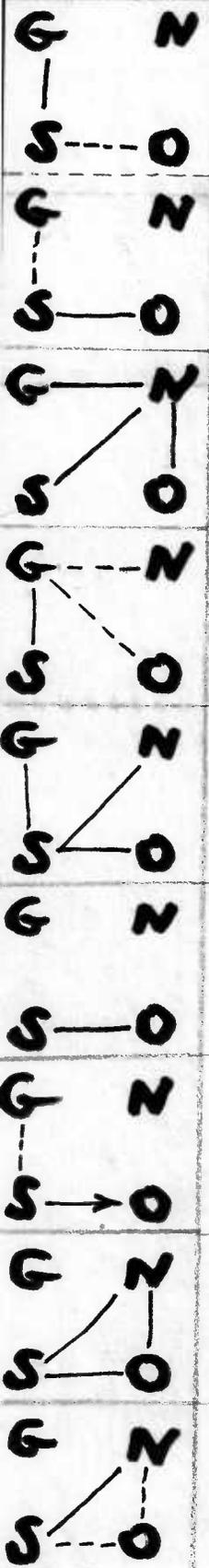


This thinksheet visualizes the typology of Fred. Streng et al, WAYS OF BEING RELIGIOUS (P-H/73). For displaying the ways, I have selected four components: G[od], N[ature], S[elf], O[ther].



1
2
3
4W
4E
5
6
7
8

PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE HOLY. The vertical God/individual relationship dominates, with (and thus the weaker horizontal line), usually, social implications. (In this and all the delineations of the ways on this thinksheet, I'm striving for stark simplicity even at risk of minor distortion.) Revelation/"hearing"/communion-prayer.

CREATION OF COMMUNITY THROUGH MYTH AND RITUAL. Here the strong line is horizontal, the weak line showing the possibility (biblically, the actuality) that the community is formed around a founder's direct numinous experience (or, as in the case of Moses, re-formed). Liturgy.

LIVING HARMONIOUSLY THROUGH CONFORMITY TO THE COSMIC LAW. Shock: nature, almost invisible in #1 and #2 (though biblically the doctrine of creation ratifies #1 and #2), dominates (as Tao and Ti/Li) #3, the Sinic way. Yin/yang, coincidentia oppositorum, the convergent experience is "where it's at." Hyperstabilizing of individual/society.

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM THROUGH DISCIPLINE (MYSTICISM): WESTERN FORM. The emphasis in both 4W and 4E is not on prayer (as in #1 and #2) but on meditation—in 4W, a convergence of meditation and prayer into contemplation ("the beatific vision"). Theocentric, theotherapeutic, with incorporation of nature and other indirectly into God.

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM THROUGH DISCIPLINE (MYSTICISM): EASTERN FORM. Noocentric, psychotherapeutic—with incorporation of Brahman (all/All) into Atman (soul, beginning with one's individual consciousness). In Transcendental Meditation, prostituted to Western hyperindividualism. The soul is all (Hinduism) or nothing (Buddhism, =Prot.Hinduism).

ATTAINING AN INTEGRATED SELF THROUGH CREATIVE INTERACTION. Flatlanders. Hyperfeminine fixation on the interpersonal (as thoroughgoing as the two #4 types, especially #4E, tend to be intrapsychic). "Human potential Movement" in its NTL/education/encounter strand (the Esalen strand allying rather more with #4E than with "interpersonal skills").

ACHIEVEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACTION. Religion experienced primarily in the prophetic struggle for justice and peace. The weak line shows God optional in the sense that "movements" have both theistic and secular participants. Differs from #2 by the arrow toward other: altruistic, sociocentric.

THE NEW LIFE THROUGH TECHNOCRACY. Everything taken seriously except God. The God-amnesiac, secularistic society and its concerns as central. "Nature" instead of God or God + nature provides the vertical dimension—so, the biosphere (ecology, etc.) as value-center, though the more the emphasis is bio- rather than techno-, the more of #3.

ENJOYMENT OF THE FULL LIFE THROUGH SENSUOUS EXPERIENCE. Ironically, radically similar to and dissimilar from #7. Similar: elimination (or assimilation) of God; dissimilar: exaltive of the individual, instead of de-individualizing (though both may be dehumanizing). Compare with the G/S/N/O patterns of the other "ways," and do for the rest.

ECSTATIC as hyper-: orgiastic
hypo-: ascetic