

RELI2732 Summary Notes

William Findlay

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A Definitions

Table A.1: A glossary of important definitions.

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Week 1: Introduction | |
| Memento Mori | The idea of reflection on mortality. Literally: remembrance of death. |
| Thanatology | The study of death. |
| Iron Crutch Li | One of the Eight Immortals in the Taoist (Ancient Chinese) pantheon. He left his body for up to a week at a time in order to talk to the gods. |
| Taphophobia | The fear of being buried alive. |
| Brain Death | The complete loss of all brain function, both voluntary and involuntary. Used as a legal indicator of death in many jurisdictions. |

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|---|---|
| Phenomenology | A focus on consciousness and objects of direct experience. We want to look at the lived experience of religious people, rather than approaching from a faith-based perspective. |
| Epoche | The suspension of judgement. We don't worry about the truth of a story; instead we look at what it means to the discourse community that tells/told it. |
| Cosmology | A religious culture's view of the universe. |
| Soteriology | The study of religious doctrines of salvation. |
| Discourse Community | A group of people who share a common discourse. They share a set of basic values and assumptions which facilitates communication. In the past, discourse communities were a lot harder to form. |
| Week 2: Indigenous Religions | |
| The Psychic Unity Of Humanity | The idea that all humans across all cultures and all time periods have essentially the same cognitive ability; any differences can be attributed to culture. |
| Numinous | The feeling of a spiritual presence. Defined by Rudolph Otto in The Idea of the Holy. |
| Tupilak | A totem thrown into the sea by the Inuit; it sends a vengeful spirit to kill the enemies of the shaman. |
| Shaman | A religious professional who interacts directly with the spirits. |
| Near-Death Experience | A personal experience associated with death or impending death. Often cited as evidence of cosmological claims. A famous example is Eben Alexander and his book, Proof of Heaven. |
| Commensal Community | A community that shares food together. |
| Week 3: Death in the Ancient World | |
| Osiris | |
| Isis | |
| Horus | |
| Anubis | |
| Ma'at | |
| Mummification | |
| Zoroaster | |
| Ahura Mazda | |
| Dakhma | |
| Fravshi | |