MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE AS PREDICTOR OF DOMAINS OF RELIGIOUS AND

SPIRITUAL SELF IDENTIFICATION: EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL

CONSIDERATIONS

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A Thesis Submitted to the faculty of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Science: Psychology

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Chattanooga, Tennessee

December 2014

ABSTRACT

The concept of spirituality has emerged as a major focal point in both the theoretical and empirical study of religion. Whether the emergence of spirituality is a dimension of religion or a separate and distinct construct has been the subject of much debate among scholars. The philosophical arguments proposed on either side have underscored the need for further research into just what spirituality is and is not. An ongoing transition from a more religious to a more spiritual self identification is evident at least in the United States (Roof & Greer, 1993, 1999; Pargament, 1999). Using the data collected from The Bielefeld International Study of Spirituality in the United States, discriminate functional analysis of the three sub-scale factors of Hood's Mysticism scale were used as predictors of the self identifications "more spiritual than religious," "more religious than spiritual," "equally religious and spiritual," and "neither spiritual nor religious." Differences between groups based on the attributes of the introvertive, extrovertive, and interpretive sub-scale factors of the Mysticism scale (M-scale) will be examined in order to distinguish what separates the groups. Previous research has indicated that mysticism scores are particularly relevant in distinguishing the more spiritual than religious group from all others (Hood, 2003; Zinnbauer, Pargament, & Scott, 1999, p. 553). The potential to use Hood's measure to discriminate between groups lends empirical support to both the validation of the M-Scale as a measure of both spiritual and religious experience as well as to the development of new and underutilized theories such as horizontal transcendence and symbolic immortality theory (Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2009; Goodenough, 2001; Lifton, 1969).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Psychology is interpretation of self in others… In this sense, psychology is self-affirmation or
self-assertion, and psychology as self-knowledge is self-deception or belief, for man's
psychological creed is immortality.
-Otto Rank, 1950

Broadening the psychology of religion and spirituality to include a variety of

philosophical, psychological, and sociological factors allows for a better understanding of both

exceptional experiences and those that provide everyday meaning and value to individuals.

These meanings and values are involved in shaping and maintaining cultural and social systems.

Mysticism and spirituality studied from an agnostic approach allows the investigation of the

human experience to proceed regardless of ontological claims, or religious and secular

distinctions. As Underhill (1988) reminds us, mysticism "in the ancient and only accurate sense

[is] the science or art of the spiritual life" (p.63). It is important not to deny the influence of

religion and spirituality in the lives and life worlds of those we seek to study, including arguably

ourselves (Meraviglia, 1999).

The formative symbolizing process is a means by which persons overcome existential

anxieties by seeking and responding to those symbols that provide a sense of continuity, purpose,

and meaning (Hood & Morris, 1983; James, 1890; Lifton, 1969). The concrete mind of the

individual judges the independent reality (ontological claim) of the noetic; "he knows these to

exist outside as well as inside the minds in question" (James, 1890, chapter 10). This process

involves the continuous search for both internal and external forms of transcendence through symbolic representation and embodiment in cultural institutions. The search and response may be both individualized and collective as well as historically, culturally, and psychologically contextualized.

The psychology of religion focuses on how these symbols come to bear meaning and what function they serve for the individual. Religious symbols evoke an experience that is both formative and transformative (Lifton, 1993; Stace, 1960) involving both a search for and a response to something sacred (James, 1902; Hood, 2001; Streib & Hood, 2013; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). Within this context, spirituality can be understood as privatized experience oriented religion (Strieb & Hood, 2011) however; the experiential core of the experience is not contingent upon a religious interpretation, *per se*, rather an interpretation of self (James, 1890; Hood & Morris, 1983). Whitehead (1996) expounds on this and provides a working definition of religion; "The conduct of external life is conditioned by environment, but it receives its final quality, on which its worth depends, from the internal life which is the self-realization of existence. Religion is… force of belief cleansing the inward parts…it is solitariness…the art and the theory of the internal life of man, so far as it depends on the man himself and on what is permanent in the nature of things" (p. 14-16).

William James gives a foundation for understanding this concept in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890); the self is comprised of two classes, self-seeking (search) and self estimation (response) that function through material, social, and spiritual elements that form the phenomenological self; the "me." James denies a transcendental ego in *Principles*, however; his treatment of self in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* "favors a consciousness aware of itself as a self" (Hood, 2008, p.9). Building on the work of James, scholars from various schools of

thought have put forth theoretical and empirical support for an unmediated consciousness that can reflect upon itself and is capable of transcending self-reflection altogether, as suggested in mystic states of ego-loss (Hood, 2008).   With the "me" there also exists, a pure ego that is the common core uniting the parts of the self to form the personal identity known as "I". Past, present and future selves are represented in this identity and are thought not as separate thoughts, but thoughts that transcend time and space. Sense of personal identity is grounded in a family resemblance, a search for continuity, or a response to phenomena (Atchley, 1971; Gadamer, 1970; Streib & Hood, 2013; Ricoeur, 1995; Starkey, 2006; Wittgenstein, 1958).   Explorations into the nature of self are inherent in religion and spirituality. Within this model experiences of spirituality relate to the interpretation of "me" as an experience of multiplicity in unity (being part of something greater) while the "I" experience represents a dissolution of self into an undifferentiated unity (being something greater). Spiritual experiences closely resemble several core components found in mystical experience such as changes in positive affect, subjective states of being, noetic and ineffable qualities, as well as unitive visions and transformations of ego. It is possible that self identification is predicated on a spiritual search and response which can be characterized as mystical.

This perspective is insightful to the understanding of a current trend in the United States away from a "more religious than spiritual" self identification towards a "more spiritual than religious" or "equally religious and spiritual" one (Sanders, 2010). Further, those reporting "neither religious nor spiritual" are also growing in numbers as compared to the "more religious than spiritual" designation. Examining how the dimensions of mystical experience relate to the formation and transformation of self identifications can perhaps shed light on the similarities and

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differences between how individuals come to know and understand "religion" and "spirituality" and their subsequent meanings for individuals and groups.

Sociological perspectives as well as psychological perspectives yield context for understanding the historical trend in self identifications and provide theoretical support to current questions and debates surrounding the word "spirituality" and its relationship, if any, to "religion." New perspectives, such as the theory of horizontal and vertical transcendence (Goodenough, 2001), as well as underutilized theories such as symbolic immortality (Lifton, 1979) can gain insight from experience-oriented investigations of the aforementioned propositions. Although the growing interest in religion and spirituality has yielded impressive results, the psychology of religion has shown limited perspective agreement. This research attempts to provide empirical and theoretical solutions to a large number of perspectives and limitations found within psychology, sociology, and philosophy. The appeal for more interdisciplinary conversations was raised some time ago and the field will certainly benefit from heeding the call (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Dillon, Wink, & Fey, 2003; Habermas, 1975; Hood, 2012; Lifton, 1969; Stace, 1960).

Looking Back to Look Forward: A Psycho-Historical Perspective

Although the "swinging sixties" is generally agreed upon as the apex of the shift in self identification from religious to spiritual, it is reasonable to assume the trend towards the privatization of religion in terms of spirituality began generations before it was explicitly expressed in the milieu of the post 1950's counter cultural movement (Stevens, 1988). It can, in fact, be seen vividly in both the scientific and Spiritualism movements that emerged simultaneously in the early part on the twentieth century. Rapid industrialization and changing

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roles of social institutions brought about by the first and second World Wars also played an explanative role in the status changes seen throughout the American landscape. The emergence of a distinct middle class with its social structures (schools, hospitals, etc) and values rooted in Christian religious tradition excited the emergence of a counterculture that rebelled against those normative structures and values. The current state of psychology with respect to religion and spirituality, with its perspectives for lack of paradigmatic agreement, remains enmeshed in a struggle to define itself as a result of competing views regarding the virtues and shortcomings of logical experimentation and the nature of experience (Khun, 1962). This legacy has left the field dislocated, struggling to know where anything begins or ends. A psycho-historical perspective is necessary to establish boundaries in an age of constant change and impermanence. Lifton (see Kriesler, 2001) defines psycho-history as a tripartite model for answering the fundamental questions of who we are and how we get a sense of who we are. First, our subject of study is creatures of the immediate historical process that brings us (the researcher) to them. Second, cultural and traditional history has made them the kind of people they are. Lastly, our subject is human beings with universal psychological struggles. This paper utilizes a psycho-historical framework for understanding the how people come to identify as religious, spiritual, and neither religious nor spiritual as well as how mystical experiences shape identity formation and meaning creation. It is particularly relevant to the study of religious and spiritual self identifications to place mysticism in its proper context so that the importance of this construct as a defining characteristic of what is commonly labeled "spirituality" can be examined.

Psychology as a Natural Science

Psychology as a discipline was still in its infancy when the scientific revolution took hold. Capitalizing on new empirical methods for uncovering the secrets of the physical world by applying them to mental states allowed Psychology to break away from its philosophical roots and argue for a place among the natural sciences. The new scientific discoveries of what had previously been great mysteries of the mind became explainable "states," "elements," and, "structures". Huge advancements throughout Europe and the United States followed with the uncovering of the "laws of learning," "laws of behavior," and "laws of psychophysics". Psychologists set out to uncover the hierarchical structures of the mind as a means of explaining behavior. Freud enlightened society with his structural model of the mind, but consciousness, with its unquantifiable feelings and sensory projections, became an ignored part of what would eventually become the Behaviorist movement of the 1920's. But if all psychic ability could be reduced to cause, effect, and, physical correlates, there would be no need for psychology to exist independently from physiology. The physicalist perspective unnecessarily downplayed the importance of religion and spirituality.

Spiritualism

The Spiritualism movement came to America at the turn of the 20th century and attracted many followers who found themselves concerned with the existential questions of life and death (Coon, 1992). In his study of primitive religions, Rank notes, "the facts of death and of the individual's denial of death brought the idea of the soul into being…at a time when life was beginning to acquire a spiritual character" (Rank, 2002, p.262). This spiritual character was exemplified in a body-soul duality because primitive man needed some way to understand the

death of others; unable to comprehend his own mortality, this enabled primitive man a sense of immortality. From the most primitive notions of the self, to the most complex, the spiritual character of man has enthralled and incited wonder (Durkheim, 1965; Eliade, 1959, 1957; Goode, 1951; Jung, 1964). Spiritualism entered the American psyche in the later part of the nineteenth century, playing on this timeless quest for unraveling the mysteries of the beyond, and standing as a counterbalance to the notion scientific materialism. The position of Spiritualism in opposition to science is best articulated in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's (1926) The History of Spiritualim, Vol. I:

> It is a strange and an amusing reflection that the arrogant science which endeavored by its mere word and glare to crush this upstart knowledge in 1850 has been proved to be essentially wrong on its own ground. There are hardly any scientific axioms of that day, the finality of the element, the indivisibility of the atom, the separate origin of species, which have not been controverted, whereas the psychic knowledge which was so derided has steadily held its own, adding fresh facts but never contradicting those which were originally put forward. (p. 59)

The popularity of Spiritualism is easy to understand. The concepts were quite simple and miraculous. Without formal organization and lacking any cohesive textual reference, Spiritualism had two main tenants, a) a belief in life after death, and b) the ability of extraordinary humans to communicate with the deceased. Fantastic stories of otherworldly experiences were circulated through newspapers. Mediums and Psychics travelled the country holding tent meetings. Both elites and common people flocked to the sites in order to communicate with loved ones passed on (Prothero, 1993). Scholars, too, became mesmerized by the methods employed by the Spiritualists. Intellectual fraternities such as the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR), founded in 1884 in part with the help of William James, employed academics and scientists on their Boards and called for a true scientific approach to the study of Spiritualism. Spiritualism, for James, was an attempt to reconcile the physicalist

psychology with the functional. Long before neurological and biopsychological paradigms

emerged as a means of study (and included research that incorporated spiritual phenomena)

James proposed a link between the physical and the spiritual nature of self, bridging a gap

between cognitive and subjective approaches to the study of religion and spirituality. As was the

case with James' "healthy-minded" and "sick-souled" individuals, religion and spiritual

perceptions may prove significant to mental and physical health without the necessity of

empirical claims to truth (James, 1902; Hood, 2008).

Psychology, Religion and Spirituality as Science

Psychological science at the turn of the century was focused, as it remains today, on

causality models of mind and behavior. It is easy to forget that Democritus gave us methods of

sensory induction one hundred years before Aristotle began to categorize knowledge, or that it

was another 1700 years from that until William of Ockham enlightened history with his

principles of reduction, and still another three hundred years from that until Descartes scientific

methods brought thought into being. Two hundred years after Descartes, Wundt was given a

laboratory at the University of Leipzig where, upon declaring himself a psychologist, the

scientific study of the mind was officially born (Viney, Wertheimer, & Wertheimer, 1979).

Students of Wundt carried his scientific tradition all over the globe and never looked back. The

scientific study of psychology rejected metaphysics, displaced non-sensory phenomena, and

sought causality through inference using quantities based on probabilities. American psychology

easily assimilated these methodologies and in 1892 Wundt's former student G. Stanly Hall

founded the American Psychological Association while Edward Tichener (also a student of

Wundt) coined the paradigmatic terms "structuralism" and "functionalism." Meanwhile Freud's psychoanalytic principles and von Ehrenfel's gestalt initiative paled as behaviorism took center stage in American experimental psychology (Malone, 2009).

William James is, ironically perhaps, credited with ushering in the scientific movement in American psychology. Out of 100, he is listed as the fourteenth most eminent psychologist of the twentieth century (Haggbloom et al., 2002). James was twice President of the American Psychological Association and one of the few early psychologists who did not withdraw from the ASPR. That James has such a prominent place in the scientific revolution within psychology is a wonderful paradox. He taught the first experimental psychology courses at Harvard and had the first psychological laboratory in the United States. Yet, in principal, he was an anti-psychologist of his day; James saw the utility of psychology as a way of explaining descriptively how people think and feel, regardless of the structure underlying their mental processes. He was keen to illuminate the limits of natural science, but as Hood (2008) and others have noted, he was well aware of his audience and played to them in such a way as to impose his own (and decidedly more radical) views of positivism while at the same time avoiding the "metaphysical traps" that snared his contemporaries. James' radical empiricism is fundamental to the current study of religion and spirituality because in his assumption of a universal pure experience that is differentiated from its interpretation. James articulates this as such; "the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as 'real' as anything else in the system" (1904, p. 534). James stressed the interdependency between the self as an individual and his experience in the world. His departure from traditional psychology was, at least, apologetic towards the Spiritualist movement. James

was certainly open to broader views of reality, and cautioned to use natural science assumptions only provisionally;

> ... at present psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo and the laws of motion, of chemistry before Lavoiser and the notion that mass is preserved in all reactions. The Galileo and the Lavoisier of psychology will be famous men indeed when they come, as come they some day surely will, or past successes are no index to the future. When they do come, however, the necessities of the case will make them 'metaphysical.' Meanwhile the best way in which we can facilitate their advent is to understand how great is the darkness in which we grope, and never to forget that the natural science assumptions with which we started are provisional and reversible things. (James, 1892, p. 468)

Influenced by Hussrel's (1975) phenomenological philosophy, phenomena are not limited to sense data but include the meaning ascribed to experiences and the significance individuals place on them. James paved the way for the development of psychology as much as for a psychology of religion by crystallizing an interpretive alternative perspective to logical positivism without denying it's foundations on sensory knowledge claims (Hood, 2008). This foundation allows religion to be measured in a variety of ways because it is sensitive to cognitive, affectual, and behavioral components (Hill & Hood, 1999). The self is not blindly influenced by a distant unknowable external source but rather through internal sources of knowing. This principle resonated with the fledgling middle class and complimented democratic principles emerging at the turn of the century (Prothero, 1993).

In an age of manifest destiny spiritualism was able to coexist with popular religion and politics of the day. The movement appealed to the "folk" ideology of the masses, right alongside Lutheran and Calvinist notions that lay men were as entitled to scriptural fruit as clergy: men could aspire and attain freedom from the outdated class system by merits of hard work and clean living, and a personal relationship with God was an inherent divine truth for the offering (Tappert, 2007). The milieu directly affected psychology. Erikson (1958) explains that Luther

versed the abstract and the concrete together. Certainly James did the same for the psychology of religion. Perhaps it is worth noting that James considered Luther the epitomic representation of a "sick soul" (James, 1902)!

Turn of the century American democracy was heavily influenced by the Reformation. The idea of private judgment as a right is one of the founding principles. But, as Stace (1920) points out, if this is interpreted to mean that every individual is entitled to exercise his own judgments at will and at random based on his own reasoning, democracy then becomes a "bad sort of Protestantism" (p. 124). The blending of scientific principles, mainstream religion, and Spiritualism, the concrete and the abstract, viewed in a historical context, is but one possible explanation of the dichotomy expressed in the "more spiritual, less religious" identifier because spirituality became regarded as more ego-centric and experientially based, while religiosity remained more aligned with social structures.

A paradox emerged between adherence to tradition and liberative models of identity construction that characterizes American culture to this day. Through a series of interviews over a ten year period, Roof and his colleagues found as beliefs in individualism increases religious identity decreases while spiritual identity increases (Roof, 1999). It is in this vein that Troelstch argues against the influence of religion on conceptions of individualism (Hervieu-Leger, 2003). Drawing from the sociology of Max Weber, Troelstch viewed religion, in development and dialectic, as independent of individual conceptions of self however interwoven the two may appear (Troelstch, 1992).

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Materialism, Individualism, and Western Mysticism

Hervieu-Leger (2003) draws a distinction between religious individualism and modern individualism. Religious individualism can be expressed via ritualized religion or interior religion with a further distinction made between ethical-logical and mystical interior religion. Ritualized religion refers to following the dogma of a particular faith. Logical interior religion, he explains, relates to a Calvinist "ethical logic." This individualism forces man to confront his own salvation in the most individualistic manner; each individual must accept his fate without any intermediary between the individual and God. The phrase "living a Godly life," would be an expression of ethical interior religion while "knowing God," would exemplify the mystical interior religious perspective.

Mystical interior individualism, on the other hand, deals with the nature of the lived experience of a personal relationship with God. Paradoxically, this relationship is consummated "through the work of divesting oneself of self…open[ing] the highest possible awareness of the self…that constitutes an extreme path of individualization of religious experience" (Hervieu-Leger, 2003, p. 162). Modern individualism (expressed in New Age spiritual movements etc.), on the other hand, is *sui generis* to religious individualism because it posits a worldly form of self salvation whose ultimate goal is the formation of an autonomous self. This directly contradicts the position of religious individualism that stresses individuality through collectivity.

Modern day individualism became preoccupied with materialism and self validation. Offering an explanation for the decline of religious identification, Roof & Greer (1993) postulate theological and individualistic meaning systems that were once in unison are now in dissensus thus acting independently of each other such that scientific and mystical modes are becoming more popular. The decrease in religious identification and subsequent increase in spiritual self

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identifications as well as no affiliation to a religious or spiritual identification may be partially understood in this context. Recently, renewed interest in Troeltsch's (1992) individual mysticism has provided new interpretations for understanding the shift from religious to spiritual as a type of rejection of rigid religious structures such that "religion" as an institution is less important than the experiential dimension of spirituality. As Garret noted in 1975, "the scientific study of religion can ill-afford the loss of the notion of mysticism to the slag heap of obsolete concepts" (p.205). Now free from a purely religious interpretation, the empirical study of mysticism began to flourish in the 1960's and has become a critical concept in the literature of both religious as well as secular forms of spirituality. Garrett (1975) identifies two analytical sub-types of mysticism labeled M1 and M2 that Hood (2003) has labeled religious mysticism (M1) and spiritual mysticism (M2). Hood has noted that the initial identifier is redundant, but it does help to clarify the two types. Garrett's (1975) religious mysticism is a broad construct that intensifies religious affirmations and is open to religious interpretation. In contrast, spiritual mysticism implies a "narrower" sense of mysticism that is divested from religious interpretation and possesses "its own sociological energy" (p.215). Although Garrett argues this second type is rare, it could very well be this mysticism that contributes to individuals identification as "more spiritual than religious." This interpretation would be consistent with historical trends towards a more privatized and less institutional form of spirituality

.

Roof's Spiritual "Seeking" and "Following"

Roof (1999) offers another historical explanation for the preference of "spiritual" as an identifier. The post WWII generations, according to Roof, comprise a generation of "seekers." Reminiscent of the WWI tune "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm? (After They've

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Seen Paree)" (Long, 1949), seekers, according to Roof, utilize "both religious and spiritual identities in the formation of self as dogma becomes internalized and interpreted as a lived experience" (Roof, 1999, p.134). Post WWII saw dramatic changes in the American landscape as both women and men adjusted to post war life. The nuclear age had dawned, bringing with it a greater need for continuity, even if this was only false security. Roof documents the religious control of culture in the 1950's though extended structures such as youth groups, Bible colleges, and religiously oriented hospitals, as having great influence over the American cultural landscape but were diminished in the 1960's by public community based structures such as country clubs and community centers and thanks in part to the social legislation of John F. Kennedy (Roof & Greer, 1993; Scheidlinger, 1995).

Popular culture began to separate itself from traditional religious values with an emphasis on leisure and self-sufficiency. Roof (1999) made a distinction between "followers" and "seekers" as individuals who subscribe to traditional religious beliefs as sources of meaning and those who actively seek meaning through alternative practices. This was evidenced in the "leisure generation" as notions of success traditionally being associated with a devotion to hard-work were overridden by a new definition embodied at the end of the 1950's that redefined success as having resources and time enough for a devotion to self exploration (Ellwood, 1997; Halberstam,1993). Psychology, in particular, profited from the great turn inward.

Self and the New Spirituality: Maslow, Rogers, and Psychology in the Sixties

Maslow (1943) articulated the integration of self actualization, religion and spirituality and self-identity with his motivational theory of hierarchical needs and peak experiences. Once the basic needs of physiology, safety, belonging and esteem are met, an individual is freed

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psychologically to pursue self-growth (the ultimate goal in the development of personhood).

Self actualization is informed by peak experiences, moments of profound awareness with

humanity, which can have a lasting impact in the development of the self (Maslow, 1964).

Spiritual seeking is present in "every impulse towards psychic progress" (James, 1890).

Maslow's peak experiences are directly influenced by the work of William James, and

closely resemble mystical experience (Hood, 2008; James, 1902; Maslow, 1964).   Peak

experiences are mystical in content, "states of consciousness of an entirely specific quality

[having] a deep impression which they make on those who have them" (James, 1902, p.398). For

Maslow, in Jamesian fashion, these experiences are representative of a spiritual self, belonging to

the empirical me (ego), "man's inner or subjective being, his psychic faculties or dispositions,

taken concretely" (James, 1890). The I (pure identity) is spirituality or mysticism (Stone, 2012).

Peak experiences, then, resemble more closely those related to extrovertive mysticism than the

ego-loss commonly associated with the introvertive type.

Both James and Maslow make a distinction between experience and interpretation that is

consistent with literature on mystical experience (Hood, 1975; 2006; James, 1890; Maslow,

1964; Stace, 1960). An interpretation of peak experience that reveals something sacred is

certainly consistent with religious interpretation of mystical experience, and Maslow took these

interpretations under serious consideration in his empirical investigation of self actualization.

Perhaps ahead of his time, his attempt to reconcile science and religion made him one of the first

exemplars of methodological agnosticism (Hood, 2012). In *Religions, Values, and Peak*

Experiences, Maslow argues the need to integrate theological and humanistic (atheistic)

approaches to the empirical study of self stating, "religion is quite compatible, at the higher

levels of personal development, with rationality, with science, with social passion," and goes on

to state, "It [religion] can quite easily integrate the healthy animal, material, and selfish with the naturalistically transcendent, spiritual, and axiological" (Maslow, 1964, p.10). New psychology was then transfixed on person centered variables such as self-esteem, personal values, and identity formation.

Rogers (1961) documented empirically the self growth that occurs throughout the process of psychotherapy. Using qualitative data and Q-sort, he showed that self growth was possible and led to more positive self perceptions. Evaluating patients during therapy and on subsequent follow ups, he reported the relationship between a patient's current concept of self and idealized self to be small (r=.23) prior to therapy. Upon follow up, the relationship becomes much larger (r=.79) suggesting that the patient has achieved a status that is closer to whom she is trying to be (p. 234-235).   The age of Humanist psychology was ushered in and remains an ideological figurehead in mainstream American culture, perhaps much to the chagrin of the cognitive psychologists that exert dominance in the academic field.

Humanistic psychology was limited because its atheistic approach excluded the empirical investigation of spirituality (Morgan, 2012). Maslow and Rogers offered an alternative perspective that was open to the inclusion of phenomenological and experiential variable such as spirituality. With this came resurgence in the field of Psychology of religion that began in the1960's and continues today (Hood, 1975). These men both served terms as Presidents of the American Psychological Association and their books sold collectively millions (Aanstoos, 2003). If their influence was ever doubted, according to Market Data Enterprises, the self help market in 2005 was a 9.6 billion dollar industry with growth projections of up to eleven percent annually through 2010 (http://www.marketresearch.com). The connection between pop psychology,

religion, and spirituality is best summarized by Dr. Benjamin Spock (1970) in his book *Decent*

and Indecent:

> Between a precise faith in God as revealed by a specific church and a bleak
> agnosticism, I think there is room for various religious, humanistic, and philosophical
> positions based on an understanding of man, which do not necessarily deny God the
> Creator though they acknowledge the difficulty of defining His nature. To the
> strongly religious person such a belief in man might add nothing. But to a person with
> no specific religion it may offer a reassuring or even inspiring credo. For it can
> integrate for him the animalistic, idealistic, and spiritual aspects of his nature,
> permitting him to respond to all these with a minimum of conflict. Even if he has no
> religion he may be moved by religious ceremonies because they speak with the poetry
> and dignity of past ages about men's aspirations to be worthy. (p.39)

Trends in both psychology and religion associated with an increase in spiritual self

identification can be viewed in the context of a historical shift that occurred in the 1960's

embodied a rejection of conformity and emphasis on normative behavior that was paramount to

the post war generation in favor of liberation of the individual from social constraints

(Halberstam, 1993; Roof & Greer, 1993), but it is wise not to forget the history leading up to

such a time (Lippy, 1994). When viewed from a wider lens, it may be the case that Americans

are becoming "less religious" in the social institutional sense instead of "more spiritual" at the

expense of religion. This supports the claim that spirituality is a privatized form of religion

(Strieb & Hood, 2010). More than ever before, America was beginning to "imagine the real" as

television and media began covering the horrors of war in real time (Buber, 1992). The

previously insular ways of living were no longer compatible with the rapid pace of American

life; the times they were a'changing. The Buddhist concept of *anicca*, one of the three conditions

of existence, is impermanence (Lopez, 2009). *Anicca* characterizes all of existence which must

necessarily include cultural and historical change, as well as academic investigations; as such we

are all "formatively bound by our own psychohistorical 'place' and by our activity in that place"

(Lifton, 1974, p.22-23). Examination of the historical lineage that may have precipitated the current trend towards a "spiritual" self identification as opposed to a "religious" one allows for a less speculative and merely curious investigation and instead offers broader insight into both the objective conditions that constitute the current shift and the subjective responses that characterize it.

Empirical Investigation of Religion and Spirituality

Levels of Research and Research Goals

Empirical researchers identify two main levels of measurement within the psychology of religion and spirituality; dispositional and functional (Berger, 1966; Gorsuch, 1988; Hood et. al, 2004; Pargament, 2002; Tsang & McCullough, 2003; Yinger, 1957, 1977). Dispositional measures include cognitive measures such as general religiousness or spirituality, commitment, and development. Level two measures include religious or spiritual participation, practices and support as well as experientially based measurements. Studies employing dispositional measures examine links between trait-like characteristics (e.g. individual differences) while functional measures examine how people use religion and spirituality (e.g. meanings and motivations). Research in the Psychology of Religion can be viewed as having three main goals (Belzen & Hood, 2006). The first aim is concerned with the materialization and symmetry in the area of psychic functioning (e.g. beliefs, desires, cognitions, experiences). The second goal is to explain how religion and spirituality become (or do not become) part of a person's psychic makeup and what factors help or hinder this process. The third goal investigates the psychic components of various religious and spiritual phenomena. This type of research focuses on the influence psychic factors may have on a particular aspect of the phenomena of study (e.g. mystical

experience, liturgy, autobiography). Belzen and Hood (2006) further classify the three identified

trajectories (psychic functioning, psychic makeup, and psychic components) as being

mechanistic, organistic, or personalistic.

The first two types aim to reconstruct phenomena by first extracting the components

parts. The last type begins with the phenomenon and tries to then unravel its elements.

Mechanistic and organistic approaches have been criticized as being reductionist and

functionally distant from lived experience (Belzen & Hood, 2006; Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003;

Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2009; Jessor, 1958; Kauffman, 2010; McAdams & Pals, 2006). This

typology, as laid out by Belzen and Hood (2006) highlights the various philosophies and

methods of each trajectory and also allows a careful examination of the strengths and weaknesses

of each position.

Mechanistic Approaches: Personality Traits and States

A meta-analysis (Saroglou, 2002), compared eighteen studies that incorporated the five

factor personality model (McCrae & Costa, 1987) to a variety of religious and spiritual measures.

The religious measures were categorized into four types: 1) general religiosity, 2) open, mature

religion and spirituality, 3) religious fundamentalism, and 4) extrinsic religion. Using several

different Five Factor Models (FFM) measures (NEO-PI, NEO-FFI, NEO-PI-R, and the bi-polar

adjective list), Saroglou (2002) found small effect sizes for the relationship between personality

and the religion and spirituality measures. Measures of "general religiosity" appear to be most

related with agreeableness, conscientiousness (r=.17, r=.20), and weakly correlated with

extroversion (r=.10). The studies also indicate a small effect size regarding a negative

correlation between openness and religiosity (r=-.06). Comparing "general religiosity" with

"open, mature religion and spirituality" the effect size of openness is much larger (r=.22) while agreeableness and conscientiousness showed a lower correlation (r=.15, r=.14). This type was negatively correlated to neuroticism. "Religious fundamentalism" was negatively correlated with openness (r=-.14) and neuroticism (r=-.12) and positively correlated with agreeableness (r=.13). Finally, "extrinsic religiosity" was only significantly correlated with neuroticism (r=.11) and was unrelated to extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. The results show religion most related to agreeableness and conscientiousness but also weakly related to the other factors dependent upon the religious dimension measured (e.g. general religiosity). Based on the low correlations, the relationship between religion and personality is weak at best. Piedmont (1999) proposed a possible sixth, "spiritual" factor of personality. Spirituality was conceptualized as a motivational trait that would remain stable throughout the life course of an individual. Spirituality was defined as, "an individual's efforts to construe a broad sense of personal meaning within an eschatological context…that lead us to develop a sense of Spiritual Transcendence, or the capacity of individuals to stand outside of their immediate sense of time and place and to view life from a larger, more objective perspective" (Piedmont, 1999, p. 998). Piedmont developed a 24 item scale that measured three factors of spirituality: universality, prayer fulfillment, and connectedness. Factor analysis established a distinct factor for the spiritual transcendence scale apart from the NEO PI-R five factors. Regression analysis revealed the scale increased the predictive capability of the NEO PI-R to a number of psychological outcomes such as positive affect and psychological well being. The findings suggest spirituality, as a dimension of personality, plays a distinct role in the trait characteristics that have a stable and long lasting influence on an individual's psychology across the lifespan. Other trait approaches include investigations into the link between genetics and religion (D'Onofrio, Eaves,

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Murrelle, Maes, & Spilka, 1999). Using the Virginia 30,000 data, they looked for evidence of heritable religious traits that would influence religious affiliation, attitudes, and behaviors. They concluded that while some evidence of minor genetic influences was present, cultural transmission accounted for the majority of the variance in all the factors they measured. This finding suggests that religious and spiritual identifications are socially reinforced Piedmont, 2005).

Subjective Well-being

There is a breadth of research that suggests a positive relationship between subjective well being and religion and spirituality (Witter, Stock, Okun, & Haring, 1985). A meta-analysis of 556 empirical sources on subjective well-being using 17 correlates (religion, health, age) found religion to be as strongly, or more strongly, related to many of the predictors such as, age and education, that had been much more exhaustively researched (Witter et al, 1985). The authors also reported that this relationship was contingent upon how religion is operationalized, with religiosity being more strongly related to subjective well being than religious activity. They conclude that social integration is more influential to subjective well being than ego-transcendence.

Kashdan and Nezlek (2012) expanded the research on subjective well being and spirituality by examining daily reports of their participants collected over a two week period. This data was compared to a measure of trait spirituality. The daily reports were measured using force-choice questions on a likert type scale. Trait spirituality moderated the relationship between daily spirituality and daily well being, suggesting that daily spirituality might alter beliefs about the self and world as a source of meaning making but this may not be the case for

all people (Besecke, 2005). The authors propose this as the first study of its kind, and therefore

there is a need for more research on the link between dispositional and daily spirituality. They

also note the small sample of atheists in their study limits and call for more research in order to

compare daily spirituality across groups of believers and non believers. The preliminary

research, however, supports the theory that individuals who report high levels of spirituality may

have less difficulty coping with everyday problems because they can perceive them within a

context of ultimate concern (Pargament & Mahoney, 2009; Tillich, 1957).

<p style="text-align:center">Organistic Approaches: Stages and Development</p>

Erikson (1959) considered generativity to be an ultimate concern of aging and the development

of the ego. Generativity is defined by Erikson as a developmental stage characterized by a

concern for future generations. McAdams & De St Aubin (1992) operationalized generativity as

comprised of seven interacting features: cultural demand, inner desire, generative concern, belief

in the species, commitment, generative action, and personal narration. Dillon, Wink, and Fay

(2003) examined the links between religiousness, spirituality, and generativity using data

collected over a sixty year period. The authors were interested to know if trends in the increase

in personal spirituality and a decline in church participation undermined generativity. Their

results found that participants who rated high on measures of religiousness and spirituality also

scored highly on measures of generative concern, but religiousness was more highly correlated

with givingness, prosocial competence, and productivity while spirituality was more highly

correlated with having an impact on others, outliving the self, creative endeavors, and social

perspective. Both religion and spirituality were positively related to altruism across the sample.

The authors suggest that individuals who incorporate both religious and spiritual elements into

<p style="text-align:center">22</p>

their everyday life may exhibit the most balanced expression of generativity. These findings suggest that religiousness and spirituality are important to both the development of generative concerns and the formation of the self as a social creature.

Fowler (1986) proposed faith develops through six discrete stages with each stage building upon the next. Each of these stages roughly relates to age, with higher stages representing more complex integrations of faith. The six stages are as follows: 1) primal or undifferentiated, 2) intuitive-projective, 3) mythical-literal, 4) synthetic-conventional, 5) conjunctive, and 6) universalizing. Fowler developed an interview (FDI) to recognize an individual's particular stage. Leak, Loucks, and Bowlin (1999) developed a Faith Development Scale (FDS) in order to operationalize Fowler's stages for quantitative analysis. This has allowed for multiple approaches to the study of faith development that integrate theological, psychological, developmental, and lifespan perspectives. In an innovative study of theological anthropology, Peloso (2012) sought to better understand the metaphors and images young Catholics relate to God using open ended questions from The God Questionnaire (Rizzuto, 1979), the Faith Development Scale (Leak et al, 1999) and participants drawings of God. The results were presented in two broad conceptual categories; faith and spirituality. Participants indicated that faith was related to a belief in God that includes, at times, frustration; the image of God in all human beings; a unique purpose for the life of every individual; love as the ultimate proof of God's existence and directive for life; and the idea that God has a plan for every life and faith is the process of constructing that relationship. Spirituality was most related to the idea of putting faith into action through attending to social justice issues; maintaining relationships with God, family, and friends while recognizing the ups and downs in each relationship; and the idea of sin as the breaking of any relationship that stressed the importance of developing a close

relationship to God and others as well as the importance of human experience in the search for spirituality. Peloso (2012) proposes the ability to create new images and metaphors allows transition into higher stages of faith. Integrated approaches such as this one serve as a conceptual bridge between organistic and personalistic approaches to the study of religion and spirituality.

Personalistic Approaches: Styles and Narratives

The third line of research identified by Belzen and Hood (2006) involves investigations of psychic components and is considered personalistic, or hermeneutical. Keller & Streib (2013) expanded the research on faith development utilizing a mixed method approach that provided a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data investigating faith development, religious styles, and biographical narratives. Fowler, Streib, & Keller (2004) modified the FDI to eliminate some of the methodological problems identified with the original version of the FDI. Such criticisms include a questioning of the assumptions of stage theory (structural wholeness, irreversibility and sequentiality of the stages), structural problems with Fowler's hierarchy (hardly anyone ever reaches the final stage), and ignoring the affect based and biographical contexts that contribute to the formation of self (Peloso, 2012; Streib, 2001; 2003; 2005). Using a case study as an example, Keller and Streib's (2013) paper provides some considerations for correcting these limitations as well as an example of how to integrate methodologies. They coded the FDI for several variables such as an estimate of narrative coherence, attachment, mentalization, reflective function and self-regulation, and wisdom-related behavior. After identifying the context of the biographical data (chronological, reflective, or narrative) they analyzed the content to identify both individual and cultural themes. The data are then evaluated in terms of trajectory in order to

determine the direction of faith development within the narrative. Data are then compiled into a

case study that can be compared to the quantitative data. Finally, they present a triangulation of

the case study data that combines insights gleaned from the case study and questionnaire data

(collected on the same person). For example, their respondent, Karin, identified herself as "more

spiritual than religious" at the time of the interview, however; Karin identified her environment

at age 12 as "more religious than spiritual." According to the authors, this represents a turn from

religion to spirituality that is also present in the sub scales scores on Ryff's Psychological

Wellbeing and Growth Scale (Ryff, 1989); Karin has low scores on environmental mastery, and

high scores on personal growth that are indicative of such a shift. The integrative method

outlined by Keller and Streib (2013) has far reaching implications for the psychology of religion

and psychology as a whole and may be beneficial to many more disciplines as well.

Semantic Theory

        The change in self report from religious to spiritual has been linked to a shift in semantic

preference, but this alone cannot exhaustively explain the trend to report being "more spiritual

than religious" or "equally spiritual and religious" than to report being "more religious than

spiritual." In their 1997 study, Religion and Spirituality: Unfuzzying the Fuzzy, Zinnbauer et al.,

attempted to clarify the definitions of both religiousness and spirituality. Using a sample from

eleven different cohorts ranging from college students to professionals, to those who subscribe to

particular faith traditions, their study was one of the first to investigate the semantic similarities

and differences between religiousness and spirituality. The findings point to differing

articulations of the terms depending on the preference for the self report choices, "spiritual and

religious," "spiritual but not religious," "religious but not spiritual," or "neither spiritual nor

religious." Participants showing preference for "spiritual but not religious" and "spiritual and religious" as a descriptor tended to view religiousness as related to institutionalized practice and commitment, while spirituality was described a less formal and more personalized commitment (Saucier & Skrzypinska, 2006). There was, however; considerable overlap with regard to belief in a higher power across all self identifications except the "neither religious nor spiritual" group, as to be expected. Interestingly, both terms were also related to an intrinsic orientation toward religiosity, suggesting those who report a preference of "more spiritual" or "equally spiritual and religious" may view their orientation as a privatized and experientially based search for, or response to, the transcendent. This is consistent with Allport's (1959, 1966) description of intrinsic religiosity being congruent with meaning and motivation while extrinsic religiosity is related to functional and pragmatic expressions of faith commitments.   A dichotomy between how researchers define the terms as compared with those who reported themselves as believers, whether in terms of religiousness or spirituality, was also made apparent (Hill et al., 2000; Shafransk & Malony, 1990; Zinnbauer et al., 1997).

Streib and Hood (2011) noted the effects of this language shift in the psychological sciences being linked to a lack of religious commitment among psychologists that may increase their preference for the term spirituality to avoid an association with "institutional aspects of faith" (Beit-Hallahmi, 1976; Hill et al., 2000; Streib & Hood, 2011; Shafranske & Malony, 1990). In their attempt to hold researchers in the field accountable for the language they adopt, they are careful to note that what might be preferred terminology in the ivory tower may not encompass the meaning of the words as understood by those populations they study. While at first glance this may seem a superfluous criticism to the lay reader, it is not. Scholars and seekers and participants in every tradition, every culture, at every time, have defined religion

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(and more recently "spirituality") in various ways and there remains the need to define them

today (Zinnbauer et al., 1997). This claim is underscored by the Division 36 of the American

Psychological Association's recent vote to change their name from the Society for the

Psychology of Religion to the Association for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality after

years of heated debate over the definitions of both terms (Div. 36 Newsletter, 2004, 2011). Was

the name changing a result of a call for divergence or as a means of increasing membership by

appealing to a generation that obviously prefers one term to another? Keller et al. (2013)

expanded the research on semantic preference by utilizing Snyder and Osgood's (1969) classic

Differential as well as a Contextual Semantic Differential created by the authors. Semantic

measurements are measurements of meaning and/or change in meaning that that allow empirical

investigation of symbolic processes (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1957). Reporting findings in

both the United States and Germany, they found that among the American sample, there appears

to be little difference between spirituality and religion (using the classic differential) and, "no

single characteristic which is associated exclusively with religion" (Keller et al., 2013, p.81).

Differences became apparent when the participants were profiled using self reports of, "highly

spiritual, low religious," "highly religious," and "neither spiritual nor religious." Using the

authors Contextual Semantic Differential for the US sample, the "highly spiritual, low religious"

category described spirituality in more expansive terms ("flexible," "creative") and religion in

more limited terms ("oppressive," "rigorous"). Within the "highly religious" grouping, both

religion and spirituality presented similar definitional characteristics ("liberating," "positive").

Americans identifying as "neither spiritual nor religious" trended toward a negative perception of

religion while "maintaining a neutral stance with regard to spirituality" (p.91). These findings

support Zinnbauer et al.'s (1997) assertion that "spiritual not religious" participants related

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religiousness less positively than the other groups in their study. These studies also reveal little difference with regard to both concepts in relation to the "sacred" or "holy," suggesting a clear association between both terms. To this end, Daniel Helminiak (2006) asserts, "whether or not spirituality is ultimately separable from religion, spirituality is surely one dimension of religion- an essential dimension" (p.198).

Helminiak (2006) raises another explanation for the "fuzz" surrounding the terms religion and spirituality. Arguing that descriptive studies within the psychology of religion are limited by descriptive methodology, Helminiak appeals for explanatory methods that illuminate more than trends and directions but also underlying process and dynamic mechanisms that explain not just what makes these phenomena function but also how and why they function within the individual and society. It would appear that Helminiak is calling for more cognitive measures of religion and spirituality, but he wants them to be weighted based on values and judgments from specific religious (or specifically otherwise) orientations. He criticizes what he calls a "value free" approach to the study of religion and spirituality, citing a lack of correlation and the continuous, as opposed to discrete, nature of the constructs being measured; he further insists that, "what is needed is a breakthrough that accounts for spirituality in terms of its essential dimensions and, thus, produces a psychology of spirituality that is explanatory and, perforce, able to account for and asses all instances of spirituality" (Helminiak,2006, p.201). He goes onto to blend Tillich's "ultimate concern" and Belzen's "commitment to transcendence" into his own definition of spirituality, a noticeably value free "concern for transcendence." It is Helminiak's ultimate goal to argue that a psychology of spirituality is superior to that of a psychology of religion in so much as it is empirically testable in theory. His psychology of spirituality would, in his view,

"unfuzzy" the relationship between religion and spirituality by separating humanity and divinity into discrete categories (ousting the theological from the psychological).

<div align="center">Theological, Atheistic, and Agnostic Approaches</div>

Most sociological research studies as well as an increasing number of studies within psychology utilize atheistic methodologies (Berger, 1967; Hood, 1985; Streib & Hood, 2011). The psychology of religion and spirituality has certainly been affected by atheistic approaches and this has served to widen the gap between researchers in the field creating an unnecessary dichotomy between current theory and historical sources of data (Roof, 1999). Garrett (1974) identifies a tripartite typology of approaches to the sociology of religion that can easy be applied to the psychology of religion and spirituality: 1) the stance of phenomenological numinalism, 2) the scientific reductionist stance, and 3) the symbolic functionalist stance. The first typology is theologically grounded, the latter represent atheistic approaches.

Garrett (1974) points to Rudolph Otto as an exemplar of the phenomenological numinalist type. Otto argued religion was a *sui generis* reality which represented an "irreducible primary datum" (Garrett, 1974, p.8) or as Otto explained it, "the quite distinctive category of the holy or sacred…peculiar to the sphere of religion" (Otto, 1950, p.4-5). More recently, a group of "new apologetics" has emerged that builds on the epistemological position that faith can be reasoned. Beck (2012) proposes a new apologetic in critical theology that examines the functionality of religious beliefs in a non reductive fashion by encompassing psychological, biological, and sociological, accounts of religious belief. The imperative is not to prove the existence of God but rather the authenticity of faith. The underlying schematic does not change though; the accounts are religiously interpreted. Theological approaches are limited in that they

only provide for exceptional or transcendent experiences interpreted through a religious framework. This methodology excludes secular sources of meaning by insisting on supernatural processes to account for identity formation and value construction.

The sacred or transcendent has no place in the scientific reductionist stance, as it is simply rejected based on the verifiability principle. This is the pure atheistic approach, such as that of Sam Harris and the "new atheists." Harris (2005) has argued that science must destroy religion. This position argues the scientific study of religion can not exist in any scientific framework and, according to Harris, attempts to do so represent a zero-sum proposition that is not only dysfunctional, but a lie we tell ourselves (Harris, 2005). The new atheist movement has been criticized for its purist position as rampant "scientism" that explicitly trivializes philosophy as a mere subjective source of knowledge (Pigliucci, 2013). The "new atheists" are representative of a small group within the atheist community, but the success of authors like Harris and Dawkins have propelled this viewpoint into the limelight. The divorce of science from philosophy is a relatively recent and controversial historical and cultural shift that unfortunately only serves to bifurcate a long standing tradition of interdependence. Harris is an interesting figure in that he argues that spiritual/mystical experiences can exist outside of a religious context and is himself a practitioner of traditionally labeled "spiritual" practices (Harris, 2005). Atheistic approaches rely on purely naturalistic interpretations of reality that reject any such metaphysical claim to reality, or at the very least, reduce experience to sense data in which exceptional experience and identity formation is socially constructed and reinforced (Berger, 1967; Streib & Hood, 2013). Baum (1970, *cf* Richardson, 1985), arguing the location of spirituality in New Religious Movements, suggests the process of meaning making (the spiritual experience of religion) is not religious, but rather, "symbolic of the quest for a more liberated

human existence" (p.111). This approach, identified as the symbolic functionalist stance takes seriously the claims of religion, but reduces them to cultural and historical symbols that are "[stripped] of their supernatural significance by exposing them as camouflage for more basic psychic or social realities" (Garrett, 1974, p. 170-171). Durkheim is clearly representative of this type (Garrett, 1974). He acknowledged the sacred dimension of religion as such that anything can become a sacred, in thought (belief) or ritual (action), that promotes social solidarity. Religion is, therefore, an outcome of individual sentimentality explicitly expressed as collective representations of reality (Durkheim, 1982, 1965). Because "collective representations can not have their ultimate causes within themselves" (p.173), an ontological imperative can not be applied; however, religion is not denied its power or permanence; Durkheim's theory accepts religion as the genesis of all forms of collective activity including science (Durkheim, 1982; Tole, 1993). The caveat to this theory is what Birnbaum has termed the empiricist temptation (Lifton & Olson, 1975). The impermanent nature of social realities creates discrete and variegated religious representations which are constantly being amalgamated and re-conglomerated such that no single collective reality can ever fully mature because there are infinite realities emerging at any given point in history. A psychology of religion and spirituality would certainly benefit from synthesizing the transient realities derived from social structure and a phenomenology that is historically situated. Bertrand Russell exemplifies a middle ground position between the scientific reductionist stance and the symbolic functionalist stance. Although dismissive of ontological truth claims purported by religion, and more specifically mystics, he did not deny the importance religious experience has for individual meaning making (see *Religion and Science* p.187-189). When asked by a student if he had denied the existence of God in a previous lecture, Russell (1919) responded' "I am not denying the existence of

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anything; I am only refusing to affirm it. I refuse to affirm the existence of anything for which there is no evidence, but I equally refuse to deny the existence of anything against which there is no evidence…things we think unreal…[are] on exactly the same level as sense data" (p.370). Metaphysical entities can either be dogmatically assumed to be real *or* constructed of empirically given things that share resemblance to the metaphysical properties such that a logical fiction (meeting the assumptions for scientific investigation) becomes an adequate substitute. Religion, in this case, falls outside the realm of science but is only just on the periphery and not totally out of reach. Symbolic interaction as a source of meaning includes religious experience as a type of logical fiction that has infinite classes (comprised of formal properties) relating the symbol to its meaning (Russell, 1919). Therefore, a theory of types is in actuality a theory of symbols. In his treatment of mysticism, Russell (2013) argues that mysticism is a frame of mind rather than a belief system. The mystic truth is one of misappropriated emotional significance (Russell, 1997). Countering this position, Stace acknowledged the significance of symbolization as it relates to the mystical experience but argued that non religious symbolism relates the symbol to meaning whereas religious symbolism evokes the experience (Stace, 1952). Stace is said to have penned *Mysticism and Philosophy* in refutation of Russell's claims of the ostensible nature of mystical experience (Nelson, 2011).

    In each of these typologies, to paraphrase Muller (1892), we are left with either invisible roots that ignore the tree and the fruit or a fruit-bearing tree that disregards its roots (p.64-65). Perhaps it is not necessary to interpret the world as either secular or sacral or that this interpretation is a necessary contingency for identity formation (Roof, 1999). Accepting that spirituality is informed by mystical experience, it becomes impossible to fully realize the importance of exceptional or transcendent experiences without consideration of both

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phenomenological and cultural variables. It *is* necessary to allow for the possibility that these experiences also transcend cultural and personal boundaries. In order to do so, a methodology must not reject claims to the ontological reality of an Absolute as *sui generis* to theology, but must allow for the construction of meaning to include the possibility that "part of the experience of God is from God" (Hood, 2013, p.11). Necessarily, it must also provide a means of understanding exceptional experiences that share common characteristics of unity with an absolute reality, such as unity with nature or humanity, which are not interpreted as metaphysical but are no lesser sources of meaning and identity formation.

Agnostic Approaches

Religion and spirituality can be understood as both a search for and response to the transcendent that allows for a methodologically agnostic approach that avoids the limitations found in those perspectives which solely reject or solely claim an ontological imperative (Streib & Hood, 2013). While this can lead to much misunderstanding and debate, there are ways of resolving this definitional problem. One solution would be to stop a priori operationalizing terms. Koestenbaum (in Hussrel, 1975) explaining Hussrel's phenomenological approach to the paradox of definition writes, "The quest for precision through successive definitions leads to an infinite regress reminiscent of those of causation and deduction. These latter are meaningless if we deny them a first term" (p.XIV). When used in context, the terms used to describe exceptional or transcendent experiences becomes fluid and non exclusive. Stone (2012) reminds us that no a priori reason is sufficient to warrant the rejection of "old words" but rather definitional constructs should be considered on a contextual basis. Methodologically this means the definition is grounded in the study itself, a natural product of the study instead of the

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researcher's previous assumptions. Because religion and spirituality can be understood both as a search and as a response, limitations found in competing perspectives can be effectively avoided (Streib & Hood, 2013).

It is expected that a person will interpret their experiences from a particular set of assumptions and beliefs and describe them in a language that is complimentary to their particular philosophic understanding (Sahadat, 1985). This is especially true of religious interpretations but can be extended to include those exceptional experiences that are not defined as necessarily religious. Hill & Hood (1999) argue for a "methodological agnosticism" to be applied to the study of religion. Citing from Troelstch, Tillich, and others, Strieb and Hood (2010) propose a method of understanding exceptional experience by essentially bracketing any claim to a reality existent beyond that which can be known, not by denying the possibility, or further dissecting the field, but by positing that within the realm of what can be empirically falsified, the search for something transcendent can also be viewed as a response to the transcendent. This is especially true of religious interpretations but can be extended to include those exceptional experiences that are not defined as necessarily religious. This approach would allow interdisciplinary collaboration that emphasizes and utilizes the strengths and compliments of otherwise divergent methods and may help to clarify definitional misunderstandings between "religion" and "spirituality."

The Secularization Paradigm

The secularization paradigm has generally been associated with sociological inquiry, however; the positivistic, value free approach has had a strong influence on psychology. As a method of explaining society, sociology rejects (whole heartedly) theological assumptions.

Applied to the study of religion, the secularization paradigm posits society is historically trending towards a more secular ideology (Wilson, 1985). This shift is linked to modernization; cultural pluralism and increased rationalization of social functions reduce the reliance on religious ideologies as a means of understanding self and society (Taylor, 2007). Secularization has been referred to as multidimensional, but as Wilson (1985) notes, the model lacks "formal specification," but offers the following extrapolation of the model inherited by the sociology of religion (and to the same extent, the psychology of religion and spirituality):

> [Secularization represents] the shift from primary preoccupation with the superempirical to the empirical; from transcendent entities to naturalism; from otherworldly goals to this-worldly possibilities; from an orientation to the past as a determining power in life to increasing preoccupation with a planned and determined future; from speculative and "reveled" knowledge to practical concerns, and from dogmas to falsifiable propositions; from the acceptance of the incidental, spasmodic, random, and charismatic manifestations of the divine to the systematic, structured, planned, and routinized management of the human. (Wilson, 1985, p. 11-14)

Secularization theory has been commonly employed in the psychology of religion and spirituality. It is important to note the distinction between "secularization," a transitive verb indicating an action or process and "secularism," is adjective describing an ideological perspective (Wilson, 1985). Secularization theory has many interesting implications, but these can not be fully recognized within an atheistic framework. Theistic interpretations are also limited in their scope. Religious and secular processes may very well be dichotomous parts of unitive whole. Religion in the public sphere is becoming increasingly constrained and conventional, however; this does not necessarily imply secularization but, instead, may represent a privatization of religion (Strieb & Hood, 2010; Wilson, 1985). This theory supports the idea of a cyclical relationship between the sacred and the secular is both culturally and individually defined and sensitive to historical shifts (Stark & Bainbridge, 1980). In this sense there is no lack of transcendent symbol systems, as secularization would seem to infer (Shupe & Bromley,

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1985). Berger and Luckmann (1966) echoed this sentiment after years of supporting a

secularization paradigm claiming the world to be "more religious than ever" (p. 338). Not

dismissing secularization altogether, Berger instead noted the process of desecularization and

secularization as a viable explanation for the historical shifts in religious affiliation.   Hood

appeals for a critical theory within sociology that integrates theological approaches which

"permits the reality of mysticism to be confronted within its differing social situations" (Hood,

1985,p.289).

Self Identification and Identity as a Formative Symbolic Process

I, Me, You, and Others

Every known language contains the pronoun "I," as well as myriad verb forms to give it ("I")

reference and control over its inner and outer environments (Becker, 1971). Without the

symbols of language identity can not be fully realized because through language we establish "I"

as an object and subject being both of the world and in the world. We are the only animal that

has the ability to self reflect, or constantly converse with itself. This distinction makes possible

the very symbolization necessary to create such concepts as religion and spirituality. By

objectifying the self, we can give objective status to others (Mead, 1982; Becker, 1973; Rank,

2002; Sartre, 1957); I can then understand you in relation to myself and the environment. We are

symbolic of one another, but not perceived as the same. The relation is hermeneutic; "I"

interpreting "me" and "you" interpreting "me" and vice versa. In "me" the "I" finds a way to

distinguish objects of meaning. Through this necessary distance, things in and of the world can

be known to our senses while also able of being directly intuited and experienced. "Me" can be

known in relation to others through symbolic interaction and seen through the self while the "I"

(pure unmediated consciousness) remains obscured. Hood and Morris (1983) dissertated this in their theory of death transcendence by making a distinction between the "transcendent" and "reflexive" self. The distinction of the reflexive and transcendent self allows for an ontologically neutral position from which to empirically investigate the modes by which people in their study cognize the survival of bodily death. The transcendent self is perpetually "beyond" the directly observable and may or may not be given the status of personhood. This self is synonymous with pure consciousness, YHWH, Prama, Gnosis, pure intelligence, Brahman, the Godhead, love, and so many other words that it is redundant to continue (Balcerowicz, 2005; Forman, 1997; Goitein, 1956; Goodrick-Clarke & Goodrick-Clarke, 2005; Stace, 1960). For Hood and Morris (1983) this is the first person self. The reflexive self, then, is the self in the third person. The reflexive self, "exists reflexively to the first person agent [transcendent self] and directly to others." This self is of the world and can function independently of the transcendent self and becoming known through contemplation or awareness as well as by the direct perception of others. It is also possible that the reflexive self operates in response to the transcendent self and vice versa such their independent utility does not assume a hierarchical position in the construction of selfhood so much as a reciprocal communication with the tripartite "I," "me," and "other".

This process begins with a gesturing of action that elicits in return a response in the other (Mead, 1982). The identification of self in the reflexive sense is a doubling back on the initial gesture meant for the other. Socialization, therefore, represents a symbolic process of committing to a world-view that can be either religious or secular with vested interest in identity formation (Geertz, 1973; Ruschmann, 2011). Without the other, the symbol and the self cannot be realized. In Mead's understanding:

> Consciousness is an emergent from such behavior; that so far from being a precondition of the social act, the social act is the precondition of it. The mechanism

of the social act can be traced out without introducing into it the conception of consciousness as a separable element within that act; hence the social act, in its more elementary stages or forms, is possible without, or apart from, some form of consciousness. (Mead, 1982, p.25)

This assumption presupposes a purely constructivist view that is not consistent with that of Hood and Morris, but makes clear the distinction between the nature of the transcendent self as being, at least, "apart from" the reflexive self. The central feature of introvertive mysticism is the transcendence of the self into a state of awareness consisting only of a void (Stace, 1960). In the mystical view, the self is absorbed within the unity of the Absolute so that the subject/object distinction dissolves. The reflexive self becomes one with the transcendent self; one with the Absolute. As previously noted, the transcendent self remains beyond the grasp of ordinary awareness, but this aspect of self can be revealed in mystical experience. In this sense the "full" self is gained through loss. The self comes to know the self, not in relation to others, but in a "first person acquaintance with itself" (Forman, 1999). As Pahnke (1963) and others have noted, this experience can be formative in that an aspect of the self is revealed that can be interpreted and incorporated in to the reflexive aspect of self. It can also be transformative in the sense that the experience can have a lasting effect that influences behavior, attitudes, and cognitions (MacLean, Leoutsakos, Johnson, & Griffiths, 2012).

The subjects "I" and "me", however; depend on the predicate to give them life. Without verb forms of action, there is no substance to the subject from which any meaningful inferences can be made. It is in negation until given a symbolic "life." In so much as religion is the subject, it also requires the necessary verbs to give it meaning and substance. For religion, much like the "I", is empty of content when it is separated from the intention and interpretation if its experience (spirituality). It is interesting to note the transcendent experience of mysticism is in part characterized by this empty form of "I".

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The Absolute in Relation to Self

In the theological traditions of apophatic and cataphatic descriptions of a higher being, the paradox of theological language is revealed. Expounded by St Dionysus the Aeropagite, the apophatic tradition argues that language cannot wholly encompass that which is beyond the language itself and for that reason incantations of divine reference should be spoken in negation. This can be exemplified in the following sentence; the most divine knowledge of God, that which comes through unknowing, is achieved in a union far beyond mind, when mind turns away from all things, even from itself" (Jones, 1996). In direct reference, the higher being is unknowing and unlimited as opposed to all-knowing and infinite. This counters the cataphatic position to the same argument of the beyondness of a higher being stating that the greatness of the infinite can only be addressed by positive incantations, what "is" as opposed to what it "is not". The apophatic description of what God "is not" is an attempt to objectify the nature of God, while the cataphatic description attempts to subjectify the nature of God. Although it is historically too late, perhaps the neologism apahatic (meaning nameless, or something one should not say) would have been more apt!

Rastafarian language provides another interesting example of the subject/object distinction. In Iyaric, there is no distinction between the subject and object "I" and "me" because Rastafarians view themselves as a community in which everyone is a subject (Simpson, 1985). Iyaric deliberately denies the object (me, he, we, him) distinction so that "John and I" would be expressed, "I and I." From a religious perspective, this erases the distance between man and God by acknowledging the presence of God within every man (Stephens, 2005). The "I and I" designation reminds the subject to constantly reflect on himself, his community, and his

relationship with God. This is relevant to a discussion of mysticism and identity formation;

Hood & Byrom (2010) note, "ontological considerations can distinguish between narcissistic

forms of mystical experience best expressed by the phrase "I am god," as opposed to a non-

narcissistic mystical experience best expressed as "i and God" (p.19). Both examples emphasize

the interrelatedness of religion and spirituality, for whether you choose to separate them *per*

differentias or rejoin them *per unitatem* the metaphoric language serves as a bridge between

dimensions of the sacred and the dimension of reality (Eliade, 1959, 1963). Symbolization of the

self within the religious context carries behind it a belief structure for the construal of meaning

and continuity. The signifier evokes the system of meaning beyond that which is being signified

(Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). The symbol in this case is not literal, but rather an experience

(Stace, 1960). Religious symbolism, therefore, unifies the noumenal, transcendent self, the

reflexive self, and the natural world. It could also be said of non-religious symbols of meaning

that the field of possible responses to the signifier is enhanced. Think back to Whitehead's

definition of religion. Could one not trade the word religion with that of spirituality and still

agree with the definition? Again, to use the language of Mead (1982), "The horns and the hoofs

go with the hide" (p.26). What remains is, as Wittgenstein points out, a "family resemblance."

Perhaps definitions are qualitatively different, but religion and spirituality are both implicitly

related. It could also be the case, and certainly remaining consistent with Wittgenstein, that the

word religion does not have a "singular essence" and therefore must encompass more words in

order to deduce a functional and contextual meaning (Pitcher, 1964; Wittgenstein,1958;

Habermas, 1985, 2002, 2006). This is certainly in line with the literature on mysticism that

suggests experience and interpretation as two distinct yet interdependent functions.

The Symbolic Universe

The life course embodies both the material and the symbolic. The trajectory of one's life is embedded in the socialization process that regulates available choices and actions and impacts the symbolic outlook, what Kohli (1986) calls the "institutions" of the life world, that structure future actions and shape perceptions Berger and Luckmann (1966) offer the a description of the symbolic universe:

> The symbolic universe provides order for the subjective apprehension of biographical experience. Experiences belonging to different spheres of reality are integrated by incorporation in the same, overarching universe of meaning…by providing the highest level of integration for the discrepant meanings actualized within everyday life…Identity is ultimately legitimated by placing it within the context of a symbolic universe. (p.117-118)

Applied to the Psychology of Religion, institutionalized systems provide a structure to experience that along with subjective beliefs can be interpreted as transcendent because, "experiences of transcendence are based on the intentionality of consciousness, i.e. the fact that every experience is the experience of something" (Knoblauch, 2003, p268). Religiosity and spirituality are two ways in which humans structure their lives by responding to symbols that elicit meaning and significance. In the search for significance there is a potentiality understood through search and also an actuality realized in response. Understanding religion as both a search and response makes the distinction between spirituality and religion unnecessary (Hood, 2005). Stone (2012) provides definition of the sacred that is free of religious symbolization; the word sacred is a word we use to describe events, things, processes that are of overriding importance and yet not under our control or within our power to manipulate…to acknowledge anything as sacred is to move beyond the narrow boundaries of the self (p.495).

Ultimate Concern and the Protean Man

Tillich (1957) defines religion and spirituality as being categorical components of "ultimate concern." Both religion and spirituality take on the qualities of form. Ultimate concern provides continuity and direction in all other concerns, those that are political, social, or cognitive for example, which comprise our formations of self. Ultimate concerns embody a spiritual essence that does not have to be attached to the notion of something sacred. The language used to define religion and the religious experience is, however; inextricably tied to the feelings (spiritual essence) they inspire and the images and symbols these feelings induce within an individual (James, 1904; Ricoeur, 1995).

The formation of the self in and of this world is then an ultimate concern that can embody the sacred but is not contingent upon it. It is possible in these terms, to view religion as one way of making meaning without negating the potential of other sources of meaning making. This symbolizing process would be similar to Lifton's (1993) Protean man. Taken from Greek mythology (Steiner, 2010), Proteus was a shape shifter who attempted to evade those who would seek his prophetic advice by changing forms. It was impossible to extract prophecy from Proteus without restraining him so that he could not change form. Lifton's Protean man is continually experiencing a type of "identity diffusion" (Erikson, 1959), seeking and responding to an interminable series of experiences, some life changing, some meaningless, that he can disregard at the drop of a hat for something he perceives to be novel or more ideal. Reminiscent of Sartre's existential dilemma regarding modern human consciousness, the protean man responds to "a sheer activity transcending towards objects" (Lifton, 1993, p. 21). Lifton argues the superego is lost to the protean man. Lacking in clear definition of morality found in more traditional cultures, the Protean man "requires freedom from precisely that kind of superego-he

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requires a symbolic form of fatherlessness-in order to carry out his explorations" (Lifton, 1993, p.48). A paradoxical relationship emerges as man struggles to hold together his inner and outer worlds. Devoid of a principle of absolute he is deprived of feeling and thus continually seeking ways to transcend his existential angst. The Protean man seeks out and thus responds to those symbols that effectively bridge the distance between his inner formulation of self and his perceptions of his place in the world while both are constantly fluid and in flux (Lifton, 1969).

Rejecting a religious identification in favor of a spiritual one could be an expression of this sense of "fatherlessness" and the attempt to reconcile it. The perception of religion as authoritative, institutionalized, and traditional is not compatible with mans need to transcend those very things. And yet, as we see, he is unable to wholly distance himself from them as they are the things he needs in order to be transcendent. Over the life course things that once held meaning give over to others and then double back again in a "fluctuating rhythm within the life of organisms: one group of drives goes storming ahead in order to attain the ultimate goal [death] of life at the earliest possible moment, another goes rushing back at a certain point along the way in order to do part of it all over again and thus prolong the journey" (Freud, 1955). Man symbolically dies and is reborn while remaining "the same but not the same."

As Freud explained, although the goal of life is death we continually seek to eschew this reality (death denial) because facing it is unimaginable (Freud, 1955). Images that challenge an individual's worldview, his ultimate concerns, threaten his life (symbolically) because they threaten the structure on which his sense of purpose and continuity are built. Physical threat and symbolic threat can often manifest the same symptoms of anxiety, fear, and denial. It is then necessary to either vehemently hold onto those images or replace them with new ones. The current and continuous antics by the infamous Westboro Baptist Church illuminate this point.

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By claiming that God hates everything they feel threatens their belief structure, they protect themselves from any challenge to their ideological system. Studies have shown that when mortality is made salient, people use their worldview as a buffer against death anxiety (Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1991, 2000).

Terror Management Theory

Terror management theory (TMT; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986) is based on Becker's theory of death denial and also posits that denial, along with adherence to cultural worldviews, mitigates the anxiety produced by thinking of one's own mortality thereby allowing death transcendence, or symbolic immortality, by restoring a sense of order and meaning (Lifton, 1969). TMT is a dual process theory in which distal defense mechanisms work to keep mortality cognitions at the level of unconscious while proximal defense mechanisms attend to conscious thought of mortality (Dickinson, 2009). TMT thus incorporates an evolutionary perspective underscoring the biological drive toward preservation and the conscious ability to postpone responses and conceive of alternatives (Zhou, Liu, Chen & Yu, 2008). Having children is a direct route to survival of the species, symbolic immortality, and also a means of passing on cultural values (Lifton, 1969). Wisman and Goldberg (2005) found that participants increased the number of children they desired as a result of mortality salience inductions. A study of Chinese attitudes towards birth control policy showed participants were less supportive of the policy after being exposed to death related options on a word completion task than those who were given the neutral word choice condition (Zhou et al., 2008). In the same study, cancer patients in hospital were found to prefer the company of younger family members after being primed to discuss their own mortality (Zhou, et al, 2008). Hart, Shaver, and Goldenberg (2005)

proposed the interrelatedness of attachment, self-esteem, and worldview form a tripartite security system for mitigating terror related to uncertainty and vulnerability (symbolic death). Several studies have shown secure attachment styles to be related to a sense of transcending death (Hart et al., 2005; Florian & Mikulincer, 1998; Florian, Mikulincer & Hirschberger, 2002; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1991). Avoidant attachment, like secure attachment, has been associated with lower levels of personal fear of death, a finding that supports the dual process model of TMT (Burke, Martens, & Faucher, 2010; Florian & Mikulincer, 1998; Mikulincer & Florian, 2000). Self-esteem, defined as ones belief regarding how well one is living up to the standards of value prescribed by the worldview, acts as an anxiety buffer that provides protection against morality threats (Harmon-Jones et al., 1997). Worldview research connected with TMT has consistently shown participants will challenge any perceived threat to their worldview through means of cultural defense systems such as in group/out group prejudice and exaggeration of stereotypes (Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997; McGregor et al., 1998; Simon et al., 1997; Schimel et al., 1999). A recent study of both American and French college students found that perceptions of a perceived outsider (an immigrant) were more negative for people who scored highly on a measure of right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) while those low in RWA provided more positive evaluations (Weise, Arciszewski, Verlhiac, Pyszczynski, & Greenberg, 2012). Unlike most previous research that concludes TMT induces hostile reactions to worldview threats, this finding suggests that less hostile responses can be provoked though making salient values of compassion and tolerance. This finding was supported in a meta-analysis of TMT studies that found mortality salience produced significantly less worldview defense than threats to meaning structures (uncertainty or worry about the future, feelings of social exclusion, or an experience of physical pain), suggesting the interplay of both structure

and content of belief contributing to worldview buffering (Burk et al., 2010; Kirkpatrick, Hood, & Hartz, 1991). Rothschild, Abdollahi & Pyszcznski (2009), in a series of three studies using fundamentalist American and Iranian Shiite Muslims, found priming with religious values (Bible or Koran) of compassion and along with mortality salience decreased support of extreme military tactics against Middle Eastern countries (in American sample) and decreased anti-western sentiments (in Iranian sample). These findings are consistent with TMT that challenges to specific aspects (content domain) of one's worldview (structural domain) "should lead to efforts to construct or affirm different frameworks of meaning" (Burke, et al., 2010, p.182). Belief in an afterlife has also been shown to decrease death related anxiety (Vail et al., 2010). Among those reporting a more spiritual identification, mortality salience increased the distinction between body and self; these individuals lessen the importance of physical death by constructing cultural and symbols of continuity that extend past bodily death (Friedman & Rholes, 2008; Goldenberg & Hart, 2009, as cited in Vail, et al, 2009; Goldenberg, 2012).

In both those who consider themselves "more religious" and those who consider themselves "more spiritual" symbolic constructions of death and immortality serve both a transformative and restorative function in the formation of the self. These images are clearly present in the major religious traditions found in the United States. The top six religious affiliations in the United States (2008) are Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Unitarian Universalist, and Hindu (for complete data see census.gov, 2012). Each of these has its own unique relationship to transformation and restoration whether through the death and rebirth of Jesus, the Great Flood, the Day of Resurrection, reincarnation of souls, Universal Salvation, or the cycles of creation. But when you look at the population breakdown of those religions against secular affiliations the top self reports change; the census breaks down as follows: Christianity,

non-religious/secular, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism, followed by agnostic, atheist, and Hindu (for complete data see http://commons.trincoll.edu/aris/publications/2008-2/aris-2008-summary-report). Taking into account changes in population, the non-religious/secular identification saw a 110% increase between 1990 and 2000. Here in lies the paradox: the data would seem to support the secularization hypothesis but, as previously explained, the majority of Americans self identify as "equally spiritual and religious." As noted, religion tends to be linked with social institutions and tradition while spirituality is considered uniquely individualized, however; these finding suggest religiosity and spirituality are perhaps more related than is apparent in current research.

Empirical Investigations Of Mysticism Using the M-scale

Operationalizing Mysticism

Hood (1975) operationalized Stace's criteria in scale form (M-Scale) which allowed empirical testing of mystical experience. The scale measures eight of nine universal characteristics of mystical experience proposed by Stace (1960). Mystical experience measured by the M-scale is characterized by eight facets common to all mysticism: 1) timelessness and spacelessness, an experience in which lies outside spatiotemporal awareness; 2) Ego-Loss, the dissolution of the ego into a unitive experience; 3) ineffability, an inexplicable experience that can not be adequately expressed but is understood; 4) inner subjectivity, a personal and deeply felt sense of awareness; 5) unity, the experience all the world as a unified one; 6) positive affect, elevated mood as a result of the experience; 7) sacredness, sensing a relationship between the experience and something revered; 8) noetic quality, knowledge that the experience has

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contributed to a greater understanding of the world. Scores are obtained by summing the positively and negatively worded questions relating to the particular facet. Each facet represents a dimension of mystical experience within three underlying factors; introvertive mysticism, characterized by the facets timelessness and spacelessness, ego-loss, and ineffability, extrovertive mysticism, characterized by the facets inner subjectivity and unity, and interpretation, characterized by the facets positive affect, sacredness, and noetic quality.

These factors were theorized based on the work of Stace (1960) which identified two main types of mysticism that are distinct as either an experience in which ego is absorbed into a unitive whole; many in the one (introvertive) or an experience of unity in diversity or multiplicity; one in the many (extrovertive), but the distinction does not imply separate functionality. In fact, Stace (1960) contends the introvertive experience is usually complimented by a previous extrovertive experience, but neither is contingent upon the other. The introvertive experience results from careful consideration such is often found in meditative practices or prayer, while the extrovertive is more common and resultant from experiences that are more spontaneous. Stace's three factor model places ineffability with the noetic on the interpretive factor along with positive affect and sacredness (Chen, Hood, Yang & Watson, 2011). The three factor structure Hood model places ineffability on the introvertive factor arguing that it is connected to the quality of ego-loss associated with the introvertive experience (Chen et al, 2011; Hood, 1975; Hood et al., 2001). Hood dropped "paradoxicallity" when developing his scale, citing that both he and Stace doubt that it is a true characteristic of mystical experience (Stace, 1960, as cited in Hood, 2001; p.270-276). In Mysticism and Philosophy, Stace (1960) argued that mystical experience cannot be understood by applying rules of logic and therefore the paradox of mystical experience must necessarily be denied. In Time and Eternity (1959),

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however, he firmly states "In the very nature of the Ultimate itself, there is contradiction…contradiction in the Ultimate is itself a religious intuition…the contradiction cannot be got rid of, because they lie at the very center of the mystical source" (p.155-160).

Religious accounts of mystical experience reveal this paradox (Hood, 2001; Hood, Hill & Spilka, 2009; Katz, 1978; Forman, 1999; Hume, 2011; Stace 1960, 1952). Even in the pure experience of the Absolute, there is implied a contradiction; the Absolute is assumed to be otherworldly and noetic yet in the mystical experience the Absolute is revealed to the mystic. The resolution, for Stace, was not a denial of paradoxicality altogether, but rather that paradoxicality becomes enmeshed with the interpretation of the experience. Stace (1952, 1960) argues mystical experience is separate from its interpretation. For the mystic, an ultimate and objective reality is revealed (noetic in quality) that is "neither logical nor illogical, but alogical" (Stace, 1952, p.159).

Empirically, this would tend to lend support to the Stace three factor model which places ineffability; the alleged inexplicability of mystical experience, along with the noetic; a cognitive advancement in understanding the world, on the interpretive factor along with positive affect and sacredness (Chen et al., 2011). Owing to the fact that all men are rational beings, the paradox of the Ultimate arises from mans attempt to interpret his experience by logic, thus the result is "our thinking becomes contradictory" (Stace, 1960, p. 153). Hood (1975) utilizes this component, purposefully or not, in his use of both positively and negatively worded scale items.

Although criticized for the use of double negation (MacLean et al., 2012), this wording inherently corrects the paradoxicality of the interpretation of mystical experience. If proof logic is applied to the construction of the scale, deduction of the truth of the statement must necessarily involve proof of the falsity of the positive statement (Lobner, 2000). Polarizing the

statements by including negation, in theory, simplifies the complexity of what is being communicated by providing further contextualization (Lobner, 2000). Paradoxically perhaps, both factor models have been tested with CFA procedures in diverse samples and have yielded good fit. Multiple cross-cultural studies lend support to the "unity thesis," the idea that the dimensions of mystical experience are universal and have proved the M-scale to be both a reliable and valid measure (Anthony, Hermans, & Sterkens, 2010; Beauregard & Paquette, 2006; Chen et al, 2011; Hood, 2001; Lazar & Kravetz, 2005), although interpretations vary by culture and religious affiliation. Mysticism can vary based on culture, orientation to religion, and independent differences, there remains a common core of experiences that serves to evoke meaning and continuity that allows us the unique opportunity to see "the many in the one." Hood (*cf* Belzen & Geels, 2003) summarizes this point eloquently:

> When mysticism as a social type is an inwardly and deeply expressive cultivation of the experiential truths of one's own faith, it is religious mysticism serving to intensify existing beliefs and whatever historical truth religion has to offer. However when it regards religion as an oppressive force who's literal merit wanes, then a more philosophically based mysticism is elevated to an independent religious principle and becomes spiritual mysticism. (p.36)

The Triggering of Mystical Experience

Mystical experiences can be elicited in a variety of ways. Hood (2001) found that varying set/setting stress incongruities could illicit mystical experiences in nature settings. The amount of anticipated stress contributed as a "limit" that concurrently allowed for transcendence. Stress was induced in natural settings by three outings that included: 1) a rafting trip on a fast moving river, 2) spending the night alone in the woods, and 3) rock climbing and repelling. The neutral stress outing involved a canoe trip on a calm river. The participants high in anticipatory stress (set) conditions, reported much higher correlations between stress and mystical experience (r=.12

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for neutral; range of r=.24-.49 for stress conditions). The finding would appear to suggest a connection between stress and elicitation of mystical experience; however, those reporting less stress activation during the outings (setting) reported higher scores on the M-scale. The authors concluded varying amounts of set and setting stress contributed to the elicitation of mystical experience.

Using sensory deprivation techniques in another study, Hood (2001) was able to induce mystical experience related to God by priming for those experiences. Utilizing Allport's (1966) intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation scale, equal groups were formed based on the intrinsic/extrinsic classification with a distinction being made between intrinsic and indiscriminately pro-religious types. Participants who had been primed for religious experience and a control group who had been given neutral priming, experienced sensory deprivation by submerging into an isolated tank. The results indicated that intrinsically oriented people reported their experiences in the isolation tank as religious regardless of the priming. Extrinsic religious types did not use religious interpretation of their experiences regardless of the priming. The indiscriminately pro-religious type, however, could be primed for a religious interpretation. This finding is relevant in understanding the distinction between "equally religious and spiritual," "more religious than spiritual," and "more spiritual than religious," because, as Hood noted, the interpretation of these experiences differ greatly and those without a purely religious framework for interpretation are lacking in the language needed to adequately describe their experience. It could be the case that those who do not have a readily available framework such as religion, defer to the description "spiritual."

Testing the hypothesis that mystical experience would positively correlate with self-actualization that would be triggered through a variety of different ways, Hood (2001) found

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differential triggering affects based on high and low self actualization scores that indicated those who are highly self actualized are more likely to report mystical experiences, and those experiences are more likely to be triggered by novel means (e.g. drug use, sexual activity as opposed to more traditional means). Low self actualized participants were triggered through traditional (religious) means, if they reported mystical experiences at all. This could be indicative of the need for people who do not consider themselves to be religious but are concerned with seeking and responding to experiences that facilitate continuity and meaning, to interpret their experiences in a privatized and personal manor. Mystical experience is obviously not limited to those who report being religious. The two previous studies, when taken together, could suggest that there are those with a desire to publically "confess" their experiences as a means of being socially connected and those who desire to keep their experiences inwardly manifested (Starbuck, 1911 *cf* Spilka, Brown, & Cassidy, 1992).

Hallucinogens and other entheogens have been historically linked to the induction of mystical experiences (Lilly, 1972; Pahnke, 1963; Griffiths, Richards, McCann, & Jesse, 2006; Griffiths, Richards, Johnson, McCann, & Jesse, 2008;) Recently, studies using double blind laboratory techniques have shown entheogen induced mystical experiences have lasting effects on individuals, including greater satisfaction with life ratings and higher psychological well being scores post experience (Griffiths et al, 2006, 2008).

Personality

Caird (1987) measured the relationship between mysticism and personality using the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire measuring introversion/extroversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism and found no significant correlations. Personality and mystical experience was investigated by Hood, Hall, Watson, & Biderman (1979) using the Jackson Personality Inventory (JPI) and the M-scale. Of the 15 JPI personality dimensions significant correlations were obtained between breadth of interest, complexity, innovation, interpersonal affect, social adroitness, tolerance, value orthodoxy, and risk taking. Using a two factor structure of the M-scale that differentiated minimal phenomenological experience (factor I) and religious interpretation (factor II), factor one was negatively related to value orthodoxy and insignificantly related to interpersonal affect, which represented the two personality dimensions that correlated with factor II. This makes sense given the factor structure and supports the theory that those who interpret their experiences as religious are more likely to favor traditional orientations and value social interactions, but the authors conclude this factor is probably not related to dimensions of personality. Participants on that do not interpret their mystical experiences as specifically religious, however, tend to be rejecting of tradition, have various interests, and be creative, tolerant, socially adept, and able to find novel solutions to problems. This factor resembles a rejection of tradition and openness to experience that is characteristic of those who report being "more spiritual than religious."

Using the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator and the M-scale, high M-scale scores were related to "feeling" and "intuition" but personality could not discriminate mystical from non-mystical experience (Campbell, 1983 *cf* Nelson, 1991). This finding is congruent with previous research suggesting mystical experience is universal and common across states and traits. This

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tends to support the idea that transcendent experiences, such as those interpreted as mystical, are part of normal identity formation from both psychological and sociological perspectives. Mystical experiences are, therefore, a necessary condition for identity formation, but are not necessarily inherently religious or spiritual. Personality as well as social factors can certainly influence these interpretations.

Life Course Variables

Spilka, Brown, & Cassidy (1992) examined the structure of mystical experience in both pre and post experience lifestyles. Pre experience dissatisfactions with life (e.g. low satisfaction with life in general, health concerns) and religiosity were found to be associated with positive features of mystical experience (e.g. unity, sacredness, positive affect). Two significant canonical correlations were extrapolated by combining the demographic data and pre experience sales that were then correlated to the mystical experience scales in order to evaluate the pre experience lifestyle of the participants. Two canonical correlations were obtained.

The first canonical variate distinguished those of older age that were dissatisfied with life in general religiously affiliated, were in poor health, and had a negative attitude towards mystical experience. The second group portrayed a positive attitude towards mystical experience, showed satisfaction with life, and the experience of positive emotions regardless of health concerns. Both groups identified with mystical dimension of unity. The authors suggest that health concerns may be a stimulator of mystical feelings of unity and connectedness with God. Religious background did not appear related to the mystical experience, but was an important contributor to pre experiential lifestyles in regards to the perception of mystical experience and

the interpretation of mystical experience as positive. This finding suggests that mystical experience is both achievable and meaningful to those who are not religiously affiliated.

Three canonical relationships were found in the examination of mystical experience and post experience lifestyles. The first canonical variate was related to unity, illumination, and sacredness as well as extreme sensory stimulation. A sense of unity was associated with positive behavioral change and an increased belief in non-religious mysticism. This variate seems to be linked to more extrinsic interpretations of the mystical experience. The second canonical variate positive behavioral change was linked to a reduced belief in mysticism. The presence of God, sacredness, and illumination were opposed to string emotional and physical reactions. This variate is indicative of the introverted mystical type, with a vertical interpretation.

The third canonical variate related positive emotions with sacredness and gaining of new knowledge in pre experience and mystical experience, and positive growth and increased belief in mystical experiences in post experience lifestyle. This grouping could be some amalgam of both introvertive and extrovertive mystical dimensions whose interpretations could be either religious or non-religious, but tend to focus more on self awareness in interpreting these experiences. These could be "equally religious and spiritual" types.

Why Mysticism is the Lens Through which to View Self Identifications

In order to better understand the why preference for spiritual over religious self identifications is becoming more prevalent in American society, it is necessary to understand the bifurcation of experience and interpretation. Mysticism has historically recognized this distinction and allows for multiple ontological interpretations of exceptional experience. Exceptional experiences, those found in mystical experience, serve a formative symbolic process

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that is necessary to both the personal and collective construction of identity. It has been argued that spiritual experiences are mystical whether they are located in a religious or secular framework of interpretation. Insight from the literature of mysticism allows an empirical look at how experience shapes self identification. In order to do so, one must first isolate which components of mysticism are important factors in the development of "religious" as opposed to "spiritual" identifications, if any exist. Understanding how exceptional experiences come to form identifications is a step towards clarifying the definitions of "religious" and "spiritual" with consideration of how these identifications are symbolized and contextualized as meaningful. The M-scale, identifying eight dimensions of mystical experience, can be used as a predictor of "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," and, "neither religious nor spiritual" self identifications. This type of analysis will elucidate not only the experiential differences and commonalities of the self identifications, but also allows for a better understanding of differences and commonalities in the interpretation of exceptional experience.

Hypotheses

Study 1

H1: Differences will exist in the percentage of self identifications between or among the eight facets of the M-scale.

The self identifications of "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally religious and spiritual," and "neither religious nor spiritual" have been theorized as representing varying degrees of religious and spiritual commitment. Using a measure of both religious and spiritual experiences, the M-scale, it may be possible to illuminate the differences

between these experiences as determined by the self identification report. Follow up (post hoc) analysis can further distinguish what facets, if any, the four categories of self report share, and on what facets they differ.

Study 2

H1: M-scale items will significantly predict self identification of "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally spiritual and religious" and "neither religious nor spiritual."

The M-scale has been extensively validated as a measure of exceptional experiences that can be explained as religious and spiritual or spiritual or religious depending on the interpretive framework (Hood, 2001). It is also the case that the experiential content captured in the M-scale can be interpreted in a secular context (i.e. unity with nature or humanity). Given the flexibility of the M-scale to capture nuance related to both religious and spiritual variables it should also have the capacity to distinguish between them what components are defining characteristics predictive of a more religious identification as opposed to a more spiritual or equally spiritual and religious or neither religious or spiritual identification, if those differences do, in fact, exist.

H2: Items from the M-scale interpretation factor (positive affect, noetic quality, and sacredness) will be the most significant predictor of self identification as "more religious."

How mystical experiences are interpreted is pivotal to their integration as either religious or spiritual. Within the interpretive factor of the M-scale, an experience can be understood to include a change in cognitive states of awareness such as elevated mood, the sense that a new reality has been revealed and that the experience is something to be revered. Meaning systems consist of cognitive, motivational, and affective components, reflected in beliefs, goals, and a

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sense of meaning or purpose (Park, 2005/2007). The facets of the interpretive factor could be

dimensions that contribute to the formation of meaning making systems. According to Park

(2007), "Meaning systems comprise the lenses through which individuals interpret, evaluate, and

respond to their experiences and encounters." (p.320). Religion and spirituality form a

quintessential component of meaning making for those who interpret their experiences as

religious or spiritual. James (1896) argues belief in a transcendent source of meaning is powerful

enough to substantially influence the empirical meaning of one's life. Experiences that are

mystical in content but are not interpreted to be religious or spiritual also share these core facets,

but are expected to diverge from religious and spiritual functions. The interpretation factor

could, therefore, be the most significant predictor of self identification as more religious within

the M-scale.

     H3*:* Introvertive facets (timelessness and spacelessness, ego-loss, and ineffability) will

most strongly discriminate self identifications among all groups while extrovertive facets (inner

subjectivity and unity) will more strongly discriminate the "more spiritual" and "equally spiritual

and religious group."

     Introvertive facets of the M-scale can be conceptualized as experiences of pure

consciousness (Forman, 1997; Hood, 1985; Hood et al, 2001; Stace, 1952). These experiences

are defined by a loosening of the boundaries of time and space, dissolution of the ego into an

undifferentiated state, and inexplicability in describing the experience. The introvertive factor

seems to more closely resemble the spiritual type of mysticism that transcends a religious

framework. Hood (2001) has noted the extrovertive type more closely resembles a religious

mysticism, at least in western samples. The extrovertive idea that "all is one" may also transcend

a religious framework, however; this is the type of experience in which the ego remains an active

participant responding to the experience, which may be in some ways a product of religious or other social and cultural symbolization. It is important to keep in mind that both these types of mysticism are really one mysticism expressed in various ways and confirming the unity thesis; the idea that there is a common phenomenological core to all mystical experience (Stace, 1987; Hood, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

GENERAL METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Overview

The following studies include participants sampled from the Bielefeld-based Cross

Cultural Study of "Spirituality" (1886 total participants). The US sample represented slightly

over half of the total sample population (n=1096, 59%). The study represented a major effort to

focus on deconversion in Germany and the US and also illuminate the deeper meanings of the

terms "religion" and "spirituality." Only a small portion of this immense and critically important

research was used in the current study. Permission from the University of Bielefeld was granted

to the researcher for the use of this data. The Bielefeld study was a mixed method design study

that included both quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey. Participants answered a

variety of questionnaires and open ended questions designed to access their understanding of the

terms "religion" and "spirituality." The questionnaire was administered following an

acknowledgment of informed consent and was expected to take an hour to complete.

Participants

Cultural and economic capital of the participants was assessed for demographic purposes

along with sex, age, religious affiliation, and geographic variables. The sample included 1095

participants (403 men, 693 women, $M = 34.39$ years, age range 15-82). Participants were

grouped based on their self report and compared for frequency (Table 1). Geographic variables

were cross-tabulated based on self identification of "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally religious and spiritual," and "neither religious nor spiritual." Of those participants reporting geographic locality, the majority of respondents identified as either "more spiritual than religious" (n=539, 51.2%) or "equally religious and spiritual" (n=291, 27.7%) and less identified as "neither religious nor spiritual" (n=153, 14.5) while only a small portion of the sample identified as "more religious than spiritual" (n=69, 6.6%). Participants were diverse in their geography; only four of the fifty United States were *not* represented by at least one participant in this sample (Montana, New Mexico, Vermont, and Wyoming) with the majority coming from the southern region of the US (Table 2). Forty four participants failed to respond to the geographic question (4.0%). Groups were formed using educational background and socio economic status questions that assessed the cultural and economic capital of the participants. The majority of the sample was low in both cultural and economic capital (n=412, 38.3%). A smaller amount of participants grouped as either high cultural capital but low economic capital (n=297, 27.6%) or high cultural capital and high economic capital (n=220, 20.4%) while only a very small amount of participants grouped as low cultural capital but high economic capital (n=148, 13.7%). It can be concluded that the education levels of the participants varied widely although the economic status of the participants did not vary as much (Table 3). Nineteen participants failed to respond to the education and socioeconomic questions (1.7%). Religious affiliation was examined by major tradition and included an option accounting for "none." The majority of the sample identified with Protestantism (n=520, 47.8%) while a lesser majority identified as none (n=313, 28.7%). Other traditions represented included Roman Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Other Eastern Traditions, and a grouping

of Neo-Paganism, Other Spiritual Groups, and Idiosyncratic Syncretists (Figure 1). Seven

participants failed to report a religious tradition (0.6%).

Table 1

Frequency of Self Report of Sample

Self Identification	Frequency	%
More R	71	6.5
More S	560	51.1
EQ R and S	300	27.4
Neither R nor S	165	15.1
Total	1096	

Table 2

Self Identification by Region

Self Identifications		Census Bureau Regions of the US				
		North East	Mid West	South	West	Total
I am more religious than spiritual	N=	7	10	46	6	69
	%	7.4%	7.0%	6.3%	7.6%	6.6%
I am more spiritual than religious	N=	47	75	374	43	539
	%	50.0%	52.4%	50.8%	54.4%	51.2%
I am equally religious and spiritual	N=	20	31	229	11	291
	%	21.3%	21.7%	31.1%	13.9%	27.7%
I am neither religious nor spiritual	N=	20	27	87	19	153
	%	21.3%	18.9%	11.8%	24.1%	14.5%
Total	N=	94	143	736	79	1052
Total Sample	%	8.9%	13.6%	70.0%	7.5%	100.0%

Table 3

Cultural and Economic Capital

Groups in Social Space	Total
CC low and EC low	412
CC low and EC high	148
CC high and EC low	297
CC high and EC high	220
Total	1077

Legend:
- Protestantism
- Roman Catholicism
- Judaism
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism and Other Eastern Traditions
- Neo-Paganism, Other Spiritual Groups, and Idiosyncratic Syncretists
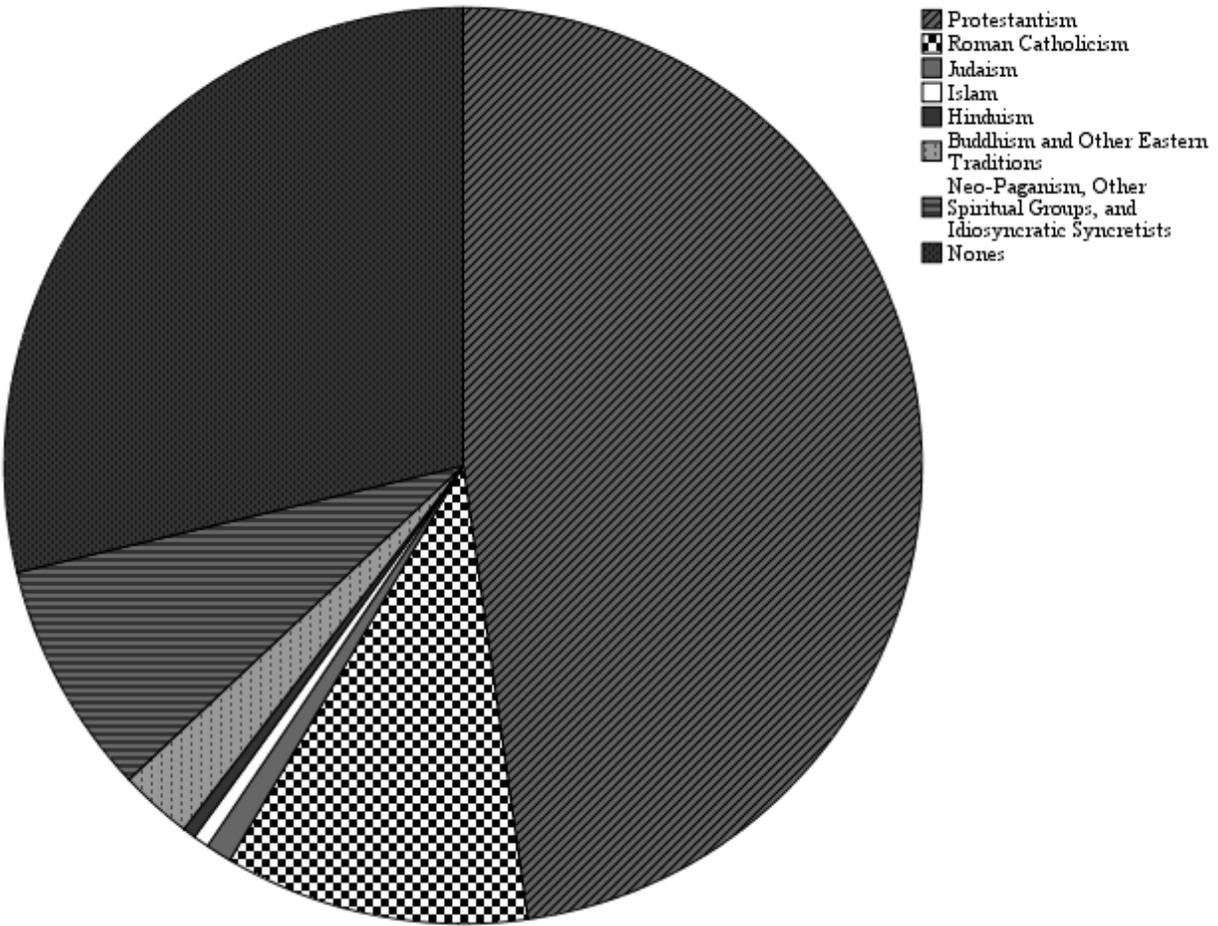- Nones

Figure 1

Religious Traditions of Participants

Measures

Copies of all measures and scales will be presented in appendix A.

Self Identification

Self identification was assessed using a force choice question with four levels: 1) I am

more religious than spiritual, 2) I am more spiritual than religious, 3) I am equally religious and

spiritual, and 4) I am neither religious nor spiritual. This descriptive question allowed

participants to examine their own relationship to religion and spirituality, and has been used in

numerous studies as a predictive and descriptive measure.

Mysticism

Consisting of 32 questions on a 5 point Likert-type scale weighted from "very

inaccurate" to "very accurate," the M-scale addresses the occurrence of mystical experience over

the life course (Hood, 1975). The 32 questions consist of equal numbers of positively worded

and negatively worded items that include questions such as, "I have had an experience which

was both timeless and spaceless" and "I have never had an experience in which I had no sense of

time or space." The Cronbach Alpha reliability of the scale using the Bielefeld US data in its

entirety was .94. Hood (1975) operationalized W.T. Stace's (1960) criteria in scale form (M-

Scale) which allowed empirical testing of mystical experience.   Mystical experience measured

by the M-scale is characterized by eight facets common to all mysticism: 1) timelessness and

spacelessness, an experience in which lies outside spatiotemporal awareness; 2) Ego-Loss, the

dissolution of the ego into a unitive experience; 3) ineffability, an inexplicable experience that

can not be adequately expressed but is understood; 4) inner subjectivity, a personal and deeply

felt sense of awareness; 5) unity, the experience of all the world as a unified one; 6) positive

affect, elevated mood as a result of the experience; 7) sacredness, sensing a relationship between

the experience and something revered; 8) noetic quality, knowledge that the experience has

contributed to a greater understanding of the world.   Scores are obtained by summing the

positively and negatively worded questions to create three sub-scale scores. Each facet represents

a dimension of mystical experience within three underlying factors; introvertive mysticism,

characterized by the facets timelessness and spacelessness, ego-loss, and ineffability, extrovertive mysticism, characterized by the facets inner subjectivity and unity, and interpretation, characterized by the facets positive affect, sacredness, and noetic quality. These factors were theorized based on the work of Stace (1960) which identified two main types of mysticism that are distinct as either an experience in which ego is absorbed into a unitive whole; many in the one (introvertive) or an experience of unity in diversity or multiplicity; one in the many (extrovertive), but the distinction does not imply separate functionality. In fact, Stace (1960) contends the introvertive experience is usually complimented by a previous extrovertive experience, but neither is contingent upon the other. The introvertive experience results from careful consideration such is often found in meditative practices or prayer, while the extrovertive is more common and resultant of experiences that are more spontaneous. The M-scale has been tested with CFA procedures in diverse samples and yielded good fit and support for the "unity thesis;" the idea that the dimensions of mystical experience are universal although interpretations vary by culture and religious affiliation (Anthony et al., 2010; Beauregard & Paquette, 2006; Chen et al, 2011; Hood, 2001; Lazar & Kravetz, 2005).

Procedure

An online questionnaire was established in 2009 and ran through 2011 with participants being recruited by convenience sampling that included print and online advertising in the United States and Germany. After acknowledging informed consent, participants completed a large survey packet consisting of several scales as well as open-ended questions to assess an individual's conceptualization of "religion" and "spirituality." The survey included measures such as personality, religious schema, and, attitudes towards God. Semantic differentials were

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also included as well as open ended definitions of "religion" and "spirituality." Participants were

informed the survey would take close to an hour to complete. Participants could also agree to a

live interview for a qualitative portion of the study. Data was de-identified and downloaded

periodically throughout the quantitative portion of the Bielefeld project and was managed in

Germany. The current sample represents a large portion of the total sample for the United States.

Data Analysis

Normality assumptions were evaluated using a variety of measures. Histograms and Z

analysis of skew revealed the data to be slightly negatively skewed. Q-Q plots were interpreted

as close enough to a normal distribution to allow for parametric testing of linear relationships. A

variable inflation factor was calculated using linear regression for each independent variable and

no multicolinearity was detected (threshold k<3). All variables fell within the threshold (.3-.9)

and no multicolinearity was detected. Because of the slight negative skew and unequal group

sizes (of the grouping variable); homogeneity of variance was assessed using a non-parametric

Levene statistic. Rank differences based on the mean were calculated for each of the

independent variables. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed on the new

variables and indicated the groups were statistically significantly different. Nordstokke and

Zumbo (2010) found using the non-parametric Levene to be more powerful than the standard

Levene commonly used in SPSS when data is not perfectly normally distributed and that the

non-parametric was less likely to commit both type I and type II errors. Outliers were identified

using an outlier labeling rule recommended by Tukey (1977) and revised by Hoaglin, Iglewicz,

and Tukey (1986) that calculates the upper and lower limits based on the difference between the

first and third quartiles multiplied by a constant (g=2.2). Seven data points were identified as

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outliers and removed from the current analysis. Nine data points were identified as multivariate

outliers as assessed by Mahalanobis distance ($p > .001$) and removed from the current analysis.

The M-scale reflected a high level of internal consistency, as determined by Chronbach's alpha

of 0.950. This was slightly higher than the total sample alpha of 0.940 from the Bielefeld study.

Cronbach's alpha was also calculated for each of the eight facets of the M-scale consisting of

four items per scale. Cronbach's alpha for the facet scales also showed a high level of internal

consistency and ranged from 0.615-0.890 (Table 4).

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha for M-Scale Facets

M-Scale Facet	Cronbach's Alpha
Time/Space	0.827
Ego Loss	0.738
Subjectivity	0.782
Unity	0.890
Ineffability	0.795
Sacredness	0.823
Noetic Quality	0.788
Positive Affect	0.615
Total M-scale	0.950

CHAPTER 3

STUDY ONE

This study was interested in determining if self identification as more religious, more spiritual, equally religious and spiritual or neither religious nor spiritual is related to a number of facets thought to comprise mystical experiences.

Method

Participants

Men and women from across the United States and Germany were recruited through social media and print campaigns along with convenience sampling to participate in an online survey managed by the University of Bielefeld in Bielefeld, Germany. This study included only the US sample (n=1096). The majority of the sample were women (n=693, 63.2%) while men represented a smaller proportion of the sample (n=403, 36.8%). Age differences revealed male participants to be slightly older (M=35.69) than female participants (M=33.64). For demographic purposes gender and age was compared to the self-identification measure (Table 5). Age of participants was aggregated to create a grouping variable based on Erickson's (1980) psychosocial stages of development that included adolescence through old age (age range 15-82).

Table 5

Gender and Age Compared by Self Identification

		Self-Identification				
Gender		More religious than spiritual	More spiritual than religious	Equally religious and spiritual	Neither religious nor spiritual	Total
Male	N=	26	194	101	82	403
	%	6.5%	48.1%	25.1%	20.3%	
Female	N=	45	366	199	83	693
	%	6.5%	52.8%	28.7%	12.0%	
Total	N=	71	560	300	165	1096
	%	6.5	51.1%	27.4%	15.1%	
Age Group						
15-19	N=	5	30	26	14	75
	%	6.7%	40.0%	34.7%	18.7%	
20-25	N=	44	315	145	113	617
	%	7.1%	51.1%	23.5%	18.3%	
26-64	N=	18	146	83	25	272
	%	6.6%	53.7%	30.5%	9.2%	
65-82	N=	4	69	46	13	132
	%	3.0%	52.3%	34.8%	9.8%	
Total	N=	71	300	300	165	1096
	%	6.5%	51.1%	27.4%	15.1%	

Materials and Procedure

All psychological measurements appeared in an online survey. The current study used responses embedded in the original survey which included several measures of religiosity, spirituality, deconversion, generativity, and well-being. Participants were directed to a website and prompted to electronically sign informed consent. Following consent participants were prompted to begin the survey. Demographic measures were collected prior to survey data collection. The survey was expected to take up to one hour to complete. Upon completion of the survey participants were prompted to provide additional contact information if they were

interested in completing the qualitative portion of the study (transcripts were given pseudonyms to protect anonymity). Participants were not compensated for their time, however; participants were free to withdrawal at any time and a summary of results was made available upon request. Data for this study included only the de-identified M-scale and self identification measure along with demographic information. The 32 item M-scale is comprised of 16 positively worded and 16 negatively worded statements measured on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. Lower responses indicated less agreement (1="very inaccurate") while higher responses indicated strong agreement (5="very accurate"). Negative items were reverse scored and summed with the positive items to create a total M-scale score. Because the scale is a measure of global experience over a lifetime this is not a particularly useful score, therefore, scores are generally reported for the three subscales (factor scores) of the M-scale; introvertive (M=41.32, SD=11.06), extrovertive (M=26.20, SD=8.28), interpretation (M=45.40, SD=9.62). Means and standard deviations of the subscale scores are reported for continuity. Eight facets related to universal mystical experience can be derived from the subscales and were used in the current analysis. Both the introvertive and interpretive scales contain twelve items that measure three facets in each subscale (introvertive = ineffability, ego-loss, timelessness/spacelessness; interpretive = sacredness, noetic quality, positive affect) and the extrovertive scale contains eight items measuring two facets (inner-subjectivity, unity). Acronyms that will appear in the measurement models of the "Results" of the both studies and illustrative items of the eight facets are as follows:

Timelessness/Spacelessness (*TS*), "I have had an experience that was both timeless and spaceless"; Ineffability (*Inef*), "I have had an experience that is impossible to communicate"; Ego-Loss (*Ego*), "I have had an experience in which something greater than myself seemed to absorb me"; Inner Subjectivity (*Sub*), "I have had an experience in which all things seemed to be

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aware"; Unity (*Uni*), "I have had an experience in which I felt everything to be part of the same whole"; Positive Affect (*PA*), "I have experienced profound joy"; Sacredness (*SC*), "I have had an experience which I knew to be sacred"; and Noetic Quality (*Noe*), "I have had an experience in which a new view of reality was revealed to me" (taken from Chen, et al, 2012). Respondents were divided into four groups based on their self report of religious and spiritual identification as "more religious than spiritual (More R)," "more spiritual than religious (More S)," "equally religious and spiritual (Equal R and S)," or "neither religious nor spiritual (Neither R nor S)."

Results

Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to examine the relationship between the self reported groups "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally religious and spiritual," and "neither religious nor spiritual," and the eight facets of mystical experience measured in the M-scale: timelessness/spacelessess, ineffability, ego-loss, subjectivity, unity, positive affect, sacredness, and noetic quality. Normality assumptions are reported in the General Method section of this paper. Preliminary assumption checking revealed the data to be slightly negatively skewed; univariate and multivariate outliers were removed; there was not homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, as assessed by Box's M test ($p = .000$), however; this was not confirmed when using the non parametric Levene test. Means and standard deviations of the eight facets by self-identification are reported below (Table 6). Participants in the More S group scored highest on seven of the facets (*TS, Inef, Ego, Sub, Uni, PA,* and *Noe*) followed, in order of highest, by Equal R and S, More R, and Neither R nor S. This pattern was evident in all of the facets except *SC* in which the Equal R and S ($M = 17.40$,

SD = 2.91) scored highest followed More S (*M* = 16.48, SD = 3.65), More R (*M* = 15.90, SD = 3.01), and Neither R nor S (*M* = 10.18, SD = 4.30). The differences between the self identification groups on the combined dependent variables was statistically significant, *F*(24, 3261) = 23.203, *p* < .0005; Pillai's Trace = .438; partial η2 = .146. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs showed that there were significant differences across the self identification groups on the eight facets of mystical experience (Table 7). Given the unequal sample sizes, Games-Howell post hoc tests were considered for interpretation. For clarity only the *non-significant* differences are reported in statistical notation. Significant results of pairwise comparisons are located in table 8. Because this study was interested in looking at how differences and similarities relate to participants identification of religiosity and spirituality, non significant findings are an important component of the analysis. Games-Howell post-hoc tests showed that *INEF* scores did not differ significantly between More R (*M* = 11.92, SD = 3.49) and Equal R and S (*M* = 13.58, SD = 3.87), a mean difference of .5490, 95% CI [-.2215 to 1.3195], (p = .252) nor were there significant differences between Equal R and S (*M* = 13.38, SD = 2.30) and More S (*M* = 13.79, SD = 2.37), a mean difference of .4057, 95% CI [-.0224 to .8339], (*p* = .071). *EGO* scores did not differ significantly between More S (M = 14.26, SD = 3.79) and Equal R and S (*M* = 13.75, SD = 3.42), a mean difference of .5176, 95% CI [-.1374 to 1.1726], (*p* = .176). There were no significant differences in *SUB* between Equal R and S (*M* = 12.88, SD = 3.83) and More R (*M* = 11.56, SD = 4.00), a mean difference of 1.317, 95% CI [-.0511 to 2.6843], (*p* = .064). The More R group (M = 11.49, SD = 3.93) did not differ from the Neither R nor S group (*M* = 10.52, SD = 5.12) on the *UNI* facet, a mean difference of .9717, 95% CI [-.6199-2.5634], (*p* = .390). *PA* facets scores were not significantly different between More R (*M* = 14.76, SD = 2.88) and Neither R nor S (*M* = 14.35, SD = 3.59), a mean difference of .4151, 95% CI [-.7310

to 1.5613], (p = .783) and there was also no significant difference between More S (16.45, SD =

3.01) and Equal R and S (M = 16.23, SD = 2.95), a mean difference of .2164, 95% CI [-.3311 to

.7640], (p = .739). There were no significant differences found between More S (M = 16.48, SD

= 3.65) and More R (M = 15.90, SD = 3.01), a mean difference of .5736, 95% CI [-.4433 to

1.5905], (p = .457) on *SC*. Finally, on the *NOE* facet, no differences were found between More S

(M = 14.39, SD = 3.79) and Equal R and S (M = 14.34, SD = 3.66), a mean difference of .0513,

95% CI [-.6309 to .7336], (p = .997).

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations of M-scale Facet by Self Identification

Self Identification		Facet							
		TS	INEF	EGO	SUB	UNI	PA	SC	NOE
More R	*M*	11.92	12.83	11.32	11.56	11.49	14.76	15.90	12.69
N = 71	SD	3.49	2.22	3.58	4.00	3.93	2.88	3.01	3.54
More S	*M*	14.56	13.79	14.26	14.03	14.42	16.45	16.48	14.39
N = 560	SD	4.36	2.37	3.79	3.95	4.49	3.01	3.65	3.79
Equal R and S	*M*	13.58	13.38	13.75	12.88	12.95	16.23	17.41	14.34
N = 300	SD	3.87	2.30	3.42	3.83	4.23	2.95	2.91	3.66
Neither R nor S	*M*	10.42	11.92	9.82	10.04	10.52	14.35	10.18	10.56
N = 165	SD	4.81	2.68	4.18	4.26	5.12	3.59	3.77	4.30

Table 7

Univariate Tests

Between Subjects Effects					
Facet	SS (Type III)	SS Error	F	Sig.	η2
TS	2370.80	19763.16	43.67	.000	.107
INEF	462.20	6242.91	26.95	.000	.069
EGO	2856.60	15299.72	67.96	.000	.157
SUB	2180.03	17231.50	46.05	.000	.112
UNI	2242.63	21992.81	37.11	.000	.093
PA	686.63	10365.76	24.11	.000	.062
SC	6246.21	12946.25	175.62	.000	.325
NOE	2089.81	15925.19	47.77	.000	.116

* df =3; error df = 1092; ($p < .05$)

Table 8

Pairwise Comparisons

Facet	Self Identification (I)	Self Identification (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
TS	More R	Neither R nor S	1.497	0.558	.040	0.049	2.945
	More S	More R	2.639	0.453	.000	1.456	3.823
		EQ R and S	0.978	0.289	.004	0.232	1.724
		Neither R nor S	4.137	0.417	.000	3.057	5.217
	EQ R and S	More R	1.661	0.470	.003	0.434	2.887
		Neither R nor S	3.158	0.436	.000	2.031	4.285
INEF	More R	Neither R nor S	0.909	0.336	.037	0.036	1.782
	More S	More R	0.954	0.282	.006	0.216	1.693
		Neither R nor S	1.864	0.231	.000	1.266	2.462
	EQ R and S	Neither R nor S	1.458	0.246	.000	0.820	2.096
EGO	More R	Neither R nor S	1.505	0.535	.028	0.116	2.985
	More S	More R	2.940	0.453	.000	1.752	4.127
		Neither R nor S	4.446	0.362	.000	3.507	5.384
	EQ R and S	More R	2.422	0.468	.000	1.200	3.645
		Neither R nor S	3.928	0.380	.000	2.944	4.912
SUB	More R	Neither R nor S	1.521	0.579	.047	0.015	3.026
	More S	More R	2.461	0.503	.000	1.144	3.779
		EQ R and S	1.145	0.277	.000	0.430	1.859
		Neither R nor S	3.982	0.371	.000	3.021	4.943
	EQ R and S	Neither R nor S	2.837	0.398	.000	1.807	3.867
UNI	More S	More R	2.928	0.503	.000	1.612	4.244
		EQ R and S	1.468	0.309	.000	0.671	2.264
		Neither R nor S	3.900	0.441	.000	2.757	5.042
	EQ R and S	More R	1.460	0.526	.032	0.880	2.832
		Neither R nor S	2,432	0.467	.000	1.223	3.640
PA	More S	More R	1.685	0.364	.000	0.731	2.640
		Neither R nor S	2.101	0.307	.000	1.306	2.895
	EQ R and S	More R	1.469	0.381	.001	0.472	2.466
		Neither R nor S	1.884	0.327	.000	1.039	2.730
SAC	More R	Neither R nor S	5.725	0.462	.000	4.525	6.926
	More S	Neither R nor S	6.299	0.331	.000	5.441	7.156
	EQ R and S	More R	1.505	0.394	.001	0.474	2.536
		More S	0.931	0.228	.000	0.344	1.519
		Neither R nor S	7.230	0.338	.000	6.356	8.105
NOE	More R	Neither R nor S	2.126	0.537	.001	0.731	3.521
	More S	More R	1.704	0.449	.002	0.528	2.880
		Neither R nor S	3.831	0.371	.000	2.870	4.791
	EQ R and S	More R	1.653	0.470	.004	0.426	2.880
		Neither R nor S	3.779	0.395	.000	2.756	4.802

* Games-Howell Post Hoc; ($p < .05$)

Discussion

This study looked at the mean differences between the eight facets of mystical experience among four self identified groups; "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally spiritual and religious," and "neither spiritual nor religious" using MANOVA procedures found in SPSS. MANOVA is most commonly used to decide which dependent variables are associated with group differences and rarely used to interpret the pattern of differences as a whole (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). This study endeavors to do the later in order to show the utility of multivariate statistics is not limited only to prediction but is also a useful way of interpreting meaningful differences between groups. A pattern of differences was observed (More S, EQ R and S, More R, Neither R nor S) in all but one of the facets, *SC*, in which the EQ R and S group scored higher than the More S group. Notions of the sacred are traditionally associated with a religious framework, however; this unique pattern of sacredness relating to spiritual identifications lends support for the claim that the M-scale is a measure of spirituality which may or may not be religiously interpreted (*e.g.*, the EQ R and S group scored highest on this facet). The consistent pattern of means would also lend support for external validity of the M-scale for generalization to religious, spiritual, and non-religious populations. The non-significant differences tended to be between the EQ R and More S group and either the More R or More S groups. Given that the majority of the sample identified as More S ($N = 560$, 51.1%) or EQ R and S ($N = 300$, 27.4%), this would be consistent with the theory that religion and spirituality are not necessarily separate constructs, but part of a single construct which involves different interpretations of spirituality, namely religiosity. In fact, it was on the *SC*

facet that the More R group did not differentiate between the More S group. The concept of the sacred in formative symbolic terms, such as ultimate concern, allows *SC* to be associated with symbols and objects that need not be identified as God or God-like, and which is clearly related to both religious and spiritual identifications. This makes sense considering *SC* falls within the *interpretive* factor of the M-scale (along with *NOE* and *PA*). Significant differences were present across and among the other groups, suggesting various interpretations of the sacred, some religiously contextualized but not all.

More R mean scores for PA were not significantly different from Neither R nor S. Positive affect is related to "feelings that reflect a level of pleasurable engagement with the environment, such as happiness, joy, excitement, enthusiasm, and contentment (Cohen & Pressman, 2006). Both More R and Neither R nor S had lower mean scores than More S and EQ R and S. This is suggestive of an interpretation which may illicit something other than positive feelings for those who are More R or Neither R nor S such as the fear, anxiety, or displeasure associated with negative affect. This would be consistent, perhaps, with a Christian interpretation based on the notion that mystical experiences are moments when individuals are directly confronted with their sin (Peers, 1959) or an extrinsic orientation towards religion which is associated with personal gain and social motives and thus less associated with elevated mood states (Pargament, 2002). For some participants in the Neither R nor S group, the reaction to mystical experience could be reminiscent of a deconversion experience associated with a rejection of previously held religious beliefs (see Streib et al, 2011) therefore evoking less positive feelings. No difference between the More S and EQ R and S groups seems to suggest that *PA* is more related to intrinsic orientations towards religiosity which are interpreted based on a personal commitment to the experience.

There was no significant difference between the means of More S and EQ R and S on the *NOE* facet. Again, the More S and EQ R and S appear to be similar in respect to the interpretation of mystical experience. *NOE* measures the extent to which the individual interprets the experience as having revealed a new or novel way of looking at the world. This new knowledge could serve to reinforce an already held religious commitment, or could disrupt that commitment, or could be completely novel and thus not related to any previous commitment. The higher mean scores for the More S and EQ R and S groups could reflect a deep sense of self awareness as personal truth that is not related to a religious interpretation. Lower mean scores could be reflective of less commitment to these ideas as valuable. Metcalfe's (2000) distinction of feeling states and inferential states of noesis may provide some insight; one's feeling of knowing is involved with the direct experience filtered through "inferential heuristics that operate implicitly and unintentionally (p.179)." Once this knowledge begins to be interpreted it is no longer simply perception, but becomes judged. This along with Streib and Hood's (2013) concept of transcendence management involving the mediation of transcendence (how this knowledge is perceived and understood it in such a way as it maximizes individual potential, noun states) and the mediation of ultimate concern (how this knowledge responds to questions of ultimate concern, verb states) could potentially account for the differences among groups. It is important to keep in mind, however; both the feeling and the inferential represent a noematic core such that differences in perception or judgment do not affect the sense of the object, in this case, the belief in the revealed truth, whatever that truth may be for the individual (Husserl, 1975).

No differences were found among the More S and EQ R and S groups on the *EGO* facet. *EGO* is related to the ego-loss associated with mystical experience, an experience in which the

I/Me/You distinction dissolves into a state of non-being. The void has been variously described as grace in the Christian and Jewish traditions (see Wolters 1961; Buber, 1958; Peers, 1959; and Tillich, 1958), and essence in Hindu and Muslim traditions (see Zaehner, 1960) and as a black hole in more common metaphysical and new age spiritualist terms (see Roberts, 1985). In these instances the ego is lost so that one may unite with a higher entity; however, this explanation would not sufficiently categorize the experience for those reporting no religious or spiritual affiliation. Hujviri (Hujwiri) (1936), a Persian Sufi scholar writing in the tenth century, offers another interpretation that might be of use; the experience becomes associated with a release of the ego, rather than its loss, into an infinite expanse (see Zaehner, 1960). For Hujviri, this is a first step towards the transcendence of the individual self that is followed by unification with God through recapitulation of revelation (a return to the source of the revelation). Removing the religious language, this experience can be described as revelation of the self, expansion of the boundaries of self (transcendence), and a return to the self as source (humanism). It is entirely plausible within the context of spirituality and non-religion, that this sense of expansion is represented within the *EGO* facet. This facet is associated with the introvertive factor, an experience of many in the one. The introvertive mystical experience is thought to be found through contemplation or meditation and is relatively hard to achieve (Stace, 1960). Koltko-Rivera (2006), in his understanding of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, points to a previously unexploited "motivational step" in which Maslow theorized self transcendence as a state above self actualization that is characterized by "seek[ing] to further a cause beyond the self and to experience a communion beyond the boundaries of the self through peak experience" (p.303). Perhaps this is part of the introvertive experience for those who do not identify as religious or spiritual.

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Neither the More R nor More S groups differentiated between EQ R and S on the *INEF* facet. The idea of mystical experience being beyond the confines of ordinary language appear to be common across these groups, however; given the difference between these groups and the neither R nor S group, it would appear those who do not identify as religious or spiritual, may view mystical experience as a more humanistic quality that can, to some extent, be contextualized with common language (probably still interpreted through metaphor).

With regards to the facet *TS*, significant differences were found among all groups. This facet involves an experience that lies outside spatiotemporal awareness. The pattern of means is as follows; More S, EQ R and S, More R, and Neither R nor S. Those identifying as More S clearly have higher incidence of *TS* while those who identify as Neither R nor S identify with this experience to a lesser extent. Braud (1995) identifies this with a feeling of past, present, and future existing simultaneously, but perhaps Leadbetter (2007) articulates it best, "we do not think of him [the person experiencing *TS*] as necessarily moving in space at all, but rather transferring his consciousness from one level to another-gradually becoming unresponsive to the vibrations [spatio-termporal awareness] of one order of matter, and beginning instead to answer to those of a higher and more refined order; so that one world with it's scenery and inhabitants seems to fade slowly away from his view, while another world of a more elevated character dawns upon him in his stead" (p.16). When spirituality is religiously interpreted within this context, time and space have finite boundaries (e.g. death of the body and resurrection of the soul to Heaven or Hell; the idea that man is in and not of the world) which may make identification with this experience more difficult. The personality trait "openness to experience" provides another way of understanding the differences between groups. Saroglou's (2002) meta-analysis of the five factor model of personality related to religion revealed intrinsic-general religiosity to be related

to the personality traits agreeableness and conscientiousness and negatively related to openness while mature spirituality was positively associated with openness. Berdyaev (1952) makes a most interesting assertion, however; personality, he stated, belongs to a spiritual and ethical category-a created spirituality born of freedom, while the individual is a naturalistic and sociological category. Personality, he continued, is "not man as phenomenon, but man as noumenon" (p.136). In this sense, men as cosmic and social beings represent a "whole" world in and of its self while the cosmic and the social are found within human personality. The duality of personality and cosmos is irrelevant in the *TS* experience just as past and present are irrelevant in moments of great joy. As an expression of the introvertive type of mysticism, described as a unitive experience of many in the one, More R and Neither R nor S groups may struggle to identify with this facet if it challenges either the Protestant idea of a dichotomous relationship to God (the sample here was predominately Protestant) or the radical individualism present in many non-religious individuals (see Carter, 1993; for a more humorous interpretation see von Hutten, 1964). It is important to keep in mind that although the interpretive factor is a separate and necessary contingent to mystical experience, it is strongly correlated to both the introvertive and extrovertive factors, and is interrelated to the cognition of mystical experience as such.

Individuals identifying as More R could not be distinguished from those individuals identifying as EQ R and S, but were different from those identifying as More S and Neither R nor S, and differences were found between More S and Neither R nor S as well, on the facet *SUB*. The higher scores for More S and EQ R and S suggested a greater sense of self-awareness that is consistent with the idea that spirituality is related to a focus on individual self-growth. This is consistent with the literature which has suggested mystical experiences can be influential in the process of self-actualization (Hood, 1977; Maslow, 1964; Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974).

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The lack of difference between the More R and EQ R and S group would, again, suggest less difference between conceptions of spirituality between the groups. Those who identify as EQ R and S, relating spirituality to a higher power, may see the experience as an awareness of the presence of that higher power, much like those who are More R. For those who are More S, the experience may be less related to an awareness of a higher power and more related to the personal experience itself. This explanation would also account for the lower scores, and thus differences among other group between the Neither R nor S group because the revelation of such experience seems counterintuitive.

Both *SUB* and *UNI* are associated with the *extrovertive* experience, an experience of one in the many. These experiences are more common and can be found in spontaneous moments of awe and wonder (Luckmann, 1990, p.164-192, *cf* Streib & Hood, 2013). The experience of *UNI* in its mystical sense speaks to a greater awareness of what Hood (2006) has termed the common core thesis. Within the context of mysticism, the common core refers to the shared contributions of mystical experience, namely the eight facets being discussed, that are common to accounts of mystical experience across religious and non-religious mystic traditions. Experiences of *UNI* are expansive moments where the subject/object distinction becomes subverted and awareness becomes synonymous with what some consider being events of pure consciousness which is unmediated by any *a priori* contextualization (Foreman,1999). The idea of a unity thesis is debatable. Taking an essentialist stance, as Hood (2006), and therefore the M-scale he authored assumes, the epistemological questions that precede this position become in juxtaposition to the methodological agnosticism Hood (2012) argues should be applied to the study of mysticism. From a purely constructivist position, the same caveats apply. The experience from this perspective becomes reduced to sense data in which the experience itself is lost, or worse, simply

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denied (see Katz, 1978). In order to stay firmly grounded in methodological agnosticism a middle ground must be reached. To this end, Stoeber (1992) and Janz (1995) provide some relief. Stroeber argues for an experiential-constructivist position which is grounded in a mystical-theistic teleology. This is a good first step to overcoming the epistemological pitfalls, but doesn't address the ontological problems associated with a theistic interpretation. Janz provides a second step involving viewing mysticism from a hermeneutic of understanding in which the interpretation of the experience as well as the experience can be encompassed without denying the importance of either. In Stroeber's opinion, the mystic can only have an experience which he is prepared to interpret and the interpretation can have a greater impact than the experience but the experience remains understood as the basis for the interpretation. Janz answers that this is acceptable only so long as the distinction is made between interpretation and understanding. For the two authors, this position denies a common core and instead allows the diversity of mystical experience to be explored. A third step, proposed by Streib and Hood (2011) brings the polemic back into the fold and involves the difference between institutional mediation and individual immediacy. Proposing a definition of religion as "the symbolic and ritual, thus social construction of experiences of 'great' transcendences in terms of ultimate concern" (p.141), allows mystical experiences to be understood without a theistic basis. Mystical experiences of *UNI*, in this context, could be understood through specific intratextural traditions (unity involving institutional mediation) or through a deep commitment to the experience itself (individual immediacy). Unitive experiences from a methodologically agnostic framework can still share a common core; these exceptional experiences serve a formative process by which the self can be interpreted in relation to itself thus finding continuity with a previously unrealized self. This is similar to James' (1902) account of mystical experiences, of uniting with an

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Absolute reality while also being aware of this "oneness" (p.407). Because knowledge of self necessarily involves knowledge of other, this hermeneutic circle becomes the core of spiritual (mystical) experience, experiences of unity. This may account for the lack of mean difference between the More R and Neither R nor S group and also help to account for the differences between and among the remaining groups.

Each facet corresponds to one of three dimensions of which mystical experience is comprised; introvertive, extrovertive, and interpretive factors. Exploring the differences between groups among the facets elucidates the characteristics that contribute to specific differences which would not be detectable using only the factor scores. While specific factors have previously been analyzed in relation to other variables, this is one of the few studies to look at all of the component parts of the M-scale in relation to religious and spiritual self identification. To examine mystical experience through its component parts may at first glance seem but a further reductive effort to encapsulate mysticism within an empirical framework to which some would argue it does not belong. To some extent, this argument may have a valid point, however; as noted, the experience of mysticism can have a lasting effect on the formative process of both pre and post experience lifestyles (see Spilka et al., 1992) by reinforcing, challenging, or providing novel ways to interpret events. It is, therefore, quite fruitful to examine the component parts in order to expand upon current theories of mysticism without reducing them to purely theistic or atheistic perspectives. The shift away from more religious towards more spiritual self identifications precipitates the need for this type of exploration. Examining the facets of mystical experience between the self identified groups is a necessary first step in understanding what role spirituality provides for individuals as they navigate their life world with respect to personal commitments and values. One limitation of this study was the structure of the self identification

questions. This study used questions that measured the identification in greater or lesser terms with regard to religion and spirituality ("I am more spiritual than religious") which made it difficult to form clearly distinct groups based on religion VS spirituality. A more forced choice, such as "I am spiritual but not religious," could have provided clarity among the group identifications which might affect the outcome of the MANOVA results by maximizing the distance between the groups. Another possible limitation is related to the group sizes. The relatively small number of participants in the More R group as compared to the other groups makes it difficult to generalize the findings for this particular group. Although it would have been ideal to find significant differences between all groups on all facets, the direction of this study focused more on the non-significant findings. This could be viewed as a potential limitation, however; the non-significant findings in this case are just as relevant to theory development as significant ones and the fact that non-significant results are rarely reported illuminates a divide between the empirical endeavor and what actually gets published creating the potential of limiting theory development and endangering future empirical investigations. There is much evidence to support the claim that religious and spiritual variables have a place in scientific research. How individuals come to seek and respond to these variables has an impact on their attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. It is only recently that health care workers and clinicians have begun to see the value in religious and spiritual meaning systems and measure their influence on both physical and mental health. This paper seeks to expand the conversation in such a way that those who deal directly with the public may better understand how to incorporate these principles into treatment modalities in ways that maximizes the benefits while acknowledging the limitations.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY TWO

This study was interested in determining what facet or facets of the M-scale best classify self-identifications of "more religious than spiritual," "more spiritual than religious," "equally spiritual and religious," or "neither religious nor spiritual."

Method

Participants

Participants were selected from a larger cross-cultural study hosted by the University of Bielefeld, Germany. The subsample was comprised of participants from the United States who completed the M-scale and responded to demographic questions and a self identification question regarding religiosity and spirituality (n=1096). The demographic data was extensive and included many interesting response options such as questions related to philosophical perspectives (Table 9). Given the ambiguous nature of the terms "religious" and "spiritual," these kinds of demographic questions provide clarity and help describe the sample population.

Table 9

Philosophical Perspectives by Self-Identification

Philosophical Perspectives	Percent of Sample by Self Identification			
	More R Less S	More S Less R	Equal R &S	Neither R nor S
I am disinterested in religion but do not oppose its existence	5.8	8.8	2.7	12.8
I am agnostic	5.8	10.4	1.7	15.9
I am scientifically minded	8.7	9.7	4.1	18.9
I am a materialist	0	0.2	0.7	1.8
I am anti religious	0	1.3	0	4.3
I believe there is a reality beyond scientific reasoning	56.5	46.5	63.6	6.7
I am an atheist	0	2.9	0	31.1
I am a non-theist	1.4	1.4	0.7	3.0
I am none of these	21.7	18.9	26.5	5.5
Total	*N*=69	*N*=557	*N*=294	*N*=164
Missing	2	3	6	1

Materials and Procedure

Copies of all measures and scales are presented in appendix A.

This study used the previously mentioned mysticism measure, the 32 item M-scale, and self identification measure of religiosity and spirituality. Recruitment was conducted over a three year period using print and online media as well as convenience sampling procedures.

Participants granted consent and answered questions in an online survey format, hosted by the

University of Bielefeld, which included both German and American respondents. Permission

was granted to the researcher for the use of this data. The US sample was used for this study

(*N*=1096). Participants were assigned to one of four groups based on their response to the

religiosity and spirituality self identification measure (more religious, more spiritual, equally

religious and spiritual, neither religious nor spiritual). The acronyms that appear in the previous

study are replicated in the current study. The M-scale facets are timelessness and spacelessness,

ego loss, subjectivity, positive affect, unity, sacredness, and noetic quality. A thorough

description of each of these facets as well as illustrative examples can be referenced in the

methods and procedures section of the previous study. Cronbach's alpha scores for the facets of

the M-scale are located in table 4.

Results

Based on the results of the MANOVA, a descriptive discriminant function analysis

(DDA) was performed using eight experiential variables as predictors of membership in four

groups. The predictors were the eight facets of mystical experience (*TS*, *INEF*, *EGO*, *SUB*, *UNI*,

PA, *SC*, and *NOE*). Groups were More R (*N* = 71), More S (*N* = 560), EQ R and S (*N* = 300),

and Neither R nor S (*N* = 165). Discriminant analysis is mathematically identical to a MANOVA

and similar to multiple regression with a categorical dependent variable. DA is part of the linear

model where group membership is the dependent variable and levels of the independent variable

are used as predictors of classification. Unlike MANOVA, DA allows examination of the

relative importance of each dependent variable predicting group membership by examining

individual dependent variable contributions to group membership. Discriminant analysis

combines the eights separate variables into canonical variables into a new single index which maximally discriminates between the four self identification groups. The DA was used for descriptive interpretation and was based on the theoretical structure of the latent factors and empirical analysis of functions predicting the classification of self identifications. Criteria for meeting the assumptions for statistical analysis can be referenced in the general methods and procedure section of this paper along with demographic information pertaining to the sample. Data was analyzed using IBM's statistical package SPSS. Independent variables (predictors) were entered together with prior probabilities calculated from the respective group size. A classification accuracy rate was calculated using squared prior probabilities multiplied by 1.25 to achieve a classification of 25% above chance. It was determined the model would need correct prediction of at least 45.4% to be considered significant based on the prior probabilities. Separate groups covariance matrix was requested for classification based on the previous study resulting in a non-significant Box M indicating the possibility of heterogeneity of variance (other measures of homogeneity that did not indicate heterogeneity are discussed in the general method and procedure section of this paper). This option uses group covariance of the discriminant function to achieve classification instead of using the functions of the original variables. Interpretation was made using the structure matrix of the canonical correlations because this study was more concerned with the interpretation of the functions rather than their predictive ability.

Three discriminant functions were calculated, with a combined (1 through 3) $\lambda = .591$, x^2 (24) = 573.666, ($p = .000$), which accounted for 87.4% of the shared variance. After removal of the first function, there was still strong association between groups and predictors (2 through3), $\lambda = .925$, x^2 (14) = 85.271, ($p = .000$), which accounted for 10.4% of the shared variance, as

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well as a third function (3), λ = .986, x² (6) = 15.263, (p = .018), which accounted for 2.2% of the shared variance. From these results, it was concluded that it may be reasonable to consider three dimensions in describing self identification group separation. Plots of the group centroids (eight-element means) for the functions accounting for the highest percentage of explained variance (Function 1 and Function 2) are represented in Figure 2. Group centroids are reported in Table 10. It appears that, with respect to LDF1, there is general separation among the four self identification groups. With respect to LDF2, it appears the More S group is separated from, collectively, the More R, EQ R and S, and Neither R nor S groups, however; the More S and EQ R and S group are less separate. With respect to LDF3, it appears the EQ R and S and Neither R nor S groups are separated from the More R and More S groups. Structural data including eigenvalues, canonical R's, Univariate F's, pooled within groups correlations, and the structure matrix are located in Table 11. From these results, the first construct is defined primarily by *SC* and *NOE*. A possible definition for the first construct is "Vertical Transcendence." The second construct is defined primarily by *UNI* and *SUB* followed, in order of highest correlation, *TS*, *EGO*, and *INEF*. A possible definition for this construct is, "Horizontal Transcendence." The third construct is defined by *PA* and could be defined, simply, as "Positive Affect." Therefore, the separation among all four self identification groups may be attributed to "Vertical Transcendence," described as exceptional experiences that are theologically interpreted and socially and culturally confirmed. The separation of More S and EQ R and S groups from the More R and Neither R nor S groups may be attributed to "Horizontal Transcendence," described as an exceptional experience that lies beyond a religiously interpreted frame to include experiences of awe and wonder. The separation of the More R group and EQ R and S group from the More S and Neither R nor S groups may be attributed to "Positive Affect," described as a

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feeling of intense joy. The means on the discriminant functions are consistent with this interpretation. The EQ R and S (*M* =.476) group had the highest mean on the vertical transcendence dimension while the More S (*M* = .236) and More R (*M* = .015) groups had lower means, and the Neither R nor S (*M* = -1.720) group had a *much* lower mean score than the than the other three groups. One the horizontal dimension, the More S (*M* = .221) group had the highest mean while the Neither R nor S (*M* = -.038) and EQ R and S (*M* = -.275) groups had lower means and the More R (*M* = -.506) had the lowest mean scores. Regarding the third dimension, positive affect, the EQ R and S (*M* = .116) and Neither R nor S (*M* = .045) had higher mean scores than the More S (*M* = -.028) and More R (*M* = -.376) groups. The relative importance of each predictor contributing to explaining group separation was evaluated using standardized discriminant functions. Located in Table 12 are the standardized canonical discriminant functions as well as the unstandardized canonical discriminant functions used to predict group membership. The unstandardized and standardized functions are like b and the β weights in regression. The standardized coefficients are scaled on the same standardized metric and can be compared to determine the relative importance of each of the predictors to explaining group separation. Based on the standardized discriminant function, *SAC* (.981) is the strongest contributing predictor of LDF1, *UNI* (.465) is the strongest contributing predictor of LDF2, and *PA* (.760) is the strongest contributing predictor of LDF3. The unstandardized coefficients are scaled in terms of the predictor's original scaling metric, rather than a standardized metric, and indicate a measure of increase in one predictor when all the other predictors are held constant. These coefficients can be used to form the linear equations predicting group membership of new cases. The percentage of correctly classified cases for this sample was 56.2%. The computed chance accuracy rate calculated from the prior probabilities was 45.4%. It can be concluded that

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the predictive model classifies better than chance alone. A Kappa coefficient was computed with

an obtained value of .24, confirming the models capabilities to predict above chance agreement,

however; the value obtained was small. Classification results are located in Table 13.

Table 10

Functions Evaluated at Group Means

	Function		
Self Identification	LDF1	LDF2	LDF3
More R	.015	-.506	-.376
More S	.236	.221	-.028
EQ R and S	.476	-.275	.116
Neither R nor S	-1.72	-.038	.045

Table 11

Structural Data for Descriptive Discriminant Analysis

Predictor Variable	Correlations of Predictor Variables with Discriminant Functions*			Univariate	Pooled Within-Group Correlations Among Predictors**							
	LDF1	LDF2	LDF3	$F(3, 1091)$	TS	INEF	EGO	SUB	UNI	PA	SAC	NOE
TS		.687		40.969	1.00	.371	.714	.558	.657	.466	.369	.573
INEF		.454		26.260			.343	.302	.300	.346	.271	.312
EGO		.661		64.492				.603	.701	.519	.392	.557
SUB		.736		42.227					.698	.443	.323	.493
UNI		.795		36.520						.548	.339	.616
PA			.514	24.857							.526	.545
SAC	.928			165.409								.493
NOE	.476			46.832								
Canonical												
R	.588	.243	.115									
Eigenvalue	.528	.063	.013									

*Largest absolute correlation between each variable and the discriminant function
** All correlations significant ($p < .05$)

Table 12

Unstandardized and Standardized Linear Discriminant Functions

Facet	Unstandardized Discriminant Function Coefficients			Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients		
	Function			Function		
	LDF1	LDF2	LDF3	LDF1	LDF2	LDF3
TS	-.023	.068	-.069	-.098	.288	-.295
INEF	.042	.095	-.123	.101	.229	-.295
EGO	.098	.025	.271	.368	.095	1.014
SUB	.026	.082	-.104	.102	.328	-.414
UNI	-.021	.103	-.148	-.094	.162	-.663
PA	-.127	.053	.247	-.391	.162	.760
SAC	.284	1.147	-.114	.981	-.508	-.395
NOE	.009	-.060	.107	.033	-.226	.408
Constant	-4.182	-2.688	-1.333			

Table 13

Classification Results

		Predicted Group Membership				
Self Identification		More R	More S	EQ R and S	Neither R nor S	Total
Original Count	More R	1	53	12	4	70
	More S	2	440	73	48	563
	EQ R and S	2	218	77	4	301
	Neither R nor S	1	60	3	97	161
%	More R	1.4	75.7	17.1	5.7	100.0
	More S	.4	78.2	13.0	8.5	100.0
	EQ R and S	.7	72.4	25.6	1.3	100.0
	Neither R nor S	.6	37.3	1.9	60.2	100.0
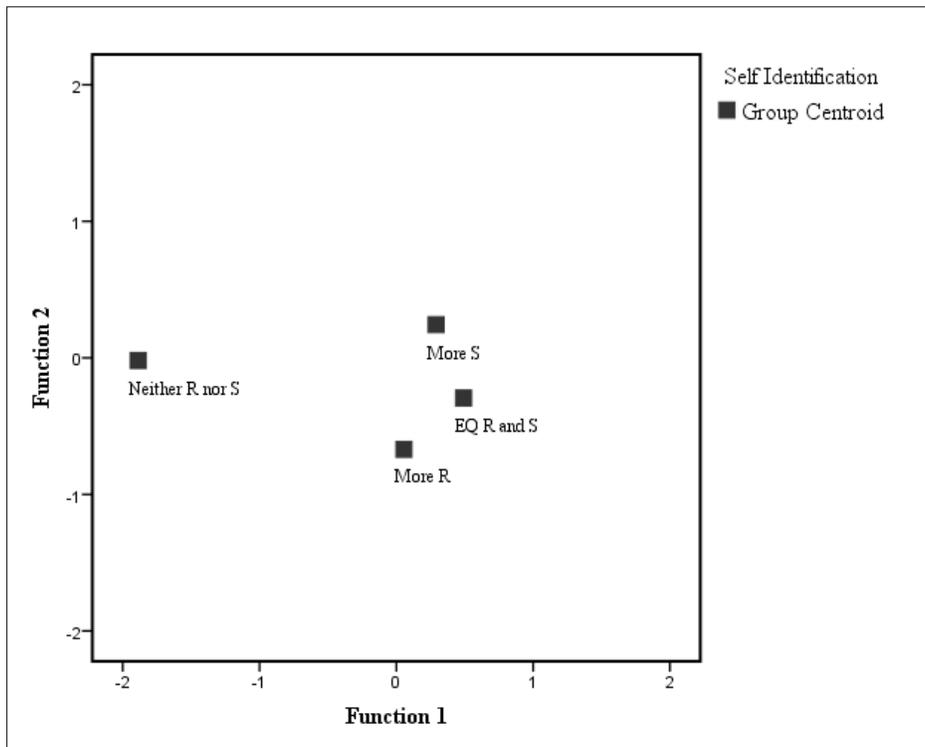
Figure 2

Functions at Group Centroids

Discussion

Results of the discriminant analysis confirmed hypothesis 1, significant prediction was achieved by classifying the self identified groups by the eight facets of mysticism. The results, however; are tentative at best, and should be interpreted with caution. The prediction model was not able to correctly classify the More R group, instead misclassifying the majority this group into the More S group. This may be unfortunate for predictive purposes, but it certainly lends support for the claim made by Hood (2006, 2011) that "contemporary mysticism is identified through questions that eliciting a [More S (or EQ R and R)] self identification, and, therefore, contemporary spirituality can be identified by scales measuring mysticism" (Hood, 2011, p.442). The lack of discrimination between the More R and More S group provides further support for the claim that religiosity and spirituality may be a unidemensional multifaceted construct (Marler & Hadaway, 2002). Previous research conducted by Zinnbauer et al. (1997) that self rated religiousness did not correlate with with mystical experience but self rated spirituality did supports this finding (taken from Strieb & Hood, 2011). Correct classification within the More S group (78%) as well as misclassification into the EQ R and S group further supports the M-scale can be used as a measure of spirituality. The misclassification of the More R group into the Neither R nor S group also supports the utility of the M-scale for measuring non-religious spirituality. The misclassification of the Neither R nor S group into the More S group (37.3%) seems to imply that spirituality is present in the mystical experiences of those who do not self identify as such. Little is known about secular transcendence and more research is needed to uncover just how this construct applies to individuals who may identify as atheist, agnostic, or none. The second hypothesis stating that items of the interpretive factor of the M-scale would best separate the self identification group More R from the remaining groups was confirmed. The

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More R group was closely related to Vertical Transcendence (LDF1), most strongly correlated with SC and NOE, and least related to Positive Affect (LDF3). The third hypothesis, stating the introvertive facets (TS, EGO, INEF) would provide better separation across groups while the extrovertive facets (SUB, UNI) would best separate More S and EQ R and S from More R and Neither R nor S was partially supported. Horizontal Transcendence (LDF2), is comprised of both the introvertive and extrovertive facets, but the UNI and SUB facets provided the strongest correlations between the facets and the function. Horizontal transcendence (LDF2) best separated the More S group from the other four self identifications. This supports the hypothesis. Regarding the EQ R group, the strongest discriminant of separation was between Vertical Transcendence (LDF1) and Positive Affect (LDF3). Horizontal Transcendence (LDF2) is the least discriminating function for the EQ R and S group. The hypothesis is not supported in this case. A thorough explanation of the Vertical and Horizontal functions is explained in the general conclusion section of this paper. The Positive Affect function, while strongly separating the Neither R nor S group from the other three groups, should be interpreted with caution due to small eigenvalues and the limited amount of explained variance.

One limitation of this study was that it did not include cross validation using a hold-out sample to test the fit of the model. Although the prior probabilities from group size were computed the unequal sample sizes were a potential limitation. Model fit may be improved by cross validation using a hold-out sample of each group relative to the size of the smallest group. Although discriminant analysis is robust to violations of assumptions of linearity and normality it is sensitive to violations of homogeneity of variance. Although steps were taken to eliminate this problem from the analysis, the two conflicting tests of homogeneity make determination of this assumption untenable. Because the main purpose of this study was to examine the combinations

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of the eight facet variables that contributed to the discrimination among the four self identification groups and was least focused on predicting group classifications, these limitations did not affect the goals set forth for this research. The language used in the self identification question may have affected the ability to get stronger separation between groups. Using questions with a dichotomous response (I am spiritual but not religious instead of I am more spiritual than religious) could potentially improve the both the predictive ability as well as present a clearer picture of group separation. None the less, the emergence of functions describing Vertical and Horizontal Transcendence are an important contribution to theory development. Future empirical studies including those that examine the relationship between non-religious (secular) transcendence and spirituality could be benefited by these results. In conclusion, using empirical analysis to further theory development is rarely done. This study hoped to show that statistical analysis can be used to enhance theory as well as to test it.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Spirituality Re-defined

Streib and Hood (2010) define spirituality as privatized individualized and experience-oriented. Explicit religion integrates psychological processes of cognition, behavior, and experience into three core components; myth, ritual, and experiences of transcendence (Schnell, 2003). According to Schnell (2003), these structures are objective (thinking, acting, and feeling) and devoid of specific content until they become incorporated as meaningful. Implicit religiosity is the process by which these structures take on meaning and are integrated into the life world. This does not imply that all explicit religion must be contingent upon the implicit because the choice of content as meaningful is individualized (Schnell, 2003). Put another way, "intrinsic symbolization is not enough. In order to become a social act, the symbol must join to some extrinsic mode; an external graphic mode must exist to convey what the individual has to express" (Becker, 1971, p.19).

Spirituality can be understood as an expression of implicit religiosity. Schnell (2003) tested this theory using ideographic data based on several questions that tapped each of the three hypothesized content areas (myth, ritual, transcendence). The data was used to further elucidate intrinsic positions, but also to test whether or not explicit religiosity and implicit religiosity were functionally different. The participants varied a great deal in age (17-80) and also in religious affiliation (including agnostics and atheists). Data from explicitly religious participants matched

those of participants who reported secular identifications, suggesting the structure of the explicit and implicit content was similar and overlapping. Comparison data further revealed that explicit religiosity was not inherently meaningful but comprised of other underlying "ultimate meanings." It was therefore concluded that explicit religiosity could be expressed in non-explicitly religious ways. The current study supports this theory.

Using a theoretical foundation grounded in myth, ritual, and experience provides a way of synthesizing religion and spirituality in the Psychology of religion by avoiding semantic tangles and without disenfranchising one dimension at the expense of the other. Meaning and value can be explicitly grasped through a relationship with a God figure or with other sacralized symbols of meaning that are more personalized, or even secularized, without losing subjective relevance for the individual (Berger, 1967).

Horizontal and Vertical Transcendence

Goodenough (2003) offers a methodologically agnostic approach to transcendence within the psychology of religion and spirituality. Integrating the concepts of implicit religiosity, religion and spirituality can be viewed as expressions of vertical and horizontal transcendence. Vertical transcendence involves a search and response to identification with a higher being (God, Allah, etc…). Horizontal transcendence is a search and response to those modes of transcendence that are held sacred and meaningful but are not connected to an absolute.   Like Tillich (1957), experiences of the sacred are not limited to religious interpretations. For Goodenough (2003), horizontal and vertical transcendences are of equal valence, both necessary for the development of identity and cultural values. The structure of vertical transcendence lies in a hierarchy of the absolute, self and culture whereas on the horizontal dimension encounters are

hierarchically framed to seek meaning (Goodenough, 2003). Individuals seek and respond to both trajectories; they are not mutually exclusive. Identity formation is complimented by both interpretations of transcendence and it is not necessary to separate ontological and axiological perspectives because a common purpose is being served (Goodenough, 2003). Transcendence within this paradigm allows contextualized ontological commitments but does not imply an inherent relationship between "transcendence and immanence" (Ruschmann, 2011, p.431).

Vertical transcendence concerns our sense of transcendence through literal immortality, the unification of self with an Absolute. The religious interpretation of vertical experiences of transcendence are paradigmatically described by Goodenough (2003) as a normative belief in an absolute dimension that embraces order, structure, virtue, and commitment. The ultimate concern of this dimension is one of the mind, the unity of "I" with Absolute (Hood's (1975) one in the many). Vertical transcendence offers a measure of permanence that is attractive and often easier to symbolize.

Horizontal transcendence involves an appreciation for the diversity offered within universe. The ultimate concerns are those that affirm the beauty of the universe (Hood's (1975) many in the one). This unity in multiplicity thus allows a sense of symbolic immortality that transcends human life (Goodenough, 2003; Hood & Morris, 1985; Lifton, 1979). Experiences of horizontal transcendence belong to the physical world and are not interpreted as supernatural, but rather epitomize a naturalistic approach to meaning and identity formation. Horizontal transcendence has an ultimate concern being connected to a greater whole that does not seek order so much as it seeks experiences of unity within the chaos and variegation of the life world.

Symbolic Immortality: A Methodologically Agnostic Approach to Understanding Identity

Symbolic immortality offers theoretical insights that help to better understand the trend in preference of self-identification and offers a unitive vision for religion and spirituality by making use of the vertical and horizontal means of self transcendence. Immortality striving has often been associated with denial of death but it has also been conceived as a source of meaning making that provides continuity to the life course (Atchley, 1971,1999; Lifton, 1969, 1976, 1979, 1993). It is also a biological fact. Man is born of man and in this way we are continually immortal. This immortality remains constant as a source of human continuity (through procreation). Immortality can be studied as a cognitive process and can also be viewed as related to but not contingent upon a religious construction of reality. Mystical experience can be said to share a family resemblance with the experiential dimension of symbolic immortality.

The seminal work in this field was pioneered by Robert J. Lifton. His theory not only includes both a religious dimension and a mystical experiential dimension but also includes dimensions that are distinctly non-religious. This theory may prove useful to the study of religion and spirituality and in part can help explain the "equally spiritual and religious" self identification. Symbolic immortality can be viewed as both a biological as well as cognitive and cultural response. The theory seems simple enough, but has far reaching implications for understanding both consciousness and behavior.

Writing in the psychoanalytic tradition after the end of WWII, Lifton studied the victims and survivors of the atomic bomb disasters at Nagasaki and Hiroshima. He began to notice patterns of cognitive response to the disaster that could be applied elsewhere to the human condition. The response was both formative and symbolic, according to Lifton; it was not a

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denial of the horrors captured in this, one of history's most atrocious events, nor a purely mythological response to it, but rather one that combined both an acceptance of the fragility and finitude of life with one that transcended the experience in such a way as to allow for continuity, for life to go on amid the chaos and disaster, the deplorable actions of war, and the immense and seemingly unending suffering of humanity. The formative-symbolizing process is stated as an alternative theory of selfhood that allows for both "Freud's insistence on confronting death as the annihilation of the self, and Jung's insistence on the psychological importance of mythic imagery of immortality" (Lifton, 1979, p. 17). The process of symbolization is on-going and fluid. It is demonstrated through what Lifton terms modes of symbolic immortality. The sense of symbolic immortality "reflects man's relatedness to all that comes before him and all that follows him" (Lifton, 1979, p. 76). There are four direct modes of symbolic immortality that people use to conceptualize their worldview both as a search for and response to the need for continuity over the life course: 1) the biological mode, 2) the creative mode, 3) the nature mode and, 4) the theological mode (Lifton, 1979). Lifton further proposed a fifth, experiential transcendent mode that influences the four direct modes which can be characterized as mystical and serves to reorder and reorganize the dominant symbols by which one lives. These modes are expressed through the reflexive self as response to the symbolizations that are meaningful to a particular person; those symbols that resonate within the transcendent self. They can be singular in their valence, or combined so that a person expresses their search for immortality in various ways through the four modes.

The Biological Mode

The first mode, the biological mode, is most obviously expressed through the creation and raising of children. Children are not only directly imprinted with genetic material that makes immortality possible, but serve as a symbol that reinforces the sense of continuity. Cultural anthropologist Robbie Davis-Floyd (2003) wrote a personal account of the death of her daughter Peyton. Her professional academic work centered on birthing rites and rituals incorporated in the ideologies and methodologies of holistic, humanist, and technocratic approaches to childbirth and midwifery. Her narrative is a poignant example of this sense of immortality as it relates not only to the manifestation of life but also certainly to the actualization of death:

> Just as birth is only a physical separation of mother and child, so death is only a physical separation of a unity that can never be broken. The umbilical cord was cut long ago, but the silver thread of energy it represents–the spirit of the umbilical cord, if you will follow me here–can never be cut and always unites Peyton and me. We first met when she was conceived–I knew the instant it happened, and I knew she was a girl. And we have never really parted. Her death so far has almost been my death, but insofar as I have survived, it has become my rebirth. I live for both of us now, knowing that Peyton both dwells in my heart and flies free in the universe, passing by to check on me from time to time. She is always with me and always anywhere she chooses to be. (p.7-8)

The themes presented in this example demonstrate the sense of immortality and continuity inherent in the biological mode. The beauty of this horrific passage is that Peyton is able to live on both in and of her mother as well as beyond. It is a challenging passage to read because when we think first of immortality in the biological mode, we often conjure the notion that parents live on in their children. Peyton lives on in her mother. Davis-Floyd draws a connection between Peyton's birth and death, knowing that they are inextricably linked in the life course by a "silver thread." Her account recalls themes common to childbirth and trauma, in fact any change; a process of birth, death, and rebirth. Her statement "I live for both of us now"

appears metaphorical, but it is not a metaphor for Davis-Floyd, it is Davis-Floyd, and her "knowing" allows her to continue living in spite of insurmountable pain. The biological mode, perhaps the simplest to acknowledge, remains one of the most profound. Other expressions of the biological mode are more biosocial; outside of the familial context, cultural groups can also be sources of symbolization. Identification with a particular ethnicity, organization, counterculture, subculture, people, and nation can all contribute to the biosocial mode of immortality symbolization. Perhaps this notion is best expressed by the Kamikaze fighters of WWII, referred to as tokkotai, or "divine wind" (Ohnuki-Tierney, 2004). The pilots were trained in both Confucian and Western philosophy. This blend of thought was especially powerful in their indoctrination to tokkotai. The emphasis on devotion and dedication to the state found in the revised (1800) versions of Confucianism were combined with Kantian individualism and self determination so that the tokkotai became a necessary for the immortality of the rest (Ohnuki-Tierney, 2004). The individual sense of biological immortality became subsumed in the biological immortality provided by protecting the state. Citing from the diary of Hayashi Tiado, Ohnuki-Tierney (2004) provides a quote from one of the tokkotai fighters that embodies this very sentiment: "We are now searching for something like a phoenix which rises out of ashes. Even if Japan gets defeated once or twice, as long as the Japanese survive, Japan will not be destroyed." The image of the Phoenix is a powerful symbol of immortality and also of the continuous cycle of birth, death, and rebirth that characterizes the mode biological immortality. Conceptualizing the modes of immortality as they function socially is an important contribution to understanding the current self identification of "spiritual but not religious."

The Creative Mode

The second mode of symbolic immortality is the creative mode. This is the mode dedicated to human works creating lasting influences on others. This mode is especially apparent in the service professions where ones influence can be continual and long lasting (Lifton, 1979). Shakespeare's Sonnets and Keat's Odes are examples of poetry and prose that would be considered efforts related to the creative mode. The statues the Colossi of Memnon are a fourteenth century B.C. testament to this mode of immortality. The pair of statues was built as a tribute to Pharaoh Amen Hotep III and was a frequent tourist attraction on world tours from Roman antiquity through the modern era (Brennan, 1998). Lord Byron wrote about his visit to the statues in, The Deformed Transformed, an allegorical play about death (Byron, 2004). One of the statues had a cracked based and moisture in the evening would cause the state to "sing" in the morning. This was interpreted to be Memnon singing to greet his mother, Eos, the dawn (Brennan, 1998). It is unique in that professional stone carvers were employed during this period to essentially graffiti the statue with inscriptions from patrons who visited the site. The inscriptions often included familial information of origin and evocations of protection. The poet Julia Balbilla inscribed on the statue in 130 A.D., "I do not think this statue of you would (thereupon) perish, and I sense within a soul hereafter immortal" (Brennan, 1998, p. 223). The Pharaoh to whom the statue was built, the statue itself, and the visitors are all symbolically immortalized in the example. Poetry is also a power symbolization of immortality through the creative mode. Ranier Maria Rilke speaks directly to two modes of symbolic immortality in his *Letters to a Young Poet* (1934). Blending modes of creativity and nature, he gives advice to the young poet, "go into yourself and see how deep the place is from which your life flows; at its source you will find the answer to the question whether you must create….for the creator must

find everything in himself and in Nature, to whom his life is devoted… [this is] the essence of creativity, its depths and eternity" (Rilke, 1934, p.11-15). Rilke's passage illuminates both the formative symbolic process of self transcendence as well as the modes through which this process is expressed. Eliade (1963) notes, "the artist struggle[s] with his raw material, as the creative spirit [seeks] victory over the immediate data of experience" (p.4). His wisdom regarding the creative can be summed as follows:

> The science of religions must be-come a total discipline, in the sense that it must use, integrate, and articulate the results obtained by the various methods of approaching a religious phenomenon. In the past few years a number of scholars have felt the need to transcend the alternative religious phenomenology or History of Religions and to reach a broader perspective in which these two intellectual operations can be applied together. It is toward the integral conception of the science of religions that the efforts of scholars seem to be orienting themselves today. To be sure, these two approaches correspond in some degree to different philosophical temperaments. And it would be naive to suppose that the tension between those who try to understand the essence and the structures and those whose only concern is the history of religious phenomena will one day be completely done away with. But such a tension is creative. (Eliade, 2013, p.8)

The Nature Mode

A third mode of symbolic immortality, the nature mode, can also be understood in relation to the social construction of meaningful symbols that allow for an individual sense of immortality. The nature mode is one of the strongest motifs embedded in culture. Writers, musicians, philosophers, architects, and political institutions all use nature symbols for their powerful ability to assert a sense of continuity. On a basic level, the changing of the four seasons can be symbolized as a metaphor for the life course. A song from the Broadway musical The Fantastick's reminds us to "Try to remember the kind of September when grass was green and grain was yellow…when you were a tender and callow fellow…that no one wept except the willow." Youth is the springtime of our lives, while old age is likened to a cold December.

Nature continues in light of personal mortality, the leaf withers and dies but the tree in spring shows itself renewed.

A more complex association of the man's connection with nature can be found in architecture and even more subtly in the symbols of our nations and states.

Both ancient and modern architecture reflect mans connectivity to nature. In Aristotle's Metaphysics, it is said, "We call 'substance' the simple bodies, i.e. earth and fire and water and everything of the sort, and in general bodies and the things composed of them, both animals and divine beings, and the parts of these" (Aristotle, 1966, 1017b 10-25). Greco-Roman architecture, embellished with both human and other organic forms, expresses this sentiment.

In modern American architecture, notables such as John Ruskin and Frank Loyd Wright, under the influence of different traditions, both emphasized the importance of harmonizing with nature in the construction of modern buildings. The Academy of Fine Arts in Pennsylvania is an elaborate example of turn of the century architecture with various flower and leaf motifs running throughout both the interior and exterior structure. Ruskin was said to keep sketches of various species of flora and fauna in order to recreate designs that were indigenous to the area for which he was designing (Weingarden, 1989). Frank Loyd Wright is perhaps the hero of American architectural design. His "organic principle" in design seeks to blend natural elements with manmade creation "as we coincide with the nature of principle and the principles of what we call nature" (Wijdeveld & Wright, 1965). Wright embodies in this passage, as well as in his creations, the sense of continuity that can be found through the nature mode.

Nations and States, too, fall under natures spell. Seals, crests, and emblems usually incorporate some element of nature into their designs in order to provide symbolization of the link between man and "his" land. The land for "him" becomes more than just a place in spatial

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reality, the trees, the grass, the hills, and every aspect of the landscape, become integrated in the emotional sense of self. Lifton refers to the "cult of the great outdoors" when writing of one way that individual's gain continuity through communion with nature (Lifton, 1969). Current research has centered on trying to get people back to nature, particularly children, with several findings indicating that children who play outdoors have higher scores on tests of creativity and imagination, lower scores on tests of anxiety (Moore & Wong, 1997; Wells, 2000; Wells & Evans, 2003). Adults, who report a strong relatedness to nature, are more likely to support environmental causes and are more likely to participate in pro-environmental behavior (Nisbet, Zelenski & Murphy, 2009). The earth as symbol of continuity is very powerful.

The environmental movement has become an important source of meaning linking an individual to the nature mode of symbolic immortality. Goodenough (2003) has identified a "green spirituality" that embodies belongingness to the universe. Along those same lines, Jerome Stone (2012) states, naturalism "affirms that attention should be focused on the events and processes of this world to provide what degree of explanation and meaning are possible" (p.481), and defines a theory for understanding spirituality in naturalists. Writing from an atheistic paradigm, Stone (2012) suggests naturalized spirituality is grounded in the sense world and involves an enlarged sense of connection, a desire (aspiration) to seek realization of ideals, and self reflection. In his framework, the sacred is not otherworldly; rather its challenging-and-yet-supportive duality is indicative of a seeking and responding to symbols that is both formative and transformative in transcending, "the narrow boundaries of self" (Stone, 2012, p.495).

The Theological Mode

The fourth mode of symbolic immortality is the theological mode. Common to all religious traditions is the concern for lasting life in the face of certain death (Hood et al., 2009; Lifton, 1969, 1975, 1976; Otto, 1950). This principle is founded on the universal religious principle that human life has value and purpose. Often this mode is symbolized as an alliance with a higher power thus ensuring immortality. The Absolute is both awesome and dreadful in its power but also holds the power of salvation thus offering an image protection and comfort. These images are characteristic of vertical transcendence; immortality is achieved through death by passage into heaven (Hood et al., 2009). Lifton (1976) is careful to point out that this mode can lose its symbolic quality and be mistaken for a literal form of immortality. The theological mode symbolizes not just life after death, but, "the image of immortality can connect with the experience of spiritual death and rebirth which may occur many times during one's earthly existence" (Lifton, 1976, p. 80). The theological mode, then, is not limited to the belief in a higher power, but constitutes a reorientation of the self in relation to life and death; a will to live is exerted in the direction of spiritual growth (Rank, 2002). Today, individuals may experience multiple conversions over their lifetime involving a deconversion experience as part of the process (Streib & Klein, 2011; Hood et al., 2009). Many of the most influential psychologists in America report a deconversion experience (Fuller, 2001). Deconversion trajectories provide one way of interpreting the theological mode. To quote Rank (2002): "Man is born beyond psychology and he dies beyond it but he can live beyond it only through vital experiences of his own-in religious terms, through revelation, conversion or re-birth" (p.16). Streib et al. (2011) identified six deconversion trajectories, although he posited there may be more. The trajectories are: 1) secularizing exit, 2) integrating exit, 3) oppositional exit, 4) religious switching, 5)

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privatizing exit, and 6) heretical exit. A secularizing exit involves disaffiliation from organized

religion and a dismissal of previous and future concern with religious belief and practice. An

integrating exit involves adopting a new system of beliefs and rituals that are considered to be

more accommodating. The oppositional exit, in contrast, is characterized by the adoption of a

more stringent set of ritual and beliefs which are, perhaps, more fundamentalist in nature. It is

interesting to note that Lifton (1993) characterizes fundamentalism as a reaction to proteanism; a

fear of chaos, a requirement of literal interpretations of scripture, and the demand of a

"monolithic self."   Religious switching involves relocation between religious organizations that

are similar in belief structure, while a privatizing exit includes a disaffiliation and termination

from a religious organization but a continuance of personalized religious beliefs and practices.

Finally, the heretical exit also involves disaffiliation and termination from a religious

organization without a renewed affiliation and is characterized by an individualized

accumulating of new beliefs and practices. Within this framework, self-identifications are

reoriented. For example, in secularizing exit a person who identified as being either religious or

spiritual or both may identify as "neither religious or spiritual" after deconversion, where a

heretical exit could involve a change in identification from "equally religious and spiritual" to

"more spiritual than religious" (Streib, 2005). Each trajectory symbolizes a death and rebirth

that includes a reorientation of the individual's ultimate concerns and eternal principles. The

theological mode can therefore encompass both a vertical and horizontal means of

transcendence, although it is more readily available in the vertical mode.

Symbols are objects we imbibe with psychological and cultural importance and select as

meaningful (Tillich, 1957). Symbols become meaningful because they unite the inner self and

the social environment. These symbols represent something sacrosanct that should not be

violated and in this way resemble dimensions of the sacred. The "I" is formed through

transcendent moments that reinforce both self awareness as well as relationships to others, the

experience of "Me." Whatever the ontological question, the formative process is not limited to

strictly religious symbols. Tillich (1959) argued religion was an ultimate concern because it

provided a direct unmediated experience with something transcendent (God, for Tillich). The

content of ultimate concern is two-fold; seeking experiences of ultimacy and responding to those

concerns. By distinguishing religious interpretations of the sacred from other sacred

interpretations, Tillich (1959) was able to integrate "the transcendent within the secular" (Hey,

2012, p.85).

Experiential Transcendence

The fifth mode of symbolic immortality, experiential transcendence, is interconnected

and influential to the previous four modes, but exists as a purely psychological state (Lifton,

1975, 1979). This mode is similar to the spiritual reorientation of the theological mode, but can

be found in non-religious experiences such as dancing, meditating, listening to music, and the

camaraderie found in working in groups to achieve a common cause (Lifton, 1975).

Experiential transcendence is not only related to a search (and response) to novel symbols, but

also to "the unfolding of that which is oldest and deepest in the self…moments of experiential

transcendence or a strong sense of relation to one of the other modes of symbolic immortality

enables one to affirm the continuity of life without denying death" (Lifton, 1976, p. 85-87). The

experiential is not only individualized, it is encouraged through cultural and societal events,

rituals, and traditions. These can include both religious and secular events that take people

outside of their normal life and evoke a sense of transcending everyday realities. Dia de los

muertos, Day of the dead, is a multi day celebration of the deceased that is symbolic of both the vertical and horizontal modes of transcendence as well as individualized and collective means of experiential transcendence. This holiday is celebrated all over the world, but has a unique relationship with Mexican history and culture (Marchi, 2009). Day of the dead celebrations consist of the construction of altars and offerings to the dead. They are highly elaborate, ritualized, and symbolized. Garciagodoy (1998) explains:

> Dias de muertos is an event through which celebrants can explore and reflect of the significance of life and death not only as metaphysical constructs but also as lived experience, as social conventions, and as the stage on which familial, political, economic, and social dramas are played out. Each celebration reveals an interpretation of what is meaningful in life and death. It deconstructs the meanings assigned to subordinated by dominant cultures by focusing on the meanings the celebrants assign to their own existential knowledge of life, death, and society (p.35).

Construction of altars and the preparation of offerings is a personalized experience. Each altar includes familiar universal symbols such as offerings of salt to purify and protect from decomposition and hanging fruits symbolic of entering the homeland of the spirits, but each is also uniquely handmade and includes photos of deceased loved ones and mementos that are unique to each family (Marchi, 2009). The food is usually traditional but is painstakingly prepared, symbolic of traveler's food for the journey to beyond (Marchi, 2009). The experience is both individualized and shared within the familial group. In modern day Mexico, the ritual has become popularized and altars and preparations are made public. Parades and banquets are held in the streets and vendors sell symbolic items such as sugar skulls and dancing skeleton dolls. There is a blending of ancient Mayan traditions, Catholic ritual and iconography, as well as Mexican symbols of nationalism.

Once a traditional Central American custom begun by pre-contact cultures, Dias de los muertos was theologically influenced by Catholic custom to become in modern times a symbolic

of Mexican nationalism exemplified through resistance to colonization by embracing ancient traditions (Garciagodoy, 1998). In this way the experience becomes shared with a community as well as a nation. Because these moments provide for profound reordering and reaffirmation of ultimate concerns, they are sought after as a means of achieving symbolic immortality. Experiences like those found during celebration are surly formative as well as transformative; renewing life in the confirmation of death. Acceptance and awareness of death allows the transcendent symbols to manifest in everyday life, evoking a legitimation of everyday reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Experiential Transcendence and Mysticism

The mode of experiential transcendence is essentially mystical experience. Lifton (1969; 1979) characterizes this mode in the following ways: 1) an experience of illumination or rapture, 2) a feeling of being beyond the limits and confines of ordinary life; a feeling of expanded life space, 3) a reorientation of time; time seems to disappear, 4) a state of extraordinary psychological unity with images of desensitization and in-animation, and/or feeling alive in a "continuous present" in which ancient past and distant future are contained (Eliade, 1959), 5) a feeling that is highly pleasurable and beyond pain, and 6) an un-expressible illumination and insight. The study of mysticism within the Psychology of Religion has centered on the conceptualizations of W.T. Stace's core concepts of mystical experience. The core characteristics are epitomized by an experience of unity. James writes in The Varieties of Religious Experience, "In mystic states we become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness" (James, 1904 *cf* Stace, 1960, p. 42). This common core is the most important aspect of mystical experience and perhaps central to all religious experience (Hood, 1975).

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Stace (1960) identified nine components universal to the experience of mysticism and made a distinction between introvertive and extrovertive types of mystical experience. Introvertive mysticism is characterized by inward facing undifferentiated unity; the sense awareness of self is lost so that the Absolute and the self are merged as one. In kind, this is similar to the apophatic interpretations of the divine being devoid of material form. Extrovertive mysticism expresses unity through multiplicity; the self is outward facing, aware of itself, and sees unity in all things. Interpretations of this follow a cataphatic interpretation that the divine encompasses everything (many in the one). Stace notes that these types are not necessarily felt as differentiated by those who experience mystical states, they share common characteristics, and both are experiences of Absolute unity; "the outward one and inward one are identical" (Stace, 1960, p. 133). The nine characteristics identified by Stace (1960) were: 1) the unifying vision (unity through multiplicity); 2) the unitary consciousness (undifferentiated unity); 3) inner subjectivity (life in all things); 4) non-spatial/non-temporal awareness (experience of timelessness/spacelessness); 5) a sense of objectivity or reality (noetic, experience revealed as truth, directly perceived); 6) feelings of blessedness or peace (positive affectual state; 7) feeling of the holy, sacred, or divine (religious quality); 8) paradoxicality (through loss there is gain and vice versa); and 9) ineffability (inability to express the experience in adequate words). These qualities are presumed to be universal to all mystical experience; "cross-cultural, ahistorical, and unbiased by religious ideology" (Hood, 1975, p.39).

Self Identification Under the New Paradigm

If we take as our paradigm that spirituality is to be conceived as privatized experience oriented religion that can be found along lines of both vertical and horizontal transcendence,

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mystical experience can be considered a characterization of experiential transcendence and vice versa. This is the experience that people identify with spirituality and being spiritual. This view is consistent with that of Wuthnow (1998) and others who describe the trend towards more spiritual identifications representative of the seeking of meaning through non-specific and unchurched forms of religion (Roof, 1999; Fuller, 2001).

Fuller (2001) identifies three groups of individuals classified as unchurched. The first group is those who do not subscribe to any religious affiliation, identifying as "neither religious nor spiritual." This group rejects supernatural explanations and embraces common sense, reason, and science, as evidence of natural laws. This is not to imply that this group does not seek transcendence or continuity, they simply do so through a non-religious formative symbolizing process. The second group identified by Fuller (2001) consider themselves in some way to be religious, but that affiliation is ambiguous at best. This group would be, perhaps, "equally religious and spiritual" but are only loosely associated with traditional institutionalized structures of religion. The third group, those who are "more spiritual than religious," can be considered religious in some expansive sense of the term in that they reject traditional religious structures but appear deeply concerned with spiritual matters and self growth. According to Streib and Hood (2010), the spirituality this group identifies with is an un-churched mysticism (Parsons, 1999). If mysticism is conceptualized as spirituality this makes good sense, because, as Hartley remarked, "true Mystics are not to be taken for a sect or party in the church, or to be considered as separatists from it, for they renounce all such distinctions both in name and deed" (Hartley, 1764, *cf* Schmidt, 2003, p. 373).

Stace (1960) makes a distinction between "pure" religious mystics and mystic philosophers. The religious mystic and the mystic philosopher both seek and respond to symbols

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of ultimate concern though the symbols are qualitatively different. This has been articulated not as a difference in degree of experience but rather kind of experience related to these types (Stace, 1960; Hood, 2001; Streib & Hood, 2013). The religious mystic comes out of a particular religious tradition and interprets experiences from a religious point of view. This mystic is well aware of his connection to mystical states of awareness and their significance. This mystic is unlikely to change faith affiliations or seek alternative symbols of continuity. The mystic philosopher, on the other hand, may be only barely consciously aware of his brush with experiences of transcendence and mystical states but is, nonetheless, affected by them through the formative symbolizing process, or what Stace calls intuition. Mystic philosophers are not by definition mystics but are prone to mystical ideas. Philosophers and psychologists like Hegel, Russell, and James fall in this category because although they did not write of a personal experience with mysticism their philosophies of knowledge were sympathetic to the study of mysticism (Stace, 1960).

The Protean man, identifying as "spiritual" may be in a sense a mystic philosopher, relatively unaware of the content of mystical experience, but never the less experiencing it. The Protean search and response to various symbols of meaning and ultimate concern is led in part by self-reflection. In this sense, he is the philosopher of his times, subjectively intuiting claims to reality and picking and choosing between those that resonate and those that fall flat of personal significance. In what Stace (1960) calls the nonattached mystic we can locate the unaffiliated agnostic and even atheist mystic so that even in the "neither religious nor spiritual" self-identification it is still possible to find the search and response of the formative symbolizing process enmeshed in ultimate concerns along the horizontal trajectory.

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This does not suggest that people who identify as "more religious than spiritual" experience a "purer" form of mystical experience, or that mystic philosophers and unaffiliated mystics are always unaware of the mystical manifesting in their life. Quite the opposite is true of the unaffiliated mystic (Stace, 1960). It is also true, as Hood (2001) points out; mystical experience need not be inherently meaningful. It is most insightful, however, to use typologies in the study of exceptional experience because it is the interpretation of the experience that is ultimately the determining factor in whether or not the experience will be formative, transformative, restorative, and so on. It is also perfectly reasonable, as supported in the literature on mystical experience, to assume that people who do not fit any particular typology have mystical experiences, ideas, and moments (Hood, 2001; Stace, 1960). Investigating the differences in these kinds of mysticism, for example, its vertical and horizontal trajectories, provides a foundation for further understanding the dynamic interplay between the self, society, and the formative influence of religion and spirituality.

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APPENDIX A

MEASURES

M-Scale

	Very Accurate	Accurate	Cannot Decide	Inaccurate	Very Inaccurate
In the box beside each question mark the statement that best describes your experience or experiences.					
1. I have had an experience which was both timeless and spaceless.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I have never had an experience which was incapable of being expressed in words.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I have had an experience in which something greater than myself seemed to absorb me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I have an experience in which everything seemed to disappear from my mind until I was conscious of only a void.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I have experienced profound joy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I have never had an experience in which I felt myself to be absorbed as one with all things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I have never experienced a perfectly peaceful state.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I have never had an experience in which I felt as if all things were alive.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I have never had an experience which seemed holy to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I have never had an experience in which all things seemed to be aware.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. I have had an experience in which I had no sense of time or space.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. I have had an experience in which I realized the oneness of myself with all things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I have had an experience in which a new view of reality was revealed to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. I have never experienced anything to be divine.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. I have never had an experience in which time and space were non-existent.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. I have never experienced anything that I could call ultimate reality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. I have had an experience in which ultimate reality was revealed to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. I have had an experience in which I felt that all was perfection at the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. I have had experience in which I felt everything to be part of the same whole.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20.	I have had an experience which I knew to be sacred.	☐☐☐☐☐
21.	I have never had an experience which I was unable to express adequately through language.	☐☐☐☐☐
22.	I have had an experience which left me with a feeling of awe.	☐☐☐☐☐
23.	I have had an experience which was impossible to communicate.	☐☐☐☐☐
24.	I have never had an experience in which my own self seemed to merge into something greater.	☐☐☐☐☐
25.	I have never had an experience which left me with a feeling of wonder.	☐☐☐☐☐
26.	I have never had an experience in which deeper aspects of reality were revealed to me.	☐☐☐☐☐
27.	I have never had an experience in which time, place and distance were meaningless.	☐☐☐☐☐
28.	I have never had an experience in which I became aware of unity to all things.	☐☐☐☐☐
29.	I have had an experience in which all things seemed to be conscious.	☐☐☐☐☐
30.	I have never had an experience in which all things seemed to be unified into a single whole.	☐☐☐☐☐
31.	I have had an experience in which I felt nothing is ever really dead.	☐☐☐☐☐
32.	I have had an experience which cannot be expressed in words.	☐☐☐☐☐

Religious and Spiritual Self Identification

Mark The Statement That Most Identifies You	
I am more religious than spiritual	☐
I am more spiritual than religious	☐
I am equally religious and spiritual	☐
I am neither religious nor spiritual	☐

Demographic Questions

Current Residence
USA
Other, please specify _____

Gender
Male
Female

Age _____

Where do you live today?
Please enter the first two digits of your zip code

_____ _____

What is the highest level of education received?
No education
1st though 3rd grade
4th through 8th grade
9th through 12th grade
High School Degree (GED)

What is the highest level of vocational training achieved?
I have no vocational training
I am presently in vocational training
I have completed vocational training
Associates Degree, Trade Degree, Skilled Education, Some College at least two years
Bachelors Degree
Masters Degree
Doctoral Degree

Please indicate/estimate your total household income per year
0-9,999
10,000-19,999
20,000-34,999
35,000-49,000
50,000-74,999
75,000-99,999
100,000-149,999
150,000 or greater

Mark the answer that most closely represents your ideal perspective, if any.
Buddhist
Protestant
Hindu
Muslim
Jewish
Catholic
Pagan
No Religion
Other, please specify _____

Whether you are religiously affiliated or not, what is your perspective? Mark the item that best describes your perspective.
I am disinterested in religion but do not oppose its existence
I am an agnostic
I am scientifically minded
I am a materialist
I am anti-religious
I belief there is a reality beyond scientific reasoning
I am atheist
I am a non-Theist
None of these, but _____

Appendix B

IRB Approval

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sara Hall-McKane   **IRB # 10-002**
                    Dr. Ralph Hood

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity
                    Dr. Bart Weathington, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: July 10, 2012

SUBJECT: IRB #10-002: Being Spiritual in Germany and the USA

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your application for Annual Renewal for the IRB project listed above.

You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

> *The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project # 10-002.*

Please remember that you must complete a form for completion when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes over one year to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page http://www.utc.edu/irb or email instrb@utc.edu

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Appendix C

Data Use Contract

Contract

Universität Bielefeld

Between the

University of Bielefeld
Universitätsstr. 35, 33615 Bielefeld, Germany (hereinafter referred to as "University")

and

Firstname: SARA   Middle: E.T.   Lastname: HALL-MCKANE

Street: 410 Willard st

City: Maryville, TN   Zip: 37803

Country: USA

(hereinafter referred to as "Member of the Research Team") the following is agreed:

Preamble

The University of Bielefeld/Research Center for Biographical Research in Contemporary Religion at the Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga/Department of Psychology are working together on the research project "'Spirituality' in Germany and the United States of America. An Empirical-Theological Investigation of Contemporary Spiritual Self-Identification in the Variety of Religious Traditions, Secular Orientations, Socio-cultural Milieu and Psycho-Biographical Contexts." In the project numerous data sets (anonymous responses to questionnaires, measured responses in computational experiments, interviews and transcripts) are gathered. The participating research teams at the University of Bielefeld and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga have access to these data sets. The following agreement regulates the use of these data sets.

§ 1

The Member of the Research Team has to keep confidential all information about the research project, even after termination of his or her participation in the research project.

The Member of the Research Team is obliged to
1. ensure that the data stay intact and complete during their processing,
2. only analyze the data in the context of the project leaders' (Prof. Dr. Heinz Streib, Prof. Ralph W. Hood, Jr., Ph.D.) authorized projects,
3. do not disclose the data to persons outside of the research project,

Data Use Contract

4. will not use the data any longer and will delete any existing copies of the data at the date of termination of her or his participation in the research project,
5. will rate with the project leader (Prof. Dr. Heinz Streib, University of Bielefeld), his partner in the United States (Prof. Ralph W. Hood, Jr., Ph.D., University of Tennessee), and the primary researchers (Dr. Dipl.-Psych. Barbara Keller, University of Bielefeld; Mr. Christopher Silver, University of Tennessee) all proposed publications prior to submission as conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, books, online publications or other forms of publication.

§ 2

Furthermore the Member of the Research Team has to ensure, that
1. in all of publications and public presentations based on the data sets, the German Research Foundation (DFG), the University of Bielefeld/Research Center for Biographical Studies in Contemporary Religion at the Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga/Department of Psychology are named, and the project leader (Prof. Dr. Heinz Streib, Prof. Ralph Hood, Jr., Ph.D.), the primary researchers of the research project (Dr. Dipl.-Psych Barbara Keller, Mr. Christopher Silver, MSMA) and the assistant of Professor Streib, Dipl.-Psych. Dipl.-Theol. Constantin Klein are listed as co-authors.
2. Furthermore, all proposed publications prior to submission as conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, books, online publications or other forms of publication have to be rated with the project leaders (Prof. Dr. Heinz Streib, Prof. Ralph W. Hood, Jr., Ph.D.) and the primary researchers (Dr. Dipl.-Psych Barbara Keller, Mr. Christopher Silver, MSMA). The project leaders and the primary researchers have to give their permission.

§ 3

In the event of a breach of any of these rules of conduct, the University can take legal regress in the Member of the Research Team.
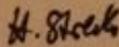
§ 4

German law applies.

§ 5

Changes and/or additions to the contract are effective only upon written consent signed by all parties in the form of a contract adjustment.
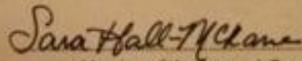
§ 6

For any dispute arising from this contract, Bielefeld is the court of jurisdiction.

Bielefeld, May 18, 2012   Chattanooga, TN

H. Stolk

_____   _Sara Hall-McLane_
University of Bielefeld   Member of the Research Team

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VITA

Sara Hall-McKane was born in Chattanooga, TN. She spent her early years climbing in trees. She has one son, James, who is the love of her life. Sara has two dogs, two cats, one fish, and one frog. She enjoys reading and spending time with her family. Aside from her research endeavors she is a grant writer and daydream believer. Her future goals include taking up a musical instrument and completing her education (pursuing a PhD) so that she may spend her late years making beautiful music and enjoying intelligent conversations with friends. More information on Sara and her current research interests can be found on her website: sarahall-mckane.weebly.com