

Wilber condensed

A collection of ideas

Author's note: I compiled/edited/wrote this document sometime in 2001 and updated it in 2002. I am posting this on-line now as a resource for anyone delving more deeply into Wilber or researching his work for an academic project and who is somewhere between looking at one of two books (e.g. *Theory of everything* and *Integral Psychology*) and taking in his whole oeuvre. I am less enamoured and more critical of Wilber now than I was then, but I still consider his work enormously important and under taught. Wilber has obviously added much since I wrote this, including *The Integral Operating System*, *Integral Spirituality* and *The One Two three of God*, which I all valued. Some of his more recent stuff I found less useful (e.g. *Boomeritis*). He has also morphed much of his thinking both into different media and on-line so his work is actually much more available to the casual researcher than when I wrote this. However, this document might still be useful to someone, hence my decision to post it as a resource to community members. Please use with discretion and don't republish. Thanks, Aubyn Howard. 03-10-16.

Introduction

This informal paper is an attempt to summarise the works and ideas of Ken Wilber, who has been described as “the most comprehensive philosophical thinker of our times” (Tony Schwartz) and as having “the most extraordinary mind of our times” (Deepak Chopra). This is not a sensible task to undertake. Indeed, one reviewer of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (probably his most serious tome) starts by saying “No summary of this book is possible. The book, all 524 pages of text and 239 pages notes, is a summary, which should reveal the depth and breadth of its scope.”

So what am I attempting to do here? Well, first of all I am doing something of practical value to myself by collecting together summaries of his key ideas in an ‘aide memoir’ that I can easily reference for my own writing. Most of the Wilber content in this paper comes directly from the Wilber/Shambhala web site, so it has simply been a matter of saving to disc, reading and editing the material available. Secondly, having gone this far, I decided to package it as a document that would be useful to others as an introduction to Wilber and might possibly inspire them to explore his work for themselves, with some directional steers. Thirdly, for my own intellectual satisfaction, I have used this as an excuse to pull together my ‘critique in progress’ of his work (this is not yet included). Alongside Wilber's genius and inspirational contribution, he can (for me) also be irritating and frustrating to read and I needed to find an outlet for some of my reactions and challenges to his work. If anyone wants to engage in this critical discussion, I will be very happy to hear from you. The ‘discussion group’ on Wilber's web site seems to attract all sorts of obsessives and weirdoes and consequently isn't very useful.

This is not, therefore, a carefully researched academic paper. I do not claim it to be a comprehensive or accurate summary or review of his work. There are probably significant omissions. It is meant to be a useful cut-and-paste job using what happens to be available on the web. And along the way I have thrown in a few comments of my own

and some direct extracts from his various books in order to complete the record of my own understanding of his work and provide some structure to the story. It is therefore very much my own partial view of his work.

I should also point out that I haven't read all of Wilber's books by a long stretch. Although I have skimmed most of his work (excluding his earlier stuff – Wilber 1 and 2), the only books I have read in full are Eye to Eye, Eye of Spirit, A Brief History and One Taste. However, I have read all of the 'Introductions to the Collected Works' (volumes 1-8), which are posted on the web, and from which most of the material here is drawn. This is his most recent writing and certainly includes his most serious attempts to bridge his ideas into the arenas of business, education, politics and other fields. Much of it has just been repackaged and published as 'A Theory of Everything' (which is actually quite a good place for a new reader to start with his work).

Wilber talks increasingly of applying an 'all quadrant, all levels' approach to different fields and this is exactly what I am developing for myself in relation to organisational analysis and consulting, building on his (and Don Beck's) '4Q8L' approach that incorporates Spiral Dynamics (an evolutionary model which can be applied very well to organisational analysis). There is some exciting new territory to be explored here; specifically, how to create a balanced, integral, broad perspective or approach to organisational change and development that puts all the different narrow perspectives, theories and models (ie management fads) into context. Not adding to the management theories or fads (others will continue to do this anyway), but providing a framework for knowing which ones to draw upon in which situations. This is one example of Wilber's direct value to my own specific field of work, although this is by no means my only interest in him.

Perhaps I should say why I have bothered to do this at all. I started reading his work earlier this year (2001) and quickly became hooked, for all sorts of reasons. Partly because he tackles big and important subjects with such clarity, skill and humour; partly because he will suddenly talk directly from the heart about his experience of higher consciousness; partly because he has set up a philosophical base camp for all sorts of further exploration. Most of all, I recognised my truth (little 't') in what he was saying, as well as 'peeked' glimpses of universal Truth. It wasn't that I was easily won over by his arguments (they aren't very always well presented, or as one critic has put it – "the majority of Wilber's arguments are not so much won as repeated so many times as to seem obviously true"), it is simply that he clearly articulates views and perspectives that I had intuitively felt or sensed but hadn't been able to articulate myself. So reading Wilber was like shifting whole rafts of my semi-conscious or unconscious mind into consciousness. This applies particularly to areas where the prevailing pressures of political correctness (or pluralistic relativism) counter your immediate intuitions. (For example, with most romanticist notions of development – I for one know that I wasn't enlightened when I was a toddler and have since 'fallen from grace' – the popular

romantic notion). Another big reason for reading Wilber is that he provides a very efficient education for philistines like myself; he has read (or scanned) virtually everything in every field he addresses and summarises the key ideas and how they fit together. Finally, although it isn't so much a feature of his more scholarly writing, in other places (e.g. *Grace and Grit*, *One Taste*) Wilber outlines a path to spiritual growth. He provides a map with practical advice for your own integrative practice leading to spiritual development, even if it is sometimes a bit daunting.

The main part of this paper follows the path of Wilber's successive 'Introductions' to his collected works. Through these, his key ideas are gradually introduced and summarised. At the start of each 'Introduction', Wilber sets the context for the work included in that volume, in terms of his development as a thinker, and I have included some of this in most cases. But what are his key ideas? Before we set out, it might help to provide a little list that we can check off against and summarise at the end, before offering a more critical view of his work. It might also help to try and show these ideas spatially in relation to each other (to be added).

- Holons
- Orientating generalisations
- The great chain/nest of being, the perennial philosophy, updated by combining western psychology with eastern mysticism
- A mandalic view of consciousness
- The eyes of flesh, mind and contemplation
- The Pre/Trans fallacy
- The four quadrants view of human knowledge
- Flatland
- Universal integralism
- All quadrant, all levels analysis
- Integrative practice

That is my personal introduction to "Wilber condensed". Below is another, more eloquent introduction to Wilber's approach. One that Wilber himself believes to be an excellent explanation of what he is trying to do. This is Jack Crittenden's foreword to *The Eye of Spirit*.

Wilber's approach is the opposite of eclecticism. He has provided a coherent and consistent vision that seamlessly weaves together truth-claims from such fields as physics and biology; the ecosciences; chaos theory and the systems sciences; medicine, neurophysiology, biochemistry; art, poetry, and aesthetics in general; developmental psychology and a spectrum of psychotherapeutic endeavours, from Freud to Jung to Piaget; the Great Chain theorists from Plato and Plotinus in the West to Shankara and Nagarjuna in the East; the modernists from Descartes and Locke to Kant; the Idealists from Schelling to Hegel; the postmodernists from Foucault and Derrida to Taylor and Habermas; the major hermeneutic tradition, Dilthey to Heidegger to Gadamer; the social systems theorists from Comte and Marx to Parsons and Luhmann; the contemplative and

mystical schools of the great meditative traditions, East and West, in the world's major religious traditions. All of this is just a sampling. Is it any wonder, then, that those who focus narrowly on one particular field might take offence when that field is not presented as the linchpin of the Kosmos?

In other words, to the critics the stakes are enormous, and it is not choosing sides at this point if I suggest that the critics who have focused on their pet points in Wilber's method are attacking a particular tree in the forest of his presentation. But if we look instead at the forest, and if his approach is generally valid, it honours and incorporates more truth than any other system in history.

How so? What is his actual method? In working with any field, Wilber simply backs up to a level of abstraction at which the various conflicting approaches actually agree with one another. Take, for example, the world's great religious traditions: Do they all agree that Jesus is God, No. So we must jettison that. Do they all agree that there is a God? That depends on the meaning of "God". Do they all agree on God, if by "God" we mean a Spirit that is in many *ways unqualifiable*, from the Buddhists' Emptiness to the Jewish mystery of the Divine? Yes, that works as a generalization -what Wilber calls an "orienting generalization" or "sturdy conclusion."

Wilber likewise approaches all the other fields of human knowledge: art to poetry, empiricism to hermeneutics, psychoanalysis to meditation, evolutionary theory to idealism. In every case he assembles a series of sturdy and reliable, not to say irrefutable, orienting generalizations. He is not worried, nor should his readers be, about whether *other* fields would accept the conclusions of any given field; in short, don't worry, for example, if empiricist conclusions do not match religious conclusions. Instead, simply assemble all the orienting conclusions as if each field had incredibly important truths to tell us. This is exactly Wilber's first step in his integrative method - a type of phenomenology of all human knowledge conducted at the level of orienting generalizations. In other words, assemble all of the truths that each field believes it has to offer humanity. For the moment, simply assume they are indeed true.

Wilber then arranges these truths into chains or networks of interlocking conclusions. At this point Wilber veers sharply from a method of mere eclecticism and into a systematic vision. For the second step in Wilber's method is to take all of the truths or orienting generalizations assembled in the first step and then pose this question: What coherent system would in fact *incorporate the greatest member of these truths?*

The system presented in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*, (and clearly and simply summarised in the following pages) is, Wilber claims, the system that incorporates the greatest number of orienting generalizations from the greatest number of fields of human inquiry. Thus, if it holds up, Wilber's vision incorporates and honours, it integrates, more truth than any other system in history.

The general idea is straightforward. It is not which theorist is right and which is wrong. His idea is that everyone is basically right, and he wants to figure out how that can be so. "I don't believe," Wilber says, "that any human mind is capable of 100 percent error. So instead of asking which approach is right and which is wrong, we assume each approach is true but partial, and then try to figure out how to fit these partial truths together, how to integrate them not how to pick one and get rid of the others."

The third step in Wilber's overall approach is the development of a new type of *critical theory*. Once Wilber has the overall scheme that incorporates the greatest number of orienting generalizations, he then uses that scheme to criticize the partiality of narrower approaches, even though he has included the basic truths from those approaches. He criticizes not their truths, but their partial nature.

In his integral vision, therefore, is a clue to both of the extreme reactions to Wilber's work—that is, to the claims that it is some of the most significant work ever published as well as to the chorus of angry indignation and attack. The angry criticisms are coming, almost without exception, from theorists who feel that their own field is the only true field, that their own method is the only valid method. Wilber has not been believably criticized for misunderstanding or misrepresenting any of the fields of knowledge that he includes; he is attacked, instead, for including fields that a particular critic does not believe are important or for going that critic's own ox (no offence to vegetarians). Freudians have never said that Wilber fails to understand Freud; they say that he shouldn't include mysticism. Structuralists and post-structuralists have never said that Wilber fails to understand their fields; they say that he shouldn't include all those nasty other fields. And so forth. The attack always has the same form: How dare you say my field isn't the only true *field!*

Regardless of what is decided, the stakes, as I said, are enormous. I asked Wilber how he himself thought of his work. "I'd like to think of it as one of the first believable world philosophies, a genuine embrace of East and West, North and South." Which is interesting, inasmuch as Huston Smith (author of *The World's Religions* and subject of Bill Moyers's highly acclaimed television series *The Wisdom of Faith*) recently stated, "No one - not even Jung - has done as much as Wilber to open Western psychology to the durable insights of the world's wisdom traditions. Slowly but surely, book by book, Ken Wilber is laying the foundations for a genuine East/West integration".

At the same time, Ken adds, "People shouldn't take it too seriously". It's just orienting generalisations. It leaves all the details to be filled in any way they like." In short, Wilber is not offering a conceptual straightjacket. Indeed, it is just the opposite: "I hope I'm showing that there is more room in the Kosmos than you might have suspected."

There isn't much room, however, for those who want to preserve their fiefdoms by narrowing the Kosmos to one particular field - to wit, their own - while ignoring the truths from other fields. "You can't honour various methods and fields," Wilber adds, "without showing how they fit together. That is how to make a genuine world philosophy." Wilber is showing exactly that "fit". Otherwise, as he says, we have heaps, not wholes, and we aren't really honouring anything.

He ends by adding

"Wilber... is giving us a pattern that connects all of life, of the Kosmos, of Spirit. His work amounts to a guide to the secrets of life - biological, social, cultural and spiritual life. ...he has drawn a detailed map, an integral vision for the modern and post-modern world, a vision that unites the best of ancient wisdom with the best of modern knowledge."

Key

Finally, an explanation of the use of text and graphics:

Major headings are in this text

And section headings are in this text

With sub headings in this text

My own commentary will be in this text **or bold headings to provide structure** and may be in [parentheses when interrupting Wilber text]

Wilber's words from his 'Introductions' and other documents posted on his web site are in this text. Key words or phrases are highlighted

Extracts from Wilber's books, including the foreword above, are presented in boxes.

The Introductions to the Collected Works

The introduction to Volume 1 of *The Collected Works of Ken Wilber*

Wilber's first book

I wrote the *Spectrum of Consciousness* in the winter of 1972. I was twenty-three years old and about half way through graduate school in biochemistry. I wrote it "in my head," as I often do; I began to write it down on paper the next winter. It took me three months to write it out long-hand, whereupon began a hilarious nine months as I tried to get it typed. By 1974 the manuscript was ready to go, and largely through the efforts of Jim Fadiman and especially John White, it finally found a publisher (after being rejected by almost three dozen).

Phases of Wilber's work

In *The Eye of Spirit*, written twenty-five years later, I divided my work into four main periods: period-1 was Romantic; period-2 was evolutionary and developmental; period-3 subdivided development into levels and lines; and period-4 set development in the context of the four quadrants (intentional, behavioural, social, and cultural). Periods 2, 3, and 4 form a fairly coherent sequence, each building on and incorporating its predecessor(s). But period-1, which was steeped in the general Romantic philosophy (which is still by far the most prevalent model of spiritual unfolding), forms a great ground of what I think are both some very good, and some very confused, ideas.

The flaws of romantic philosophy

All of the works in this volume are from period-1, and they represent, in my opinion, about the best you can do with the fundamentally flawed notions of Romanticism. These works were extremely important for me, because in trying to make the Romantic ideas work, I found out precisely why they would not. The general Romantic notion is that men and women start out--both phylogenetically and ontogenetically (in infancy, in the noble savage, in Eden)--immersed in an unconscious union with Spirit, a type of wholeness and oneness with the entire world. But as development or evolution proceeds, we lose that wholeness and are thrust into the world of separation, alienation, suffering, and pain. But once having split from that wholeness, we can regain or recapture it, but now in a conscious, mature form.

The Romantic view has much to recommend it, and I would incorporate many of its essential features in later models. But the crucial problem concerns the nature of the infantile state of "unconscious wholeness with the world." Since infants do not clearly differentiate subject and object, inside and outside, Romantic theorists have taken this as a type of *mystica unio*, a type of nondual union with the entire world. But are infants really one with the whole world? They certainly are not one with the world of language, logic, poetry, art, commerce, economics, or even the Oedipal complex--for none of those have yet emerged. The infant exists in a type of fusion state, no doubt, but it is a fusion merely with the sensorimotor world. None of the higher worlds have yet emerged, and

thus the early "paradisiacal" state is definitely not one with any of those. And this early fusion state certainly does not transcend the self, because there is not yet any self to transcend.

Most common flaw: the pre-trans fallacy

The Romantics, it appeared, were caught in what I would later call "the pre/trans fallacy." The early infantile fusion is not trans-personal, it is pre-personal; not trans-rational, but pre-rational; not supramental, but inframental. Because both *pre*-personal and *trans*-personal are, in their own way, *non*-personal, it is easy to confuse the two. The typical mistake is to try to *reduce* all transpersonal mystical states to prepersonal infantile narcissism, thus dismissing spirituality altogether (e.g., Freud). But the Romantics committed the opposite mistake: they *elevated* prepersonal infantilisms to transpersonal glory (while simultaneously turning Spirit into an infantile display). Reductionism and elevationism are the two sides of the pre/trans fallacy, and the Romantics were the original elevationists.

This was not yet obvious to me as I began writing on these topics. Indeed, the vast majority of the theorists in the field firmly believed, as they still do, that the Romantic model is *the* correct model of spiritual unfolding. Joseph Campbell, Alan Watts, Norman O. Brown, the entire Jungian tradition--all had lined up in favour of the Romantic view. My job, as I saw it, was to correlate and synthesise all of these various theorists, East and West, and thus produce a type of master template of human growth and development. And so I began. The works in this volume (CW1) present the major statements from that period--namely, period-1--where I was grappling with, and trying to free myself from, the great Romantic tradition.

One of the major difficulties with Romanticism is that, because the early "paradisiacal" fusion state is supposed to contain the "whole world" (albeit unconsciously), then each succeeding stage of development must be pictured as a "loss" of something essential that was previously present. Romanticism *must* view the infantile state as possessing *everything* that is important and significant (after all, if enlightenment is a *recapturing* of the infantile state, that state must possess *all* good things!), and therefore Romanticism *must* view subsequent development as a series of painful, tragic loses. Actually trying to make this scheme work verges on the preposterous (and hilarious), as I was soon to discover.

Introduction to the Second Volume of *The Collected Works of Ken Wilber*

Wilber-2, a basic developmental approach

This volume (CW2) contains the major publications of that period of my work I have called phase-2. Phase-1 was Romantic, marked by an overall belief that the dawn state of humans--both ontogenetically in the child and phylogenetically in primal humans--was a type of slumber in Paradise, in Eden, in a unified state or ground of being, from which we were alienated in the process of growing up, and to which we therefore should return: the

original "paradise" must be *recaptured* in some form for our salvation. The insuperable difficulties with that view led me to abandon a pure Romanticism for a more evolutionary or developmental view (phase-2), which replaced a "recaptured goodness" model with a "growth to goodness" view.

On god/goddess and male/female dichotomies

- on ascending (transcendental, heaven) and descending (immanent, earth) paths...

In *Up from Eden* I also focused on differentiating between average-mode or *exoteric* religious symbols (stemming from the magic, mythic, or mental levels) and advanced-mode or *esoteric* religious symbols (stemming from the psychic, subtle, or causal levels). In particular, I focused on the difference between the **Great Mother** (originating largely in prepersonal structures) and the **Great Goddess** (originating largely in transpersonal ones). Likewise with **God the Father** as a mythic parental figure (prepersonal) and as Purusha or **Consciousness** (transpersonal).

Those insights are still quite valid, in my opinion, but I would simply add, as I did in a footnote to the original text, that there are other equally important meanings of the Feminine and Masculine Faces of Spirit. As explained in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* and *A Brief History of Everything*, the most comprehensive meaning of "God" and "Goddess" is simply as **Ascent and Descent, Eros and Agape, wisdom and compassion, consciousness (purusha) and manifestation (prakriti), transcendence and immanence**. Neither God nor Goddess is more important, higher, deeper, or better. Rather, each covers half of the **eternal cycle of reflux and efflux**, reaching higher in wisdom and reaching deeper in compassion, the Eros and Agape of Spirit's play in the world.

The nature of religious experience

Those **individuals, for example, who have a strong religious experience, satori, or enlightenment**, almost always report that they are simply **rediscovering something that they once knew (in eternity) but forgot (in time)**. Profound mystical experience always carries the sense of "coming home," and never the sense of stumbling onto something completely unknown. Plato, in that regard, was quite right: this type of spiritual knowledge is a remembering, not an inventing. And we remember our higher states because they are already there, as potentials, awaiting rediscovery (a rediscovery of something we possessed, not in childhood, but in the depth of the timeless moment). In this specific sense, then, **we absolutely need a concept of involution in order to be true to the phenomenological evidence of spiritual experience**.

Now, of course, you are perfectly free to believe in evolution and reject the notion of involution. I find that an incoherent position; nonetheless, you can still embrace everything in the following pages about the evolution of culture and consciousness, and reject or remain agnostic on involution. But the notion of a prior involutory force does much to help with the otherwise impenetrable puzzles of Darwinian evolution, which has tried, ever-so-unsuccessfully, to explain why dirt would get right up and eventually start writing poetry. But the notion of evolution as Eros, or Spirit-in-action, performing, as Whitehead put it, throughout the world by gentle persuasion toward love, goes a long way to explaining the **inexorable unfolding from matter to bodies to minds to souls to Spirit's own Self-recognition**. **Eros, or Spirit-in-action, is a rubber band around your neck and mine, pulling us all back home**.

On Piaget's cognitive stages of development

Piaget's main cognitive stages (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational), are ones that I still use, in a very general way, but *only* for the cognitive line of development, and then only for the lower half or so of the spectrum of consciousness (beyond formal operational is centauric vision-logic, psychic vision, subtle archetype, causal gnosis, and nondual sahaja). Piaget's major misjudgement, most critics now agree, was attempting to subsume all developmental lines within the cognitive line alone, which simply does not allow for the empirical fact that different lines show sometimes pronounced differences in rate of development and dynamic of unfolding (see *The Eye of Spirit*). But Piaget's brilliance in clinically investigating--and theoretically formulating, within a Hegelian/Kantian scheme--the development of cognitive worldviews, moral sense, space and time construction, levels of self sense, and so on--all within a largely non-reductionistic, holistic, constructivist, developmental/evolutionary, self-organizing paradigm--was a monumental contribution.

Introduction to the third volume of *The Collected Works of Ken Wilber*

Wilber's phases summarised

I have, for convenience, divided my overall work into four general phases.

Phase-1 was Romantic (a "recaptured-goodness" model), which posited a spectrum of consciousness ranging from subconscious to self-conscious to superconscious (or id to ego to God), with the higher stages viewed as a return to, and recapture of, original but lost potentials.

Phase-2 was more specifically evolutionary or developmental (a "growth-to-goodness" model), with the spectrum of consciousness unfolding in developmental stages or levels.

Phase-3 added developmental lines to those developmental levels--that is, numerous different developmental lines (such as cognitive, conative, affective, moral, psychological, spiritual, etc.) proceeding in a relatively independent manner through the basic levels of the overall spectrum of consciousness.

Phase-4 added the idea of the four quadrants--the subjective (intentional), objective (behavioral), intersubjective (cultural), and interobjective (social) dimensions--of each of those levels and lines, with the result being, or at least attempting to be, a comprehensive or integral philosophy.

The PFT

The pre/trans fallacy simply says: in any recognised developmental sequence, where development proceeds from pre-x to x to trans-x, the pre states and the trans states, because they are both non-x states, tend to be confused and equated, simply because they appear, at first glance, to be so similar. Prerational and transrational are both nonrational;

preconventional and postconventional are both nonconventional; prepersonal and transpersonal are both nonpersonal, and so on. And once we confuse pre and trans, then one of two unfortunate things tends to happen: we either **reduce** transrational, spiritual, superconscious states to prerational, infantile, oceanic fusion (as did Freud); or we elevate infantile, childish, prerational states to transcendental, transrational, transpersonal glory (as the Romantics often did). We reduce trans to pre, or we **elevate** pre to trans. Reductionism is well-understood; elevationism was the great province of the Romantics.

The Romantics, *correctly* realising that Spirit is beyond mere rationality, and *correctly* realising that the rational-ego stands outside of, and even resists, nondual Spiritual consciousness, then made the classic elevationist PTF: they assumed the prehistorical slumber in Paradise was the primal whole out of which humanity fell, and back to which humanity must return, in order to usher in a transrational heaven. And that deeply *regressive* view of human potentials would set the stage for all of the well-known downsides, even horrors, of Romanticism: an obsession with self and self-feelings (regressing from worldcentric to sociocentric to egocentric), hedonistic amorality (regressing from postconventional compassion to conventional care to preconventional impulse)--all of which claimed to be "beyond reason," whereas most of it was simply beneath it.

Eye of flesh, mind and contemplation

The essay "Eye to Eye," which opens the book named after it, uses the simple three levels of consciousness:

- the eye of flesh
- the eye of mind, and
- the eye of contemplation

and suggests how even that simple scheme can shed considerable light on many recalcitrant philosophical and psychological dilemmas. "The Problem of Proof" carries this discussion forward, and presents what amounts to a full-spectrum empiricism: sensory experience, mental experience, and spiritual experience, all of which are equally experiential, and thus all of which can be carefully validated using evidence that is open to confirmation or rejection by a community of the adequate.

The different purposes of religion

...at the very least, we need to distinguish between **horizontal legitimacy** (or how well a given religion provides meaning, integration, and value on a particular level) and **vertical authenticity** (or how well a given religion promotes transformation to higher levels altogether).

“it is common to distinguish between "religion" (authoritarian and institutional forms) and "spirituality" (personal beliefs and experiences). In some ways that is a useful distinction, but in many ways it obscures. There are very profound personal/mystical branches of most forms of institutional religions; in fact, in many ways religion is just institutionalized spirituality (e.g., if New-Age spirituality became influential and established, it would eventually be a religion). I prefer to speak instead of narrow and broad conceptions of religion/spirituality (or shallow and deep, depending on the metaphor).

Waves and Streams of Consciousness

From One Taste, The Journals of Ken Wilber

Sunday, November 16

How development takes place...

Wilber quotes Donald Rothberg's descriptions of the messy, irregular and unique way that development unfolds for an individual, and then outlines his 'Wilber-3' model in more detail:

"Development doesn't somehow proceed in some simple way through a series of a few comprehensive stages which unify all aspects of growth.... The [different] developmental lines may be in tension with each other at times, and some of them do not show evidence, Wilber believes, of coherent stages.... There might be a high level of development cognitively, a medium level interpersonally or morally, and a low level emotionally. These disparities of development seem especially conditioned by general cultural values and styles." In other words, through the *levels* or waves of the spectrum of consciousness, various developmental *lines* or streams proceed relatively independently, so that you can be at a high level of development in some lines, medium in others, and low in still others.

Wilber-3 identifies over a dozen separate developmental lines, such as cognitive, moral, affective, love, concern, attention, self-identity, defences, interpersonal, artistic, and kinesthetic--some of which themselves are spiritual, and some of whose higher stages are spiritual--which allows us to track these various overlapping developments, all of them organized and co-ordinated by the self.

Here is a simple way to picture wilber-3, which involves the integration of the levels of the Great Chain with various developmental lines moving through those levels (or streams through those waves). Let's use a simple version of the Great Chain, with only four levels (body, mind, soul, and spirit); let's use only five lines (there are almost two dozen); and let's make spirituality both the highest development in each line and a separate line of its own, to cover both common definitions (see figure 5).

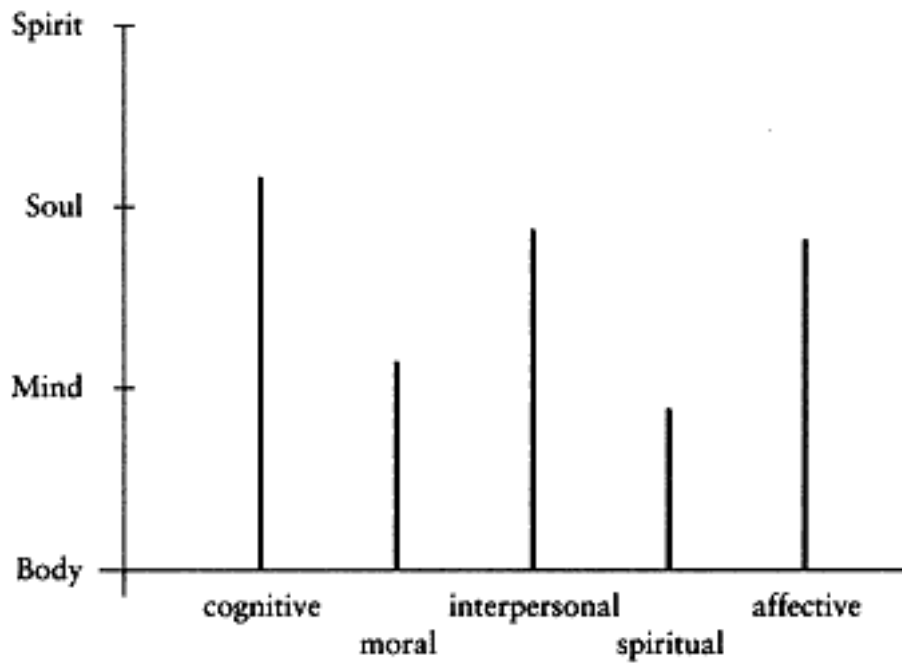


Figure 5. The Integral Psychograph

Since "hierarchy" upsets many people, let's also draw that hierarchy in the way that it is actually defined, namely, as a holarchy (see figure 6). This is the identical concept, but some people are more comfortable with nice feminine circles (I prefer them myself, because they so clearly show the "transcend and include" nature of the Great Nest of Being).

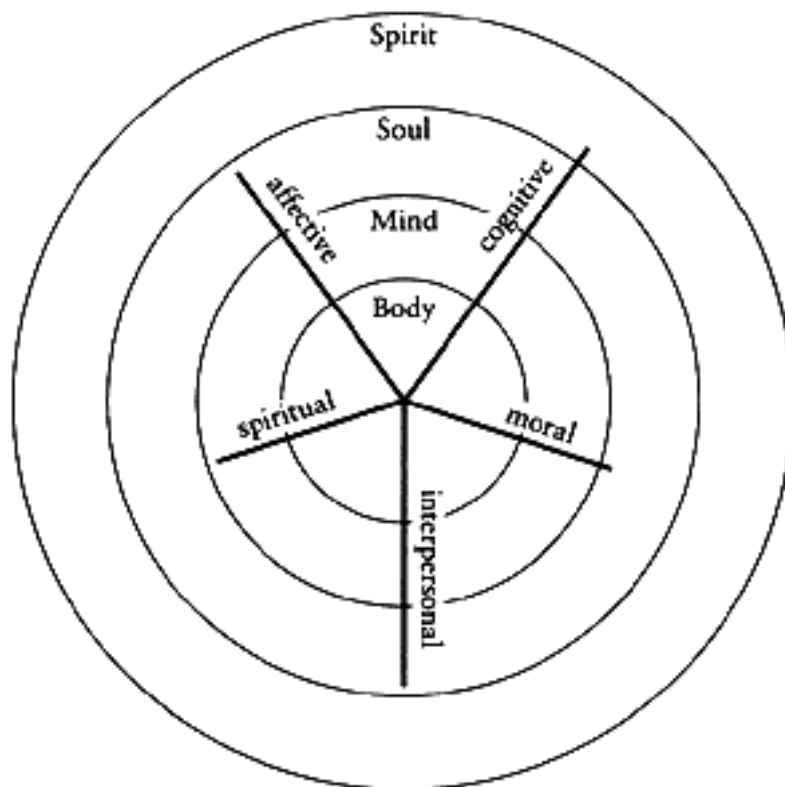


Figure 6. The Integral Psychograph as a Holarchy

The point of both of those diagrams--what I call an "integral psychograph"--is that you can track the different developmental lines (or streams) as they move through the various levels (or waves) of the Great Nest. You can be at a higher, transpersonal, or "spiritual" level in several lines, and at a lower, personal, or "psychological" level in others, so that both spiritual and psychological development overlap--and the separate spiritual line(s) can be relatively high or low as well.

All of these streams and waves are navigated by the self (or the self system), which has to balance all of them and find some sort of harmony in the midst of this melange. Moreover, something can go wrong in any stream at any of its waves (or stages), and therefore we can map various types of pathologies wherever they occur in the psychograph--different types of pathologies occur at different levels or waves in each of the lines.

Even though we can say, based on massive evidence (clinical, phenomenological, and contemplative), that many of these developmental streams proceed through the waves in a stage-like fashion, nonetheless overall development does not proceed in a specific, stage-like manner, simply because the self is an amalgam of all the various lines, and the possible number of permutations and combinations of those is virtually infinite. Overall individual growth, in other words, follows no set sequence whatsoever.

Finally, as suggested in the nested diagram (figure 11-2), because each senior dimension transcends but includes (or nests) the junior dimension, to be at a higher wave does not mean the lower waves are left behind. This is not (and never has been) based on a ladder, but on the model of: atoms, molecules, cells, and organisms, with each senior level enfolding or enveloping the junior--as Plotinus put it, a development that is envelopment. So even at a higher level, "lower" work is still occurring simultaneously--cells still have molecules, Buddhas still have to eat.

Weaknesses of the traditional Great Chain of being model (Wilber-2)

Wilber then compares Wilber-3 with the simpler Wilber-2 model, making a crucial distinction between levels of being and sense of self. Then he describes how the development and presence of the frontal being (ego-mind), deeper psychic (soul) and the Witness (spirit) overlap...

That's wilber-3 in a nutshell. While I'm on that topic, I'll give one last example of why I believe that this type of wilber-3 model is an improvement on the traditional Great Chain model (or Wilber-2), which contains the various levels of Being but does not fully understand how and why different lines develop through those levels. Huston Smith, we have seen, accurately summarises the traditional Great Chain as body, mind, soul, and spirit (correlative with realms he calls terrestrial, intermediate, celestial, and infinite). That model is fine as far as it goes, but the trouble is, it starts to fall apart under further scrutiny, and it often collapses under the avalanche of modern psychological research.

To begin with, the traditional Great Chain tends to confuse the levels of Being and the types of self-sense associated with each level. For example, mind is a level of the Great Chain, but the ego is the self generated when consciousness identifies with that level (i.e., identifies with mind). The subtle is a level of the Great Chain, the soul is the self

generated when consciousness identifies with the subtle. The causal/spirit is a level in the Great Chain, the True Self is the "self" associated with that level, and so on. So the sequence of levels in the Great Chain should be body, mind, subtle, and causal/spirit, with the correlative self stages of body-ego, ego, soul, and Self--to use the very simplified version. Although I often use the traditional terminology (body, mind, soul, spirit), I always have in mind the difference between the actual levels (body, mind, subtle, causal) and the self at those levels (body-ego, ego, soul, Self).

[So, to summarise...

<i>Level of being</i>	<i>Types of self sense associated at each level</i>	
Body	<->	Body-ego
Mind	<->	Ego
Subtle	<->	Soul
Causal/Spirit	<->	True Self/witness]

Here is where some of these distinctions start to pay off (and the usefulness of the move from Wilber-2 to Wilber-3 becomes more obvious). The traditions generally maintain that men and women have two major personality systems, as it were: the frontal and the deeper psychic. The traditional Great Chain theorists (and Wilber-2) would simply say that the frontal is the self associated with the body and mind, and the deeper psychic is associated with the soul, which would indeed be a type of ladder arrangement. But the frontal and the deeper psychic seem much more flexible than that; they seem to be, not different levels, but separate lines, of development, so that their development occurs alongside of, not on top of, each other. We can graph this as shown in figure 7 (for which I have reverted to a more accurate 6 levels).

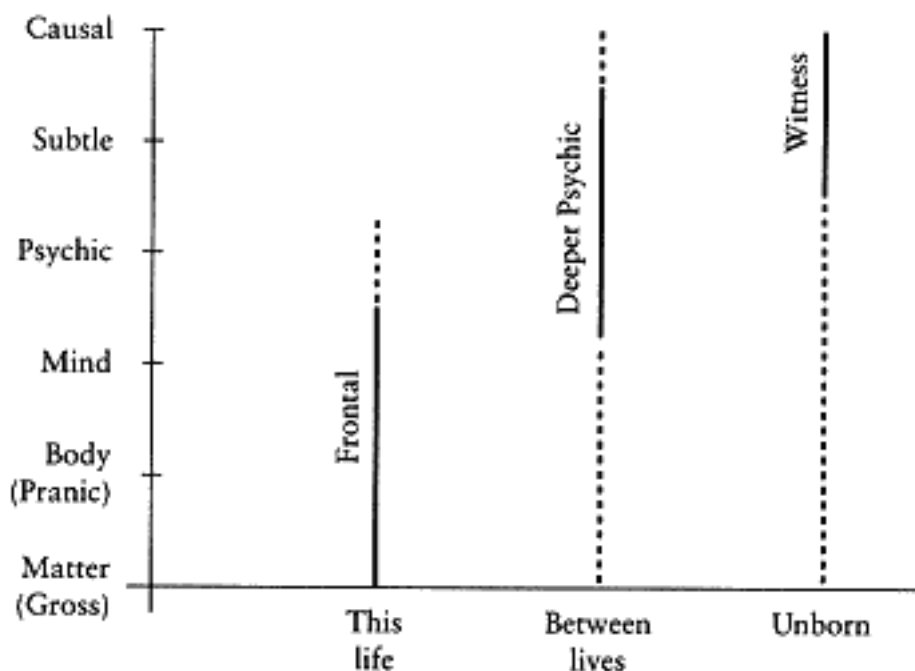


Figure 7. The Development of the Frontal (or Ego), the Deeper Psychic (or Soul), and the Witness (or Self)

Ego...

The frontal being is the gross-oriented personality--in the widest sense, what we mean by "ego," or the personality that is oriented outwardly to the sensorimotor world. The frontal being begins its developmental line or stream with material conception, continues through the emotional-sexual or pranic stages, into the mental stages, and fades out at the psychic. Frontal development represents the evolution of the self (or self-identity) through the lower-to-intermediate waves of the Great Nest of Being.

Soul or deeper psychic...

According to the traditions, while the frontal personality is that which develops in this life, the deeper psychic is that which develops between lives. It is, in the very widest sense, what we mean by the word "soul." At any rate, the deeper psychic is said to be present sometime from conception to mid-term; in fact, some research suggests that prenatal, perinatal, and neonatal memories do in fact exist, and since these cannot be carried by the frontal personality and the gross brain (since they have not developed), the traditions would maintain that these memories are being carried by the deeper psychic being and are later lost as frontal development gets under way and submerges the early psychic being. Likewise, past-life memories, if they are genuine, would be carried by the deeper psychic. Nonetheless, it is not necessary to believe in either prenatal memory or past lives in order to acknowledge the deeper psychic self, which is primarily defined by its access to higher consciousness, not by its access to past lives.

Although the deeper psychic is present from birth (or mid-prenatal), it plays a modest role until the necessary frontal development finishes its task of orienting (and adapting) consciousness to the gross realm. As the frontal personality begins to fade, the deeper psychic being comes increasingly to the fore. Just as the frontal personality orients consciousness to the gross realm, the deeper psychic orients consciousness to the subtle realm. And, as we saw, the self associated with the subtle realm is the "soul," which is why "deeper psychic" and "soul" are generally synonymous. But the deeper psychic, even though its roots are in the subtle realm per se, nonetheless has a development that reaches down to some of the earliest stages, culminates in the subtle, and disappears at the causal.

Already we can begin to see the advantage of making the frontal and the deeper psychic not discrete levels but overlapping lines; not different waves but often parallel streams. We can go one step further and note that there is a last major "personality," that of the Self, associated with the causal, but also, like the others, having developments that reach down into earlier stages. In other words, we can usefully treat the Self as a separate line or stream of development, even though its basic orientation is the causal.

And witness...

The Self, or the transpersonal Witness, is not--like the ego or the soul--a "personality," since it has no specific characteristics whatsoever (it is pure Emptiness and the great Unborn), except for the fact that it is an Emptiness still separate from Form, a Witness still divorced from that which is witnessed. As such, the Self or Witness is the seat of attention, the root of the separate-self sense, and the home of the last and subtlest duality, namely, that between the Seer and the seen. It is both the highest Self, and the final barrier, to nondual One Taste.

Nonetheless, the power of Witnessing is the power of liberation from all lower domains, and the Witness itself is present, even if latently, at all previous stages. Each developmental stage "transcends and includes" its predecessor, and the "transcend" aspect, in every case, is the power of the higher to be aware of the lower (the soul is aware of the mind, which is aware of the body, which is aware of matter). And in each case, the "is aware of" is simply the power of the Witness shining through at that stage.

Although the Witness is present as the power of transcendental growth at every stage, it comes to its own fruition in the causal realm. As the ego orients consciousness to the gross, and the soul orients consciousness to the subtle, the Self orients consciousness to the causal. While all of them have their root dispositions in specific realms or waves of the Great Nest, they also have their own lines or streams of development, so they often overlap each other, as indicated in figure 11-3. And this is what I think so many mediation teachers and transpersonal therapists see in themselves and their clients, namely, that ego and soul and Spirit can in many ways coexist and develop together, because they are relatively separate streams flowing through the waves in the Great Nest of Being. And there can be, on occasion, rather uneven development in between these streams.

Big egos and enlightenment do go...

We all know fairly enlightened teachers (alive to the Unborn) who nonetheless still have "big egos," in the sense of strong, forceful, powerful personalities. But the presence of the ego is not a problem; it all depends upon whether the person is also alive to higher and deeper dimensions. As Hubert Benoit said, it is not the identification with the ego that is the problem, but the exclusive nature of that identification. When our self-identity expands beyond the ego, into the deeper psychic, then even into the Unborn and One Taste, the ego is simply taken up and subsumed in a grander identity. But the ego itself remains as the functional self in the gross realm, and it might even appropriately be intensified and made more powerful, simply because it is now plugged into the entire Kosmos. Many of the great enlightened teachers had a big ego, a big deeper psychic, and a very big Self, all at once, simply because these are the three functional vehicles of the gross, subtle, and causal domains, and all three vehicles were appropriately intensified in the great awakened ones.

However, development follows a path within each line...

Now--and this is what tends to confuse people--although the various developmental lines often overlap each other, and in no specific sequence, the individual lines or streams themselves usually have their own invariant, universal, developmental sequence -- namely, to the extent that they unfold into consciousness, they must negotiate the levels or waves in the Great Nest, and in an order that is given by Nest itself. For example, we have substantial evidence that cognition, morals, affects, kinesthetic skills, and interpersonal capacity, to name a few, all develop through preconventional, conventional, and postconventional waves (see Integral Psychology for extensive references). In other words, the various streams seem to move through the levels in the Great Nest in a fashion that is determined by the universal Great Nest itself. Although all sorts of regressions and temporary leaps forward are possible, the empirical fact remains as Aurobindo said: individual streams obey the law of a successive unfolding (undulating through the waves of the Great Nest itself).

At the same time, I repeat: even though all developmental lines (including the frontal, the deeper psychic, and the capacity for witnessing) follow their own stages, the overall mixture of lines does not. The "overall self" is a juggling of some two dozen different developmental lines, and thus each individual's unfolding will thus be a radically unique affair.

[Note: My overall psychological model consists of waves, streams, self, states, and realms. The above entry discusses mostly waves and streams. For a more complete discussion, including altered states of consciousness and realms of consciousness, see Integral Psychology, forthcoming in volume 4 of the Collected Works.]

Introduction to the fourth volume 4 of the Collected Works

Initial implications and applications of an evolutionary development approach...

The works in this volume all explore the implications of an evolutionary view of the Kosmos, from matter to mind to spirit. What would psychology, sociology, cultural studies, philosophy, and spirituality look like if we adopted an evolutionary or developmental approach? What fundamental insights might we gain? What recalcitrant dilemmas might be softened? What intractable problems might begin to yield? I hasten to add that evolution or development by no means covers the whole story of the Kosmos; it is simply a very important part of the whole story, a part that, when the following works were originally written, was alarmingly being ignored.

Development of worldviews

[This is rather technical/dense but provides a generic approach to worldviews which is an interesting counter-balance to specific systems of worldviews to be introduced later – feel free to skip this]

Psychologists have been able to determine the general stages through which worldviews develop (including in different cultures and subcultures). The work of Deirdre Kramer suggests that the worldviews of men and women progress through these stages:

Preformism--This is a simple lack of differentiation.

Formism/mechanism--Features are differentiated but not integrated; static forms therefore predominate and are related by gross mechanistic generalizations.

Static relativism/contextualism--This involves a rejection of static forms and the beginning of relativity and contextualism. When this view matures, full *systems* come into view, and the next stage emerges:

Static systems--At this stage, reports Kramer, the individual "constructs systems of self, other, and interpersonal relationships that subsume apparent contradictions into more integrated, coherent structures [which include] the integration of consistencies and inconsistencies into systems." But these structures and systems are still *static*: "While the

concepts may feature holism, they are generally static--they do not stress the dynamic, changing, actively constructed nature of such systems." When the *dynamic* nature of systems is grasped, the next stage emerges:

Dynamic relativism/contextualism--This stage is marked by "an awareness that social-cognitive systems are culturally and historically bound." In other words, this is a contextual/constructivist stance, with *relativism* and *pluralism* defining all frames of reference.

But precisely because there is as yet no way to interrelate these pluralistic contexts--since each remains "incommensurate" with the others (or put still another way: since there is no "meta-narrative" that mutually interrelates all the different contexts)--this worldview is ultimately fragmented and chaotic: "Prediction is impossible, as all people and events are unique and continually change in unsystematic ways. Consequently, contradiction runs rampant. There is no order to such a universe; any order imposed externally or via one's cognitive framework." Because multiple contexts are grasped, but because *the rich networks of interconnections between multiple contexts is not grasped*, this worldview remains disjointed and fragmented. However, when the relationships between multiple contexts are discovered, the next worldview begins to emerge:

Dynamic dialecticism--Here all multiple contexts are seen to be mutually interactive over both space and time, constituting an organic order that emerges from the nonpredictable play of its parts. Each whole is a part of other wholes indefinitely, related by tension, resolution, and recurrence. "In an organicist/dialectical worldview, all phenomena are in continual movement or activity, characterised by the ongoing tension between events, their [limitation], and the resolution of that [limitation] into momentary structures that soon begin to create new tensions, initiating the cycle again. The dialectical whole (i.e., the momentary structures) is characterised by emergence (i.e., the whole redefines and transcends its constitutive elements) and reciprocity (i.e., a change in any one element in a system influences and in turn is influenced by a change in other parts of the system). Thus, in a dialectical system, all elements are interrelated and reflections of the same underlying, essential unity."

What particularly separates this worldview (dynamic/developmental dialecticism) from its predecessor (dynamic relativism/contextualism) is its *increased capacity to hold multiple contexts in mind*, across both space and time: "In a dialectical system there is a relationship among such contexts. In a contextualist system there is no such relationship.... A contextual perspective would contend that the opposing value systems of two cultures or two generations are unrelated"--because they are supposedly incommensurable and purely relativistic. But a further growth of consciousness allows the recognition of deeper and wider connections, which discloses, among other things, a *directionality* to the changes that were thought to be random at the preceding level of development: "At the dynamic dialectical level, perfect prediction is also impossible, because of the emergent quality of evolving structures. However, there is nevertheless a direction to such change, and a relationship among contrasting [pluralistic and contextual] systems." This directionality and relationship is dynamic, dialectical, developmental, and evolutionary. "Change occurs through evolution, where conflicts are resolved and redefined by newer, more encompassing solutions which yield new conflicts, and so on. People, groups and society naturally evolve through different phases. The whole of the organisation transcends and gives meaning to parts."

Views on pathology and psychotherapy

I summarised the Great Nest as possessing nine basic waves of consciousness (sensorimotor, phantasmic-emotional, rep-mind, rule/role mind, formal-reflexive, vision-logic, psychic, subtle, and causal/nondual), and therefore I outlined the *nine correlative fulcrums* that the self goes through in a complete evolution or development through the entire Great Nest.

Each time the self steps up to a new and higher sphere in the Great Nest of Being, it can do so in a relatively *healthy* fashion--which means it smoothly differentiates and integrates the elements of that level--or in a relatively *pathological* fashion--which means it either *fails to differentiate* (and thus remains in fusion/fixation/arrest) or it *fails to integrate* (which results in repression, alienation, fragmentation). Each wave of the Great Nest has a qualitatively different architecture, and thus each fulcrum (and pathology) likewise has a qualitatively different structure. I therefore outlined *nine levels of pathology* (psychosis, borderline, neurosis, script, identity, existential, psychic, subtle, causal), and suggested the correlative *treatment modalities* that seem to best address these different waves of pathology (pacification, structure building, uncovering, cognitive, introspection, existential, the path of yogis, saints, and sages).

Needless to say, these were meant only as the most general of generalizations, useful insofar as they alert us to the very different contours of the various waves in the Great Nest of Being, and the correlatively different fulcrums of the self's journey through those waves. All too often, one particular psychotherapeutic approach (psychoanalysis, Gestalt, neuro-linguistic programming, holotropic breathwork, transactional analysis, biological psychiatry, etc.) is used for *all* types of psychopathologies, often with unfortunate results. Rather, the one thing we learn from the existence of the multiple waves of the spectrum of consciousness is just how many different dimensions of existence there are, and how a sensitivity to these multiple dimensions *demand a multiplicity of treatment modalities*.

Introduction to Volume 5 of the *Collected Works* Grace And Grit

Wilber's writing gets personal...

In terms of the *Collected Works*, there was a decade-long hiatus in my theoretical writing, stretching from *Transformations of Consciousness* (written in 1984) to *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (written in 1993). *Grace and Grit* tells the story of that hiatus, which, although it was an absence of writing, was an abundance of blessings. And anguish. It is the story of perhaps the most remarkable person I have ever known, Terry Killam, soon to become Treya Killam Wilber.

As I write this, it has been ten years since Treya's death. I am immeasurably more, and immeasurably less, because of her presence. Immeasurably more, for having known her; immeasurably less, for having lost her. But then, perhaps every event in life is like that: filling you up and emptying you out, all at the same time. It is just that, it is oh-so-rare that such a one as Treya moves among us, and thus the joy, and the pain, are all so intensely amplified.

Introduction to Volume 6 of the *Collected Works* The Revised, Second Edition of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*

The Genesis of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*

Sex, Ecology, Spirituality was the first theoretical book I had written in almost ten years, following the events described in *Grace and Grit*. The previous book, *Transformations of Consciousness* (with Jack Engler and Daniel P. Brown), was completed in 1984; I wrote *Grace and Grit* in 1991; and then I settled down to finally write a textbook of transpersonal psychology that I had been planning on doing for several years. I was calling that textbook *System, Self, and Structure*, but somehow it never seemed to get written. Determined to do so, I sat down and begin transcribing the two-volume work, whereupon I realised, with a shock, that four of the words I used in the very first paragraph were no longer allowed in academic discourse (development, hierarchy, transcendental, universal). This, needless to say, put a considerable cramp in my attempt to write this book, and poor *System, Self, and Structure* was, yet again, shelved. (I recently brought out an abridged version of it with the title *Integral Psychology*, in volume 4 of the *Collected Works*).

Drawbacks and benefits of postmodernism and pluralistic relativism

And how Wilber came to write *Sex, Ecology and Spirituality* as an attempt to create an integral philosophy to transcend it...

What had happened in my ten-year writing hiatus, and to which I had paid insufficient attention, is that extreme postmodernism had rather completely invaded academia in general and cultural studies in particular--even the alternative colleges and institutes were speaking postmodernism with an authoritarian thunder. The politically correct were policing the types of serious discourse that could, and could not, be uttered in academe. Pluralistic relativism was the only acceptable worldview. It claimed that all truth is culturally situated (except its own truth, which is true for all cultures); it claimed there are no transcendental truths (except its own pronouncements, which transcend specific contexts); it claimed that all hierarchies or value rankings are oppressive and marginalising (except its own value ranking, which is superior to the alternatives); it claimed that there are no universal truths (except its own pluralism, which is universally true for all peoples).

The downsides of extreme postmodernism and pluralistic relativism are now well-known and widely acknowledged, but at the time I was trying to write *System, Self, and Structure*, they were thought to be gospel and were as religiously embraced, making any sort of developmental and transcendental studies anathema. I therefore set *System, Self, and Structure* aside, and began to ponder the best way to proceed, feeling rather like a salmon who had first to swim upstream in order to have any fun at all.

But I have been dwelling merely on the downsides of postmodernism and pluralistic relativism. Their positive benefits are equally numerous and far-reaching, and deserve a hearing as well. As I have tried to suggest in several places (e.g., *The Marriage of Sense and Soul*, *Integral Psychology*, the Introduction to volume 4 of the *Collected Works*), pluralistic relativism is actually a very high developmental achievement, stemming from

the postformal levels of consciousness, which disclose a series of very important truths. ("Postformal" means the cognitive stages lying immediately beyond linear rationality or formal operational thinking. Thus, cognitive development proceeds from sensorimotor to preoperational to concrete operational to formal operational to postformal cognition, to possibly higher modes [see below]. I also refer to postformal cognition as *network-logic* or *vision-logic*--Gebser called it *integral-aperspectival*--and it is vision-logic that drives the best of postmodernism).

As I suggested in those publications, the truths of postmodernism include constructivism (the world is not just a perception but an interpretation); contextualism (all truths are context-dependent, and contexts are boundless); and integral-aperspectivism (no context is finally privileged, so an integral view must include multiple perspectives; pluralism; multiculturalism). All of those important truths can be derived from the beginning stages of postformal vision-logic, and postmodernism at its best is an elucidation of their profound importance.

In particular, the previous stages of concrete operational (which supports a worldview called "mythic-membership") and formal operational (which supports a worldview called "universal formalism") have inherent limitations and weaknesses in them, and these limitations, when pressed into social action, produce various types of rigid social hierarchies, mechanistic worldviews that ignore local color, and universalistic pronouncements about human beings that violate the rich differences between cultures, peoples, and places. But once consciousness evolves from formal to postformal--and thus evolves from universal formalism to pluralistic relativism--these multiple contexts and pluralistic tapestries come jumping to the fore, and postmodernism has spent much of the last two decades attempting to *deconstruct* the rigid hierarchies, formalisms, and oppressive schemes that are inherent in the preformal-to-formal stages of consciousness evolution.

But pluralistic relativism is not itself the highest stage of development, as numerous studies have consistently shown (see *Integral Psychology*). When vision-logic matures into its middle and late phases, pluralistic relativism increasingly gives way to more holistic modes of awareness, which begin to weave the pluralistic voices together into beautiful tapestries of integral intent. **Pluralistic relativism gives way to *universal integralism*.** Where pluralism frees the many different voices and multiple contexts, universal integralism begins to bring them together into a harmonized chorus. (Universal integralism thus stands on the brink of even higher developments, which directly disclose the transpersonal and spiritual realms--developments wherein the postformal mental gives way to the postmental or supramental altogether).

But this leaves pluralistic relativism in a difficult position. Having heroically developed beyond a rigid universal formalism, it became suspicious of any universals at all, and thus it tended to fight the emergence of universal integralism with the same ferocity that it deconstructed all previous systems. It turned its critical guns not just on pre-pluralistic stages (which was appropriate), but also on post-pluralistic stages (which was disastrous). Deconstructive postmodernism thus began to actively fight any higher stages of growth, often turning academia into a charnel ground of deconstructive fury. Little new was created; past glories were simply torn down. Little novel was constructed; previous constructions were merely deconstructed. Few new buildings were erected; old ones were simply blown up. Postmodernism often degenerated into the nihilism and narcissism for

which it is now so well-known, and the vacant haunted hollow eyes of professional academia, peering through the smoking ruins, told the tale most sadly.

One thing was very clear to me, as I struggled with how best to proceed in an intellectual climate dedicated to deconstructing anything that crossed its path: I would have to back up and start at the beginning, and try to create a vocabulary for a more constructive philosophy. Beyond pluralistic relativism is universal integralism; I therefore sought to outline a philosophy of universal integralism.

Put differently, I sought a world philosophy. I sought an *integral* philosophy, one that would believably weave together the many pluralistic contexts of science, morals, aesthetics, Eastern as well as Western philosophy, and the world's great wisdom traditions. Not on the level of details--that is finitely impossible; but on the level of orienting generalizations: a way to suggest that the world really is one, undivided, whole, and related to itself in every way: a holistic philosophy for a holistic Kosmos: a world philosophy, an integral philosophy.

Three years later, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* was the result.

The four quadrants within an integral perspective

It soon became obvious that the various hierarchies fall into four major classes (what I would call the four quadrants); that some of the hierarchies are referring to individuals, some to collectives; some are about exterior realities, some are about interior ones, but they all fit together seamlessly; the ingredients of these hierarchies are *holons*, wholes that are parts of other wholes (e.g., a whole atom is part of a whole molecule, which is part of a whole cell, which is part of a whole organism, and so on); and therefore the correct word for hierarchy is actually *holarchy*. The Kosmos is a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely, expressing greater and greater holistic embrace--holarchies of holons everywhere!--which is why *everybody* had their own value holarchy, and why, in the end, all of these holarchies intermesh and fit perfectly with all the others.

The universe is composed of holons, all the way up, all the way down. And with that, much of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* began to write itself.

If the first part of the book attempts to outline a universal integralism--a view of the *holonic Kosmos* from subconscious to self-conscious to superconscious--the second part of the book attempts to explain why this holistic Kosmos is so often ignored or denied. If the universe really is a pattern of mutually interrelated patterns and processes--holarchies of holons--why do so few disciplines acknowledge this fact (apart from their own narrow specialties)? If the Kosmos is *not* holistic, not integral, not holonic--if it is a fragmented and jumbled affair, with no common contexts or linkings or joinings or communions--then fine, the world is the jumbled mess the various specialties take it to be. But if the world is holistic and holonic, then why do not more people see this? And why do many academic specialties actively deny it? If the world is whole, why do so many people see it as broken? And why, in a sense, *is* the world broken, fragmented, alienated, divided?

The second part of the book therefore looks at that which prevents us from seeing the holistic Kosmos. It looks at what I call *flatland* (scientific materialism).

Sex, Ecology, Spirituality - Introduction

IT IS FLAT OUT strange that something – that *anything* – is happening at all. There was nothing, then a Big Bang, then here we all are. This is extremely weird.

To Schelling's burning question, “Why is there something rather than nothing?,” there have always been two general answers. The first might be called the philosophy of “oops.” The universe just occurs, there is nothing behind it, it's all ultimately accidental or random, it just is, 'It just happens - oops! The philosophy of oops, no matter how sophisticated and adult it may on occasion appear - its modern names and numbers are legion, from positivism to scientific materialism, from linguistic analysis to historical materialism, from naturalism to empiricism - always comes down to the same basic answer, namely, “Don't ask.”

The question itself (Why is anything at all happening? Why, am I here?) – the *question itself* is said to be confused, pathological, nonsensical, or infantile. To stop asking such silly or confused questions is, they all maintain, the mark of maturity, the sign of growing up in this cosmos.

I don't think so. I think the “answer” these “modern and mature” disciplines give – namely, oops! (and therefore, “Don't ask!”) – is about as infantile a response as the human condition could possibly offer.

The other broad answer that has been tendered is that *something else is going on*: behind the happenstance drama is a higher or wider pattern, or order, or intelligence. There are, of course, many varieties of this “Deeper Order”: the Tao, God, Geist, Maat, Archetypal Forms, Reason, Li, Mahamaya, Brahman, Rigpa. And although these different varieties of the Deeper Order certainly disagree with each other at many points, they all agree on this: the universe is not what it appears. *Something else* is going on, something quite other than oops....

This book is about all of that “something other than oops.” It is about a possible Deeper Order. It is about evolution, and about religion, and, in a sense, about everything in between. It is a brief history of cosmos, bios, psyche, theos – a tale told by an idiot, it goes without saying, but a tale that, precisely in signifying Nothing, signifies the All, and there is the sound and the fury.

This is a book about holons – about wholes that are parts of other wholes, indefinitely. Whole atoms are parts of molecules; whole molecules are parts of cells; whole cells are parts of organisms, and so on. Each *whole* is simultaneously a *part*, a whole/part, a holon. And reality is composed, not of things nor processes nor wholes nor parts, but of whole/ parts, of holons. We will be looking at holons in the cosmos, in the bios, in the psyche, and in theos; and at the evolutionary, thread that connects them all, unfolds them all, embraces them all, endlessly.

Introduction to Volume 7 of the *Collected Works* The Integral Vision at the Millennium

The opportunity and barriers to an integral embrace...

We live in an extraordinary time: all of the world's cultures, past and present, are to some degree available to us, either in historical records or as living entities. In the history of the planet earth, this has never happened before.

It seems hard to imagine, but for humanity's entire stay on this planet--for some million years up to the present--a person was born into a culture that knew virtually nothing about any other. You were, for example, born a Chinese, raised a Chinese, married a Chinese, and followed a Chinese religion--often living in the same hut for your entire life, on a spot of land that your ancestors settled for centuries. From isolated tribes and bands, to small farming villages, to ancient nations, to conquering feudal empires, to international corporate states, to global village: the extraordinary growth toward an integral village that seems humanity's destiny.

So it is that the leading edge of consciousness evolution stands today on the brink of an integral millennium--or at least the possibility of an integral millennium, where the sum total of extant human knowledge, wisdom, and technology is available to all. But there are several obstacles to that integral embrace, even in the most developed populations. Moreover, there is the more typical or average mode of consciousness, which is far from integral anything, and is in desperate need of its own tending. Both of those pressing issues (the integral vision as it relates to the most developed and the least developed populations) are related directly to the contents of this volume of the *Collected Works* [and *A Theory of Everything* – Wilber uses the above as an introduction to Chapter 1].

In short, what is the status of the integral vision in today's world, both in the cultural elite and in the world at large? Let us start with the leading edge, and the many obstacles to an integral vision in our cultural elite.

Integral Critical Theory

As Jack Crittenden points out in his foreword to *The Eye of Spirit*, if we succeed in developing a truly holistic or integral view, then we will simultaneously develop a new type of *critical theory*, because the integral paradigm will inherently be critical of those approaches that are, by comparison, partial, narrow, shallow, less encompassing, less integral. Jack suggests that the approach set forth in several of my books (such as *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* and *The Eye of Spirit*) is a new type of integral vision which therefore carries a new type of critical theory--that is, a theory that is critical of the present state of affairs in light of a more encompassing and desirable state, both in the individual and the culture at large.

It is certainly true that I have tried to offer both an integral vision and a critical theory; whether they succeed or not remains to be seen. It is also true that this particular integral vision especially came to fruition with *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* and with the two books in this volume, *A Brief History of Everything* and *The Eye of Spirit*. This period in my

work marked the emergence of "Wilber-4," or an approach that is "all-level, all-quadrant" (which I will explain in a moment), and which does indeed attempt to provide a genuinely integral or comprehensive view of the Kosmos. Not a final view or a fixed view or the only view; just a view that attempts to honour and include as much research as possible from the largest number of disciplines in a coherent fashion.

The Waves of Existence – Graves and Spiral Dynamics

Wilber outlines the work of Clare W Graves (foundation of Spiral Dynamics) as an example of a developmental scheme that he will increasingly start to use as a reference, given its flexibility and general applicability at both individual and social levels (ie a holonic scheme that can be described in all four quadrants)...

One of the striking things about the present state of developmental studies is how similar, in broad outline, most of its models are. Indeed, in *Integral Psychology* I assembled the conclusions of over one hundred different researchers, and, as one of them summarised the situation, "The stage sequences [of all of these theorists] can be aligned across a common *developmental space*. The harmony of alignment shown suggests a possible reconciliation of [these] theories..." (F. Richards and M. Commons in Alexander et al., *Higher Stages of Human Development*, p. 160).

From Clare Graves to Abraham Maslow; from Deirdre Kramer to Jan Sinnott; from Jurgen Habermas to Cheryl Armon; from Kurt Fischer to Jenny Wade; from Robert Kegan to Susanne Cook-Greuter, there emerges a remarkably consistent story of the evolution of consciousness. Of course there are dozens of disagreements and hundreds of conflicting details. But they all tell a generally similar tale of the growth and development of consciousness from--to use Jean Gebser's particular version--*archaic to magic to mythic to rational to integral*. Most of the more sophisticated of these cartographies give around six to ten waves of development from birth to what I call the centaur level. (Beyond the centaur, into the more transpersonal waves of consciousness unfolding, agreement tapers off. I will return to this point later.)

Few of these developmental schemes are the rigid, linear, clunk-and-grind models portrayed by their critics. Development is not a linear ladder but a fluid and flowing affair, with spirals, swirls, streams, and waves--and what appear to be an almost infinite number of multiple modalities (there appear to be as many different dimensions or modalities of consciousness as there are different situations in life--i.e., endless).

Here I will simply use one of them as an example. The model is called Spiral Dynamics, based on the pioneering work of Clare Graves. Graves proposed a profound and elegant system of human development, which subsequent research has refined and validated, not refuted. "Briefly, what I am proposing is that the psychology of the mature human being is an unfolding, emergent, oscillating spiralling process marked by progressive subordination of older, lower-order behaviour systems to newer, higher-order systems as an individual's existential problems change. Each successive stage, wave, or level of existence is a state through which people pass on their way to other states of being. When the human is centralised in one state of existence"--as I would put it, when the self's *centre of gravity* hovers around a particular wave of consciousness--"he or she has a psychology which is particular to that state. His or her feelings, motivations, ethics and values, biochemistry, degree of neurological activation, learning system, belief systems,

conception of mental health, ideas as to what mental illness is and how it should be treated, conceptions of and preferences for management, education, economics, and political theory and practice are all appropriate to that state."

Graves outlined around eight major "levels or waves of human existence," ranging from autistic, magical, and animistic, through sociocentric and conventional, to individualistic and integrated. As is usually the case with Western researchers, he recognised no higher (transpersonal) levels, but the contributions he made to the prepersonal and personal realms were profound.

It should be remembered that virtually all of these stage conceptions--from Abraham Maslow to Jane Loevinger to Robert Kegan to Clare Graves--are based on extensive amounts of research and data. These are not simply conceptual ideas and pet theories, but are grounded at every point in a considerable amount of carefully checked evidence. Many of the stage theorists have had their models checked in first-, second-, and third-world countries. The same is true with Graves' model; to date, it has been tested in over fifty thousand people from around the world, and there have been no major exceptions found to his general scheme.

Of course, *this does not mean that any of these schemes give the whole story, or even most of it*. They are all simply partial snapshots of the great River of Life, and they are all useful when looking at the River from that particular angle. This does not prevent other pictures from being equally useful, nor does it mean that these pictures cannot be refined with further study. What it does mean is that any psychological model that does not include these pictures is not a very integral model.

From Graves to Spiral Dynamics

Graves' work has been carried forward and refined by Don Beck and Christopher Cowan, in an approach they call Spiral Dynamics. Far from being mere armchair analysts, Beck and Cowan were participants in the discussions that lead to the end of apartheid in South Africa. The principles of Spiral Dynamics have been fruitfully used to reorganise businesses, revitalise townships, overhaul education systems, and defuse inner-city tensions.

The situation in South Africa is a good example of why the idea of developmental stages (each with its own worldview, values, and needs) can actually reduce and even alleviate social tensions, not exacerbate them (as critics often charge). Spiral Dynamics (following Graves) sees human development as proceeding through eight general "value memes" or deep structures: *instinctive* (archaic-uroboric), *magical/animistic* (typhonic-magic), *power gods* (magic-mythic), *absolutist-religious* (mythic), *individualistic-achiever* (rational-egoic), *relativistic* (early vision-logic), *systematic-integrative* (middle vision-logic), and *global-holistic* (late vision-logic), each of which will be outlined in a moment. These are not rigid levels, but fluid and flowing waves, with much overlap and interweaving, resulting in a meshwork or dynamic spiral of consciousness unfolding.

The typical, well-meaning liberal approach to solving social tensions is to treat every value as equal, and then try to force a levelling or redistribution of resources (money, rights, goods, land) while leaving the values untouched. The typical conservative approach is take its particular values and try to foist them on everybody else. The

developmental approach is to realise that there are many different values and worldviews; that some are more complex than others; that many of the problems at one stage of development can only be defused by evolving to a higher level; and that only by recognising and facilitating this evolution can social justice be finally served. Moreover, by seeing that *each and every individual has all of these memes potentially available to them*, the lines of social tension are redrawn: not based on skin color, economic class, or political clout, but on the *type* of worldview from which a person, group of persons, clan, tribe, business, government, educational system, or nation is operating. As Beck puts it, "The focus is not on types of people, but types *in* people." This removes skin color from the game and focuses on some of the truly underlying factors (developmental values and worldviews) that generate social tensions.

1. Beige: Archaic-Instinctual . The level of basic survival; food, water, warmth, sex, and safety have priority. Uses habits and instincts just to survive. Distinct self is barely awakened or sustained. Forms into *survival bands* to perpetuate life.

Where seen: First human societies, newborn infants, senile elderly, late-stage Alzheimer's victims, mentally ill street people, starving masses, shell shock.
0.1% of the adult population, 0% power.

2. Purple: Magical-Animistic . Thinking is animistic; magical spirits, good and bad, swarm the earth leaving blessings, curses, and spells which determine events. Forms into *ethnic tribes* . The spirits exist in ancestors and bond the tribe. Kinship and lineage establish political links. Sounds "holistic" but is actually atomistic: "there is a name for each bend in the river but no name for the river."

Where seen: Belief in voodoo-like curses, blood oaths, ancient grudges, good luck charms, family rituals, magical ethnic beliefs and superstitions; strong in Third-World settings, gangs, athletic teams, and corporate "tribes."
10% of the population, 1% of the power.

3. Red: Power Gods . First emergence of a self distinct from the tribe; powerful, impulsive, egocentric, heroic. Mythic spirits, dragons, beasts, and powerful people. Feudal lords protect underlings in exchange for obedience and labor. The basis of *feudal empires* --power and glory. The world is a jungle full of threats and predators. Conquers, out-foxes, and dominates; enjoys self to the fullest without regret or remorse.

Where seen: The "terrible twos," rebellious youth, frontier mentalities, feudal kingdoms, epic heroes, James Bond villains, soldiers of fortune, wild rock stars, Atilla the Hun, *Lord of the Flies* .
10-20% of the population, 5% of the power.

4. Blue: Conformist Rule . Life has meaning, direction, and purpose, with outcomes determined by an all-powerful Other or Order. This righteous Order enforces a code of conduct based on absolutist and unvarying principles of "right" and "wrong." Violating the code or rules has severe, perhaps everlasting repercussions. Following the code yields rewards for the faithful. Basis of *ancient nations* . Rigid social hierarchies; paternalistic; one right way and only one right way to think about everything. Law and order; impulsivity controlled through guilt; concrete-literal and fundamentalist belief; obedience to the rule of Order. Often "religious" [in the mythic-membership sense; Graves and Beck

refer to it as the "saintly/absolutistic" level], but can be secular or atheistic Order or Mission.

Where seen: Puritan America, Confucian China, Dickensian England, Singapore discipline, codes of chivalry and honour, charitable good deeds, religious fundamentalism (e.g., Christian and Islamic), Boy and Girl Scouts, "moral majority," patriotism. 30-40% of the population, 30% of the power.

5. Orange: Scientific Achievement. At this wave, the self "escapes" from the "herd mentality" of blue, and seeks truth and meaning in individualistic terms--hypothetico-deductive, experimental, objective, mechanistic, operational--"scientific" in the typical sense. The world is a rational and well-oiled machine with natural laws that can be learned, mastered, and manipulated for one's own purposes. Highly achievement oriented, especially (in America) toward materialistic gains. The laws of science rule politics, the economy, and human events. The world is a chess-board on which games are played as winners gain pre-eminence and perks over losers. Marketplace alliances; manipulate earth's resources for one's strategic gains. Basis of *corporate states* .

Where seen: The Enlightenment, Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* , Wall Street, emerging middle classes around the world, cosmetics industry, trophy hunting, colonialism, the Cold War, fashion industry, materialism, liberal self-interest. 20-30% of the population, 50% of the power.

6. Green: The Sensitive Self. Communitarian, human bonding, ecological sensitivity, networking. The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness; feelings and caring supersede cold rationality; cherishing of the earth, Gaia, life. Against hierarchy; establishes lateral bonding and linking. Permeable self, relational self, group intermeshing. Emphasis on dialogue, relationships. Basis of *values communes* (i.e., freely chosen affiliations based on shared sentiments). Reaches decisions through reconciliation and consensus (downside: interminable "processing" and incapacity to reach decisions). Refresh spirituality, bring harmony, enrich human potential. Strongly egalitarian, anti-hierarchy, pluralistic values, social construction of reality, diversity, multiculturalism, relativistic value systems; this worldview is often called *pluralistic relativism* . Subjective, nonlinear thinking; shows a greater degree of affective warmth, sensitivity, and caring, for earth and all its inhabitants.

Where seen: Deep ecology, postmodernism, Netherlands idealism, Rogerian counseling, Canadian health care, humanistic psychology, liberation theology, cooperative inquiry, World Council of Churches, Greenpeace, animal rights, ecofeminism, post-colonialism, Foucault/Derrida, politically correct, diversity movements, human rights issues, ecopsychology. 10% of the population, 15% of the power.

From first to second tier thinking

The real meaning of paradigm shift...

With the completion of the green meme, human consciousness is poised for a quantum jump into "second-tier thinking." Clare Graves referred to this as a "momentous leap," where "a chasm of unbelievable depth of meaning is crossed." In essence, with second-tier consciousness, one can think both vertically and horizontally, using both hierarchies

and heterarchies. One can, for the first time, vividly grasp the entire spectrum of interior development, and thus see that each level, each meme, each wave is crucially important for the health of the overall spiral.

As I would word it, since each wave is "transcend and include," each wave is a fundamental ingredient of all subsequent waves, and thus each is to be cherished and embraced. Moreover, each wave can itself be activated or reactivated as life circumstances warrant. In emergency situations, we can activate red power drives; in response to chaos, we might need to activate blue order; in looking for a new job, we might need orange achievement drives; in marriage and with friends, close green bonding.

But what none of those memes can do, on their own, is fully appreciate the existence of the other memes. Each of those first-tier memes thinks that its worldview is the correct or best perspective. It reacts negatively if challenged; it lashes out, using its own tools, whenever it is threatened. Blue order is very uncomfortable with both red impulsiveness and orange individualism. Orange individualism thinks blue order is for suckers and green egalitarianism is weak and woo-woo. Green egalitarianism cannot easily abide excellence and value rankings, big pictures, hierarchies, or anything that appears authoritarian, and thus green reacts strongly to blue, orange, and anything post-green.

All of that begins to change with second-tier thinking. Because second-tier consciousness is fully aware of the interior stages of development--even if it cannot articulate them in a technical fashion--it steps back and grasps the big picture, and thus second-tier thinking appreciates the necessary role that all of the various memes play. Using what we would recognize as mature vision-logic, second-tier awareness thinks in terms of the overall spiral of existence, and not merely in the terms of any one level.

Where the green meme uses early or beginning vision-logic in order to grasp the numerous different systems and pluralistic contexts that exist in different cultures (which is why it is indeed the sensitive self, i.e., sensitive to the marginalization of others), second-tier thinking goes one step further. It looks for the rich contexts that link and join these pluralistic systems, and thus it takes these separate systems and begins to embrace, include, and integrate them into holistic spirals and holarchies (Beck and Cowan themselves refer to second-tier thinking as operating with "holons"). These holarchies include both interior (consciousness) and exterior (material) waves of development, in both vertical and horizontal dimensions (i.e., hierarchical and heterarchical), resulting in a multi-leveled, multi-dimensional, multi-modal, richly holarchical view. Second-tier thinking, in other words, is instrumental in moving from *pluralistic relativism* to *universal integralism*.

The extensive research of Graves, Beck, and Cowan indicates that there are two major waves to this second-tier consciousness (corresponding to what we would recognise as middle and late vision-logic):

7. Yellow: Integrative . Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies [holarchies], systems, and forms. Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority. Differences and pluralities can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows. Egalitarianism is complemented with natural degrees of excellence where appropriate. Knowledge and competency should supersede rank, power, status, or group. The

prevailing world order is the result of the existence of different levels of reality (memes) and the inevitable patterns of movement up and down the dynamic spiral. Good governance facilitates the emergence of entities through the levels of increasing complexity (nested hierarchy).

8. Turquoise: Holistic. Universal holistic system, holons/waves of integrative energies; unites feeling with knowledge [centaur]; multiple levels interwoven into one conscious system. Universal order, but in a living, conscious fashion, not based on external rules (blue) or group bonds (green). A "grand unification" is possible, in theory and in actuality. Sometimes involves the emergence of a new spirituality as a meshwork of all existence. Turquoise thinking uses the entire spiral; sees multiple levels of interaction; detects harmonics, the mystical forces, and the pervasive flow-states that permeate any organisation.

Second-tier thinking: 1% of the population, 5% of the power.

With only 1 percent of the population at second-tier thinking (and only 0.1 percent at turquoise), second-tier consciousness is relatively rare because it is now the "leading-edge" of collective human evolution. As examples, Beck and Cowan mention items ranging from Teilhard de Chardin's noosphere to the growth of transpersonal psychology, with increases in frequency definitely on the way, and even higher memes still in the offing....

Green meme, boomeritis, pluralistic relativism and narcissism

Again, Wilber then comes down hard on the primary barriers to breakthrough thinking...

As with the catch words "anti-hierarchy," "pluralistic," and "egalitarian," whenever you hear the word "marginalisation" and a criticism of it, you are almost always in the presence of a green meme..

The point is perhaps obvious: because pluralistic relativism has such an intensely subjectivistic stance, it is especially prey to emotional narcissism. And exactly that is the crux of the problem: *pluralism becomes a supermagnet for narcissism* . Pluralism becomes an unwitting home for the Culture of Narcissism.

In green's noble attempt to move beyond conventional rules (many of which are indeed unfair and marginalizing), and in its genuine desire to deconstruct a rigid rationality (much of which can be repressive and stultifying)--in short, in green's admirable attempt to go *postconventional*, it has often inadvertently embraced *anything* nonconventional, and this includes much that is frankly *preconventional*, regressive, and narcissistic.

There a troubling contradiction in all this. It's not just that the claims of the cultural pluralists are said to be *universally* true (the so-called "performative contradiction," which means they are making claims that they insist cannot be made); the problem is deeper than that.

Narcissism, at its core, is a demand that "Nobody tells me what to do!" Narcissism will therefore not acknowledge anything universal, because that places various demands and duties on narcissism that it will strenuously try to deconstruct, because "nobody tells me what to do." This egocentric stance can easily be propped up and supported with the tenets of pluralistic relativism.

However, there are gifts in green...

...it is from the pluralistic perspectives freed by green that integrative and holistic networks are built.

The sociologist Paul Ray has recently made the claim that a new cultural segment, whose members he calls "the cultural creatives," now make up an astonishing 24 percent of the American population* (or around 44 million people). In order to distinguish them from the previous cultural movements of *traditionalism* and *modernism*, Ray calls this group the *integral culture*. Exactly how "integral" this group is remains to be seen; but I believe Ray's figures indeed represent a series of very real currents. The traditionalists are grounded in premodern mythic values (blue); the modernists, in rational-industrial values (orange); and the cultural creatives, in postformal/postmodern values (green). Those three movements constitute exactly what we would expect from our survey of the development and evolution of consciousness (preformal mythic to formal rational to early postformal).

[*Ray describes three worldviews. Traditionalists/heartlanders: 29%, Modernists: 47% and Transmodernists/cultural creatives: 24%; US figures from his research]

But a few more points stand out. What Ray calls the integral culture is not integral as I am using the term; it is not grounded in universal integralism, mature vision-logic, or second-tier consciousness. Rather, as Ray's survey results suggest, the majority of cultural creatives are basically *activating the green meme*, as their values clearly indicate: strongly antihierarchical; concerned with dialogue; embracing a flatland holism ("holistic everything," as Ray puts it, except that all genuine holism involves holarchy, or nested hierarchy, and the cultural creatives eschew holarchy, so their holism is usually an amalgam of monological wholeness claims, such as offered by physics or systems theory); suspicious of conventional forms of most everything; admirably sensitive to the marginalization of minorities; committed to pluralistic values and subjectivistic warrants; and possessing a largely translative, not transformative, spirituality. As Don Beck himself points out, using substantial research, "Ray's 'integral culture' is essentially the green meme.

The all quadrant, all level approach

Once we include both hierarchies and heterarchies--both ranking and linking--we can develop a more integral vision that is "all-level, all-quadrant", a vision that includes the I and the We and the It domains--or self, culture, and nature--as they all unfold in matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit, spanning the entire spectrum of consciousness in all its radiant dimensions. This includes multiple modalities, waves, streams, states, and realms, all woven together into a global holism or universal integralism.

This multidimensional Kosmos is therefore not just a final state, but a flow state. Not just holographic, but holodynamic. Not just given, but ceaselessly unfolding, in multiple waves and streams of existence, flowing and evolving in endless displays of Spirit's own self-blossoming. Therefore, let us honour and include these unfolding, developing, evolving currents as the Kosmos flowers in all its domains.

The integral approach that I am recommending--and which I simplistically summarize as "all-level, all-quadrant" (or even simpler: "the holonic approach")--is dedicated to including all of the nonreducible realities in all of the quadrants--which means, all of the waves, streams, states, realms, and types in any and all dimensions, as disclosed by reputable, nonreductionistic researchers. All four quadrants, with all their realities, mutually interact--they "tetra-interact" and "tetra-evolve"--and a more integral approach is sensitive to those richly textured patterns of infinite interaction.

The four quadrants-- simply refer to four of the most important dimensions of the Kosmos, namely, the interior and the exterior of the individual and the collective.

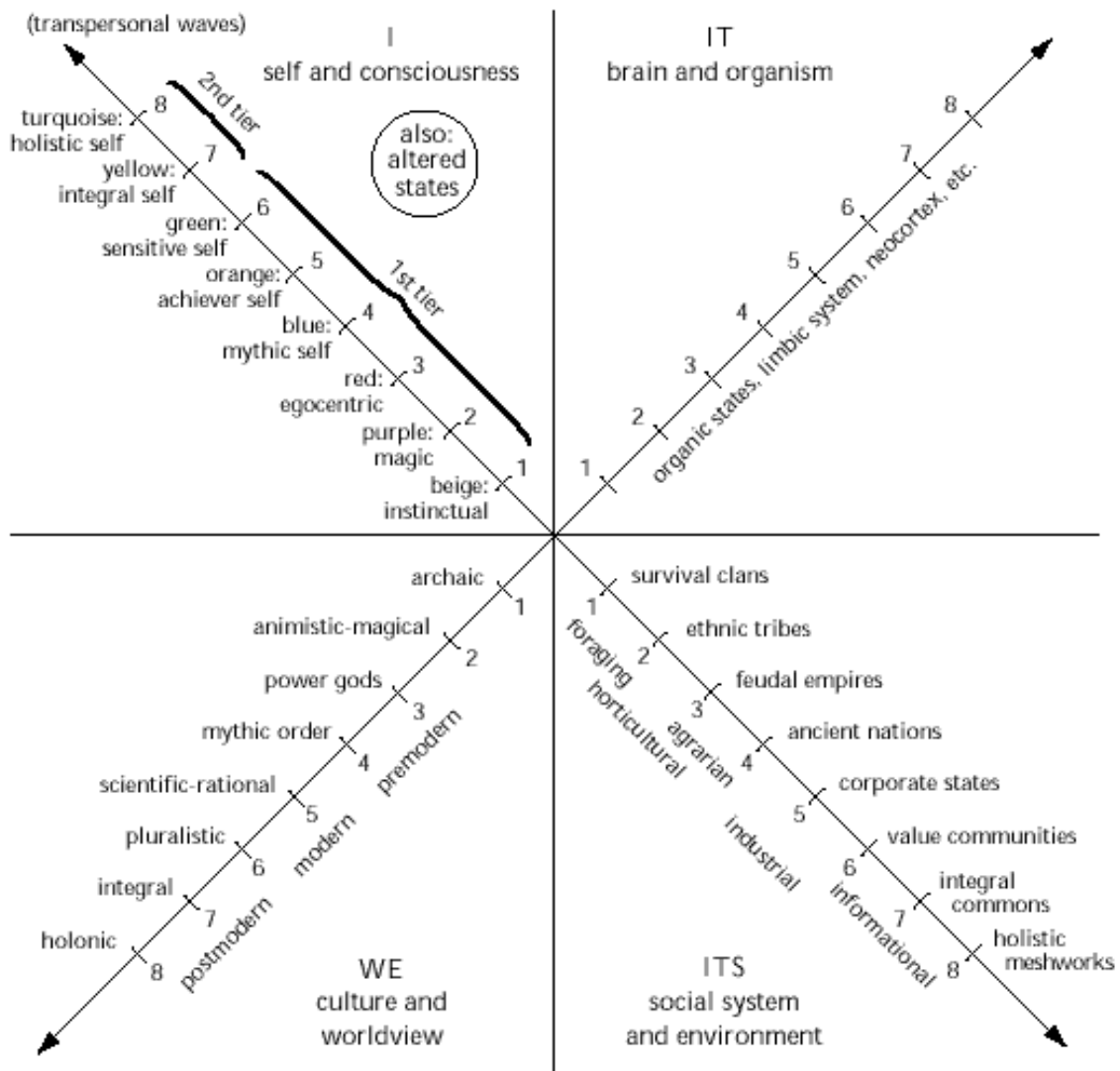


Figure 1. *Some Examples of the Four Quadrants in Humans*

Let us focus, for a moment, on waves, streams, and types. Waves are the "levels" of development, conceived in a fluid, flowing, and intermeshing fashion, which is how most developmentalists today view them. Carol Gilligan's three major moral waves for women--selfish, care, and universal care (i.e. preconventional, conventional, and

postconventional) --are typical of the holarchical levels or waves of development. Why does she maintain that these stages are (her word) "hierarchical"? Because each stage is a necessary ingredient of its successor, and thus stages cannot be skipped or reordered, as her research confirms.

Through these general *waves* of development flow many different *streams* of development. We have credible evidence that these different streams, lines, or modules include cognition, morals, self-identity, psychosexuality, ideas of the good, role-taking, socioemotional capacity, creativity, altruism, several lines that can be called "spiritual" (care, openness, concern, religious faith, meditative stages), communicative competence, modes of space and time, affect/emotion, death-seizure, needs, worldviews, mathematical competence, musical skills, kinesthetics, gender identity, defense mechanisms, interpersonal capacity, and empathy.

...a person can be a particular *type* (using Jungian types, Myers-Briggs, the enneagram, etc.) at virtually any of the levels.

Introduction to Volume 8 of the *Collected Works*

Science and religion

Ken Wilber Science and religion, science and religion, science and religion. Their relationship really will drive humanity insane, if only humanity were sensitive enough. As it is, their relationship is merely fated to be one of those damnable dyads--like mind and body, consciousness and matter, facts and values--that remain annoying thorns in philosopher's sides. Ordinary men and women, on the other hand, have always drawn freely on both science (or some sort of technical-empirical knowledge) and religion (or some sort of meaning, value, transcendental purpose, or immanent presence). Still, how to fit them together: "Ah, and there's the rub," as Shakespeare would say.

This volume of the *Collected Works* contains two books, *The Marriage of Sense and Soul--Integrating Science and Religion* and *One Taste* (the journals I kept while writing and publishing *Sense and Soul*). Both are devoted, in their own ways, to the relationship of science and spirituality, the former, in a scholarly fashion, the latter, according to my own personal experiences.

All-Level, All-Quadrant

As a preview, let's use a few simple diagrams to outline this integral approach.

Figure 1 is the traditional **Great Chain of Being**. Because each senior level transcends but includes its juniors, this is actually the **Great Nest of Being**, as the figure shows. Notice that **science** (e.g., physics, biology, psychology) is indeed on the **lower floors**, and **religion** (theology, mysticism) is on the **top floors**. (This is the basis for category three, which, as we saw, is probably the most influential stance among those sympathetic with spirituality.) But this also gave the traditional Great Chain its "otherworldly" ontology; much of the upper floors were literally "out of this world" and had few if any points of

contact with the material realm. (More specifically, the class of events marked D and E had virtually no direct correlations with A and B; hence, "otherworldly.")

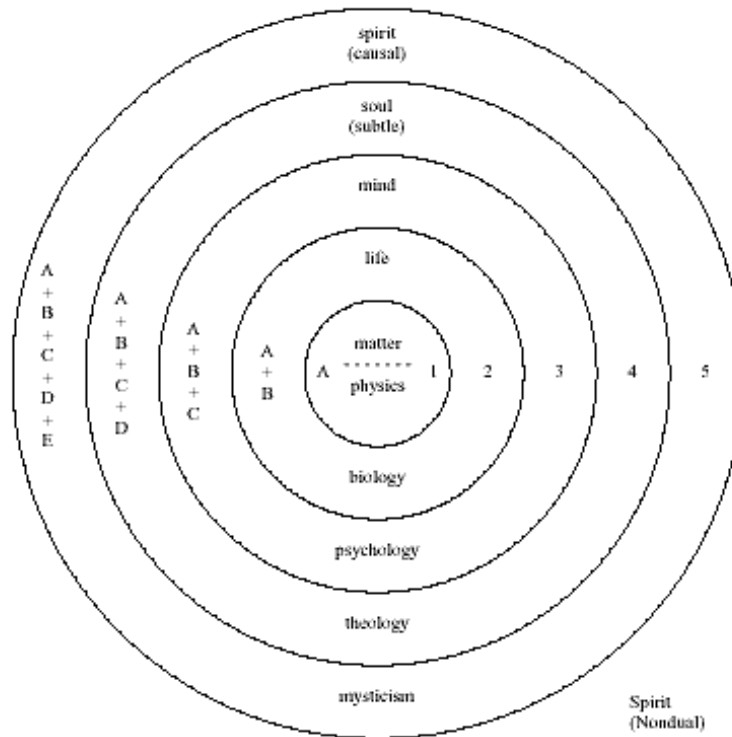


Figure 1. The Great Nest of Being. Spirit is both the highest level (causal) and the nondual Ground of all levels.

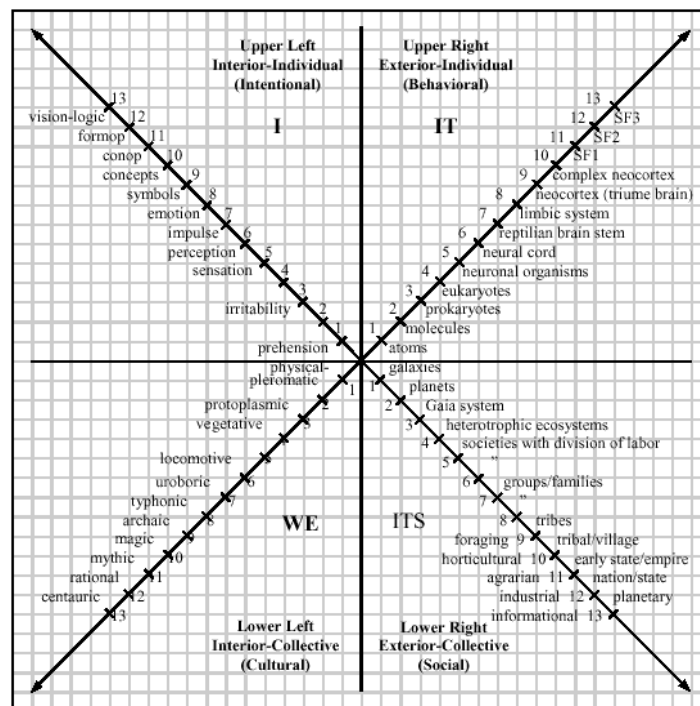


Figure 2. The Four Quadrants

Thus, an "all-level, all-quadrant" approach intimately integrates science and religion across many different fronts. It integrates deep religion with broad science by showing that deep spirituality is a broad science of the farther reaches of human potential. It also integrates deep religion with narrow science, because even deep-spiritual data and experiences--which must be understood in their own terms, and not reduced to any other level or quadrant--nonetheless have real correlates in the material brain, which can be decisively investigated with narrow science (as in the case of our meditator hooked to an EEG). It even makes room for narrow religion, as we will see in a moment. In all of these cases, an "all-level, all-quadrant" approach offers at least the possibility of a seamless intermeshing of what were previously thought to be "nonoverlapping magisteria."

Viva la Difference!

This integral approach also respects the *vital differences* between the various types of science and religion. To say that an inquiry is following the disposition of good science is not to say what the content or actual methodology of that inquiry will be. It only says that this inquiry engages the world (injunction), which brings forth experiences of the world (data), which are then checked as carefully as possible (confirmation). But the actual form of the inquiry--its methods and its content--will vary dramatically from level to level and from quadrant to quadrant. Unlike positivism, which allowed only one method (empirical) in only one realm (sensorimotor), this approach allows as many methods and inquiries as there are levels and quadrants. In figure 4, for example, narrow science (empiric-analytic) investigates the Right-Hand quadrants; but in the interior quadrants, there are four levels in both individual and collective, giving us at least eight different methodology/contents.

Flatland--or scientific materialism--is the belief that only matter (or matter/energy) is real, and that only *narrow science* has any claim to truth. (Narrow sense, recall, is the science of any Right-Hand domain, whether that be atomistic science of the Upper Right, or systems science of the Lower Right.) Flatland, in other words, is the belief that only the Right-Hand quadrants are real.

Applications of the Integral Model

Wilber applies his integral approach to a number of areas and reviews the contributions of others:

Politics

Medicine

Ecology

Spirituality

etc

Business. Applications of the holonic model have recently exploded in business, perhaps, again, because the applications are so immediate and obvious. The quadrants give the four "environments" or dimensions in which a product must survive, and the levels give the types of values that will be both producing and buying the product. Research into the values hierarchy--such as Maslow's and Graves's (e.g., Spiral Dynamics), which has already had an enormous influence on business and "VALS"--can be combined with the quadrants (which show how these levels of values appear in the four different

environments)--to give a truly comprehensive map of the marketplace (which covers both traditional markets and cybermarkets). Of course, this can be used in a cynical and manipulative way--business, after all, is business--but it can also be used in an enlightened and efficient fashion to more fruitfully match human beings with needed products and services (thus promoting the health of the overall spiral).

Moreover, *management training* programs, based on an integral model, have also begun to flourish. Daryl Paulson, in "Management: A Multidimensional/Multilevel Perspective," shows that there are four major theories of business management (Theory X, which stresses individual behaviour; Theory Y, which focuses on psychological understanding; cultural management, which stresses organizational culture; and systems management, which emphasizes the social system and its governance). Paulson then shows that these four management theories are in fact the four quadrants, and that an integral model would necessarily include all four approaches. He then moves to the "all-level" part, and suggests a simplified but very useful four stages that the quadrants go through, with specific suggestions for implementing a more "all-level, all-quadrant" management.

Other pioneers in this area include Geoffrey Gioja and JMJ associates, whose Integral Leadership seminars (three general levels in the four quadrants) have been presented to dozens of Fortune 500 companies ("We believe that until recently, the transformational approach of organizational change has been the unmatched champion for producing breakthroughs, both subjective and objective. We now assert that the transformational approach has been eclipsed by the integral approach"); John Forman of R. W. Beck Associates, who uses an "all-level, all-quadrant" approach to correct the flatland distortions of systems theory; On Purpose Associates (John Cleveland, Joann Neuroth, Pete Plastrik, Deb Plastrik); Bob Anderson, Jim Stuart, and Eric Klein (co-author of *Awakening Corporate Soul*), whose Leadership Circle brings an "all-level, all-quadrant" approach to "Integral Transformation and Leadership" ("The main point is that the evolution of all of these streams of development in all of the quadrants are intimately bound up with each other. Spiritual intelligence is literacy in the practice of transformation. Spiritual intelligence is fast becoming a leadership imperative"); Leo Burke, Director and Dean of Motorola's University College of Leadership and Transcultural Studies, who oversees the training of some 20,000 managers around the world; Ian Mitroff (*A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*); Ron Cacioppe and Simon Albrecht ("Developing Leadership and Management Skills Using the Holonic Model and 360 Degree Feedback Process"); Don Beck of Spiral Dynamics, which has been used in situations totaling literally hundreds of thousands of people; and Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, who are working with an all-level, all-quadrant approach coupled with very specific change technologies built around the optimal management of energy--physical, emotional, and mental. Tony is now writes the monthly Life/Work column for *Fast Company*, and can be contacted there.

Education. Because I am a "integral" or "holistic" thinker, people often imagine that I support what are generally called "holistic" educational approaches, whether conventional or alternative. Alas, such is not generally the case. Many "holistic" approaches are, in my opinion, either sadly flatland (based on conventional systems theory, or merely the Lower-Right quadrant), or they stem from a philosophy that Spiral Dynamics calls "the green meme," which means a type of pluralistic approach that nobly attempts not to marginalize other approaches, but in fact marginalizes hierarchical development, and thus often ends up sabotaging actual growth and evolution. In any event, all of these typical

"holistic" approaches overlook the prime directive, which is that it is the health of the overall spiral, and not any one level, that is the central ethical imperative. A truly integral education does not simply impose the green meme on everybody from day one, but rather understands that development unfolds in phase-specific waves of increasing inclusiveness. To use Gebser's version, consciousness fluidly flows from archaic to magic to mythic to rational to integral waves, and a truly integral education would emphasize, *not* just the last wave, but *all* of them as they appropriately unfold.

There are a large number of truly integral theorists working with these ideas and the applications of an all-level, all-quadrant education. In many instances, both the organizational structure of the schools (administration and faculty) and the core curriculum offered to students have been organized around an all-level, all-quadrant format. This has occurred both in conventional schools and in schools for the developmentally challenged. I hope increasingly to address this important issue in future writing.

Integral Transformative Practice. Closely related to integral education is "integral transformative practice" (ITP), which is, in a sense, integral education that includes the higher or transpersonal waves of development. Mike Murphy and George Leonard pioneered the first practical ITP in their book, *The Life We Are Given*. I have continued to work closely with Mike in elucidating the theoretical underpinnings of such a practice. There are now approximately forty ITP groups around the country (if you are interested in starting or joining such, you can contact Murphy and Leonard via their publishers). The Stanford Center for Research in Disease Prevention (of the Stanford University Medical School) is monitoring this practice, which has already had some rather extraordinary effects--testament to what an integral transformative practice can facilitate. There are many other, similar types of all-level, all-quadrant approaches being developed around the country, and I expect to see an explosion of interest in these types of more comprehensive programs, simply because they are more effective in initiating transformation.

The development of worldviews

Because the holonic model originally arose as an attempt to coherently account for waves, streams, states, realms, and quadrants, one of its claims is to be genuinely holistic. A by-product of this attempted inclusiveness is a system that is very useful in indexing the various worldviews, philosophies, religions, and sciences that have been offered over the years. The idea, again, is not that any one of these various worldviews has the whole picture (including mine), but that the more of these worldviews can be seamlessly included in a larger vision, the more accurate the view of the Kosmos that emerges. This more encompassing view then acts as an indexing system for the various worldviews, showing their relation to each other and the irreplaceable importance of each.

There have been countless attempts, over the years, to categorize the various worldviews that are available to men and women. Plato offered brilliant accounts of the alternative philosophies present in ancient Greece. Fa-hsiang categorized the religious systems existing in T'ang China. St. Thomas Aquinas gave exhaustive representations of the most influential of the existing philosophies--to name just a few.

With the modern era, and the understanding of evolution, many theorists began to give classifications of various worldviews in terms of their *development*. One of the first, and still most influential, was that of Auguste Comte, founder of positivism, whose famous "Law of Three" stated that humanity's knowledge quest has gone through three major stages: religion, metaphysics, and science, with each stage being less primitive and more accurate (resulting, by happy chance, in the stage occupied by Comte. The constant downside of developmental theories is that the highest stage is usually, by strange coincidence, evidenced by the proponent of the theory. I hasten to point out that I have never made such claim myself, though I am often accused of it). By far the most sophisticated of these developmental classifications of knowledge was that of Georg Hegel, whose undeniably brilliant systematic philosophy found room, he believed, for every major worldview in history, East and West. (Unfortunately, as Bertrand Russell pointed out, all that Hegel actually knew about China was that it existed. This, and subtler problems with the Hegelian system, brought it tumbling down; but we can nonetheless admire Idealism for the brilliance of what it did manage to accomplish). Other well known developmental-historical models (which may involve both growth and decay) include those of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Herbert Spencer, Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, Pitirim Sorokin, Antonio Gramsci, Teilhard de Chardin, Carroll Quigley, Jurgen Habermas, Gerhard Lenski, Jean Gebser, and Sri Aurobindo.

More recently, certain philosophers have attempted "overview" models that suggest the types of worldviews that people *can* form. One of the first was Stephen C. Pepper's *World Hypotheses* (1942), which claimed there are four of them: formistic (the world exists as categories), mechanistic (the world is cause-effect), contextual (the world is relational), and organismic (the world is interactive and relational). Schwartz and Russek (see the section "Medicine"), building on Pepper, added four more: implicit process (the world has subtler energies and consciousness), circular causality (cybernetic), creative unfolding (emergent adaptation), and integrative diversity (which attempts to integrate them all).

Another influential classification of worldviews according to available types was that of social systems theorist Talcott Parsons, who laid out worldviews along a (political) continuum of five major positions: Right Systemist, Right Marginalist, Middle Marginalist, Left Marginalist, Left Systemist. While this has some advantages, it actually covers a very narrow, middle-level range of possible worldviews, as we will see. Robert Bellah has cut his analysis at another angle, finding four major worldviews in America: republican, biblical, utilitarian, and romantic. Mark Gerzon finds six: religious, capitalist, disaffected, media, new age, and political. Samuel Huntington sees the world dominated by a clash of eight or nine major cultural worldviews (or civilizations): Western, Latin American, African, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist, and Japanese. But those are good examples of the "meta-analysis" of *types* of worldviews that many modern scholars have found useful--and they *are* useful, provided we can find a more encompassing context from which all can be accorded some sort of respect. (Ah, and there's the rub.)

Chakras

The notion of levels or dimensions of reality brings yet another type of indexing system. The chakras, for example, represent the various levels of being and knowing available to humans as actual *structures* in the bodymind. (The chakra system is one of the most prominent and widespread versions of the Great Chain of Being, variations of which are

found in virtually all of the world's major wisdom traditions, East and West. The chakras themselves are said to be subtle energy centers in the human body that support correlative types of knowing and being. They are generally given as seven in number, located at: the base of the body; the genital region; the abdomen; the heart region; the throat; the forehead; the crown. There are also said to be numerous auxiliary chakras above and below those. The acupuncture meridians are variations on these subtle energy currents.)

It is generally agreed that the seven chakras are simply a slightly more sophisticated version of matter (1), body (2), mind (3-4), soul (5-6), and spirit (7). But beyond that it gets a little more complicated. Accounts of the specific nature and function of each chakra vary, often considerably, because most of the main chakras perform different functions depending on whether they are "open" or "closed." The forehead chakra, for example, functions as the seat of logical rationality when closed (or operating in its outward, exoteric form), and yet, when opened (or realising its highest function), it is the doorway to transcendental insight, mystical visions, and gnosis. For this reason, it is common to reserve the higher chakras (particularly 5, 6, and 7) for their spiritual, transcendental functions, and assign their closed functions to lower chakras (such as 3 and 4). In this example, I will therefore assign reason to the higher-mind (chakra 4), and not to its esoteric capacities (or the root of higher transcendental intelligence, chakra 6). If you have your own favorite version of the chakras, you are welcome to use that, since this example depends only on the notion of seven structural modes of consciousness, and you can fill in the details however you like.

With those qualifications in mind, I will simply define the chakras as: (1) matter; (2) biological life force, prana, emotional-sexual energy, libido, elan vital; (3) lower-mind, including power and intentionality; (4) higher-mind, including reason, and higher emotions, including love; (5) psychic opening, creative vision, nature mysticism, early stages of spiritual and transcendental consciousness; (6) subtle consciousness, gnosis, genuine archetypes, deity mysticism; (7) radiant spirit, both manifest and unmanifest, the Abyss, the empty Ground, formless mysticism.

Chakras meet worldviews

The point is that we can rather easily classify types of worldviews according to the chakra or the level of the worldview itself, and numerous theorists have done exactly that. To give a few examples that the various theorists have suggested, we have: materialistic worldviews, such as Hobbes and Marx (chakra 1); vital and pranic worldviews, such as Freud and Bergson (chakra 2); power worldviews, such as Nietzsche (chakra 3); rational worldviews, such as Descartes (chakra 4); nature mysticism, such as Thoreau (chakra 5); deity mysticism, such as St. Teresa of Avila (chakra 6); and formless mysticism, such as Meister Eckhart (chakra 7).

As useful as those classifications are, there are certain problems that immediately stand out, and the only way to handle these difficulties is to introduce what might be called a *cross-level* analysis. For we need to distinguish the level *from which* a worldview originates, and the level *to which* it is aimed. For example, Marx is often taken to be an exemplar of a type of materialism (chakra 1), but Marx himself is not coming from chakra 1 or existing at chakra 1. The only thing at chakra 1 is rocks, dirt, inert matter, and the physical dimension itself. Marx is a very rational thinker; he is coming from, or he is functioning at, chakra 4. But Marx, following Feuerbach, believed that the fundamental

realities of the world are essentially material: so he is coming *from* chakra 4, but confining his attention *to* chakra 1. Similarly Freud: his early libido psychology is coming from chakra 4, but is aimed at chakra 2 (pansexuality). At the other end, so to speak: the Deists were coming from chakra 4 but aimed at chakra 6, and so on.

In other words, this allows us to trace both the level that the *subject* is coming from, and the level of reality (or *objects*) that the subject believes to be most real. This immediately enriches our capacity to classify worldviews. Moreover, it allows us to do a "double-tracking"--the level of the subject, and the levels of reality the subject acknowledges. This is sometimes referred to as the "levels of selfhood" and the "levels of reality"--or simply the level of the subject and the level of the object. (This "cross-level" and "double-tracking" was introduced in *A Sociable God* and *Eye to Eye*, and refined in *Integral Psychology*.)

To use my own version of the levels of the subject (or the levels of consciousness), we have (to give an abbreviated account): sensorimotor and archaic (chakra 1); typhonic and magical (chakra 2); mythic and early mental (chakra 3); rational-egoic, centauric, and vision-logic (chakra 4); psychic (chakra 5); subtle (chakra 6); and causal (chakra 7). The point is that, especially in the middle range (chakras 3, 4, and 5), the subject or self at those chakras can take as an object *any of the other chakras* (any of the other levels of reality)--can think about them, form theories about them, create artworks of them. Of course, when a lower chakra tries to grasp a higher chakra, without actually transforming to that chakra, certain inadequacies and limitations haunt the formulations, but that has never prevented people from doing so anyway, and we need to take those into account.

All of a sudden, the simple seven-level scheme is not so simple. Even if we say that only the middle chakras engage in cross-level work (the lower chakras, such as rocks, do not do so; and the higher chakras tend to be transmental, although they can certainly form mental theories--but we will leave them out for simplicity's sake), that means that chakras 3, 4, and 5 can give their attention to each of the seven chakras, forming a different worldview in each case--which gives us *twenty-five major worldviews* available from the seven structural levels of consciousness in the human bodymind.

And, of course, that is just the start. If the holonic conception is "all quadrants, levels, lines, types, states, and realms," those twenty-five worldviews cover *levels* of self (or subject) and levels or *realms* of reality (or objects). We still need to include the *quadrants* in each of those levels/realms; the different *lines* or streams that move through those levels/realms; the various *types* of orientations available at each; and the many altered *states* that temporarily tap into different realms. Moreover, individuals, groups, organizations, nations, civilizations all undergo various kinds of *development* through each of those variables. All of the above factors contribute to different types of worldviews, and all of them need to be taken into account in order to offer a truly integral overview of available worldviews.

There is one final requirement. The integral vision, to be truly integral, must find a way that *all* of the major worldviews are basically *true* (even though partial). It is not that the higher levels are giving more accurate views, and the lower levels are giving falsity, superstition, or primitive nonsense. There must be a sense in which even "childish" magic and Santa-Claus myths are true. For those worldviews are simply the way *the world looks at that level*, or from that chakra, and all of the chakras are crucial ingredients of the

Kosmos. At the mythic level, Santa Claus (or Zeus or Apollo or astrology) is a phenomenological reality. It will do no good to say, "Well, we have evolved beyond that stage, and so now we know that Santa Claus is not real," because if that is true--and all stages are shown to be primitive and false in light of further evolution--then we will have to admit that our own views, *right now*, are also false (because future evolution will move beyond them). But it is *not* that there is *one* level of reality (e.g., mine), and those other views are all primitive and *incorrect* versions of my one level. Each of those views is a *correct* view of a lower yet fundamentally important level of reality, not an *incorrect* view of the one real level. The notion of *development* allows us to recognize nested truths, not primitive superstitions.

One Taste, meditation and constant consciousness

...thus, the second major point I wanted to get across in *One Taste* is the importance of meditation as part of an integral practice. This is particularly crucial for strengthening consciousness and thus allowing it to remain stable as one passes from waking to dreaming to deep sleep. The more we can access this "constant consciousness" or "basic wakefulness" (which is present in all states, waking, dreaming, and sleeping), the more we become alive to Spirit's ever-present Presence.

And It Is All Undone

It is, truly, a game; what dream walkers we all are! Nothing ever really happens here, nothing moves in time or space, it is all so painfully obvious that I advert my eyes from the blinding truth. But here we are, You and I, and it is You-and-I that is the form of Spirit in this and all the worlds. For in the entire Kosmos, there is only One Self; in the entire Kosmos, there is only One Spirit – a and thus the Self that is reading this page is the exactly the Self that wrote it.

Let us, then, You-and-I, recognise together who and what we are. And I will be with you until the ends of the world, and you will be with me, for there is only One Self, which is the miracle of Spirit. This is why we will be together forever, You-and-I, in the world of the Many-That-Are-One, and why we have never been separated. Just as Consciousness is singular, and the Self is One, and the Self neither comes nor goes, so You-and-I are that Self, forever and forever and endlessly forever.

Thank you deeply for coming on this journey with me, and guiding me at every point, and enlightening me through and through, and forgiving me all along, and being You-and-I.

“So Who Are You?”

From One Taste

So who are you? You are not objects out there, you are not feelings, you are not thoughts-you are effortlessly aware of all those, so you are not those. Who or what are you?

Say it this way to yourself: I have feelings, but I am not those feelings. Who am I? I have thoughts, but I am not those thoughts. Who am I? I have desires, but I am not those desires. Who am I?

So you push back into the source of your own awareness. You push back into the Witness, and you rest in the Witness. I am not objects, not feelings, not desires, not thoughts.

But then people usually make a big mistake. They think that if they rest in the Witness, they are going to see something or feel something-something really neat and special. But you won't see anything. If you see something, that is just another object-another feeling, another thought, another sensation, another image. But those are all objects; those are what you are not.

No, as you rest in the Witness-realising, I am not objects, I am not feelings, I am not thoughts-all you will notice is a sense of freedom, a sense of liberation, a sense of release-release from the terrible constriction of identifying with these puny little finite objects, your little body and little mind and little ego, all of which are objects that can be seen, and thus are not the true Seer, the real Self, the pure Witness, which is what you really are.

A Summary of Wilber's Psychological Model—Or: Outline of 'An Integral Psychology' - Ken Wilber

Part 1 of 14: The Death of Psychology and the Birth of the Integral

In 1983, I stopped referring to myself as a "transpersonal" psychologist or philosopher. I began instead to think of the work that I was doing as "integrative" or "integral." I therefore began writing a textbook of integral psychology called *System, Self, and Structure*, a two-volume work that, for various reasons, has never been published. I have just recently, however, brought out a one-volume, simplified outline of integral psychology called, appropriately enough, *Integral Psychology--Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. This article is a summary of that book, and hence a summary of my present psychological model.

But it is true that integral psychology fits none of the existing four forces (behavioristic, psychoanalytic, humanistic, or transpersonal). The claim of integral psychology is that it "transcends and includes" the four forces, but that claim is exactly what the four forces all sharply dispute. In any event, my own opinion is that integral psychology is not a transpersonal psychology; it appears to be more encompassing than anything that today calls itself transpersonal. Nor do I believe that transpersonal can or will become truly integral; all of its main factions are rooted in models that seem demonstrably less than integral.

My hope is that integral psychology, in moving outside of transpersonal psychology and building more bridges to the conventional world, will provide a complementary approach to move consciousness studies forward, while maintaining a respectful and mutually beneficial dialogue with the four forces. I have long been a strong supporter of all four forces of psychology, and I will continue to do so.

Some critics have called integral psychology a fifth force, but I don't think that is a useful way to proceed (and it can also become an unfortunate game: okay, then I have the sixth force...). Besides, I believe the four forces of psychology are slowly dying, and being the fifth force of that death march is perhaps not desirable. Psychology as we have known it, I believe, is basically dead. In its place, in my opinion, will be more integral approaches.

Put differently, my belief is that psychology as a discipline--referring to any of the four traditional major forces (behavioristic, psychoanalytic, humanistic/existential, and transpersonal)--is slowly decaying and will never again, in any of its four major forms, be a dominant influence in culture or academia. (The following explanation requires familiarity with my "all-quadrant, all-level" [AQAL] model; for those unfamiliar with this model, it will be explained later in this article, and you might come back to this introduction after you have finished.)

At this point in Western history (basically, an amalgam of traditional, modern, and postmodern currents)--and specifically at this time in America (circa 2000)--we are going through a period of an intense flatland cascade, a combination of rampant scientific materialism (the orange meme) and the "nothing but surfaces" of the extreme postmodernists (the green meme): in short, interiors are out, exteriors are all; there is no depth, only surfaces as far as the eye can see. This puts an intense selection pressure *against* any sort of psychology that emphasizes solely or mostly the interiors (psychoanalytic, humanistic/existential, and transpersonal).

This is compounded by numerous specific social factors, such as the medical/insurance and "managed care" industry supporting only brief psychotherapy and pharmacological interventions. Again, the interior psychologies are selected against in this negative cultural current. The only acceptable approaches to psychology are increasingly the Right-Hand approaches, including biological psychiatry, behavioral modification, cognitive therapy--and remember, "cognition" is defined as "cognition of objects or its," and thus cognitive therapy is not so much an interior

exploration of depths but simply a manipulation of the sentences one uses to objectively describe oneself (cognitive therapy in general works with "adjusting your premises" so that they match scientific, objective, Right-Hand evidence)--and, finally, an increasing, almost epidemic, reliance on the use of medication (prozac, xanax, paxil, etc.), all of which focus almost exclusively on Right-Hand interventions. (See, for example, the superb *Of Two Minds*, by Tanya Luhrmann; the "two minds" are, of course, the Upper-Left and Upper-Right approaches to psychology, and Luhrmann leaves no doubt as to which is winning the survival race; if I may be allowed a pun, interiors are out, exteriors are in.) Silly things like trying to find out *why* you behave in such a fashion, or trying to find out the *meaning* of your existence, or the *values* that constitute the good life, are not covered by insurance policies, and so, in this culture, they basically do not exist. Three of the four forces (psychoanalytic, humanistic/existential, and transpersonal) are thus, once again, selected against; a negative cultural pressure is moving them to extinction and in some ways has already succeeded, so that these major forces are one jot away from dinosaur status. (This is not necessarily a bad thing, as we will see.)

The old behaviorism (one of the four forces) has survived, but only by morphing into much more sophisticated forms, two of which are now dominant: cognitive science and evolutionary psychology. It is important to note that both of these endeavors are quintessentially Right-Hand approaches. *Cognitive science* focuses on the Upper-Right quadrant--the exteriors of individuals--and studies those holons in an objective, scientific, empirical fashion: human consciousness is viewed as the result of neurophysiological mechanisms, organic systems, and brain neural networks that summate in individual awareness. Psychopathology is viewed as a pathology of these organic pathways, and cure involves fixing these organic pathways (usually with medication, sometimes with behavioral modification). All of this is conducted in third-person it-language.

Evolutionary psychology focuses on the objective organism (Upper Right) and how its *interaction* with the objective environment (Lower Right) has resulted, via variation and natural selection, in certain behaviors of the individual organism, most of which originated to serve survival (which is defined, as LR truths always are, as functional fit). Thus, you tend to behave in the way that you do (e.g., males are profligate sex fiends, females are nesting homebodies), because a million years of natural selection has left you with these genes. (I am not contesting the truths of evolutionary psychology; I am pointing out that they are Right-Hand only.)

In both of those dominant forms of present-day psychology, there is no introspection to speak of, no searching the interiors, the within, the deep, the Left-Hand quadrants. There are only objective its scurrying about in objective systems, networks, and the empirical web of life: no within, no interiors, no depth. And thus, once again, the three major forces of interior psychology (psychoanalytic, humanistic/existential, and transpersonal) are left to slowly wither, which slowly they are.

In my opinion, the only interior psychologies that will survive this new sociocultural selection pressure are those that adapt by recognizing an "all-quadrant, all-level" framework, for only that framework (or something equally integral) can embrace *both* the Right- and Left-Hand realities. Thus the Left-Hand or interior psychologies can securely hook themselves to the tested truths of cognitive science and evolutionary psychology without succumbing to the reductionism that says there are only Right-Hand realities. That is, the only psychologies that will survive will be those that plug themselves into an AQAL formulation, which fully concedes the biological, objective, empirical, and cognitive components of consciousness, but *only* as set in the four quadrants. This *integral* approach concedes the relative truths of the dominant Right-Hand psychologies but simultaneously paints a much broader and more encompassing picture of consciousness and Kosmos.

The integral approach is thus constantly on hand to point out all of the correlations of the exterior events in brain and body (the Upper-Right quadrant studied by cognitive science and evolutionary

psychology) with the interior events in mind and consciousness (the Upper-Left quadrant studied by interior psychologies), and to further show how all of them are inescapably anchored in cultural and social realities as well (the Lower-Left and Lower-Right quadrants)--with none of those quadrants being reducible to the others. As an extraordinary number of scholars have pointed out, the arguments against reductionism are simply overwhelming; an AQAL formulation therefore stands as a constant reminder that we can in fact fully honour the truths in all four quadrants without trying to reduce any of them to the others. As the severe limitations of the merely objectivistic, exterior, Right-Hand approaches become clear to individual researchers (as they almost always eventually do), an integral framework thus stands available to help them make the leap to a more comprehensive approach.

If the only psychologies that will survive are psychologies that are plugged into an "all-quadrant, all-level" framework (which includes behavioral, intentional, cultural, and social dimensions, all of which stretch from matter to body to mind to spirit)--such a psychology is not really psychology as we have known it. That is, a four-quadrant psychology is no longer psychology (which is why integral psychology is not actually a fifth force, although many people will continue to call it such). Rather, integral psychology is an inherent feature of a Kosmology, and its practice is a movement of the Kosmos itself. This is why I believe the four forces will continue to wither, and their places will increasingly be taken by various forms of integral psychology that adapt to this new cultural selection pressure (or Eros) by recognizing niches of reality as yet unoccupied (namely, an AQAL space), into which they can evolve with the assurance of survival by adapting to yet higher and wider dimensions of reality. The integral claim is that because an AQAL formulation is more adequate to reality, evolution into a consciously AQAL space has inherent survival value. Correlatively, less adequate and comprehensive approaches will increasingly face extinction pressures.

This might well leave the four forces as historical dinosaurs. At the same time--and this is the claim of integral psychology that the other psychologies dispute--any truly integral psychology will "transcend and include" all of the important truths of the four forces. Nothing is lost, all is retained; even dinosaurs live on in today's birds. The test of any integral psychology is to what degree it can accept and *coherently* integrate the valid research and data from the various schools of psychology--not just the four major forces, but developmental psychology, evolutionary psychology, cognitive sciences, phenomenological/hermeneutic approaches, and so on. Of course this is a daunting challenge, perhaps forever unreachable; but as of today we know too much to ever settle for less.

What follows is my own version of an integral psychology. More specifically, it is a succinct summary of the "Upper-Left quadrant" of my model (as I will explain in a moment). Since this is a simple summary of evidence and arguments developed elsewhere, I will rarely quote other authorities in this presentation; works of mine that I reference do so extensively, and interested readers can follow up with those references. And, of course, each of these topics is discussed more fully in *Integral Psychology* (let me say that the fact that this book, within two months of its publication, has become a bestseller gives me hope that this fledging field will soon be flourishing).

Here are five of the main components of human psychology that any comprehensive or integral model might want to address: developmental *levels* of consciousness, developmental *lines* of consciousness, normal and altered *states* of consciousness, the *self* or self-system, and what I call the four *quadrants* (which include culture and worldviews, neurophysiology and cognitive science, and social systems). Let's take them in that order.

Part 2 of 14: Levels or Waves

Not all components of the psyche show development, but many of them do, and those developmental aspects or stages need to be taken into account. They are not the whole story of the psyche, but they are an important part. We live in an evolutionary universe, and those currents of evolution appear to operate in the human mind as well.

There is abundant evidence that some aspects of cognition, morals, psychosexuality, needs, object relations, motor skills, and language acquisition proceed in developmental stages, much as an acorn unfolds into an oak through a series of process phases. These stages or levels of development are not the rigid, linear, rungs-in-a-ladder phenomenon portrayed by their critics, but rather are fluid, flowing, overlapping waves.

I use all three terms--structures, levels, and waves--to describe these developmental milestones. "Structure" indicates that each stage has a holistic pattern that blends all of its elements into a structured whole. "Level" means that these patterns tend to unfold in a relational sequence, with each senior wave transcending but including its juniors (just as cells transcend but include molecules, which transcend but include atoms, which transcend but include quarks). And "wave" indicates that these levels nonetheless are fluid and flowing affairs; the senior dimensions do not sit on top of the junior dimensions like rungs in a ladder, but rather embrace and enfold them (just as cells embrace molecules which embrace atoms). These developmental stages are concentric spheres of increasing embrace, inclusion, and holistic capacity.

When it comes to consciousness itself, evidence strongly suggests that there are indeed various *levels of consciousness*, which appear to span an entire spectrum from subconscious to self-conscious to superconscious. This great spectrum of consciousness is well-known (indeed central) to the world's major wisdom traditions, where one version of it appears as the Great Chain of Being, which is said to range from matter to body to mind to soul to spirit. (The Great Chain is actually a misnomer. It is not a linear chain but a series of enfolded spheres: spirit transcends but includes soul, which transcends but includes mind, which transcends but includes body, which transcends but includes matter. This is actually the Great Nest of Being. Some modern thinkers accept the existence of matter, body, and mind, but reject soul and spirit. They therefore prefer to think of the levels of consciousness as proceeding from, e.g., preconventional to conventional to postconventional. My essential points can be made using any of these levels, but because we will also be discussing spiritual or "superconscious" states, let us for the moment simply assume that the overall spectrum of consciousness does indeed range from prepersonal to personal to transpersonal.)

Based on various types of cross-cultural evidence, many scholars have suggested that we can further divide this overall spectrum of consciousness into seven colors or bands or levels (as with the seven chakras); others suggest around twelve (as with Aurobindo and Plotinus); some suggest even more (as in many of the well-known contemplative texts. See *Integral Psychology* for over one hundred models of the levels of consciousness, taken from premodern, modern, and postmodern sources). The actual number of these waves is perhaps less important than the simple fact that they exist, just as the actual number of colors in a rainbow is less striking than the rainbow itself. We can legitimately divide and subdivide the colors of a rainbow in any number of ways. I often use nine or ten *basic levels* or waves of consciousness (which are variations on the simple matter, body, mind, soul, spirit), since considerable evidence suggests that these basic waves are largely universal (or generally similar in deep features) wherever they appear (e.g., the human mind, wherever it appears, has a capacity to form images, symbols, and concepts. The contents of those images and symbols vary from culture to culture, but the capacity itself is a universal that emerges at a particular stage of development).

But it should be remembered that all of these various codifications of the developmental levels are simply different snapshots taken from various angles, using different cameras, of the great

rainbow of consciousness, and they are all useful in their own ways. They are simple categorizations provided by humans; but each of them, if carefully backed by evidence, can provide intriguing clues to this mystery of consciousness.

That these levels, nests, or waves are arranged along a great rainbow or spectrum does not mean that a person actually moves through these waves in a merely linear or sequential fashion, clunking along from body, then to mind, then to soul, then to spirit. Those are simply some of the basic levels of consciousness that are potentially available. But an individual possesses many different capacities, intelligences, and functions, each of which can unfold through the developmental levels at a different rate--which brings us to the notion of various independent modules in the human psyche, which I also call lines or streams.

Part 3 of 14: Lines or Streams

Through the developmental levels or *waves* of consciousness, move various developmental lines or *streams* (such as cognition, morals, affects, needs, sexuality, motivation, and self-identity). In any given person, some of these lines can be highly developed, some poorly (or even pathologically) developed, and some not developed at all. Overall development, in short, is a very uneven affair!

The reason appears to be that the numerous developmental lines are to some degree *independent modules*, and these modules can and do develop in relatively independent ways (but not totally independently). Each of these modules probably evolved in response to a series of specific tasks (e.g., cognition of the external world, needs and desires in different environments, linguistic communication, sexual release mechanisms, and so on). Exactly how and why these independent developments occur in the various lines is a topic for much fruitful research.

The important point is that a person can be at a relatively high level of development in some lines (such as cognition), medium in others (such as morals), and low in still others (such as spirituality). Thus, *there is nothing linear about overall development*. It is a wildly individual and idiosyncratic affair (even though many of the developmental lines themselves unfold sequentially).

The most common criticism of my model is that it is linear, a view I have not held for twenty years. But what about spirituality itself? Does it necessarily unfold in stages? My answer, again, is absolutely not. But before we see why, let's discuss states of consciousness.

Part 4 of 14: States of Consciousness

We are all familiar with several states of consciousness. For example, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. Those are some of the "normal" or "ordinary" states. Some of the "altered" or "nonordinary" states include peak experiences, religious experiences, drug states, holotropic states, and meditative or contemplative states. Evidence strongly suggests that a person at virtually any *stage* or level of development can have an altered *state* or peak experience--including a spiritual experience. Thus, the idea that spiritual experiences are available only at the higher stages of development is incorrect. States themselves rarely show development, and their occurrence is often random; and yet they are some of the most profound experiences human beings ever encounter. Clearly, those important aspects of spirituality that involve altered states do not follow any sort of linear, sequential, or stage-like unfolding.

What types of higher states are there? Extensive cross-cultural research suggests that there are at least four higher or transpersonal states of consciousness, which I call *psychic*, *subtle*, *causal*, and *nondual*. (As we will see in a moment, when these *temporary* states become *permanent* traits,

these transitory states are converted into permanent structures of consciousness, and I call those permanent structures, levels, or waves by the same four names.)

Briefly, the psychic state is a type of *nature mysticism* (where individuals report an experience of being one with the entire natural-sensory world; e.g., Thoreau, Whitman. It is called "psychic," not because paranormal events occur--although evidence suggests that they sometimes do--but because it is increasingly understood that what appeared to be a merely physical world is actually a psychophysical world, with conscious, psychic, or noetic capacities being an intrinsic part of the fabric of the universe, and this often results in an actual experience of oneness with the natural world). The subtle state is a type of *deity mysticism* (where individuals report an experience of being one with the *source* or *ground* of the sensory-natural world; e.g. St. Teresa of Avila, Hildegard of Bingen). The causal state is a type of *formless mysticism* (where individuals experience cessation, or an immersion in unmanifest, formless consciousness; e.g., pseudo-Dionysus, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Patanjali). And the nondual is a type of *integral mysticism* (which is experienced as the union of the manifest and the unmanifest, or the union of Form and Emptiness; e.g., Lady Tsogyal, Sri Ramana Maharshi, Hui Neng).

As I have suggested elsewhere, these are all variations on the natural states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep--which is why a person at virtually *any* stage of development can experience *any* of these nonordinary states (because everybody, even an infant, wakes, dreams, and sleeps). However, in order for these *temporary* states to become *permanent* traits or structures, they must enter the stream of development (as we will see). Of course, for most people, the dream and deep sleep states are experienced as being less real than the waking state; but with prolonged meditative practice, these states can be entered with full awareness and an expansion of consciousness, whereupon they are said to yield their higher secrets.

In many of the wisdom traditions, the three great normal *states* (of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep) are said to correspond to the three great *bodies* or *realms* of being (gross, subtle, and causal). In both Vedanta and Vajrayana, for example, the bodies are said to be the energy support of the corresponding mind or state of consciousness (i.e., every mental mode has a bodily mode, thus preserving a bodymind union at all levels). The gross body is the body in which we experience the waking state; the subtle body is the body in which we experience the dream state (and also certain meditative states, such as savikalpa samadhi, and the bardo state, or the dream-like state which is said to exist in between rebirths); and the causal body is the body in which we experience the deep dreamless state (and nirvikalpa samadhi and the formless state).

The point is that each state of consciousness has a corresponding body which is "made" of various types of gross, subtle, and very subtle energy (or "wind"), and these bodies or energies "support" the corresponding mind or consciousness states. In a sense, we can speak of the gross bodymind, the subtle bodymind, and the causal bodymind (using "mind" in the very broadest sense as "consciousness"). The important point is simply that *each state of consciousness is supported by a corresponding body*, so that consciousness is never merely disembodied.

Part 5 of 14: The Relation of Structures and States

Now, *states* of consciousness (with their correlative bodies or realms) contain various *structures* of consciousness. States contain structures. For example, the waking state can contain the preoperational structure, the concrete operational structure, the formal operational structure, and so on. In Vedanta, these structures or levels of consciousness are known as the *koshas* (or sheaths). The subtle body, experienced in the dream state (and the bardo realm, savikalpa samadhi, etc.), is said to support three major koshas or consciousness structures--the *pranamayakosha* (élan vital), the *manomayakosha* (conventional mind), and the *vijnanamayakosha* (higher and illumined mind). The reason that both Vedanta and Vajrayana maintain this is that, for example, each night when you dream (when you are in the subtle body), you have access to these three structures (you can experience sexual élan vital, mental images and

symbols, and higher or archetypal material--i.e., the dream state can *contain* all three of those structures), but you do not experience the gross body, the sensorimotor realm, or the gross physical world--those are not directly present. In the dream you are phenomenologically existing in a subtle body experiencing the various consciousness structures supported by that subtle body and contained in that state.

In short, any given broad *state* of consciousness (such as waking or dreaming) can contain several different *structures* (or levels) of consciousness. These structures, levels, or waves, as earlier suggested, span the entire spectrum, and also include many of those structure-stages that have been so extensively studied by western developmental psychologists, such as the structure-stages of moral, cognitive, and ego development (e.g., Kohlberg, Gilligan, Piaget, Loevinger, Graves, Kegan, Cook-Greuter, Wade). When, for example, Spiral Dynamics (a psychological model developed by Don Beck et al., based on the research of Clare Graves) speaks of the red meme, the blue meme, the orange meme, and so on, those are structures (levels) of consciousness.

Why are all these distinctions important? Very simply, recognizing the difference between states of consciousness and structures of consciousness allows us to understand how a person at any *stage or structure of development can nevertheless have a profound peak experience of higher and transpersonal states* --for the simple reason that everybody wakes, dreams, and sleeps (and thus they have access to these higher states and realms of subtle and causal consciousness, no matter how "low" their general stage or level of development might be). However, the ways in which individuals *experience* and *interpret* these higher states and realms will depend largely on the level (or structure) of their own development. We will return to this important point in a moment.

Part 6 of 14: Phenomenal States

Finally, within the major structures of consciousness, there are various *phenomenal states* (joy, happiness, sadness, desire, and so on). The point is simply that within broad states of consciousness there are structures of consciousness, within which there are phenomenal states.

Notice that neither states of consciousness nor structures of consciousness are directly experienced by individuals. Rather, individuals directly experience specific phenomenal states. Structures of consciousness, on the other hand, are *deduced* from watching the behaviour of numerous subjects. The *rules* and *patterns* that are followed by various types of cognitive, linguistic, moral (etc.) behaviors are then abstracted. These rules, patterns, or structures are very real, but they are not directly perceived by the subject (just as the rules of grammar are rarely perceived in an explicit form by native language speakers, even though they are following them). This is why structures of consciousness are almost never spotted by phenomenology, which inspects the present ongoing stream of consciousness and thus only finds phenomenal states. This is a significant limitation of phenomenology. That is, phenomenology usually focuses on phenomenal states and thus fails to spot the existence structures of consciousness. Thus, if you introspect the phenomenal states of body and mind, you will never see something that announces itself as a "stage-4 moral thought" (Kohlberg); nor will you find something called "the conformist stage" (Loevinger); nor will you spot "the relativistic stage" (Graves). The only way you spot those *intersubjective structures* is to watch populations of subjects interact, and then look for regularities in behaviour that suggest they are following intersubjective patterns, rules, or structures. Phenomenology is thus a useful, if limited, aspect of a more integral methodology.

Part 7 of 14: Developmental Aspects of Spirituality

All *structures* of consciousness generally unfold in a developmental or stage-like sequence, and, as virtually all developmentalists agree, *true stages cannot be skipped*. For example, in the cognitive line, there is sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational,

vision-logic, and so on. Researchers are unanimous that none of those stages can be skipped, because each incorporates its predecessor in its own makeup (in the same way that cells contain molecules which contain atoms, and you cannot go from atoms to cells and skip molecules). No true stages in any developmental line can be skipped, nor can higher stages be "peak experienced." A person at preoperational cannot have a peak experience of formal operational. A person at Kohlberg's moral-stage 1 cannot have a peak experience of moral-stage 5. A person at Graves's animistic stage cannot have a peak experience of the integrated stage, and so on. Not only are those stages in some ways learned behaviors, they are incorporative, cumulative, and enveloping, all of which preclude skipping.

But the three great *states* (of waking, dreaming, sleeping) represent *general realms* of being and knowing that can be accessed at virtually any stage in virtually any line--for the simple reason that individuals wake, dream, and sleep, even in the prenatal period. Thus, gross, subtle, and causal *states* of consciousness are available at virtually any structure/stage of development.

However, the ways in which these altered states will (and can) be *experienced* depends predominantly on the *structures* (stages) of consciousness that have developed in the individual. As we will see, individuals at, for example, the magic, mythic, and rational stages can all have a peak experience of a subtle realm, but how that subtle realm is experienced and interpreted depends in large measure on the structures of consciousness that are available to unpack the experience.

(Technical point: the lower reaches of the subtle I call the "psychic"; and the union of causal emptiness with all form I call "nondual." This gives us the four major transpersonal states that I mentioned [psychic, subtle, causal, and nondual]; but they are all variations on the normal states available to virtually all individuals, which is why they are generally available at almost any stage of development. See *Integral Psychology* for a full discussion of this theme.)

Now, under conditions generally of prolonged contemplative practice, a person can convert these *temporary* states into *permanent* traits or structures, which means that they have access to these great realms on a more-or-less *continuous* and *conscious* basis. In the case of the subtle realm, for example, this means that a person will generally begin to lucid dream (which is analogous to savikalpa samadhi--or stable meditation on subtle forms); and with reference to the causal, when a person stably reaches that wave, he or she will remain tacitly conscious even during deep dreamless sleep (a condition known as permanent turiya, constant consciousness, subject permanence, or unbroken witnessing, which is analogous to nirvikalpa samadhi, or stable meditation as the formless). Pushing through even that level, the causal formless finds union with the entire world of form, a realization known as nondual (sahaja, turiyatita, bhava).

In each of those cases, those great realms (psychic, subtle, causal, nondual) are no longer experienced merely as *states*, but have instead become permanently available patterns or structures of consciousness--which is why, when they become a permanent competence, I then call them the psychic level (or structure or wave), the subtle level, the causal level, and the nondual. The use of those four terms to cover *both* structures and states has led some critics to assume that I was confusing structures and states, but this is not the case. [14](#)

The important question then becomes: do those four *states*, as they become permanent *structures*, show stage-like unfolding? Are they then actually *levels* of consciousness? In many ways, yes (again, not as rigid rungs but as fluid and flowing waves). For example, a person who reaches *stable* (permanent) causal witnessing will automatically experience lucid dreaming (because stable causal witnessing means that you witness *everything* that arises, which includes the subtle and dream states), but not vice versa (i.e., somebody who reaches stable subtle awareness does not necessarily reach pure causal witnessing)--in other words, we have a stage sequence (i.e., the causal is a higher level than the subtle--e.g., the anandamayakosha is a higher level than the

vijnanamayakosha, or the overmind is a higher level than the intuitive mind, and so on--exactly as maintained by the great wisdom traditions).

This is why Aurobindo says, of these higher, transpersonal levels/structures: "The spiritual evolution obeys the logic of a successive unfolding; it can take a new decisive main step only when the previous main step has been sufficiently conquered: even if certain minor stages can be swallowed up or leaped over by a rapid and brusque ascension, the consciousness has to turn back to assure itself that the ground passed over is securely annexed to the new condition; a greater or concentrated speed [which is indeed possible] does not eliminate the steps themselves or the necessity of their successive surmounting" (Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, II, 26). His overall writing makes it clear that he does not mean that in a rigid ladder fashion, but more as I have suggested: a series of subtler and subtler waves of consciousness unfolding, with much fluid and flowing overlap, and the possibility of nonlinear altered states always available. But for those states to become structures, "they obey the logic of a successive unfolding," as all true stages do. The world's contemplative literature, taken as a whole, is quite clear on these points, and in this regard we justifiably speak of these transpersonal structures as showing some stage-like and level-like characteristics.

Again, that is *not* the entire story of spirituality. In a moment I will suggest that spirituality is commonly given at least four different definitions (the highest levels of any of the lines, a separate line, an altered state, a particular attitude), and a comprehensive or integral theory of spirituality ought charitably to include all four of them. Thus, the developmental aspects we just discussed do not cover the entire story of spirituality, although they appear to be an important part of it.

To give a specific example: If we focus on the cognitive line of development, we would have these general levels or waves in the overall spectrum of cognitive development: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational, vision-logic, psychic, subtle, causal, and nondual. Those nine general *levels* or *structures* Aurobindo respectively called sensory/vital, lower mind, concrete mind, logical mind, higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, overmind, and supermind, stretching along a single rainbow from the densest to the finest to the ground of them all.

The respective worldviews of those nine general structures of consciousness can be described as: archaic, magic, mythic, rational, aperspectival, psychic (yogic), subtle (saintly), causal (sagely), and nondual (siddha).

Those are *levels* of consciousness or *structures* (stages), during whose *permanent* unfolding, no stages can be readily skipped; but at virtually *any* of those stages, a person can have a peak experience of psychic, subtle, casual, or nondual *states*. Overall or *integral development* is thus a continuous process of converting temporary states into permanent traits or structures, and in that integral development, no structures or levels can be bypassed, or the development is not, by definition, integral.

Part 8 of 14: Uneven Development

This does not prevent all sorts of spirals, regressions, temporary leaps forward via peak experiences, and so on. Notice, for example, that somebody at the psychic *level* can peak experience the causal *state*, but cannot stably access that realm because their *permanent* development has not yet reached the causal as a stage (or a permanent acquisition or structure). In order for that to happen, they must traverse the subtle realm (converting it into an objective stage) before they can *stably* maintain the witnessing position of the causal (turiya), because the permanent witness is, by definition, continuously aware of all that arises, and that means that if the subtle arises, it is witnessed--which means the subtle has become a permanently available pattern or structure in consciousness. Thus, stages in integral development, as elsewhere, cannot

be skipped (they do not have to be perfected or mastered to the nth degree, but they do have to be established as a general competence. Somebody who cannot witness the subtle state cannot, by definition, be the causal witness--hence, the stage-like nature of these higher structures as they become *permanent* acquisitions.)

Still, what usually happens is that because these three great realms and states (waking/gross, dream/subtle, and formless/causal) are constantly available to human beings, and because as *states* they can be practiced to some degree independently of each other (and might even develop independently to some degree--see *Integral Psychology*), many individuals can and do evidence a great deal of competence in some of these states/realms (such as meditative formlessness in the causal realm), yet are poorly or even pathologically developed in others (such as the frontal or gross personality, interpersonal development, psychosexual development, moral development, and so on). The "stone Buddha" phenomenon--where a person can stay in extraordinary states of formless absorption for extended periods--and yet be poorly developed, or even pathologically developed, in other lines and realms, is an extremely common phenomenon, and it happens largely because integral development has not been engaged, let alone completed. Likewise, many spiritual teachers show a good deal of proficiency in subtle states, but little in causal or gross, with quite unbalanced results--for them and their followers. In short, what usually happens is that development is partial or fractured, and this fractured development is taken as the paradigm of natural and normal spiritual development, and then students and teachers alike are asked to repeat the fracture as evidence of their spiritual progress.

The fact that these three great realms/states can be engaged separately; the fact that many contemporary writers equate spirituality predominantly with altered and nonordinary states (which is often called the fourth wave of transpersonal theory); the fact that lines in general can develop unevenly (so that a person can be at a high level of development in some lines and low or pathological in others)--and that this happens more often than not--have all conspired to obscure those important aspects of spiritual development that do indeed show some stage-like phenomena. My point is that *all* of these aspects of spirituality (four of which I mentioned and will elucidate below) need to be acknowledged and included in any comprehensive theory of spirituality--and in any genuinely integral spiritual practice.

Part 9 of 14: A Grid of Religious Experiences

If we combine the idea of *levels* of development with *states* of consciousness, and we realize that a person at virtually any level or stage of development can have a peak experience or an altered state, we get a rather remarkable grid of many of the various types of spiritual and nonordinary experiences.

For example, let us use Jean Gebser's terms for some of the lower-to-intermediate levels of consciousness: archaic, magic, mythic, rational, and aperspectival (there are higher, transpersonal structures, as we have seen, but these will do for now). To those five levels, let us add the four states of psychic, subtle, causal, and nondual. The point is that a person at any of those five structures can peak experience any of those four states, and that gives us a grid of twenty types of spiritual, transpersonal, or nonordinary experiences.

As was suggested earlier, the reason this grid occurs is that the way in which individuals *interpret* an altered state will depend in part upon their general level of development. For example, individuals at the mythic level might peak experience a psychic state, but they generally interpret that psychic peak experience in the terms of their mythic structure. Likewise, there is a magic experience of a subtle state, a mythic experience of a subtle state, a rational experience of a subtle state; and so on with causal and nondual. Putting these altogether gives us a phenomenological grid of the many types of altered, nonordinary, and religious experiences available to men and women (this is a series of ripe doctoral dissertations waiting to be picked). For more details on this grid, see *A Sociable God* and *Integral Psychology*.

Part 10 of 14: The Self

So far we have explored states, waves, and streams. Juggling all of those--and of crucial importance--is the self (or self-system or self-sense). For the striking thing about the levels, lines, and states is that in themselves they appear to be *devoid of an inherent self-sense*, and therefore the self can *identify* with any of them. That is, one of the primary characteristics of the self is its capacity to *identify* with the basic structures or levels of consciousness, and every time it does so, it generates a specific type of self-identity, with specific needs and drives. The self appears to be a functional system (which includes such capacities as identification, defense, tension regulation, and will), and it also undergoes its own type of development through a series of stages or waves (as investigated by, e.g., Jane Loevinger, Robert Kegan, Susanne Cook-Greuter, etc.). The main difference between the self-stages and the other stages is that the self has the job of balancing and coordinating all of them!

This balancing act, this drive to integrate the various components of the psyche, appears to be a crucial feature of the self. Psychopathology, for example, cannot easily be understood without it. The basic structures of consciousness do not themselves get sick or "broken." They either emerge or they don't, and when they do, they are generally well functioning (barring organic brain damage). For example, when concrete operational thinking ("conop") emerges in a child, it emerges more-or-less intact--but what the child does with those structures is something else indeed, and that specifically involves the child's self-sense. For the child can take any of the contents of the conop mind and repress them, alienate them, project them, retroflect them, or deploy any number of other defensive mechanisms. This a disease, not of conop, but of the self.

(Here is a more extreme example: a psychotic might be, among other things, temporarily plugging into a subtle realm and hence begin dream-like hallucinations. The subtle realm is not malfunctioning, it is working just fine; but the self cannot *integrate* these realms with the gross/frontal structures, and therefore it suffers a severe pathology. The pathology is not in the subtle, it is in the self-system and its failed capacity to integrate.)

Most psychopathology (on the interior domains) seems to involve some sort of failure in the self's capacity of differentiation and integration--a failure that occurs during what I call a *fulcrum* of self-development. A fulcrum occurs each time the self encounters a new level of consciousness. The self must first *identify* with that new level (embed at that level, be in fusion with that level); it eventually *disidentifies* with (or transcends) that level so as to move to a yet higher wave; then it ideally *integrates* the previous wave with the higher wave.

A miscarriage at any of those points in the particular fulcrum (failed identification, failed differentiation, failed integration) will generate a pathology; and the type of the pathology depends upon *both* the level of consciousness that the fulcrum occurs and the phase within the fulcrum that the miscarriage occurs. If we have nine general levels or waves of consciousness (each of which has a corresponding fulcrum that occurs when the self identifies with that level), and each fulcrum has these three basic subphases (fusion, transcendence, integration), then that gives us a typology of around twenty-seven major self pathologies (which range from psychotic to borderline to neurotic to existential to transpersonal). Far from being a mere abstract typology, there are abundant examples of each of these types.²⁴

Again, none of this is a rigid, linear type of classification. The various waves and fulcrums overlap to a great extent; different pathologies and treatment modalities also overlap considerably; and the scheme itself is a simple generalization. But it does go a long way toward developing a more comprehensive overview of both pathology and treatment, and as such it seems to constitute an important part of any genuinely integral psychology.

The fluid nature of all of these events highlights the fact that the self-system is perhaps best thought of, not as a monolithic entity, but as the *centre of gravity* of the various levels, lines, and states, all orbiting around the integrating tendency of the self-system. When any aspects of the psyche become cut off from this self-organizing activity, they (as it were) reach escape velocity and spin out of orbit, becoming dissociated, fragmented, alienated pockets of the psyche. Therapy, on the interior domains, thus generally involves a recontacting, befriending, reintegrating, and "re-entry" of the dissociated elements back into the orbit of conscious inclusion and embrace.

Part 11 of 14: Four Meanings of Spiritual

If we focus for a moment on states, levels, lines, and self, we will find that they appear to underlie four of the most common definitions of "spirituality."

In *Integral Psychology*, I suggest that there are at least four widely used definitions of spirituality, each of which contains an important but partial truth, and all of which need to be included in any balanced account: (1) spirituality involves peak experiences or altered states, which can occur at almost any stage and any age; (2) spirituality involves the highest levels in any of the lines; (3) spirituality is a separate developmental line itself; (4) spirituality is an attitude (such as openness, trust, or love) that the self may or may not have at any stage.

We have already discussed some of the important ingredients of each of those usages. We have particularly examined the idea of spirituality as involving peak experiences or altered states (#1). Here is a quick review of the other three.

Often, when people refer to something as "spiritual," they explicitly or implicitly mean the highest levels in any of the developmental lines. For example, in the cognitive line, we usually think of transrational awareness as spiritual, but we don't often think of mere rationality or logic as spiritual. In other words, the highest levels of cognition are often viewed as spiritual, but the low and medium levels less so. Likewise with affects or emotions: the higher or transpersonal affects, such as love and compassion, are deemed spiritual, but the lower affects, such as hate and anger, are not. Likewise with Maslow's needs hierarchy: the lower needs, such as self-protection, are not often thought of as spiritual, but the highest needs, such as self-transcendence, are.

This is a legitimate usage, in my opinion, because it reflects some of the significant developmental aspects of spirituality (namely, the more evolved a person is in any given line, the more that line seems to take on spiritual qualities). This is not the only aspect of spirituality--we have already seen that states are very important, and we will see two other aspects below--but it is a factor that needs to be considered in any comprehensive or integral account of spirituality.

The third common usage sees spirituality as a separate developmental line itself. James Fowler's stages of faith is a well-known and well-respected example. The world's contemplative literature is full of meticulously described stages of contemplative development (again, not as a series of rigid rungs in a ladder but as flowing waves of subtler and subtler meditative experiences, often culminating in causal formlessness, and then the breakthrough into permanent nondual consciousness). In this very common usage, the spiritual line begins in infancy (or even before, in the bardo and prenatal states), and eventually unfolds into wider and deeper spheres of consciousness until the great liberation of enlightenment. This is yet another important view of spirituality that any comprehensive or integral theory might want to take into account.

Viewing spirituality as a relatively independent line also explains the commonly acknowledged fact that somebody might be highly developed in the spiritual line and yet poorly--or even pathologically--developed in other lines, such as interpersonal or psychosexual, often with unfortunate results.

The fourth usage is that spirituality is essentially an attitude or trait that the self may or may not possess at any stage of growth, and this attitude--perhaps loving kindness, inner peace, charity, or goodness--is what most marks spirituality. In this usage, you could have, for example, a spiritual or unspiritual magic wave, a spiritual or unspiritual mythic wave, a spiritual or unspiritual rational wave, and so on, depending on whether the self had integrated that wave in a healthy or unhealthy fashion. This, too, is a common and important usage, and any integral account of spirituality would surely want to take it into consideration.

We will soon see that those four uses of "spiritual" are not mutually incompatible. For the moment, recall that earlier in this discussion we focused on a "grid of religious experiences." Notice that that grid is simply what we see if we combine factors 1 and 2/3--that is, if we map the various states of consciousness on the various structure-stages. Thus, even that grid recognizes some of these major uses, suggesting again their widespread importance.

Two general claims: One, those four major definitions are indeed common definitions of "spirituality." They are not the only uses, but they are some of the most prevalent. And two, those four common uses arise because of the actual existence of states, levels, lines, and self, respectively. People seem to intuitively or natively grasp the existence of states, levels, lines, and self, and thus when it comes to spirituality, they often translate their spiritual intuitions in terms of those available dimensions, which gives rise to those oft-used definitions.

As suggested, those definitions of spirituality are not mutually incompatible. They actually fit together in something of seamless whole, as I try to show in *Integral Psychology*. We can already see, for example, that any model that coherently includes states, levels, lines, and self can automatically give a general account of those four aspects of spirituality. But in order to see how this would specifically work, we need one more item: the four quadrants. (The four quadrants are not to be confused with the four uses of spirituality; the number four in this case is coincidental.) But the four quadrants are crucial, I believe, in seeing how the many uses of spirituality can in fact be brought together into a more mutual accord.

Part 12 of 14: Quadrants

Most people find the four quadrants a little difficult to grasp at first, then very simple to use. The quadrants refer to the fact that anything can be looked at from four perspectives, so to speak: we can look at something from the inside or from the outside, and in the singular or the plural. (For a map of the four quadrants, see the Introductions to CW7 and CW8, posted on this site.)

For example, my own consciousness in this moment. I can look at it from the inside, in which case I see all my various feelings, hopes, fears, sensations, and perceptions that I might have in any given moment. This is the first-person or phenomenal view, described in "I" language. But consciousness can also be looked at in an objective, "scientific" fashion, in which case I might conclude that my consciousness is the product of objective brain mechanisms and neurophysiological systems. This is the third-person or objective view, described in "it" language. Those are the inside and the outside views of my own consciousness.

But my consciousness or self does not exist in a vacuum; it exists in a community of other selves. So in addition to a *singular* view of consciousness, we can look at how consciousness exists in the *plural* (as part of a group, a community, a collective). And just as we can look at the inside and the outside of the individual, we can look at the inside and the outside of the collective. We can try to understand any group of people from the inside, in a sympathetic resonance of mutual understanding; or we can try to look at them from the outside, in a detached and objective manner (both views can be useful, as long as we honour each).

On the inside of the collective, we see all of the various shared worldviews (archaic, magic, mythic, rational, etc.), ethics, customs, values, and intersubjective structures held in common by

those in the collective (whether that be family, peers, corporation, organisation, tribe, town, nation, globe). The insides of the collective are described in "we" language and include all of those intersubjective items that you might experience if you were truly a member of that culture. From the outside, we see all of the objective structures and social institutions of the collective, such as the physical buildings, the infrastructures (foraging, horticultural, agrarian, industrial, informational), the techno-economic base, the quantitative aspects of the society (the birth and death rates, the monetary exchanges, the objective data), modes of communication (written words, telegraph, telephone, internet), and so on. Those are all "its" or patterns of interobjective social systems.

So we have four major perspectives (the inside and the outside of the singular and the plural): I, it, we, and its. Since the objective dimensions (the outside of the individual and the outside of the collective) are both described in third-person it-language, we can reduce the four quadrants to just three: I, we, and it. Or first-person, second-person, and third-person accounts. Or art, morals, and science. Or the beautiful, the good, and the true.

Now my major point is that *each of the levels, lines, and states of consciousness has these four quadrants* (or simply the three major dimensions of I, we, and it). This model therefore explicitly integrates first-, second-, and third-person accounts of consciousness at each of the levels, lines, and states. This gives what I believe is a more comprehensive and integral model of consciousness. This "all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines, all-states" model is sometimes referred to simply as "all-quadrant, all-level," or AQAL for short. I have explored this model at length in several books, such as *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality; Brief History*; and *Integral Psychology*. If we systematically investigate the implications of this AQAL model, we might also find that it opens up the possibility of a more integral approach to education, politics, business, art, feminism, ecology, and so on (see, e.g., *A Theory of Everything--An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality*, to be released by Shambhala in September 2000).

It should be emphasized that this article has dealt almost exclusively with only one quadrant, namely, the interior of the individual (which is called the "Upper-Left quadrant"). But in other works I have dealt extensively with the other quadrants, and my point is certainly that all of the quadrants need to be included in any balanced account of consciousness. What is missing in the other major schools and forces of psychology is exactly this more comprehensive or AQAL approach, which is why I believe integral psychology must move in a noticeably different direction while maintaining a friendly and mutually beneficial dialogue with the other four forces.

Part 13 of 14: The Religious Grid, Revisited

To see why the four quadrants are crucial for understanding even individual psychology, we can return to our "religious grid" as an example. We earlier discussed only the Upper-Left quadrant factors (the interior of the individual), which is fine for the phenomenology of spiritual experiences. But for an integral account, we need also to include the other quadrants.

The Upper-Right quadrant (the exterior of the individual): During any spiritual, religious, or nonordinary state of consciousness, what are the neurophysiological and brain-state correlates? These might be investigated by PET scans, EEG patterns, physiological markers, and so on. Conversely, what are the effects of various types of physiological and pharmacological agents on consciousness? An enormous amount of this type of research has already been done, of course, and it continues at an increasing pace. Consciousness is clearly linked in complex ways to objective biological and neurophysiological systems, and continued research on these correlations is surely an important agenda. This type of consciousness research is now by far the most prevalent in conventional consciousness studies, and I wholeheartedly support it as providing some crucial pieces of the overall puzzle.

Nobody, however, has successfully demonstrated that consciousness can be reduced without remainder to those objective systems; and it is patently obvious that phenomenologically it cannot. Unfortunately, the tendency of the third-person approaches to consciousness is to try to make the Upper-Right quadrant the only quadrant worth considering and thus reduce all consciousness to objective "its" in the individual body/brain--but those cover only one-fourth of the story, so to speak.

Still, this is an incredibly important part of the story. This quadrant, in fact, is the home of the increasingly dominant schools of psychology and consciousness studies that I mentioned in the introduction (e.g., cognitive science, evolutionary psychology, systems theory applied to brain states, neuroscience, biological psychiatry, etc.). This quadrant is exactly the quadrant with which the interior psychologies must correlate their phenomenological findings and in which they must anchor their results, if they are evolutionarily to survive the coming intensification of flatland approaches (or the increasing cultural pressure for objective, exterior, "scientific," third-person methodologies in both research and therapy).

As also suggested in the introduction, the actual effect of this new cultural selection pressure is to select for integral (or AQAL) models, since neither Left-Hand (introspective) nor Right-Hand (objectivistic) approaches will be able to stand on their own, despite their seemingly inherent drive to claim that their way is the only true way. But the pendulum has, for the moment, definitely swung toward the Right-Hand paths, and any Left-Hand paths that do not respond with an integral or AQAL orientation will almost certainly be driftwood on the shore of this new cultural current of Eros.

The Lower-Left quadrant (the interior of the collective): How do different intersubjective, ethical, linguistic, and cultural contexts mold consciousness and altered states? The postmodernists and constructivists have demonstrated, correctly I believe, the crucial role played by background cultural contexts in fashioning individual consciousness. But many postmodernists have pushed this insight to absurd extremes, maintaining the self-contradictory stance that cultural contexts *create* all states. Instead of trying to reduce consciousness to "it"-language, they try to reduce all consciousness to "we"-language. All realities, including those of objective science, are said to be merely cultural constructions. To the contrary, research clearly indicates that there are numerous quasi-universal aspects to many human realities, including many altered states (e.g., all healthy humans show similar brainwave patterns in REM sleep and in deep dreamless sleep). Nonetheless, these patterns are indeed given some of their contents and are significantly molded by the cultural context, which therefore forms an important part of a more integral analysis.

Lower-Right quadrant (the exterior of the collective): How do various techno-economic modes, institutions, economic circumstances, ecological networks, and social systems affect consciousness and altered states? The profoundly important influence of objective social systems on consciousness has been investigated by a wide variety of approaches, including ecology, geopolitics, ecofeminism, neoMarxism, dynamical systems theory, and chaos and complexity theories. All of them tend to see the world as a holistic system of interwoven "its." This, too, is an important part of an integral model. Unfortunately, many of these theorists (just like specialists in the other quadrants) have attempted to reduce consciousness to just this quadrant--to reduce consciousness to digital bits in a systems network, a strand in the objective Web of Life, or a holistic pattern of flatland its, thus perfectly gutting the I and the we dimensions. Surely a more integral approach would include all of the quadrants--I, we, it, and its--without trying to reduce any of them merely to the others.

Of course, the foregoing analysis applies not only to states but also to levels, lines, and self: all of them need to be situated in the four quadrants (intentional, behavioral, cultural, and social) for a more integral understanding, resulting in an "all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines, all-states" panoptic.

Part 14 of 14: The Research Agenda

I have tried to show that many of the levels, lines, and states in the various quadrants are, in principle, capable of being investigated via a type of "simultracking" (see "An Integral Theory of Consciousness" in CW7). The specific research agenda is spelled out in that essay, but the point is simple enough: in addition to the extensive research that is now being done *separately* on the various levels, lines, and states in the various quadrants, the time is now ripe to (1) begin detailed correlations of these events with each other; and thus (2) move toward a more integral theory, not only of consciousness, but of the Kosmos at large; a theory that (3) would begin to show us the how and why of the *intrinsic* connections between all things in existence. This would truly be a "theory of everything," at least in outline, even if all of the details remain beyond our grasp.

In short, whether or not you agree with my particular version of an integral model of consciousness, I believe the evidence is now quite substantial that, at the least, any comprehensive model would want to take into account quadrants, levels, lines, states, and self. This fledging field of integral psychology holds great promise, I believe, as an important part of a comprehensive and balanced view of consciousness and Kosmos.

If the only psychologies that will survive are psychologies that are plugged into an "all-quadrant, all-level" framework (which includes behavioral, intentional, cultural, and social dimensions, all of which stretch from matter to body to mind to spirit)--such a psychology is not really psychology as we have known it. That is, a four-quadrant psychology is no longer psychology (which is why integral psychology is not actually a fifth force, although many people will continue to call it such). Rather, integral psychology is an inherent feature of a Kosmology, and its practice is a movement of the Kosmos itself. This is why I believe the four forces will continue to wither, and their places will increasingly be taken by various types of integral psychology that adapt to this new cultural selection pressure (or Eros) by recognizing niches of reality as yet unoccupied (namely, an AQAL space), into which they can evolve with the assurance of survival by adapting to yet higher and wider dimensions of reality. The integral claim is that because an AQAL formulation is more adequate to reality, evolution into a consciously AQAL space has inherent survival value. Correlatively, less adequate and comprehensive approaches will face extinction pressures.

This might well leave the four forces as historical dinosaurs. At the same time--and this is the claim of integral psychology that the other psychologies dispute--any truly integral psychology will "transcend and include" all of the important truths of the four forces. Nothing is lost, all is retained; even dinosaurs live on in today's birds. The test of any integral psychology is to what degree it can accept and *coherently* integrate the valid research and data from the various schools of psychology--not just the four major forces, but developmental psychology, evolutionary psychology, cognitive sciences, phenomenological/hermeneutic approaches, and so on. Of course this is a daunting challenge, perhaps forever unreachable; but as of today we know too much to ever settle for less.

LEVELS	DISORDERS	TREATMENTS
TRANSPERSONAL		
causal	causal pathology	formless mysticism
subtle	subtle pathology	deity mysticism
psychic	psychic disorders	nature mysticism
PERSONAL		
centauric / vision logic	existential pathology	existential therapy
formal reflexive (formop)	identity neuroses	introspection
rule/role (conop)	script pathology	script analysis
PREPERSONAL		
rep-mind	psychoneuroses	uncovering techniques
phantasmic-emotional	narcissistic-borderline structure	structure-building techniques
sensoriphysical	psychoses	physiological/ pacification
undifferentiated or primary matrix	perinatal pathology	intense regressive therapies



CORE CONCEPTS

THE TWENTY TENETS

In *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* Wilber describes the "Twenty Tenets" of holonic philosophy that are common to evolving or growing systems wherever we find them (there are actually 19, but who cares?)

THE PRE TRANS FALLACY

The most important theoretical contribution of Wilber to the understanding of the nature of spiritual development, is the so called "pre trans fallacy". We tend to confuse prepersonal and transpersonal states because both are non-personal.

THE FIVE PHASES

Wilber has divided his own intellectual development into four phases, simply called Wilber-1, Wilber-2, Wilber-3 and Wilber-4, and most recently, Wilber-5. Most critics respond to works from the early phases, and don't have an up to date understanding of Wilber's oeuvre.

THE FOUR QUADRANTS

An integral understanding of human consciousness should at least include the outer and the inner dimensions, in both their individual and collective manifestations. This Four Quadrants Model is the guiding principle of Wilber's more recent works.

INTEGRAL PHILOSOPHY

More than any other school of thought, integral philosophy combines the best of premodernity, modernity and postmodernity, while at the same time avoiding its extreme forms of expression.

THE TEN LEVELS

The stage model Wilber proposes consists of four prepersonal, three personal and three transpersonal stages -- in all, a nine stage model of human development. Each is stage can be correlated to stage-specific forms of pathology and therapy.

INTEGRAL POLITICS

In recent years, Wilber has extended his integral approach to the field of politics. His vision is about a liberal spirituality, a mystical humanism, that embraces Left, Right and "Up" -- the stages of human development neglected by both parties.

INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

Wilber's vision is evolutionary from beginning to end. He sees development not only in nature, but also in culture and spirituality. However, evolution is backed up by a the rather mysterious process of involution.

THREE TYPES OF SCIENCE

Wilber has rewritten the philosophy of science so that it not only grounds both the natural and the social sciences, but even makes room for a third type of "science": meditation or interior research, which follows the same formal steps as the other two types of science.

HOLONS

A core concept in Wilber's philosophy is the concept of the holon, which he borrowed from Arthur Koestler. The idea is that everything is not only a whole, but also part of a larger whole, so a "part/whole" or "hol-on".

KOSMOS

Wilber's view of the kosmos is very different from the one of physics, which holds matter to be the only "real" reality. To make room for other dimensions of existence, Wilber has borrowed the Pythagorean term "Kosmos".

POSTMODERNISM

Modernism naively believe in progress, postmodernism denied all stage conceptions as ethnocentric; constructive postmodernism or integralism again tries to find the hidden pattern behind all cultures and views.

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