

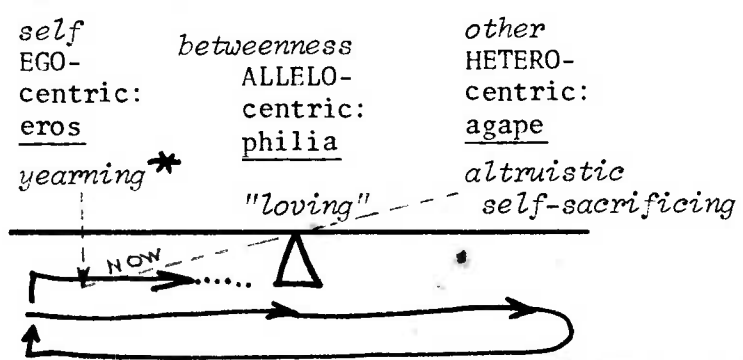
*"The erotic" refers to yearning with all one's being and powers, collectively and distributively. A fragmented culture will specialize among the powers: a Dionysiac, on body pleasures; an Apollonian [e.g., Vedanta], on "consciousness." Hence the importance, for me, of the question *What are you longing for?*

1. Yesterday (10Oct76), the grace for our family meals [GRACE BEFORE MEALS:...EACH DAY IN THE YEAR, Jn.C.Winston/39] had this for its first two lines: "We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food, / But more because of Jesus' blood." Yes, Jesus' blood mixed in with our food....Jesus mixed in with our life, our blood. Not a pretty picture, any angle you look at it. Realistic: "And what are you doing with your blood?" [Kagawa] Anegocentric: The center is not our table, but the Table of the Lord with his Body and Blood....This morning in Breakfast for the Hungry Hearted the leader presented, for discussion, Tom Wolfe's 23Aug76 NEW YORK feature article, "The 'Me' Decade and the Third Great Awakening." He sees the American Zeitgeist now as (p.3) "a weird combination of piety and encounter groups, of raging ego-massage and Transcendental Meditation," then describes the smorgasbord of me-centered offerings promising the self-alchemy of transformation into--and here I leave the article to do my thing, for the rest of the thinksheet--"what I was meant to be" or "the true me behind the ego" or "the person I can become" or "the realized self, become what I truly am."

2. No wonder the article brought in the most mail ever received in the history of the magazine! Me-tripping is "in" at all levels of our society, as it was during the 1740s (the First Great Awakening) and the 1840s (the Second Great Awakening). Me-awakening can't get off the ground without strong emotion, so weak-emotion offerings [my denomination, UCC, e.g.] are shriveling in numbers and influence. The sacred "in" is charisma [including, in this broad sense, Southern Baptist conversionism], and the secular "in" is various versions of gut-spilling (e.g., primal scream as a Shalom Retreats component).

3. Well, is this me-ism health or pathology? Both. Love yourself, say Lev. and Jesus; so self-attention, introspection, self-manipulation toward "improvement" and "growth," are good. To the infant, the world's a big tit, and that's healthy--as long as you're an infant, and that's always, for we never cease to be anything we've been. But if that's all, it's sick, because since infancy we've become more than we were and, in varying degrees, have gotten the message that to become more than we are is "where it's at" for us humans. The love-center moves to between self and other, from egocentric to allelocentric. But then relationship proves nettlesome, and it's healing requires another step for love: out of the middle into the other [heterocentricity, "the cross"--which got BHH into Jesus, and the liberal church's neglect of devotion to and through him]. So I put this THREE-LOVES diagram on the chalkboard:

Our society is maturing in beginning to recognize that lust/greed materialism are humanity-canceling inflations, the big-tit syndrome. May we soon be beyond this psycho-big-titism!



4. Grammatical note: Since "me" is predicate, what's the subject? And am I active or passive in relation to the subject? Am I the subject's beloved, or victim? If "the other" is only the other human being, I'm a flatlander, locked into "society." The biblical situation is rather that I myself am the other: God is the primary subject, the "I" Creator; and all my relationships within creation are "me" secondary. There's precious little of this, of course, in the anti-gapaism of "the Third Great Awakening."

5. Instances of Me-in-group, the most powerful have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too formula: Billy Graham, Werner Erhart [est], Fritz Perls, Ira Progoff, Tom Oden [TAG], Lyman Coleman ["Serendipidy"], Jerry Brown, Jimmy Carter....Luther moved swiftly from self-preoccupation, which he then described as the essence of sin [incurvatus]: the opposite of Jung, who sucks the world into the psyche, as do all other gnostics.