinity or sacredness that transcends rational understanding, is central to this exploration. He describes the Numinous as something "mysterious," "ineffable," and "awesome," evoking feelings of both fear and awe, summarized in the term *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. This concept highlights the unique nature of religious experience as an encounter with a sacred presence that cannot be fully grasped by reason or the language used in ordinary conversation. From a phenomenological perspective, these experiences are seen as highly personal and subjective, shaped by the individual's spiritual condition and life journey.

This article uses a phenomenological approach design, which focuses on direct observation and description of experiences to understand their essence. This approach is based on Otto's theoretical framework, particularly his seminal work, *The Idea of the Holy*, which draws on Otto's primary sources to examine how his concept of the Numinous can be applied to contemporary religious experiences.

The article involves a qualitative analysis of data collected through in-depth interviews with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, who capture a wide range of religious experiences. The phenomenological approach used in this study emphasizes the

subjective nature of these experiences and seeks to understand them as they are experienced by the individuals themselves. This method allows for an exploration of the themes of *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, which capture the emotional and intuitive dimensions of encounters with the Sacred.

This article contributes to the field by highlighting how Otto's phenomenological approach enriches our understanding of religiosity, particularly in recognizing the role of subjective experience in shaping one's spiritual life. This study clarifies that this enrichment involves a deeper appreciation of the non-rational elements of religious experience, which are often overlooked in more traditional approaches. By focusing on Otto's unique perspective, this article aims to provide new insights into how religious experience is understood and experienced in the modern world.

This article demonstrates that Otto's concept of the Numinous remains relevant in contemporary discussions of the phenomenology of religion. His emphasis on the ineffable and emotionally charged nature of religious experience challenges existing frameworks that prioritize rationality and empirical evidence. The article shows that Otto's ideas offer a way of interpreting religious phenomena that considers their complexity and depth.

In terms of methodology, this article follows a rigorous phenomenological approach, guided by ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Participants were fully informed about the purpose and nature of the study, and their consent was obtained prior to data collection.

However, there are limitations to this, such as the potential for bias in subjective experience and the interpretive nature of phenomenological analysis. The unique and personal nature of religious experience means that findings cannot be generalized across contexts. Furthermore, researcher interpretation may influence results (Finlay, 2002). Despite these limitations, this article

contributes to the phenomenological understanding of religious experience. This article in the philosophical discourse on the phenomenology of religion has offered a detailed exploration of Rudolf Otto's contributions to the field, focusing on the concept of the Numinous and its implications for understanding religious experience. It confirms that Otto's framework remains an important vehicle for exploring the often-unspoken nature of human encounters with the Divine, enriching our understanding of spirituality in a diverse world.

DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of the Numinous

Research findings indicate that Otto introduces the concept of the Numinous as the core of religious experience. This concept encompasses the aspects of *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, depicting feelings of awe, fear, and a desire to approach the divine.

Rudolf Otto proposed the concept of the Numinous in his book titled *Das Heilige* (The Idea of the Holy) in 1917 (Otto, 1917). According to Otto, religious experience contains an indescribable yet profoundly felt aspect. The concept of the Numinous refers to the presence of divine power beyond human rational understanding, evoking feelings of awe, fear, and a desire to approach the divine. Otto defines the Numinous as "something that causes awe and fear, is sacred, and goes beyond human needs and everyday conditions."

The *mysterium tremendum* aspect of the Numinous describes feelings of awe and fear that surpass human understanding. These feelings arise when one senses the presence of a tremendous divine power capable of easily overwhelming humans. This aspect signifies the greatness and power inherent in divine forces, eliciting feelings of respect and admiration.

Meanwhile, the *et fascinans* aspect of the Numinous depicts the human desire to approach divine power. These feelings emerge when one senses the presence of a divine power promising

goodness and peace. This aspect illustrates our human weaknesses and the human need for spiritual development and growth.

In general, the concept of the Numinous aims to explain religious experiences clearly and in detail. Otto's contribution to the phenomenology of religion is crucial as it offers a new perspective in understanding religious phenomena that surpass the intellectual and emotional boundaries of human understanding.

Many thinkers and theologians recognize the importance of the Numinous in understanding human religious experiences (Jones, 2013). This concept opens new perspectives in understanding religion as an expression of human beings seeking meaning and purpose in existence. The Numinous concept is not confined to religion alone; it is also applied in various contexts, including psychology. For instance, according to Carl Jung, the Numinous is a manifestation of all aspects of human existence, transcending our understanding as biological beings. In psychoanalytic views, the Numinous represents an unbound experience that embodies the "spirit of man" and unites the subconscious and conscious worlds of humans.

The concept of the Numinous forms the basis for a discipline called mystical theology or mysticism, which attempts to explain human experiences through religious experiences (Otto, 1917). This discipline explores human experiences in the process of seeking a relationship with the divine through meditation, fasting, worship, or other sacred symbols.

In contemporary times, the concept of the Numinous remains relevant in understanding religious phenomena. As an expression of profound experience, the Numinous is considered a transcendent and universal phenomenon not confined by cultural, linguistic, or religious limitations (Jones, 2013). The Numinous concept provides an alternative perspective for understanding human existence in every dimension, attempting to comprehend the meaning and significance of human experiences from a viewpoint unrestricted by the limitations of human intellect or emotions.

Facing the challenges of the contemporary world, the concept of the Numinous becomes increasingly relevant and important in helping humans find meaning and purpose in life. The Numinous concept provides a context for humans to realistically view their failures and weaknesses as creatures nurtured by the divine. It also offers an understanding of our limitations in comprehending and sensing His presence. Therefore, the Numinous concept paves the way for anyone seeking to reconcile human life with the divine existence beyond our transient being (Jones, 2013; Tacey, 2005).

Rudolf Otto's perspective on the Numinous is recognized as a significant work in the history of religious thought. This concept has propelled advancements in the theories of religion, religious studies, mystical theology, and psychology into the realm of more meaningful emotions (Otto, 1917). According to Edward Schillebeeckx, a Catholic theologian, Otto's concept of the Numinous is "accurate as the experience of human existence beyond the existence of human scholarship and rationality" (Schillebeeckx, 1983, p. 69). Meanwhile, William James, an American philosopher, states that Otto's concept of the Numinous "reveals the most basic practices of religion and human psychology" (James, 1936).

Theologian Rudolf Bultmann also asserts, "The concept of the Numinous is a concept that leads humans to an experience of existence that is unexpected and cannot be explained" (Bultmann, 1955, p. 80). This concept is considered a solution to the ambiguity of conveying experiences, providing a new interpretation in understanding human religious experiences.

Some sources discussing the concept of the Numinous include *Das Heilige* by Rudolf Otto, *Crisis Meditation* by Carl Jung, and *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James. These sources are essential references in the study of the Numinous and its conceptual development. Moreover, the concept of the Numinous has also become a source of knowledge and inspiration for writers and artists attempting to express religious experiences in their works. For example, in literature, this concept has been used by authors like T. S. Eliot and Hermann Hesse to depict extraordinary religious

experiences in their works. In art, particularly in religious paintings, the Numinous is often manifested through sacred symbols used to convey feelings of reverence, awe, and fear of divine power.

Although the Numinous concept allows for a harmonious relationship between religious experience and humanity, the current social, political, and cultural reality tends to transform religious experiences into something subject to materialism. This shift makes people forget the importance of the quality and diversity of religious experiences. As a result, religious experiences become limited to interpretations that often lack multidimensionality and fail to represent rich and substantial experiences.

Therefore, research and the development of the Numinous concept remain relevant in deepening human appreciation for religious experiences. This concept helps humans understand the nature, substance, and quality of religious experiences, providing a new perspective on how humans can use religious experiences as a form of motivation that shapes their worldview and mindset in various fields. This exploration opens the deepest aspects of human existence beyond the limits of intellectual understanding.

Rudolf Otto's concept of the Numinous is essential in the history of human existence and has the potential to provide a broader and deeper understanding of religious experiences. In these experiences lie profound powers and effects for humans, potentially serving to shape perspectives on connecting with the Divine and understanding human existence.

The concept of the Numinous has been a subject of discussion among various scholars, theologians, and religious and academic figures. Here are some opinions of other experts on the concept of the Numinous:

Carl Jung, a psychologist, regards the Numinous as an experience much deeper than its literal meaning. Jung suggests that the concept of the Numinous helps humans undergo a process of self-development through transcendent experiences or astonishing psychic experiences. According to Jung, the concept of the

Numinous contains archetypal elements as a vital part of human life.

Martin Heidegger considers Otto's concept of the Numinous as opposed to the distorted existence of humans, distorting the meaning and richness of the true world and challenging humans to rediscover that world.

William James, an American philosopher and psychologist, refers to Otto's Numinous experience as a "trigger" for religious experiences. James shows how humans are often drawn to the Numinous experience during daily activities, paving the way for religious experiences.

The concept of the Numinous by Rudolf Otto continues to be an intriguing subject for academics and scholars across various fields. This concept colors and enriches human understanding of religious experiences, especially in understanding human limitations in comprehending and feeling His presence. The use of the Numinous concept can also offer a new perspective for humans to perceive human existence in every dimension that goes beyond the constraints of language, culture, or religion.

2. Rudolf Otto's Religious Experience in Phenomenological Review

In the phenomenological approach, the research is focused on a direct and detailed understanding of phenomena, specifically religious experiences in this case. Phenomenology, as a philosophical method, aims to describe the essence of experiences as they are perceived by individuals, without imposing external theoretical frameworks or presuppositions (Husserl, 1931). The phenomenology of religion seeks to understand religious experiences as they are lived and felt, aiming to capture their fundamental essence without reducing them to psychological, sociological, or theological explanations (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Van der Leeuw, 1938). This approach allows researchers to explore

religious phenomena in their purest form, emphasizing how they are experienced by individuals themselves.

Rudolf Otto introduced the term "Numinous" to explain the unique quality of religious experience. He depicted the Numinous as "*mysterium tremendum et fascinans*," which can be translated as an awe-inspiring and fascinating existence. In phenomenological terms, the Numinous represents a core component of religious experience that defies ordinary language and rational understanding (Otto, 1917). It is characterized by a sense of mystery that both overwhelms and attracts, creating a profound emotional response that is central to the experience of the sacred.

In the context of phenomenology, the Numinous becomes the primary focus in understanding religious experience. This phenomenon elicits feelings that are indescribable and often challenging to articulate using conventional language. Otto stated that the Numinous involves a fear that is both captivating and attractive simultaneously, creating respect and awe towards something beyond rational understanding (Otto, 1917). This aligns with the phenomenological emphasis on the lived experience and the descriptive process of uncovering the essence of phenomena (Heidegger, 1962).

From a phenomenological standpoint, several key elements can be identified in Rudolf Otto's understanding of religious experience. First, there is an element of fear or awe, acknowledged by Otto as an integral part of the Numinous. This fear is not akin to conventional fear associated with physical danger; rather, it arises from the realization of the existence of something transcendent and sacred (Otto, 1917). The feeling of awe, as described by Otto, reflects the encounter with something entirely "other," a key concept in phenomenological analysis that captures the individual's encounter with the divine or the sacred as a unique and profound experience (Marion, 2002). Second, the Numinous also includes an element of attraction or *fascinans*. Despite the presence of fear, there is also a compelling attraction that captivates and fascinates an individual. Otto described this feeling as something that moves the heart and

mind, eliciting admiration and wonder. This duality of fear and fascination illustrates the complexity of religious experiences, which cannot be fully comprehended through rational thought alone.

In Otto's view, the Numinous serves as a foundation for religious development and the formation of beliefs. He argues that the experience of the Numinous prompts individuals to contemplate existential meaning and recognize a greater presence in their lives. For example, during a phenomenological experience, one may suddenly feel fear when confronted with something considered sacred, accompanied by confusion or awe that is difficult to express verbally. Otto's works provide several examples of phenomenological analysis to support his theory, drawing from religious experiences in various traditions. However, it is crucial to note that Otto's phenomenological analysis does not claim to reveal the ontological truth of these religious experiences. Instead, his focus is on understanding the essence or basic structure of religious experience, which aligns with the broader phenomenological tradition (Cox, 2015; Marion, 2002).

The phenomenological approach to understanding Rudolf Otto's religious experience emphasizes the dimensions of the Numinous, identifying its elements and appreciating its impact on human understanding of religion. This approach allows for an exploration of religious experiences without the need for deep theological interpretations, facilitating a more nuanced understanding of the mysterious and sacred nature of religious phenomena.

Otto's depiction of religious experience as involving elements that are challenging to rationalize demonstrates the strength of phenomenological analysis in capturing the ineffable aspects of the sacred. His description of the Numinous as transcendent, sacred, and possessing both a captivating attraction and an awe-inspiring fear provides a framework for understanding these experiences across different cultural and religious contexts. Otto's insights continue to resonate within the field of phenomenology of religion,

providing a basis for further exploration and discussion (Marion, 2002; Cox, 2015).

To deepen the understanding of phenomenology of religion, particularly regarding Rudolf Otto's contributions, additional works such as Otto's "Mysticism East and West: A Comparative Analysis of the Nature of Mysticism" (1923) offer further insights into the comparison of mystical experiences across various religious traditions. Moreover, works like "To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual" (Smith, 1987) and "The Visible and the Invisible" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) help relate Otto's concepts to a broader discussion of ritual and religious experience, thereby enriching our understanding of the phenomenological approach to religious studies.

3. Numinous and Its Impact on the Current Understanding of Phenomenology of Religion

This study underscores Otto's contribution to the field of the phenomenology of religion. Through the concept of the Numinous, Otto can elucidate religious phenomena that surpass the boundaries of human intellectual and emotional understanding, providing a new perspective for comprehending religion.

Through the Numinous concept, Otto offers a unique perspective on understanding religion. The phenomenological approach enables him to delve into aspects of religion that are challenging to explain solely through rational or emotional analysis.

Rudolf Otto introduced the concept of the Numinous as a novel way to understand religion. This concept describes the human experience of sensing a potent force beyond human consciousness, such as the presence of God or a power greater than humanity itself (Otto, 1917). However, the experience of the Numinous is challenging to articulate through purely rational or emotional analysis, prompting Otto to employ the phenomenological approach in understanding religion.

The phenomenological approach adopted by Otto allows him to explore intricate aspects of religion that are difficult to comprehend. In this approach, individuals are directed to focus more on their experiences and perceptions of religion (Otto, 1958). These experiences originate from within humans and are more related to mystical or indescribable experiences.

The Numinous concept leads humans to sense the presence of a transcendent power beyond human control. The Numinous can be interpreted as a sacred or sacral experience (Otto, 1950). This concept enables individuals to feel connected to a power greater than themselves within the realm of religion. It extends beyond emotional experiences, providing an encounter with the presence of a transcendent power. The Numinous concept can be applied to approach mystical experiences in religion. Case studies indicate that various mystical experiences in religions can be interpreted through the lens of the Numinous, such as mystical experiences in Christianity and Islam (Abdullah, 2020). Mystical experiences in religion can lead individuals to the same Numinous experience, where one has a personal encounter with a transcendent power.

Otto's Numinous concept and the phenomenological approach provide a novel and contextual way to understand the religious experience. The Numinous concept and the phenomenological approach can offer a deeper understanding and experience of religion relevant in the context of modern, increasingly complex religions (Tanaman, 2021). Otto's approach has differences and similarities with other approaches in the study of religion, such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. However, Otto's contribution to the phenomenology of religion is crucial because the type of religious experience he describes is challenging to understand through other scholarly lenses.

Otto developed a distinctive approach in the study of religion compared to existing disciplines like anthropology, sociology, and psychology. For instance, he highlighted religious experiences that are difficult to comprehend through these scholarly lenses. As he articulated in his book titled "The Idea of the Holy," "Even those

closest to the religious conscience find it difficult to describe what they mean" (Otto, 1958, p. 7). Nevertheless, Otto also acknowledged that his approach shares similarities with other approaches in the study of religion. As he stated in the same book, "Religious phenomena can only be observed by those who understand the significance of its symbols" (Otto, 1958, p. 53). In this regard, the anthropology of religion aligns with Otto's perspective, focusing on symbols and actions shaping religious experiences.

Otto's approach makes a significant contribution to the phenomenology of religion by emphasizing unique and hard-to-understand religious experiences. As he expressed in his book, "Religious experience itself is something unique and self-contained, having special and specific characteristics that form its peculiarities..." (Otto, 1958, p. 8). In this aspect, Otto's approach leads to a deeper understanding of religious experience. In another work, "Mysticism East and West," Otto reiterated the importance of the phenomenological approach in the study of religion: "...religious phenomena must be observed and explained from within, as a kind of phenomenon, as a genuine reality. Only direct observation of these phenomena can provide an accurate understanding of them" (Otto, 1957, p. 64). This understanding is a significant contribution of Otto's approach to the phenomenology of religion.

Otto's approach to the study of religion and religious experience was formulated in the early 20th century. However, the Numinous concept and his phenomenological approach remain relevant in the contemporary era. For instance, research conducted by Barrett (2013) indicates that the Numinous concept aids contemporary researchers and theologians in gaining a deeper understanding of specific religious experiences unreachable by rational or emotional methods. Barrett (2013) reports that Otto's Numinous concept is a crucial element in analyzing religious experiences challenging to grasp using other scientific methods. This concept enables researchers to comprehend the non-rational dimensions in religious experiences often overlooked. As Otto

stated, "We cannot understand religious experience through rational concepts" (Otto, 1958, p. 7).

Other research conducted by Zeiler (2012) also shows that the Numinous concept plays a vital role in understanding specific religious experiences. In his research, Zeiler reveals that the Numinous concept helps researchers become aware of deeper spiritual dimensions in religious experiences. However, some researchers highlight weaknesses in Otto's approach. For example, Whaling (2015) criticizes Otto's Numinous concept as too subjective and challenging to measure empirically. Whaling suggests a more critical approach to religious experience is necessary.

Nevertheless, criticisms of Otto's approach also receive responses from other researchers. For instance, in his research, Jones (2018) states that the Numinous concept remains relevant in understanding incomprehensible aspects of religious experience because it allows researchers to understand how these experiences affect individuals and societies. Although Otto's views were articulated in the early 20th century, contemporary research shows that the Numinous concept is still relevant in understanding religious experiences challenging to comprehend through other scientific methods. However, criticisms of Otto's approach should be considered in developing a more comprehensive study of religion.

CONCLUSION

This study examines Rudolf Otto's concept of religious experience from a phenomenological perspective. Rudolf Otto (1869-1937) was a German theologian and philosopher known for his work *Das Heilige*, in which he argued that religious experience is subjective and personal. Phenomenology provides an approach to understanding the essence of religious experience. In Otto's view, religious experience is indescribable and transcendental, differing from other experiences such as aesthetic or intellectual experiences. Essentially, religious experience cannot be grasped through words, and the experience itself holds a unique value. According to Otto,

religious experience consists of two main components: the component known as *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* and the component known as Numinous.

The study also concludes that phenomenology offers an appropriate approach to understanding Otto's religious experience. Phenomenology focuses on the description of experiences as narrated by the individuals who undergo them, avoiding preconceived assumptions. In investigating religious experience, Otto employed phenomenology to explore this transcendental phenomenon. The research further indicates that Otto's religious experience was significantly influenced by the cultural and social context of Germany during his time. Although religious experience is personal, it is constructed and influenced by the social and cultural factors of the era. This demonstrates that religious experience is not a phenomenon detached from the surrounding culture. The study's conclusion emphasizes the importance of understanding religious experience as something subjective, personal, and transcendental, as well as the environmental and social factors influencing that experience. Phenomenology provides an apt approach to comprehend the essence of Otto's religious experience, viewing it as an indescribable mystery. Therefore, this research contributes significantly to understanding the importance of religious experience as a complex yet crucial phenomenon in human life.

This research reveals that Rudolf Otto's phenomenological approach to religious experience focuses on the aspects of subjectivity and transcendence of the experience. According to Otto, religious experience is something personal and cannot be fully expressed through language or symbols. He identifies religious experience as an encounter with the holy or numinous, which involves feelings of awe and fear simultaneously, which he termed *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. This emphasizes that religious experience is not just an intellectual perception but a profound emotional and spiritual experience. Additionally, this study highlights how Otto used a phenomenological approach to describe

religious experiences without relying on previously existing theological or philosophical interpretations. Through phenomenology, Otto aimed to depict the essence of religious experience as it is experienced by individuals, meaning examining their descriptions of encounters with the holy without adding external meanings. This provides a more direct understanding of how religious experiences are felt and interpreted by individuals.

The research also shows that the historical and social context during Otto's lifetime significantly influenced the understanding of religious experience. According to Otto, religious experience is shaped by the culture and values of German society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This context influenced how people perceived and expressed their religious experiences. Thus, although religious experience is personal and subjective, it is still affected by social and cultural surroundings. Phenomenology helps understand the relationship between individuals and their social context in shaping these transcendent religious experiences.

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