



20th Century Background for Integral Psychology

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This paper introduces Integral Psychology (IP) as a mature embrace to the question of what is human nature and how do we best explore it. Historically, wave after wave of various trends and movements have attempted to give psychology a focus and scientific status. After decades of specialization and segmentation (APA has over 50 divisions), IP aims at a mature synthesis of the field. IP mines and integrates the lasting contributions to our understanding of human nature and potential from all psychological schools of thought, disciplinary divisions, and methods of investigation—paying attention to both research and applications. In this paper I explore six of the major historical predecessors to IP: behaviorism, psychoanalysis, humanistic-existential, transpersonal, constructivist-developmental, and positive psychology.

Introduction

You may ask why we need yet another psychology in a field rife with different schools, each with its own approaches and claims to legitimacy. We posit that the very fragmentation of the field and its overall focus on “problems” are a legacy of twentieth-century modernism. Now that we have entered the twenty-first century, we need a psychology that reflects recent advances in science and a shifting focus from illness to health. Integral Psychology, as conceived by Ken Wilber (*Integral Psychology*, 2000), offers such a model. It gives the most welcoming and comprehensive explanation for why a new attitude is necessary. It invites us to take what is best from each approach and identify the useful insights about human functioning are embedded in psychology’s various schools. Then we can evaluate what techniques have proven most effective for which purposes, with which clients or groups, and under what conditions. This new scientific attitude is more modest than earlier positivist, progressivist views and more adequate because it includes the best of all times and all climes, and offering a novel way to evaluate both existing and emerging knowledge-practices.



People have pondered the question of what it means to be a human and how we fit into nature since the dawn of history. There have always been theories of how to raise the young from helpless newborns into functioning adult members of a given society. Indeed, every society throughout history has created stories for its people about where they came from, what their purpose is, and what comes after life. Visit Gauguin's (1897) artistic rendition of the stations of life with the questions "*D'ou venons nous? Que sommes nous?*" and "*Ou allons nous?*" written in the left upper corner. (Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?)¹

Social practices, in turn, depend on a society's basic beliefs about human nature—from raising and schooling children, adjudicating disputes, punishing and rewarding members, healing the sick, and burying the dead.

And still every generation is asking anew: Who are we really, why are we here, what is our purpose on this earth, and where are we headed? How do we learn, develop, and make sense of our experience? What does it mean to be human? How are we similar and different from each other? When is it more beneficial to focus on our individual and cultural differences, our uniqueness, and when should we focus on what unites us as a species? For example, we all breathe, eat, digest, and sleep, but we may have entirely different diets, metabolize at different rates, and have different sleep patterns. In addition, even though all humans are socialized into a language as far as we know, people from different communities may not understand each other because the meaning of the shared experience is interpreted in entirely different ways. All this adds to the complexity of answering the question about what human nature is.

Moreover, now more urgently than ever before, we are also asking how do we know what we know (epistemology)? Who or what is it that "knows?" How do we find out (methodology)? And finally, we may come to wonder whether the desire or need to know and understand is perhaps itself an aspect of the uniquely human.

This introductory paper gives an overview on how Integral Psychology emerged as the most comprehensive, coherent, effective, and parsimonious approach to researching these salient



questions. It offers a compass or orienting framework that optimizes interdisciplinary perspectives and collaboration as well as necessary checks and balances.

Psychology itself is but one of the many branches of science that has been searching for answers to these conundrums of human nature and human experience. It has struggled as a discipline with its identity, vacillating between attempting to be a hard science and acknowledging its philosophical roots. The struggles of the discipline very much echo the history of civilization and the evolution and historical vicissitudes of “science.”²

The Hybrid Term “Psycho-Logy”

The term “psycho-logy” itself reflects the tension between natural and social sciences. It is a compound of two roots: (1) “psyche,” which The OED (1964) and Webster (1984) give as a). the soul or spirit and b). the mind, and (2) “logy,” the most common meaning of which is “the study of,” (a cognate of “logic”). The OED also dates the entry of psychology into the English language as 1693 and lists its meaning as the science of the nature, functions, and phenomena of the human soul or mind. Previously these questions were the province of philosophy, which etymologically means “the love of wisdom.” Thus, psychology also reflects the tension between our perennial thirst for both wisdom and knowledge.

For much of the twentieth century, the earlier definition of psychology, and its focus on meaning and the essential nature of human beings, has been overshadowed by the pressures of scientific materialism and objectivity. As early twentieth-century psychology labored to become “more scientific,” it steered away from the topics of soul and consciousness, values, and questions of meaning. These were deemed too fuzzy and too abstract to belong to the realm of scientific inquiry. Gardner (1985) presented a groundbreaking new perspective on the position of science in psychology and the necessary interplay between meaning making and cognition in *The Mind’s New Science*.

However, scientific exploration now includes the formerly neglected topics of consciousness, soul, and spirit. This is a result of the ongoing breakthroughs in neurobiology, biophysics,



biochemistry, and genetics, along with the introduction of new technologies such as super computers, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRIs), and Computer-Aided Tomography (CAT).

As one example, subjects today may undergo extensive testing in order to measure what happens in their brains when they receive dopamine boosts (known to engender pleasurable sensations) and report “pleasure,” in order to determine where pleasure in the brain resides and what neurochemical reactions occur as a result. Other such research investigates how cognition, memory, learning, and consciousness register on various sophisticated instruments and in test tubes. Often the intent is to prove that we do not need to resort to esoteric sources to explain human consciousness. According to this view, there is nothing about human experience that can not be explained entirely within the ever more sophisticated hard sciences. From that perspective, knowledge of human existence is achieved when we can fully and adequately describe the *mechanics of life*. Wilber calls this attitude flatland reductionism because it ignores the interior, subjective conditions as a vital part of the equation.

The study of the mind, soul, and spirit, as well as questions of meaning and subjective experience, could not be objectively studied in the first half of the last century with the available scientific instrumentarium. However, questions of meaning and value, rather than mere mechanics, persisted within special branches of psychology. A few of the most influential of these will be outlined below, especially as to their main conception of what it means to be human. I see four major forces in twentieth-century psychology (behaviorism, psychoanalysis, humanistic/existential, and transpersonal). I also nominate the recent arrival of positive psychology to this list.

The following psychological theories have captured the predominant attention of the field of psychology for much of the modern period. Behaviorism and psychoanalysis were two currents originally intent on making psychology a more exact science. Freud, in particular, was apt to make grand generalizations about why humans are the way they are based on his individual observations and musings. Despite the limitations of Freud’s theory, his fundamental influence



on psychology is monumental. Moreover, psychoanalysis itself has evolved into a more critical and self-examining discipline.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism first came on the scene with J. B. Watson (1919) and was then popularized by Skinner (1938). Behaviorism explored the exterior, observable, and measurable behaviors (Upper-Right quadrant, UR).³ It relied on statistical outcomes in controlled laboratory experiments. It focused on instinctual conditioning and basic needs, such as survival and safety. It eschewed as irrelevant and outside the psychological purview anything more complex and subjective. Behaviorists study overt behaviors and believe that people are conditioned by rewards and punishments to act in specific ways. Thus, they seek to manipulate human behavior towards positive ends through the use of appropriate techniques and reinforcements. Today, neither behaviorist researchers nor practitioners maintain that conditioning alone can explain everything humans do as it maintained in its heyday. It does, however, explain aspects of behavior in certain contexts and behavior modification is useful for discrete applications.

Wilber writes, “The old behaviorism has survived, but only by morphing into much more sophisticated forms, two of which are now dominant: cognitive science and evolutionary psychology.”⁴

According to Wilber:

Cognitive science focuses on the UR 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 [a] cure involves fixing them (usually with medication, sometimes with behavioral modification).⁵



For those interested in the evolution of cognitive science, Howard Gardner (1985) offers a succinct appraisal in *The Mind's New Science*.

The more we learn about the brain and neural networks, the more we are in awe of their mind-boggling complexity. Various natural science—from physics, to biology, to chemistry and their cross-disciplines—all contribute to our increasing understanding of the mechanisms that keep our bodies running—second by second, day by day, year in and year out.

At least the brief sojourn of our material bodies was a certainty for most of human history. Now, however, there is a debate heating up whether there are limits to the human life span and whether we could live forever, perhaps in bionically enhanced or modified forms with parts of us replaced by computer extensions. This kind of hypothesizing is not just held among medical specialists and cognitive scientists. *The New Yorker* and *Discover*, for instance, regularly bring articles that address such issues to the interested public.⁶ The Conference announcement of the World Future Society Meeting for July 2004 contains the following lines about a possible transhuman revolution:

The world is moving towards a fourth wave in which humans will become transhuman, and later posthumans, due to the advances of technology. Transhumanism represents a radical new approach to future-oriented thinking that is based on the promise that the human species does not represent the end of evolution, but rather its beginning. Transhumanism is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and evaluating the possibilities for overcoming biological limitations through scientific progress (p. 3).

Being aware of these trends is important because they challenge the very notion of human nature and psychology as we have framed them. What cognitive science, evolutionary psychology, and neuroscience cannot address is the meaning we make of existence. That is a supremely personal aspect of being alive. Meaning belongs to the domain of the interior: it belongs to the individual interior (UL), which encompasses a person's predispositions, preferences, and level of



development. It is also an aspect of the collective interior (LL), which stands for the shared values and cultural patterns programmed into and embodied in our meaning making. Evolutionary psychology, for example, focuses on the objective organism (UR) and its *interaction* with the objective environment (LR); these interactions, via variation and natural selection, result in certain behaviors that optimize survival. (Survival here is defined as functional fit.) Reports of new research using these premises appear in the popular press regularly and often with sensational overtones.⁷

Damasio's (1999) work is perhaps a best case example of what neuroscience has to offer to the refinement of psychology from the "eye of the flesh" point of view. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body And Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* examines the etiology of consciousness from the nonverbal, prepersonal experience of wakefulness to the personal sense of a separate or autobiographical self. Damasio acknowledges that his conclusions about consciousness were shaped predominantly by his investigation of patients with neurological disease and damage.

According to Damasio (1999), the nonconscious neural signaling of an individual organism begets the proto-self, which later permits the core self and core consciousness, which allows for the autobiographical self, which is the basis of extended consciousness (p. 310). The latter requires extensive memory and language defined in neurological terms and allows "human organisms to reach the very peak of their mental abilities" (p. 86). At the end of Damasio's developmental chain, extended consciousness can lead to what he terms conscience (p. 230). In his estimate, our ability to (1) transcend the survival instinct and to (2) desire truth (having a conscience) constitutes the upper reaches of human greatness (p. 230).

He views human consciousness as a totally *biological* phenomenon, different from nonhuman consciousness only in degree. He does not venture beyond what we would call a personal, independent, agentic adult self with its capacity for moral reasoning. As detailed and astute as his analysis is, it seems limited in at least two ways. First, his insights are generated almost exclusively by extrapolating from the sick, undoubtedly a problematic move when it comes to



optimal health and human potential. In contrast, the psychologies explored in this paper are psychologies of the well. Second, he does not address transpersonal phenomena, especially the possibility that the enlightenment experience is not as affected by brain injury as one would expect if consciousness were entirely bound by biology. Ram Dass can serve as a counter case here. He has been afflicted by a severe stroke, and despite motor and speech disabilities, seems conscious of his earlier realizations.

On the other hand, Damasio contributes much to our understanding of consciousness by locating the regions of the brain that act as the “software” for consciousness and by showing how these regions interplay with each other. In addition, his research supports the idea that persistent attention eventually changes the patterns of neuronal firings, networks, memories, and our interpretation of experience.

Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis, on the other hand, sought to understand the unconscious, hidden motivations and internal instincts that cause and condition later behavior. This view was first introduced by Freud (1920), who believed that human beings are operating entirely from a set of basic, initially unconscious instincts. These involve sex, hunger, thirst, and the avoidance of pain. According to Freud, if instincts are unfulfilled or warped in early childhood, neuroses result and cast a shadow on whatever the individual undertakes later on. By letting clients talk and associate freely while analyzing their dreams and utterances, Freud invented a qualitative method that still broadly influences our thinking and much of psychotherapeutic practice. The “talking cure” allows a patient to relive and repair past experiences and thus become less defensive and more adjusted to the exigencies of adult life. However, the adjusted life is often no more than what Thoreau so aptly described in *Walden* as one of “quiet desperation,” a rather listless and limited vision of the human condition and its potential.

In part as a counterpoint to behaviorists’ dispirited view of people and clinical psychologists’ focus on psychopathology and neuroses, modern humanistic/existential psychology,



transpersonal psychology, and constructivist adult developmental theory asserted themselves as more hopeful branches of psychology in the middle of the twentieth century. Positive psychology is an even more recent arrival on the playing field. Let me characterize them each below.

Humanistic/Existential Psychology

The origin of humanistic/existential psychology can be traced back to the Renaissance when the philosophy of humanism was born. It, in turn, had its origins in ancient philosophy, notably the Greeks. Its basic belief is that every person has worth and the right to achieve self-fulfillment through reason and personal initiative.

Maslow (1954) suggested that psychological health is more than being well adjusted and free from psychopathology. “Certainly it seems more and more clear that what we call ‘normal’ in psychology is really a psychopathology of the average, so undramatic and so widely spread that we don’t even notice it ordinarily” (p. 16). Maslow insisted that we need to study extraordinary human beings, not the average bloke, in order to understand human capacity and creative potential.

His hierarchy of needs postulates that human beings will fulfill their needs for survival, safety, love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization in that order. People are likely to attend to higher needs only if their lower needs are reasonably fulfilled.⁸ Later in his life, Maslow (1971) added self-transcendence as a possibly even higher need and researched what he called Being-values. In *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, he opened the door for the emergence of transpersonal psychology. Not since James’s *The Varieties of Religious Experience* in 1902 had the exploration of religion and spiritual or non-ordinary states of mind been an acceptable scientific topic in mainstream psychology. He proposed three complementary approaches for understanding human beings: explaining people by their deficiencies and neurotic symptoms (Theory X, UR); by their motivation towards self-actualization in the face of ongoing life challenges (Theory Y; UL/LL/LR); and by their alignment and attunement with transcending values (Theory Z; UL).



The humanistic psychologist, Carl Rogers (1965), created the term “person-centered,” which means that individuals know what is meaningful to them and what they need in order to heal themselves and grow. Rogers insisted that reflection and self-actualization were necessary for becoming an authentic person, and that empathy and unconditional positive regard from others were essential for individuals to learn to understand themselves and to make healthy choices in response to life’s challenges.

Other representatives, Rollo May for example, are listed both under humanistic and existential psychology. The titles of some of May’s (1950, 1967; 1970, 1975, and 1981) books give a flavor of existential psychology’s overall quest to explore the dilemma of human existence and meaning: *The Meaning of Anxiety*; *Psychology and the Human Dilemma*; *Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences*; *The Courage to Create*; *Freedom and Destiny*; and *The Discovery of Being*.

In general, humanistic/existential psychologists look at the whole person as a Gestalt within his or her life and cultural context. They postulate that behavior is primarily determined by a person’s perception of the world around her; that is, by her interpretation of that experience. Thus, humanistic/existential psychology emphasizes that individuals are much more than the product of their conditioning (behaviorism) or their early experiences and neurosis (psychoanalysis). Indeed, humanistic/existential psychologists trust that individuals are internally directed and motivated to fulfill their human potential, including their potential for growth, wisdom, love, joy, and creativity. While humanists generally have a hopeful view of humanity and its potential, existentialists differ in that they see the individual constantly walking the razor’s edge between meaninglessness and the irrational, immature abdication of personal choice and responsibility. Existentialists view morality and finitude as the hallmarks of human existence, and regard the creation of personal meaning in the face of mortality as the defining act of an authentic human being. They generally do not share the belief of some futurists that posthuman development is both unavoidable and desirable.



Transpersonal Psychology

As mentioned above, Maslow's work in the sixties on Being-values and the human need for self-transcendence gave impetus to a new branch of psychology. According to Michael Daniels (2000), an eloquent and scientifically-minded proponent of this branch, transpersonal psychology is concerned with the study of those states and processes in which people experience a deeper or wider sense of who they are or a sense of greater connectedness with others, nature, or the "spiritual" dimension. The term "transpersonal" means "beyond the personal." A common assumption in transpersonal psychology is that transpersonal experiences involve a higher mode of consciousness in which the ordinary mental-egoic self is transcended.⁹

While Developmental and Integral Psychology clearly distinguish between the experience of transpersonal states and stages of consciousness, transpersonal psychology, as a rule, does not. This can lead to what is generally dubbed the pre/trans fallacy. The truly transpersonal stages of development are confounded and given the same weight as earlier, prepersonal, and less differentiated beliefs and ways of making sense of reality. Thus, the child's momentary unconscious, oceanic abandon and joy may be equated with a highly mature, stable experience of conscious nature mysticism. It is evident that many adherents of transpersonal psychology conduct rigorous and scientifically valid studies of transpersonal phenomena and experiences. Despite their individual efforts, the field as a whole has become associated with the New Age and, according to Michael Daniels (2000), displays an uncritical fascination with "crystals, UFOs, alien abduction, chakras, auras, fairies, psychism, aromatherapy, levitation, fire-walking, or the millennium," the very preoccupations from which transpersonal psychology wishes to distance itself.¹⁰ As Daniels (2000) mentions, all of these phenomena and practices are worthy of rigorous scientific investigation as to their nature and transformational potential. However, if any such current practices and/or beliefs turn out to be scientifically unfounded or based in premodern, undifferentiated notions of reality, their truth claims need to be challenged.

Although transpersonal psychology was seminal for psychology in bringing attention to non-ordinary states of consciousness, spiritual phenomena, and meta-physical matters as objects of



scientific exploration, it seems to have done so too indiscriminately. As a result, transpersonal psychology now has a hard time introducing more rigorous boundaries both internally and in the perception of many others within the psychological community. Reflecting this dilemma, the APA, American psychology's gatekeeper, has not yet accepted transpersonal psychology as one of its separate divisions.

In summary, transpersonal psychology maintains that (1) each person is fundamentally and ultimately a part of the universe, (2) the whole and its components are basically "good," and (3) the people are destined to shift from a personal, conditioned self-sense to an identification with a deeper, overarching sense of transpersonal unity (Scotton, Battista, and Chinen, 1996; Walsh and Vaughan, 1993).

Constructivist Developmental Psychology (Focus on levels)

Starting with Piaget (1896-1980), developmental psychology has offered another powerful response to the question of human nature and individual differences. Constructivist developmental theory asserts that everyone moves through qualitatively different ways of knowing who they are, how they themselves and the world works, and how they know what they know. Constructivist developmentalists believe that human nature is dynamic, adaptable, and continuously evolving both individually and throughout history. To become a full member of society, each newborn human must retrace the basic steps of phylogenetic development. In the early years, innate maturation/differentiation processes (nature) launch the individual in the direction of growth. But children can only grow successfully with adequate support from the environment (nurture as experienced through parenting, schooling and training, cultural/social conditioning), including a shared language (LL) and adequate structural support (LR).

Constructivist developmental psychologists also hold (at least implicitly) that language and the capacity for symbol use is universal, innate, and central to understanding human experience. Once we acquire language, it becomes an automatic, unconscious habit and serves as the main tool for recognizing, learning, conceptualizing, interpreting, and communicating in and about all



aspects of experience. Because language is ubiquitous, and because it automatically filters the flux of experience into discrete events and objects of attention, it reinforces our sense of separateness. From my developmental research into the language habit and its effect on the development of self-awareness, I conclude that language cements the illusion of subject/object separation to a degree we rarely realize.¹¹

It is an encouraging trend that Western psychologists have begun to look into the costs associated with our near total reliance on language and other symbolic abstractions as the given for meaning making. An opinion increasingly heard among observers of the postmodern intellectual scene is that “we create symbolic systems of meaning... and then forget that they are our creations” (Anderson, 1990, p. ix). Also, language poses a unique problem of analysis by “being both the object and the agent of its study” (Bruner, 1990). Although the mantra “The map is not the territory” is often cited, it is rarely explored in any depth. For a more thorough treatment, see *The Marriage of Sense and Soul* for Wilber’s (1998) description of the linguistic turn in philosophy (p. 124).

Even the Buddha admonished his devotees about the illusion of trying to capture reality with words. According to Trungpa (1987), speech is one of the most powerful filters that screen us from a direct perception of what is. “Concepts,” he wrote, “are used as tools to solidify our world and ourselves. If a world of nameable things exists, then ‘I’ as one of the nameable things exist as well” (p. 7).

Meaning-focused developmentalists hold that concepts and their labels are intimations of a deeper reality that may never be fully accessed empirically or by merely rational means. They expand on Plato’s cave allegory. The linguist Korzybski (1948) first referred to the reality outside the cave as the real “territory” and warned us about confusing our conceptual maps—the shadows on the wall—with the reality outside. Language is arguably the chief means by which we create such conceptual maps of reality. These maps, in turn, serve as a powerful tool to create a sense of permanence and identity and help us ward off our fears of impermanence and insignificance.¹² By the time we are adults our use of symbolic representations is such an



automatic aspect of our behavior that we completely depend on them for making sense of the world and for communication.¹³ We can't imagine surviving without them.

And yet in the hands of poets and visionaries, language can be used to break through the shadows of representation and to illuminate the human predicament of being enmeshed in language.

Existence is beyond the power of words
To define: Terms may be used
But are none of them absolute.
In the beginning of heaven and earth there were no words,
Words came out of the womb of matter; And whether a man dispassionately
Sees to the core of life
Or passionately sees the surface,
The core and the surface
Are essentially the same,
Words making them seem different
Only to express appearance.
If name be needed, wonder names them both:
From wonder into wonder
Existence opens.
—Laotse

Once one has tasted the universe as an interconnected whole without boundaries, one may come face to face with the powerful desire to organize experience by attributing order and relevance to it. This is so even when one conceives of this possibility as a thought experiment or hypothesis rather than a deeper knowledge.

Constructivist developmental theory postulates that interpreting experience, hence meaning making, is a distinctively human activity and of a fundamentally different order than the rudimentary thought and language capacity observed in other species. Humans perceive, organize, judge, and synthesize input from external as well as internal sources in order to create coherent stories, maps, and theories for their lives. Constructivist developmental theories outline



how we form such systems of coherent meaning through a series of increasingly comprehensive and subtly differentiated reinterpretations of reality, or through a sequence of qualitatively different stories about what is real and salient in human life. Even the story of story making (constructivist developmental theory) is still a story.

In the West, the trajectory¹⁴ of human development is commonly divided into four discernable waves of development. These waves can be assigned various labels. Kohlberg first introduced the terms preconventional, conventional, and postconventional, while Wilber added post-postconventional to the overall model within which the different lines are explicated. The fourth general wave is also often referred to as transpersonal or self-transcendent as indicated in Table 1.



Basic Levels	Kohlberg's Levels of Development	Wilber	Representation
IV	Postpostconventional	Kosmocentric (ego-transcendent)	Transpersonal, immediate
III	Postconventional	Worldcentric	Personal, rational, language-mediated representational
II	Conventional	Ethnocentric	
I	Preconventional	Egocentric	Prepersonal

Table 1. Four Major Waves of Development

Data from both Kegan’s (1994) research and my own statistical analysis of over 5,000 Sentence Completion Tests shows the percentage distribution of adults at these waves to be approximately as follows: Preconventional 10%, conventional 80%, and postconventional and transpersonal together another 10%. Slightly higher percentages at the postconventional wave are seen in samples of senior professionals and highly educated people. Psychologists associated with Integral Institute generally agree on these four major waves as useful for mapping the overall journey of human development, regardless of the line investigated.

Different developmental theorists have investigated different aspects or lines of meaning making. According to Wilber (2000), in any given person, some of these lines can be highly developed, some poorly (or even pathologically) developed, and some not developed at all. Some of these lines and their most well-known observers are the cognitive (Piaget, 1952, 1978; Commons, 1984); moral (Kohlberg, 1984); relational (Gilligan, 1982); and needs fulfillment (Maslow, 1954). A similar conception of differences in innate strengths and growth potential is that of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1985). When comparing developmental theories, it is therefore important to clarify which waves are being examined and which lines or intelligences are being compared.



There are also several different, more ancient conceptions of human nature that have a developmental cast: theories range from the seven centers of the chakra system, in which each center resonates at a higher frequency than the previous one; to theories of multiple bodies (physical, esoteric, and formless in Kriya Yoga, or gross, subtle, and causal in Vedanta); to Aurobindo's (Satprem, 1968, pp. 202-218) planes of the mind (ordinary, higher, illumined, intuitive, and overmind). All of these maps are useful for explaining and recognizing aspects of experience at qualitatively different levels of perception and interpretation.

Different constructivist developmental theories further subdivide the main four waves into a number of more specific stages. Differences among them are a result of different research foci (e.g., different lines), different data used, and different research methodologies, as well as differences in the development and personalities of the researchers themselves.¹⁵ Even today most research money goes to studies of the development from birth to early adulthood and some to the later, "declining" years. However, it took people interested in the middle adult years to discover ways of meaning making that go beyond the conventional, culturally-supported perspectives.

Furthermore, mental growth is also described as a process of continuing differentiation and integration at progressively higher levels of complexity, in which earlier dilemmas are renegotiated and readdressed with more adequate and timely solutions. This view of growth is often represented as a spiral (Kegan, 1982; Beck & Cowan, 1996). The more differentiated individuals become, the more they can simultaneously process and integrate more elements from more diverse sources into a coherent framework. Sources of input range from registering multiple channels of sensory information; others' moods, behaviors, and interactions; and one's own thoughts, perceptions, emotions, motivations, biases, dreams, intuitions, bodily states, and states of consciousness, to name just a few. In addition, one can also consider interindividual phenomena in the form of the group mind and archetypal intimations as other sources of information (Consult Smith and Berg, 1987, *Paradoxes of Group Life*).



According to developmental theory, a new stage integrates the material or content of the previous one as a special case, or, as an element into its more inclusive meaning system. Linear causality is a special case of circular causality. It isolates variables that in reality are systemically connected. However, the difference between a linear and a systemic view of reality is not merely one of greater complexity as describable with set theory and mathematical formulas. In constructive developmental terms, each new stage also represents a qualitatively different interpretation of reality. It has emergent qualities that are not predictable from what came before.

Each stage in the stage sequence is always both a part and a whole. It is a whole meaning making system in its own right, as well as part of a bigger, more expansive system of understanding. Kegan (1982, 1994) speaks of “orders of consciousness,” or the increasing ability to take as object that which one previously could only construe and experience subjectively. According to Kegan (1982), what one was unconsciously embedded in or subject to at one stage, becomes an object that can be consciously organized and related to at the next higher stage.

Historically, Piaget was undeniably one of the most influential contributors to the psychology of the twentieth century. He introduced the notion of stage models for development or what he called a genetic epistemology. He observed that children’s reasoning changed in terms of quality over time, and that the changes were predictable and deducible from their observable actions and explanations. Thus, how they know the world (epistemology) evolves and is different for children at different ages. Based on his research, he posited that mental growth occurs in an invariant hierarchical sequence of relatively stable equilibria or stages. Each new stage constitutes a transformation of the previous way of knowing. Each stage is more complex and more adequate to function in a complex world with multiple demands.

In *The Origins of Intelligence* (1952), Piaget outlined four major stages of increasing differentiation and rationality. In large strokes, children’s thought develops sequentially from sensorimotor to concrete and abstract thought to formal reasoning. Piaget called the highest form of cognitive integration he observed formal operations (or formop for short). Formop is a highly



decontextualized set of rules and abstract procedures common to traditional scientific practice. It embodies logico-deductive tenets, which posit that:

- causality is linear;
- variables are independent;
- boundaries of objects are closed;
- objects are separate from the observer.¹⁶

Piaget (1952) projected that people reach formop by early adulthood. He saw this stage as the prototype of mature reasoning and necessary for the functioning in a modern society. Adults at this stage act as self-agents, independently orchestrating their lives and consciously choosing among alternative beliefs. Indeed, formop figures prominently in the ideology and education of the West.¹⁷ Adults with formal operations treat reality as something preexistent and external to themselves, made up of permanent, well-defined objects and closed systems that can be experimented with, measured, analyzed, and figured out according to established procedures. Instruments of measurement, experimental protocols, sophisticated analysis, and agreed-upon scientific notations and representations are the chief anchors of this worldview. Formop is sometimes referred to as Newtonian or scientific, and, with positivistic overtones, as a progressive or “modern” stance.

By reifying and objectifying experience, humans exert a measure of control over their environment. On the other hand, by only granting reality to rational, waking consciousness, formop thought demotes whole realms of human experience as non-existent or unimportant. A decision that seems eminently logical and reasonable within a narrowly defined context may turn out to be disastrous or unwise in the long run. Scientific progress and technical prowess devoid of wisdom, historical awareness, and far-ranging forethought may carry an inordinately high price.¹⁸



Post-Piagetian or Postconventional Models of Adult Development

Research into the possible development beyond Piaget's formop began in earnest in the 1950s. Loevinger (1966) and Kohlberg (1969) were two of the early pioneers in postulating and documenting ongoing adult mental growth into meaning making systems that included not only abstract reason but the higher order needs first introduced by Maslow, such as intuition, compassion, principled moral values, integration, self-actualization, and wisdom. Kohlberg (see Table 1) first introduced the term "postconventional," while calling the earlier stages that Piaget had investigated preconventional and conventional development.

Looking at formal operations as a step in human cognitive development rather than its endpoint, and at cognition as one line in several, postconventional developmentalists set out to chronicle and define positive adult development and individuation over the whole lifespan.

In some form or another, all postconventional theories take into account the interdependence of parts within a system and the interdependence between a system and its contexts. Constructivist developmental psychologists agree that a postconventional view of reality posits the following:

- variables are interdependent;
- boundaries are open, a matter of interpretation;
- while the permanent, objective world exists, its meaning is constructed;
- the observer influences what is observed; objectivity is not possible.

People with a postconventional conception of reality try to understand their own cultural conditioning and participation in interpreting reality. Things mean what they do because of our experience with them in given personal, semantic, cultural, social, and historical contexts. This view considers interrelationships rather than isolated individuals and aims for plausible interpretations rather than objective explanations and final causes. It outlines dynamic patterns and processes rather than immutable laws. It also explicitly describes the means by which its hypotheses are generated (heuristics) and does not merely tacitly rely on the unexamined use of



the sanctioned arsenal of scientific methods in its field. Wilber (1986) refers to these later, more complex logics as vision-logic.

The conception of reality that emerges at late vision-logic holds that:

- causation pervades space-time;
- relations among variables form a unity;
- not only their boundaries, but the permanent objects themselves are human constructs, created through the process of reification.

While a postconventional view allows people to explore the content and assumptions that guide their beliefs, the next developmental step compels them to investigate the process of meaning-making itself. The deep-seated psychological need for maps, order, certainty, and permanence becomes a center of attention and concern. Individuals begin to understand that as long as they search for a permanent identity and a coherent story to their existence, they maintain a fundamental separation between knower and that which they know.

Postconventional development thus describes the stepwise deconstruction of the constructed aspects of our symbolically mediated views of reality. It outlines the progressive disidentification with the fiction of the separation between knower and known. At least in theory, the conscious decoupling from one's automatic and exclusive symbolic "mediation" of experience allows one to reconnect with the underlying, seamless reality in a fuller and more "immediate" way. In addition, Korzybski's (1948) mandate, that "the map is not the territory," becomes a deeply understood reality, not just a bloodless motto. It is a constant reminder that every theory we construct needs to be seen and understood as a map: a partial, over-generalized, and often distorted view of the underlying experience.

At the fourth, post-postconventional, or ego-transcendent wave, individuals begin to embrace both personal and transpersonal ways of meaning making. They can appreciate the function of



earlier views based on abstractions and distinctions perpetuated in language, while they additionally have stable access to subtle insights and direct apperception of what is.

To summarize, most Western developmental stage theories describe the path of human development as a sequence of increasingly complex and integrated stages or coherent systems of meaning making. Development starts at birth, evolves through the early prepersonal and preverbal phases, and finally through the personal realm. Within the personal realm, constructivist developmental theorists state that each stage constitutes a qualitatively different and more differentiated way of experiencing reality, a different way of knowing, or a different worldview as perceived in waking consciousness. Even today, most research is confined to childhood and early adulthood, while postconventional development is covered by a minority of researchers. Studies that even consider the possibility of post-postconventional development are still rare in the academic establishment. Another way of looking at the developmental path is to state that the more individuated or self-actualized a person becomes, the greater his or her detachment is from the objects of attention via the senses and the mind, and the less biased his or her perspective is on the self as experiencer and meaning maker.

No matter how much we learn and know about the intricate workings of our bodyminds through objective, modern science, our existence as biological organisms is time limited. Our edifices of knowledge are partial, incomplete, and impermanent. Death is a constant no matter what label we put on it and at what level we encounter it: from the little, daily bruises to the ego (the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune), to transformations of consciousness where we die to an older version of who we are, to physical death, to final ego-transcendent awakening. No matter how much we may know about dying from a biological and cognitive science perspective, no matter what our specific belief system regarding death, our awareness of our mortality makes us unique in the animal kingdom.

The beasts are mortal, but they do not know or fully understand that fact; the gods are immortal, and they know it—but poor man, up from beasts and not yet a god, was that unhappy mixture: he was mortal, and he knew it. (Wilber, 1981, Preface)



In general, constructivist developmental psychology describes development as personal and unidirectional. Development moves from the unconscious, undifferentiated embeddedness of the newborn to the conscious, differentiated awareness of a split from the Ground experienced at the highest personal stages. Koplowitz (1984), using Piaget's theory as a basis, was one of the first researchers who also drew from Eastern perspectives on reality. His is a developmental model that can be read top-down because spiritual unity is taken as prior to materialized existence. The shift from viewing the individual life span from birth to mature adulthood (bottom-up) as chronicled by most constructivist developmental psychologists, to viewing life as a brief moment in an otherwise vast, timeless universe (top-down, bottom-up, bi-directional) has profound implications for what can and cannot be considered as explanatory possibilities for human experience and human nature.

The distinction between *content* and *structure* is also important to many constructivist developmentalists. Similar values and preferences can be expressed at different levels of complexity and integration. In other words, it is not what I believe (content) but the way I hold my beliefs (structure) that matters in terms of development.

Here is a concrete example of how seemingly similar surface content may reflect different structures of meaning making (ego development in this case) and translate into different behavior. The issue at hand is what to do about the use of laboratory animals for cosmetic testing. Fridda, for instance, adores animals and hates to see them cooped up and abused for research. Because animal welfare is of such importance to her, she single-handedly destroys a laboratory to free all its caged denizens. She feels righteous about her action and justifies the destruction as necessary because of the noble end it achieves in her eyes. Fridda has no perspective on her actions or any room to reflect on others' views on the matter. She is a captive of her own convictions. We may assume that she is acting out of a pre-conventional or early conventional frame of reference. Joe also loves animals. He became a historian of lab animal use and publishes papers about how the laws governing this practice have evolved. The level of abstraction, balanced examination of various sources, and overall objectivity with which Joe does this reflects a linear scientific or modern mindset. Finally, Bob and Lisa, together with a



couple of their friends, decide to collaborate with others from many research disciplines and many constituencies (grass-root, local, state and government, public affairs, television) to bring greater awareness to the issue of using animals for testing, in order to change existing public perceptions and influence national policy. In this case, their behavior is more likely reflecting a postconventional perspective. When asked, all of these actors might say that they do what they do because they love animals.

A related notion to content and structure is that of *espoused theory* versus *theory-in-use*, made popular by Chris Argyris (Argyris and Schön, 1977) in organizational behavior circles.¹⁹ No doubt many more people are proponents of an integral mandate than are actually embodying it. The ideal of creating a postconventional, highly effective community of inquiry may be appealing to many who see the necessity for more adaptable, equitable, and enlightened organizations, but actually creating and then sustaining such an organization has so far eluded even most of the best efforts.

Unlike some transpersonal psychologists, constructivist developmental psychologists do not confound early unconscious immersion with later conscious union with the Ground. In addition, they also clearly distinguish between *temporary states* and *stable stages* of consciousness. They hold that human beings have transient potential access to peak experiences and altered states of mind throughout development, as well as during the regular sleep and dream cycles. Such experiences, however, are filtered through, distorted, and constrained by a person's current developmental stage of meaning making in the waking state. They also posit that there are stable, ego-transcendent, or truly "trans-personal" stages of reality perception that follow postconventional development.

In *Transformations of Consciousness*, Jack Engler (1986) came squarely down on the side of ego maturity: "You have to be somebody before you can be nobody" (p. 24). A developmental psychologist might put it this way: "You have to *have* something before you can *transcend* or *let go of it*." Whether one can achieve enduring ego-transcendent stages of development without a



concomitant mature level of ego development is an ongoing and hotly debated issue in consciousness studies and developmental psychology.

Central to the constructivist developmental model are the claims that (a) the stage sequence is unidirectional and that the stages constitute hierarchical integrations; (b) people evolve from the least differentiated to ever more differentiated ways of knowing and relating to the world and their inner experience; and (c) development moves from simple to complex in regard to all possible contents, lines and domains, and their interconnections. In the most global sense, development can be described as the gradual unfolding of people's capacity to embrace ever-vaster horizons and to plumb ever-greater depths of heart, mind, body, and soul.

As mentioned at the beginning of this essay, during the early epochs of life, the vast majority of people go through predictable transformations from one way of knowing to another. This movement is part of maturation and socialization and therefore neither deliberate nor conscious at the time. By now we know astonishing details about the first year of life and what tremendous changes occur in the infant—physically, mentally, and psychologically. The majority of contemporary society makes sense of reality in ways that are identified as belonging to the conventional wave. A minority of people continue to develop more complex, coherent, and qualitatively different ways of knowing, feeling, and acting. At this point, development becomes increasingly more voluntary, deliberate, and conscious. Further growth in the personal realm is generated in part by the explicit asking of the very questions posed in the beginning paragraph of this essay and the conscious registering of how one responds to them.

Positive Psychology

In the last decade, the term positive psychology has gained wide acceptance (APA), and funding has begun to flow into this new field made prominent by Martin Seligman (2002) as the “science of happiness.” The following paragraphs are largely a summary of a recent article on positive psychology by Mary Sykes Wylie in the *Family Networker*, (2003, pp. 47-53).



According to Sykes (2003), positive psychology is an explicit reaction towards the entire “so-called mental health establishment that has become a giant public edifice dedicated to mental illness” (p.47). Meanwhile we know very little about what constitutes “normal,” healthy, and happy human functioning. Seligman (2002) set out to change that record and to finally define and ground vague concepts such as hardiness, courage, awe, and the like through valid and rigorous research. He hopes to determine what these concepts actually mean operationally and how they objectively affect the way people behave—hence, the science of happiness.

Sykes (2003) reports that so far Seligman and his team have defined three major branches of positive psychology: (1) subjective happiness, (2) human excellence, and (3) positive institutions. The last branch answers the question of what kinds of institutions best support (1) and (2). Below is a list of some of the content categories that have been selected as possible candidates for this classification system. As it contains many concepts also important in developmental, humanistic/existentialist, and transpersonal psychology, I believe it is valuable to explore the usefulness and discoveries of this approach and how it fits into Integral Psychology.



Subjective happiness (positive emotions and moods)	Expressions of human excellence (positive human strengths & virtues)		Positive institutions
Well-being	Optimism	Humility	Democracy
Contentment	Wisdom	Forgiveness	Family
Feeling love and loved	Knowledge	Altruism	Free press
Awe/wonder	Courage	Benevolence	Sustainability
Transcendence	Will power	Citizenship	Alternatives to materialism
Relatedness	Humor	Spirituality	Social networks (church, school)
Courage	Justice		
Joy, bliss	Tolerance		
Hope	Temperance		

Table 2. Preliminary Categories in the Three Branches of Positive Psychology

Most recently, Peterson and Seligman (2004) published a handbook, *Character strengths and virtues*, based on their values-in-action classification project. There has been much resistance to such an endeavor. For one, critics view the whole classification scheme and the choice of topics unsystematic. How can qualitative, inner experiences be rigorously defined, much less quantified? Here, terms are treated as if they mean the same the world over while we know that most abstract concepts are culture- and context-sensitive as well as mutable over time. In addition, critics point out that most people are not interested in wisdom, but instead are focused on sex, money, status, and personal gratification.²⁰

In its defense, it has to be said that positive psychology is not just another “positive thinking, let’s feel good” movement. It does not ignore the reality of human miseries such as sadness, anger, fear, and anxiety, which seem to be hardwired and serve important functions in human survival.²¹ “The underlying message of positive psychology is that we can to some extent make ourselves happier, even when we can’t entirely rid ourselves of our miseries,” (Sykes, 2003 p. 50). Seligman (1990), the discoverer of learned helplessness in humans,²² now explores and



advocates learned happiness. What he hopes to achieve is to find ways to develop positive feelings not through therapy and medication, but through institutions that encourage “hard work, cooperation, self-sacrifice, child-care, learning and teaching, and seeking transcendent meaning in ordinary life” (Sykes, 2003, p. 50). A notion of “good character” is a core assumption of this approach to psychology. What constitutes the good life, good character, and human virtues are questions dating back to ancient Greek philosophy. To gain more clarity about these vital concerns through rigorous research is at the heart of positive psychology as well as central to an Integral Psychology.

What is unmistakable in contemporary psychology is a turn towards embracing the inner world on many different fronts, from phenomenological to scientific, while, at the same time, the natural sciences and their cross-disciplines are subjecting matters of consciousness and other previously untouchable aspects of human experience to their methods and investigative tools. The Dalai Lama is one well-known representative who openly acknowledges the need for the scientific study of consciousness, even subjecting himself to brain wave measures while in deep meditation. After decades of ever greater disciplinary specialization, indications of cross-disciplinary efforts are a welcome shift and give rise to hopes for a less fragmented, more coherent field of psychology.

What is of even greater interest here is that the newest work being done is not only cross-disciplinary, but cross-methodological and spans all quadrants in the AQAL model. This wider synthesis is called transdisciplinary in Integral Psychology.

Now that we have given a purview of the major strands of psychology that have led to Integral Psychology, we can introduce the newest and most all-embracing form of investigation into human nature and potential.

AQAL or Integral Psychology (IP)

The founding of Integral Institute in 2000 was a landmark outreach event, which drew together thought leaders from various branches of science and practice. One of its aims was to begin to



bridge the many chasms between academic disciplines, policy makers, practitioners, and citizenry that now exist. Jeffrey Alexander identified three major post-WWII phases in social science: modernist, postmodern-pluralist, and an emerging integral age, an “age of synthesis.” Wilber is unrivalled as a representative of this new synthesis.

An excerpt from Jack Crittenden sums up Wilber’s (1995) integrative embrace, from “What is Integral?” at <http://www.integralinstitute.org/history.htm>:

Wilber’s approach appears to have provided a coherent vision that seamlessly weaves together truth-claims from such fields as physics and biology; the eco-sciences; chaos theory and the systems sciences; medicine, neurophysiology, biochemistry; art, poetry, and aesthetics in general; developmental psychology and a spectrum of psychotherapeutic endeavors, from Freud to Jung to Kegan; the great spiritual 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.

The Integral or AQAL “all-quadrant, all-level” paradigm combines the best of ancient wisdom (i.e., phenomenological examinations) with the best of modern and postmodern knowledge (i.e., objective science and intersubjectivity, respectively). In *Integral Psychology* Wilber (2000) does for psychology what Jack Crittenden (2000) suggests he does for science in general. He offers the most comprehensive treatment of psychology available in which he compares and integrates into a coherent map about a hundred different developmental theories from antiquity to the present, from the Eastern wisdom traditions to the leading-edge of Western psychology.



Many proponents of adult developmental psychology have come to embrace Wilber's integral vision and his AQAL model as a comprehensive, viable, and productive orientation map for psychology. Indeed, their own emphasis on levels of psychological development makes the conception of levels in the other quadrants all the more salient and fascinating. The AQAL developmental perspective makes room for studying human nature and human experience from every conceivable angle.

As mentioned above, there is a growing interdisciplinary insight that the maps and theories we make about reality are always partial. They can never grasp the whole, intricate unity of the living universe of which we are an inseparable part. The very existence of multiple, often conflicting maps and scientific explanations of human nature helps to point out the relative incompleteness and limitation of each of them. As Wilber jokes, nobody is likely to be 100% wrong 100% of the time. Instead, IP follows the rule that "*everybody* is right. More specifically, everybody—including me—has some important pieces of the truth, and all of those pieces need to be honored, cherished, and included in a more gracious, spacious, and compassionate embrace" (Wilber, vol. 8, p. 49).

So far I have touched upon cognitive and behavioral approaches to psychology that focus on the "logic" in psycho-logy. I have also introduced a few of the major branches of psychology (psychoanalytic, humanistic/existential, developmental, transpersonal, and positive) that retain a focus on the interior aspects of experience, and emphasize the "psyche" root in psycho-logy. At the same time, these divisions are competing with the current vogue of cognitive, biomedical, and evolutionary science approaches. For now, many of the academic debates regarding the psycho-logy divide are continuing with vocal combatants on both sides.

Despite this fact, there is a noticeable shift in emphasis as a result of our greater understanding of interrelated systems and postmodern advances in epistemology. Rather than pitting theories against each other, IP aims at a dialectical understanding of how different models interrelate and influence each other in complex ways. IP also uses the best discoveries of each different approach to create a more viable, broader map of the human territory and its study. In effect, IP



is strikingly different from other approaches in two ways. First, it integrates useful contributions to knowledge throughout history from as many fields of inquiry as possible. Second, it explicitly explores its own limitation as a simplifying, generative model. It is unique because it sees science making itself as an aspect of meaning making, and therefore, as an ongoing, dialectical process under evolutionary contingencies. Intimations of such a view of the scientific enterprise go back to 1962, when Thomas Kuhn presented his interpretation of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

Wilber predicts that behavioristic, psychoanalytic, humanistic-existential, and transpersonal approaches to psychology, joined now by positive psychology, will be absorbed by IP since it “transcends and includes” them all. I believe that it will take the dynamic interplay between specialists willing to expand their focus and synthesizers like Wilber for the evolution of psychology to thrive.

IP delivers what no other psychology accomplishes so far by providing us with a simple, coherent framework, which includes behavioral (UR), intentional (UL), cultural (LL), and social/structural dimensions (LR), each stretching from matter to body to mind to spirit. The six main components of a human psychology that any comprehensive or integral model needs to cover, according to Wilber, are (1) The four territories of attention: interior and exterior, individual and collective; (2) consciousness and its waves and levels; (3) lines of development; (4) natural and altered states of consciousness; (5) styles, types, or modes of personality; and (6) the concepts of ego, self, or self-system.²³

Thus, IP and the AQAL framework can map the historical, theoretical, and methodological import of other psychologies and their contribution to today’s and tomorrow’s understanding of human nature. In this paper, I have looked at a few of the major approaches to psychology in the twentieth century. From behaviorism to psychoanalysis, from constructivist developmental theories to cognitive science and evolutionary biology, from quantitative analysis to qualitative investigations, IP can account for what came before, what is currently being explored, and where psychology may be headed. It embraces the process and evolution of the scientific endeavor. Its



superior strength is its openness to ongoing self-inquiry and discovery and its profound honoring of theory-making as a form of storytelling, a story without end and with ever newly emerging, unforeseen possibilities. And at every turn, those who engage in IP know the ultimate move is one of dis-identification with all theories and all forms of explanation. From Wilber: “So you pursue this inquiry, Who am I? Who or what is this Seer that cannot itself be seen? You simply ‘push back’ into your awareness, and you dis-identify with any and every object you see or can see” (p. 221).



Endnotes

¹ <http://www.abcgallery.com/G/gauguin/gauguin68.html>

² For a very readable summary of the history of civilization, see James Burke (1985) *The Day The Universe Changed*.

³ Basic knowledge of AQAL theory is assumed here, where Upper Left (UL) and Upper Right (UR) stand for individual interior and individual exterior, and Lower Left (LL) and Lower Right (LR) stand for collective interior and collective exterior, respectively.

⁴ Waves, Streams, States, and Self—A Summary of My Psychological Model (Or, Outline of An Integral Psychology) found at: http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/int_psych_summ.cfm/xid,6278/yid,4513272

⁵ Waves, Streams, States, and Self—A Summary of My Psychological Model (Or, Outline of An Integral Psychology) found at: http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/int_psych_summ.cfm/xid,6278/yid,4513272

⁶ Two recent examples: (1) Groopman, J. Annals of Medicine. The bionic eye: Can scientists use electronic implants to help the blind see? *The New Yorker*, September 29, 2003. (2) Wright K. Staying alive: How long can the human body last? Cover story in *Discover*, November 2003, vol. 24 No 11.

⁷ The Boston Globe of 8.17.03 carried an article by C. Thompson entitled, Do scientists age badly? A researcher says marriage ruins a beautiful mind. Thompson examines an article in the *Journal of Research in Personality* by S. Kanazawa who declares that evolutionary psychology explains why male scientists lose steam as they age. According to Kanazawa, producing scientific breakthroughs is a form of male mating behavior meant to attract females.

⁸ I wish to remind myself and my readers of our own privileged status for being in a position to pay attention to these questions, rather than doing backbreaking, physical labor all day long in order to feed a hungry family in a hostile environment, as millions do all over the world.

⁹ <http://www.mdani.demon.co.uk/trans/tranintro.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.mdani.demon.co.uk/trans/tranintro.htm>

¹¹ It is interesting to me that during the last year there have been several moves to account for first-, second-, and third-person perspectives in AQAL with numeric/symbolic representations (Wilber, Excerpt D of the forthcoming volume two of the Kosmos Trilogy). Whether these translations constitute useful abstractions and systematizations of knowledge or simply fun, advanced forms of formal operations (that are even further removed from underlying reality than natural language accounts) is a puzzle that has occupied me for some time. Like much of theory, they may be helpful to people at certain places in development while detrimental to the deeper growth of others, since they constitute further forms of “reification.”

¹² My own passion for the field of constructivist developmental psychology grew out of my training in semantics, the linguistics of meaning (Cook-Greuter, 1995, 1999). I continue to explore how people develop increasing awareness of language and its power to both liberate and to enslave.

¹³ Traumdeutung (the interpretation of dreams) was one of Freud’s chief means of trying to understand human nature. That we use language and other representations in dreams is particularly obvious to speakers of more than one language. It counts as a breakthrough in language acquisition when one begins to dream in a second language.

¹⁴ “Trajectory” is of course a ballistic metaphor that describes a rising and declining curve more in step with physical development. In physical terms, childhood growth, adult stasis, and late life decline are aptly described by a trajectory. To reiterate, our choice of words implies a view of reality. “Trajectory” creates a different meaning than words like “path” or developmental “spiral.”

¹⁵ That the developmental position of the researchers/theoreticians also plays a role in their theory-making stands to reason. This is a controversial position, but one that is inevitable if we accept as a basic tenet of developmental theory that we can fully understand only the material at our own current level and the developmental levels we have successfully navigated through. As a result, we can only make limited projections about levels and conceptions of reality beyond our own. Given our need for goodness, beauty, and truth, we project these higher stages to be ideal types. Thus, the unavoidable conclusion is that the theories themselves are somewhat reflections of the developmental capacity of the theory-makers. Even to raise the question of the possibility of developmental constraints is usually felt as an affront by the minds so constrained. Thus, working in the constructivist developmental domain is a politically delicate matter. It is one of the challenges of mature growth to learn not to



overidentify with one's creations (including theories), as they are always partial, limited, and biased in multiple and subtle ways. It is also wise conduct to not let one's developmental expertise become a professional liability (French: *Déformation professionnelle*), i.e. to *automatically overapply* the tools of one's trade. This caution, of course, also governs this paper.

¹⁶ Here, I am borrowing characterizations of the conventional, postconventional, and post-postconventional waves used by Koplowitz in 1984.

¹⁷ For a thorough analysis of the modern demands embedded in current Western ideology and their impact on adults, see Kegan's (1994) *In Over Our Heads: The mental demands of modern life*. A case in point is the modern democratic institution. It is based on the availability of a citizenry that can deliberate issues independently and critically, and arrive at fair and reasoned solutions. That is, it depends on Piaget's highest described stage.

¹⁸ Let me list just two examples: 1) The decision to build and then drop atomic bombs in 1945 has altered global consciousness forever and fueled the nuclear arms race. Even the peaceful use of nuclear energy creates disposal products that we have no way of eliminating. We are now concerned, and some alarmed, about many other scientific breakthroughs, the potentially disastrous consequences of which we have no way of predicting or undoing once they occur; 2) One wonders what will happen as more and more genetically engineered animals and plants are introduced, since they will likely alter our ecosystems and ourselves in unpredictable and possibly deleterious ways. Depending on whether one takes a personal or a transpersonal stand, this could spell dire doom for humanity or be a powerful lesson in the karmic learning process.

¹⁹ When researchers design tests to find out what level of meaning making system a person generally has access to, this distinction between theory-in-use and espoused theory has important methodological implications. While some measurements try to elicit a person's theory-in-use (Lahey et al, 1988; Loevinger 1978; Cook-Greuter, 1999), others, such as the Values test of Beck and Cohen (1996), focus on what values a person holds. It is much easier to admire and believe in certain ideals (espoused theory) than to live and exemplify them in one's actions (theory-in-use), or as the common parlance has it, "to walk the talk."

²⁰ As quoted in Sykes's article, Steve Wolan's wrote an email message to Seligman that read: "This is all well and good. But this is not what my patients are interested in. My patients are interested in sex, shopping, drugs, and rock 'n' roll." Wolan thinks that "People use their human strengths like creativity, humor, relationship in specific contexts, to overcome particular adversities, hardships, and struggles. Marty (Seligman) doesn't seem to be interested in that—he's interested in their pure, Aristotelian essence" (p. 50).

²¹ See Hunter Lewis (2002) in *The Beguiling Serpent*. He gives a systematic assessment of four basic dysphoric emotions (desire/want, anger, fear, and sadness) and their evolutionarily based survival functions. He hypothesizes that the absence of attachment to these four fundamental emotions itself constitutes the fifth basic emotion or the positive state of contentment or equanimity. While the details of Lewis's overall theory may be debatable, the economy of the basic taxonomy is insightful, integrative, and beguiling indeed. In my view, Lewis's main problem is that his argument lacks a developmental perspective. He assumes that most adults are rational, self-determining, independent agents.

²² Seligman and Peterson (1985) started out charting "learned helplessness." Seligman only later became interested in "learned optimism" and eventually to the postulation of a positive science of psychology.

²³ For a general overview of these topics, readers are directed to

<http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/kosmos/excerptB/part3.cfm>, *A Theory of Everything* (2000), and *Integral Psychology* (Wilber, 2000), which covers each aspect of AQAL in greater depth. For an introduction to All Quadrants as a heuristic or scanning method applicable to problem spaces, see AQ as a Scanning and Mapping Device (Cook-Greuter, 2005).



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