Survey of Non-Traditional Beliefs

Agenda:

**1. Session I, September 20**

**Introduction**

**Sources**

**Mystical Traditions**

**What Is a Mystic**

2. Session II, September 27

Karma

Resolution of Karma

3. Session III, October 4

Reincarnation

Akashic Records

4. Session IV, October 11

Free Will Choice

Understanding Karma, Reincarnation and Free Will Choice

5. Session V, October 18

Chakras

Kundalini

6. Session VI, October 25

Astrology

Healing Systems

Additional Discussion topics

Classical Elements

Aether, Prana, White Light

Power of Thoughts

How to Change Your Attitude

Tools from the Kybalion

Gender and Mental Gender

Lesser Mysteries/Greater Mysteries

Mystery Schools

Ley Lines

Locations with Strong Energy

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Handout

look for the session date and content that are in **bold**

the attached material relates to that session

handout is exactly the same as the display you see on the screen

too many experiences with PPT when my notes in class were not sufficient

this is the kind of topic that may want to go back and review later

handout will be posted on DocStore

if you use the Word version, the links will work

if you use the PDF version, the links will *not* work

if you need help using DocStore, let me know

Resources

at end of handout

used data from Internet after careful review, have numerous links

all tested and work

fussy about the resources

medical: NIH, Hopkins, Mayo, Duke, Cleveland Clinic, etc.

associations

research studies, university web sites and the like

if you have trouble using that kind of data, please let me know

Lots of concern about how to present this material

information that various concepts were held by various groups or religious sects

this material was “hidden” from public view, read that as “kept sacred”

example: the Jain held the chakra material

some info was available but was presented in complicated language

had to work to understand it

examples:

Rudolf Steiner, used very complex sentence structure

ADK Luk, used synonyms but didn’t explain that the same as other word

per ADK Luk decision to allow release of secret information in the early 30's

started begin to hear about concepts during 50's and 60's

no proof but all of a sudden people started talking about some of these concepts

for class means lots of sources are from mystical sects/traditions

now:

there is “original” or “core data” but have been a lot of changes

many people or groups have adjusted info or added nuances

sometimes changed the names to show the enhancements

sometimes kept the old names but used the enhancements

some of it I found very unusual, but that is MY reaction, my choice

decided that it would be best to give a basic understanding

not all the recent add ons

not all the recent adjustments

as if: share basic concepts

then let you get into new/more complex theory if you wish

by giving you a good base of core concepts

you will have a solid basic understanding

then you can explore intelligently from that base

see the changes

some will fit for you, some will not fit for you, personal choice

can come to your own conclusions about what is right for you

Vocabulary

often different religions use same words but have a different meaning

also definitions have changed over time

for those religions that accept reincarnation, the definition of the applicable

vocabulary has adjusted

wanted to make the definition more palatable for those who do not accept

reincarnation (cycle of lives)

example: the meaning of “nirvana” (goal of reincarnation in Buddhism):

*Webster’s College Dictionary*, 2010

1. A state of ultimate wisdom and blessedness

2. A state of release from the cycle of reincarnation and absorption into the universal reality

*Macmillan Dictionary*

1. nirvana or Nirvana a state of complete spiritual happiness that Buddhists and Hindus try to achieve in which human existence no longer seems important

2. INFORMAL a feeling of complete happiness and peace

*Merriam Webster*

: the state of perfect happiness and peace in Buddhism where there is release from all forms of suffering

: a state or place of great happiness and peace

Full Definition of NIRVANA

1: the final beatitude that transcends suffering, karma, and samsara [aka reincarnation] and is sought especially in Buddhism through the extinction of desire and individual consciousness

2 a: a place or state of oblivion to care, pain, or external reality; also: bliss, heaven

b: a goal hoped for but apparently unattainable: dream

clearly, if you are in conversation with someone

be sure you are both talking about the same thing

be sure you both mean the same thing for the words you are using

Historical Mystery Traditions

Isis and Osiris (Egypt)

Osiris was killed by his brother Seth and dismembered

Seth hid the pieces in various places

Iris, wife of Osiris, found all the pieces and put them back together again

Pythagoras

Plato and Socrates (Greece)

Eleusis (Greece)

Demeter, goddess of agriculture, spouse of Hades

Persephone, daughter with Zeus

abducted by Hades

4 months in Hades, 8 months on Earth, hence the seasons

Ephesus (Greece)

devoted to Isis-Artemis (Diana)

Dionysus (Greece and later Roman)

Romans later turned lesser mysteries turned into Bacchanalia (a drinking fest)

greater mysteries still strong

Mithras (Persian god)

Druids (especially in northern Gaul)

Dark Ages

Cathars

Gnostic revival movement, southern France/northern Italy, 12-14th cent

Knights Templar

Freemasons

Chart of the Mystical Traditions/Sects

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| RELIGION | MYSTICAL TRADITION | EXAMPLES OF MYSTICS |
| Historic Figures |  | Pythagoras (580 BCE – 500 BCE)  Plotinus (205 CE – 270 CE) |
| Judaism | Kabbalah | Moses Cordovero (1522 – 1570)  Isaac Luria (1534 – 1572)  Baal Shem Tov (1698 – 1760) |
| Hinduism |  | Kabir (d. 1518)  Ramakrishana (1836 – 1886)  Vivekananda (1863 – 1902) |
| Buddhism |  | Lord Buddha (Siddhārtha Gautama) |
| Buddhism | Zen | Dogen (1200 – 1253) |
| Islam | Sufi | Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmi (1207 – 1273)  Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882 – 1927) |
| Christianity |  | Apostle John  Hildegard von Bingen (1098 – 1179)  St. Francis of Assisi (1181/2– 1226)  Meister Eckhardt (1260 – 1327/8)  Richard Rolle (1290-1349)  St. Teresa of Avila (1515 – 1582)  St. John of the Cross (1542 – 1591)  Evelyn Underhill (1875 – 1941)  Thomas Merton (1915 – 1968) |
| Confucianism (China) | Tao |  |

Note that there is no Christian mystical tradition but are many Christian mystics

second century CE

a lot of unrest in church, factions not always agree

churches Asia Minor

Roman church

Gnostic activity

Irenaeus ©. 120 – c. 202) was mediator among factions

became Bishop of Lyon

he felt that the Gnostics were threat to Roman church

Gnostics concepts and teachings:

there was a duality of good vs evil, light vs dark, etc.

not idea of the single God of the Roman church

members used own pathway to get to salvation

personal growth and learning

Jesus taught lesser mysteries to public, greater mysteries to disciples

per Elaine Pagels

Harvard professor

studied Gnosticism

worked with translation of the Nag Hammadi documents,

found in 1940s in Egypt

she felt that the Gnosticism was *political* threat to Roman church

Irenaeus attacked the Gnostic beliefs as heresies

he said

only one God

what Jesus taught is written in the New Testament

only one set of teachings

population needs church to provide absolution of sins

many of the Gnostic ideas were like the experiences of the mystics

but Irenaeus put a stop to all Gnostic beliefs or anything like them

hence no mysticism

teachings of Jesus are only what is said in Bible

what is a mystic?

Rabbi Amy Scheinerman:

Kabbalah (meaning “that which has been received”) is the intellectual and methodological approach to accessing the timeless truth of reality in the here and now. In other words, it is the process of acquiring and practicing esoteric knowledge and techniques for glimpsing the reality beyond our material world -- ultimately, for “glimpsing” the Ultimate Reality, God.

Google: (same as the Oxford English Dictionary)

a person who seeks by contemplation and self-surrender to obtain unity with or absorption into the Deity or the absolute,

[Note continuation]:

or who believes in the spiritual apprehension of truths that are beyond the intellect.

Sufi: direct personal experience of God

mine: a oneness experience with the Godhead/Creator

also: process of having the mystical experience changes how you choose to live your life

go from *believing* there is a Central Deity to *knowing* there is some power there

does make a difference in your choices and how you act

those who have had mystical experience, find it very hard to describe

means that there are many descriptions, lots of symbolism

not a conversion experience like Paul’s on the road to Damascus

not a dream

not a series of dreams that give unusual impact

not a near death experience (NDE)

not like a mystical image of fog above a lake in a forest

not equivalent to a wizard

how to have a mystical experience

traditionally three pathways:

service

study

mediation and contemplation

I would add how you live and the choices you make

not something to take on lightly

Jewish story of 4 rabbis who entered the divine orchard or paradise:

one died immediately

one went mad immediately

one cut the plants (did he perhaps try to destroy the orchard?)

one emerged in peace

generally a multi-year project

lots of work and study ahead

lots of fixing yourself and changing some habits

lots of learning to be very honest with yourself about yourself

restrictions on learning the Kabbalah:

be at least 40 years of age (changed to 20 years by Cordovero)

high moral standards

prior rabbinic learning

married

mental and emotional stability

have no control over when the experience will happen

it just does, when you are ready and the time is right

Resources:

General:

<http://www.themystica.com/mystica/default.html>

Awarded from: Britannica.com; Criteria: Editors selected site as one of the best on the Internet for quality, accuracy of content, presentation and usability. See home page in the bottom left for the search feature

<http://www.crystalinks.com/>

look under A-Z on menu bar to find a directory

<http://www.ancient-wisdom.com/>

<http://www.encyclopedianomadica.org/>

Carol E. Parrish-Harra, Ph.D., *New Dictionary of Spiritual Thought*, Sparrow Hawk Press, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 2002

an excellent dictionary with entries on just about anything in spiritual and esoteric

concepts and thought from a number of religions, clear and easy to understand

*Kybalion,* Three Initiates

actual authorship uncertain, primary candidate is William Walker Atkinson

not a book to sit down and read through, better to read a chapter and then think about it

for awhile

however, it is a book that one can go back to again and again

ADK Luk books (Alice Schutz)

To purchase:

<http://www.alohapeace.com/lawoflife.aspx>

not necessarily an easy read

lots of very detailed information on the Masters of the White Brotherhood

(mystical beings who are often mentioned in various discussions)

Mystical Traditions:

http://holybooks.lichtenbergpress.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Origin-of-Western-Mysticism.pdf

about Plotinus

long but interesting, good definition and understanding

<https://westernmystics.wordpress.com/>

read thoroughly, some things hidden in this I think

not clear what they mean by the term “mystic”

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mysticism/>

erudite, good resource so may be helpful

search on how to obtain a mystical experience

<http://www.sawka.com/spiritwatch/cehsc/ipure.htm>

Bruce B Janz, Ph.D. Professor, University of Central Florida

<http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/mysticism/>

resources for Bruce Janz’s class on Western Mysticism, University of Central Florida

lots of info, links and cross references

under section on Academic Study of Western Mysticism, first subsection:

click on Mysticism, PPT presentation

Evelyn Underhill

<http://www.evelynunderhill.org/>

Underhill, Evelyn, *Mysticism,* 12th EDITION, New York, Meridian Books, 1955

Janz: “an old classic but later works fulfill this project better”

Underhill, Evelyn, *Practical Mysticism*, New York, E.P. Dutton, 1915

Janz: “good introduction, kind of a primer on mystical life”

Rabbi Amy Scheinerman

<http://scheinerman.net/judaism/Ideas/index.html>

click on Kabbalah in the list on her web site

Recommended reading:

Daniel C. Matt*, The Essential Kabbalah: The Heart of Jewish Mysticism*

Lawrence Kushner*, The Way into Jewish Mystical Tradition*

Zev ben Shimon Halevi, *The Work of the Kabbalist*

Moshe Idel*, Kabbalah: New Perspectives*

per Rabbi Scheinerman, not recommended are:

The Kabbalah Centre

Michael or Yehuda Berg