

3.5.1 Modern Witchcraft

As outlined above, *witchcraft has its origins in the Babylonian Mysteries cult false religion* [emphasis added]. Kirban expounds, “In Babylon there were 53 temples of the great gods, 55 shrines dedicated to Marduk (the chief god of the sun) . . . 80 altars to the goddess Ishtar . . . plus hundreds of other shrines . . . The Babylonians practiced fortune telling and astrology as well as magic and the casting of spells . . . and necromancy . . . the practice of claiming to foretell the future by alleged communication with the dead” (Kirban 1980:118-9). Modern witchcraft or Wicca (as it is known today) made its resurgence in the fourteenth century. In addition to the paragraph on The House of the Plantagenets in the previous section, the following is provided according to Kirban:

During the medieval period, *a witch was considered to be one who had sold her soul to Satan in exchange for magical powers . . . witches met before the throne of Satan who was a goat . . . one witch would present a child to the demon . . . novices were given a black book in exchange for the Gospels they were renouncing* [emphasis added] . . . much of the black book of sorcery attempts to tie in Solomon with its rites. One is called *La Clavicule de Salomon* . . . On page 30 of this book is . . . the famous “magic circle.” Supposedly, anyone who enters into communication with demons must be enclosed in this circle. . . . The circle must be nine feet in diameter . . . it must be traced with a consecrated knife, thou shalt make 4 Pentacles (5-pointed stars) with the name of the Creator . . . Professional witches were called to prepare **philters**, a potion or charm thought to arouse sexual love or produce a death-spell. . . . It was here the divining rod had its origin . . . the words dowsing or witching are used interchangeably with divining . . . In European folklore, the two annual occasions when witches meet are April 30th and October 31st (Hallowe’en) . . . witches are organized into **covens** . . . they meet at the time of the full moon . . . and . . . eight other occasions they call **sabbats** (the witches’ sabbath) . . . witches refer to their religion as “**Wicca**,” the feminine form of an Old English word meaning witch. . .

In Wicca there are both male and female members but the cult is mainly governed by the high priestess . . . the garter has always been the badge of office of the high priestess. Edward III (1327-1377) openly displayed the garter and acknowledged that he was a witch. He supposedly founded the “double coven” of the Order of the Garter in the witches honor . . . It is said that in France alone, under the reign of Charles IX, there were over 100,000 witches . . .

*Witchcraft has been divided by some into **white** magic and **black** magic. Those who practice black magic usually declare openly that they are serving the devil . . . In Europe much of black magic witchcraft comes from The Sixth and Seventh Books of*

Moses, false magic-type books . . . to possess these books is supposedly to possess the power of Lucifer . . . Those who practice white magic declare that they invoke the name of God, not Satan, and they use Biblical phrases [emphasis added]. . . . Dr. Merrill F. Unger sums up the distinction between religious white magic and Biblical faith . . . : In biblical faith, trust is placed solely in the Lord Jesus. In white magic, it is deflected to someone else (the human agent) or to something else (one's own faith) (Kirban 1980:119-120, 123-25).

Additionally, Ron Rhodes adds the following modern understanding to Wicca's beliefs.

Modern witches claim to be diverse, tolerant, rely on personal experience, and maintain a very subjective, relativistic view of truth. They have an exalted view of nature—all nature is alive:

“The earth itself is a living organism, and a life force permeates and infuses all of nature. . . .

Starhawk, a witch, says that ‘the model of the Goddess, who is immanent in nature, fosters respect for the sacredness of all living things’” (Starhawk, *The Spiritual Dance* (New York:

Harper & Row, 1989), 23). Witches also use magic, are involved in various forms of the occult

(e.g., spiritism, crystal gazing, numerology, astral projection, tarot cards, and astrology), perform

mystical rituals (e.g., “drawing down the moon/sun”), and consider sex to be a “sacrament

among witches. It is said to be an outward sign of an inward grace.” They have varying beliefs

about God, but all of them are either pantheistic or polytheistic, with the two primary deities

being Mother Goddess and the Horned God. They deny that Jesus Christ was God incarnate,

Who died for the sins of humanity, because human beings are divine and are in no need of

salvation or atonement. Most witches also believe in reincarnation with an interim heaven called

Summerland, where “souls can be refreshed and become ready for rebirth in a new body”

(2005:234-7). *Based on this review of the modern clarification of Wicca's beliefs, it becomes*

obvious that it is another form of heresy [emphasis added]. This resurgence of modern witchcraft

then flowed naturally into the rise of modern secular humanism.