

Quote from
The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality

©By Christian A. Schwarz

This quote from *The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality*, an excellent book of understanding Spiritual Styles (within Christianity), explains the Mystical Style in a way I found helpful... (See my blog on 4/24/2010 My Cup Overflows)

My notes:

- 1) I do not experience Schwarz's comments on "esotericism," but I do understand his interpretation and do see it in other mystical paths. Secrecy has never been a part of Pathwork to my knowledge.
- 2) For at least two decades I have held the view expressed in Schwarz's quote from Hans Küng in the last paragraph.
- 3) In his work Schwarz seems to leave out the concept of growth in consciousness as developed and taught by Ken Wilber, Don Beck, and others. Using Beck's and Wilber's levels of consciousness, I would see the "battling fundamentalists" as representative of Tier 1 consciousness levels where each category of consciousness within Tier 1 believes the other categories are wrong. I would see the fact that, as Schwarz points out, Mystics accept both Mystics of other religions as well as the other segments of their own religion (who are in Tier 1 consciousness) as evidence that the Mystics are in Tier 2 or Tier 3 levels of consciousness in which All the Tiers are accepted as needed and useful. So while Tier 1 folks are troubled by and don't "get" or are even threatened by the Mystics, the Mystics do get and are not troubled by the Tier 1 folks.

From page 138 of The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality:

The Mystical Wing of All Religions

In the same way as any religion has its fundamentalist and its liberal wings, almost all religions have a mystical movement. The mystical experiences that can be gained from different religions are amazingly similar – whether we are dealing with a Hindu yogi, a Persian Sufi poet, a neoplatonic philosopher, a medieval monk, a representative of the Jewish Kabbala, or with a contemporary who has turned away from the rationalism and technocracy of Western civilization.

Phenomenologically, the experiences that mystics of different religions have can be assigned to the same category. That doesn't mean, however, that they are theologically identical. The content of a mystical experience can differ considerably from religion to religion. The common element is how this content is approached. The same is true of the fundamentalist wings of various religions: Their content differs considerably (that is why they battle against each other so relentlessly). The way this content is approached, however is almost identical.

There are mystical varieties where belief in God is not even a prerequisite for the mystical experience. Mysticism knows theistic, pantheistic, and atheistic varieties. What, then, is the common denominator?

The common denominator is the experience of “oneness.” Within non-theistic religions this state is usually referred to as “illumination,” within theistic religions, it is referred to as the “unification of God with our soul,” *unio mystica*. This experience of unity overrides the subject-object separation. People don’t necessarily idolize nature, but they experience the absolute through nature.

All strains of mysticism have a certain tendency toward esotericism. The mystical mystery is only accessible by the “initiated.” The mysteries are secret teachings or secret cults that are not discussed in the presence of the “non-initiated.” Generally, words are not seen as adequate tools to communicate mystical experiences. Mystical spirituality doesn’t have any visible body of control. Mystics – whether they are Jews, Muslims, or Christians – don’t need outer assurance, since they are conscious of God’s presence wherever they are.

Often mystics are in tension with the orthodox representatives of their respective religions. However, in most cases they don’t attack the traditional orders and doctrines. Rather, they formally agree with them, without it really meaning an awful lot to them. Sticking to words, dogmas, and rules is regarded as a hindrance to moving forward to the actual meaning of what they have been intended to communicate.

If the result of the Spiritual Style Test has revealed the mystical style as your native style, this doesn’t imply that all these descriptions apply to you. It simply means that you have a stronger affinity to these tendencies than other Christians. You may use completely different terms – such as, “contemplation,” “meditation,” or perhaps simply “prayer” – to describe the same experiences that other people describe as “unity,” “illumination,” or “*unio mystica*.”

Hans Küng observed correctly: “Mystics of completely different religious backgrounds can be closer to each other than they are to the average believer within their own religion.”