

Thrice OT uses intensive forms of Heb. "I": Gen.3.10, 6.17, 9.12. Highly instructive!

This thinksheets is notes on a word now elative, rising in numinous force within cultures and in the various emergents of transculture. It's not that "consciousness" is hard to define. It isn't. It's quite easy within any particular world-paradigm (explicative cosmo-story). And it's easy to experience: we're doing it when we try to define "consciousness"! But it's nigh-impossible to arrive at a universal and everybody-satisfying definition; for each definition feeds back sanctially, confirmatively, upon (1) the world-view from which it takes its start, and (2) the life-situation of the definer (the definition being, sociology-of-knowledge-wise, a mirror-reflex of how the person earns what goes into the visible and invisible mouths of that person). I.e., each definition is political in the broad sense of being rhetorical, self-defensive and self[group]-promotive. This remark is intended to be scientific, not cynical: I am pointing to the bending-back or cyclical character of definitions of human awareness. But do not expect that all who develop sophistication on, e.g., the pedagogy or pathology of attention/perception/awareness, will be also metaphysically sophisticated. One frequently encounters in technical articles and books "pure" nonsense about "pure" consciousness, applying to science, by invalid extrapolation, the sanction of purity.

1. By "primitive" consciousness I mean no disparagement of cultures other than the literate East's and West's, but rather only the state in which separation/alienation of ego from else has not proceeded far enough to become "the individual" (hypertrophied in Kierkegaard's "der Einzel," the single one, from Ger. for "one"; in a figure fr. Ger. ["der Einzelverkäufer," the retailer], consciousness by retail rather than, as in "primitive" consciousness, by wholesale, the collective consciousness, whence also Jung's collective unconscious). Gen.3 profoundly suggests that "the modern [i.e., post-primitive] mind" represents not just separation-for-function but also alienation-by-rebellion, an ambivalent condition I have called, at the beginning of this paragraph, "separation/alienation" (from God, world, others, self).

2. Eastern "pure consciousness" is a spiritual achievement by overcoming the alienation from self and Self (the depths of self, where Atman is Brahman and Yin/Yang converge and Dharma becomes/appears as Nirvana and...whatever world-story one is taking the terms from, but all monistic). While the West has a mystical monistic tradition, in almost every instance it is ecstatic rather than metaphysical (i.e., of the feelings only, and not of the thinking--whereas in the East, the feelingful experience is "realized," thought into Reality, and by recycle experienced as Real and Reality). Every strand of the Human Potential Movement is buttressed with monistic thinking derived from (A) Western "science" (right-brain linear monism), (B) philosophical versions of Indic and Sinic consciousness, and/or (C) Western mystical traditions sans their theistic matrix. Every strand of HPM is thus subversive of biblical religion, while also revealing something about God-world-self (as in Ro.1). Every strand tends to narcissism, the relativization of history, and thus the limitation of "justice" to the psychic and private realms (not matter the defensive "and alsos" and "so thats" expressive of promoters' goodwill toward the human race). AND God is at work in HPM, foraging from the enemy camp its authentic emergents; and we biblical people should be there foraging with God, but not joining the enemy. DANGER: If we stay in that camp, we begin to think as that camp thinks. What gets our attention gets us. So Jesus: "I say unto you, WATCH...."

3. Western secular consciousness has been (to use Cox's title) "tending East" for a long time as it has been wandering farther and farther away from its biblical roots. Ignorance, e.g. in the media, of the biblical way is so great as to amount to stupidity. The Creator-Savior-Lord / creation-community cosmic-historical dualism, which sees human consciousness as only, merely, no more than one creature among the other creatures, has faded and become alien to our post-biblical culture. Biblically, "I am" does not refer primarily to me, to us humans, but to God (Ex.3.14 bis). (See the conscious tension the Gospel of John [Jesus' "I am"s] puts against Kr's'na's "Iam"s in the Gita: thinksheet #408 . Rabbi Chaim Stern asked me about "I am the resurrection"[11.25] and "I am the way"[14.6] two days after he said in synagogue, "Best is to be prayer.")