How Religious Styles Develop: Typology and Longitudinal Perspectives

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Construction of the Religious Types from Religious Style Ratings in 677 Faith Development Interviews
Four Typical Summaries of Religious Style Ratings

1. Predominantly individuative-reflective
2. Predominantly conventional
3. Substantially ethnocentric
4. Emerging dialogical-xenosophic

2 = Instrumental-reciprocal Religious Style
4 = Individuative-systemic Religious Style
3 = Mutual Religious Style
5 = Dialogical Religious Style
Four Religious Types – Summary Characterizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characterization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emerging dialogical-xenosophic</strong></td>
<td>On top of the use of critical and autonomous reflection there is an openness for inter-religious dialog and for being challenged or changed by the encounter with the Other/the Strange (xenosophia)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Predominantly individuative-reflective</strong></td>
<td>Predominant practice of critical and autonomous reflection—featuring religious (multi-religious) plurality; in case of conflicting validity claims, models of tolerance are considered.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Predominantly conventional</strong></td>
<td>Predominant inclination for consent to the conventional beliefs and prescriptions of one’s group or life-world; desire for mutual interpersonal harmony, while avoiding critical questioning.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Substantially ethnocentric</strong></td>
<td>Characterized by a substantial mythic-literal, ethnocentric and mono-religious claim to the exclusive truth of texts and teachings of one’s own tradition and to a system of punishment and reward in morality</td>
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Sample Characteristics for Type Construction

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n_{\text{USA}})</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n_{\text{Germany}})</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: % female</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td>16-86</td>
<td>18-76</td>
<td>16-84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Profiling the Four Religious Types with Percentages of Style Ratings

Changes of the Religious Types
Between Time 1 and Time 2
Stability and Change in Religious Type between Time 1 and Time 2 for N = 90 Re-interviewees

Emerging dialogical-xenosophic
- Time 1: 13
- Time 2: 7

Predominantly individuative-reflective
- Time 1: 24
- Time 2: 35

Predominantly conventional
- Time 1: 39
- Time 2: 44

Substantially ethnocentric
- Time 1: 14
- Time 2: 4

Stayers
- From Emerging to Emerging: 1
- From Predominantly individuative-reflective to Predominantly individuative-reflective: 13
- From Predominantly conventional to Predominantly conventional: 5
- From Substantially ethnocentric to Substantially ethnocentric: 2

Movers upwards
- From Emerging to Predominantly conventional: 4
- From Predominantly individuative-reflective to Predominantly conventional: 7

Movers downwards
- From Emerging to Substantially ethnocentric: 10
- From Predominantly conventional to Substantially ethnocentric: 7
Two Cross-lagged Models for Predicting Religious Styles Change between Time 1 and Time2

Openness to experience at Time 1 qualifies as negative resp. positive predictor of style 3 or style 4 ratings at Time 2. Style rating at Time 1 predicts autonomy at Time 2.
Latent Growth Curve Model with Two-Wave Data

Openness to experience (NEO-FFI) at Time 1 as predictor of Type slope.

$N = 78$; Stand. Regr. of Type Slope ON openness $= .19 \ (p < .05)$
Conclusion

- All models are wrong, but some are useful (George Box). Our new typology is no exemption.

- Religion is not monolithic. We need to account for differences, for a “variety.”

- Based on interview evaluation, five religious styles and four religious types are identified.

- Religious styles and religious types are hierarchically ordered. They reflect a developmental sequence.

- Religious styles and religious types can be related to questionnaire data and modelled longitudinally in mixed-method designs.

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Guest Editors (besides Heinz Streib as journal editor): Ralph W. Hood, Barbara Keller

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Manuscripts from diverse psychology/neuroscience subdisciplines are welcome, (e.g., from cultural psychology, developmental, social-personality, political psychology, social-cognitive-affective neuroscience, measurement, and others). Studies with innovative methods, nationally representative samples, under-studied populations, or—for contribution about change and development particularly important—longitudinal designs are especially welcome. Research from other fields such as political science, sociology, religious studies, economics, anthropology, communication, and other disciplines could fit, but should make an identifiable contribution to the psychology of religion literature.

Topics may focus generally on the question of how and why the individual religiosity of children, adolescents and adults is changing over the life-span, and how such changes and developments effect, and are effected by, the religious fields in specific cultures. Example research topics could therefore include: conversion, deconversion and re-conversion, continuity and discontinuity of religious identity, disaffiliation, unbelief and irreligiosity. Studies could address how religiosity and religious search is responding to developmental tasks. There is room for rigorous empirical studies about the changes in the understanding of religiosity itself. Research studies about the well-being, mental health and coping processes associated with religious change and development are also welcome.

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