

AN INTEGRAL AGE AT THE LEADING EDGE

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INTRODUCTION TO EXCERPTS FROM VOLUME 2 OF THE KOSMOS TRILOGY

Anthropologists agree that human beings, in their million-or-so-year history, have undergone 5 or 6 truly profound and major transformations, where “transformation” means a substantial change in the structure, nature, views, needs, and values of an individual or society. There are many ways to view these transformations. One is according to the techno-economic base, which has transformed from “foraging” (hunting and gathering) to “horticultural” (early agriculture, done with a simple digging stick or hoe) to “agrarian” (advanced agriculture, using a heavy animal-drawn plow) to “industrial” to today’s “informational.” Another way to view them is according to their corresponding worldviews, which transformed from “archaic” (moving from the great apes) to “magic” (tribal) to “mythic” (traditional fundamentalist and mythic-literal religion) to “rational” (the Enlightenment and modernity) to “pluralistic” (postmodernity and multiculturalism).

What’s most intriguing is that many researchers have found substantial—indeed, compelling—data suggesting that humanity is today on the verge of another transformation, the most significant and far-reaching in all of history. It is usually referred to by term such as “Integrated” or “Systemic” or “Integral”—meaning whole, complete, inclusive, all-embracing, holistic, systematic, nonmarginalizing, comprehensive. As developmentalist Clare Graves first pointed out, each of the previous worldviews (previous to, that is, Integral) is marked by the belief that its views, and its views alone, are real or true, and all others are wrong, childish, or just plain confused. But this new Integral level intuitively believes that there is some sort of merit, however modest, in absolutely all of the preceding worldviews—they are all “true but partial,” and thus all of them need to be included in a truly inclusive or non-oppressive society. If nothing

else, they are all stages in a human's overall growth and development, and each needs to be included for that reason alone.

In all of human history, there has *never* been a culture that operated on that idea as an inclusive and all-embracing view of the values of its citizens, and yet an Integral culture promises just that—the first culture in all of history that is truly all-embracing, all-inclusive, all-caring. Clare Graves, the previously mentioned developmental pioneer, called the recent beginning emergence of this Integral level “a cataclysm of meaning, a monumental leap of meaning,” and indeed, it appears to be exactly that. Moreover, the many fragmented, partial, and segmented approaches to the world's problems—which characterize the responses to virtually every major difficulty facing humanity today, from global warming to worldwide economic meltdown to terrorism to world hunger and poverty to the threat of nuclear incidents—would be superseded with more inclusive and comprehensive approaches, promising for the first time to actually get real traction in curing these really wicked problems.

The benefits continue—applied to individuals as well as whole societies. In individuals, their own broken, fragmented, partial, and torn selves would instead find approaches that involved wholeness, fullness, freedom, and genuine liberation. The pain and suffering that comes from partial and broken personalities would be healed and wholed in a worldview that stresses—and offers—unity, completeness, totality, and all-inclusiveness, as many-fragmented humans became full and whole for the first time. Want it or not, happiness quotients would begin to soar, suffering plunge.

Each of those major transformations that first occurred in humanity's past—archaic to magic to mythic to rational to pluralistic (on the edge of today's integral)—remain in existence

as stages that individual's go through on the way to their own maturity. The archaic stage still exists, and marks the first few years of a newborn's life; magic is still present, and emerges today around years 1-5; mythic still has a real presence, and dominates—in the same basic form it has had for thousands of years—ages 7-12 (along with any adults who remain arrested at this stage); rationality emerges today in adolescence and continues into early adulthood; if growth and development continues, the pluralistic postmodern stage emerges in early adulthood and remains until death (barring the possibility of this new Integral transformation, which can occur anytime after the postmodern). Individuals in any modern or postmodern society can develop to any one of those stages before developmental arrest sets in, making each culture a mixture (or “layer cake”) of all 6 or so major levels or stages of consciousness—with all the internal “Culture Wars” that that entails. The three main value systems involved in today's Culture Wars are the three highest levels to evolve to date—mythic traditional (seen in fundamentalist and “mythic-literal” religious believers); modern rational (seen in the standard scientific-materialist worldview and its beliefs); and the postmodern pluralist (seen in multiculturalism, the “cultural creatives,” and ultra liberal stances). Each of them, of course, thinks the others are totally crazy, immature, or generally idiotic. Only the Integral stage, just now tentatively emerging, promises to overcome the Culture Wars by possessing a structure that is inherently inclusive, embracing, comprehensive—and not fragmented, narrow, broken, and partial—and inherently at war.

The natural question is, are there things we can do to bring forth the Integral transformation now? And the answer is a cautious “yes.” First, it needs to be understood that psychologists still do not have a detailed understanding of transformation itself—what causes it, what can accelerate it, what prevents it.

But in general, anything that challenges the present level and supports the next higher, emerging level will facilitate transformation. A few psychological approaches (known generally under the names “Integral Transformative Practice” and “Integral Life Practice”) have taken an Integral approach themselves, combining numerous independent forms of transformation (from body work to emotional/therapeutic work to mental training to spiritual meditation) to get the best results from all of them working together. (See *Integral Life Practice*, by Wilber et al., for more of this approach.)

One of the items in all Integral Transformative Practices is the mind module, or working on training the mind to think integrally and thus participate in an integral transformation directly. Psychologists have found, for example, that simply studying a developmental model of the human mind (which views the mind developing through a series of stages or levels, just like the archaic, magic, mythic, rational, pluralistic, integral sequence)—the simple studying of such developmental models and sequences will, in itself alone, increase the speed of development of the individual through those levels. Simply studying the stages of development facilitates their emergence (as if knowing that there are higher stages of growth that you can develop through opens to the mind to that very possibility).

Likewise, the same is true of Integral Frameworks (one of which will be presented in this book), all of which contain a developmental component (thus including that important area) among its other dimensions. Simply studying that Integral Framework is *psychoactive*—it activates the mind to more quickly and easily transform through the various levels to the Integral level itself. It does so by alerting the mind to all the different dimensions that Integral models have found to actually exist in the human being—many of which were simply unknown even a few

decades ago. But if you don't even know that these dimensions or areas of your life exist, you will never know that you can develop into them. But learning of all the different dimensions of your being will alert the mind to be on the lookout for anything that addresses them and facilitates their emergence.

Thus, once you “download” an Integral Map (or “Super-Map,” as it's sometimes called, given its comprehensive nature), it will red flag all the areas of your life that you didn't even know existed, and trigger the mechanisms to begin the growth and development of these areas in earnest. And all you have to do is learn of their existence!

These “hidden” dimensions, exposed by an Integral Map or Super-Map, are very like the rules of grammar that each of us follows. Every person brought up in a particular language-speaking culture ends up speaking that language quite correctly—they put subjects and verbs together correctly, they use adjectives and adverbs correctly, and in general, they follow the rules of grammar of that language quite correctly. But if you ask any of them to write down the rules of grammar that they are so accurately following, not one of them can do it. In other words, they are following a very extensive set of rules but have no idea that they are doing so, let alone what those rules are! These hidden dimensions are like the rules of grammar that all of us have and are following quite faithfully and quite accurately, but most of us have no idea that these things are even there. They are “hidden maps,” hidden grammars, that govern how we interpret and experience the various territories in which we find ourselves. Only by including all of these areas, crucial as each one of them is, can we both truly discover our full potentials, and genuinely address the globally wicked problems now threatening to engulf our world. One thing is certain: continuing the present, fragmented, partial and broken approaches that we have been

using—which have not worked in the past, and will not miraculously start working in the future—can we even hope to address both of these issues, both our great potentials and our serious problems.

This is what this book is designed to do—point out the various dimensions or aspects of a truly Integral Framework (based on the study of dozens of world cultures in premodern, modern, and postmodern times), and thus alert your mind to their existence (thus automatically opening them to growth and development). As you go through the various parts of this book, some of them will seem interesting, some even exhilarating; others will move more slowly, even boringly, and take a little effort. But I urge you to simply move through each area, reading it as carefully as you can at the time, and if it makes a great deal of sense, great!; and if not, no worries. Simply enter the information and move on. Whether you know it or not, this is enough to register these dimensions in your brain, and trigger the psychoactive nature of the Integral Framework to start doing its job—namely, transforming your very own consciousness to those Integral dimensions that are more conscious, more open, more inclusive, more caring, more loving, more capable, and more encompassing—leading from an identity with “me” to “us” to “all of us” to the entire “All”—to what the Sufis call “the Supreme Identity,” an identity with the Ground of All Being—your Truest and Deepest and Highest Self (if this seems a little far out, I urge you to take the first few steps with me, and—once you are exposed to these new dimensions—see if they don’t start to make some sort of sense to you).

Some of the material might strike you as unnecessarily academic and heady. Don’t worry, it won’t kill you (although there might be times you wished it did!). Simply take a breath and walk on. The Integral Map is just a map, and we all know that we

don't want to confuse the map with the territory. At the same time, we don't want to be stuck with an inaccurate, screwed-up map, either, do we? And the Integral Map or Super-Map is the most complete, inclusive, and comprehensive Map we have yet of the territory of you. No matter how complicated it might seem on occasion, every one of the major dimensions of this Map are facets of your very own awareness that you can easily find operating in you *right now*. All of them, literally. No matter how academic sounding some might be, they are actually simple components of your own awareness right now, as you will clearly see. The problem has been, nobody before has told you where and how to find them! And so your awareness very likely remained partial, fragmented, and broken (or at least less inclusive, less Full, than it easily could be).

But with each of the components or dimensions of the Integral Map, you will be directed to exactly where and how you can feel these dimensions operating in yourself right now. So hang in through the academic crud, and then join me in feeling and experiencing these dimensions in your own being, and notice how much Fuller and Freer you feel each time you make a new discovery. And then after making that discovery, simply stand back and let the psychoactive nature of the Integral Super-Map do its job—which it will indeed do.

An example of an “academic” component of the Integral Map is what is called **Integral Post-Metaphysics**—and its corollary, **Integral Methodological Pluralism**. These are important, I believe, for many reasons. First and foremost, no system (spiritual or otherwise) that does not come to terms with modern Kantian and postmodern Heideggerian thought can hope to survive with any intellectual respectability (agree with them or disagree with them, they have to be addressed)—and that means

all spirituality as well must be post-metaphysical in some sense. (Sounds academic already, right? All it is really referring to is the nature of God or Spirit and whether or not we can actually prove the existence of Spirit. Is that more interesting? For *premodernity*, Spirit or God was taken as real as a matter of unthinking faith and belief, and all but the incurably confused believed in the existence of some sort of God or Goddess or Spirit or spirits. But *modernity* demanded evidence, not just mythic proclamations, and with that, most mythic religion collapsed entirely. Humanity went from a stance of “God is everywhere” to “God is nowhere.” And postmodernity claimed that all of this stuff is socially constructed anyway, so there are no universals—and certainly not a single universal Spirit—in any event. The Integral claim is that all 3 of those stances have some measure of the truth, and thus all 3 need to be integrated in a single Framework—and it claims to have done so, and that the results of this integration can be directly experienced by you or anybody who cares to experience it. So learning about this integration, no matter how academic it sounds, will open you to be able to experience this universal Spirit in your own awareness, as a case of the Supreme Identity of Enlightenment or Awakening. Curious? Well, simply read on....)

Second, as Einsteinian physics applied to objects moving slower than the speed of light collapses back into Newtonian physics, so an Integral Post-Metaphysics can generate all the essentials of premodern spiritual and metaphysical systems *but without their now-discredited ontological (or metaphysical) baggage*. This, to my mind, is a central contribution of an Integral Post-Metaphysics—it does not itself contain extensive metaphysics, but it can generate metaphysics as one possible AQAL Matrix configuration under the limit conditions of premodern cultures (“AQAL,” as we will see, is simply another

name for the Integral Super-Map—“AQAL” is short for “all quadrants, all levels, all lines, all states, all types,” which are some of the central elements of this Framework, as we will see). That is, the AQAL Matrix, when run using premodern parameters, collapses into the old metaphysics (as Einsteinian collapses into Newtonian, even though it itself is non-Newtonian). On the other hand, alter the overall conditions of the Matrix by adjusting it to the parameters of the postmodern world, and the metaphysics drops out entirely, even though there still remains an entire spectrum of consciousness, waves of development, evolution and involution, and a rainbow of awareness that runs unbroken from dust to Deity—but without relying on any pre-given, archetypal, or independently existing ontological structures, levels, planes, etc. In fact, the entire “Great Chain of Being” disappears entirely from existence, but the Matrix can generate its essential features if certain mythic-era assumptions are plugged into its parameters. (I realize this can already start to sound unbearably academic, but each of those points will become crystal clear, I assure you.)

Of course, some sort of “Great Chain of Being” has been central to spiritual traditions from time immemorial, whether it appears in the general shamanic form as the existence of higher and lower worlds, the Neoplatonic version of levels of reality (e.g., the amazing Plotinus), the Taoist version of realms of being (e.g., Lieh Tzu), the Buddhist version of a spectrum of consciousness (e.g., the 8 vijñanas), or the Kabbalah sefirot—and down to today’s newer wisdom traditions, from Aurobindo to Adi Da to Hameed Almaas. All of them, without exception, postulate the existence of levels or dimensions of reality or consciousness, including higher or wider or deeper dimensions of being and knowing—some sort of rainbow of existence, whose waves, levels, or bands possess a genuine reality that can be accessed by sufficiently evolved or developed souls. In other words, they all

postulate the existence of *metaphysical realities*—which is exactly what is challenged (and thoroughly rejected) by modern and postmodern currents.

Therefore, what is required is a way to generate that essential rainbow of existence but with a minimum of metaphysical or ontological baggage. In other words, IF we can generate the essentials of a spiritual worldview without the metaphysical baggage, then we can generate a spiritual worldview that will survive in a modern and postmodern world. That, in any event, is one of the central aims of Integral Post-Metaphysics (and its practical application, called “Integral Methodological Pluralism”), both of which will be outlined in these pages. If we can succeed in this endeavor, then all of those spiritual worldviews (from shamanism to Plotinus to Padmasambhava to Aurobindo) can be reanimated and utilized within a broader, non-metaphysical AQAL matrix, which can generate the same rainbow of existence but without the discredited metaphysical accoutrements, and thus one can still utilize their profound wisdom without succumbing to the devastating attacks of modern and postmodern currents.

I should mention that this book, *Sex, Karma, and Creativity—The Past and the Future in the Ever-Present Now*, is volume 2 in the Kosmos Trilogy, whose first volume was *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality—The Spirit of Evolution*. It is not necessary to have read that first volume before reading this one. But together they are pointing to an Integral Reality that transcends and includes the entire manifest world at large, that leaves fragmentation and partiality and brokenness behind, that lights up the ever-present Ground of Being and All-Embracing Consciousness at its core, that unites samsara and nirvana in a nondual embrace of loving care, and finds the entire Kosmos arising within your very own being—as supernovas explode in your heart; the sun lights up a dawn where your brain used to be;

the rains of the Earth are the tears of your own True Self; your Unborn nature leaves you never entering the stream of time and thus living timelessly in the eternal Now; and likewise never leaving the stream of time, rendering you Undying in your genuinely immortal Condition; an ultimate Being—a Divine Self as simple Suchness or Thusness—that looks out from your eyes right now, reading this page, and listens with your ears right now, hearing that robin signing in the distance, the same Self that looks out through the eyes of all sentient beings everywhere, since Consciousness is a singular the plural of which is unknown, the discovery of which releases you from your mistaken identity with the separate-self sense, the self-contraction, that is nothing but a synonym for suffering, another name for terror, a corresponding term for torture, when all the while your True Self, radiant to infinity and gorgeously glorious to eternity, beats time to the falling raindrops on the temple roof, reminding you of who and what you really are, when you are really Nothing—you are then, of course, truly the All, and all your efforts have been a flight from the alone to the Alone, this ever-present Self that is right now witnessing everything that arises moment to moment, silent and open and peacefully unperturbed, as the infinitely unshakeable Condition of all conditions and the Nature of all natures, never born, never dying, always Present, here and now and utterly obvious, too simple to believe and too easy to reach, becomes your True and Self-Liberating Reality, your one and only One and Only, now and forever more.

AN INTEGRAL AGE AT THE LEADING EDGE

Introduction

Let us begin this overview by first noting what appears to be a rather dismal fact: today we hear a lot about *Cultural Creatives* and the new and exciting rise of an *Integral Culture*—a holistic, balanced, inclusive, caring culture that moves beyond the traditional and the modern and into a postmodern transformation. But, in fact, significant psychological evidence indicates that in today's overall world-wide population, *less than 2% of the overall population* is at anything that could be called an “integral” wave of awareness (where “integral” means something like Gebser's *integral-aperspectival*, Loevinger's *autonomous* and *integrated* stages, Spiral Dynamics' *yellow* and *turquoise* vMEMES, Wade's *authentic*, Arlin's *postformal*, the *centauric* self and *vision-logic*, etc.)—or any stages at the general teal Holistic and turquoise Integral levels of altitude (terms soon to be explained).

The same evidence suggests, however, that a very large percentage of the population—close to 25%—is at the immediately preceding wave of development, the pluralistic wave (which is Loevinger's *individualistic* stage, Spiral Dynamics' *green* vMEME, Paul Ray's *cultural creatives*, Wade's *affiliative*, Sinnott's *relativistic*, etc.)—or the general green altitude (to be explained). Moreover, because most of this population has been at the green wave for several decades, it appears that a large portion—perhaps up to one-third—are ready to move forward to the next wave of expanding consciousness—which means, move forward to this truly new *integral wave of awareness*.

In other words, that modest 2% of the population that is now Integral might soon swell to 5%, 10%, or more. I believe that, as with any evolutionary unfolding, we will especially start to see

evidence of this increasingly Integral consciousness at the growing tip, or at the leading edge, or in the avant-garde (by whatever appellation)—in academia, the arts, social movements, spirituality, thought leaders. “Integral theories”—or attempts at such—are already starting to emerge across the board in academia, especially as the leading-edge theorists continue to throw off the yoke of extreme postmodern pluralism (and the green wave) and start finding not just the incommensurabilities but the integral commonalities of cultures. There seems to be little doubt that in so many ways the growing tip is reaching toward the integral light....

In short, we appear to be entering *an integral age at the leading edge* (with significant portions of the culture at large to follow).

This is exactly why, I believe, Jeffrey Alexander, America’s most gifted and influential social theorist (and, I might add, brother of the late Skip Alexander, one of the finest theoreticians of consciousness this country has ever produced), *found three major movements* in modern social theory: functionalism, microsociology, and synthesis.

1. The first movement, especially prominent after WWII, was classic structural-functionalism, or simply *functionalism*, which touched virtually all areas of psychology and sociology, and found its ablest proponent in Talcott Parsons. This was an admirable attempt to bring a *systems theory* perspective to the human sciences, but one marred by the limited adequacy of theoretical physics and biology at the time. If you are trying to draw parallels between natural and social systems, and natural systems are thought to be governed by concepts such as equilibrium and homeostasis—instead of seeing that they also possess inherently self-organizing processes with an intrinsic

drive to higher levels of order out of chaos—then you are going to arrive at a very *static* social systems theory, one that could (and would) be charged with being a thinly disguised form of political conservatism. Your systems theory is a Republican in drag.

In many ways, classical functionalism was the product of a conceptualization capacity whose center of gravity was still formal operational (the orange altitude—again, colors to be explained shortly), which tends to cognize universal systems, but only insofar as they are more static and unchanging, and not in their dialectical, chaotic, and transformative modes (which tend to be best captured by postformal cognition). Still, the insights and contributions of Parsons were so profound and so far-reaching that all present-day theories, if they hope to be adequate, attempt to “include and transcend” Parsons (as has Habermas, Luhmann, Alexander, Bailey, etc.). Parsons, for example, had an unerring intuition of the necessity to include all four quadrants in any social theory, which he called “four generic types of subsystems”: the organism (Upper Right), the social system (Lower Right), the cultural system (Lower Left), and the personality (Upper Left; along with “colors,” “quadrants” will be explicated shortly). Still, classic functionalism—with its inherently static, monolithic approach—was doomed in its original form, and it began, especially in the late sixties and early seventies, to be eclipsed by the next wave of social theory, that of *microsociology*. (This was accompanied, in the culture at large, by a significant movement of the leading edge from an orange, rational, formal operational, modern stage to a newly emerging, pluralistic/relativistic, multicultural, green, postmodern stage.)

2. As the pluralistic green wave started to emerge on a more widespread scale, it began to displace the orange wave at the leading edge of the academic elite, and thus the modernism of orange universalism gave way to the postmodernism of green

pluralism. Where the former was marked by static universal systems identically governing all cultures, the latter was marked by relativism, multiculturalism, diversity studies, and incommensurabilities of every imaginable variety. This was, in many ways, the first move from formalism to postformalism, and the result was a much-needed turn away from abstract grand theories, big pictures, metanarratives, and universal formalism, toward a detailed attention to particulars, to cultural nuances and important differences, with an emphasis on marginalized sectors and heterogeneity. Orange-wave sociology gave way to green-wave sociology, and the age of *microsociology* began. Historical studies, as only one example, moved from studies of the “big names” and movers and shakers of history (kings, presidents, generals, leading scientists, technology waves, techno-economic modes, and “Big Pictures” purporting to tie them all together) and instead to items like the specific details in the day of a life of a Virginia slave (and just that—just the details per se, with no “Big Picture” behind them that they were supposedly manifesting), or the values of a burgeoning middle-class shop keeper, who was female, as she attempted to move into a previously male-dominated market.

Three decades of microsociology have shown us both its strengths and its weaknesses. Its strengths lay in bringing to awareness the thousands of day-to-day details of “micro-history” and “micro-sociology” that all the “Big Pictures” had totally overlooked—the truly “human side” of humanity began to emerge, warts and all, marginalization and all, oppression and power and domination and all. The weaknesses lay in the fact that, even as scholars attempted to demonstrate the relative nature of each culture’s values and beliefs and knowledge, they ended up inadvertently postulating universal features of a human being that created the relative beliefs (and thus, for example, Foucault’s

Archaeology of Knowledge attempted to show how and why humans everywhere produce value systems that are indeed relativistic, and to do so he postulated items that were the same in all humans—and hence humans everywhere produced relativistic values based on these common features—but those features themselves, the same in all humans, were therefore universals, and he had created a *performative contradiction*—he himself was producing universals that his own theory claimed were not possible. Increasingly, postmodern theories of all varieties fell victim to problems such as this)

By the middle 1990s, the weaknesses had become increasingly obvious and insurmountable, and microsociology was slowly replaced at the leading edge by accelerating attempts to find an integral interpretation that incorporated the important contributions from all of the previous approaches, including functionalism and microsociology, but also moved beyond their limitations. As Alexander points out, social theory therefore entered its emerging third phase, so that “it is not surprising, therefore, that contemporary theorists have returned to the project of synthesis.”¹

3. Thus we arrive at today: a *project of synthesis*, an *integral age at the leading edge*, which is only a decade or two old. As a larger movement (spreading outward beyond a handful of pioneers over the last few decades), it is really just now beginning with the dawn of the new millennium. What this larger movement very likely represents—and has been noticed by hundreds of social observers in virtually every area of human existence—is the transformation from green to teal, from intra-cultural to trans-cultural, from ethnocentric pluralism to global integralism, from relativistic to holistic. Whereas the “Big Pictures” of the orange

¹ Alexander and Colomy, “Neostructuralism today,” in G. Ritzer (ed.), *Frontiers of Social*

“universal systems” harshly excluded an appropriate sensitivity to cultural diversity, to world-making intersubjectivity, to the enactive (not merely representational) activity of cognition, and to the irreducible heterogeneity of many systems, the post-green Big Pictures that are starting to emerge at the dawn of the age of synthesis all explicitly include and build upon the green-wave contributions of microsociology, but without getting lost in an attention to trees so fierce that it denies the existence of forests.

An integral age at the leading edge, a Big Picture of many forests, an age of synthesis arising from the ruins of pluralism washed ashore—a “monumental leap in meaning.” This monumental leap, this integral age at the leading edge, is one of the essential themes of the following presentation.

And again, this applies not only to the world “out there” and cultures at large, it applies to the world “in here” and your own inherent potentials, your own capacity to move from orange rationality to green pluralism and on to holistic and integral unities and togetherness and the genuine Fullness of your own being, an Integral Transformative Practice that discloses the deepest, widest, and highest areas of your own being and awareness. This Self-Realization and Self-Liberation and Supreme Identity is an inherent feature of all that follows.

CHAPTER 1. KOSMIC KARMA: WHY IS THE PRESENT A LITTLE BIT LIKE THE PAST?

Overview

Moment to moment, the universe hangs together. Somehow, the universe of this moment and the universe of the previous moment are both similar and different: similar, in that the present moment resembles the previous moment in an enormous number of important ways; different, in that it is also significantly new. The more you think about it, the more mysterious the whole thing is....

The inheritance of the past is one the central topics we will be discussing, because it turns out to be a key in almost every area of human inquiry. But it also touches on what is perhaps the most crucial question in the whole area of human existence, including an area that we will be touching on in this presentation, spirituality. (And we should note right at the start that this “spirituality” is not what is meant by “spiritual” or “religious” in the typical, conventional sense. There are areas of human life that, in many ways, are “spiritual,” but they nonetheless remain untouched by the vast majority of the Great Religions now in existence—leading many people to announce that they are “spiritual but not religious”—they have spiritual insights, intuitions, and needs, but ones that are rarely if ever touched by traditional Religions. This will become much clearer as we proceed, but the type of spirituality we will be advancing in this book is much closer to the “spiritual but not religious” form than to the typical mythic-literal form of many Religions.)

But all of the ancient spiritual Traditions—from shamanism to Neoplatonism to Christian mysticism to Buddhism—maintain

that, in addition to this physical realm, there are higher realms or higher dimensions or higher levels of reality, and these higher levels *already exist* in some sense (e.g., as Platonic forms, Hegelian ideas, Aurobindian involutionary deposits, archetypes of all varieties, or as shamanic higher and lower worlds). For Aurobindo, to give one example, all of the higher levels of reality are laid down by involution (a process where Spirit goes out of itself and steps down into increasingly denser, more limited, and narrower versions of itself—to use Christian terms, Spirit condenses and sediments into soul, which condenses and reduces into mind, which sediments and reduces into body, which again reduces and sediments as matter—whereupon the material universe blows into existence with the Big Bang, and the whole process reverses as evolution; Plotinus called involution “Efflux” and evolution “Reflux”); and therefore all these higher levels *pre-exist* in a real sense, and thus these higher levels unfold or become manifest during evolution (so that evolution is simply unfolding what involution enfolded or deposited—evolution is a rewinding of the involutionary videotape). But all of the modern and postmodern currents deny that there are higher realms—or, more generally, deny that there are any sort of pre-existing givens at all (including any sort of pregiven ontological structures: modernity denies higher structures, postmodernity denies universal structures altogether: either way, spirituality is out). Spiritual traditions insist that salvation is in some sense a re-discovery of an already existing reality. Postmodernity insists that nothing is discovered, everything is constructed. The entire ‘fight’ between ancient and modern hinges on that central issue: are there ontologically pre-existing levels or dimensions of reality?

If there is ever to be a spirituality that can be respected by the modern and postmodern world, it will have to figure out a way to fit those two contradictory claims together. What is required, to

put it bluntly, is a way to derive all of the basics of a spiritual worldview—from satori or salvation as a ‘coming home’ to the existence of levels or waves of consciousness—but without postulating ontologically pre-existing realities. If we can’t do that, then spirituality is dead in the modern and postmodern world of intellectual respectability.

We begin this attempt at *a post-metaphysical reconstruction of the spiritual traditions* with the prosaic point of the inheritance of the past....

Kosmic Karma in Four Dimensions

The inheritance of the past: it seems that all holons, to some degree, are influenced by the holons that went before them. (A *holon* is a “whole/part,” or a whole that is also a part of other wholes: a whole atom is a part of a whole molecule, which is part of a whole cell, which is part of a whole organism, etc. The Kosmos is fundamentally composed of holons, all the way up, all the way down. And all holons seem to inherit some sort of past....) The universe of this moment is somehow different from the universe of the preceding moment, but it also shares some similarities, yes?

In other words, this present moment is both similar to the preceding moment and also somehow different. That issue—the relation of the present to the past—turns out to be crucially important, for it touches every aspect of our lives (psychological to sociological to spiritual). It appears that the past-and-present somehow constitute an inheritance-with-novelty—in other words, the present moment is a mysterious mixture of karma and creativity. That *karma-and-creativity* appears to be the very matrix of our moment-to-moment reality, and how we

conceptualize that matrix will therefore be a crucial ingredient in our own self-understanding.

We open with the specific topic of *karma*, or *the inheritance of the past*. In order to get started, let's simply assume that the present moment inherits something from the past, and let us attempt to outline some of the features of this inheritance in order to show what might be involved.

This inheritance is almost certainly a four-quadrant affair—that is, all four dimensions of holons bequeath their present to the future as the past. The *four quadrants* are four of the most basic ways that we can look at any event: from the inside or from the outside, and in singular and plural forms.² This gives us the

² As we will see, technically the quadrants apply to sentient, conscious or proto-conscious holons (which, panpsychically, include quarks, atoms, molecules, cells, organisms, etc.—any organically created compound individual or whole/part, as opposed to, say, heaps and artifacts); and the quadrants are basically dimension-perspectives of those beings (namely, the interior and exterior of the singular and the collective, giving 4 overall dimension-perspectives. All holons have all 4 of these quadrants—as we'll see, these are an individual interior [called “Upper-Left quadrant”] and an individual exterior [“Upper-Right quadrant”], and a collective interior [“Lower-Left quadrant”] and a collective exterior [“Lower-Right quadrant”]). Each quadrant represents the view through a particular perspective of that quadrant's being. But some items are not sentient or living, and thus do not themselves possess these conscious perspectives, but can nonetheless still be viewed from them, in which case we refer to these basic “views from” as “*quadrivia*” (and the “views through” are quadrants). Thus, the painting of a woman is not a conscious holon, but rather an artifact (the painted woman can't actually see or think or feel—although the molecules, atoms, and quarks in the painting are proto-conscious, or possess prehension—they are genuine sentient holons, a la Whitehead or Peirce or Leibniz). But you and I can look at the painting through any of our 4 quadrants, thus taking a “view from” each of our quadrants of the painting (producing 4 perspectives or *quadrivia*). Thus, “I” can have my own views of the painting (which is the Upper-Left quadrant, the “I”-space or interior of the individual); you and I can share “our” opinions of the painting (a view from the Lower-Left quadrant, the “we”-space or interior of the collective). The painting can also be viewed in a 3rd-person, “objective,” scientific perspective as a material “it,” made of so many grams of ink and paper and frame—hence, the view from the Upper-Right quadrant, the “it” or exterior (meaning “objective”) dimension of the individual (i.e., taking an “objective view,” as opposed to my “subjective view” in the Upper Left). And the painting is part of an overall series of systems—economic to ecological—where it exists as an artifact and is often exchanged (the art world, for example,

interior and the exterior of the individual and the collective. These four perspectives are not merely arbitrary conventions. Rather, they are dimensions that are so fundamental that *they have become embedded in mature language systems the world over* as pronouns during the natural course of evolution. These embedded perspectives show up as 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person pronouns. Thus, the interior of the individual shows up as “I”; the interior of the collective as “you/we”; the exterior of the individual as “it/him/her”; and the exterior of the collective as “its/them.” In short: I, we, it, and its (subjective, intersubjective, objective, and interobjective—experiential, cultural, behavioral, social).

(Technically, “1st person” means the person who is speaking—“I,” “me,” “mine,” singular; and “we,” “us,” “ours,” plural. “2nd person” means the person being spoken to—“you,” “thou,” singular; and “youse” or “you guys,” plural. The “3rd

setting the price of the painting, if for sale)—the collective-exterior or “its” systems of the Lower-Right quadrant.

Whether we are talking of quadrants in sentient holons, or quadrivia in artifacts and other items, these four perspectives—the interior and exterior of the singular and plural—are the 4 most fundamental distinctions in the Kosmos. G Spencer Brown, in this famous *Laws of Form*, states that a universe comes into being when an inside is marked off from an outside (which also usually means, a subject is separated from an object)—and most philosophers and traditions agree (from Whitehead to Buddhism). But interior and exterior do not exist alone—in fact, the singular makes no sense whatsoever without its plural, and as far as we know, there are no singulars without a corresponding plural or collective somewhere (evolutionary biologists refer to this as “no first instances”—that is, when a species comes into existence, it does so as a population, never as a single plant or animal—in fact, for most animals, at the very least a sexual partner is needed if the species is to reproduce and continue to exist). Thus, marking off an inside and outside is not really enough to bring a universe into being—at the very least, we need to mark off an inside and outside (an interior and exterior, or subject and object) in both individual and collective forms. These 2 boundaries (interior and exterior, individual and collective) are both prerequisites for the creating of a universe, and taken together they form 4 dimensions (the interior and the exterior of both the individual and the collective)—hence, the 4 quadrants, which go all the way down, all the way up. As we will often see, including these 4 dimension-perspectives is the minimal that is needed to get anything like an inclusive or truly integral view, and virtually every major system of thought is marred by leaving out 1 or more of these fundamental dimensions.

person” means the person or thing being spoken about—“him, her, he, she, his, hers, it,” singular; “they, them, theirs, its,” plural. “You” is technically 2nd person and “we” is 1st person plural, but I often include “we” as part of the “you” dimension, because in order to treat you as a “thou” and not an “it”—to understand you at all—there must be an overlapping horizon of mutual understanding or “we.” So I often use “you/we” as the general 2nd-person perspective, with the four basic dimensions therefore being I, we, it, and its, or the interior and exterior of the individual and the communal.)³

³ Technically, the Lower-Left quadrant is the interior of the collective, and thus is strictly a “we” (although a “we” is a “you” plus “I”). But if you want a pure 2nd-person perspective, then you simply draw a second set of 4 quadrants, and that second set represents the second holon or second person. Only if this holon and the first holon enter into mutual communication or resonance will they both be part of the “we” of the other holon, and thus actually incorporated into each other’s Lower-Left quadrant as part of their respective “we’s.” Otherwise, they remain 3rd-person “its” to each other, at most existing as an artifact-like entity in each other’s LR quadrant. Still, because 2nd-person “you” is an aspect of 1st-person plural “we,” I will often, loosely, refer to the Lower Left as mutual 2nd-person.

But the distinctions that are most fundamental in these 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person pronouns are the quadrants themselves; the pronouns are, in fact, derived from the quadrants. What is fundamental in the Lower-Left quadrant is an “I” confronted with an Other, and only as this “I” and this Other actually communicate or resonate does it become clear that there is an actual person, or another “I,” in this “Other,” and henceforth that Other is referred to as a “you” or “thou”—and if there is no communication, mutual understanding, or resonance, this “Other” remains an “it,” totally incommensurable, alien. This is why the Lower-Left quadrant is technically a “we,” not a “you”—until the “you” becomes part of the individual’s “we,” it will remain a 3rd-person object—like a carrot or rock—not understood or communicated with or resonated with, and thus not entering into the actual hermeneutic circle of “we” and becoming a genuine aspect of the individual’s Lower Left, but remain instead an alien being outside of understanding or comprehension. Just because that 2nd-person “you” is being addressed by a 1st-person “I” doesn’t mean that “you” has become part of a genuine “we” or Lower-Left circle—there must be some sort of actual communication and resonance for that to happen. But “I,” “we,” “it,” and “its”—the 4 quadrants—are present in all holons regardless of conscious communication and resonance, and thus constitute the actual existence of the quadrants (e.g., much cultural contexts or “we’s,” for example, occur subconsciously, as background contexts and fore-knowledge—but they do occur, and do exist, and thus are an intrinsic part of the Lower Left).

These four perspectives, embedded in virtually all languages, appear to represent *four major dimensions of being-in-the-world*. There might be others, but these four are especially fundamental. (For an extensive account of the four quadrants, see *A Brief History of Everything*.)

A few diagrams will help indicate what is involved with the quadrants. Figure 1-1 shows a few samples that are typical for each quadrant (starting from the Big Bang, through the emergence of life—early cells or prokaryotes and mature cells or eukaryotes—then the evolutionary Tree of Life—from amphibian neural cord to reptilian brain stem to paleomammalian limbic system—to humans and their triune brain, the most complex holon in existence, whose synaptic interrelations are larger than the number of stars in the known universe). And note that phenomena in each of the quadrants are correlative with phenomena in the other quadrants at the same altitude or level of development—thus, the exterior of atoms (Upper Right) possess an interior of Whiteheadian prehension (Upper Left), and atoms join together to form collective galaxies (Lower Right), with the collective interior or mutual prehension of atoms-in-galaxies being “physical” or “physiosphere” resonance (Lower Left)—the quadrants are, after all, different perspectives on the same occasion.

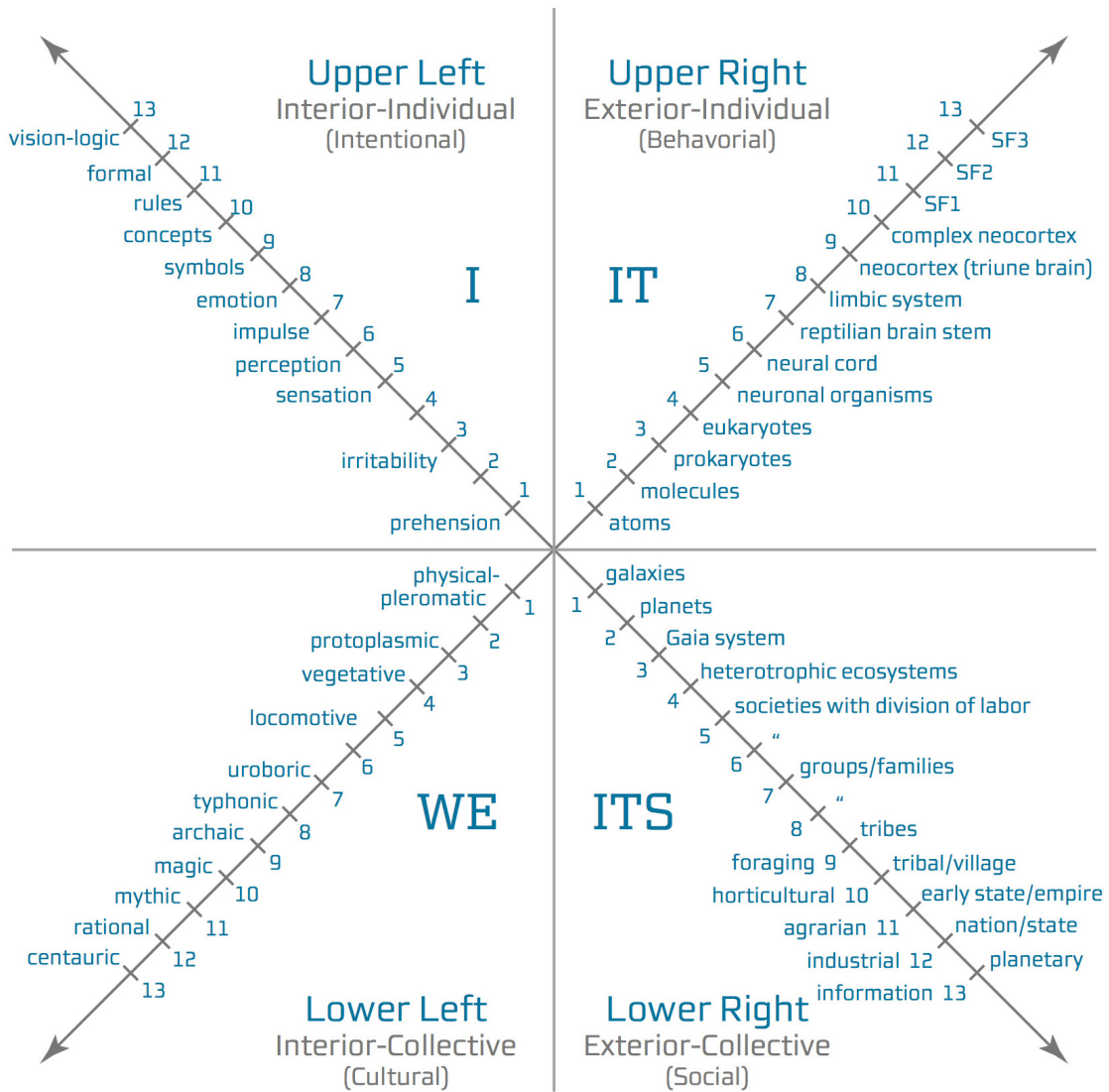


Figure 1-1. Some Details of the 4 Quadrants.

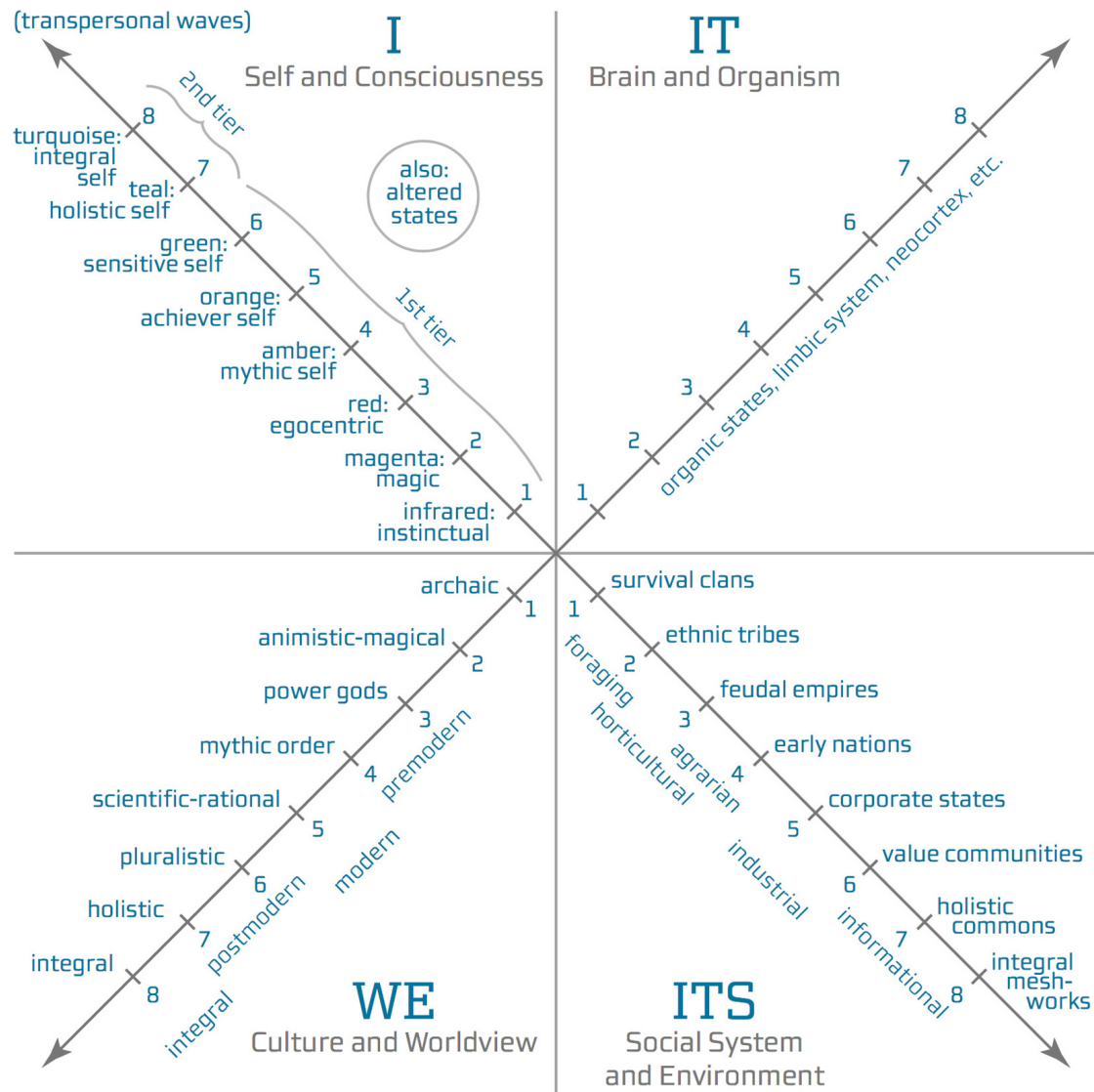


Figure 1-2. Some Examples of the 4 Quadrants in Humans.

Figure 1-2 shows some typical human examples of phenomena in the 4 quadrants, including its cultural worldviews (what “we” see) in the Lower Left (such as “animistic-magical” or “rational-scientific” or “integral”) and its correlative techno-economic modes in the Lower Right (the exterior physical networks and systems of the collective—including foraging to agrarian to industrial to informational. “Horticultural” is early

farming done with a simple digging stick or hoe; “agrarian” is advanced agriculture done with a heavy animal-drawn plow).

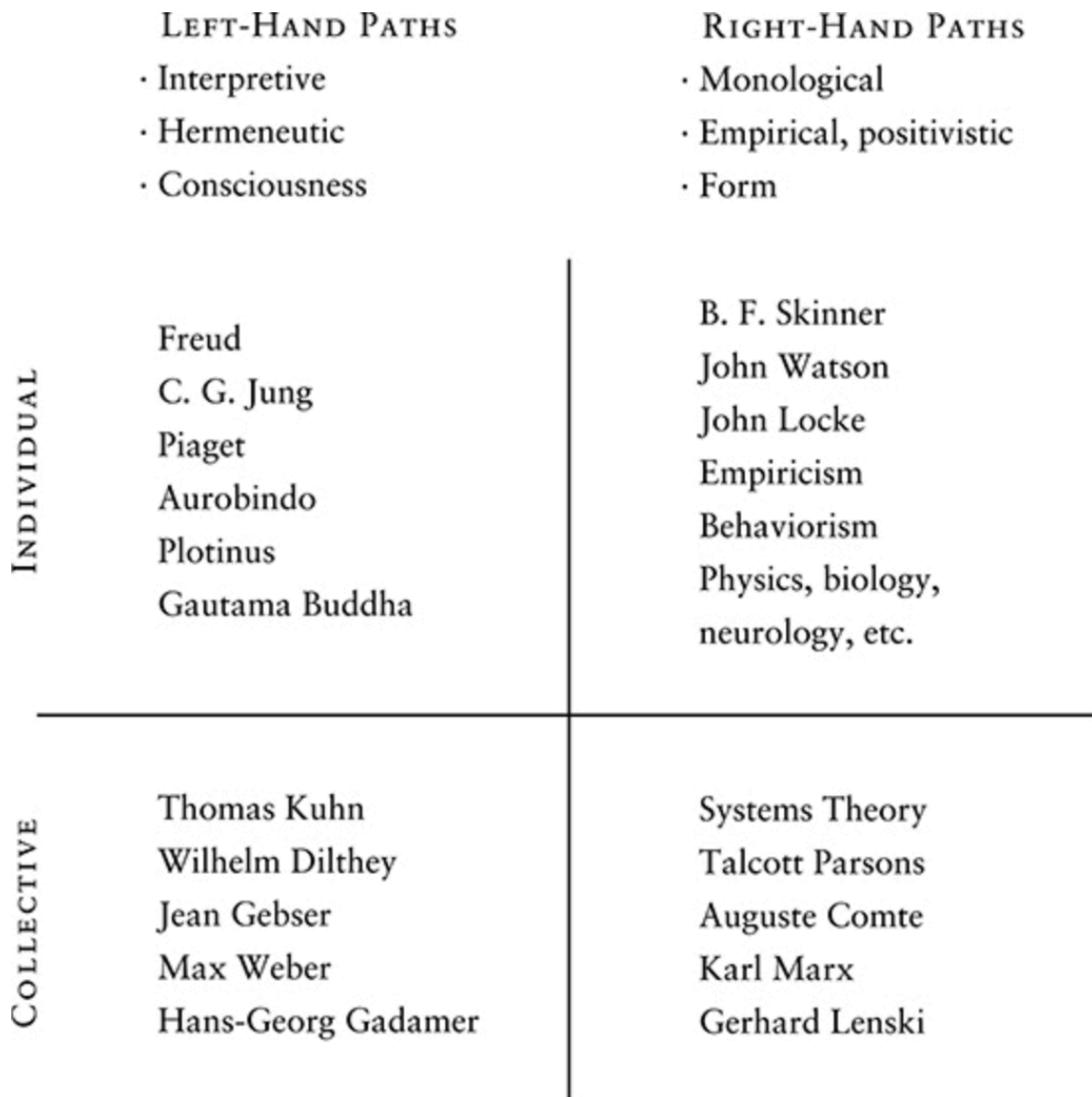


Figure 1-3. *Some Representative Theorists in Each Quadrant.*

Figure 1-3 shows some theorists who have made pioneering contributions to understanding each quadrant, so pioneering that many of them are still paradigmatic for their disciplines. It is this

diagram that, perhaps more than any of the others, will highlight one's quadrant prejudices, if any are present. Acknowledging that Freud or Buddha was dealing with a domain that is every bit as real as, say, electrons or plants or planets, is just more than some, especially positivistically oriented, can stomach. But Freud was doing a very straightforward phenomenology—so much so that, for instance, he never once used the terms “ego” or “id” (those translations were introduced by James Strachey to make Freud sound more “scientific.” The terms Freud actually used in his original German were the pronouns “the I” [instead of “the ego”] and “the it” [instead of “the id”], as in things like, “If we look within, we see a large area, the I, that is basically under our will or control; and then an even larger area, the it, which is almost completely beyond our control—we say things such as, ‘The anxiety, it is stronger than me,’ or ‘The desire to eat, I can’t control it.’” Thus, perhaps Freud’s most famous summary of psychoanalysis, usually translated as, “Where id was, there ego shall be,” was actually, in the original, “Where it was, there I shall become.” He was reporting, in other words, on directly apprehended phenomena in the Upper-Left quadrant, phenomena that are as real as phenomena in any other quadrant, including electrons and plants and planets.) Making room for all of these—including mental phenomena as well as physical phenomena—is a primary goal of an Integral Approach.

The point, very simply, is that not just one of these quadrants, but all four of them, are equally real, equally present, equally important, and equally to be included in any truly comprehensive, complete, integral view of reality.

The idea, then, is that the inheritance of the past can be looked at from all four perspectives—or in all four dimensions of being-in-the-world—with each one showing us something important in the overall equation. Different theorists have given

cogent explanations for some of these dimensions and their types of karmic inheritance, but we want to include all of them in a more integral explanation. Some of these types of inheritance are shown in figure 1-4, “The Inheritance of the Past in All Four Quadrants.”

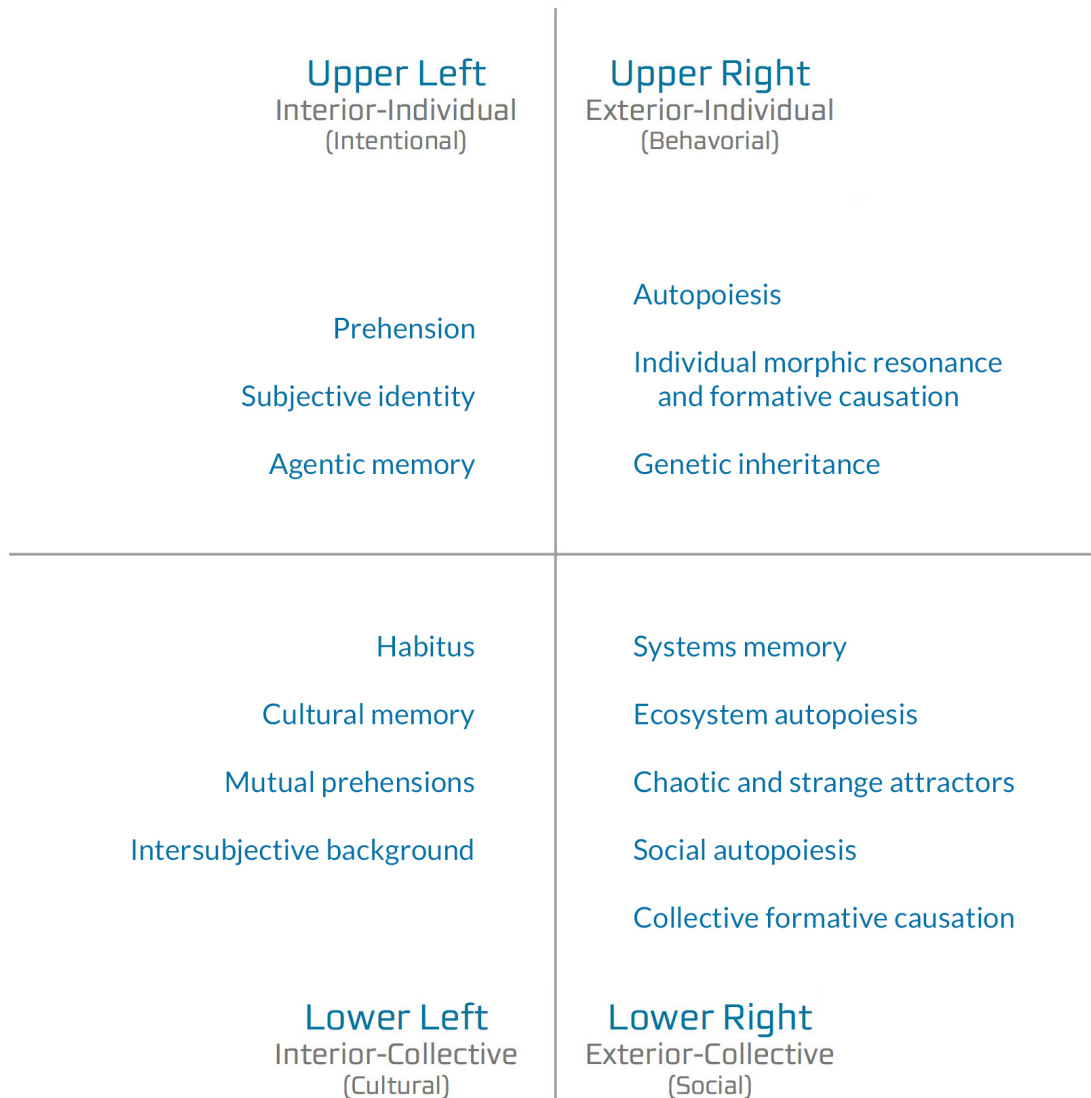


Figure 1-4. *The Inheritance of the Past in All Four Quadrants.*

For example, Whitehead gave the classic explanation of how the interiors of individual holons are passed on as future

inheritance: namely, *prehension* (or prehensive unification). Each actual occasion—or each present moment (which exists as a subject of proto-experience)—as it comes to be, does two things at once: it prehends (or experientially feels and embraces) its immediate predecessor (i.e., the present moment touches, prehends, feels, or embraces the immediately preceding moment), so that the subject of this moment becomes the object of the subject of the next moment. This means that the present moment is, in part, *determined* by the nature of its predecessors: it is handed an inherited past as part of its feeling in this moment, a feeling that is therefore a prehensive unification of *all* ancestral feelings, and this inheritance is the basis of a type of *causality* exerted by the past on the present (i.e., a causal inheritance of past objects that were once present subjects, or a feeling of feelings). But two, according to Whitehead, the present moment then *adds* its own moment of *creative novelty* or *emergence*—it feels something *entirely new*—and thus it also *transcends* the past to some degree. Thus, each moment transcends and includes its predecessors, inheriting a history of feelings (or objects that were once subjects) but also adding a creative novelty found nowhere in the past—but a creative novelty that then itself becomes part of the inherited feelings handed to its future, which will then likewise transcend and include that inheritance.

With a few qualifications, I strongly agree with that general Whiteheadian view of the nature of moment-to-moment existence. Whitehead actually discovered the inescapable reason that the Kosmos is *holarchical* in its very nature: each moment transcends and includes its predecessors, the very definition of holarchy (where all of the lower is in the higher, but not all the higher is in the lower—all an atom is in the molecule, but not all the molecule is in the atom; all the molecule is in the cell, but not all the cell is in the molecule, and so on—each transcends and includes its

predecessor, and thus each level becomes more and more whole, more and more unified, more and more differentiated-and-integrated). This *necessary* increase in the overall wholeness of the Kosmos is the only way the universe *can* unfold moment to moment and continue to hang together: it's inherent in its very structure and process.

But we add a crucial item: this is a *4-quadrant affair*, all the way down—a view we also call *quadratic*. That is, each holon or actual occasion has subjective (I), intersubjective (we), objective (it), and interobjective dimensions (its)—the 4 quadrants. Whitehead brilliantly described moment-to-moment manifestation in the subjective and (to some degree) intersubjective dimensions. But we will be adding inheritance in the objective and interobjective dimensions, as well as fleshing out the intersubjective realms in a way that is clearly not found in Whitehead. David Ray Griffin, Whitehead's ablest interpreter, suggested that Whitehead's approach be called *partial dialogical* and the quadratic approach be called *complete dialogical*, which seems fair enough.⁴

Nonetheless, the important point is that Whitehead was the first to spot the general features of the microgenetic holarchical nature of moment-to-moment existence, so we are more than glad to be Whiteheadians in this general area. If we are careful about what is actually meant, we can also call this “tetra-prehension”—each quadrant includes, prehends, or embraces its previous-moment version.

However, for the *objective* and *interobjective* dimensions of Kosmic inheritance, we might look instead to something like

⁴ See “Do Critics Misrepresent My Position? Appendix A—My Criticism of Whitehead as True but Partial: The Move from an Incomplete Dialogical View to an Integral/Quadratic Formulation,” posted on www.kenwilber.com.

Rupert Sheldrake's notions of morphic resonance and formative causation. Sheldrake's work, as we will see, is merely one of many types of explanatory theories in the Right-Hand quadrants, but it has received a fair amount of critical praise (along with typical alarms) and highlights elegantly some of the important issues involved in the inheritance of objective and interobjective forms. But it is important to realize that the points we are making about Right-Hand inheritance can be made without reference to Sheldrake's work. Most of the types of inheritance in the Right-Hand quadrants are very straightforward affairs, involving, for example, biological and sociological autopoiesis, DNA replication, systems maintenance, chaotic and strange attractors, institutionalized forms and modes of production, and so on—not very far-out stuff, actually, at least when compared with some of Sheldrake's ideas. But Sheldrake has highlighted some of the more esoteric aspects of formative causation, which makes the essential points glaringly obvious, so we will use his examples as some of the countless instances of Right-Hand inheritance.

What we will be doing, then, is surveying the various theories of inheritance—or theories of how the past influences the present (see fig. 1-4). And because, in the Age of Synthesis, we do not want to leave out any valid perspective or any dimension from our integral account, we will attempt to fashion an overview that includes all of them. This will give us the beginning outline of the inheritance of the past in all four quadrants, or a *quadratic account of Kosmic karma*.

A quick summary of what we will find is that each holon seems to relate to its predecessor(s) as follows:

- 1. In the Upper Left**, each holon is a *prehensive unification* of all of its predecessors—a subject of experience that, as it comes to be, prehends the previous subject as object of the new subject:

that is, it *feels* and *embraces* the *interiors* of its predecessor: it is a feeling of a feeling, and thus it inherits—and to some degree is determined by—the feeling/awareness of its immediately preceding moment of feeling-awareness (which in turn once *felt* its predecessor, and so on). This is dryly described as “prehensive unification,” but what that really means is that I feel the feelings of the moment before me, which had felt the feelings of the moment before it, so that what I am now experiencing is a felt condensation of the entire history of the Kosmos in its subjective dimensionality (a microgeny that recapitulates ontogeny, which recapitulates phylogeny, which recapitulates cosmogeny).

This present prehension of past prehensions constitutes a type of inescapable *causality* exerted by the past on the present (this, of course, was Whitehead’s answer to Hume). If you (or any holon) can feel this moment, and then feel this moment, then there is a *degree of continuity* (and therefore *a degree of causality*) of the previous moment on this moment, because the previous moment is now a *part* of the *whole* of this moment (i.e., the whole of one moment becomes a part of the whole of the next, which is why moment-to-moment existence is a holarchy and each moment a holon that transcends and includes its predecessors—and that is prehensive unification.). The “include” aspect inescapably builds into the present moment a *felt causal influence* from the past. To put it bluntly, the fact that I can *feel* the previous moment means that I am to some degree *influenced* by the previous moment—the present is influenced by the past because it can feel it. Or, to say the same thing from a slightly different angle, because the present moment prehends or includes (as in “transcends and includes”) the previous moment, it is actually embracing it, or taking it into its being, and thus is inescapably altered by it, determined by it to some degree.

This is karma, yes? Or certainly a part of it; in this case, the influence of yesterday's feelings on today's feelings. This inheritance is virtually impossible to deny coherently. (Hume thought he had demolished any such inductive sequences, but all he demolished is any attempt to prove that tomorrow's patterns will be the same as today's; he did not disprove that today's patterns are similar to yesterday's. In fact, Hume flirted with the notion that causality was actually something like a habit, but it was really Charles Peirce who first clearly pointed out that what we call laws of nature are actually *habits of nature*, a point we will return to shortly.)

But I am not *merely* determined by my felt karma; I can also, to a degree, *transcend* the past via my own *creativity*: in this way only is some degree of freedom possible. There is not only the inheritance of the past, there is, in each moment, a spark of novelty, of newness, *of something that never came before*. “The creative advance into novelty,” as Whitehead put it—and he saw it as an inescapable feature of the Kosmos all the way down—what Whitehead called “an ultimate category”—a deeply intrinsic dimension of the universe in all its domains, and starting from the very start. (Creativity for Whitehead, of course, is simply a spark of Spirit present in all actual occasions.) So we both *inherit the past*—or include and embrace it in our own feelings (and thus we are influenced and molded by the past to some degree)—and also *go beyond the past*, with this moment's intrinsic capacity for newness, for novelty, for emergence, for transcendence, for a little bit of freedom.

This subjective or prehensive inheritance-and-transcendence was one of Whitehead's great discoveries.

Incidentally, Whitehead's analysis of the micro-structure of all subjective occasions (i.e., the subject of one moment becomes

the object of the subject of the next moment, or a feeling of feelings) *explains why we see the same general pattern on the macro scale*: that is, psychological development is marked by one major pattern: the subject of one stage of development becomes the object of the subject of the next stage of development (as both Kegan and I have pointed out, he in *The Evolving Self* [1980] and myself in *The Atman Project* [1978]. As Kegan put it, “I know of no better way to summarize development but that the subject of one stage of development becomes the object of the subject of the next stage”). Whitehead, as I said, simply gave the infrastructural analysis of why this holarchical unfolding is universally and inherently built into the Kosmos.

2. In the Lower Left: Moving a bit beyond Whitehead, each subjectivity exists in a sea of intersubjectivity, and this sea, too, has its karmic influence. *Individual holons and communal (or social) holonsprehend their past*. They are both influenced by the past, and then move beyond it to some degree. They transcend-and-include their past feelings and shared values with moments of creative emergence. Cultures, in short, have memories.⁵

⁵ Strictly speaking, a collective or communal holon (cultural or social) does not have a singular agency, will, or consciousness, and thus communal holons do not directlyprehend their ancestors, or previous communal holons, *in the same way* that individual holons do. It is subjectivity that prehends previous subjectivity, but all subjects arise with a context or background of intersubjectivity—and interobjectivity—that in part molds and influences the very nature of subjectivity itself. More accurately, each holon has a subjective dimension that directly prehends its past, but it also has an intersubjective dimension to which subjectivity is always already tetra-meshed and which therefore constrains to some degree the form of the feelings that subjectivity can have in any actual occurrence. This habitual constraint is the form of cultural memory. Likewise, the objective dimensions of any holon are tetra-meshed with interobjective realities that constrain the form of objective behavior, a constraint that appears as social systems memory. These collective dimensions of the AQAL Matrix don’t have a dominant monad but a dominant mode of resonance (see below), known as a “nexus-agency,” and this collective nexus-agency in a broad sense prehends the previous moment’s collective nexus-agency as a resonating influence, and then adds its own bit of creativity or novel emergence to the mix, and passes that amalgam on to the next moment, whose nexus-agency will then likewise transcend and include that, and so on.

Philosophers have been arguing for centuries over the similarities and differences between individual and social. Some deny any differences; others deny any similarities. Both are right: there are clearly important similarities as well as crucial differences between individual and social holons—see “On Critics, Integral Institute, My Recent Writing, and Other Matters of Little Consequence” (posted [on www.kenwilber.com](http://www.kenwilber.com)).

(What is the easiest way to tell the difference between an individual holon and a social or communal holon? The former has a relatively fixed and visible physical boundary. An ant is an individual holon, an ant colony is a social holon; a human organism is an individual holon, while a family, a club, and an nation are human social holons. Confusing these two is a calamitous fallacy that, among other things, is the very definition of fascism, whether political fascism or ecofascism or values fascism, because the collective is treated as an individual with a single will, value, and intentionality, which enslaves all real individuals to that system and its dominant mode; and this occurs in everything from mere theories, such as Maturana and Varela’s autopoiesis, to actual politics, such as Louis XIV’s famous *L’etat c’est moi*, “I am the State,” and therefore all people in the State must do as I, its dominant monad, command. Herbert Spencer was one of the first to emphasize this distinction, pointing out that social and individual are contrasted in terms of, respectively: asymmetrical vs. symmetrical, discrete vs. concrete, and sensitive in all its units vs. having a single sensitive center. Whitehead agreed, and called this sensitive center—possessed by an individual and not a social holon—the “regnant nexus” or “dominant monad,” and it is that center of subjectivity that does all the prehending, which is why social holons do notprehend their past in the same way that individual holons do. These issues are taken up at length in Excerpt C, particularly in relation to Maturana and Varela’s confusion of social and individual, which was corrected in Niklas Luhmann’s influential reformulation of social autopoiesis theory, also discussed in Excerpt C as well as Excerpt E (coming soon).)

As for collective or communal memory (and specifically cultural memory in this case): notice that the fact that the intersubjective background molds subjectivity does not strictly mean that intersubjective cultural patterns are the deep structures *within which* subjective patterns arise—although we sometimes use that loose language—but rather that any holon must mesh with pre-existing occasions in all four quadrants or face extinction: we call this “tetra-mesh.” Thus, subjective holons that do not tetra-mesh with intersubjective dimensions will not be able to manifest.

More specifically, the general waves, streams, types (etc.) in all of the quadrants represent the Kosmic habits that have unfolded in those quadrants up to the leading-edge of today’s evolutionary unfolding. The deep patterns of the already-laid-down holons *in each quadrant* help determine the surface features found in any of those holons in any of the quadrants. The relation “deep to surface” therefore stands for the relation of the deep features of any holon in any quadrant to the contents or actions of that holon; it does not stand for the relation of one quadrant to another. Thus, when we say that “subject and object arise within an intersubjective space,” that is simply shorthand for the fact that all four quadrants arise together and must priorly mesh in order to manifest. We sometimes give a type of ontological priority to intersubjective and interobjective dimensions because the collective weight of those structures is enormous; moreover, the deep features of the inherited waves in the subjective

and objective quadrants originally arose *only in interaction* with other subjects and objects—that is, arose only in intersubjective and interobjective tetra-meshing—agency is always agency-in-communion—but it is not that one of those quadrants existed *prior* to the others (such that one could actually arise “within” another one), but that they all arise simultaneously and tetra-evolve in mutual mesh. Thus, the relation “prior to actual” refers to the relation, not between collective quadrants and individual quadrants, but between the deep and surface features in all of the quadrants. A la Sheldrake, the deep features of the already-laid-down holons (including any waves, streams, or types of holons) in the various quadrants are “ontologically prior” to any surface features of those holons, which simply means that those deep features are the *Kosmic habits* inherited from the past and which act as probability waves for actual occasions in those spaces. (The nature of this inheritance is outlined in the main text in more detail.)

Thus, various intersubjective or cultural patterns, inherited from the previous moment, are indeed ontologically prior to this moment’s subject, and therefore they place palpable constraints on the form of this moment’s subject. But this moment’s subject also inherits *its own* individual past as prehension, and thus BOTH the previous subjective and intersubjective patterns are ontologically prior to the present moment’s subject. In fact, all four quadrants hand the present an inherited AQAL Matrix that is ontologically prior to the present moment’s arising (as the prior or inherited past), a past which must be embraced (as tetra-prehensive unification) if the present moment is to harmoniously exist and not face pathology or extinction. (And, of course, each moment, in all four quadrants, nonetheless has a measure of *creativity* that ontologically *transcends* anything given to it by the past: this is how ‘significant’ trumps ‘fundamental’ in the transcend-and-include nature of each present moment. Thus, e.g., each subjectivity can to some degree rise above its own its own past and its own culture, which is another reason that any subjectivity is not actually “within” the intersubjective field).

Accordingly, when we say that “the intersubjective field is prior to subject and object,” that is simply a shorthand way of emphasizing the importance of all four quadrants: the Lower-Left or intersubjective quadrant is the one that is almost always ignored, misunderstood, or distorted, and therefore we often emphasize the fact that subject and object always arise in conjunction with an intersubjective meshwork. But again, to emphasize the importance of the Lower-Left quadrant is not to deny the *equal* importance of the other quadrants. As we will see, the extreme privileging of the Lower-Left quadrant is postmodernism’s major pathology (a participatory pluralism that callously disrespects realities in the other quadrants). On the other hand, the simultaneous tetra-arising and tetra-causality of all four quadrants and their necessary mutual evolution explains the influence of the past intersubjective dimension on the present subjectivity, but it also explains the influence of the past subjective, objective, and interobjective dimensions on present subjectivity as well. None of those dimensions should be either overlooked or absolutized. (All of these points are elaborated in the main text in more detail.)

In short, where individual holons have a “dominant monad,” social holons have a “dominant mode of discourse” or a “dominant mode of resonance,” and this is centralized in what is called the “nexus-agency” of the social holon—the central pattern or nexus of the social holon

This *cultural background*—the Lower-Left quadrant—is inherited moment-to-moment by the subjects arising within its horizon, not as a separate entity but as the form or pattern of their communal arising. This is what we mean when we say that communal holons canprehend their past—or in very simple form, we say that there are *cultural and social memories*—there are patterns in culture and society that repeat themselves to some degree, the lingering influence on the present of a past that was once present and is therefore carried forward to some degree as Kosmic habit.⁶ In the Lower Left, we refer to *cultural memories*,

that exerts its controlling effects on each of its members. This nexus-agency (the core of the “we”) is what—if we are careful in the use of this term—“prehends” the previous moment’s nexus-agency, so that each nexus-agency “transcends and includes” its predecessor, and thus the longer the social is in existence, the “thicker” this nexus-agency becomes with past influences. Further, this nexus-agency is layered (the “layer cake” of culture), in that it has a given percentage of its population at each of the major structure-levels of development (indicated by a rainbow color—e.g., red, amber, orange, green, etc.). The given culture generally has its most dominant influence from the level of development that the largest percentage of its members are at (although this can vary); thus, a largely green population culture has a largely green nexus-agency as the source of its regulating codes, laws, habitus, influencing patterns, and so on. The dominant influence of this intersubjective culture on subjective individuality is that, if the individual is below the culture’s general center of gravity, that cultural center of gravity (in the nexus-agency) will act to help pull the individual up to that level (acting as a *pacer of transformation*); if the individual is above that center of gravity, the culture will act to pull it down (acting as a source of arrested development or even regression). In other words, if you are beyond a culture’s general center of gravity, you’re on your own.

⁶ In regards to social and cultural prehensions and memory, as indicated previously, it is not that a collective holon has an individual agency that can directlyprehend the feelings of its past (since collective holons do not have individual agency), but rather that an individual holon becomes a *member* of the collective holon when its individual behavior follows the organizing rules of the collective and its individual feelings mesh via mutual resonance.

More technically, this means that an individual holon becomes a member of a social or communal holon when (1) its organismic behavior (UR) meshes with the rules (or syntax) of the interobjective social system (LR), and (2) its individual feelings and prehensions (UL) mesh with the intersubjective cultural background (LL). (In Excerpt E, we will see that

which are reflexive and pre-reflexive meaning-backgrounds, communal feelings, and mutual prehensions (or intersubjective inheritances), and in the Lower Right, we refer to social or *systems memories*, which are interobjective patterns of systems maintenance, economic and ecological reproduction, among others. The explanation of how sociocultural patterns reproduce themselves is a primary task of all social theories, from social autopoiesis to ecological sustainability.

But let's not overlook the fact that each holon is transcend-and-include: any holon arising in mesh with a particular culture can, to some degree, transcend that culture. With reference to the cultural background, the cumulative moments of creative novelty

cultural meaning [LL] involves *semantics* in the broadest sense, and social rules [LR] involve *syntax* in the broadest sense, so that an individual holon becomes a member of a communal holon when it meshes with its collective semantics and syntax, or its cultural and social patterns.)

The collective or communal holon is not something that exists as a superorganism over and beyond the individual organisms, but rather exists as the patterns that individual members follow in their membership (or the patterns of agency-in-communion). Shared behavioral patterns (and their artifacts) are the “stuff” of *social memory* (these behavioral patterns can be *latent* or *manifest*); and distributed values, shared horizons, and mutual prehensions are the stuff of *cultural memory* (these mutual prehensions can be *conscious*, *unconscious*, or *preconscious*).

Thus, when an individual holon shares the syntax (LR) and semantics (LL) of the group, it is a *member* of the group, and *membership* is found in the shared patterns and feelings, and not in some superorganism with its own agency above and beyond the individual. (For syntax and semantics, see Excerpt E. For a discussion of “members” versus “parts” as it pertains to social holons refer to Excerpts C and D [coming soon])

This is another way of saying that all four quadrants arise together in tetra-evolution. Treating the social holon as an individual organism—i.e., as a superorganism with a single agency or regnant nexus—is, as indicated above, the central philosophy of fascism, whether it appears in Marxism, ecotheories, Gaia paradigms, Goddess mythology, or systems theory—all of which view individuals as parts or cells of a super-organism. This confusion of individual and social holons is found in theorists from Francisco Varela to David Bohm, but has been clearly corrected by such important theorists as Niklas Luhmann, Jürgen Habermas, and Erich Jantsch. We will return to this crucial topic in Excerpt C (coming soon).

in subjectivity can eventually alter the very form of intersubjectivity itself (we say that the quadrants arise together and tetra-evolve, or that they “tetra-mesh,” or that they “tetra-interact”—or, if careful, that they “tetra-prehend”). But the general point for now is that *cultural holons have a past*, a karmic inheritance, and this inheritance of intersubjectivity (or the inheritance of mutual prehensions by members of a culture) is an important part of Kosmic karma.

When Bourdieu writes about a culture’s *habitus*; when Heidegger describes a culture’s interpretation of Being nestled in *historicity*; when Gebser outlines major frames of interpretation (magic, mythic, mental, integral) inherited in various cultures over time; when Gadamer details the inescapable significance of *solidarity* in establishing mutual understanding—in all of those cases, they are describing *cultural inheritance*—the collective feelings (or mutual prehensions) of the Lower-Left quadrant as they are carried forward as a Kosmic habit influencing all individuals meshed with those cultures. We will return to this crucial idea of *cultural background*—and its inheritance (and transcendence)—throughout this presentation. So important is it—especially for including the postmodern moment in our integral account—that we will devote an entire section to it (in [[TBA]] Excerpt C The Ways We Are in This Together: Intersubjectivity and Interobjectivity in the Holonic Kosmos). But first, let’s finish our quick survey by looking at inheritance in the remaining quadrants:

Upper-Right and Lower-Right Inheritance

That is a brief outline of *subjective* and *intersubjective* inheritance, the means by which the *felt dimensions* of the Kosmos reproduce themselves moment to moment, while still

allowing creative emergence (which then itself becomes part of the inheritance future holons will transcend and include).

But each holon also has *objective* and *interobjective* dimensions; that is, there are objective correlates of individual and cultural prehensions. One version of this inheritance of exterior realities is offered by Rupert Sheldrake, as we were saying. Briefly, we reframe Sheldrake's general theories as follows:

Each holon—when looked at in an exterior, *3rd-person* perspective (and not in the *1st-person* prehension of the UL or the *2nd-person* mutual prehensions of the LL)—appears as a morphic unit with a morphic field. The *morphic unit* refers to the stable pattern, structure, or form of the holon; and the *morphic field* refers to the various fields surrounding the unit (which will be explained as we proceed). I agree with Sheldrake on those essential items, as long as we remember that these terms refer to a holon *as viewed in 3rd-person singular*—that is, the Upper-Right quadrant only. But in that dimension, it is quite true, as Sheldrake puts it, that “morphic fields are associated with holons at all levels of complexity.” And holons, Sheldrake correctly points out, “are arranged in nested hierarchies or holarchies.”⁷

Sheldrake often uses the analogy of a vibrating string: if you put two pianos together and hit the C note on one piano, the same string will start vibrating in the other piano. The two strings vibrating together is called *morphic resonance*, the one string causing the other to vibrate is analogous to *formative causation* (because the form or pattern of one string is causing or evoking the same form or pattern in the other).

A morphic unit/morphic field is thus one aspect of (or one

⁷ Sheldrake, *The Presence of the Past*.

way of looking at) a holon's Upper-Right dimension. Accordingly, while each holon is *subjectively* prehending its previous feelings (UL)—and thus being determined in part by its past feelings—the exterior *form* of the holon (UR) is resonating with its previous forms, and therefore its present form is determined to some degree by the past forms of its own manifestation: this is morphic resonance and formative causation operating in an individual.

Thus, among other things, what appears in the Upper Left as prehensive unification appears in the Upper Right as moment-to-moment individual formative causation. And just as subjective prehension (UL) is meshed with fields of felt intersubjectivity (LL), so individual objective forms (UR) are meshed with fields of interobjectivity (LR)—that is, *both individual and social holons have morphic fields* (with all of them tetra-arising and tetra-evolving in AQAL space).⁸ We will return to the collective forms

⁸ That is, both the UR and LR have morphic forms and fields. The UL (subjective feelings) and the LL (mutual prehensions) do not have morphic fields *in themselves*, because “morphic field” is a 3rd-person description of various realities, but UL and LL are essentially 1st-person and 2nd-person realities, known most directly in an I or thou/we language and by direct experience. But when UL and LL realities are looked at in objective, 3rd-person terms, then you get the UR and LR, which indeed appear as various exterior **forms** (individual forms or morphic units [UR] and collective forms or social systems [LR]) and the related **fields** of those individual and collective forms (including individual [UR] and collective [LR] morphogenetic fields and subtle energies). Note that, in my view, these various **fields** include not only morphic or morphogenetic fields, as described by Sheldrake, but also various **energy fields** (gross energy, subtle energy, and causal energy, as we will see in **Excerpt G**, “Toward a Comprehensive Theory of Subtle Energies”—where I will further suggest that the various morphic fields *are actually subtle energy fields*; but whatever we decide about that issue, the point is that both morphic fields and energy fields are Right-Hand phenomena, appearing in both UR and LR, or the exterior forms and fields of both individual and social holons).

With regard to Sheldrake, the point is that both individual and social holons (UR and LR) have morphic (or morphogenetic) fields. Each morphic unit has individual morphogenetic fields that relate its present individual state to its previous individual states. The *collective* dimensions of that formative causation or structural inheritance are the morphogenetic fields and systems found in the Lower Right, but both individual morphic fields and collective morphic fields influence the present unfolding of morphic units.

in a moment.

A morphic field is sometimes referred to as a *morphogenetic field*, a term introduced by Waddington, well-known embryologist. “Morphogenetic” means “developmental groove”—it means “structural or formal” (morphic) “creation or development” (genetic). “Morphogenetic field” is a term often used in biology (e.g., as noted, Waddington) to refer to the *patterns that govern the development of biological forms and structures*, but Sheldrake’s point (and I concur) is that all holons (or morphic units) have morphogenetic fields, which is why he uses the terms “morphogenetic field” and “morphic field” interchangeably.

So what does Sheldrake mean by morphic field (and the related notion of structural or formative causation)? Here’s a typical example: as Sheldrake points out, when complex protein molecules first emerged, they could have settled into any number of equivalent forms or structural patterns. There are no known

Again, it is not simply that the collective fields mold the individual, but that that individual’s past fields also mold the individual (which can mold the collective), which is to say—as always—that the quadrants tetra-evolve.

Thus, we do not privilege the interobjective morphogenetic field as being alone ontologically prior to the present object, because there are also *individual* objective morphogenetic fields that are equally prior to the present object: the objective dimensions of any holon must mesh with both objective and interobjective inheritance—in fact, an AQAL inheritance. But precisely because it is the *interobjective* dimensions of this inheritance that are almost always overlooked—by objective science, by intersubjective postmodernism, by LL pluralism, and by UL phenomenology—we therefore give a strong emphasis to the incredibly powerful influence of interobjective fields, structures, and systems on the forms of individual development. As we will see in the main text, the great contributions of inquiries ranging from **ecological sciences** to **chaos and complexity theories** is that they focused on this incredibly important **interobjective dimension**.

Finally, as mentioned, the Upper-Right quadrant is the home not only of gross forms and energy, but of subtle forms and energies and causal forms and energies. See **Excerpt G**: “Toward a Comprehensive Theory of Subtle Energies.”

physical laws that state that only one of these many forms must occur. But when enough molecules settle into a particular form, all subsequent molecules, even in a different time and space, will settle into the same form. Sheldrake introduced structural or formative causation to account for this empirical fact, which cannot be accounted for by any known physical forces. Once a molecule (or any holon) settles into a particular pattern or form, that form appears to exert a type of influence on all similar forms—that is formative causation exerted by one morphic field on similar morphic fields (“morphic resonance”).

Sheldrake gives example after example of morphogenetic fields guiding subsequent development of individual morphic forms. Once a difficult task has been accomplished anywhere in the world—from crystallizing complex molecules to rats learning a particular maze to linguistic words being created—the same task can more easily be repeated anywhere else in the world (as has already been demonstrated by numerous empirical studies). This is identical to what we see with the emergence of psychological forms: for example, in historical unfolding, once the red (magic-mythic) structure had significantly emerged anywhere in the world, it began more easily appearing elsewhere around the world. A difficult, novel, creative emergence had settled into a Kosmic habit now available to subsequent holons.

Extensive work on the inheritance of forms has already been done. Brian Goodwin, for example, in such important books as *How the Leopard Got Its Spots* and *Signs of Life*, demonstrates that many processes in nature are pulled by complex dynamics toward very specific forms. Of over 250,000 species of higher plants, only *three* basic distributions of leaves around stems are actually seen. The bone structures of paws, hands, and fins have similar forms in all vertebrae. In other words, only certain forms

are available for holons of a given class, and these deep forms are a product of past inheritance that, as Kosmic habits, act as dynamic attractors (strange, chaotic, etc.) that severely limit the types of forms that can arise in interobjective space, even though there is absolutely nothing in the forms themselves that impose these limits.

Now, Sheldrake is claiming only that these patterns or deep forms are inherited. He is saying that the general structure or form of a molecule is collectively inherited; he is not saying that what this molecule actually does is collectively inherited. That is, the general form of the holon is collectively inherited, not any action or content of that form. This is simply an instance of a very widespread pattern that we often find: namely, various deep features (in all four quadrants) are collectively inherited, but not their surface features.⁹ As we will see, all this really means is that

⁹ The fact that many of the deep features in all four quadrants are *collectively inherited* confuses some people, because the upper quadrants are supposed to be merely individual, not collective, so how could the upper quadrants have collective forms? Put differently, any time I find a collectively inherited form, isn't that a lower quadrant entity?

No, not at all. The upper quadrants simply represent that which exists in any individual holon (e.g., prehensive feelings in the UL and morphic forms, mass, and energy in the UR); it does not exclude the fact that the deep features of those individual occasions are often collectively inherited.

For example, take Stan Grof's Basic Perinatal Matrices. According to Grof, all human beings universally go through four stages of the birth process, mirroring the actual stages of the biological birth ordeal. Does this mean that the four BPMs belong to the lower or collective quadrants, since everybody has them? No. When an infant is going through the birth process, many of those events involve what is happening only to a specific individual—the infant has various sensations, perceptions, feelings, and impulses as it goes through the organic stages of the birth process. Those processes do not primarily involve mutual understanding, shared values, 2nd-person perceptions, and so on. Rather, the four BPMs are *exterior (or 3rd-person) descriptions* of what is happening behaviorally to an individual infant (the UR) and its subjective feelings, sensations, perceptions, and so on (in the UL). The fact that the deep features or stages of those processes are collectively inherited does not mean a *collective experience* is therefore occurring (although it sometimes does, in which case those involve tapping into the other quadrants or altered states: the mother and neonate exchange intimate feelings, for example, which is a LL phenomenon). We all collectively inherit ten toes, but

the deep features or Kosmic habits of the universe are simply *probability waves* for finding a particular type of occurrence in a particular spacetime locale. We will return to this important theme in Part II.

Although we sometimes use “morphogenetic fields” to mean any deep features of the waves in any quadrant (interior or exterior), it must be repeated that technically a *morphogenetic field* (or a *morphic field*) is an *exterior* description of holons, not interior. When you are experiencing subjective or intersubjective realities, you never say, “I’m feeling a nice morphogenetic field.” The *actual realities* of the Left-Hand quadrants are immediate feelings, desires, impulses, images, perceptions, prehensions, values and mutual understanding, expressed in *1st-person* (“I”) and *2nd-person* (“you/we”) perspectives. When we look at those phenomena *from the exterior*, in *3rd-person* perspective (“it/its”), we see exterior forms, morphic units, morphogenetic fields, deep structures, social systems, the ecological web of life, and so on. It is crucially important not to confuse exterior descriptors (e.g., morphic fields) with actual interior realities (feelings, prehensions, etc.). All of them have a place in the AQAL Matrix, but none of them can be reduced to, or fully explained by, the others.

In the Lower Right, there exist various *collective fields* and *systems* of morphic units. These *interobjective* fields are the correlates of *intersubjective* feelings and values. That is, if you look at the communal existence of any holon from the exterior, in

when I feel my toes, this does not mean that I am necessarily having a collective transpersonal or shared experience with you (unless you are feeling your toes and for some bizarre reason we are talking about what it feels like to feel toes.)

In short, many of the deep features in all four quadrants are collectively inherited; when those forms are experienced individually, we have the upper quadrants; when shared, the lower quadrants.

a 3rd-person stance, you can discern various forms, structures, systems, patterns of interaction, and collective morphogenetic fields (a social holon—a collective looked at from the exterior—has its own unique, signature, interobjective morphic field (in addition to the morphic fields of each of its individual members); but if you look at those exterior collective forms *from within, that is, from within their shared interior horizons*, in a 2nd-person collaborative inquiry and participatory enactment (“you/we”), you will find, not structures or fields or systems, but mutual feelings, shared values, vivid lived experiences, and so on, all of which are adequately described only from a 1st- and 2nd-person perspective. (See below, quadratic methodology, or Integral Methodological Pluralism).¹⁰

¹⁰ One of the most exasperating aspects of introducing new notions is the whole problem of terminology. This is especially true of quadrants and their dimensions and personal pronouns. For the Left-Hand and Right-Hand dimensions, we have terminological pairs such as “interior/exterior,” “inside/outside,” “internal/external,” and “within/without”—plus items like “subjective/objective.” And each of those can be semantically correlated differently with personal pronouns such as 1st-person (subjective) and 3rd person (objective).

I have throughout this volume given specific definitions for each of those pairs (e.g., “interior/exterior” applies technically to Left-Hand and Right-Hand quadrants, resp.—to the “inside” and the “outside” of a holon. But “inside/outside” are also given technical definitions, as are “internal/external” and “1st-person/3rd-person,” to mention a few. But it is not always easy to use these definitions consistently, I freely admit. My tendency has therefore been to specifically define “interior/exterior,” “inside/outside,” and “internal/external” in technically precise terms, and to leave “within/without” free-floating, able to apply to any of those 3 different dimensions. Likewise, I have left some leeway in how 1st-person and 3rd-person are used with regard to those dimensions, but most often using 1st-person/3rd-person perspectives as roughly synonymous with both subjective/objective and inside/outside.

I’m truly sorry for the difficulty here. All I can recommend is that, as the distinctions between the 3 important dimensions named “interior/exterior,” “inside/outside,” and “internal/external” are introduced, the reader anchor his or her understanding around those definitions, since I will endeavor in most cases to use them strictly, consistently, and in one way only, as defined.

“Within/without” will be kept largely open entirely, referring to any and all of those 3 distinctions as well as personal pronouns. (It’s nice to have at least one term pair that is not

But let's continue to focus on the objective and interobjective dimensions (which are the only ones adequately addressed by Sheldrake's theories). Like all other developmental grooves in any of the quadrants, these interobjective fields first emerged to some degree as creative novelty but are now inherited forms that must be included (even as transcended), forms that therefore *guide* the types of exteriors that *can* emerge under their influence (just as intersubjective contexts mold the types of subjectivity that can tetra-mesh with their contours).

So this is what we have: In the Upper Right, there are various morphic units (with their associated morphic fields)—such as quarks, atoms, molecules, cells, organisms, and so on. These are seen by looking at an individual holon from the exterior in a 3rd-person perspective. In other words, these morphic units are the objective structures or *exterior forms* of that holon's *subjective feelings* or prehensions, which themselves can only be seen or felt from within their interior horizons (which is the Upper Left). Thus, the exterior form is atom, the interior is prehension; the exterior form is cell, the interior is irritability; the exterior form is plant, the interior is sensation; the exterior form is animal with neural net, the interior is perception; the exterior is animal with brain stem, the interior is instinctual impulse; the exterior is animal with limbic system, the interior is emotion, and so on. Interior feelings are inherited via prehensive unification, exterior forms via morphic resonance and formative causation (among others, including genetics—about which I am saying little at this time, since we will return to it as a mere subset of tetra-evolution and tetra-enactment).

Moreover, both interiors and exteriors exist in individual and

strictly defined and can be used freely!) And I promise to do everything I can to make the use of these terms transparent as we go forward.

collective varieties. In short, there are individual prehensions (UL) and collective prehensions, such as mutual resonance or mutual understanding (LL), as well as individual morphic units and their morphogenetic fields (UR) and collective morphic units and their morphogenetic fields (LR).

What Sheldrake is offering is a wonderful description of the inheritance of structures or forms in the Right-Hand quadrants. That is, Sheldrake's formative causation refers to the inheritance of various structures or forms that first emerged, in part, as creative novelty, but have now become Kosmic habits that are inherited by subsequent forms—and those are exactly the *objective correlates* of Whitehead's *subjective inheritance of prehensions*. In other words, all four quadrants inherit their past, then add a moment of creativity that transcends the past to some degree (and that total package or amalgam—past causality and added present novelty—are *together* passed on to the subsequent moment as a total past causality, to which the subsequent moment will then add its own novel creativity, and so on).

It appears, then, that all holons have a four-dimensional inheritance or karmic residue, which forms the inescapable platform from which any present moment must be launched. The previous AQAL Matrix can be transcended to some degree, but it also *must be included*, or the present suffers a dissociation and repression of its own yesterday. The typical postmodern view that history is merely a series of complete ruptures with no continuity might actually be postmodernism's description of its own dissociative pathology, puffed up to ontological priorities. In any event, most of postmodernism overlooks the brilliant insights of Whitehead about what must be happening in this moment in order for it to pass into the next (an account quite similar to the Buddhist view, by the way). There are not just ruptures, but inclusion-with-some-ruptures, and that overall “transcend and

include” builds a holarchy into this and every moment. Sheldrake, at any rate, is not ignoring this important inclusion or inheritance of the past, and he is attempting to account for some of its objective forms and deep features. (And this area—“morphogenesis,” or the development of form—is one of the most poorly understood and addressed issues in all of modern science—except when it deals with the lowest, least significant holons in existence—such as atoms—whose “creativity” and “novelty” component approaches—but never reaches—zero, and then it looks as if you have a purely deterministic, cause-effect sequence, which natural science addresses easily—and incorrectly, or only partially, covering the “include” but ignoring the “transcend” part. Sheldrake starts with a blunt confrontation of these unsolved and often even unaddressed issues, and proposes perfectly rational solutions to these issues, and moreover, ones that mostly are open to empirical testing. I am constantly stunned at the enraged, irrational reactions to Sheldrake from scientific materialists, whose over-reaction can only be read as a stepping on somebody’s exposed nerve endings on a topic at least preconsciously realized to be a real weak spot with modern science.)

Summary

So far we have covered a very brief introduction to four of the basic dimensions of *being-in-the-world*—the Upper-Left quadrant: **subjective** (*intentionality* and *experience*; 1st person singular); the Upper-Right quadrant: **objective** (material *objects* and *behavior*—micro [physiological], meso [organismic], and macro [biological, cosmic]; 3rd person singular); the Lower-Left quadrant: **intersubjective** (*culture*; 2nd person and 1st person plural); and the Lower-Right quadrant: **interobjective** (*social systems*; 3rd person plural).

We noted that all of those dimensions of being-in-the-world have aspects that seem to endure and other aspects that appear novel—what we called *karma* and *creativity*, respectively. The enduring aspects of Kosmic inheritance we also called *Kosmic habits* or *grooves*, which are not pregiven realities (archetypal, Platonic, Hegelian, or Aurobindian), but rather Kosmic patterns and routines that, although originally novel or new emergents, are repeated by enough holons that they become engrained in the Kosmos and are henceforth carried forward, either as enduring physical patterns or self-organizing autopoietic entities of one variety or another. We gave several examples of karmic inheritance or Kosmic habits found in all four quadrants, such as subjective prehension (UL); intersubjective inheritance and cultural memory (LL); organismic autopoiesis and individual morphic resonance (UR); and systems memory and interobjective formative causation (LR). Those are only a few of the types of karmic inheritance available, but they are enough to indicate some of the important factors involved in Kosmic habits and the crucial dimensions of all holons that are being preserved and carried forward (even as the creative aspects of the Kosmos continue to introduce novelty and transcendence). Needless to say, any truly integral account of the Kosmos needs to touch bases with all of those vital realities.

The enduring or included dimension of existence is fundamental, because essentially every single type of holon that has been created and emerged since the Big Bang is still in existence—such as quarks, sub-atomic particles, atoms, molecules, cells, organisms, and so on. And further, those holons are almost always the sub-holons in (or ingredients of) subsequent entities—as quarks are parts of atoms, and atoms are parts of molecules, and molecules are parts of cells, and so on. Holons in all 4 quadrants, once they emerge, tend to remain in existence,

transcended and included by subsequent holons.

This is especially important because each of those 4 dimensions or 4 quadrants has a different methodology of disclosure and enactment. As we will see (and as only a few examples): **empiricism** and **behaviorism** primarily engage the Upper-Right quadrant; **introspection** and **phenomenology** primarily engage the Upper-Left quadrant; **hermeneutics** and **collaborative inquiry** primarily engage the Lower-Left quadrant; the **ecological sciences**, **structural-functionalism**, and **systems theory** primarily engage the Lower-Right quadrant. Of course, there are many more types of inquiries available, but these highlight some of the more historically significant—and the point is that, since all 4 quadrants are equally existing and equally important, all of those methodologies are equally important and need to be included in giving a full, complete, and comprehensive account of any occasion in existence. This ends, immediately, the turf wars between these various epistemologies as to which is “really real” (with the others being downplayed or denied altogether).

All of these different methodologies are not important merely as historical traces; they are all crucial ingredients of what might be called an *Integral Operating System* (IOS). An Integral Operating System is the AQAL Framework and its accompanying Integral Methodological Pluralism (or the many types of legitimate methodologies operating in “all quadrants and all levels”—an Integral Methodological Pluralism that touches all the bases in a attempt to endlessly open itself to the creatively self-disclosing and self-enacting Kosmos: to feel all feelings,prehend all prehensions, as the Self feels itself to infinity and back, never fixed but always changing each and every moment in an open-ended free-for-all cascading through the AQAL Matrix and infinitely beyond. Once an individual downloads and installs IOS

in their own worldview, they begin more conscientiously attempting to include all views, all approaches, all potentials in their own sweep of the Kosmos. IOS initiates a self-correcting, self-organizing outreach to all aspects of the universe previously marginalized by worldviews that were too narrow, too shallow, too self-enclosing to serve as more transparent vehicles of Kosmic consciousness.

At this time, as the center of gravity in the cultural elite begins to shift from green pluralism to teal integralism (again, colors to be explained shortly), various types of IOS are being increasingly and actively sought by the academic avant garde—integral theories and practices of all sorts are starting to tentatively emerge on the scene. We are indeed entering *an integral age at the leading edge*. Exactly what that means, of course, remains to be seen, for the integral age is only beginning vaguely to shimmer on the cultural horizon, right out there in the slowly clearing fog of the misty tomorrow....

In the meantime, in order to assist any sort of integral understanding being able to reproduce itself autopoietically, and thus be carried forth as an enduring insight of the Kosmos into itself, it appears that we need, among many other things, a way to interpret Kosmic habits that does not rely on outmoded and discredited metaphysical postulates (such as pre-existing ontological levels or structures of reality, archetypes as fixed and pregiven forms, involution as a predetermined path, phenomena as existing entirely independently of subjects perceiving them, etc.). What all of those postulated pre-existing entities have in common is that they are believed to be something like “eternal ideas in the mind of an unchanging God,” and thus the importance of evolution itself in helping create those entities is overlooked. We can still postulate the existence of a God—if we provide experiential methods, injunctions, exemplars, or paradigms for

disclosing such Being (which is, we will see, exactly what the contemplative sciences provide), but even God is then usually divided into, to use Whitehead's version, a Primordial Nature of God and a Consequent Nature of God—what the Eastern Traditions often call simply “Emptiness” and “Form.” Emptiness, or the Primordial Nature of Spirit, is radically limitless, formless, unqualifiable (including that), Unborn and Undying, and cannot be conceptualized with any dualistic or partial concepts—it can be directly and fully realized, but not fully described accurately (since every concept makes sense only in terms of its opposite—infinite vs. finite, manifest vs. unmanifest, good vs. evil, pleasure vs. pain, up vs. down, and so on—and Spirit or Ultimate Reality has no opposite). The Consequent Nature of God, however, refers to the manifest, relative realm, and its total accumulating Wholeness, where each moment, because it “transcends and includes” the previous moment, becomes Fuller and Fuller, more Whole and more Whole, more Unified and more Unified, more differentiated-and-integrated overall. Where Emptiness (or Spirit's Primordial Nature) does not evolve (or enter the stream of time at all), Form (or Spirit's Consequent Nature) definitely evolves, becoming more and more unified and holistic with every moment.

But it's fairly clear that neither of those dimensions are pre-given, pre-existing, unchanging, fixed entities. Emptiness, as the genius philosopher-sage Nagarjuna (founder of Madhyamika Buddhism, which we will explore later) pointed out, can be said neither 1) to exist, nor 2) not to exist, nor 3) both, nor 4) neither—it is known, not through such dualistic concepts and rational analytic categories, but through nonconceptual nondual awareness (gnosis, jnana) awakened via contemplation or meditation. But it has no parts, no ingredients, no nothing that is archetypal or unchanging or fixed or given—all of those concepts are beside the

point with Emptiness. And the Consequent Nature of Spirit is itself the ongoing result of Spirit's own evolution, Spirit's own "transcend and include," and thus its "ingredients" are not pre-given, fixed, or archetypal either, but rather emerge and come into existence depending on factors in all 4 quadrants as they constantly tetra-interact. In no case are we dealing with fixed, given, archetypal, pre-determined entities in any fashion. Thus, genuine Spiritual realities, instead of being postulated metaphysical entities that simply have to be taken on faith, can either be directly realized in the nonconceptual awareness of contemplative science (Empty Primordial Nature), or read off the evolutionary record (in its Consequent Nature), as science now does with so many elements. In no case are pre-existing, eternally unchanging metaphysical elements claimed to be central.

Unless we can fashion such a post-metaphysical approach, any IOS will be burdened with outmoded Kosmic habits that now prevent the novel emergence of more integral modes in the creatively unfolding AQAL Matrix. In short, the next step in an Integral Post-Metaphysics is to replace pre-existing metaphysical structures with...what?

CHAPTER 2. KOSMIC HABITS AS PROBABILITY WAVES

Prologue

Let us begin by giving some examples of Kosmic inheritance as played out in human holons. The general thesis, of course, is that certain individual and collective prehensions and forms (in all quadrants) have been inherited to some degree. This means, for example, that all of the waves up to today's leading edge of evolution (which in humans roughly means, up to around the turquoise Integral wave) have been inherited as morphogenetic grooves and contextual fields. They originally emerged in part as creative novelty at evolution's leading edge, but then were laid down as Kosmic habits and thus form part of the building blocks of future occasions.

The older the wave or structure, of course, the more fixed a Kosmic habit it has become. Thus, the basic features of the *infrared domain* (or the sensorimotor realm) are similar the world over: all humans, without exception, require food, water, warmth, shelter. *Magenta* (magic) has been around for at least 150,000 years; *red* (magic-mythic) for at least 10,000 years; *amber* (mythic), for around 4,000 years—so, relatively speaking, there is very little wiggle room left in any of their deep features: they have become morphogenetic grooves of intense habitual patterns almost impossible to break (even though originally they emerged in part as creative freedom). Modern *orange* (rationality) is only around 300 years old on any large scale (with early spot formations in Greece), but nonetheless most of its essential forms seem to have settled in. Postmodern *green* (pluralism), on the other hand, is only around 30 years old (on any sort of collective scale), so green has a fair amount of wiggle room left in its

structure; it is not yet a fully settled habit. The leading-edge today is around *teal* (holistic) to *turquoise* (integral), which means that any of you who are pioneering or studying integral ideas and practices are, right now, actually creating the Kosmic forms and habits that future generations will inherit, even as future generations continue to move beyond teal and turquoise.¹¹

As we were saying, the leading edge today is around *teal* to *turquoise*—the frothy, chaotic, wildly creative leading-edge of consciousness unfolding and evolution, still rough and ready in its newly settling contours, still far from settled habit. This is why today, right now, we want to try to lay down as “healthy” a teal groove as we possibly can, because we are creating morphic fields in all subsequent Kosmic memory. If a particular wave emerges in a deformed, warped, fragmented, or pathological fashion—due to various types of turbulence in AQAL space—then that unhealthy form will be inherited by the future, with terribly unfortunate results. (For the ways in which both orange and green

¹¹ Spiral Dynamics is a particular model of psychological development based on the work of the pioneering developmentalist Clare Graves. Graves in particular based his model on the developmental line of what he called *values systems*, which is why *Spiral Dynamics* (Beck, Don and Cowan, Christopher) continues to refer to *vMememes*, short for “value memes.” For Integral Psychology, the values line is one of perhaps two dozen equally important developmental lines or streams of consciousness evolution; what we want to avoid, of course, is any sort of “line absolutism,” just as we want to avoid quadrant absolutism, state absolutism, or type absolutisms. In Excerpt D, we will explore ways that we can account for “basic levels/structures” of consciousness as a cross-line measure without succumbing to line absolutism. It is in that excerpt that the altitude spectrum (which utilizes the colors of the natural rainbow) used throughout this presentation is further explained. Still, the great advantage of the Gravesian values line is that it is easily understood, it has a considerable amount of empirical evidence, and it is one of the most fundamental of human motivators, so it works extremely well as a simple overview/example of human development. But, needless to say, the main points that I am making can be made with any valid developmental line; see *Integral Psychology* for extensive discussion of this theme; for a brief introduction to Spiral Dynamics, see *A Theory of Everything* [and the intro to CW7, posted on www.kenwilber.com in Archives]. Don Beck, influenced by Integral Theory, now refers to Spiral Dynamics as Spiral Dynamics Integral, or SDi.

have tilted toward dysfunctional basic forms, see the endnote.)¹²

¹² The orange level, which emerged at large as the leading edge of the Western Enlightenment and “modernity” (Maslow’s self-esteem, Loevinger’s conscientious, Kohlberg’s moral stage 5 or social contract, Piaget’s formal operational, Kegan’s order 4, etc.) was defined by Weber as “the differentiation of the value spheres,” namely, the differentiation of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—or morals, science, and art—and thus they could all escape the Church’s domination of each of them with a mythic-religious dogma (the Churchmen didn’t have to look through Galileo’s telescope—they “knew” what they would see), and thus each of these areas (art, morals, science) began to make stunning advances, altogether marking the switch from the general Mythic Era to the Modern Rational Era (what the Durants called “The Age of Reason and Revolution”). For approximately 100 years or so, these fully differentiated spheres continued to interact with each other, support each other, help explain each other, and otherwise exist in a friendly, integrated, mutually supportive fashion. This was an incredibly fruitful and creative period. But as the natural sciences began making stunning discoveries (largely because dealing with the least evolved, least creative holons, such as atoms, molecules, physical planets, etc.), science began, innocently enough, to colonize the other value spheres, as science degenerated into scientism and an integrated value-sphere reality gave way to scientific materialism, the belief that only the Right-Hand quadrants were really real and really important. All other dimensions were “epiphenomenal” or “imaginary” or “childish” or simply “not real.” Several hundreds of years later, this is essentially the basic form that orange takes when it first emerges in any individual—it emerges as a tendency to scientific materialism (where “scientific” means “reproducible via sensory evidence” and “materialistic” means “only exterior, physical, material dimensions are really real”). Thus orange’s original, healthy, unity-in-diversity form collapsed into a morphic field that was reductionistic, absolutistic (quadrant absolutism), and paradigmatic for *all* forms of serious knowledge. Thus, in many ways, the fundamental Kosmic habit of orange has become dysfunctional (and many of today’s “wicked problems” are due to runaway versions of scientific materialism—which ignores morals, ethics, aesthetics, spirituality, etc.—from crony capitalism to environmental despoliation to modern techniques of genetic homicide).

Likewise, when postmodern green (pluralism) first emerged, it emphasized a pluralistic reality as a driver of human rights (and environmental rights), and thus drove everything from the important civil rights movement to the worldwide environmental movement to anti-hate crime legislation. But as green pluralism continued to function, it increasingly slipped into strident forms of relativism, and from there into global deconstructionism, where every major approach to human issues was denied reality because supposedly there were no “universals,” and any claim to have a universal truth was seen as a hidden way to oppress and dominate people, to take one’s own values, claim they were universal, and then attempt to shove them down everybody’s throat. Where there is some true to that, it can’t be taken to the extremes postmodernism did without violent self-contradictions (it claims that there are no universal truths; it claims that all knowledge is a social construction; it claims that there are no superior views anywhere; it claims all knowledge is an interpretation and thus varies from culture to culture. But it itself absolutely believes that all of those items are true for all people, in all cultures, in all places, at all times—in other words, it itself is committing actions that it claims cannot and should not be performed—in many different ways, it is universally claiming that it

Of course, each subsequent wave is “transcend and include,” so subsequent waves can, to some extent, transcend and redress previous pathologies: but at what cost? To some degree this is what happened with orange rationality—the great emergence of the orange wave during the Enlightenment was fairly quickly warped into its *flatland version*—often referred to as *scientific materialism*—and we of today have unavoidably inherited this fractured Kosmic habit—the dissociation of the value spheres instead of their differentiation¹³—a pathological Kosmic habit, a disenchantment of the world, which postmodernism in part arose to redress.

With mixed results, alas. In fact, it appears that the great potential of the green wave, which took as its vehicle postmodernism, actually arrived on the scene in an atmosphere

is true that there are no universal truths). It is claiming that its view is not a matter of mere interpretation, not a mere social construction, and is superior in a world where nothing is supposed to be superior. But as *The Shadow University* demonstrates, this view has become dogma in all leading universities, and professors can be instantly dismissed for disagreeing with any of those elements—a true Green Inquisition. Thus, green’s central form has become a green absolutism—a dysfunctional form of green—and this is how it tends to emerge now in the first place, as this essentially dysfunctional form of pluralism taken to absolutism.

That’s why we still need to be very careful about the emergence of the Integral levels of consciousness just now starting to happen. There is nothing that says they must emerge in a balanced, healthy, nonreductionistic fashion; like orange and green before them, it is entirely possible they will increasingly tilt into dysfunctional forms, which, given Integral’s power, would be disastrous. That’s why it’s important that the Integral models we adopt now are truly inclusive, comprehensive, and as complete as we can make them.

¹³ The “differentiation of the value spheres” was the differentiation of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—or morals, art, and science—from their fusion and domination by Church mythic-dogma. Evolution operates via “differentiation-and-integration” or “transcend-and-include,” and so this was a natural evolutionary step due to be taken at some point. But as science increasingly began, through its staggering achievements, to dominate the scene, the differentiation of the value spheres—which was the “*dignity* of modernity”—gave way to the dissociation of the value spheres, and the domination (or what Habermas calls “the colonization”) of all of them by science, with a resulting scientific materialism as the dominant worldview of modernity—which was the “*disaster* of modernity” and “the disenchantment of the world,” a disaster still in place.

that carried a strong tendency to reproduce the modern flatland pathology: a flatland habit so ingrained that green not only eventually succumbed to it but magnified it, glorified it, drank the hemlock and called it fine wine. The green wave degenerated very quickly (in a few decades) into a generally pathological or malformed version (caught, as it was, in the morphogenetic turbulence caused by the orange flatland warp in the AQAL Matrix). This pathological flatland version of green, due to its association with such trends as politically correct coercive movements, we call “the mean green meme” (or the MGM); and the MGM, over the last three decades, settled into a rigid, unyielding, morphogenetic groove that took all human beings who were attempting to move beyond orange and slammed them into the prison of a flatland pluralism.

Green, like orange, started out on a healthier base, and was responsible for the civil rights movement; feminism becoming a significant social, political, and personal force; the widespread environmental movements; shifts to sustainability in all areas; a keener awareness of disenfranchisement and marginalization and oppression. But as green progressed, it became more and more extreme, more and more deconstructive, and ended up destroying and deconstructing much of what it had created, leaving behind a nihilism and narcissism that haunts the world to this day.

(Likewise, orange began in a relatively healthy fashion, and fought to replace monarchy with representative democracy—with the French and American revolutions; introduced most of the modern sciences, which among other things added decades to the average life span; moved from an ethnocentric mythic religion to a worldcentric universal “Rights of Man”—which soon included all races and all sexes—where every individual is treated equally regardless of race, color, sex, or creed—such that, in a hundred-year span, roughly 1770-1870, slavery was outlawed from every

modern industrial-rational society on the face of the planet, the *first time in history* an entire societal type had outlawed slavery; and finally, in Weber's terms, modernity "differentiated the value spheres"—of art, morals, and science—so that, instead of being controlled by the Church, each sphere was free to go its own way and make its own pioneering discoveries. But a victim of its own success, the science sphere "colonized" the other spheres, leaving in their place a scientific materialism that allowed science, and science alone, to pronounce on what was true. The "disenchantment of the universe" was upon us.)

Because the green wave and the MGM—and boomeritis¹⁴—are only three decades old, their morphogenetic grooves have as yet been inscribed only moderately lightly in Kosmic memory, and therefore concerted efforts now—by healthy green and healthy teal and turquoise—might yet turn the tide and bequeath to the future the great potentials of the healthy green wave, a Kosmic habit that all future generations could then draw on as a

¹⁴ "Boomeritis" (aka "pluralitis") is the green, pluralistic, postconventional wave infected with red, preconventional, egocentric narcissism. Green, in its desire to go postconventional and deconstruct marginalizing and oppressive social institutions, ended up confusing "post-conventional" with "pre-conventional" (egocentric) modes, simply because both are "non-conventional" (this is called the "pre/post fallacy," or the "pre/trans" fallacy). Under these circumstances, green's "pluralism"—which believed deeply in egalitarianism, the idea that all human belief systems are equally valid, that none are superior to others, that what is true for you is true for you and what is true for me is true for me, and neither can be challenged—a view that implicitly and even explicitly encouraged every view—no matter how narcissistic, self-glorifying, self-promoting, and other-denying—to flourish. As a result, under this constant influence, research shows that the most recently graduating class is 2-3 times more narcissistic than their Boomer parents—in fact, the most narcissistic class ever since testing began—and their Boomer parents were known as the "Me generation"! In other words, this narcissism got its first major generational glorification with the Boomers, who were actually known, as just noted, as the "Me generation" (so that this recent class has been called the "Me Me Me generation"); but Boomers, marked often by green pluralism and a red egocentric underbelly, were caught in what I have called "boomeritis" (a green/red psychograph), although clearly, you can have boomeritis without being a Boomer. But this boomeritis trend was the beginning of the increasingly rampant narcissism our culture is known for.

foundation for a more caring, sensitive, truly compassionate world, instead of a world now dominated by thought police, green inquisitors, politically correct silliness, and one brutality or another parading as pluralism: barbarism with a smiley face.

(Of course, five-thousand years from now, green and teal will be almost as fixed and determined as red magic or amber mythic are now. At that time, most teenagers might be negotiating, not orange as they are now, but teal—orange they would have passed through probably around age 8 or 9 with a quick yawn. And the leading edge would likely be somewhere around indigo (the para-mind), whose vast unformed potentials will start to crystallize and take on form as molded by AQAL space through future parameters as yet undetermined, still to emerge in part as creative novelty before they settle into predetermined habit. But that is why, today, it pays to focus on the two waves that are the cusp of the Kosmic action right now—green [pluralism] and teal [systemic holism]—and attempt to contribute, as best we can, to their healthy versions as a gift to tomorrow....)

In short, the leading-edge of creative novelty is, in today's world, somewhere around holistic teal, which means that the deep features of the probability waves from infrared to beginning green have already been laid down as Kosmic habits—and the earlier the wave, the more settled and determined it is.¹⁵ Thus, in today's

¹⁵ In humans, we call the sum total of those habits, inherited as potentials ready to emerge as actuals, the **ground unconscious** (see *Atman Project*, CW2, *Eye to Eye*, CW4 and *Transformations of Consciousness*, CW4). The ground unconscious also includes any **involutionary givens** (see note [[[26]]?] below). The ground unconscious can thus be accounted for without recourse to Platonic givens or fixed archetypes. See in particular the endnotes in *Integral Psychology* dealing with a post-metaphysical approach to these issues, endnotes gathered together in “On the Nature of a Post-Metaphysical Spirituality,” posted on www.kenwilber.com.

world, the deep features of waves up to around green are relatively set and “predetermined,” *not* by timeless archetypes but by prehensive unifications and morphic resonances from past creative novelties now settled into habits.

Probability Space in the AQAL Matrix

Because “postmodernism” has often also been referred to as “post-structuralism” (at least in academia), people often misunderstand just what a “structure” is (and is not). Among experts, there is actually a broad and strong agreement as to the meaning of a “structure,” which is generally defined—by Sheldrake, Piaget, Habermas, Francisco Varela, Carol Gilligan, Jane Loevinger, etc.—as a “*holistic dynamic system of self-organizing processes* that maintain themselves as patterns through their self-reproduction.”¹⁶ As dynamic self-maintaining

By the way, when it comes to criticism and critics, I have long ago given up having critics accurately represent my position before criticizing it; that is not really what criticism is about in the postmodern university, where criticism has come to be primarily the expression of what is true for the critic (not true for the position being criticized). Thus, in today’s criticism, the critic uses a particular book or essay to express what that book sets in motion in the critic; the critic’s response is thus primarily a cataloging of the critic’s egoic feelings, sentiments, and thoughts as the critic reads a particular piece—it has almost nothing to do with the piece itself or its actual contents, which are largely irrelevant to the display of the responses of the critic. It took me almost a decade to realize this and to cease trying to engage in factual or evidentiary discourse with critics, and respond instead to the feelings of the critic, where the only acceptable response to is thank them for sharing their swell sentiments. If, on the other hand, you attempt to correct their misrepresentations, this is taken to mean that you are condemning their feelings, and thus you are taken to be a terribly insensitive fellow, following the “great chain of being nasty,” which is the only sin recognized by the mean green meme. Accordingly, a type of interpretive play, acknowledging and honoring the egoic feelings and desires of the critic, is the main arena in which criticism operates today, and this requires, shall we say, some getting used to....

¹⁶ See, e.g., Bausch, *The Emerging Consensus in Social Systems Theory*, and the Intro to CW3. There is, however, a semantic confusion that needs to be addressed. Sometime a distinction is made between “organization” and “structure,” where “organization” means

patterns, structures are not fixed and unchanging, but rather are “unstably stable” (or a mixture of “*circularity* and *openness*”—i.e., oldness and newness—i.e., karma and creatively—i.e., include and transcend), and thus are capable of flexible adaptation to fluctuations: they can evolve through “structural coupling” with enacted environments (we say, “tetra-evolve”). A structure is materially different moment to moment; its pattern or form, however, is unstably stable and endures as a Kosmic habit for as long as that class of holons exists in spacetime (i.e., for as long as it negotiates the selection pressures in the AQAL Matrix).

It is common in postmodern forms of “new paradigms” to say that “structure” has been replaced by “process.” Actually, of course, structure was always defined as dynamic processes that reproduce themselves. But there are indeed two aspects of structures that researchers keep emphasizing: their capacity for fluid change (e.g., *accommodation* and *adaptation*—or adjusting to their *communities*); and their capacity, if conditions are right, for remaining incredibly stable over long periods of time (e.g., *autopoiesis* and *assimilation*—or stable *agency*).

Keep in mind, for example, that there are living bacteria on earth that have remained unchanged *for over one billion years*. There are insect species that have remained unchanged for over ten million years; reptilian forms, over 5 million years—not to mention the forms of many atoms and molecules that are close to 15 billion years old: that is an awesome capacity for stable

“pattern” and “structure” is used in the narrower sense as the material components of the organized pattern. Thus, Maturana and Varela say, for example, that a cell has “a closed organization and an open structure.” The organization or the dynamic pattern of the cell is *closed* because it is autopoietically maintained and resists all change; but the structure is *open* because the actual material components of the cell are changed constantly. That is quite true; but many theorists (and virtually all structuralists) use “structure” to mean the “organization” or the pattern itself, and not the material components. I am following that more standard usage. Thus, “structure” means the organized dynamic pattern that is autopoietically maintained and resists change, and “components” mean the material components.

agency! In humans, the infrared structure has remained essentially unchanged for 500,000 years; the magenta structure, for 30,000 years; red, for 10,000 years; amber, for 4,000; orange, for 300; green, for 30 (and we are now on the frothy, creative edge of human evolution where new and higher potentials—holistic and integral—although explored, co-created, and enacted in idiosyncratic forms by relatively rare pioneers, are just starting to emerge and crystallize on a widespread or cultural basis—much more about that later).

What is required, then, is a way to account for “structure” without falling, shall we say, into structuralism, or a *reification* of structures as some sort of ontologically existing molds (which is what both the perennial philosophers and the early structuralists did, in their own ways, both of which need to be jettisoned in that regard, simply because they didn’t work).

We saw that deep features are inherited in essentially unchanging or “unstably stable” ways, whereas surface features tend to be recreated anew in each individual holon. That is, even though the general patterns (or morphogenetic grooves) of these holons are handed to us by Kosmic karma, all of the actual contents, surface features, and expressions of these habitual patterns are determined by relatively, culturally, and individually contingent factors in all four quadrants.

But this is where we start to move beyond any of the typical definitions of “deep structures,” “deep features,” or “deep patterns”: for Integral Post-Metaphysics, a “deep pattern” is not an actually existing form or structure but simply a term that represents *the probability of finding a particular type of holon in a particular area of spacetime in the AQAL matrix*.

Thus, if we say that a person is “at the red wave,” and the red wave’s general features include egocentrism, preconventional

morality, and strong power drives (among others), that does not mean that there is some sort of concretely existing structure, pattern, or adaptive intelligence called “the red structure” (or the red meme or the red module, etc.) such that this person is somehow operating within it and bound by it (or that is somehow “in” the person). All it means is that the person that we identify as operating at or from red is acting in a space where the probability of finding those types of responses is very high (i.e., responses that are egocentric, preconventional, power-laden, etc.). The fewer of those responses you find, the less the person is “at red”—the less they are operating in the space of probabilities of that particular Kosmic habit (and the habit itself is a probability space).

A deep pattern, then, is simply a probability wave. The deep features that are characteristic of that probability wave are discovered by doing a *reconstructive* investigation *after the fact* of its existence, and *not* something that we can deduce in a Platonic or Hegelian or Aurobindian fashion before its actual emergence. In other words, to say that consciousness is “at the red wave” simply means that it is vibrating at a particular probability wave: from the exterior, we say that it is flowing along a particular morphogenetic field that represents the probability of finding certain types of behaviors at that point in spacetime; from the interior, we say that the feeling-awareness of that holon arises within a horizon of individual and collective prehensions, such that the probability of feeling a certain type of feeling (e.g., “red”) is very high at that particular wave.

Some probability waves are so tightly laid down as Kosmic habits that the probability of finding a particular type of holon in that space approaches (but never fully reaches) 100%. This often happens in physical systems, with things like atoms or molecules (where, as Whitehead pointed out, it was mistaken as pure determinism); but it happens often enough even at higher waves

(e.g., the probability of finding certain types of holons at the red probability wave is very high indeed). But that should not obscure the fact that the stages/waves of development, in all quadrants up to the present, originally emerged in part as profound creative novelty and were then laid down as habits that accordingly represent, not rigid grids of determinism, but organic habits indicating the likelihood or probability of finding a particular event in a particular spacetime.

(Even an electron, as viewed by quantum mechanics, is not a pre-existing thing but a “tendency to exist” whose *probability* of being found in a *particular spacetime* is given by the square of the Schroedinger wave function. There is no real 100% determinism even at the atomic level. And speaking of atomic creativity—even though it is relatively modest, especially in comparison with higher holons, it is not absent; after all, after several million years of nothing but quarks, sub-atomic, and atomic particles existing, the leading edge—atoms—managed to come together and, out of their own intrinsic creativity, produce molecules—a wildly creative emergence that was a true transformative leap in evolution. If atoms had no creative power at all, the universe would still consist of nothing but atoms everywhere.)

Thus, to quickly summarize, the deep features of any holon (quark, atom, molecule, cell, human developmental stage, etc.) are simply the types of events that are probable within the Kosmic habits already laid down by past creative emergence. These probability waves are not some sort of clunky concrete structures lying around out there, but are simply the general morphogenetic grooves that represent the probability of finding a particular event at a particular spacetime locale in the creatively unfolding AQAL Matrix.

As for the actual features or concrete structures of those

events, they are co-determined, not just by past Kosmic habits that set broad probability patterns, but by actually-existing factors in all four quadrants (experiential prehensions, behavioral patterns, social systems, and cultural contexts).¹⁷ The actual activity of,

¹⁷ As we saw, many of the probability waves of development are collectively inherited, but whether they refer to the upper or lower quadrants depends on the specific characteristics being considered. “The red level,” for example, includes the general set of values that are available to an individual within the probability space of a particular wave of consciousness (a wave that, in this case, we call “red” or “egocentric”). When an individual experiences a personal subjective value that falls within that probability space, that is an instance of the Upper Left (i.e., the “red level” then refers to aspects of the subjective dimension of values, needs, motivations, etc. as they vibrate in an individual human holon in a particular AQAL matrix). The preponderance of evidence, gathered by a reconstructive inquiry, suggests that the general features of this probability wave are inherited by humans whenever they evolve beyond magenta, which we take as indicating that this wave has become a fairly settled Kosmic habit prehended by virtually all holons moving through that now-laid-down space.

When these red prehensions are *mutually shared* with other holons at red; when there is an intimate, nonmediated resonance of red feelings with red feelings among two or more holons; when red values (i.e., values whose features have a very high likelihood of falling within the probability space called red) form the background of mutual understanding; when red value waves are a part of the fabric of the pre-reflexive feelings of the members of any collective holon; when the horizons of individual holons vibrating at red fuse in a mutual-enough prehension: then we speak generically of a “red worldview,” and here red obviously means the Lower Left: not just individual, but communal.

Finally, when a red value wave is lit up and vibrating in the UL or LL, there are (necessarily) corresponding vibrations in the UR and LR. In humans, a red value felt subjectively (UL) goes hand in hand with an increased activity in the limbic system (the Upper Right). And when holons vibrating at red come together as a group, and act as if the group’s center of gravity is red (i.e., the general features of the group’s behavior fall within those that would be generated by the characteristic occasions of the red probability wave), then that group has a syntax or social system representing the collective exterior dimension (LR) of the red probability wave, and it has a set of mutual prehensions, semantics, and pre-reflexive backgrounds (LL) representing its intersubjective dimensions.

Thus, it is not that there is something called an individual red value, and that several holons then come together and exchange this thing called red value (although that can happen), but rather and most fundamentally, there is a general probability wave or Kosmic habit (which represents the repetitive or karmic likelihood of finding a particular class of events in a particular spacetime locale)—a probability wave that in this instance we call “red”—and that probability wave can be looked at (and experienced) from at least four important perspectives: subjective, objective, intersubjective, and interobjective. These dimensions are not four

different things but four different dimensions of any actual occasion (all the way up, all the way down).

(Generally, the term “red” is used only for the subjective and intersubjective dimensions of this probability space, which is fine; but the point is that there is simply a general probability space with at least four dimensions, and we can use the terms from any of those four dimensions to refer to the others—this is merely a matter of semantics. We could just as well use “limbic” to refer to the correlates in all four quadrants, or “tribal,” and so on. But generally, various terms are used specifically with reference to only one quadrant—terms like prehension, values, molecules, ecosystem—and those terms better reflect the realities of that quadrant or dimension, and therefore we will usually follow that custom; but the fact that these are merely four dimensions of a single actual occasion should always be kept in mind.)

So the red intersubjective background does not come into existence through an individual exchange of red values; nor does the subject arise in an intersubjective space—rather, they all arise simultaneously and tetra-evolve. Any subject that does not initially mesh with the *a priori* or pre-existing AQAL space will be selected out of existence (a fact that appears to a pre-quadratic understanding as a belief that relationships, or the intersubjective background, are ontologically prior to subjectivity, a fractured understanding replaced by the simultaneity of tetra-evolution). Any quadrant has to mesh with all other quadrants or it is selected out of existence.

The fact that the collective dimensions often have more weight (by sheer dint of numbers) should not be misinterpreted to mean that the collective dimensions are somehow ontologically prior. It is not that one quadrant is prior to another. Rather, what is prior to the AQAL space of this moment is simply the AQAL space of the preceding moment. There must *initially* be a tetra-mesh of this moment’s AQAL matrix with that of its predecessor, or prehensive unification fractures, formative causation fails, there is no moment of continuity between now and then, and accordingly the newly-emerging holon is erased in its emergence. (We say it must *initially* tetra-mesh because, of course, the new moment will also add its degree of creative novelty in all four dimensions, and thus the AQAL matrix of this moment will transcend to some degree the matrix of the moment before: thus does the Kosmos grow.)

If intersubjectivity (LL) were ontologically prior to a subjectivity (UL), then cultural backgrounds could never be *fundamentally* changed by individual subjects (i.e., subjects, coming after the fact of the deeply prior ontological ground, could never get at the ground in order to change it), whereas individual subjects always have some sort of influence, sometimes profound, on the cultural background (as one quadrant influencing another). Likewise, the cultural background itself must mesh with other dimensions: if, for example, the intersubjective background (LL) does not mesh with the techno-economic base (LR), then there is a profound interior conflict and dissonance between the cultural and social aspects of a holon’s being-in-the-world (i.e., its semantics and its syntax clash). (For an extended discussion of this theme, see the section “The Nature of Revolutionary Social Transformation” in the main text.) The point, as usual, is that the quadrants arise simultaneously and tetra-evolve in mutual mesh.

say, a red holon, is determined not only by the inherent deep form of that red wave, but by that particular red holon's past history and past activities in all 4 quadrants—its own history is an inherited karmic tendency (in all 4 quadrants) that its present moment must “include” even as it partially “transcends” it. Both of those determinants are extremely important—its own deep features (which give certain potentials and also create certain limitations) and its overall actual history (the sum total of past actions in all 4 quadrants that must be included in a “tetra-prehensive unification,” moment to moment, if the holon is to be carried forward in existence. “Natural selection” is simply one, fairly narrow, version of selection pressures—in this case, in the Lower Right—that certain holons face. But there are selection pressures issuing from all 4 quadrants—actually, from all dimensions in the AQAL Matrix—and these must be met if the holon is to continue its existence). That, again, is why we say that although deep probability waves (morphogenetic grooves or deep patterns) are unalterably inherited from the past in a collective fashion, most of the surface features are not, but depend upon variable historical contingencies.¹⁸

¹⁸ “Deep” and “surface” are sliding terms, which is why one must rely on the context to help determine their meaning. For example, the “deep” features of a holon are defined as that which is common to that class of holons, and “surface” refers to only individual members of that class. But “deep” and “surface” are therefore relative, because they shift meaning according to the *level of the class* itself. There could be deep features common to members of a particular family, a particular subculture, a particular culture, a particular civilization block, all humans, all sentient beings, and so on. In that case, what is “deep” to one is “surface” to the next higher class: e.g., the *deep* features of a particular family (i.e., features shared by all family members) are *surface* features of a particular culture (i.e., they are not shared by all culture members). Likewise, the deep features of a culture are surface features for a civilization block, and what is deep to that block is surface to all humans, etc. All of those uses are acceptable, as long as they are based on reputable evidence from sound reconstructive inquiries.

Further, it appears that all of those collectives (as well as the individual) generate morphic fields—which is Sheldrake's essential point. Thus, these classes are not mere

abstractions—another essential point. That is, these morphic fields (of a family, a group, a subculture, a culture, all humans) exert *formative causation* on the form of all holons in that class, which is part of their deep-feature inheritance (or Kosmic-karmic influence on subsequent holons). Sheldrake gives example after example of how different classes of holons exert morphic influence on other members in that class—whether a family, a group, a nation, all humans, all species, etc. A civilization block, for example, is united in the fact that all of its members speak a particular language, such as English, and that collective linguistic field has profound morphic effects on its members. Likewise with the influence that a family can exert on its members, a peer group on its, a nation, and so on. Each of those classes, to the extent they really exist, have deep and surface features; and the deep features are inherited by all members of that class as part of its Kosmic karma.

In the main text, when I generally say that “deep features are inherited, surface features are not,” I usually mean that from the class of the universal (unless otherwise specified). From that vantage point, the *universally* inherited deep features of, say, infrared (such as the need for food, water, and shelter, which are universally inherited by *all* human beings with no exceptions) nevertheless do not determine what a particular culture or individual does in the specific ways of acquiring food, water, and shelter, so we say that those specific surface features are *not* universally inherited—they are surface features that appear differently from culture to culture, and those cultural differences need to be acknowledged and honored (they are, however, inherited from the previous moment’s surface features in that particular group, family, nation, etc.).

But a particular culture will invariably develop a set of practices (e.g., a particular language structure; various ethical norms; a particular techno-economic mode of production, styles of dress and accepted mores, etc.)—practices that, although surface to universal structures (i.e., those specific forms are *not* inherited by all humans), are nonetheless common for all members of that culture, and thus they are the *deep* features of that particular culture, inherited as background by all normal members of the culture. So those sociocultural backgrounds (intersubjective and interobjective) are actually *deep features for that society*, and as such are inherited by all normal members of that society (but not all humans everywhere). And likewise within those deep structures of a particular culture, there are family surface structures—but those might be common to all members of that family, and thus are “deep” structures collectively inherited by all members of that family (but not all members of that culture nor of all humans).

The point is that what is “surface” for one level can be “deep” at another (and, among other things, the deep features at any level exert morphic resonance and formative causation on holons at the same class-level). Moreover, in order to spot “deep” features, the corresponding cognitive apparatus is necessary. For example, teal systems theory discloses universal patterns that cannot be discerned with amber or green cognition. (See **Excerpt F**, subsection “A Brief History of Conperceptions.”) This is why the green wave, for example, which does not have cognitive access to 2nd-tier holarchical universals and their cross-cultural deep features, imagines that there are only surface features everywhere—that there are only relativistic and pluralistic features in existence. But add 2nd-tier integral cognitions, and the deep features underlying cultural relativity come into focus—such as the deep patterns of the

quadrants, with 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person perspectives, and the spiral of development itself. This does not deny the relativity of many cultural productions—which are indeed *universally* “surface” and not universally “deep”—but it does complement rampant relativity with the many features, disclosed by teal and turquoise, that are cross-cultural for humans, including many of the claims made by the postmodernists themselves, such as the interpretive component of all human knowledge, which is indeed a universally deep component, as is the constructivist aspect of all knowledge, another postmodernist tenet.

So the generic statement that “deep features are inherited, surface features are not” needs always to be qualified, because the concrete meaning depends upon which class-level is implied. The statement actually means “*inherited by all members of that class.*”

To summarize: Generally, in the main text, I am referring to cross-cultural or *universal* features, and thus when I say “deep features are inherited, surface features are not,” I mean that those general probability waves are inherited as Kosmic potentials/habits by all humans, but that’s as far as it goes, cross-culturally. Nothing that is relatively surface to those deep features is universally inherited. But that does not stop particular cultures, subcultures, and families from having their own “deep” features that are collectively inherited by their members (as determined by a reconstructive science). At their particular class-level—say, that of cultures—it is again true that “deep features are inherited, surface features are not”—which in this case means, all members of that culture inherit certain deep features, such as the culture’s intersubjective background (which is generally deep to all normal members), but not all members inherit particular features within that background (which are surface). However, some features that are surface for that culture might be common to all members of a particular family, in which case they are deep features for that family and are inherited by all members of that family (this is particularly true, as almost everybody intuitively understands, for pathological traits in a family, where the sins of the fathers and mothers are visited unto the seventh generation...). Here we have a deep family karmic pattern, which is nonetheless surface to the culture itself (and certainly surface to all humans).

Anyway, please keep in mind the sliding nature of “deep” and “surface” in following the narrative about formative causation, morphic resonance, and Kosmic karma in general. As I said, in the text, usually I am speaking about cross-cultural and *universal* features (deep for all normal humans), so everything else is treated as “surface,” which means, everything else is culturally relative (which is true, in comparison with the universals). But within those cultures, there are many deep features inherited by that culture, by various subcultures, by families, and by individuals (with morphic resonance and formative causation presumably contributing to the mechanisms of that inheritance in each case, along with factors in the other quadrants, such as prehensive unification, genetics, autopoiesis, habitus, etc.).

The important point, which will be suggested in the main text, is that none of those deep features at any level—including the universal—are predetermined in any sort of Platonic, Hegelian, Aurobindian, or pre-given archetypal fashion. They emerge in part as creative novelty during evolution, and only after they are laid down as Kosmic habits do they become potentials that can be inherited by subsequent holons. This is an essential aspect of the move from metaphysical to post-metaphysical.

But please notice: *even the deep patterns* of the *higher* waves of consciousness—that is, higher than green—are now in the process of being formed; not even those patterns are given from past creativity in a predetermined *a priori*. As we will see, there are two important, but very different, types of patterns in consciousness: *structures* of consciousness, and *states* of consciousness. We will be going over these in detail as we proceed; for now I'll include an introductory summary in the endnote (though it is not necessary to read that now—only if you're interested).¹⁹ But, as we will see in detail, structures of

¹⁹ Structures of consciousness—which we are discussing now—are stable, enduring, dynamic holistic patterns of awareness, and govern the types of phenomena that can be enacted, co-created, and experienced at any level or stage of frontal (or conventional) development.

States of consciousness—the major natural states of consciousness—are usually given as 5 in the great Traditions—waking, dreaming, deep formless sleep, ever-present Witnessing, and ever-present Suchness or Nondual Unity. Most of the natural states are present at birth, although they will usually have to await growth and development in order to fill in their content; and what content they do possess at any given time is interpreted by the structures that are present and have developed to date. What develops in states is the self's center of gravity, or major identity with the various states, with Wakefulness or Awareness progressing from being confined to the waking state, to the dream state (where one might begin to lucid dream), to deep formless states of awareness (the Abyss, the largely unmanifest), to pure empty unqualifiable Witnessing (or the True Self), to nondual Suchness, Thusness, or Isness—pure Unity Consciousness. With states, it is possible to have brief peak experiences of higher states, but, as Aurobindo pointed out, any skipped states will still have to be revisited and renowned properly, and then transcended-and-included in further development. As we will see, any state experience is *interpreted by structures* (so that, as a brief example, a person might have an experience of a subtle-dream state luminosity and love-bliss. If the person is at magic egocentric red, they will interpret this state as applying only to themselves, as proof that they, and they alone, are Jesus or the Divine—a very typical schizophrenic experience. If they are at mythic ethnocentric amber, they will interpret—and experience—this state as applying to their root group, as evidence that they are indeed members of the chosen peoples, who alone are suffused with this Divine Light, all others being soulless infidels. If they are at worldcentric orange or green, they will interpret—and experience—this Divine Light as belonging to all peoples, regardless of race, color, sex, or creed, and Jesus becomes a humanistic world teacher, not the one and only, solely Divine human in history. If at 2nd tier or 3rd tier, they will interpret—and experience—this Divine Light as applying not only to all humans, but to all sentient beings, even to all manifestation itself, as Everything that arises is seen as a manifestation of Divine Light, freely available to all in a community of being. Again, because these states are generally all present, in various degrees of access, from birth, a person can, while they are developing through them, occasionally have a peak

consciousness are the ways in which humans GROW UP. States of consciousness are ways in which they WAKE UP. This is a very important distinction that we will be returning to many times; it is a recent discovery that has shed a great deal of light of human growth and development. The point, for the time being, is that both of these developmental sequences (structure-stages in Growing Up and state-stages in Waking Up) are relatively independent (you can be highly evolved in one and poorly in the other, and vice versa), and yet both are absolutely essential in a true Enlightenment or full Awakening, and skimping on either one leads to various inadequacies, fragmentation, and dysfunction. (The West, or conventional development, has focused almost exclusively on structures of consciousness and the multiple intelligences that they drive in Growing Up. The East, or more accurately contemplative development East or West, has focused

experience—or a “peek experience”—of any of the higher states. But for these realizations to stick, and become part of the Self, these temporary states must be converted into permanent traits, and that is the goal of growth and development through the states of consciousness. This generally does not happen on its own, or as a natural occurrence, and thus some sort of specific transformative practice must be taken up—most often, meditation or contemplation—in order to move Wakefulness or Awareness from gross waking to subtle visions to causal formlessness to pure Witnessing to ever-present nondual Suchness and ultimate Unity Consciousness. States, on their own, rarely show sequential development or growth—unless, indeed, they are trained in meditation and contemplation, and then their wakeful access to Awareness generally evolves from gross to subtle to causal to Witnessing to Nondual. In these cases, we often refer to the states as *state-stages*, since they are indeed showing stage development. Needless to say, we will be returning to this overall topic throughout this presentation.)

Structures of consciousness, on the other hand, are more, well, structured and patterned than states, and where most states simply come and go with little development (unless they are being trained in meditation), structures by their very nature show growth and development and tetra-evolution, with each stage transcending-and-including its predecessor(s). There are no skipping structure-stages, although their emergence can be accelerated by various practices (more about that later). Because structures have to be created and laid down, one can only “peek experience” a structure one or two stages in advance. Somebody at, say, Level 9 magic cannot peek experience Level 13 pluralism, because it doesn’t yet exist anywhere in awareness or the psyche of the Level 9 individual (except as unformed growth potential).

almost exclusively on states of consciousness and their Awakening potentials in Waking Up—including states such as Enlightenment or Awakening or Metamorphosis, the Great Liberation. Uniting structures and states is thus the simplest and most straightforward way to unite Eastern and Western psychology, as we will continue to see.)

Humanity, in its overall tetra-evolution, has pushed through virtually all of the major natural states of consciousness in their various contemplative traditions.²⁰ But humanity on the whole—

²⁰ The 4 or 5 great natural states of consciousness, given to all human beings—waking, dreaming, sleeping, witnessing, and ever-present nondual—give one type of access to the great potentials that span the entire morphogenetic spectrum—gross, subtle, causal, emptiness, and nondual. Anybody, at virtually any *stage* of development (structure-stage or state-stage), can have an altered state or peak experience of these higher *states of consciousness* (for the simple reason that everybody wakes, dreams, and sleeps). Those higher states are real, they exist, they are authentic, and they can disclose higher and deeper and wider realities spanning the entire states spectrum and the great morphogenetic field (gross to subtle to causal to nondual), even though many of the aspects of those higher *states* have not settled into widely available, inherited, specific, concrete, morphogenetic *state-stages* (nor will they, unless they are specifically trained, as with meditation, for example).

When a leading-edge pioneer first pushes into some of these higher state potentials (whether they do so yesterday, today, or tomorrow), they can do so in one of two basic ways: as a *temporary peak experience* (or altered state), or as a *permanent acquisition* (or enduring trait). If the former, they simply experience some of these higher potentials as a temporary spiritual experience or altered state, which can have a profound impact on them (and their followers, if they become teachers). However, these potentials do not become a permanently accessible trait or acquisition in consciousness.

In order for that to happen—in order for temporary state-stages to become permanent traits—then the pioneer must undergo some sort of learning, growth, and permanent development into those higher potentials. As with all learning—from learning a language to learning karate to learning how to ride a bike—there will be some sort of stages involved, or some sort of sequential unfolding of these acquisitions. As with all new emergents, much of these sequential acquisitions first emerge as free and creative novelty at the chaotic and frothy leading edge of development and evolution. But if they are repeated by more holons, they begin slowly to settle into Kosmic habits that are then available to subsequent holons who engage the particular injunctions that first brought forth and tetra-enacted this particular path and its state-stages (the most general forms of tetra-evolution being the same for the developmental sequences of both structures and states). Gautama Buddha, for example, is credited with creating a novel series of meditative injunctions (exemplars, paradigms, practices) that could take a serious practitioner from gross states (waking) to subtle states

(savikalpa) to causal states (nirvikalpa, nirodh, nirvana). Those specific practices involved a series of meditative stages that he taught to his followers (like all stages, they were not rigid and discrete linear steps, but fluid, flowing, and overlapping waves of consciousness, but they generally unfolded from sila, or a strenuous foundation in moral precepts, to meditative practices of absorption and insight, leading to nirvikalpa, nirodh, and nirvana; like all stages—structure-stages or state-stages—those were never found to unfold in the reverse order, and hence were true stages). As more and more practitioners followed those general state-stages (in an AQAL fashion—that is, in collectives or sanghas anchored in social institutions), the more those stages became ingrained as Kosmic habits that made that particular meditative path a dependable series of state-stages through the great morphogenetic field of higher subtle and causal potentials. Today, the general state-stages of vipassana meditation are available as permanent acquisitions in the meditative developmental line, although, of course, their various surface features vary from culture to culture and often from individual to individual. But there is nothing about those stages that represent pregiven, fixed, absolute, independently existing ontological realms, planes, or levels of reality or consciousness. Rather, as more and more leading-edge pioneers pushed into the higher states on a more permanent basis, they increasingly gave form to those realms, forms that, when adopted by more and more individuals, eventually settled into Kosmic habits as available *state-stages* of development that could be enacted by a particular series of paradigms and injunctions. (But even then, of course, only their deep form or morphic pattern is inherited; their surface forms and contents will vary from culture to culture and person to person, just as the surface forms of red, amber, orange, etc. do so now. And, it goes without saying, there are many other different paths available through the great spectrum of state consciousness.

Today, for example, Hameed Almaas is fashioning a new series of waves and stages through the great morphogenetic field of higher state potentials; as more and more of his followers pursue the specific morphogenetic groove that he pioneered, the more its features become ingrained as a Kosmic habit through that particular developmental line in the AQAL matrix. A lineage path, in other words, is now being cut into the Kosmic grain, and, like all lineages, it will bear the marks of its founder, both positive and negative. This is unavoidable in any sort of higher, pioneering path-cutting, and thus one always hopes that the founder or founders of a particular path in a particular developmental stream create a sufficiently self-critical sangha such that any major deviant patterns can be internally spotted and self-corrected. (Humanity, needless to say, has a spotty track record in that regard....)

The point is that at any given time, higher states are collectively available (as temporary altered states) even if higher state-stages are not (as permanent acquisitions, although higher permanent stages can be forged uniquely by individuals or sanghas); but as more individuals push into higher states, the more they become available as collective stages (or Kosmic habits), stages that appear as *a priori* but are actually *a posteriori*—this is the essence of a post-metaphysical derivation of higher levels (in structures and states alike) without Platonic, Vedantic, or Aurobindian givens.

Structure-stage development follows similar, general principles—as we are presently discussing in the main text in greater detail—except structures are more formed with a stabler architecture, and there are no “peek experiences” more than a stage or two beyond one’s

East or West—has only grown partially through the available structures of consciousness that have been laid down, however thinly, by pioneering individuals ahead of their time in evolutionary unfolding (and higher structures are continuing to be laid down as evolution continues). We have evolved, in structure-stages, from infrared archaic to magenta magic to red magic-mythic to amber mythic (traditional religious) to orange reason (the scientific Enlightenment) to green pluralism (and postmodernism), and there stand poised on the very edge of a frothy, creative, tetra-engaged evolution standing now on the brink of 2nd tier (holistic teal and integral turquoise), poised to take that “extraordinary leap in meaning” that Graves spoke of as the more widespread emergence of systemic teal. (This emerging global transformation is also a topic we will return to often throughout this presentation.)

But as for higher structures of consciousness, higher waves of consciousness, and their particular higher reaches of human possibilities—there are indeed virtually unlimited higher structural potentials, but they are just that at this time: unformed *potentials*, potentials that have not yet crystallized and settled into widely available Kosmic habits.... A few rare souls have pushed into these higher 2nd- and 3rd-tier spaces, and left lightly imprinted footprints, gossamer traces, in the higher regions of the AQAL

present level or stage of consciousness development. Structural development transcends-and- includes all previous structures (none can be skipped or bypassed, and the order of stage unfolding cannot be altered by social conditioning), a process occurring in all multiple intelligences, with the result that the individual increasingly GROWS UP; state development, on the other hand, transcends-and- includes the *self's access* to all previous states (most natural states are present from birth, and development through them involves the self's increasing capacity to move its Wakefulness from attachment to one state, e.g., wakefulness, to the next, e.g., subtle visionary-dreaming, without losing consciousness or passing out—until all states are transcended-and- included in the capacity of Nondual Unity to embrace all states— “include”—while being simultaneously free of all states—“transcend”—thus WAKING UP from the delusional dream of illusion, duality, and suffering).

Matrix, traces that will need to be filled out in a tetra-quadrant fashion and become more commonly experienced for them to settle into true Kosmic habits and genuine grooves of existence, available for one and all who follow.

As we just saw, the leading edge of creative novelty is, in today's world, somewhere around systemic teal, which means that the deep features of the structures from infrared to green have already been laid down as Kosmic habits—and the earlier the wave or structure, the more set and determined it is. Thus, in today's world, the deep features of waves up to around orange are relatively set and “predetermined,” not by timeless archetypes or ideas in the mind of God, but by prehensive unifications and morphic resonances from past creative novelties now settled into habits. In other words, yesterday's *a posteriori* have become today's *a priori*. After the fact, we can trace their emergence with a reconstructive inquiry that shows that these patterns were laid down; before the fact we could not predict those patterns in any specific detail at all (all we would know is that they must transcend-and-include the previous tetra-structures, but—like the folding protein molecules—there are any number of ways to do this, none of them really predictable before their emergence). “Emergence” is just that—a “surprise,” something that can't be predicted, or else it wouldn't be a true emergence, just another determined pattern in evolution.

This is why, even if certain past forms are relatively given as habits, the leading edge is not. For example, what we now call the violet altitude or Meta-mind includes all structures/forms that have evolved up to the violet altitude, but, particularly since teal Holistic, turquoise Integral, and indigo Para-mind are themselves so lightly formed, the actual structure that the violet Meta-mind will have is still yet to be laid down in most of its architecture. It is not available for “peak experiencing” (except to somebody at

indigo Para-mind, and then only in the loosely and vaguely formed fashion it now has; but these individuals' very experience will contribute to the growing form and pattern of the Meta-mind).

Thus, the leading edge of Spirit's creative unfolding is frothy, unformed, chaotic, creative, a wild sport and play of bringing forth creative novelty, a creative novelty that is eventually laid down as a Kosmic habit and that, *to all subsequent development*, then appears as an *a priori* given, even though it was originally laid down as an *a posteriori* to Spirit's mysterious and creative play. (This is why the world's great perennial philosophers looked at all these past levels of consciousness and assumed that they were simply that way for all time—and thus inadvertently postulated them as being unchanging archetypes, or fixed ideas in the mind of God—failing to realize that they had actually been laid down and sedimented as a 4-quadrant affair over hundreds of thousands of years.) And likewise, their experience of any possible higher structures gave no indication that the pattern or form of these experienced higher structures were themselves still being formed and sedimented, and thus they assumed that—as with the lower levels—all these levels of consciousness were given for all time, usually as, we noted, an idea in the mind of God or an everlastingly unchanging archetype of the mind. The ever-present role of tetra-evolution thus escaped these otherwise brilliant pioneers.

Accordingly, even the deep features of the potentials higher than orange or green are not carried as pre-given levels already formed, but as morphogenetic potentials that, as they begin to crystallize, will be molded by factors in all 4 quadrants (actually, all elements in the AQAL Framework)—and IF those deep patterns begin to crystallize in more and more holons around the world, they will eventually settle into deep habitual patterns that

will then at that point be inherited by all subsequent development. Those higher structure-stages (stages higher than green) are, *as stages*, still in their infancy, available in *idiosyncratic* forms to highly evolved individuals, but awaiting their emergence on a larger scale in order to become settled Kosmic habits universally and stably bequeathed to the future (as, e.g., magenta, red, amber, and orange are now).

Once these Kosmic habits are formed, at any point in evolutionary unfolding, they are actually the stable patterns that will then become the *sub-components* of all new and creative emergents. For example: atoms, which originally emerged in part as creative novelty, settled into habitual patterns that then become the ingredients or subcomponents of molecules. The forms of those molecules themselves first emerged in part as creative novelty, but then settled into patterns that became the ingredients or subcomponents of cells, and so forth. Once red emerges, it becomes a subcomponent of amber, which becomes a subcomponent of orange, and so on, as the Whiteheadian moment-to-moment holarchy unfolds. This “transcend-and-include” relationship, grounded in Whiteheadian “tetra-prehension,” is part of the basis of the gentle tilt of the Kosmos towards greater and greater complexity and depth, a tilt that by any other name is Eros (or Spirit-in-action).

Selection Pressures in AQAL Space: Validity Claims in Tetra-Mesh

As each new holon emerges, it emerges into an *already-existing* worldspace—that is, it emerges in an AQAL space that already has various sorts of waves, streams, states, systems, and so on, each with its own ongoing inheritance or karma. (Again,

yesterday's *a posteriori* have become today's *a priori*.) Each newly-emergent holon therefore must prove itself capable of existing or surviving in that already-existing worldspace—it must tetra-mesh with the already-existing forces and fields in the AQAL Matrix. It is therefore subjected to various selection pressures (or validity claims) representing *the types of fit* to which it must adapt in order to survive. Of course, it will not only or merely mesh: it will also bring its own moment of creative novelty that goes beyond all meshing altogether; but if it does not mesh to some significant degree in the first place, it will simply be wiped out by existing selection pressures and never get a chance to express or pass on its creativity.

Because each holon has at least 4 quadrants or 4 dimensions of being-in-the-world, and each of those dimensions must mesh with the already-existing worldspace, there are at least four types of selection pressures: each holon *must mesh to some degree* with its own I, we, it, and its. Thus, each holon must be able to register the exterior it-world accurately enough (*truth*); each holon must be able to register its interior I-world accurately enough (*truthfulness*); it must be able to fit with its exterior-communal or social system of its (*functional fit*); and it must be able to adequately negotiate its cultural milieu of we (*meaning*).

Those validity claims of tetra-mesh (it-truth, I-truthfulness, its-functional fit, we-meaning) are not clunky representational pictures but mutually evoked enactive engagements; and those tetra-selection pressures apply to all holons, from atoms to cells to trees to worms to wolves to apes. Any holon that fails to adequately negotiate all of those selection pressures simply ceases to exist; it is rendered extinct.

This quadratic formulation gives us purchase on the nature of the relationships between the subjective, objective,

intersubjective, and interobjective dimensions of existence. Although, at any given time, we might emphasize the importance of any one of those dimensions, particularly the intersubjective (especially if it is being ignored by most theorists), the technically correct view is that *all four dimensions arise simultaneously and tetra-evolve*. No quadrant is ontologically prior or primary.

Thus, we often say that “intersubjectivity is the *ground* in which both subject and object arise”—and that expresses an important point, but it is still only part of the integral story (a part we emphasize because it is so often ignored). The full story is that the actual *ground* of arising is not intersubjectivity but the *AQAL Matrix altogether*. That is, the previous moment’s AQAL Matrix is the *a priori* ground upon which the present moment arises (a ground that, if all goes well, the present moment will embrace and to some degree transcend in the next AQAL moment). Each quadrant therefore hands the future *a ground of inheritance* (i.e., there is a quadrant-to-quadrant Kosmic karma), and any holon must mesh with all four of those selection pressures or face erasure. It is not that the intersubjective field is there first, and then the subject and object pop out of it, but that every holon has four dimensions that arise simultaneously and with which it must mesh to a significant degree or the holon cannot survive in the already-existing worldspace.

Certainly this means that the intersubjective field influences the probability waves of the holon’s form of emergence; but so do the interobjective fields, the previous subjective prehensions, and the previous objective morphic resonances. And they do so, not one after the other, but all together and at once. If the holon does not mesh in a fundamental fashion with its intersubjective background of previously given mutual prehensions, then it will not arise; but neither will it arise if it fails to fit with the inheritance in any of the other three quadrants. None of these

alone are ontologically or chronologically prior: what is prior is the AQAL Matrix *en toto*. The previous AQAL moment is this AQAL moment's inheritance (to which it will add its degree of transcendence).

What generally happened with the postmodern pluralists is that they—correctly sensing that the intersubjective ground had been left out of the equation by an Enlightenment epistemology that ontologically privileged the Upper-Right quadrant—inadvertently careened and crashed in the opposite direction: they *ontologically privileged* the Lower-Left quadrant of relationships, participatory pluralism, and intersubjectivity (which often degenerated into Lower-Right grammarology or “syntaxology”). But the common battle-cry was: “Relationships are prior to the things that are related.”

Of course, relationship without anything to be related is nothing but an arid abstraction (which secretly elevates green value structures to ontological absolutes). This postmodernist conception reflects a pre-integral, pre-quadratic understanding of the Kosmos, where events are taken to be existing occasions *that have to be related* by various types of ground/figure or context/content schemes, instead of seeing that they all arise simultaneously in AQAL space and tetra-evolve in mutual mesh. Neither things nor relationships are prior: both are simply different perspectives or dimensions of the AQAL Matrix. As we will see, postmodern pluralism got caught in a particularly intense form of quadrant absolutism (of the Lower Left) that took its important but partial insights and established them as a quadrant hegemony that marginalized other, equally important voices, a topic we will return to shortly.

Given these facts, if we may consider them that, what about something like the nature, in the human realm, of “revolutions”?

Ever since Marx focused on the nature of social revolutions, virtually every marketing scheme in the West has claimed that its product is “revolutionary.” Every new idea is claimed to be revolutionary; every new change technology is claimed to be revolutionary; every new preparation is claimed to be revolutionary. So what, on earth, exactly is “revolutionary,” anyway? And how can it apply to my own life?

CHAPTER 3. THE NATURE OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Let's pause in the theoretical account and give some concrete historical examples of the emergence of new probability waves, using as a point of departure some of Karl Marx's enduring insights about sociocultural transformation.

We hear much today of the need for transformation, the need for new paradigms, and even the need for a “revolution” in society, and certainly in leadership and new modes of thinking. What we see less of is any in-depth analysis of what actually constitutes societal transformation, genuinely new paradigms, or authentic revolutions. So let us see if an AQAL analysis of these key terms—transformation, paradigm, revolution—can shed any light.

Base and Superstructure Must Tetra-Mesh

Start with the nature of some of the major and acknowledged societal transformations that we have seen in history—such as from foraging to agrarian, or magic to mythic, or feudal to industrial. What drives these major shifts or transformations from one mode to the next?

One of Marx's central points, and a point that still rings true, is that around a particular “base” or mode of techno-economic production (e.g., foraging), there grows a particular worldview or “superstructure” (e.g., a magical worldview). Now for Marx, of course, the base (LR) determines the superstructure (LL), whereas for us they tetra-evolve (as a play of all four selection pressures; and the “superstructure” is not “resting” on the base; they are the interior and the exterior—the Left-Hand and Right-Hand—of the

same occasion). It is not that “the base” is more real or more fundamental, and “the superstructure” is an afterthought resting on and determined by the prior material base. Rather, they both arise together and mutually tetra-act as part of the AQAL Matrix. (We will still refer to “base” and “superstructure,” but unless otherwise stated, we mean the AQAL version.)

One of the easiest ways to get a sense of the important ideas that Marx was advancing is to look at more recent research (such as Lenski’s) on the relation of techno-economic modes of production (foraging, horticultural, herding, maritime, agrarian, industrial, informational) to cultural practices such as slavery, bride price, warfare, patrilocality, matrilocality, gender of prevailing deities, and so on. With frightening uniformity, similar techno-economic modes have similar probabilities of those cultural practices (showing just how strongly the particular probability waves are tetra-meshed).

For example, over 90% of societies that have female-only deities are horticultural societies (“horticultural” means a simple form of farming using a digging stick or hoe, contrasted with “agrarian,” which is a more complex farming using a heavy animal-drawn plow. The first forms of farming were everywhere horticultural). This means that wherever you find a “Great Mother” society, you are almost always dealing with a horticultural society. Great Mother deities just don’t show up in any other societal types. 97% of herding societies, on the other hand, are strongly patriarchal. 37% of foraging tribes have bride price, but 86% of advanced horticultural do. 58% of known foraging tribes engaged in frequent or intermittent warfare, but an astonishing 100% of simple horticultural did.²¹

The existence of slavery is perhaps most telling. Around

²¹ See Gerhard Lenski, *Human Societies*.

10% of foraging tribes have slavery, but 83% of advanced horticultural do. The only societal type to completely outlaw slavery was patriarchal industrial societies, 0% of which sanction slavery.

In short, the type of techno-economic base of a society constrains its various probability waves in very strong ways. Thus, it appears that there is a crucially important (if partial) truth contained in Marx's most famous statement about these facts, namely (to paraphrase): "It is not the consciousness of humans that determines their reality but their economic-material realities that determine their consciousness." That is, the Lower-Right quadrant (which includes the techno-economic base) clearly has a profound influence on the types of beliefs, feelings, ideas, and worldviews of men and women. For us, of course, this is in every way an AQAL affair—we needn't buy into Marx's tendency to absolutize the LR quadrant. At the same time, it is very hard indeed to overestimate the impact of the LR quadrant on the various modes of consciousness and culture.

There is another way to state this important point: namely, *3rd-person materialities have a profound effect on 1st- and 2nd-person realities*. That was Marx's essential and enduring insight, and it remains true to this day because it reflects an important and enduring aspect of the AQAL Matrix.

To continue Marx's historical overview: around a particular techno-economic base grows a particular superstructure of cultural beliefs and worldviews (including religious systems). But sooner or later there occur *technological innovations* (which means, for example, that at some historical moment, some forager figured out how to plant seeds and harvest crops—thus moving from a foraging base to a horticultural base). Precisely because there are obvious survival advantages to planting and harvesting

(advantages so obvious that virtually all foragers everywhere adopted them whenever they were discovered), and thus the techno-economic base fairly quickly transformed from foraging to horticultural in most parts of the world. Once this happened in more and more tribal holons, it eventually settled into a Kosmic habit in the LR available readily to subsequent human holons.

But the fascinating point that Marx spotted was this: the technological innovation happens very fast (in the LR), simply because you can change the *materials* of production fairly quickly: put down your bow and arrow, pick up a hoe, dig a hole like this, put in the beans, watch. But the superstructure—the worldview, the cultural accoutrements of religion, meaning, beliefs, shared values, and so on (LL)—*moves much more slowly*, because this involves not just picking up a new piece of matter (in the Right-Hand world), but an interior subjective transformation of consciousness (in the Left Hand)—a notoriously slow and difficult process. Therefore, with almost any widespread technological innovation, the superstructure of values and beliefs *now lags behind the transformations in the techno-economic base*. In short, there is a disjuncture between Lower Left and Lower Right (between old superstructure and new base, between old paradigm and new realities, between old culture and new social system, between old meaning and new functional fit, between old semantics and new syntax). And that spells disaster.

As we would put it, technological innovations, in order to be innovations that actually supplant their predecessors, are ones that are more evolved and carry more depth (i.e., in this case, planting that is attuned to the seasonal cycling of nature demands extensive foresight and temporal planning—demands, that is, a concrete operational wave of cognition (amber altitude), whereas much of foraging-in-the-moment demands only preoperational (magenta or red). This *increased technological depth* (the product of increased

cognitive depth) is evidenced in the fact that technological innovations show an irreversible evolutionary sequence. That is, if we look at the technological evolution from foraging to horticultural to agrarian to industrial to informational, that sequence has never, *ever* run in the reverse. Barring social disintegration, no industrial society ever decided to go back to agrarian, which decided to go back to horticultural, which decided to go back to foraging. There is an Eros to the sequence: time's arrow, as Prigogine would say, is asymmetrically evolutionary.

In short, this increased technological depth (in the LR) from foraging to horticultural could now support an increased depth in the worldview (in the LL)—namely, a move from magic to mythic.²² But the foraging tribes that first started horticultural planting *still had a magical worldview* that was originally adapted to, or tetra-meshed with, the old foraging mode. Thus, there was a disjuncture, a friction, a contradiction, between base and superstructure (for us, between LR and LL). They had a techno-economic base capable of supporting a new and advanced mythic worldview, but they were stuck with an “old paradigm”—the old

²² More technically, the stage beyond Magic is called Magic-Mythic. It is something of a transition from Magic proper (magenta) to Mythic proper (amber). “Magic” means where the source of “miracle” power is located. In pure Magic, the self itself is capable of performing miracles—if I do a Rain Dance, this will (magically) force nature to rain. If I make a doll representing a real person and stick a pin in the doll, the real person will (magically) be hurt. But by the time of Mythic, humanity increasingly understood that it alone could not actually perform miracles; however, supernatural beings—God, Goddess, Spirit, spirits—could perform miracles for me, if only I know how to approach that Spirit properly—what ritual, rite, or prayer would please that Spirit and make it bring in the crops, make it rain, insure the day's hunt, and so on. In between those two there was “Magic-Mythic,” where humans could still perform miracles, but only special types of humans—very powerful ones. Spiral Dynamics actually calls this stage “PowerGods,” and that's a good name for it. Mommy, for example, could turn the yucky spinach into candy if she wanted—she's a PowerGod. Every leader of all of the major military Empires that began to spread across the globe at this time historically was thought to be, literally, a God—a PowerGod. In talking of the shift from foraging to horticultural, we are talking of the shift from Magic to Magic-Mythic or PowerGods.

magical worldview adapted to a foraging base that no longer existed as the significant mode of production. (As Marx would put it, the relations of production were out of sync with the forces of production.)

Because the LL and LR no longer meshed, something had to give: some quadrant will get a painful deconstruction. There will have to be a profound *cultural revolution* (LL) in order to tetra-mesh with the techno-social revolution (LR) that just occurred.

It was Marx's genius to spot these internal tensions and contradictions between base and superstructure (LR and LL) as new techno-economic bases historically emerged, and he intuitively understood that if there is not tetra-mesh, all hell is about to break loose, as the *newly rising culture* (meshed with the *new base*) is attacked by the old culture (functionally fitted to the old base). This is usually translated as the idea that history is driven by class warfare, but the crucial point for Marx was that classes themselves are defined in relation to a particular mode of production—the warfare is between different techno-economic modes and the worldviews they support. As new technological modes emerge, more progressive and expansive worldviews become available, but societal revolutions are often required to put the quadrants back in sync (more about this in a moment). Time, history, depth, and Eros are on the side of the newly rising culture, but the transition from the old paradigm to the new paradigm is usually less than pleasant.

To put it bluntly, one of the main causes of culture wars is that there is a break in the AQAL Matrix, a disjuncture between LL and LR that tears the communal fabric, often violently. And that happens because transformations in the LR or techno-economic base (which only involves changing matter) can be put into play much more quickly than changes in the LL, the

superstructure, culture, or reigning worldview (which demands a change, not just in material, but in consciousness). Thus, as is often said, technological developments run ahead of our wisdom in how to use them (among other things).

Now, of course, this is not a one-time or singular affair. What Marx failed to see is what virtually everybody else has failed to see in this regard: it is not that each society has a single monolithic technological mode and a single monolithic worldview, and that the two somehow have to match up. Rather, each society is a spectrum of AQAL actualities: there are different percentages of individuals at every level of the spectrum of consciousness, at least up to the average level of that culture (with a few moving beyond). And there are pockets of every mode of techno-production up to the leading edge: even in industrial societies, there are red street gangs foraging for their existence; individuals with gardens in their backyards are using digging sticks and hoes; and the farmers of Kansas are still out there with heavy (animal-drawn or machine-drawn) ploughs planting seeds. So there is no single base and no single superstructure, such that an internal contradiction between them could propel the major transformations that have marked history. Marx's general idea—that of a mismatch between LL and LR causing internal communal contradictions and tensions—is still true, but the mismatch spans the spectrum of consciousness up to the highest average wave in that society, and in all four quadrants with their many waves and streams (all of which have to tetra-mesh in the AQAL configuration, or something has to give).

In the modern West, the major culture wars involve not just *traditional* versus *modern* versus *postmodern* values, but techno-economic modes of *farming*, *industrialization*, and *informational* sectors, with worldviews of *mythic*, *rational*, and *pluralistic* (respectively and correlatively). In the nonwestern world, the

major conflicts are between tribal-foraging and mythic-agrarian at war with modern-industrial and postmodern-pluralistic modes.

Thus, the socio-cultural tensions (and legitimation crises) span the spectrum, with various cultures and sub-cultures in various mixtures of stable and unstable mesh. With regard to the LR social system and its techno-economic base, what generally happens is that a technological innovation begins in the mind of some creative individual (UL)—James Watt and the steam engine, for example. This novel idea is communicated to others through the inventor's verbal and cognitive behavior (UR), until a small group of individuals eventually understands the idea (LL). If the idea is compelling enough, it is eventually translated into concrete forms (e.g., the building of actual steam engines), which now become part of the socio-economic base (LR). Precisely because adopting the base requires only a change in material, and not a change in consciousness, then the technological revolution can speed through the social system extremely quickly—leaving the old cultural worldview completely out of sync with the new realities.

To change that cultural worldview requires, of course, a difficult subjective transformation of consciousness in order to tetra-mesh with the new social realities of increased depth. And the only way that generally happens is: a group of individuals who have precociously developed to the higher wave of culture and consciousness eventually—through means peaceful or not—end up at the helm of a novel governance system whose characteristics are those of the new probability wave (in consciousness, culture, and technics)—that is, the same new wave that produced the new technics.

Thus, for example, concrete operational cognition, which produced horticultural technology, could also support a move

from preconventional tribal governance to sociocentric, conventional, trans-tribal forms of governance that united various tribes into larger non-kinship-lineage political blocks, as well as a shift from magic worldview to mythic worldview. And in turn, the new horticultural technics itself, created by and embodying a greater cognitive depth, supported and actively inculcated a mythic worldview: hence the tetra-evolution. (Marx was right in that, for most people, the techno-economic base is a major determinant of their consciousness; but he overlooked where the base originally came from: namely, the consciousness of the inventor, which clearly determined the base. In other words, Marx overlooked the AQAL Matrix and tended to absolutize the Lower-Right quadrant, an absolutism we needn't share in order to appreciate his important if partial truths.)

Likewise, formal operational cognition, which could produce a steam engine, could also support the move from conventional to postconventional modes of governance (e.g., from aristocracy to representative republican democracy, outlawing slavery at the same time for being immoral, which from this level—and only this level—it is indeed)—as well as a shift from mythic to rational worldview—so that, once again, all of the quadrants, at the same level of depth, would tetra-inculcate the others.

Using the example of the shift from tribal-magic-foraging to village-mythic-horticultural, even though the new mythic culture is *governed* from the leading-edge of collective evolution, nonetheless there are still pockets and subcultures of archaic and magic values—the existence of which causes internal culture wars of great significance (the historical battles between magic and mythic are legendary; see *Up from Eden*). The point is that everybody is born at square one (the archaic), and grows and develops from there up to, possibly, the highest expectable level in that society (and occasionally a stage or two beyond)—and they

can stop at any level, leaving the society as a “layer cake” of individuals at different levels of development. So it is not that there is simply a wrenching culture war between one epoch and another, but that within any given epoch, there are internal culture wars representing the pockets of Kosmic habits still available on their own. Each society, as we said, is an amalgam of different percentages of individuals at virtually all levels of development (up to that of the culture itself), and their internal squabbles often reek havoc. (This is yet another reason that the Integral transformation now facing us is so truly *revolutionary*—for the first time in history, the leading-edge would embrace all previous worldviews, finding room for each and all, essentially ending sanction for the culture wars from the leading-edge itself.)

Paradigms

Incidentally, this account of historical change via AQAL selection pressures is consonant with Kuhn’s observations on scientific revolutions, which are simply a subset of the AQAL transformational matrix we are outlining. Briefly: certain factual discoveries in the Right-Hand world cannot be accounted for by any scientific worldview in the Left Hand, and thus a severe disjuncture occurs between base and superstructure (between LR and LL), such that an often painful revolution in belief structures and worldviews is now required to keep pace with factual information. Thomas Kuhn, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, outlined hundreds of such paradigm shifts or revolutions in scientific practice.

The way Kuhn used the term “paradigm,” of course, has been badly misunderstood by the public and by most critics and appropriators of the term, who incorrectly use it to mean some sort of overarching theory or super theory. Fritjof Capra, Stan Grof,

Duane Elgin, Richard Tarnas, Charlene Spretnak—the list is virtually endless—would say that a new holistic or ecological theory should replace the old atomistic, Newtonian-Cartesian worldview, and that would be a new paradigm. But that typically incorrect use has Kuhn exactly backward. “Paradigm,” for Kuhn, does not mean the theory or the superstructure, but the base or social practice. Paradigm is an almost exact equivalent of techno-economic base, social practice, behavioral injunction, or exemplar (the term “exemplar,” meaning “practice to ideally be followed,” is the term Kuhn finally chose for “paradigm,” since the latter term was so often misinterpreted in ways I’m outlining, which infuriated him, and eventually led to his using an entirely different term, which clearly doesn’t mean “theory” but more like “injunction”).

That is, a paradigm is a set of social practices and behavioral exemplars—specific types of experiments, for example, that generate a specific set of data or factual occasions. A paradigm, exemplar, or injunction brings forth, enacts, and illumines a particular set of phenomena, data, experiences, or apprehensions. (This is why my own broad theory of good science has three major strands: injunction or paradigm, enacted data or apprehensions, and confirmation/rejection. The first strand was modeled to take account of Kuhn’s important work, while setting it in a larger context of phenomenology, falsifiability, and other equally important if partial factors.)

Thus a paradigm, as Kuhn used it, might be a particular set of experiments that produce X-rays. These experiments, injunctions, or social practices (the Lower Right) become the models or exemplars of how good science in that field is to be done. Other scientists use and model those exemplary practices to produce (enact and bring forth) more data, phenomena, or factual occasions. And—almost exactly as in Marx (because they were

both onto the AQAL nature of this thing)—around this base or paradigm (LR) grow various superstructures, theories, or worldviews (LL) that are molded and determined by the base.

Thus, for example, around an entire set of physical experiments and paradigms had grown the entire edifice of Newtonian physics theory. That is, around the LR base of technological production grew LL theories and worldviews. Or again, around the LR base of data production and injunctive paradigms (which enact and bring forth various types of data, experiences, and phenomena) grew various LL theories, superstructures, and worldviews that attempted to explain the factually enacted data. The base or paradigm helps determine the consciousness of the scientists in this regard (just as the techno-economic base helps determine the consciousness of individual in any society—although, again, for us it is an AQAL affair that does not privilege any single quadrant, level, line, or state). As we saw with Marx, the essential point is that 3rd-person materialities have a profound effect on 1st- and 2nd-person realities.

This arrangement—which is Kuhn’s “normal science”—works well as long as the data generated by the paradigm continues to fit within the prevailing worldview. The Newtonian theory, for instance, worked very well for a very long time to explain all of the data that had been generated to date. With a few exceptions... such as black body radiation and Brownian motion. And as more and more sophisticated experiments were invented, new data were generated that could not in any way be explained by the old theories. Thus, the base of technological production—the new paradigm—was generating experiences that could not be accounted for by the old theories. The new base needed a new worldview, and thus science was set for yet another “revolution,” or dramatic change in worldview to account for the progressive

increase in depth of the new paradigm demanding an increase in depth in a new theory.

And yes, this was scientific *progress*, as Kuhn made very clear (“I am a firm believer in scientific progress”—Kuhn), again showing his (correct, I believe) agreement with Marx in this essential regard (namely, there is a progressive Eros to the sequence, or else “revolutions” are not really revolutionary but are merely the old cyclical going nowhere). Kuhn felt the necessity to reaffirm his belief in progress because of what postmodern pluralism/relativism was doing with his ideas—namely, make it appear that “facts” were social constructions of scientific theory, and changing the theory would change the facts—again, exactly backwards.

Of course, virtually all of today’s “new paradigm” theorists—including all of the authors just mentioned, and literally hundreds of others—claimed that they had a new paradigm, when in fact they had no such thing. All they had was a new theory, not a new base, not a new set of injunctions to generate new data, not a new exemplar at all. The wildly popular version of “paradigm” had the cart before the horse, and simply presented a new theory with no new paradigms at all—that is, the “new paradigms” were entirely a boomeritis version of Kuhn’s important research (see *Boomeritis*, chap. 8).

Whenever a new (and real) paradigm enacts and brings forth new data, the old worldviews and theories are thrown into a crisis that can only be resolved by a progressive increase in depth to keep pace with the increase in depth in the new paradigm or techno-productive base. Whether this crisis (or *paradigm clash*—which means, clash between various technological forces of data production, or a clash between the types of experiments and exemplars that will be taken as producing the most significant

data)—whether this crisis is resolved through overt *revolution* or quieter *reform* (see below), the results are the same: an increase in depth in both Lower Right and Lower Left (and therefore Upper Right and Upper Left for all those involved). In short, all four selection pressures in AQAL space swing into play and conspire to move Eros yet another notch forward in the Kosmic game. (This does not mean that all progress is sweetness and light; as we will see below, new progress and new pathologies often go hand in hand, but that fact in itself is not enough to deny the aspects of development that can and do represent genuine and progressive increases in depth.)

But let us immediately note that a paradigm clash is actually a small subset of a much larger and more important phenomena, so let us move forward to that larger discussion.

Legitimation Crisis

A paradigm clash is actually a good example of what is more generally known as a *legitimation crisis*.

First, a few technical terms. In my own approach, *legitimacy* refers to *adequacy in horizontal **translation***, and *authenticity* refers to *adequacy in vertical **transformation*** (see, e.g., *A Sociable God*, CW4 [[[?]]]{also below}). Thus, *authenticity* is a measure of the degree of depth or height of a belief system (so that a turquoise worldview is more authentic than an amber worldview), and *legitimacy* is a measure of how well that worldview functions at its own level. A particular worldview can be very legitimate (or happily accepted by most members of the culture) but not very authentic (e.g., it might be a magenta or red belief structure). On the other hand, some worldviews might be very authentic (representing, say, turquoise or high vision-logic

cognitions) and yet not very legitimate (or not accepted by the ruling or ruled classes).

A *legitimation crisis*, in the broadest sense, is a breakdown in the adequacy of a particular mode of translating and making sense of the world—that is, a breakdown in the adequacy of a particular worldview and its capacity to command allegiance among those it is supposed to be influencing in one significant way or another. This can occur in any culture or subculture (including the scientific, as we just saw), but it has particular relevance in the *political arena*. Thus, a governing body (chieftain, ruler, monarch, plutocracy, aristocracy, democracy, etc.) is said to be *legitimate* if it is widely accepted by the governed (or if, alternatively, there are good legal/moral reasons for supporting it). *Legitimation* is the process by which members of a particular culture believe (and thus follow) the governing agencies (from theoretical to political) of that society. And *theories of legitimacy* attempt to explain (and/or justify) why a particular governing system has the acceptance and allegiance of its members (the explanatory reasons for this acceptance can range across a spectrum from mere functionality at one end to more substantive, moral/normative reasons at the other).

A political legitimation crisis therefore means a sociocultural crisis in the prevailing modes of translation (at any given level) in reference to the governance systems of that culture (whether that culture be political, scientific, medical, educational, etc.). A legitimation crisis, in the broadest sense, is a crisis of faith in the prevailing worldview and in the governing bodies representing that worldview.²³

²³ A legitimation crisis can happen, of course, regardless of the level of the worldview. Even highly authentic worldviews must seek and find legitimation. Authenticity is no guarantee of legitimacy, nor vice versa. See *A Sociable God*, CW3.

At the turn of the century, Max Weber authored an extremely influential treatise (*Economy and Society*) in which he identified three major sources of political legitimacy (or reasons that people have followed a particular governance system or regime): customs or traditions; legal-rational procedures (e.g., voting); and individual charisma. Although those three *sources* of political legitimation do indeed exist, Weber's *analysis* of those sources of legitimacy was mostly functional—that is, those sources were not viewed as good or right, but simply as ones that have worked. This essentially functionalist view of legitimacy continues (implicitly or explicitly) to be embraced by most systems theorists, including most famously Niklas Luhmann.

Other theorists, disturbed that Weber's analysis was merely functional and not moral or normative (and thus could be used to confer legitimacy on, say, the Nazis, as long as they functionally worked—i.e., in functionalism, legitimacy is reduced to the state's capacity to generate belief in its legitimacy: the standard systems theory reduction of all Left-Hand values to LR functional fit), have added other views of legitimacy and its justification, particularly those focusing on *rights* (a view running through Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Rawls, Habermas). In this view, a governance system is legitimate (and thus deserves the allegiance of its members) if it guarantees certain human rights, usually secured through some form of *social contract* between the governed and the governing. We will return to this important view in a moment.

A fifth view of legitimacy might be added, namely, the *postmodern*, which abandons a search for universal grounds of justification and returns to local narrative traditions under the banner of plurality and diversity (at which point it becomes pragmatically indistinguishable from the first form of legitimacy, that of customs/traditions, and thus is forced to justify every form

of local barbarism: as with so much of postmodernism, it degenerates into regressive displays).

Now, all of those sources and views of legitimacy (rightly or wrongly) are present in today's world, including traditional customs, charismatic leadership, and implicit or explicit social contracts. A *legitimation crisis* occurs when the belief in the governing worldview and its representatives begins to break down, and this breakdown is in every way an AQAL affair—factors from all the quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types swing into play, summarized as “selection pressures in all four quadrants”—and if this turbulence is severe enough, then “societal revolutions” are often set into motion.

Societal Revolutions

During any widespread political legitimation crisis (just as we saw with any profound scientific crisis), when turbulence in the AQAL Matrix reaches a critical threshold point, translation breaks down and transformation ensues—that is, horizontal modes of translation cease to be effective and vertical transformation to new modes altogether are required in order to meet the new selection pressures.

But “societal transformation” can be either progressive or regressive—that is, the vertical shift in levels can be either breakthrough or breakdown, a leap to higher levels of organizational complexity or a retreat to lower, less complex, more primitive states. We will see examples of both.

At the same time, many “societal revolutions” are really neither higher nor lower; they are simply different ways of translating at essentially the same level of culture, consciousness, and complexity. In fact, the original meaning of “revolution” was

not progressive or transformational at all, but merely circular. That is, for virtually all political theorists throughout most of history, a social or political “revolution” was not any major breakthrough to a higher or deeper level of anything, but merely a cyclical, circular, or revolving affair—the very word “revolution” comes from “revolving,” and it meant just that, a revolving “same ole same ole” pattern basically going nowhere. Thus, Plato and Aristotle analyzed the *cyclical* changes in governments from aristocracies to tyrannies to democracies and back again. Renaissance Italian scholars introduced the term *revoluziones* to describe the *alternating* pattern of popular and aristocratic factions. Thomas Hobbes used the English word *revolution* to describe the *circular* transfer of power from king to parliament and back again. Nothing in any of those changes was thought to be progressive, permanent, or transformational.

And then, for the first time in history, “revolution” was used by a political theorist to mean a vertical shift or transformation to higher levels or modes of being and governance. The theorist? No surprise: Karl Marx (and Frederick Engels), in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which attempted to demonstrate that all of history is actually a series of revolutions (or higher transformations) tied to economic progress. Believers in transformation and new paradigms have been talking about their “revolutionary” new ideas ever since.

Still, as we were saying, Marx was on to a series of enduring insights. First and foremost, he was writing in the wake of the historical realization that history is significant: that is, the realization that evolution touches all areas of the manifest world. This crucial insight, first enacted by the orange probability wave—and intensified with teal—had driven the profound changes in humanity’s understanding of itself that were expressed in the rise of the evolutionary interpretations of the Kosmos that

began to appear in everything from biology (Darwin) to sociology (Spencer, Comte) to psychology (Baldwin) to philosophy (Schelling, Hegel): not only species, but ideas themselves evolve and have a history.

It was Marx's peculiar genius to realize the need to link these evolutionary historical unfoldings to techno-economic structures (even if he went a bit overboard), and that is why it is always a good idea to at least touch bases with Marx whenever we talk of social "transformations" and "revolutions," because otherwise the discussion becomes focused merely on changes in ideas, consciousness, or culture, without understanding the absolute necessity of linking any real changes to the Lower-Right quadrant of social materialities as well. (As we saw, a real paradigm is a LR social practice, not a LL theory or worldview—as we earlier put it, 3rd-person materialities have a profound effect on 1st- and 2nd-person realities—and it was Marx who first spotted that crucially important point.)

For Marx, history was therefore marked (at least in part) by a series of revolutions linked to *progressive* (or vertically transformative) changes in techno-economic capacity. In each case, an older, more primitive, backward, and often oppressive economic class (with its outmoded worldview, philosophies, and belief structures), which had benefited from the old techno-economic base, was overturned by a new and rising class whose power stemmed from more advanced forces of techno-economic production. The important moment of truth in all this is that there is indeed a slow, overall Eros to the sequence—there is a slowly increasing developmental depth in cognition, culture, and techno-economic forces of production (rock to spear to bow-and-arrow to plow to steam engine to computer). And if a particular societal crisis happens to occur on the cusp of one of those major increases in developmental depth, then the only thing that will resolve the

tension and turbulence in the AQAL space is a vertical social transformation and cultural revolution (or, at the least, profound cultural reform). In short, the only real cure for a crisis in legitimacy is an increase in authenticity.

Marx's initial insights into that process are sound and enduring. But, much like Freud, although Marx's general ideas were often sound, he got virtually every detail wrong. And his notorious reductionism, also like Freud's, is something we can happily jettison. (Marx's statement that we earlier quoted—"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their reality but their economic-material realities that determine their consciousness"—becomes interesting only insofar as the meaning of the word "determines" approaches "causes," which in fact it never does, not even in Marx. Rather, the social-economic realities of the LR are part of the crucial elements that tetra-determine the nature of any actual occasion.) But for just that (limited) reason, Marx's insights are an important part of any AQAL analysis of social transformation and cultural revolution. Every revolution, every transformation, every shift in consciousness and culture that actually sticks has *of necessity* a Lower-Right component, and if that component is not present and prominent, you can dismiss any claims to have a new paradigm, a great transformation, or a new and revolutionary anything.

For the most part, of course, most political "revolutions" have not been riding the cusp of any truly vertical shift in any of the quadrants. Like mutations in nature, revolutions in politics are usually lethal, not beneficial, or are at most what their name originally meant, merely a circular or superficial change of the guard in the fundamentally same underlying regime (i.e., they are a surface structure shuffling in the same deep structure in AQAL space). Only a small handful of true revolutions are riding the cusp of Eros. The American revolution caught the beginning

wave from amber to orange, and therefore represented a profound vertical transformation (from mythic to rational, from ethnocentric to worldcentric, from conventional/conformist to postconventional/individualist). But in the twentieth century there have been over *one hundred* “revolutions”—most of them merely a barbaric reshuffling of the cards (and many with anything from slight to significant regression, or downward transformation).

As one historian has pointed out, “What is perhaps most striking about revolutions in this century is their sheer volume and variety. From the beginning to the end, in every area of the world, revolutions have shaped political life.” Mexico, Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey, Iran, Russia, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, Algeria, Nicaragua, Argentina, the Congo, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Columbia, Portugal, the Philippines, Cambodia, Egypt, Libya, Syria—the list of twentieth-century revolutions is virtually endless. Few of these revolutions were hooked to any vertical current in any of the quadrants, but rather were “cyclical” or surface-structure changes in essentially the same AQAL space. Call these “horizontal revolutions,” if you will.

Historians, such as Jack Goldstone, have identified *four major factors* that account for most of these horizontal revolutions, and the more of these factors you find in the AQAL configuration of any given culture, the more likely there will be a (horizontal) political revolution:

1. A weakened government, usually due to economic reasons. This weakness leaves an opening for a revolutionary coup.
2. A change in the balance of power between the major elites in the culture. Typical elites include army officers, political leaders, high bureaucrats, cultural and religious leaders, labor and

business leaders, and intellectuals. These elites usually compete for power following various implicitly understood “rules of the game” in that culture, but occasionally, due to various factors, there is an upset in elite power distribution and one elite seizes control or a new elite emerges—“*such elite leadership is a prerequisite for revolutions*” (Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World*). Contributing to elite turmoil in the AQAL Matrix are international trade of goods and ideas, new investment, foreign aid, military support, new economic modes and opportunities.

3. Rapid population growth, which tends to increase poverty and resource depletion, undermines workers and peasants, and stresses governments.

4. Erratic international intervention. International consensus often halts revolutions, and lack of it encourages them.

Empirically it has been the case that the more of those factors present in any society, the greater the likelihood a revolution will occur. As we would put it, the more of those factors that are present in the AQAL configuration of any society, then the greater the probability that this AQAL space will also contain, as an actual occasion, a legitimation crisis that will reach a critical threshold, followed by a (horizontal; although very, very rarely, vertical) political-social revolution.

Further, scholars agree that such (horizontal) revolutions usually increase nationalism, mass mobilization, and state power, all of which often lead to war, which are common byproducts of revolution.

The only places in today’s world not significantly touched by those four factors are Europe and North America, which means that the rest of the world is still open to—and will very likely

continue to suffer—violent revolutionary altercations, and human suffering will rise proportionately.

In fact, apart from the world wars, the most human suffering in the twentieth century has come from revolutions and subsequent attempts to prop up revolutionary institutions: in the Soviet Union, Eastern and Central Europe, China, Africa, Asia, Cambodia: tens of millions of people were executed, starved, tortured, or imprisoned to create revolutionary states, all of which promised sovereignty to the people when the people were nowhere near capable or even desirous of such. The difficult fact for “revolutionaries” of all varieties—political to academic to cultural—to realize is that an authentic revolution is in every way an AQAL affair, demanding not just a “new paradigm,” not just a new worldview, not just a new techno-economic base, not just a new social system, and not just a new set of ideas—but all of them and all together. Failing that, social revolutions are more often than not simply an occasion for more human carnage of one variety or another.

The Fifth Factor

Another item that is often missed in any understanding of social transformation is the “all level” part of the AQAL parameters. An increase in exterior or social or economic development can only be sustained with a corresponding increase in interior development in consciousness and culture. Simply trying to put a new form of governance, political system, or social distribution network in place without a corresponding development in the levels of the interior dimensions of consciousness has historically guaranteed failure in societal transformation.

For example, the very notion of a *social contract* (which is the basis of most forms of sophisticated legitimation, including today's representative democracies) is itself the product of an orange (or higher) wave of moral development. And yet the orange probability wave emerged on a fairly widespread scale only three centuries ago. For this reason, it is no accident that democratic governance systems (of a social contract nature) are very recent developments in human evolution, emerging only after the Western Enlightenment on any widespread scale.

In fact, it was the historical emergence of the orange probability wave in the Left-Hand quadrants (i.e., the Gebserian move from mythic to mental-rational, or from amber to orange level worldview), coupled with profound advances in technocognitive capacity represented by, for example, the steam engine over the windmill (in the Right-Hand quadrants), that inserted Eros into the sequence of historical-developmental unfoldings and thus profoundly increased the likelihood that of the revolutions occurring at that time, at least some of them would be of a significant, vertical, truly transformative nature.

That is, the existence of a *fifth factor*—namely, the significant increase in depth in any of the quadrants in a particular society's AQAL configuration—when added to the other four factors (outlined above), substantially increases the likelihood that a merely horizontal revolution will actually give way to a vertical revolution as well.

Put differently, when the AQAL configuration of a society possesses the standard risk factors for horizontal revolution, plus a fifth factor (namely, an increase in depth in any of the quadrants), then the AQAL selection pressures will include an element of Eros (or the morphogenetic pull to greater depth, complexity, consciousness, and care), and thus the AQAL selection pressures

will agitate toward an *increase in authenticity* in *all* of the quadrants, or an increase in the developmental level of consciousness, culture, and complexity, because only by an increase in depth (or an increase in authenticity) in all of the quadrants can the tension, turbulence, and turmoil created by the breakdown in translation processes, signaled by a legitimization crisis, find some sort of resolution. In short, the effective increase in depth in any one quadrant creates a tension that can only be resolved by a corresponding increase in depth in the other quadrants as well.

The exact nature of this resolution, and the exact nature of the surface structure configurations that will satisfy the agitated selection pressures in AQAL space, cannot be determined or specified ahead of time or before the fact (due to the inherently creative or novel aspect of all vertical transformations and authentic emergents: if we could predict it, it would not be emergent); but, as with any complex vertical transformation, its pathways can be understood *after the fact* by a reconstructive inquiry that tells us *what* happened, and an AQAL interpretation that can better help us understand *why* and *how* it happened.

Major vertical social transformations are relatively rare, certainly in any widespread and significant fashion. Historians alive to verticality (in consciousness, culture, and complexity—that is, in any of the quadrants) have found only a half dozen or so truly profound society-wide transformations (e.g., foraging-magic, horticultural-magic/mythic, agrarian-mythic, industrial-rational, informational-pluralistic).²⁴ Marx focused on the vertical shifts in techno-economic modes (or the Lower-Right quadrant), which is

²⁴ This is not to overlook the hundreds and thousands of micro-transformations or micro-increases in depth that can and often do happen in individual and societal affairs. It is simply that profound macro transformations (e.g., foraging to horticultural to agrarian) are relatively rare.

clearly one of the critically important dimensions in societal change simply because techno-economic materialities constantly touch all members of a society (and are, as hinted in an endnote, probably the single strongest determinant of the average mode of consciousness in a culture).²⁵ Gerhard Lenski's work on the stages of techno-economic development is probably the most sophisticated in this line of approach, and his techno-economic stages are now virtually uncontested by scholars: *foraging*, *horticultural*, *agrarian*, *industrial*, and *informational* (with side branches into *maritime* and *herding*, both roughly at the level of horticultural to agrarian). These stages are a standard part of my own version of the Lower-Right quadrant in the AQAL matrix.

It was *Jean Gebser* who gave the first compelling account of the correlative cultural transformations in the Lower-Left quadrant (although the breakthrough insights in this regard were first made by theorists from Schelling to Hegel to James Mark Baldwin). Although Gebser had no clear understanding of their internal relation to modes of production (i.e., Gebser possessed a pre-quadratic approach), his stages of cultural or worldview

²⁵ As previously noted, what remains of the Marxist argument, when viewed through an AQAL lens, is that the Lower-Right quadrant, although not the sole determinant of men and women's consciousness or being, is the single greatest determinant of the average level of consciousness in the Lower Left. Thus, for example, a techno-economic mode of agrarian in the LR will be the single strongest (but not sole) factor that will predispose and support a traditional mythic worldview in the LL as the most *average* mode and stage of development for that culture (and, indeed, this is what we see generically around the world, including in the U.S., where the farmers of Midwest—and its agrarian LR techno-economic mode—have a strongly average traditional, fundamentalist, mythic-religious worldview, with a correlatively conservative tendency; while the LR-industrial mode Northeast has a strongly average orange rational worldview, and is more likely to be liberal; the Northeast also has a higher proportion of LR-informational mode bases, and thus a consequent green average mode of consciousness in those areas, and hence likewise liberal or post-liberal [postmodernist] in tendency). There are, of course, any number of exceptions, but these are sturdy conclusions vis a vis averages, tendencies, and general modes. I asked Charles Taylor [[]], noted historian of human societies, what he thought of this notion (that “the Lower-Right techno-economic mode of production is the single greatest—not sole—determinant of the *average* level of consciousness in the Lower Left”), and he thought for a long time and replied, “That’s exactly right.”

transformation are likewise generally uncontested by relevant scholars (although the interpretations of their significance sometimes differ): *archaic* (infrared), *magic* (magenta), *early mythic* (red), *late mythic* (amber), *mental-rational* (orange), *integral-aperspectival* (green and higher, but especially teal). These general stages (conceived as probability waves) are one influential way to interpret the stages in the Lower-Left quadrant of the AQAL Matrix (because Gebser was writing at a time that green had not yet widely emerged, he tended to treat all higher structures—starting with green and including teal and turquoise, plus any higher states—as belonging to “integral-aperspectival”; I generally break these down into aperspectival or pluralistic—green—and integral or 2nd tier—teal and turquoise).

Since everybody in every culture is born at square one and begins their growth and development from there (in all their lines or multiple intelligences)—and any individual can stop at any major level—then any given culture is a “layer cake” of different percentages of its population existing at various levels. Generally speaking, the culture (and especially any of its subcultures) will have a “center of gravity” at a particular level—which is the developmental (rainbow altitude) level at which its nexus-agency is primarily operating—and this cultural center of gravity represents the level of “dominant discourse” or “dominant resonance” through which the culture at large operates. And if an individual is below this cultural center of gravity, that center will act as a “pacer of transformation” helping to pull up (or transform) the individual to that same level; and if the individual is higher or beyond that center, it will act to pull them down—any higher transformation (in structures or states) will have to be engineered by the individual on his or her own (generally by finding a micro-community and micro-culture—such as a “sangha”—whose own center of gravity is that which the individual is seeking to

incarnate). The tensions between these various subcultures—each with a different developmental level of their nexus-agency (in the overall “layer cake”)—drives all sorts of various “culture wars” internal to the society; if intense (and combined with factors discussed above), this can lead to “civil wars” and “revolutions” (and with greater frequency but less intensity, these often happen within particular subcultures as well).

When these cultural worldviews first arose, the level of cognitive complexity embodied in them could, when turned to the exterior world, produce *correlative* modes of techno-economic production (which in turn tended to inculcate the same level of depth in the users of the base). Thus, when the interobjective dimension of an actual occasion appears as a foraging mode, the intersubjective dimension appears as an archaic-magic worldview; when the interobjective dimension appears as horticultural, the intersubjective dimension tends toward early mythic (or magic-mythic); agrarian, late mythic (or mythic proper); industrial, mental-rational; informational, pluralistic.

I said these correlations hold “when they first arose,” because the whole point about techno-economic modes is that, once they are produced by a particular level of consciousness, they can be used by virtually any level of consciousness (whether it could itself produce them or not). Thus, one of the horrors of the modern world is that morally ethnocentric tribes, which on their own could only produce a bow and arrow, could now get their hands on orange technology (material Right-Hand artifacts), including anything from gas chambers to nuclear weapons, and thus couple a very low level of moral development with a very high level of techno-cognitive development. Most of the nightmares of the twentieth century—from Auschwitz to the Gulag—which have wrongly been blamed on modernity, are

actually the product of premodern consciousness attaining modern technology and weapons. It is this possibility of a jarring disconnect between LL and LR that drove Marx to some of his original insights (e.g., a new and more advanced techno-economic paradigm throws the old paradigm and the worldviews that it supported into a legitimation crisis that can only be finally resolved by a corresponding vertical transformation in cultural worldviews to match the increased depth in the new paradigm/exemplar).

My point for the moment is simply that, once a material artifact (including a force of production) is created by a correlative level of consciousness and cognition, it can take on a life of its own. Although the artifact (and the force of production) itself, precisely because it *embodies* a particular level of cognition, will always tend to *evoke* a similar level of consciousness in the user of the artifact, this is not in any way a causal or deterministic affair (not, anyway, after its first emergence). Ethnocentric tribes can use gas chambers, even though they haven't the cognitive capacity to produce them themselves: this is the horror of disjunctive development that can occur precisely because material artifacts and the consciousness that produced them can take on an independent life of their own, so that "levels and lines" (i.e., different degrees or levels of development in different lines of development—which is very common: e.g., high cognitive development and low moral development—such as Nazi doctors) becomes a nightmare of global proportions in today's world: high technical development, low moral development, a mixture of which leads straight to Wounded Knee, to Dachau, to Treblinka, to Sobibor, and to September 11th.

Eros and Authenticity

We have seen that when any of four major sociocultural factors are present, the likelihood of a societal revolution increases. We have also seen that, if a fifth factor is added (namely, a vertical increase in depth in any of the quadrants of the AQAL configuration of a particular society), then there is an added selection pressure that agitates not just for a circular (“revolving”) translational change in surface structures but a vertical (or authentically “revolutionary”) transformational change in deep structures (following the morphogenetic gradient of increased complexity and consciousness, or Eros by any other name).

As it turns out, these (exceedingly rare) vertical societal transformations (as we have seen, there have only been a half-dozen or so truly profound ones in generic terms—although each of those, at their original emergence, produced several dozen examples around the world, among the hundreds of merely “revolving” revolutions also occurring) are not necessarily of the dramatic *revolutionary* variety; some are the quieter *reform* variety. Both occur and have historically occurred. For example, with regard to the vertical shift from amber (late mythic-agrarian) to orange (industrial-rational), and its corresponding shift from feudal-aristocracy-monarchy to implicit social contracts and representative democracies, *revolutions* that attempted to ride that evolutionary wave included the American Revolution (which succeeded fairly well due to strong factors in all four quadrants), the French Revolution (which aborted badly and reverted to amber Napoleonic), the Russian Revolution (which never had a chance due to a pre-industrial AQAL configuration, and ended up imposing Marxism on its nexus-agency, which remained arrested at an amber/collectivist/conformist level), and the Chinese Revolution (which eventually ended up substituting Marxist

amber for Confucian amber, with an industrial edge).

Where revolutions thus had a fairly poor track record, reform movements that attempted the same essential vertical transformation fared somewhat better. Prussia (in 1806-1812) and England (1828-1832) managed, via relatively quiet reform and not overt revolution, to implement many of the quadratic potentials of the orange probability wave, including a reduction in the privileges of aristocracy, extending citizenship, and progressive economic and political restructuring. These reforms were “revolutionary” in the sense of being profound, vertical, authentic transformations, but were not “revolutionary” in the overt sense of being accompanied by political insurrection, war, or physical altercations.

But whether the vertical transformation occurred via revolution or reform, the essential point is that in either case *a majority of the elite faction leading the transformation was at the orange probability wave*. As with any profound social transformation, it must be inaugurated and channeled by an elite, and the elite, in every case of genuine vertical transformation, has itself been riding the edge of the new and emerging probability wave (in this case, orange). If this is not the case, then the revolution/reform is merely of the old “circular” or “cyclical” variety, being merely a change in surface structures in the AQAL configuration of the society. But should a majority of the elite (or at the very least, its major ideas adopted by the elite) be representing the leading edge of the newly emerging probability wave, then the fifth factor is introduced into the increasingly chaotic translations of the AQAL landscape, and selection pressures therefore begin to agitate toward a vertical transformation to a new and higher spacetime niche, a new and higher probability wave in the cascading AQAL ocean. The crisis in legitimacy is finally resolved only by an increase in

authenticity.

Moreover, in the case of successful modern revolutions/reforms, a significant fraction of the population at large was also at the orange probability wave (at least in the cognitive line—although it turns out that what “significant” means is surprising—see below). As history has demonstrated time and again, it does no good to introduce a new mode of governance (e.g., stemming from the orange probability wave) if the consciousness of the population itself is nowhere near that wave. Representative republican democracy is a governance system where sovereignty resigns in systems of holons at the orange probability wave; such a democracy has never occurred at amber, red, or magenta. Representative democracies and the reforms they carry are only around 300 years old in any sort of enduring fashion; they are dated with the Western Enlightenment and the emergence of the orange probability wave on a widespread scale.

But just how “widespread” does widespread have to be? As it turns out—at least according to a preliminary survey of the last few vertical transformations—not that great, due to a peculiar social phenomena known as a “tipping point.” It appears, for example, that when around 10% of the population reaches the particular leading-edge wave, that creates a tipping point where the values of the leading edge tend to permeate the entire society, even though only 10% of the society itself is actually at that higher level.

Thus, when just 10% of European and American society became orange, we find the French and American revolutions (replacing monarchy with representative democracy); the writing of the American *Constitution*; the complete legal abolition of slavery; and the replacement of mythology with science as the dominant legitimated mode of knowledge acquisition. All of this

occurred, even though, again, only 10% of the society was actually at the level that espoused those values. Likewise, in 1959, about 2% of the population of the United States was at green pluralism (postmodernism); by 1979 (when Jacques Derrida was the most widely quoted academic in America), it had reached 11% on its way to 20%. In the ensuing “revolutions of the sixties,” we thus find the emergence of the civil rights movements; the emergence of the worldwide environmental movement; the rise of feminism as a strong political, legal, and personal force; the rise of multiculturalism and “sensitivity movements”; anti-hate legislature, and so forth—again, even though only slightly more than 10% of the population was actually at the green levels that fundamentally embraced those values. But somehow, with this tipping point, the values of the leading-edge level become more acceptable to virtually all lower levels, and widespread societal reforms occur in that wake. (Another reason we are anxiously awaiting 2nd tier reaching 10% of the population.)

But at least that tipping point percentage seems necessary. Thus, throughout the twentieth century, every time that Western industrial democracies attempted to introduce orange social-contract democracy into red societies, the result was always the “free election” of red military dictators and regimes. Communist insurrectionaries likewise attempted to introduce socialism into similarly red societies, and the result was once again a red military dictatorship. Exterior developments (in social structures and institutions) demand correlative interior developments (in consciousness and culture) in order to be sustained, and simply forcing “democratic” behavior from a population is worthless without correlative interior growth (a fact that can be adequately tracked only by using something akin to an AQAL analysis).

Summary: Eros and Revolution

That is simply another way of emphasizing the fact that most “revolutions,” “transformations,” or “new paradigms” are, like mutations, usually lethal (or at best inconsequential), not beneficial—which is why the original meaning of “revolution” was “a circular or cyclical going nowhere.” But part of the brilliance of Marx (and the Idealists themselves) was to spot that, in the long run, there is an Eros to the evolutionary sequence: a slow, fitful, but unmistakable increase in developmental depth and evolutionary unfolding, and therefore the possibility of new and more authentic modes of being, consciousness, culture, and politics continually emerging at the chaotic, frothy, leading edge of the probability configuration of the AQAL Matrix in any society, and this new emergence (in any of the quadrants) throws the old forms of being into a destabilizing crisis of legitimacy, which, if profound enough, can only be resolved by an increase in authenticity.

(This Eros, or slow but inexorable increase in differentiation-and-integration and therefore increase in wholeness, unity, consciousness, and complexity, is inherent in the very nature of moment-to-moment existence, as the subject of one moment becomes the object of the subject of the next—that is, as it “transcends and includes” its predecessor—and thus each succeeding moment is more unified, more whole, more inclusive, more encompassing—and thus each moment “includes” or “prehends” its predecessors, but also adds a degree of novelty, transcendence, creativity, or emergence, with this overall “transcend and include” of necessity growing in the direction of increasing wholism. Overall, the universe is not winding down—it is winding up—as the simplest look at the evolutionary record—quarks to atoms to molecules to cells to organisms—makes painfully clear. Only when you selectively focus on dead matter

in a closed system does disorder increase; but as Schroedinger pointed out, life lives on “negative entropy”—it lives on increasing order. Every now and then the cumulative results of this increasing order forces the system to jump into higher levels of organization altogether, and this we see in everything from stellar evolution to biological evolution to human evolution—Eros is an *intrinsic* force in the unfolding of the Kosmos.)

We saw that in the original Marxist version, a legitimation crisis occurs when the superstructure (or relations of production) no longer mesh with the advances in the base (or forces of production), and therefore the *meaning structures* of that culture are no longer supported in a believable way. In other words, the prevailing worldview—and the prevailing governing bodies—suffer a loss of legitimacy, a loss of believability. The intersubjective meaning (LL) no longer meshes with the interobjective social realities (LR), and thus a profound legitimation crisis shakes the entire culture.²⁶ Meaning no longer matches fact; truth no longer matches truthfulness; semantics and syntax are out of whack; base and superstructure no longer support each other—and something has to give, as all four selection pressures swing into play in the violent turbulence of the disturbed AQAL Matrix.

We also saw that in the *scientific world*, this means that the old theories (the old superstructures), which were adapted to, and generated by, the old social practices and paradigms (the old

²⁶ That is part of the AQAL reconstruction of Marx and his contributions: the importance of Marxist-historical materialist *component* is that it includes the Lower-Right dimensions of social systems and the institutional power they embody. What is entirely lacking in new paradigm and postmodern versions of “transformation” is that they usually rely on subjective and intersubjective factors alone, thus often totally overlooking objective and interobjective realities. Further, as we will see in our historical survey of the Lower Right (see *Excerpt E*), Marxism is a form of **developmental systems theory** in the broadest sense (or interobjective forces of production and relations of production: that is, relations of signifiers and systems of syntax). This can only be adequately analyzed using an AQAL Framework.

base), now no longer fit with recent and anomalous evidence. A new paradigm (i.e., a series of new scientific experiments and behavioral injunctions) have generated new data, new evidence, and new experiences that cannot be fitted into or explained by the old theories. The old theories therefore suffer a legitimation crisis: their meaning structures (LL) no longer functionally fit with new material evidence (LR). Old semantics and new syntax clash, and only a new series of theories and meaning structures can match the evidence generated by the new modes of scientific production (i.e., the new paradigms that generate, enact, bring forth, and produce new types of data or evidence). A *scientific revolution* (or at the least, profound *reformation*) therefore occurs which ushers in a new series of theories or meaning structures (LL) that are adapted to, and tetra-mesh with, the new modes of scientific data production (LR), so that the new scientific culture (LL) now matches the new social system (LR).

A similar type of legitimation crisis occurs in the academic world of the humanities, not just the sciences. To give only one example, over the last thirty years, there has been a particularly influential type of data production machine (or techno-economic injunction), but one that was itself malformed to a significant degree, namely, the behavioral injunction and set of social rules for deconstructing texts (or deconstructing systems of signifiers without an equally widespread mode for putting something positive in their place: it was merely deconstruction without reconstruction). This malformed mode of data production and behavioral injunctions (or paradigms) supported a worldview of faux egalitarian postmodernism (i.e., a malformed mode of the green wave often known as “the mean green meme”). This mode of production or social behavior practice helped to determine the consciousness of the humanities professor and his or her unsuspecting students. However, as new forms of social practice

and new theories based on them began to generate more integrated and more authentic modes of consciousness and culture, the worldview of extreme postmodernism has been thrown into a profound *legitimation crisis*, which itself can only be overcome by a revolution or reform to more authentic, more integral modes of consciousness, culture, and complexity in the academic landscape. This particular revolution—an *integral age at the leading edge*—is, of course, only now beginning to form (and is one of the main themes of this essay).

In *politics* at large, a legitimation crisis means that there is a new and rising culture that does not believe the ideas and practices of the old governing bodies. The new and rising culture possesses a degree of depth and complexity that is beyond the grasp of the old governing bodies, and therefore the entire structure of governance suffers a legitimation crisis for the new culture (at the hands of Eros). A political revolution—perhaps violent (revolution), perhaps not (reform)—will therefore have to occur in order for new governance systems to take into account the new increases in depth of cognition and technology. (As we have often put it, the only cure for a profound legitimation crisis—in any domain, scientific to academic to political—is an increase in authenticity.) If those revolutions/reforms are successful, the new (and more authentic) governance systems will possess a sturdy legitimacy for the new (and more authentic) culture. Failing that, there are only culture wars, as various cultures and subcultures vie for ruling legitimacy.

All sorts of pleasant and unpleasant solutions to internal culture wars have historically been devised. A fun one exercised by mythic believers was the mass murder of magic witches (possibly hundreds of thousands of them in Europe's medieval history, as mythic Church battled magic pagans). But many solutions were very positive: the United States *Constitution*, for

example, stemming mostly from the rational probability wave (orange), demanded that, although you are allowed to have any private beliefs that you want—primitive archaic, egocentric magic, or ethnocentric mythic—nonetheless in the public space you *must behave* according to rational, worldcentric laws. The democratic *Constitution* was more authentic (greater depth for greater span) than the previous aristocracy, and thus time's arrow was on its side (and time's arrow is indeed an arrow with directionality, as Prigogine pointed out in his amendments to the second law of thermodynamics, because it works to create “order out of chaos”—i.e., Eros). Of course, as we said, in order to support such an arrangement, a significant percentage of the population itself (and not just the revolutionary elite) must be at a sufficiently evolved wave of consciousness (in this case, orange or higher), or the social contract will simply degenerate into red regimes and amber dictatorships of one variety or another. A significant percentage seems to hover around 10%, which, although modest in size, seems enough to set off a tipping point that sediments the leading-edge's values (in, of course, watered-down versions) throughout the lower levels.

The advantages that any greater technology and deeper cognitions have over their predecessors were many (in addition, of course, to the new forms of pathology introduced by the new modes: the dialectic of progress). We were looking at the example of horticultural-mythic over foraging-magic in its positive forms: one central advantage was that the mythic worldview had a relatively greater depth (which could include and embrace a larger number of individuals and therefore unite many tribes into a social communion much larger than their merely kinship lineage ties which dominated foraging modes). This relative increase in cognitive depth was shared by an increase in the technological depth of horticultural over foraging (evidenced

in a higher degree of complexity and integration in the social system)—which is why foragers by the droves adopted horticultural modes wherever they were introduced.²⁷ And once the new worldview arose to match the new base (e.g., once mythic supplanted magic), then the higher mythic worldview and the deeper (more complex) horticultural mode were in mesh; they reflected different dimensions of the same probability wave, and thus could tetra-evolve more harmoniously.... (until industrial modes arose to displace horticultural-agrarian, and the old mythic-membership worldviews were challenged by the rising rational-egoic worldviews, and so would go yet another round of world-wrenching cultural and social wars of transformation, whether by overt revolution or quieter reform....)

The advantage of any higher worldview is not in the “include” but the “transcend” side of the equation: there is an Eros to the sequence, such that the transcendental value of the new and higher worldview moves into a new probability space (or a new niche) where it can flourish outside of old Kosmic habits (while initiating, in that new niche, its own forms of new Kosmic

²⁷ One of the many insuperable difficulties with the eco-primitivist view—which sees foraging tribes as an ecological, social, and political Eden—is that such a view has a very hard time explaining why, if that is the case, the foragers themselves abandoned that mode and adopted the horticultural mode in virtually every case it was offered. Why would cultures by the droves abandon such an alleged heaven? To voluntarily jettison heaven, either the foraging tribes were incredibly stupid (which they weren’t), or they were not in any real heaven at all (but more like a relative hell they were all too eager to transcend, which transcend they did via horticulture). The history of ecological damage to this planet is largely a history of unintended consequences—no society intentionally set out to ruin the environment—the Mayans, for example, would not have practiced slash and burn if they knew the resulting rainforest depletion would directly result in the death of their civilization. But it wasn’t even until the late modern era that humanity had a scientific understanding of ecology itself, and thus understood for the first time its crucially important networks of interaction connecting virtually all living organisms in vital life-supporting meshes. By then, the industrial revolution had begun a series of massive unintended consequences (pollution to toxic wastes to hot-house gases) that would make it a horse race between ecological understanding and planetary destruction. We are presently awaiting the results of that race.

habits)—just as, for example, mammals found a new space outside of reptilian probability waves (although the mammalian brain, of course, transcended and included a reptilian brain stem, which transcended and included vegetative life functions, which transcended and included inorganic molecules, which transcended and included atoms... all the way back to the Big Bang). The new and deeper/higher worldview is therefore selected and carried forward in the new probability space, even though there are fewer holons there than in the previous space (whose Kosmic habits have now become subcomponents of the new holons).

Thus, foraging-magical modes of governance gave way to agrarian-mythic modes of governance, which gave way to rational-industrial, which is now on the cusp of pluralistic-informational. But even though the leading edge takes control of the major forms of governance systems, *all* of the previous waves remain as sub-pockets in the culture, even while the culture itself, on the whole, is subjected to the new governance system. Individuals and subcultures span the entire spectrum of the different waves of consciousness (up to the average, and a few beyond). And that is the major source of internal culture wars in the “layer cake” of culture.

In this summary it is therefore important to repeat: What Marx failed to see is what virtually everybody else has failed to see in this regard: it is not that each society has a single monolithic technological mode and a single monolithic worldview, and that the two somehow have to match up. Rather, each society is a spectrum of AQAL actualities: there are individuals at every level of the spectrum of consciousness, at least up to the average level of that culture (with a few moving beyond). And there are pockets of every mode of techno-production up to the leading edge: even in industrial societies, there are red street gangs foraging for their existence, and the

farmers of Kansas are still out there planting seeds. So there is no single base and no single superstructure, such that an internal contradiction between them could propel the major transformations that have marked history. Marx's general idea—that of a mismatch between LL and LR causing internal communal contradictions and tensions—is still true, but the mismatch spans the spectrum of consciousness up to the highest average wave in that society, and in all four quadrants with their many waves and streams (all of which have to tetra-mesh in the AQAL configuration, or something has to give). It is still true that a given culture has a dominant mode of discourse, or a dominant mode of resonance, usually consisting of the highest plus most influential developmental level in its nexus-agency, which is enough to identify the culture at large as “magic” or “magic-mythic” or “mythic” or “rational” or “pluralistic” (and in the future, “integral”). And when this dominant level was first emerging, it was almost always as part of a clash between the old correlative techno-economic modes and the new modes with their “rising culture” (the culture identified with the newly emerging higher cultural level). That aspect of general Marxism is still valid. But the rest of the culture is subdivided into numerous subcultures (the “layer cake”), each at a different level of LL worldview and LR technology (although now, the LL worldview can also utilize virtually any level of LR technology in existence, since it is only a material artifact whose use does not demand change in levels of consciousness and culture—hence, e.g., tribal red consciousness and orange gas chambers).

The emergence of the Integral levels of consciousness and culture will prove to be a truly, deeply, and genuinely revolutionary occurrence, simply because, in all of human history, there has never been a culture anywhere on the planet whose dominant nexus-agency was truly all-inclusive, non-

marginalizing, non-dominating, and non-oppressive (as an Integral level is, this “monumental leap in meaning”). This will be such a radically new and unprecedented mode of societal organization that we literally have no historical precursors that could give us any idea of what this might be like; it promises to be such a wildly new expansion in inclusivity, embrace, care, consciousness, differentiation-and-integration as to be virtually unimaginable by any of today’s standards anywhere in the world.

The Idea of Progress

Only such an AQAL interpretation can allow us to handle the *idea of progress* in a way that makes sense of actual historical realities. The problem with virtually all previous notions of progress—from the Enlightenment to Marx to present-day liberal democratic versions—is that they made the wholly unwarranted assumption that society has merely a single basic worldview and a single basic techno-economic mode, and therefore history must be a progressive, step by step increase in liberal values, with single-step techno-economic modes, clunking up the great ladder of linear progress. Thus, if the Enlightenment represented the emergence of industrial-rationality over feudal-mythology, then modernity must embody nothing but progress, pure and simple.

But, of course, a society whose governance system embodies industrial-rational modes (orange), still has pockets of archaic, magic, magic-mythic, and mythic subcultures (infrared, magenta, red, and amber). All cultures are this “layer cake” system, or a percentage mixture of different levels of consciousness evolution (although each specific culture or subculture usually has a dominant mode of discourse or resonance, representing the most powerful or significant level of consciousness present in that

subculture and governing the “nexus-agency” of that subculture). Moreover, the artifacts or products of orange can now be used by pre-orange waves. Orange moral consciousness, for example, demands that all people be treated fairly, regardless of race, color, sex, or creed. Orange cognition is also powerful enough that it has to the potential to produce assembly line gas chambers, but orange moral consciousness would never use them. But tribal-red moral consciousness can easily seize orange products and artifacts and will gladly use them—hence, Auschwitz.

In other words, “levels and lines” (different developmental lines—cognitive, moral, emotional, spiritual, etc.—possess different rates of development and thus possess different levels of development)—which becomes an important ingredient in the AQAL analysis of any idea of “progress,” because the higher the level of development in any line in a society, the greater the possibility that those higher products can be seized by lower levels of development in other lines. Thus, the greater the genuine depth in any society—that is, the more there is genuine, real, authentic progress—the more types of pathology that can follow in its wake, due to “levels and lines.” This allows us to track the “good news, bad news” nature of all social transformations, and not fall into the only two widely accepted options, which either see *only* progress or deny *all* progress and see nothing but ruptures.

In short, no matter how “high” a society is in terms of developmental depth, every human being must start its development at square one, and thus the greater the depth, the more transformations an adult human must undergo, and since each transformation can miscarry, then the more problems that can occur the more advanced the society becomes. An indigenous tribal society at magenta magic only has one major transformation that a human must navigate to be mature—he or she must transform from infrared to magenta (and indigenous societies

recognize when that transformation goes wrong and produces illness, which the shaman or medicine man or woman is trained to deal with). But a postmodern human has at least 5 major transformations to undergo (sensorimotor-infrared to magenta-magic to red-magic/mythic to amber-mythic to orange-rational to green-postrational—and something can go wrong at every one of those stages! Postmodern societies can be sick in ways indigenous societies literally can't even imagine). Even in a society whose governance systems were at leading-edge turquoise, with enormous depth and wisdom, individuals would still have begin at infrared, then magenta, then red, amber, orange, green, teal, and finally turquoise—if they develop fully. But many individuals will remain at junior waves of development, which is certainly their right in all post-orange societies. But just that fact accounts for the peculiar distresses of advanced cultures: the higher the culture, the more stages of development involved, and since every stage has its own pathologies, then the higher the culture, the more ways you can be sick. Thus, good news, bad news.

(The same “layer cake” phenomenon is behind one of the most widespread and *inaccurate* interpretations of modernity and religion. Namely, almost every commentator on modernity—noticing the sharp rise of rational science and the drop in mythic religion—pronounced the eventual and complete “death of religion”—only to be met with a continued presence of mythic religion, long past the point where it was supposed to have disappeared, whereupon commentators began noticing this and announcing that all previous commentators had been wrong—with none of them understanding why, which is that everybody is born at square one and begins their development from there, so that before a person enters any rational science stages, they have to pass through mythic religious stages—and many of them undergo

arrested development at those stages and hence occupy mythic religion as a station in life. This will *never* go away, although, if the cultural center of gravity continues to rise, then the average level to which individuals develop will also continue to rise—to rational science or higher—and this would involve the decrease in the overall percentage of individuals remaining at mythic. But they will never simply disappear, because mythic is a genuine stage in overall human growth and development.)

Accordingly, due to “levels and lines,” we can indeed allow both the idea of progress in any line, and the fact that higher cultures showing authentic progress can nonetheless be subjected to barbarities that primal cultures literally could not even imagine.

This fact also leaves all societies open to internal culture wars, as pockets at different waves of consciousness vie for legitimation. As we have seen, in today’s industrialized West, there are three major subcultures still at war: the traditionalist mythic-amber wave (best adapted to agrarian-feudal modes), the modernist orange-rational wave (best suited to industrial mass-production modes), and the postmodernist green-pluralist wave (best suited to pluralistic informational modes). The governance systems of Western societies are in the slow and painful transition from industrial-orange to informational-green (with significant push-back from traditional mythic-fundamentalists). And the major hazard in today’s world is that the green wave is emerging in too many instances in its malformed mode, with its AQAL Matrix significantly fractured by a flatland pluralism that erases depth from the Kosmos wherever it finds it. But that’s another story, the story of boomeritis, yes?²⁸

²⁸ Boomeritis is a form of the pre/post (or pre/trans) fallacy—the confusion of *pre-conventional* and *post-conventional* modes simply because both are *non-conventional*, and thus appear similar to the untutored eye. The Boomer generation was so anxious to move

Summary

We have covered a lot of ground up to this point. Here is a quick summary of the central conclusions:

- Each holon has at least *four major dimensions of being-in-the-world*: subjective (“I”), objective (“it”), intersubjective (“we”), and interobjective (“its”).
- In the subjective dimension (UL), the moment-to-moment nature of flowing existence involves *prehension*—or this moment’s feeling of the previous moment—which is a holarchical transcend-and-include of the previous moment. This is one example of the fact that each dimension of being-in-the-world *inherits* a type of influence (or Kosmic karma)

beyond (or transcend) the rational, conventional, orthodox ways of doing things—which the Boomers believed were corrupt, degenerate, and inauthentic in almost every way—that they embraced not only post-conventional modes but pre-conventional modes, and thus confused “all of us” with “me” on too many occasions. Combined with the rampant nihilism and narcissism of the green postmodern wave (and particularly its mean green meme form), the Boomer’s ended up as the “Me” generation, and deconstructed every human knowledge discipline and social practice, prior to them, as being helplessly inauthentic and oppressive, and replaced them with “the wonder of being Me.” Since all previous systems were deconstructed, but very few were re-constructed, the results were indeed, not only a rampant narcissism (e.g., Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*) but a blood-letting, depression-inducing, values destroying nihilism. “Me” and “irony” is all that remained (“irony” being the saying of one thing will meaning its exact opposite—“Oh, hey fellow, nice tie”). All previous approaches to knowledge and reality were pronounced dead—the death of man, the death of history, the death of humanities, the death of science, the death of rationality, the death of spirituality, the death of being—leaving, again, only that tag team from postmodern hell, nihilism and narcissism.

It is only in the last decade or so that to that list, we could finally add, “the death of postmodernism”—probably officially with Terry Eagleton’s announcement, in the annual pomo literary conference a decade or so ago, that “postmodernism is as dead a movement can be.” What we are looking for now is the return of Big Pictures, the return of value, the end of mere irony, the end of rampant narcissism, the discovery of good-enough universals, and the evolutionary glory of continuing growth, development, and novelty touching all aspects of the Kosmos. We are looking, that is, for more Integral and Comprehensive Worldviews.

from its predecessors.

- In the objective dimension (UR), the moment-to-moment nature of flowing existence involves, among other things, *morphic resonance* and *formative causation*, where the objective form of a holon resonates with similar forms across spacetime, influencing them to some degree (just as a vibrating string causes other similar strings to vibrate at the same frequency. The two strings vibrating together is called morphic resonance, the one string causing the other to vibrate is called formative causation). In the UR dimension, this inheritance appears most essentially as the past forms of an individual holon influencing its present form. This UR influence, as we will see, also appears to involve various types of subtle energies. Another equally important form of UR inheritance is *autopoiesis*, whereby living holons self-organize and self-reproduce, so that a holon's previous moments of existence are inherited by its subsequent moments of existence. (We will discuss autopoiesis at length in Excerpt C and Excerpt E.)
- In the intersubjective dimension (LL), the moment-to-moment nature of flowing existence involves the inheritance of a cultural background of shared meanings and mutual prehensions. In essence, this is the basis of *habitus* and *cultural memory*.
- In the interobjective dimensions (LR), the moment-to-moment nature of flowing existence involves collective morphic resonance and collective formative causation that sets up various morphogenetic grooves that will strongly influence, and sometimes directly guide, the unfolding development of individual holons that arise in mesh with those grooves. This is simply a subset of the general phenomena of *systems memory*.

- Thus, all four dimensions of being-in-the-world are influenced to some degree by their predecessors.
- Put differently, each holon inherits, as a given or *a priori* ground, the AQAL matrix of the previous moment.
- These inheritances involve deep patterns of being-in-the-world that are not archetypal givens but *Kosmic habits*.
- Kosmic habits are not rigid concrete structures but *probability waves* of finding a particular type of holon in a particular spacetime locale in the creatively unfolding AQAL matrix.
- In order to survive, each holon must *tetra-mesh* with its AQAL inheritance or face extinction. This tetra-evolution involves *selection pressures* in all four dimensions of its being-in-the-world (truth, truthfulness, meaning, functional fit—indeed, pressures from all of the elements in the AQAL Matrix).
- If the AQAL Matrix of this moment inherits the AQAL Matrix of the previous moment, it also adds its own spark of *creative novelty, emergence, or transcendence*. Each actual occasion is “*transcend and include*,” giving rise to the Whiteheadian holarchical nature of each moment, which not only inherits or prehends its past, but transcends it by adding its own moments of creative novelty and newness.
- Therefore, evolution is marked not just by the inheritance of past forms in tetra-mesh, but the emergence of new forms in transcendental leaps of creativity. As Jantsch summarized it, evolution is “*self-organization through self-transcendence*” (with “self-transcendence” being one of the many names of “Eros”).
- These emergent leaps therefore create new niches in the AQAL matrix marked by probability waves of *greater depth, consciousness, complexity, and inclusive capacity*.

- These niches take on specific forms as Kosmic habits when that space is *quadratically enacted* by a sufficiently large number of holons (which then pass on this inheritance to subsequent holons, who will transcend and include it).
- Higher potentials become concrete actualities through this process of *creative enactment in tetra-mesh*. At no point are *pregiven* levels, structures, or stages required.
- Whenever a new niche is in the process of tetra-emergence, the old niche is thrown into a *legitimation crisis*, which can only be resolved by an increase in authenticity—or a *transformation* to the new niche of greater depth, consciousness, culture, and complexity.
- Authentic vertical transformations to greater levels of depth do not automatically spell progress, however, because higher developments in some lines can be accompanied by lower developments in other lines (a phenomena called *levels and lines*, whether in individuals or societies).
- For this reason, historical development is always a painful, dialectical mixture of “*good news, bad news*”—the “dialectic of progress”—as individuals and subcultures in the society span the entire spectrum of consciousness in all of its available waves, in both their healthy and unhealthy forms.
- Thus, the greater the depth of any individual or culture, the more *potentials and pathologies* available to it.
- An *AQAL* or *integral analysis* of all of those factors very likely represents the best chance of increasing the good news and diminishing the bad news in any AQAL configuration (in an individual, family, society, species, planet, or Kosmos), because only an integral analysis takes into account the widest variety of evidence from the greatest number of sources, and is therefore the least exclusionary and least violent approach to self-and-other

understanding. The fact that each moment's AQAL configuration is handed to the next moment as a karmically inherited past fact—which the next moment must therefore include or preserve it in its own amalgamated makeup—doesn't prevent the next moment from also adding its own bit of freedom, newness, emergence, creativity, or transcendence. Put differently, each new moment has a degree of *interpretive freedom* in the face of the factual givenness of the previous moment. It is this transcendental freedom, driven most generally by Eros, that allows the evolutionary sequence itself to show continued, inexorable “transcend and include”—meaning increasing wholeness, increasing differentiation-and-integration, increased unity, increased care and concern, increased consciousness, and increased complexity. The universe is inexorably winding up, and this “winding up” is the very nature of time's arrow that governs the entire manifest realm—including human beings' own ongoing existence in this world. It's time to look closer at this astonishing fact.

CHAPTER 4: FACTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Postmodern epistemologies (from Nietzsche to Heidegger to Gadamer to Foucault to Derrida to Lyotard) have done two profound things: introduced incredibly important truths into the game of human epistemology, and completely confused the field almost beyond repair. What is required, in any Integral Methodological Pluralism, is a way to honor the enduring insights of postmodernism while avoiding the crippling confusions that have thus far inescapably followed.

The main argument between postmodern and modern/premodern epistemologies concerns whether the weight of truth is to be assigned to relativity or universality—or, which amounts to the same thing, whether interpretations or facts are most fundamental. The very form of that argument itself, however, demonstrates that it has taken place almost entirely within a 1st-tier paradigm (i.e., a 1st-tier data injunction machine)—the argument has been between amber fundamentals, orange universals, and green pluralisms, with one of them taken to be true and the others false. A 2nd-tier turquoise paradigm discloses, on the other hand, a more fruitful way to move forward by highlighting the partial truths contained in all of those claims, and then resituating them within a more encompassing and compassionate framework expressing a self-reflexive turquoise moment of the AQAL Matrix's self-understanding. In doing so, we will see that the argument is not between facts and interpretations, but instead involves understanding how both facts and interpretations are integral dimensions of this and every moment.

I personally have seen no other approach that comes anywhere close to integrating the truths of premodern, modern, and postmodern approaches. Rather, today's existing approaches

tend to choose one or the other of those moments (premodern or modern or postmodern) and virulently condemn the others—a living example, alas, of a 1st-tier mentality still at war with its neighbors. Let us see if we can instead introduce a 2nd-tier integral moment that honors each of them by resituating them in a larger framework, a framework that salvages their truth claims by limiting their reach. That is, by relieving each of them of their absolutisms, their enduring partial truths can be registered, included, and embraced in the ongoing unfolding of this moment's rush to realization.

Overview: Revolutionary Integral Pluralism

Let's start by turning from the nature of Kosmic karma in all four quadrants and look a little more closely at the methodologies that seem the most appropriate at disclosing/enacting the phenomena “in” those quadrants. The quadrants, recall, are simply variations on the 4 basic dimension-perspectives created by the two fundamental distinctions necessary to get a universe going: the interior and exterior of the individual and collective, which create 4 major dimensions found in all holons, all the way up, all the way down.

(And quadrants gave rise to the personal pronouns found in all languages—1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person pronouns. But these are derived after the quadrants, and actually depend upon them, and thus we need to be very careful when we use them to “represent” the quadrants—the Lower-Left quadrant, e.g., becomes involved in 2nd-person “you” only if a 1st-person plural “we” is first formed. This is why, technically, the Lower Left is not 2nd person and cannot be represented, explained, or indicated by “2nd person.” But with caution, we can use 1st-person “I” for the Upper Left; 2nd-person—as you/we—for the Lower-Left; 3rd-person “it” for

the Upper Right; and 3rd-person plural “its” for the Lower Right. I’ll explain this further in an endnote for those interested. But it’s why, for example, Torbert’s “1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person” methods are not in any way substitutable for the 4 quadrants.)²⁹

²⁹ What is fundamental to the Kosmos is the interior and exterior of the singular and plural, and not “1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person” pronouns, which themselves are derived from, and evolved from, the 4 quadrants—which were already present in a human’s existence. Thus, when human beings were evolving pronouns for 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person encounters, and an individual “I” approached a 2nd-person “you,” that “I” recognized this 2nd person if and only if there was some sort of mutual understanding and communication between them (some sort of “we” had formed). If not—if the other person was totally and completely *not* understandable or communicable—the other person remained an object, an “it,” a 3rd-person thing, exactly like a rock or a carrot. In other words, what was recognized as a “you” was actually the other in a “we” (the other in a 1st-person plural)—and thus it was the Lower-Left quadrant, the “we” space or intersubjective space, that was behind the capacity to recognize and understand an Other in the first place. And that “Other” entered the being and awareness of a particular “I” only as part of that “I’s” “we space.” In other words, “2nd-person” understanding and recognition did not come before or exist, on its own, before the interior “I” space or the collective “we” space—those quadrants predated any abstraction as “1st-person” and “2nd-person”—and those quadrants remained what really existed after their components were abstracted and named “1st person” and “2nd person.” Thus, any individual’s Lower-Left quadrant or “we” space contains various “you’s,” but only “you’s” that are part of the “I’s” various “we” spaces—without that mutual understanding, the 2nd-person “you” remains a 3rd-person “it”—part of an individual’s Right-Hand quadrants—again, like a rock or a carrot. The AQAL diagram is sometimes criticized for leaving out a “you” in its own case (with the Lower Left technically being a “we”); but if you want to understand the 2nd person’s makeup in itself—since that is not in and of itself part of the first person’s Lower Left—then simply draw another AQAL diagram, next to the first AQAL diagram (which represents the first person’s makeup), and that second diagram gives you the actual makeup of the second individual. That individual will have a Lower-Left quadrant that includes the first person’s existence, but again, only insofar as the first person has actually entered into a mutual understanding “we” space—and then that “we” space—as understood by the second person’s “I”—is then an actual part of the second person’s makeup (their Lower-Left being). In all of these cases, it is the quadrants that are actually and directly interacting—there is nothing in and of itself that “1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person” pronouns actually refer to; those are all abstractions from what is actually happening as all 4 quadrants in one individual holon interact with all 4 quadrants in another—and the quadrants are the fundamental reality, not the pronouns. That’s why the quadrants are the interior and the exterior of the individual and the collective—and not directly 1st-, 2nd-, or 3rd-person “realities,” which themselves are loose abstractions and summaries of the actual quadrant realities.

Without this understanding, then referring to a methodology as, e.g., being “2nd-person,” is misleading, since “2nd person” technically means the person being spoken to; but if a Martian

lands—or simply a person from another culture being investigated by an anthropologist—if that person can't be communicated with at all, then there is no “2nd-person” methodology for getting to this person whatsoever. Talk all you want, use all the so-called “2nd-person” methodologies you want, and you still won't get anywhere—and that's because all so-called “2nd-person” methodologies are actually “1st-person plural” to a large degree—that is, based on the real Lower-Left quadrant (the interior of the collective, or 1st-person plural, the “we”). All of this is missed by referring to them as “2nd-person” methodologies (and that's why “2nd person” does *not* replace the Lower Left).

Likewise, “3rd-person” methodologies are usually taken to mean methods applied strictly to objective, exterior, basically material objects. But in reality, one can take that attitude—that objective “looking at” attitude—and apply that to exterior spaces OR interior spaces. As we'll see when we get to zones, one can take an outside, objective, “from without” view of either exterior objects or interior subjects—for the latter, one can apply maps and models to interior holons, viewing them in a detached, objective, observer-like fashion. So “3rd-person” approaches are not confined merely to exterior objects. That's another example of confusing quadrants with personal pronouns—they are actually fairly different, and in detail, refer to very different items. So these distinctions need to be kept in mind, even as we occasionally use 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person pronouns to summarize the quadrants. And that is why saying that “we include all 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person methodologies” is not the same as covering all 4 quadrants.

Also, keep in mind another fundamental yet extremely common confusion in referring to “1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person,” namely, there are two—*radically different*—meanings to those terms (“1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person”). Technically, they refer to the person speaking (“1st person”), the person being spoken to (“2nd person”), and the person or thing being spoken about (“3rd person”). But they also refer to levels of interior development (based on perspective-taking capacity)—levels up to and including red, egocentric, safety levels can only take a 1st-person perspective, they cannot “take the role of other” or see the world from an other's shoes. This capacity to take a 2nd-person perspective emerges with amber, conformist, mythic-membership levels. And the capacity to take a 3rd-person, universalizing, objective view, emerges with orange formal operational or rational levels. At postformal levels (such as green, pluralistic, postmodern levels), the individual can take a 4th-person perspective (and thus reflect on 3rd-person perspectives, “deconstructing” them if desired). And at integral, 2nd-tier, systemic levels, a person can take a 5th-person perspective.

Now, the first meaning is entirely different from the second meaning. When, using the first meaning, you say, “We are using 2nd-person methodologies,” there is nothing in that statement that tells us just what level of development that 2nd person is at. In reality, they could, in fact, be at merely egocentric, 1st-person perspective stages. Or they could be at amber, 2nd-person perspective stages. Or orange 3rd-person, or green 4th-person, or 2nd-tier 5th person. And likewise with saying “We're using 1st-person methodologies” or “We're using 3rd-person methodologies”—which level of development do you mean with each of those???

That is never specified. And yet, widely accepted versions of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person methodologies exist at amber, at orange, at green, at teal, at turquoise, at indigo, and so on. This confusion never occurs when we use quadrants, and say, for example, “This is an Upper-

The point is that each of those quadrants—those dimension-perspectives—embodies a particular dimension of *being-in-the-world*. Further, it appears that each of those dimensions of being-in-the-world (or each of those quadrants) can be approached by a different mode of inquiry. These different inquiries—from *phenomenology* to *behaviorism* to *hermeneutics* to *collaborative inquiry* to *systems theory*—all disclose different aspects of the Kosmos, but each approach tends to take its corner of the Kosmos to be the Kosmos itself, thus ignoring or denying the important realities in the other quadrants (not to mention the fact that the belief in the existence of the other quadrants is usually ascribed to some sort of horrible pathology in the believer).

In other words, as important as all of these methodologies are, each of them tends to be blind to the realities in the other quadrants. It is this historical blindness, still operating as a widespread Kosmic habit, that we particularly want to address, because this blindness requires a sustained creative novelty of transcendence in order to escape its inherited prejudices. We call this prejudice *quadrant absolutism*, whether it appears in positivism, phenomenology, postmodernism, or elsewhere. (And

Left quadrant methodology,” or “This is a Lower-Left methodology,” because it is always understood that any quadrant can have phenomena at any level of development, and so you have to specify specifically which level you mean in each case. It is generally understood, in Integral Approaches, that at a minimum we mean 2nd-tier levels, or 5th-person perspective (or higher) in each and every 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person methodology being used or recommended (thus, an Integral “1st-person methodology” uses at least a 5th-person perspective, as does an Integral 2nd-person and Integral 3rd-person approach)—and these *levels* of perspective are the second meaning that their titles, based on the first meaning, completely and totally overlook. This is especially why something like Torbert’s “1st, 2nd, and 3rd-person methodologies” alone is totally inadequate to cover anything like a truly Integral Approach. What levels are those???

And this, finally, and again, is why the quadrants can in no way be referred by, or substituted by, merely using “1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person” terms. And those aren’t the *realities* that are involved in these cases anyway—the quadrants and their levels are (as in, AQAL).

this is often accompanied by a level, line, state, or type absolutism—the ways in which a whole Kosmos can be denied are legion.)

If we are ever to truly enter an integral age at the leading edge, it would help enormously if this widespread quadrant absolutism could be addressed and overcome. A significant move in that direction can be taken by simply acknowledging the important truths that each of the major forms of inquiry offer (instead of condemning all but one's own).

Briefly, here is what we will be suggesting (and refining as we proceed): in a very general fashion, *empiricism* and *behaviorism* (among others) primarily engage the exteriors of the individual (the Upper Right; “it”); *introspection* and *phenomenology* (among others) primarily engage the interiors of the individual (the Upper Left; “I”); *hermeneutics* and *collaborative inquiry* (among others) primarily engage the interiors of the collective (the Lower Left, “we”); and the *ecological sciences*, *structural-functionalism*, and *complexity and systems theory* (among others) primarily engage the exteriors of the collective (the Lower Right, “its”). Of course, there are many more types of inquiries available, but these highlight some of the more historically significant that we will be briefly discussing.

Putting all of these modes of inquiry together, as an enactment and disclosure of turquoise/indigo cognition, results in what we are calling *Integral Methodological Pluralism*, which embodies the more practical side of an Integral Post-Metaphysics, and is responsible for generating the overall features of the AQAL Matrix.

If we are ever to enter an integral age at the leading edge, it will likely be under the banner of an Integral Methodological Pluralism. Clare Graves called the transformation from 1st tier to

2nd tier a “*momentous leap of meaning*,” because where all 1st-tier stages are convinced that their particular worldview is the only valid worldview, 2nd-tier consciousness is capable of fully recognizing and honoring the partial truths in all of them. In other words, the leap from 1st tier to 2nd tier is a leap from partialism and pluralism to integralism and holism.

Pragmatically, this means that all partial modes of human inquiry suddenly assume a new and profound significance as important pieces in the larger Kosmic puzzle, each of which has something incredibly important to tell us. Integral Methodological Pluralism thus becomes the banner of that momentous leap of meaning.

Of course, there are many other ways that 2nd-tier consciousness will begin to reach a larger number of members of any given society, but here we are discussing the growing tip, or an integral age at the leading edge. As Goldstone pointed out, it has empirically been the case that *elite leadership is a prerequisite for revolutions*. If those revolutions (or even reforms) are to be of an authentic, vertical, transformative nature, then a fifth factor is necessary—namely, an increase in Eros or depth in any of the quadrants—and because the elite leading edge today is green (and has been for 30-40 years), then it follows that the fifth factor in this instance inexorably means a teal paradigm, or an integral injunction and social practice, and the *actual practice* of Integral Methodological Pluralism—as a meta-theory—fits that bill organically. (Applying Integral Meta-Theory to one’s life, work, relationships, and growth in a practical, useful, transformative fashion is the goal of Integral Life Practice, where all of these theoretical issues are set aside and very pragmatic exercises and practices are put into play. For this, please see Wilber et al., *Integral Life Practice*.)

In short, the more human beings who engage in an Integral Methodological Pluralism—whose very nature is to acknowledge, honor, and include all authentic modes of human inquiry—then the greater the probability that the leading edge of the AQAL configuration in that culture will undergo a legitimation crisis followed by “a momentous leap of meaning” from 1st- to 2nd-tier consciousness, with the possibility that the consciousness and culture of this growing tip will then spread out to larger segments of the society at large.

To Enact a Dimension of Being-in-the-World

Each of the important methodologies (from empiricism to collaborative inquiry to systems theory) are actually types of *practices* or *injunctions*—in all cases, they are not just what humans think, but what humans do—and those *practices* therefore *bring forth*, *enact*, and *illumine* a particular dimension of one’s own being—behavioral, intentional, cultural, or social. For example, the very form of participatory or collaborative inquiry—in which two or more subjects of awareness enter a circle of shared horizons and therefore bring forth a worldspace of overlapping intentionalities, meaning, and mutual understanding—the very form of this injunctive practice enables, enacts, and brings forth the intersubjective dimension of the individuals themselves. (This is why different forms of *praxis* yield different *theoria*.)

Under the enactive potential of various forms of practice—from phenomenology to empiricism to hermeneutics to ecological investigations to contemplative endeavors—various dimensions of a holon are energized: they “light up” in vibratory resonance, enacting a worldspace mutually co-created by the inquiring subject (but not merely created by the subject), and stand forth in

the clearing created in part by the form of the inquiry.

Thus, when I take a 1st-person stance to this moment, I light up the subjective dimensions of my being-in-the-world, many aspects of which are disclosed by introspective phenomenology. When I take a 2nd-person (“you/we”) stance to this moment, I light up the intersubjective dimensions of being-in-the-world, many aspects of which are disclosed by hermeneutics and collaborative inquiry. When I take up a 3rd-person perspective to this moment, I light up the objective (and interobjective) dimensions of being-in-the-world. (We will discuss several examples of these in a moment.)

That is why none of these domains (or none of the occasions in any quadrant) are merely given or predetermined, just lying around out there waiting for all and sundry to see—but neither are these domains totally created by the inquiring subject or intersubjectivity (which is merely the pathology of postmodernism, that *all* knowledge is a “social construction”). As we have seen, some features of these domains (or reality in general) are *given*—that is, they pre-exist the present awareness of the inquiring subject (we say that they “subsist” in reality). These givens or Kosmic *a priori* include the various Kosmic habits and the quadratic inheritances we discussed. As we put it, the *a priori* or given ground of this moment is the previous moment’s AQAL matrix, which arrives on the scene as a given (or an inheritance from the previous moment) but never exists merely as a given, for not only was it creatively and emergently and transcendently fashioned at some previous point, it is always already taken up, transcended and included, transformed and reworked, by this moment’s AQAL Matrix, as self-organization through self-transcendence creatively unfolds moment to moment. This is a careful balance between the epistemic fallacy (the mistaken notion

that the ontology of an entity is entirely determined by how it is known) and the ontic fallacy (the mistaken notion that the knowing of an entity is entirely determined by the pre-given ontology of the entity—a fallacy also known as “the myth of the given”). The Integral approach maintains that both of those are two correlative dimensions of the same underlying Wholeness, and they mutually co-enact and co-create each other. Anything less than that runs into profound contradictions and paradoxes.

Reconstructive Inquiry

That is an essentially Whiteheadian stance (but *only* if expanded from an incomplete to a complete or quadratic formulation—see below); that is, the entire previous moment of AQAL space is handed to this moment’s AQAL space as an *a priori*, even though that space itself, when it first emerged in the previous moment, emerged in part as creative freedom (not determined, not given), but a freedom that, when passed on to the succeeding moment, is passed on as determinism (which the new moment must *include*, on pain of pathology, and then *go beyond* by adding its own creative freedom that is not totally determined by the previous moment).

These Kosmic givens thus include (among other items we will discuss) the entire world of *past actuals*—that is, all of the actual occasions that have already emerged (an emergence molded by the entire AQAL space in which they arose), a creative emergence that is then handed to succeeding moments as causal influence, morphic resonance, formative causation, prehensive unification, cultural context and social memory, morphogenetic grooves, deep patterns and waves of development, and so forth. These types of inheritances are givens: they are given by the past to the present, and they pre-exist any subject’s present awareness

of them (although when they were first laid down, they were themselves *co-created by the subjectivity* that is part of the AQAL matrix at every moment, so that the holons at a given level of evolution co-enacted each other, with each holon providing a space or clearing in which its cohorts could emerge and be engaged). That is, these givens do *not* in all ways pre-exist subjectivity and its interpretations, since subjectivity is one of the four dimensions of all actual occasions; rather, these givens pre-exist the subjectivity of this moment, not the subjectivity of the previous moment, which helped co-create them. But the point is that, once laid down, the previous moment's entire AQAL space is handed to this moment's AQAL space as a *given* which pre-exists any registration by this moment: it pre-exists the subjectivity, and the objectivity, and the intersubjectivity, and the interobjectivity of this moment—but not of the moment before, although the moment before received its own *a priori* givens, and so on.)

Hence, the only way that the subjects of this moment can *reflectively* illumine their history of past actuals is through a reconstructive inquiry (in any quadrant). A *reconstructive inquiry* means that a subject or subjects attempt to examine the actuals of their own existence by investigating these realities *after* they have already emerged. A reconstructive inquiry (in any quadrant) is therefore essentially an *a posteriori* investigation into previously laid-down realities. It is not an *a priori* investigation into predetermined structures (which is where we part ways with Plato, Hegel, Plotinus, Husserl, and Aurobindo—again, this is part of the move to a post-metaphysical stance), even though the past actuals being investigated now appear as *a prioris* because they are indeed Kosmic habits that are now pre-given (which is why metaphysics mistook them for ontologically pre-existing structures instead of organic Kosmic habits, which are handed not from the timeless to time, as metaphysics thought, but from the

temporal past to the temporal present).

Reconstructive inquiry is not by any means the only type of inquiry. It is simply one version of the investigation of *what was* as it impacts *what is*. It does not specifically cover inquiries that involve what should be (morals, ethics, normative inquiries); or aesthetic inquiry (art, artistic expression, self expression); or more openly interpretive endeavors (literary, expressive); or even exploratory inquiry into realities not yet emerged on a large scale but just now forming at the frothy creative edge (future potentials), among many others. So when we emphasize that reconstructive inquiry is important, let's not imagine it is the only approach to reality, but is merely one of the many tools of Integral Methodological Pluralism. It is important, however, because it can help us determine which waves of consciousness (e.g., red, amber, orange) have been laid down as Kosmic habits, and which are as yet still in the formative stages—and thus allow us to move forward with a post-metaphysical approach to levels of consciousness, which can point to the existence of these waves of consciousness without resorting to metaphysical and ontological postulates but simply morphogenetic patterns and habits of evolution (without denying the existence of *higher* potentials available through self-transcendence, although these higher potentials have not yet taken on fixed form on a widespread scale, and thus their exploration remains idiosyncratic, though nonetheless very real).

In short, reconstructive inquiry is one type of inquiry that examines the nature of the present moment by looking into the past moments that led to its present form and content. These types of reconstructive inquiries, organized by quadrant, include, for example: reconstructive science or *evolutionary science* (in the LR), *anthropology* (LR), *genealogical hermeneutics* (LL), *developmental structuralism* (UL), *psychoanalytic inquiry* (UL),

Foucauldian archaeology and genealogy (LL), *interpretive cultural history* (LL), the *evolution of ecological systems* (LR), *stellar evolution* (LR), *biological speciation* (LR), *evolutionary psychology* (UR), *bifurcation points* in complex and chaotic *dynamic systems* (LR), and so on. Those reconstructive inquiries basically “unearth” or “discover” various aspects of the past actuals of the holons under investigation, and they can do so because those past actuals are givens which pre-exist this moment. They are not Platonic givens but Kosmic habits: nonetheless, they pre-exist this moment. They are Whiteheadian givens—fossilized actual occasions now prehended by their descendents, to which they are internal (actual ingredients of the new subject) as prehensive unification and interpretive reflection (which is why they jump the Kantian divide of the thing-in-itself and present no fundamental epistemological dilemma; see below. This topic is further unpacked in [[TBA]] **Excerpt C** n. 55, “Solidarity and Post-Kantian internality”).³⁰

But the central point is that, although these past actuals are givens that pre-exist this moment, their illumination is not. That is—just as with every other moment in spacetime (past, present, and future)—this moment’s coming-to-be is an AQAL affair: it is molded by factors in all four quadrants (and their already-existing waves, streams, and states). This means that the unearthing of

³⁰ As noted, as long as we are careful, we can label this “four-quadrant prehension” or “quadratic prehension” or “tetra-prehension” (without implying Whitehead did so—his account is strictly monological or subject-object, not quadratic). But the idea is indeed that all four quadrants “touch” their predecessors, and this touching is part of the quadratic inheritance. Whitehead’s “prehension” really only covers the Upper Left (e.g., much of formative causation is not prehended in the typical fashion, but exerts its “touching” influence nonetheless). So please keep these cautions in mind. Many inheritances are not consciousnessly felt or realized (or technically prehended), but enter the new moment’s subject nonetheless—certain deep structures in all quadrants being the most common. “Tetra-prehension” thus means all of those 4-quadrant factors that are “tetra-included,” whether consciousnessly realized or not.

past actuals, which *subsist* as fossil givens, inescapably occurs in conjunction with this moment's creative freedom and interpretation. Moreover, when the past actual is taken up in this moment by the present subject, it is in part co-created by the very AQAL structure of the present moment, particularly its level—there is a magenta world, a red world, an amber world, an orange world, a green world, and so on, and any past actual will be seen and experienced (and co-created) differently by the world doing the prehending (e.g., red will experience a past actual quite differently than green).³¹ Thus, even though it is a given past

³¹ If there is a “red world, an amber world, an orange world, etc.,” then exactly what is it that can be said to subsist in all those worlds? The way this is pragmatically played out is that the “ex-istence” view of the highest expectable level of development at any time (in today's case, turquoise) is taken to be the “real” subsistence view of reality. That is, what is present at red, amber, orange, etc., when it comes to, say, atoms, is taken to be the view that turquoise has of atoms—which is today, basically, that atoms are a manifestation of an 11-dimensional reality of strings and superstrings that manifest the entire universe—thus, what “ex-ists” for turquoise is taken to be what “subsists” in reality for everybody, including the earlier stages. Thus, although tribal red did not contain any atoms in its “ex-istence” (there was nothing anywhere in tribal awareness that represented atoms in any form), we nonetheless believe that atoms were indeed real at the time of tribes—that is, that they “subsisted,” even if they didn't “ex-ist,” and we take those atoms to “really” be according to the way that turquoise now describes and models them—that is what we take as “really real” (as “subsisting,” even though it is just turquoise's interpretive “ex-istence” view). And any form of realism—from naïve realism to critical realism—when it defines what it takes to be the bottom, real, true ontological reality, is basically giving a *turquoise-level interpretation* of the AQAL Matrix as they understand it. That “unchanging” reality will, in fact, change significantly as soon as new scientific discoveries, paradigms, and theories are introduced—so much for “unchanging” reality. But this is why developmental studies are so important for philosophy—because the first thing you learn from developmental studies is that each level of development literally sees a *different world* (with a *different ontology*)—and you can't account for that by postulating a single, unchanging, pregiven ontology that our models and epistemologies have to reflect accurately, because what science itself believes “actually exists” changes in many ways every few decades—there is no totally “unchanging” reality anywhere. Only a sliding notion of truth—similar to Hegel's “Each level is adequate; each higher level is more adequate” can handle the ontology issue. Today, turquoise is adequate; tomorrow, indigo will be more adequate—and more true, and more inclusive, and more whole, and more unified, and more adequate all around. This doesn't stop today's turquoise view from being true. It is simply true-for-today. That's real truth, but also truth contextualize in a relational, ever-unfolding, ever-changing evolutionary reality.

actual, it becomes a co-created prehended present actual through the tetra-prehension of this moment's subject and its entire AQAL Matrix. To say that a past actual could be experienced in the present moment precisely as it was experienced in the previous or past moment, is to deny the entire movement of “transcend-and-include”—and the “creative advance into novelty”—that actively molds whatever it prehends.

Thus, there is no way to get at past actuals except through a “tetra-prehension” that enacts and co-creates the newly present form of the past actual. The past actuals, as givens, are not tucked seamlessly into the pre-reflective prehensive unifications of this moment—rather, they are tucked into the structure-world of this moment's prehension (red, amber, orange, green, turquoise, etc.—or any element of the AQAL Matrix); and they can only be unearthed with a reflective reconstructive inquiry that inescapably adds its own interpretative (subjective and intersubjective) dimensions. Thus, past actuals, as givens, are never disclosed in their pristine form; they are previous AQAL spaces that, when prehended now, are done so by the structure-world of the present moment (i.e., its AQAL Matrix), and if reflectively “unearthed,” are done so only by this moment's AQAL space, a disclosure that colors the previous space with this moment's additions and interpretations (which is exactly what the previous AQAL space had done itself before passed to this moment as a given). Thus, even though the entire Kosmos of the previous moment is handed to us as a given and is felt from within in its totality in my present prehension (i.e., in my present prehensive unification), at no point do we disclose a merely pregiven world. Rather, those “givens” arise (and are prehended) in a red world, or an amber world, or an orange world, or a green world, and so on, each one of which will interpret—and experience—the past in a different, unique way. There is no one, single, pregiven world, just waiting to be

uncovered; there are different worlds entirely, determined by their basic structure parameters (e.g., red, amber, orange, green, etc.) Again, at no place do we ever find a merely given world. Epistemology and ontology are inextricably bound and united into an integral prehension of this and every moment—consciousness and being cannot be fractured, torn, and ripped asunder, but are two complementary aspects of the same occasion.

This does *not* mean that therefore our reconstructive hermeneutics, reconstructive phenomenology, and reconstructive sciences are of no benefit at all—they are extraordinarily important as one aspect of a more transparent self-understanding. It is to say, however, that at no point do reconstructive inquiries disclose the thing-in-itself³² (although, if done correctly, they are

³² The “thing-in-itself” is a fundamentally confused notion, because it abstracts real holons from their multidimensional matrix and presents them as if they could be thus isolated in reality. There is no thing-in-itself per se; each holon has a Kosmic Address (the sum total of its AQAL elements as they locate a given holon in its various quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types—the sum total of those for any holon is that holon’s “Kosmic Address”). No holon is a “thing-in-itself,” which means a “thing seen from the view from nowhere”; each holon is rather a Kosmic-Address holon, and thus exists as it does by virtue of its complex makeup in all elements of the AQAL Matrix. And the sentient beings apprehending any holon likewise have their own Kosmic Address. Thus, a human being prehending an atom—some dozens or even hundreds of levels of reality “below” the human—is totally different than another atom prehending an atom, at the same level of the Kosmic Address, and thus reducing “cross-interpretation” to a minimum, leaving only “primary interpretation” to separate them. But humans have not only primary interpretation, but dozens/hundreds of levels of cross-interpretation, which dramatically complicates matters. Human can, nonetheless, prehend atoms to some degree, simply because atoms are parts of, elements of, the human compound individual, and thus humans are constantly including atomic consciousness in their own prehensions. The question is, when a human being is aware of something—anything—what is that “something”? A thing-in-itself? No, the previous moment’s AQAL Matrix is what a human is aware of—and humans with different Kosmic Addresses will experience and be aware of different things, depending in part on their own Kosmic Address and how it inherently unfolds and interprets the previous moment. But “what is being experienced?” is not a major philosophical problem. What is experienced is the previous moment’s AQAL Matrix (with its overall Kosmic Address) and what is experiencing it is the individual’s AQAL Matrix (with its Kosmic Address). “Is it qualia or quanta?” The answer to that is clearly, “Both”—and for the simple reason that both of those notions enter my consciousness,

guided by the factual inheritances or Kosmic habits of the past as they impinge causally on the present via morphic resonance, formative causation, prehensive unification, cultural memory, and so on). When we enact a world, we are immersed in a meshwork of pre-existing givens with present enactments and co-creations.

Facts-and-Interpretations Are Intrinsic to the Kosmos

Thus, to say that the present moment is a seamless mesh of past givens and present co-creations is not to deny the existence of either one of them. Whitehead's great genius was to see that "facts-and-interpretations" are the same thing as "include-and-transcend." The previous moment is handed as fact, as given, as *a priori*, to the present moment, which adds its own creativity, interpretations, and transcendence—an AQAL Matrix which is then handed, *as fact*, to the next moment's matrix. The interpretations of today become the facts of tomorrow as Kosmic inheritance.³³

I am aware of what both of those mean, so clearly I'm experiencing them both. But the *ding an sich* is a red herring.

³³ The interpretations of today become the facts of tomorrow as Kosmic inheritance—but if and only if they survive selection pressures in all four quadrants. Of course, more technically, it is the totality of this moment's AQAL space that is handed to the next moment's AQAL space, so that the facts (RH) and interpretations (LH) of this moment are handed to the facts and interpretations of the next moment. The point is simply that facts and interpretations, or objectivity and subjectivity, or matter and consciousness, are inseparable dimensions of all holons.

Incidentally, the surface features (in any quadrant) have their own individual history, which is subjectively inherited as prehensive unification and objectively inherited as individual morphogenetic fields. But in order to manifest, both of these must mesh with the given intersubjective and interobjective fields—again, the quadrants tetra-evolve.

This is true all the way up, all the way down. As I have often pointed out, even electrons have to interpret their environment (e.g., to know whether to jump into an orbital or not—and this is *not* a causal or deterministic choice, as quantum mechanics makes quite clear), and even quarks possess intersubjectivity. It is not just that atoms prehend their predecessors (a la Whitehead); it is that one AQAL moment comprehends its predecessors: the four quadrants go all the way down (we will return to this important point in a moment and discuss the ways that it goes considerably beyond, while happily including, Whitehead’s notion of prehension).

Thus, when it comes to humans as well, there are indeed *a priori* givens, and there are our present interpretations of those givens. The great (and in some ways single) argument between modernity and postmodernity has always been: how much weight do we give to each of those moments? Modernity (and the Enlightenment) argued strenuously that there is only a pregiven world of facts. The basic Enlightenment paradigm was thus referred to as the *reflection paradigm* (or “the Mirror of Nature”)—namely, reality is in all important ways objectively given (i.e., the world of nature we see out there is a pregiven reality reflected or represented in the universal and unchanging laws of nature)—and therefore correct epistemology consists in making an accurate map or representation of the pregiven territory. The givens alone are real: facts alone exist.

Postmodernity, as if in violent reaction to that rigid stance, swung to the other extreme and came up with its own howler: there are no facts, only interpretations. Postmodernity did not merely say, “There are givens but our disclosure of them is in many ways interpretive.” It said simply, “There are no givens anywhere, there are only interpretations and social constructions.” In other words, in place of the Whiteheadian process of rupture-

with-continuity (or transcend-and-include), postmodernism put a *nothing-but-ruptures* view: nothing but breaks, incommensurate disjunctions, fragments, shards, as the broken Kosmos proceeds in jerks moment by moment to alienate and dis-own its past.

So modernity claimed, “There are no interpretations, only facts”; and postmodernity claimed that there are “no facts, only interpretations.” I don’t have to tell you that in my opinion they both had an important if partial piece of the puzzle. What is required, of course, is an integral-aperspectival stance that honors and incorporates the important moments of both approaches to past actuals, while avoiding their respective quadrant absolutisms (Enlightenment modernism privileged the UR; postmodernism privileged the LL).³⁴ Both of them took their own preferred mode of being-in-the-world and claimed it was the only valid mode of being-in-the-world.

Interpretation *in Both Senses*

Up to this point, we have been focusing on inquiry into *past actuals* (or items that can reasonably be said to already exist in the four quadrants); we are not yet talking about inquiry into *future potentials*, which includes inquiry into the frothy edge of today’s evolutionary unfolding; inquiry into events that are just emerging; inquiry into the limitless number of different forms of translation that arise moment to moment; inquiry into the transcendental components of any prehension; inquiry into higher states that are already present as general realms—such as waking, dreaming, sleeping; and inquiry into any items that might be what we call *involutionary givens*, or realities that seem to be present from the

³⁴ They were also involved in wave absolutism: modernity absolutized orange, postmodernism absolutized green.

very start of evolution (such as mathematics, certain physical laws, any truly archetypal forms, the morphogenetic gradient of Eros, the 20 tenets given in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*, and so on. Whether any or none of those exist will be discussed later).

Rather, at this point, we are talking about inquiry into those occasions that in some sense pre-exist our inquiry as actual occasions: that is, the previous moment's AQAL universe and any of its enduring Kosmic habits that repeat themselves in this moment. That is why we refer to all of these inquiries as *reconstructive inquiries*, whether reconstructive science (e.g., physics, evolutionary biology), reconstructive phenomenology and introspection (e.g., depth-psychology inquiry into past repressed feelings); reconstructive hermeneutics (an investigation of the history of meaning in a culture); reconstructive anthropology (inquiry into the historical and prehistorical material traces of human becoming), and so on.

And the question is, what part of our knowledge is based on those pre-existing facts or givens (handed to this moment via Kosmic inheritance), and what part on present interpretations of those facts (which transcend any past givens and cannot be found in the world of facts)?

In other words, the difficulty is how to determine just what part of our reconstructive inquiries are closer to the facts as best as we can construe them, and what parts are mostly our interpretations or misinterpretations added to those facts. This is a difficult subject, and one that I believe can be best illuminated by an AQAL approach.³⁵

But let me make a few observations on this delicate issue

³⁵ See **Sidebar A:** "Who Ate Captain Cook? Integral Historiography in a Postmodern Age," posted on www.kenwilber.com.

based on our discussion of Kosmic karma. The general idea is actually simple, at least in theory: the more that past actuals are repeated, the more they become fixed and ingrained Kosmic habits—and therefore the more these past actuals continue to exist as givens, as facts, handed to the future; and the longer they exist, the more stubborn they become, resisting bad interpretations strenuously.

For example, when atoms first emerged, their emergence was in part determined by their own past givens (the already-existing quarks, electrons, protons, etc.—that is, the previously existing AQAL matrix at that time), but their emergence was also in part a stunning leap of creative novelty (i.e., that creative emergence was *a new interpretive moment* that could not be reduced to any of the pre-existing givens). As more and more electrons, protons, and neutrons followed those morphogenetic grooves and gathered together into atoms, the more the very forms of atoms themselves became ingrained as Kosmic habits. At some point, the creatively interpretive aspects of atomic formation began to wane, and the formal dimensions of atoms settled into habits handed to all succeeding moments.

Today there are over 100 of these atomic elements, stable subcomponents of all subsequent gross-realm holons. In other words, in today's world, atoms have become such a deeply ingrained Kosmic habit that no creative emergent of today's manifest realm can realistically fail to include them. This means that atoms have become deep features of the Kosmos handed to all future occasions, which must transcend-and-include their forms (or fail to exist). And therefore, these *deep* or *formal* atomic features strenuously resist re-interpretation by today's AQAL space (*in both senses*: the atoms themselves have ceased adding new interpretive emergents to their basic forms—as Whitehead would say, in this regard their creative novelty now approaches

zero—and we humans ourselves therefore have very limited wiggle room in our interpretations of the formal aspects of atoms). Still, our present experience of atoms—as atoms cease merely to subsist and become ex-isting entities in our awareness—indeed co-creates exactly how we will see and experience these atomic forms. We have already changed our understanding of “subsisting” atoms from an orange-world interpretation—where atoms were viewed as tiny planetary systems with electrons orbiting the nucleus/sun like little planets; to green-world interpretation, where atoms were seen as an aggregation of multiple quarks; to a teal-world interpretation where all quarks were seen as inherently related in an integrative scheme called “the Eightfold Way”; to turquoise-world interpretation where atoms are seen as the “products” of a 10- or 11-fold multiple-dimension reality, a scheme that seems to be able to unify all 4 major physical forces—strong and weak nuclear, electromagnetic, and gravitational. This is now taken to be the “real” world of what atoms are truly like, what “subsisting” atoms “really” are. In short, what is thought to *subsist*—since it is a “pregiven” world that can only be disclosed—or “ex-ist”, at any level—by a subjective/intersubjective interpretation—what “subsists” is what “ex-ists” at the highest expectable level of development to date (in this case, turquoise. So turquoise’s interpretation of what ex-ists in its awareness is taken to be what really subsists in reality). This clearly points out that, although various items can be said to subsist, when we actually describe or identify what it is that “subsists,” we are in fact involved with a particular level’s interpretation of what actually ex-ists in its awareness (which is then taken to describe what is “really” subsisting in reality).

In both senses is an important point, because it highlights two fundamental types of interpretation present in the Kosmos. The first and most fundamental is that *interpretation is an*

intrinsic aspect of the Left-Hand quadrants of all holons, top to bottom. That is, any given moment's prehension contains an element of creative novelty and interpretive freedom, which cannot be reduced to, or explained by, the *a priori* givens and facts of the previous moment (and "interpretive freedom" means that how a holon feels its past is not fully contained in its past). As we said, even electrons have to interpret their environment—not to mention bacteria, worms, and wolves.

Thus, interpretation is *inherent* in the subjective and intersubjective dimensions of being-in-the-world (all the way up, all the way down). We often emphasize the importance of intersubjectivity in interpretation (and therefore, in shorthand, we often identify interpretation as quintessentially a LL occasion, and will continue to do so), but all interior dimensions have a moment of interpretive freedom (although never divorced from the other quadrants).

This moment's quadratic prehension is therefore an amalgam, an inseparable meshwork, of intrinsic facts and intrinsic interpretations. That is, this moment's quadratic prehension includes this moment's factual givens plus this moment's interpretive take on this moment's givens. And the sum total or amalgam of these facts-and-interpretations (i.e., this moment's AQAL Matrix) is then handed, as given FACT, to the next moment's quadratic prehension, which then adds its own facts and interpretations, which altogether as amalgam are then handed, as FACT, to the next moment, which will then INTERPRET that or any such FACTS in ways not contained in those FACTS (which is why this moment transcends and includes its predecessors, and co-creates, to some degree, however minor, the new face of those predecessors in their new prehensive unification).

In short, the FACT(S) of the previous moment plus the facts-

and-interpretations of this moment are then handed, as prehensive amalgam, to the next moment as the new FACT (i.e., as the new sum total of past actuals as givens), which is then open to new interpretations, which can become new facts.... As we said, the interpretations of today become part of the facts of tomorrow as Kosmic inheritance.

The second type of interpretation intrinsic to the Kosmos follows from the first, namely, holonsprehend each other, and therefore must interpret each other's interpretations. The first type of interpretation is simply part of the creative freedom inherent in every holon (i.e., every holon must interpret the present moment to some degree, and it inherently has a degree of novelty or creative freedom in how it does so); the second type is what happens when one holon specifically attempts to interpret another holon. This is where, shall we say, the interpretive game gets dicey.

Let me simply say that, precisely because interpretation of the first type is intrinsic to the Kosmos, so is interpretation of the second type. Any time one holon encounters another, it is a four-quadrant-to-four-quadrant affair: each holon encounters the other not just as a given fact or 3rd-person object, but as a 1st- and 2nd-person interpretative affair. The deer watching a hunter must interpret the hunter's actions, and not merely react to each of them like, say, a falling rock. Precisely because all holons (all the way up and down) contain a moment of sentience, they will always have to interpret their environments and therefore interpret each other's interpretations.

Needless to say, *adequate interpretation therefore demands same-depth translation*. If one holon attempts to interpret a holon of greater depth, something will definitely get lost in the translation.

By the time we come to human holons, their linguistic capacities greatly extend and complicate interpretation (in both senses). Postmodernism, of course, became (understandably) obsessed with the outrageous mystery of interpretation of the Other: how on earth can we even begin such a task? Postmodernism generally answered, “We can’t”—it is basically impossible to adequately interpret a cultural Other, so we are left with incommensurable cultures, incompatible linguistic practices, noncommunicating lifeworlds, and pluralistic shards in all directions. As it turns out, postmodernism simply overstated its case, and by the time that Derrida admitted (in *Positions*) that “the transcendental signifier does exist”—completely undercutting the impossibility of communication and adequate translation, which extreme postmodernism was built on—then the game of extreme postmodernism had already run its course, although it left academia in the midst of a colossal legitimization crisis it has yet to resolve.

We needn’t follow postmodernism to its extreme in order to agree with its incredibly important if very partial truths, first and foremost of which is: interpretation is intrinsic to the Kosmos (which is the real meaning of “there is nothing outside of the text”). Postmodernism, of course, meant only the second type of interpretation that we are discussing, and then specifically in its human forms—that is, human beings are linguistic creatures and therefore must interpret everything that enters their world, since the “limits of my language are the limits of my world.” But that view, taken in and by itself, ultimately has no meaning (and is, in fact, self-contradictory) unless it is plugged directly into the first type of interpretation, namely, all holons, top to bottom, have an interpretive component internal to their own makeup or actual constitution. Once interpretation is adequately situated in an AQAL configuration, the partial truths of postmodernism take

their rightful and important place in a more integral orientation.

So we have two types of interpretation intrinsic to the Kosmos, which we might call *primary interpretation* (inherent in the Left-Hand quadrants of all holons) and *cross-interpretation* (where, as a subset of primary interpretation, one holon attempts to interpret another).

Let us now return to the point we were making, which is that the older any interpretative object, the less wiggle room left in its makeup. As we were saying, when we humans today investigate atoms, for example, we can agree that atoms have some sort of essential form that subsists in reality (tribes had atoms impacting them; and even if atoms ex-isted nowhere in tribal awareness or experienced reality, they nevertheless did subsist). As soon as we start to describe what this subsistence is, however, we end up co-creating, to some degree, the ex-istence of that subsistence, and that ex-istence—and hence subsistence—can only be known by a given level of development and its worldspace interpreting (and hence co-creating) that subsistence as it comes to ex-ist. The subsistence of that holon is known as directly as it can be by the holons on the same level of evolution where the holon was first created; thus, it's "cross-interpretation" is dramatically reduced (since essentially identical holons are interpreting each other) , and all that separates the different holons is primary interpretation; hence, that phenomenology is as close as any holon can get to primary ontology (nonetheless co-created by the epistemology and methodology of the intersubjective holons co-existing with each other). But all subsequent-level holons will only know this subsistence by adding cross-interpretive ex-istence—and that is why we have an orange view of atoms, a green view of atoms, a teal view of atoms, and so on—each past actual as handed to the present is unfolded as a cross-intepretation, and thus the ex-istence

of the holon, which is all that can be directly known, is co-determined by the AQAL framework of the experiencing present holon; and in virtually every case, the “ex-istence” of an experienced holon is taken to be its real and true subsistence, or how it actually and truly is in an ontological fashion, thus subtracting the element added by the epistemology/methodology in co-creating and enacting the experienced holon (and note that each of those—the orange view of atoms, the green view of atoms, the teal view, etc.—when they were the predominately accepted view of atoms, was taken to be *the* one and only actual ontology of atoms—the orange atom was *the* real atom, the green atom was *the* real atom, etc.—evidence again of the importance of developmental studies in understanding just what epistemology and ontology really are, and especially of how they are mutually enactive and co-creative).

But the older and more oft-repeated the holon’s form is—and atoms are very old—the less wiggle room there is in the ex-istence interpretations. It still can be fairly significant (as the examples of the many worldviews of atoms—orange, green, teal, etc.—demonstrates), but the morphic field and deep features of the holon’s subsistence provide a relatively sturdy base for any interpretations, which is why bad cross-interpretations are generically rebuffed by the actions of the atoms themselves (which is why falsifiability is often—but not always—one of the many yardsticks used by reconstructive sciences: *falsifiability* is the rebuff of a bad cross-interpretation by the Other of the interpretation).

But what exactly is an atom? What is the actual “ontology,” the actual “subsistence,” of an atom? The point we were just making is that, as it arises in human awareness, the atom’s AQAL complex arises in the human’s AQAL complex, and thus its

present prehension is determined and co-created in part by the AQAL Matrix of the human. (This is after the atoms have already co-created each other by their epistemic-ontic wholeness—the unity of their being-consciousness—with each atom helping to create the clearing or opening in which other atoms can appear—“panpsychically.”) This human enaction or co-creation is why what we consider atoms continues to change: even though the past actual changes only modestly in its own being and to other atoms, how humansprehend those changes are sometimes rather significant. To recapitulate, with orange, atoms were little “planetary systems,” with a sun-nucleus surrounded by swirling planet-electrons. To green, that view was taken to be truly silly and simplistic, and atoms had subdivided into numerous sub-atomic particles and quarks, including mesons, bosons, leptons, among others. By teal, these were being brought together into an “Eightfold Way” integrative theoretical unification, which the recent discovery of the Bose particle has reinforced. By turquoise, sub-atomic particles were starting to be subsumed by “strings,” sub-sub-atomic dimensionalities—so far, 11 in number—that involved, among many other items, the existence of parallel universes or “multiverses”—and a black hole in one universe was viewed as likely being a white hole in another universe, such that mass-energy from the black-hole universe was pouring into the white-hole universe. Which view of the atom is right? All of them, in a sense, depending upon the level of the observer—although we generally take the highest level interpretation as being the most likely to be accurate; and thus we say that what is generally taken as really and truly (ontologically) “subsisting” *is actually what “ex-ists” in the consciousness of the highest expectable developmental level*, turquoise in this case (but the whole point is that, as long as evolution in consciousness continues, the being-consciousness of the Kosmos will continue to

be prehended in somewhat different ways, since epistemology and ontology are two aspects of the same occasion, co-creating each other via, in humans, both forms of creativity and creative interpretation intrinsic to the Kosmos—primary and cross).

This is why we say that only deep patterns or features are inherited by collectives: they are what all holons of that class had in common as they first emerged at a particular level, and therefore those patterns set up a strong collective morphic field; whereas all surface features—or what only a few holons did—were not strong enough to be collectively passed forward (although they are carried forward by the individuals themselves in their own prehensions and individual morphic fields).

Of course, there is a type of spectrum or holarchy of collectives—family, group, subculture, culture, nation, planetary, etc. The point is that there is individual karma, family karma, cultural karma, national karma, etc.; and those deep features, but not surface features, are inherited by all the members of those families, groups, nations, and so on. Notice that most of these collectively inherited patterns are not universal but are rather confined to one small group, subculture, or culture. Only a few deep features are universal or worldcentric, but the discovery of those universal patterns can only be unearthed by a reconstructive inquiry conducted by orange or higher (and often by teal or higher), since they involve universal patterns invisible to lower-level structures. We will return to these important points momentarily.

A Simple Analogy: The Grand Canyon

As we said, the older the past actual, the less room for today's interpretations, in both senses (the holon's and ours—that

is, the less the interpretive moments internally added by the holon itself, and the less wiggle room in our cross-interpretations of their features—barring leaps in consciousness evolution). Conversely, the more recent the past actuals, the more room for interpretation (in both senses).

In psychological development, for example, this means that the earlier waves of development—particularly infrared, magenta, red, amber, and to some extent orange—are now fairly set as deep givens handed to the present as morphogenetic fields and interpretive habits, whereas the more recent waves (green, teal, and especially turquoise—not to mention all of 3rd tier) are still in their formative periods.

Let me give a simple analogy here. A very old, deeply ingrained Kosmic habit—such as, say, the probability wave of the infrared structure—is like the Grand Canyon: it is a morphogenetic groove cut so deeply into the Kosmos that it is virtually impossible to escape. If you are traveling down the Grand Canyon, you can either float down the Colorado River at the bottom—a relatively swift ride that takes 50 hours or so—or you can walk all the way up to the top, then all the way back down to the bottom, then all the way up to the top and all the way down again, and so on for miles: a huge expenditure of energy that would take you months of walking to cover the same ground. And a purely material object floating down the river, although theoretically it could follow the same up-and-down path, the actual chances of it doing so are basically nil. Thus, if a human holon wants to get down the river in the most efficient fashion, there is close to a 100% certainty that it will follow the river at the bottom, and not walk up and down continuously. Thus, to say that a human holon is navigating the Colorado River in a developmentally efficient fashion, is to say that there is close to a 100% certainty that we will find that holon moving down the river

at the bottom of the Grand Canyon in any given moment (not to mention the course taken by any material object, where there is close to a 100% probability that it will follow that same efficient path).

The infrared structure or probability wave is just like that: there is a virtually 100% certainty that human holons attempting to traverse its spacetime warp will follow the grooves—and thus display the characteristics—associated with the infrared wave of the AQAL Matrix, which is why all humans *universally* have a need for food, shelter, water: the infrared structure (which is a result of the infrared's first form of interpretation with other infrared structures, a co-creation that occurred in humans a million or more years ago. How we humans today interpret this infrared structure—using the second form of interpretation—continues to change and evolve with the emergence of successive levels of consciousness, particularly from green to teal—recent studies in brain neuroplasticity, as an example, give a very different view of sensorimotor intelligence, how it is created, and what surface-structure changes it can undergo in response to environmental change, a teal view that in almost every way is significantly different than the green interpretation held several decades ago). Moreover, these infrared characteristics can only be determined (or reflectively discovered and outlined) by a reconstructive inquiry that investigates the Grand Canyon *after the fact* of its actual emergence and habit-cutting grooves—i.e., as an *a priori* of past inheritance, not a predetermined archetypal structure.

The older the holon, the more like the Grand Canyon it becomes. At the deepest point, the Canyon is almost a mile down (some 5000 feet)—in human holons, that would be like infrared.³⁶

³⁶ And, of course, pre-human holons are cut even deeper than that—they are cut not just one mile but hundreds and thousands and millions of miles into the Kosmos. The most fundamental holons—such as strings, quarks, and subatomic particles—go back virtually to

Magenta is less deeply cut (say, 4000 feet down); red less deeply cut than that (say 2000 feet); and amber less deeply still (1000 feet). Orange is a mere 300 years old—the equivalent of perhaps only 300 feet cut into the Kosmos. And green—on the scene for a mere four decades in any widespread fashion—is a morphogenetic groove that has been cut a paltry 30 feet into the surface of the Kosmos. And poor 2nd tier is rather like a few people dragging sticks along the surface of the ground, slowly beginning to carve a holistic and integral morphogenetic groove into the Kosmic landscape.

Thus, as we have been saying, the deep features that are inherited in any quadrant as Kosmic habits are simply probability waves for finding a type of occasion in a particular AQAL spacetime. The older the inherited feature, the more restricted the probability (so that very old morphic forms appear largely deterministic, even though originally laid down partly as creative

the Big Bang itself—some 14 billion years ago—and thus their morphogenetic grooves have been cut into the Kosmos almost from the start. Succeeding holons—from atoms to molecules to cells to organisms to triune brains—are cut less and less deeply, and thus are **less fundamental** (but are **more significant**, since they transcend and include their predecessors—see *A Brief History of Everything*). By the time we arrive at human holons, although they compound and include previous holons, their defining or capping holons are relatively thinly cut into the Kosmos, and thus although they are even less fundamental, they are much more significant, transcending and including as they do the entire historical cuts of the Kosmos, a prehensive unification whose sub-feelings go all the way back to feeling the Big Bang itself.

(A holon is more *fundamental* the more other holons include it in their own makeup and thus depend on it for their existence; a holon is more *significant* the more other holons it contains in its own makeup. Thus, an atom is very fundamental, since virtually all higher holons include atoms in their makeup—molecules, cells, organisms, etc.—but it is not very significant, since it includes only sub-atomic particles in its makeup and thus signifies very little other being. An ape, on the other hand, is very significant, since it includes pre-ape holons that go all the way back to the Big Bang—organ systems, organs, cells, molecules, atoms, sub-atomic particles, strings—and thus signifies all of that being in its own makeup; but the ape is not very fundamental, since few other holons include apes in their makeup—the human being the only holon that transcends and includes certain ape components.)

freedom). All the other features of holons—their permutations, combinations, surface features, and actions—emerge as a novel play in this moment’s AQAL space, transcending-and-including the past in a rush of creative fervor, with interpretations and facts sliding all over each other in a riot of indeterminacy. But the general features themselves slowly settle as Kosmic habits, and, as usual, the older the habit, the harder it is to break.

From Partial to Complete Dialogical Inheritance

We will be pursuing many of these crucial topics—such as the relation of facts and interpretations—in later sections, where we will give specific examples of what is meant in each case. The simple point for now is that each actual occasion—each existing holon—has at least four dimensions of being-in-the-world, so that each moment exists as an AQAL display with a four-dimensional inheritance.³⁷

Each four-dimensional moment therefore *intrinsically* has objective/factual aspects or dimensions (UR and LR) and interpretive/consciousness aspects or dimensions (UL and LL). We are not now talking about how humans interpret other holons (or cross-interpretation); we are talking about holons themselves, all the way up, all the way down (primary interpretation). As this moment comes into being (at any level), it possesses a spark of creative transcendence, interpretive freedom, and nondetermined play; but as it passes into the next moment it becomes “gone” or “past,” a past actual no longer changing: it ceases to interpret itself

³⁷ Of course, if you add the different dimensions of time—there appear to be at least five in each of those four “spatial” dimensions—then the total dimensions of holons reaches 20 dimensions or greater. See endnote 9 for chap. 1 of *A Theory of Everything*, where I outline these 20 dimensions of advanced holons. But the simple four dimensions/quadrants will more than suffice for this discussion.

and passes into the fossil record of the *a priori*. The entirety of this moment's facts-and-interpretations is thus handed to the next moment as *a priori* given dimensions, which will then meet those givens with its own facts-and-interpretations, or inclusion and transcendence.

To put this more accurately, by moving from Whitehead's partial dialogical to a quadratic formulation: the AQAL matrix of this moment is taken up and included in the AQAL matrix of the next. This is not merely a matter of prehension and prehensive unification, as Whitehead believed. Whitehead was actually giving an Upper-Left quadrant analysis of moment-to-moment existence, and thus he largely neglected the inheritances contributed by the other quadrants. For example, while the subjective dimension of this moment is prehending the subjective dimension of the previous moment (and thus being molded to some degree by the prehensive causality of past feelings), the *objective dimension* of this moment is exerting a *formative causation* on the objective dimension of the next, and thus exerting not just a *feeling* causality but a *morphic* causality. Strictly speaking, that type of objective or exterior inheritance *is not directly prehended by the holon*, unless it takes up a 3rd-person stance to its own existence, and thus it cannot be accounted for by Whiteheadian prehension or concretion (but can be accounted for by Sheldrastian morphic fields and other UR and LR inheritances, including *subtle energy resonances* [see Excerpt D]).

Thus, each moment is not just a subject that becomes object of the next subject; rather, each moment's objective forms also causally influence subsequent objective forms in a way that is not prehended or directly felt by the holon. That is, objective dimensions pass on their influence to subsequent objective dimensions, and subjective dimensions influence subsequent subjective dimensions—and likewise intersubjective and

interobjective—and altogether they help mold the face of the present moment (*only some of which* enter the prehension or felt-awareness of the holon. Nonetheless, as previously noted, we can, if we are careful, expand the definition of “prehension” to cover “touching” and “embracing” in all their 4-quadrant forms, and hence speak of overall inheritance, or overall transcendence-and-inclusion, as “quadratic prehension” or “tetra-prehension.” We just want to be careful to notice the different forms this prehension takes in each quadrant, so as to not get caught in a subtle form of quadrant absolutism).

Likewise, as the exchange with David Ray Griffin disclosed, various *intersubjective fields* influence the form of the subject in ways that are *never prehended as object by the subject* (i.e., fields and nexuses that enter and mold the subject *directly as the subject arises*, and not as a prehended object by the subject. For example, as an amber holon begins its transformation to orange, the amber subject simply enters a field or orange nexus that, although never directly felt by the holon, governs its form and architecture from the very start. The new orange subject doesn’t feel orprehend the orange field, because it is *embedded in*, and intensely *identified with*, the orange field itself, which is thus part of the seeing subject, and not something that can be seen. Only as orange transforms to green, does orange to some degree become an object of the subject of the new green level).³⁸

In short, various aspects of *all* the quadrants are inherited, not merely as a prehensive unification (a la Whitehead), and not merely as formative causation (a la Sheldrake), and not merely as cultural memory (a la Bourdieu), and not merely as social systems (a la von Bertalanffy), but via a total AQAL inheritance that

³⁸ See Appendix A of “Do Critics Misrepresent My Position?,” posted on www.kenwilber.com.

includes the four quadrants all the way down (in a complete and not partial dialogical fashion).³⁹

³⁹ When we say that the subject of this moment becomes object of the subject of the next, it means within the subjective stream itself. Thus, the “interior object” of the new subject is quite different from the “objective dimensions” (the exterior or RH dimensions) of the subject. In order to show what this means, let’s use the words “interior” and “exterior” to refer to the overall subjective and objective streams (or the LH and the RH dimensions), and use “subject” and “object” in the Whiteheadian sense of prehender and prehended. What we then have is: the present moment has interior and exterior dimensions (LH and RH; for this example, we will focus on the individual quadrants, so that UL is “interior” and UR is “exterior”). The overall AQAL matrix is handed to the next moment, such that the present interior/subject of this moment becomes an interior/object of the interior/subject of the next moment (i.e., the felt subject in the UL becomes a felt object in the UL of the new subject in the UL; put differently, the felt subject becomes a felt object, subcomponent, or subholon of the new felt subject). AND, simultaneously, the present exterior (or UR correlate) of this moment’s interior/subject (UL) becomes an enfolded subholon (or subcomponent) of the new exterior correlate of the interior/subject of the next moment (i.e., the exterior form of this moment becomes a subcomponent form of the new exterior of the next moment—in the UR—whose interior correlate is the new subject prehending the old subject in the UL. The old interior subject in the UL has become interior object of the new subject in the UL, and the old exterior in the UR—including its morphic and subtle energy fields—has become a subcomponent of the new exterior in the UR, the sum total of which, along with the lower quadrants, is the total AQAL inheritance). See **Excerpts C and D** for further reflections on this topic, where we will discuss why “inside” and “outside” are not the same as “interior” and “exterior,” and why that is important in a more Integral Methodological Pluralism.

The point is that, if on occasion we lapse into merely Whiteheadian lingo (since a more complete and quadratic view takes time to explicate), please put this in its correct AQAL interpretive framework. For example, when we say that the facts-and-interpretations of this moment are handed as fact to the next moment, or that this moment becomes an object of the subject of the next, the actual reality is: the interiors of this moment are handed to the interiors of the next, while the exteriors of this moment are handed to the exteriors of the next, not dualistically but in nondual tetra-interaction. The AQAL matrix of this moment does not become a prehended object of the next moment, for only the subjective dimension in its surface features are actually prehended; all other aspects are handed as inheritance through the AQAL matrix, not through the prehensive unification (e.g., the individual subject never prehends its own deep structure, nor its own stages of development, nor its own probability waves, nor its intersubjective background, and so on—unless it takes up specific 2nd- and 3rd-person inquiries).

When we want to refer to the total inheritance of all these feelings and forms—LH and RH—and not just the conscious or felt forms, we will often simply refer to “tetra-inclusion”; and “transcend and include” refers primarily to tetra-inclusion (deep structures, for example, are inherited or included, but not in conscious awareness. This is true not only of many Upper-

The point is that all of the existing theories of inheritance—from prehension to causality to autopoiesis to systems memory—seem to tap into one or two of these dimensions of being-in-the-world, but none seem to cover all of the known bases. So from now on, when we speak of Kosmic karma, we mean an AQAL affair of tetra-inclusion, all the way up, all the way down.

In short, moment-to-moment inheritance is an AQAL affair: subjective dimensions resonate with, and influence, subjective dimensions via prehension; objective (i.e., exterior) dimensions resonate with, and influence, objective dimensions via formative causation; and so on with intersubjective and interobjective habits. Quadrant-to-similar-quadrant resonance is the form of Kosmic memory (actually, all of the elements of the AQAL Matrix are element-to-element inherited). And many of the Right-Hand forms of this inheritance never enter the direct prehension or consciousness of the holon inheriting them, nor do most of the deep structures in the Left-Hand quadrants themselves, all of which, as we will see, are discovered only by 2nd- and 3rd-person inquiries (and not 1st-person prehensions or introspections). There are likewise Right-Hand subtle energy fields, in addition to morphic fields (see below), all of which elude conscious prehension per se.

The essential point for the present discussion is that the AQAL Matrix of one moment is handed as a given, an *a priori*, to the AQAL Matrix of the next. These givens are factual, in the sense that the AQAL Matrix of the previous moment has ceased its own creative novelty and has settled into the unchanging past,

Left components, but of many Lower-Left and Right-Hand components as well, so again, care should be taken with the use of the term “prehension” and “tetra-prehension”—noting that, as indicated, we sometimes use “tetra-prehension” very loosely to mean “tetra-inclusion.” Many of the dynamics are the same or similar—such as an actual transcending and including—but one is done in consciousness, one in pre- or sub-consciousness.

part of the fossil record of Kosmic evolution. Its creative freedom has ceased as the moment of transcendental creativity is taken over by the next moment, rendering this moment “dead,” if you will, or passed into Kosmic memory. It is now a *past actual*, which is fixed or *a priori* in the sense that it no longer can interpret itself and thus change the form of its own existence, as it did in its own moment of present creativity, but it can be interpreted by its successors (which carries onward the co-creative aspects of evolution). As a past actual, its overall probability waves have collapsed into a specific and largely unalterable form (although with increasing time and repetition, those probabilities settle into more and more fixed forms), a creative reality now passed into a largely nonchanging fossil (becoming more “nonchanging” the more it exists), and a past actual that can only be reflectively known, by higher-level holons, via present cross-interpretations—and molded in the sense that it can now co-arise in a red world, an amber world, an orange world, a green world, a teal world, a turquoise world, and so on, each time re-created and co-created by the unity of epistemology and ontology in the ongoing AQAL Matrix at any and all given levels.

In short, the form of Kosmic memory is the AQAL Matrix tetra-prehended and tetra-included moment-to-moment, and not merely prehensions, nor mindless formative causation, nor merely systems memory, nor solely cultural habitus, etc. Kosmic inheritance is moment-to-moment tetra-inclusion—transcending and including—all the way up, all the way down.

Conclusion

The forgoing sections suggest a theoretical framework—an AQAL Matrix, with its Integral Methodological Pluralism—that allows us to do several things at once in this integral age at the

leading edge.

First, we can account for *existing* stable structures (from bacteria to ecosystems to levels of consciousness) without resorting to pre-given archetypes, structures, or independently existing ontological levels—that is, we can begin to replace metaphysical speculation with reconstructive inquiry.

Second, even existing structures are not viewed as independently existing concrete entities but as *probability waves* for finding particular occasions in a certain vicinity of the AQAL Matrix at any given time.

Third, the very nature of any actual occasion *intrinsically* contains at least three or four major dimensions (the four quadrants), each of which embodies an intrinsic mode of *being-in-the-world* (which loosely translate into 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person modes).

Fourth, this AQAL Framework and its Integral Methodological Pluralism (or a theoretical framework that explicitly honors and includes all quadrants, all levels, all lines, all states, all types) is very likely one of the few frameworks that can help to inaugurate *an integral age at the leading edge*. Although any AQAL configuration is merely a 3rd-person, abstract, theoretical, it-language construction, any authentic AQAL map nonetheless *explicitly* draws attention, not just to 3rd-person “its,” but to the other important realities of 1st- and 2nd-person modes, including personal feelings, experiences, phenomenology, meditation, hermeneutics, and collaborative inquiry—and insists that the realities and phenomena disclosed by those inquiries can only be known by directly using those inquiries themselves. Therefore, any genuine AQAL layout helps to continually remind individuals that they should be touching bases with all of those realities—with all of the quadrants, all of the levels, all the lines,

all the states, all the types—even if the simple AQAL map itself can never replace the actual territory of any of those (nor was it meant to). Moreover, unlike most other maps (from the Web of Life to the postmodern paradigm), which believe themselves to be the actual territory and the one correct way to view it, an AQAL approach is acutely aware that it is merely a map, and thus it can carefully and cautiously point to higher territories and realities not directly contained in the map itself (as long as it indicates the actual methodology that *can* directly contact those realities). Thus, an especially helpful aspect of any authentic AQAL approach is that it explicitly draws attention to the many methodologies that can themselves directly enact and illumine the various realities and potentials of the creatively unfolding Kosmos (hence, Integral Methodological Pluralism).

In other words, the AQAL map clearly realizes it is just a map, not the territory. And of course we don't want to confuse any map with the territory. At the same time, we don't want an inaccurate or screwed-up map, either. And AQAL, by explicitly including virtually all of the most significant methodologies discovered by humankind over the centuries and even millennia, gives us one of the best chances we have for an authentic, believable, usable map of the real world.

It does this in large measure by the inclusion of these various methods of accessing knowing and being in its Integral Methodological Pluralism. It is to a summary of this Integral Methodological Pluralism—harbinger of an integral age at the leading edge—that we can now turn.

CHAPTER 5. INTEGRAL METHODOLOGICAL PLURALISM

Introduction

I believe we now have enough background information to take a quick tour of the some of the more commonly-used methodologies that light up, enact, and bring forth the various dimensions of holons. In each of these cases—from empiricism to phenomenology to hermeneutics to systems theory—we can ask, what is being disclosed or brought forth by the injunctions of the particular inquiry? That is, when we pursue those particular inquiries, what is it that we actually find? What does the inquiry show us? And why is this important?

A typical and common assumption made by many epistemologies is that there is a single, pregiven world, and that the various epistemologies (and methodologies) have come into being as different attempts to map or disclose this single pregiven world in the best way possible—and that one of them is basically right, and the others are basically wrong (childish, silly, off the mark, or just plain incorrect). An Integral approach takes a fundamentally different tack—no human mind is capable of producing 100% error (we say, nobody is smart enough to be wrong all the time). Rather than look for the one right way (while dismissing the plethora of allegedly wrong ways), we instead assume that each major approach—which usually has been in existence for many years (often centuries), and has earned the loyalty of thousands, even millions, of followers—has some degree of the truth, and the basic question is no longer which is right and which is wrong, but how can the universe be structured in such a way that all of them are true but partial?

The AQAL Framework suggests that each of its elements

(quadrants, levels, lines, states, types) is correlated with one or more types of epistemologies or methodologies that themselves help to enact or co-create the elements they disclose, and thus there are at least as many “correct” approaches as there are quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types. Simply surveying the *already existing* types of multiple epistemologies and multiple methodologies (which correlatively give rise to multiple ontologies) allows us to create, fairly straightforwardly, the outline of an Integral Methodological Pluralism. (What then requires a little more intellectual work is suggesting an overall Framework that explicitly makes room for each of those approaches—and we will briefly and simply undertake such an investigation, because it provides some very interesting results, I promise.)

Several items are being enacted and illumined in the clearing created by a particular inquiry, including *past actuals*, present *actual occasions*, and *future potentials*:

(1) We just discussed one of the most important items—namely, some of these inquiries (such as physics, biology, developmental psychology, systems theory, ecology) can disclose many of the enduring features of *past actuals* that are still active in the present as “givens,” as facts that pre-exist this moment’s interpretations of them (even if inescapably colored by this moment’s interpretations, and even though, when they were first laid down as facts, they themselves had an intrinsic moment of interpretive freedom).

(2) Some of these inquiries (such as hermeneutics, collaborative inquiry, meditation, artistic creativity, phenomenology) can also highlight the *actual occasions* (or facts-and-interpretations) that themselves emerge or are emerging in this moment (even though, technically, the moment we know any

of them they have just slipped slightly into the past).⁴⁰

(3) And—just as important—some of them can disclose various *future potentials* that are just emerging with their own wild creative jolts. These emergents have certainly not settled into past givens—certainly not yet—but are just coming to be in this moment of indeterminate playfulness. If any of these creative emergents survive the selection pressures in all quadrants and are subsequently repeated by more and more holons in that class, they might eventually settle into deep patterns and ingrained Kosmic habits handed to all members of that class in the future.

Those are some of the occasions open to our present forms of inquiry. In an important endnote, we will discuss some of the other items that might be discovered through human inquiry (items such as *involutionary givens*, or those truly archetypal patterns that might reasonably be supposed to exist prior to the start of evolution itself).⁴¹ And remember, what we are exploring

⁴⁰ “Technically, the moment we know anything it has already slipped slightly into the past.” Although there is one exception to this. Following the Traditions, we maintain that there is a relative, finite, temporal reality, that generally unfolds in a sequence we recognize as “past to present to future,” and when we know any holon in that stream, it indeed has slipped into the past by the time we know it. But there is also an infinite, spaceless, timeless, formless Ultimate Reality (which transcends and includes the formed, manifest, relative, temporal reality). In that dimension, there is no time, only a timelessness, which appears in the world of time as the timeless Present or eternal (timeless) Now moment. All of these Now moments occur simultaneously. That is, the Now moment in New York City is the same as the Now moment in Alpha Centauri. Various different manifest realities and realms arise “out of” this infinite, formless, timeless Reality, and they differ from timespace location to timespace location; but the spaceless infinite and the timeless eternity are one and the same, to the extent that can be stated, wherever they appear. This allows the “unity consciousness” of the timeless Now to be a real unity consciousness wherever it appears—it is the same Ultimate Reality in Alpha Centauri as in New York City or anyplace else in this manifest universe. This timeless, spaceless, unity consciousness can be directly realized in the paths of Waking Up via the state of Enlightenment, Awakening, satori, the Great Liberation, the Supreme Identity.

⁴¹ *On the Nature of Involutionary Givens*

Are there any givens (other than past inheritances) that determine the nature of this moment's coming-to-be? Put differently, are there any givens that seem to have existed prior to the Big Bang (or, at the very least, came into existence absolutely concurrently with the Big Bang)? Among the few theorists who have thought clearly about this issue, the consensus seems to be yes.

Here is a myth that is sometimes useful in suggesting notions that cannot be grasped dualistically or conceptually in any event: As Spirit throws itself outward to create this particular universe with this particular Big Bang (an overall movement called *involution*), it leaves traces or echoes of its Kosmic exhalation and Efflux (Plotinus's term for "involution"). For the most part, these traces constitute little in the way of actual contents or forms or entities or levels, but rather a vast morphogenetic field that exerts a gentle pull (or *Agape*) toward higher, wider, deeper occasions, a pull that shows up in manifest or actual occasions themselves as the *Eros* in the agency of all holons, or the drive to ever-higher unities and wholes and differentiations-and-integrations. (We can think of this "pull" as the pull of all things back to Spirit; Whitehead called it "love" as "the gentle persuasion of God" toward unity; this love reaching down from the higher to the lower is called *Agape*, and when reaching up from the lower to the higher is called *Eros*: two sides of the same pull). This vast morphogenetic pull connects the potentials of the lowest holons (materially asleep) with the potentials of the highest (spiritually awakened). The involutionary given of this morphogenetic field is a gradient of potentials, not actuals, so that *Agape* works throughout the universe as a love of gentle persuasion, pulling the lower manifest forms of Spirit toward higher manifest forms of Spirit—a potential gradient that humans, once they emerged, would often conceptualize as a gradient that moved from matter to body to mind to soul to spirit. "Spirit" (capital "S"), of course, was (and is) the ever-present ground of all of those manifest waves, equally and fully present in each, but "spirit" (small "s") is also a general stage or wave of evolution: spirit, in this specific sense, is the transpersonal structures or stages at which Spirit as ground can be realized—thus evolution, according to the traditions, moves from Spirit-as-matter to Spirit-as-body to Spirit-as-mind to Spirit-as-soul to Spirit-as-spirit. The original reverse of that sequence—when Spirit went out of itself to create soul, which then sedimented downward to mind, which in turn crystallized downward as body, which then sedimented downward as matter—is known as *involution* (Plotinus, as noted, called it Efflux, and the evolutionary return, he called Reflux).

The residue of this involutionary outpouring are various *involutionary givens* (or items that are given or deposited by involution, items that therefore pre-existed the Big Bang and thus are already operating from the moment of the Big Bang forward), the most general of which, as we just saw, is the great morphic field of evolutionary potential, a gentle gradient of persuasion pulling all manifest holons back to their ever-present Ground as Spirit—a Kosmic field of *Agape/Eros*, gently pulling evolution into greater and greater unity, consciousness, embrace, inclusion—a force more dryly known as "self-organization" or "order out of chaos" or "dissipative structures." The universe, it appears, is tilted, and its entire contents are slowly sliding toward the Source and Suchness of the entire display. This tilt, this grain to the Kosmos, this *Agape/Eros*, this vast morphogenetic potential, exerts a tender pull on evolution to unfold in waves of greater complexity, greater inclusiveness, greater depth, greater consciousness, greater care, until the entire Kosmos is included in a prehensive unification

that can swallow the Pacific Ocean in a single gulp, hold Mount Everest in the palm of its hand, blink and bring nightfall to the entire universe, smile and bring forth the sun to shine on all creatures great and small.

Are there involutionary givens other than the great Kosmic morphic field of Agape (appearing in all holons as Eros)? In other words, are there any *a priori* forms, not just in the evolutionary sequence, but in the involutionary sequence? We already saw that evolution inherits its *previous moment* as an *a priori* given. But those are not archetypal or timelessly pregiven forms, merely the past creative forms of evolutionary unfolding. We are now asking: are there any forms that were laid down as “memory” in the *involutionary* sequence and which therefore show up as timelessly given forms that are present at the very start of evolution itself and operative at every point of evolution’s unfolding? As involutionary givens, we have already postulated Eros/Agape and the morphogenetic tilt of manifestation. Are there any others? (That is, are there any *a priori* forms that are *a priori* to evolution’s *a priori* forms?)

Whitehead believed so: eternal objects, for example (these are things that you have to have before you can have anything else, such as shape, color, etc.).

Sheldrake implicitly has a set of involutionary givens. For Sheldrake, there are no archetypal constants or pregiven forms, but in fact he introduces several universal, pregiven constants in order to explain morphic resonance and its formative causation. By Sheldrake’s own theory, there are certain categories that *must always be the case* in order for this theory of morphic resonance and formative causation to be true, and those *a priori* categories are in fact timeless (or archetypal in that sense). For example, Sheldrake sees the world as composed of energy and form; he sees energy causing energy and form causing form; he sees development occurring; and he sees creativity as essential. All of those—energy, form, causation, development, creativity—are seen to be present everywhere, timelessly, from the start—they do not themselves develop or evolve. They are therefore archetypal by his own standards, at least for this universe—and hence are involutionary givens.

Most physicists today believe that when the Big Bang occurred, it seemed to be following certain physical laws described by mathematics, and if these physical laws (and the mathematics describing them) weren’t already present, there is no way that our present mathematical calculations could give us any information about what happened at the Big Bang and shortly thereafter. These mathematical matrices therefore must have been present at or before the Big Bang (i.e., as involutionary givens), and not something that came into being after the Big Bang and were then inherited by the future (which would be an evolutionary *a priori* for subsequent moments, and which do indeed exist; but these mathematical forms appear to be involutionary *a priori*—not anything created in the past but present all along).

All of these involutionary givens might be viewed as the patterns and constraints that are the residue of this particular round of involutionary creation: what’s left of Spirit’s exhalation that resulted in the Big Bang, which was therefore already following these patterns (or involutionary givens) when it blew into the scene.

So it certainly seems that there are at least some forms of involutory givens. I would call these “archetypes,” but that term has been so abused as to be perfectly meaningless. So let’s call them “prototypes,” or simply involutory givens.

On the other hand, many theorists, such as Plotinus, Hegel, and Aurobindo, went a bit too far in trying to specify and determine the form and sometimes content of these involutory givens. They tended to view these involutory givens as consisting of actual levels, sometimes with actual contents, so that evolution is nothing much more than a rewinding of the involution videotape.

That view, I believe, does not easily withstand today’s scrutiny. In fact, all of those great pioneers were presenting metaphysical, premodern (and certainly pre-postmodern) constructions. As such, they did not adequately grasp the AQAL nature of manifest spacetime; in particular, they did not grasp the formative power of the Lower-Left quadrant: the inescapably constitutive power of the cultural contexts and backgrounds with which all subjects and objects are indelibly meshed, to which they must initially conform, and within which certain of their prehensions necessarily arise. Put bluntly, even the staggering genius of these great pioneers could not escape their own cultural embeddedness enough to see that much of what they called “universal pregiven levels of being” were actually particular, socially constructed surface features. That is, *most of what they ascribed to involutory givens were really evolutionary inheritances*. Not forms eternally given by Spirit on its way to material manifestation, but inherited forms of *past manifestation* on its return to Spirit. This is why we are attempting to construct a *post-metaphysical*, post-postmodern spirituality that honors the essentials of these masters, while setting them in a context more adequate to today’s self-understanding (i.e., today being simply the form of Spirit’s self-prehension at this particular wave of its own playful unfolding).

Still, these blindingly brilliant, philosophical avatars of Eros saw one, overwhelming, awe-inducing fact: Spirit is your own *Original Face*. It is not something that is socially constructed, or that is created for the first time when you happen to stumble on it, or that pops out at the end of a temporal sequence, or that is nothing but some sort of Omega that can only be realized at the end of the universe. Spirit (or, as we’ll see, its “Primordial Nature”) is your own ever-present, radically all-inclusive, always-already-the-case reality, which is why some notion of involution, or *return* to a Spirit that was never lost, is an inescapable part of the theoria of every great philosopher-sage, bar none. There is one, staggering, screamingly undeniable involutory given: the ever-present Ground of all grounds, the Nature of all natures, the Condition of all conditions, the Primordial Nature of Spirit itself (sometimes also called “Big Mind”).

But in addition to the Primordial Nature of Spirit, which was (at least implicitly) present at (and before) the Big Bang, and present all along at every stage and level of evolution, there is the “Consequent Nature” of Spirit—the sum total of all unfolding of the manifest universe, which is the manifest form of Spirit itself. This aspect of Spirit evolves (with evolution itself being “Spirit-in-action”). Therefore, this involves things like the major structures of development or Growing Up that appear in human beings (and all beings for that matter)—such as magenta Magic and amber Mythic and orange Rational. And as we look at the very highest of these levels or structures so far—into what are called “super-integral” or “3rd-tier”

stages—we find “Supermind,” which is the sum total of all structures developed at that point, plus a realization of Big Mind (or the Primordial Nature of Spirit). So Supermind is the sum total of the Consequent Nature and the Primordial Nature of Spirit. And where Big Mind or Primordial Nature is fully present at each and every stage/level of evolution, Supermind is present only at the very highest level of evolution to date. There is the highest rung in the ladder of development (the highest level of the Consequent Nature of Spirit) and there is the wood out of which the entire ladder is made and which is fully present at every rung (the Primordial Nature of Spirit). Supermind is both. Big Mind is an involutionary given; Supermind is not.

The great philosopher-sages (premodern, modern, and postmodern) often disagree on the specifics of the involutionary givens. Honorable men and women can do so. I have stated my own beliefs in this regard (and will summarize them below). But the notion of involutionary givens is a *necessary* framework with which the human mind, itself a product of evolution, must use *in order* to construe evolution in a noncontradictory way. As we saw, even the postmodernists, who deny any givens, actually present their own set of implicit universal givens to explain why there are no other givens.

Well, all of these theorists, it seems, are intuiting those faint traces and perfumed residues of Spirit’s quiet exhalation—your own original breathing out—that created this particular manifest world and thus show up as involutionary givens in it, there to be interpreted by the AQAL matrix of this and every moment.

The point, then, about involutionary givens, is basically this: keep them to an absolute minimum. Or postulate the very fewest that you need to get a universe going. Occam’s razor, in a sense. And the reason for this is that involutionary givens are not items that can be directly experienced or opened to direct evidence or proven universally—and thus they fail the modern scientific test of evidence and the postmodern test of self-evident interpretation. I once defined “metaphysics” as “thought without evidence,” and that is what most metaphysics is—postulated notions that have no way to really prove them. And this causes huge problems.

Take, for example, the meditative texts of the West. You can search those texts exhaustively, and while you might find numerous mentions of, say, a subtle-state contemplation that disclosed luminous beings with 2 wings (e.g., angelic beings), nowhere, in any Western meditative text whatsoever, will you find mention of a subtle-level being that has 10,000 arms—although that is probably one of the most common forms that you will find in Tibet (a manifestation of Avalokitesvara, or the Boddhisattva of Compassion). So a modern and postmodern researcher is likely to view both of them as mere cultural creations without any genuine reality at all. Postulating one or the other of them is thus a sure way to get your “spiritual system” rejected by both modern and postmodern theorists.

But if you remove those specifics as being actual givens, and instead maintain that what is given is the general subtle state itself (as the dream state, for example, for which we have a great deal of evidence, scientific and otherwise), then that is a tenet likely to be accepted. And then it is a simpler matter of maintaining that each of those figures is a surface-structure phenomenological item given in this subtle deep structure, but a figure molded by all 4 quadrants to take on the specific forms that they do in the different cultures. And there is

ample empirical evidence for those different forms. Thus, by limiting the actual number of “metaphysical” realities (e.g., angels or Avalokitesvaras), and adopting a post-metaphysical stance, you can get your system accepted by modern science, and then add the specific interpretive features (2 wings, 10,000 arms) as surface features to your actual reality of a subtle state. So by minimizing the metaphysical givens, and adopting an Occam’s razor post-metaphysical minimalism (e.g., the AQAL Framework), you can have your cake and eat it, too. What’s fundamentally real is the subtle state and the many phenomenologically real objects that it discloses; and what is relatively real is the actual form of many of these objects as they are molded and formed by different cultural, social, and psychological factors. After all, as a spiritual believer, does that really detract anything needed from your spiritual beliefs and experiences? Have you really lost anything? On the contrary, you have gained a fairly believable theory that even modern science can’t object to, not in general outlines, anyway.

As for Spirit breathing out to create the entire manifest world, this is, as I said, a useful myth (i.e., a metaphysical component that it’s hard to cut out of the system and still have any explanatory power—“What came before the Big Bang?” is a question that does not admit of any other type of proof, not even meditative, but only conjecture. The point, as I said, is simply to keep those types of conjectures to an absolute minimum.)

* * * *

Within that myth, we can summarize. The postulated list of *involutionary givens* seems to include:

(1) *Eros*. Eros basically is derived from one fact: Spirit creates the entire manifest world and every holon in it; in fact, every holon is Spirit-in-itself playing at being Other (e.g., the great nest of morphogenetic potential often summarized as matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit is actually Spirit-as-matter, Spirit-as-body, Spirit-as-mind, Spirit-as-soul, and Spirit-as-spirit). Since the reality, Suchness, or Isness of every holon is actually Spirit, but because most holons do not realize that they are Spirit, then each holon, so to speak, has an itch for infinity: each holon has a drive, a desire, a push, a telos, a hankering for God—which means, a drive to realize Spirit-itself, a drive which ultimately wants to embrace the entire Kosmos itself. This is a drive toward higher unions, wider identities, greater inclusion—culminating in God-realization, or every holon’s realization of Spirit, by Spirit, in Spirit, as Spirit. This ultimate realization, in its Primordial Nature, is not a summation at the end of the line, or a culmination of temporal additions, or a finite sum of finite parts adding up to One Really Big Finite Thing, but rather the realization of the ever-present, spaceless and therefore infinite, timeless and therefore eternal, formless and therefore omnipresent, Condition of all conditions and Nature of all natures and radically groundless Ground of all grounds. Nevertheless, in the manifest realm, the paradoxical result is a drive toward greater unity among finite things themselves, yearning to be Free and Full. This drive toward greater unity and wholeness in the finite realm is called Eros: the drive of all finite things to find the infinite, which results in the increasing unification and differentiation-integration of finite occasions (the sum total of

which is the Consequent Nature of Spirit). In the temporal realm, the sequence of ever-increasing unifications is endless, stretching from the subtle into millions, billions, zillions of manifest realities in the future, as every moment transcends-and-includes its predecessors, thus bringing new truths, new experiences, new realities, and new integrations into being, with no discernible upward limit (because Spirit is not found as the upper limit of finite things but as their ever-present Ground, and therefore there is no final destination upward, and the Consequent Nature of Spirit simply compounds everlastingly). At some point in this spiral of development and evolution, a holon becomes complex enough, differentiated-and-integrated enough, conscious enough, that it can begin to awaken to its ever-present Ground or Primordial Nature, even as the finite display continues on its agitated round of unifications. In that holon, Spirit then continues its play of manifestation, but now as a conscious, felt, vividly present Presence, a ray of infinity hooking out from that holon on the world that it created.

This drive—the drive of Eros—appears, to the 3rd-person perspective of humans at or beyond the teal wave, as a drive toward self-organization in all complex holons, a drive to create order out of chaos, a series of dissipative structures that eat energy and create unified form: against all scientific sensibilities (which see only “its” without intentionalities), and against every known law of physics (which imagines that “its” only run downhill), the material universe appears to be actively organizing itself into higher and more complex systems. Scientists scratch their heads. How can that be? The universe is self-winding. The universe seeks higher unions. The universe has a drive for self-organization. The universe... well, let us say plainly what the it-perspective misses: the universe is on fire with an unquenchable thirst for God. But however you wish to conceive this Eros, this drive to order-out-of-chaos, this astonishing autopoiesis at the very heart of matter, it is an uncontested pattern in evolution, and a pattern that cannot be accounted for by evolution itself.

Thus, Eros is postulated to be one of the involutionary givens: that is, one of the items present from the start of evolution, a deposit in the manifest realm of Spirit’s involution into, and as, that realm—faint echoes of Spirit’s sneeze that set this particular round of the Kosmic Game in motion.

(2) If all holons reach toward Spirit, Spirit reaches out to all holons. The first is called Eros, the second is called *Agape*. Two sides of the same pull.

(3) A *morphogenetic gradient* in the manifest realm. This refers to the curvature of spacetime across all possible forms of the manifest or AQAL Matrix: Eros operates through a gradient of increasing embrace. This gradient (clumsily expressed by premodern traditions as a pregiven, fixed series of levels and planes stretching from matter to body to mind to soul to spirit—the so-called “Great Chain of Being”) actually represents the tilt of a universe looking for God. Involution creates, not a series of fixed planes and pregiven levels (there is no fully pregiven Great Chain), but a vast morphogenetic field of potentials, defined not by their fixed contents and forms but by their relative placement in the sliding field. (See “On the Nature of a Post-metaphysical Spirituality,” posted on this www.kenwilber.com.)

(4) Certain *Prototypical Forms or Patterns*. If involution creates, not a series of pregiven fixed levels but a fluid morphogenetic field, the question remains: are there any fixed forms

now are various forms of *inquiry*, or ways that we look for truth, or meaning, or information, or feelings, or insights, or collaborative sharing, and so on. In all forms of inquiry, in any quadrant, we are looking for something. So we are asking: in the various quadrants, what forms of looking or inquiring are there? And what do they bring forth or disclose? Needless to say, inquiry is not the only form of human feeling, knowing, being, or desiring—it is simply the form most open to reproducible methodology.

that are involutory givens? We saw several: Whitehead's eternal objects, basic mathematical-physical laws, Sheldrake's implicitly postulated archetypes, and so on. A list of 20 proposed involutory givens can be found in chapter 2 of SES. These *20 tenets* are simply the residual forms of the Big Sleep, echoes of the Big Forgetting that set this round in motion, involutory forms that were tattooed on the translucent skin of the radiant Kosmos in its coming-to-be.

But aside from those relatively few involutory givens, keep in mind that what most theorists postulate to be involutory givens or eternal archetypes (i.e., *involuntary a priori*, given for all time) are actually *evolutionary a priori*, or forms chaotically created in temporal unfolding and then handed to the future, *not* as forms that were predetermined even before they unfolded, but simply as Kosmic habits that various forms happened to take in their AQAL evolution of creatively transcending and causally including, forms that were then handed as *a priori* to the next moment, an *a priori* determined not by eternal archetypes but by temporal history, intrinsic creativity (Eros), and tetra-prehension.

Still, the point is that at least some patterns appear not to be merely historical—and that is where it is necessary to postulate involutory givens. Of course, the theorists who do acknowledge involutory givens, such as Whitehead, must then postulate that the actual emergence of a given occasion is somehow a mixture of involutory givens, or timeless *a priori*, and evolutionarily-created or historical *a priori*, which are not determined prior to their emergence. For example, the early subatomic particles at the Big Bang were obeying various laws of physics, so their actual existence was a mysterious mesh of archetypal givens and historical contingencies. Some version of this mixture or concrescence of eternal objects and actual occasions is postulated by most philosophers who have thought carefully about issues of involution and evolution, and I accept the general outlines of these conclusions.

But two points: be as careful as you can that you are not confusing *evolutionary* givens—which are not eternally given but are Kosmic habits created by temporal, chaotic, evolutionary history and bequeathed to the future as habits that are then givens or *a priori* in a temporal sense—and *involuntary* givens, which are what you must have before you can have anything else, and which therefore appear to exist at or before the Big Bang.

Let's look at the contours of some of these methodologies by giving a very quick, generic, simplistic account of some of the more commonly-used inquiries and a little bit of their recent history. (For this presentation, we will focus simply on the overall quadrants themselves. Once we have seen what this involves, and get a general idea of what we are doing here, then at a later point we will investigate in more detail the fascinating results of looking at subjective and objective approaches within each quadrant—the “8 zones”—and see these basic principles laid out in a very cogent and important and, I believe, fascinating way.)

Upper-Right Inquiry

Perhaps the simplest of any sort of inquiry is *sensory empiricism* (which, given theoretical puffing, appears as *behaviorism* and, with more puffing, *positivism*—I will, despite some important differences, treat them generically as one in this introductory overview). Sensory empiricism is also the most naively appealing, based on a series of facile assumptions: I see sensorimotor objects out there (although, empiricists agree, all I really see are sensory patterns and relations; but these are assumed to be “things,” and these “sensory things” are assumed to be the only real objects of empirical awareness); those objects (and probably those objects alone) are real; therefore true knowing consists of following the behavior of those objects as carefully as I can: that is, true knowing consists of making an accurate map of a pregiven, objective, sensory territory.

It's not that those assumptions are entirely wrong in every way. It's that, even if we grant their true aspects, they are a very small slice of the Kosmic pie (at the least, there is not only sensory experience but mental experience and spiritual experience—not only the eye of flesh, but the eye of mind and the

eye of contemplation). But the true aspects of that approach (which we are focusing on now) revolve around this:

When I attempt to take up the stance of an impartial, objective, and “scientific” viewing of phenomena, *I light up the 3rd-person (singular) dimensions of being-in-the-world* (the Upper-Right quadrant). Those third-person dimensions are there, they are real, they are relatively objective (i.e., many of the aspects of present occasions are handed to the present as Whiteheadian past actuals factually inherited or prehended by this moment. This is why a diamond will cut a piece of glass, and it will do so in a premodern culture, a modern culture, and a postmodern culture: so much for cultural relativity). Those *facts* stand, but they do not stand alone, nor do they constitute a reality divorced from, or unmolded by, the other quadrants and dimensions of being-in-the-world. The disaster, needless to say, occurs when the investigation into this quadrant (the Upper Right)—or inquiry into the objective or exterior behavior of sensorimotor occasions—is taken to be the only type of investigation that yields true knowledge (an immature assumption that occurs only when I presume, contrary to the entire web of available evidence, that the only occasions that are real are sensorimotor occasions—which amounts to an absolutizing of the naive stance of unreflective awareness. “That we deny reflection is positivism”—Jürgen Habermas). This blindness is simply another instance of *quadrant absolutism*.

Still, a 3rd-person inquiry into the behavior of the sensorimotor dimension of holons is an important tool in any Integral kit. This empirical mode of inquiry lights up the 3rd-person dimensions of being-in-the-world. It is therefore instrumental in helping to disclose some of the factual aspects of this moment (which means, the inherited forms of the quadratic past still active in this moment, AND the objective or Right-Hand

correlates of the Left-Hand consciousness and interpretations arising in this moment). The existence of this important quadrant, of course, is denied by postmodernists, but only because, as we will see, they are involved in a quadrant absolutism of their own.

(Remember that, even though we deduce that the sum total of the previous moment's AQAL Matrix of fact-and-interpretation is handed to this moment's AQAL Matrix as a factual given at the start, that factual given is taken up, enacted, and to some degree co-created by this moment's Matrix. A la Whitehead, the *subsisting* subject-reality of the previous moment is prehended and co-enacted by this moment's subject-reality—making that previous subject a prehended/enacted object—so that its subsisting reality is known and exists only as this moment's existing “object” reality. This is unavoidable, and means that the previous moment's facts-and-interpretations—presented as overall fact to this moment—are inexorably taken up as part of this moment's facts-and-interpretations, so that any pure fact, pure pregiven, pure un-interpreted factual reality never exists—so even as total amalgam “fact” handed to the next moment, then whenever it is known—and it is always known, at least by its same-level communal partners—it is known/prehended/enacted as part of an interpretative matrix. So its “given-ness” is always part of an “interpreted-ness,” even on its own level, and most definitely vis a vis different levels. We used “atoms” as an example—we all agree “atoms” are real, they have a real “subsisting” reality; and we could leave it there, except as soon as we try and say exactly what that subsisting reality is, we end up doing so only through a particular level's interpretation of what “atoms” are—an orange view, a green view, a teal view, etc.—that is, we know only the given level's “ex-isting” reality (how a holon “ex-ists” as seen by a particular level), not the holon's intrinsic “subsisting” reality (which is never directly known, even by its

partners, who subject it to “primary interpretation” at the least). When this is not explicitly realized—from various schools of realism to systems theory and the natural sciences in general—then what is taken as “subsistence”—or the holon’s “really real” ontology—is virtually always unknowingly taken to be the view of “ex-istence” given by the highest expectable level of development in that discipline. Thus, for example, in today’s modern science, the “really real” subsisting reality of any holon is actually just the “turquoise ex-istence” view of the “reality” of that holon—that is, how the turquoise level views that holon is taken to be how that holon “really” is, its real ontology. Without realizing it, the turquoise level’s view—what ex-ists in turquoise awareness—is taken to be the “really real” subsistence of all of reality itself. As the next higher level of consciousness comes into being—in this case, the indigo—then new methods—paradigms and exemplars—and corresponding new theories will “paradigm clash” with the turquoise view, and eventually the indigo view of ex-istence will replace the turquoise view of ex-istence as giving us what is “really real” for the subsisting reality of the entire universe. “Subsistence” will then be—largely unknowingly—identified with the ex-istence view of indigo. This is basically unending.)

Important inquiries here—i.e., with empiricism (behaviorism, positivism)—include most of the natural sciences focusing on individual behaviors, such as physics, chemistry, molecular biology, biochemistry, evolutionary behaviorism/psychology, neurophysiology, neuroscience, and cognitive science.⁴² However limited they are in covering the Kosmos, they form an important cornerstone of any truly Integral

⁴² These modes of inquiry only came into their own with the emergence of the orange probability wave, or the first wave to *reflectively* grasp a 3rd-person stance, and therefore the first mode to reflectively engage in hypothetical-deductive awareness which enacts and illumines this dimension.

Methodological Pluralism, highlighting the 3rd-person dimension (singular—UR—and plural—LR) of the holon.

Upper-Left Inquiry

Upper-Left inquiry, or inquiry into 1st-person modes of being-in-the-world, is the most immediately available inquiry for everybody: I simply look into my own mind, my own awareness; I introspect. Of course, things then get very complicated very quickly—what I call “my own mind” is partly a product of culture, social systems, a bit of undigested meat, you name it (which only means, once again, that no quadrant is divorced from the others). Still, “introspection” in any of its numerous forms is not entirely an illusory game; just as with empiricism and all the other quadrant inquiries, it can disclose many important occasions—past actuals, present occasions, and future potentials—not disclosed or enacted by any other mode.

The simple fact is, when I take up a stance of feeling into myself, *I light up the 1st-person dimensions of being-in-the-world* (the Upper-Left quadrant). Of course, what I find depends on a host of variables, including—most importantly—both the *wave* (level) of consciousness and the *stream* (line) of consciousness that I am feeling into (i.e., both the developmental level and the developmental line). But generic 1st-person inquiry is behind a multitude of important methodologies across the entire spectrum of consciousness—including various types of meditation and contemplation, introspective psychology, psychoanalytic endeavors, shamanic voyaging, phenomenology of awareness, dream analysis, and body work. Even though various inquiries can highlight aspects of this 1st-person “I/me/mine” stream that are universal, in itself it constitutes the very core of my lifeworld, my

lifespace, with personal values, ideals, goals, wishes, needs, desires, intentions. And, according to the remarkable meditative Paths of the Great Liberation, this dimension is the opening to my own highest and deepest Self, one with Spirit, one with All—what the Sufis call “the Supreme Identity.” From that view alone—should it prove valid—this dimension is an important part of any overall Integral Methodological Pluralism.

Most of the conflicts between approaches in this quadrant concern—without their opponents realizing it—an argument as to which one of the many levels of consciousness is the one and only true level—a case, we will see, not of quadrant absolutism but of *wave or level absolutism*. And we will also find a heated argument among theorists who believe that only one stream or line in this quadrant is really real—e.g., those who believe that the Piagetian cognitive stream, or the Gravesian values stream, or the vipassana meditation stream is the only really deep stream against which all others are but surface currents—an example of *stream or line absolutism*.⁴³

⁴³ In fact, it was the Piagetian stream absolutism—or Piaget’s belief that the cognitive line was the one deep line against which all other developmental lines were surface—that eventually derailed developmental studies for a decade or two. Piaget did for developmental psychology what Hegel did for developmental philosophy—presented such a brilliant, tightly woven system that when one part of it collapsed, the entire edifice tended to fall apart, taking the entire field with it, at least temporarily. Much of what Piaget discovered about the cognitive line is still accurate and valid, but if and only if the cognitive line is seen as one of at least a dozen other, relatively independent developmental lines. It is quite true that the cognitive line is necessary but not sufficient for most other lines, but that does not mean that the other lines develop within the cognitive line—in fact, most of them develop quite behind the cognitive line, giving a very uneven psychograph for most individuals (see *Integral Psychology*). But if the cognitive stream is seen as one of a dozen relatively independent developmental lines, modules, or intelligences (e.g., Howard Gardner), then much of Piaget’s pioneering insights can be transcended and included.

Most of the pioneering developmentalists were—although they rarely realized this—focusing on one of the major developmental lines or multiple intelligences, and developing research and models that referred primarily to their one particular line. As such, they tended to assume that their line was the fundamental and basic line, and other lines could be explained in terms

Nonetheless, 1st-person phenomenology, in many of its forms—spiritual, mental, bodily—shorn of any wave or stream or state or type absolutism, is clearly an important resource in any Integral Methodological Pluralism. Phenomenology historically has been used in virtually every quadrant—and for just that reason, is one of the methodologies that acknowledges the Upper Left, and hence is particularly useful there. Thus, when

of theirs. Thus, Piaget focused on the cognitive line, Loevinger on the ego line, Kohlberg on the moral line, Graves on the values line, Erikson on the psychosocial line, Freud on the psycho-sexual line, Fowler on the spiritual line, Perry on the social roles line, Arlin on the ideas-of-the-Good line, Kegan on the subject-object line, and so on. The point is, every one of those lines are real, and yet they are all relatively independent, often developing at different rates and under different conditions. All of this can be remembered if we use an integral psychograph, and place each of them on that overall integral graph.

We have to be careful not to confuse terminology between the lines, since the terminology is often reflective of the specific model the theorist used to explain their line, and their line alone. For example, Kohlberg introduced the terms preconventional (egocentric), conventional (ethnocentric), and postconventional (worldcentric) to apply to his major stages or levels in the moral line. These are such useful terms that other writers often picked them up to apply to stages in different lines—totally unwarranted. Thus, I have heard “formal rationality” referred to as “postconventional,” since formal rationality is necessary in order to develop postconventional morals. But they are not the same, and rationality can also fully support preconventional morals and conventional morals—as with most lines, they are relatively independent, and you can be at virtually any stage in any line, no matter how different they otherwise are.

We handle the terminology problem by introducing something called “altitude,” represented by a rainbow spectrum of bands or levels. Just as if you have, say, 10 different paths going up the side of a mountain, the view from the north path is quite different from the view from the south path, which is different from the west path, which is different from the east path, and so on. So you can’t use “northern” terms when trying to explain the “southern” path. But there is one item that all of the paths share and have in common—and that is the altitude that any point on each of them is up the mountain. You can say, for example, that a particular point in all 10 paths are at 2000 feet, or all are at 7000 feet, or the view from the north is at 5000 feet and the view from the east is at 8000 feet—and so on. “Altitude”—which generally reflects degrees of consciousness or degrees of complexity—is something shared by all the paths and thus can be used with all of them, and hence comparisons can be made using altitude (we can speak of orange cognition, orange morals, orange emotional, and so on—in addition to different altitudes for each—this person is at indigo consciousness, green ego, amber spirituality, and so on, without borrowing inappropriate terms from one line to apply to another). All of this can be seen on any integral psychograph.

phenomenology is used to inquire into awareness, it “brackets” any “truth claims” about what the images, symbols, or signs it finds might mean—for example, if it finds the image of a “centaur,” it doesn’t ask whether the centaur is empirically real or not; it simply investigates the image of the centaur as it presents itself (this is why phenomenology is excellent for this dimension—which behaviorism and positivism can’t even see in the first place, completely leaving them out of this dimension).

Lower-Right Inquiry

Of course, both Upper-Left and Upper-Right inquiries are, in one sense, naive. They both tend to assume that individuals stand alone. I look into my own mind (UL), and nothing I see there suggests that those contents are profoundly molded, sometimes even created, by my culture. And I look at objective things out there (UR), and they seem to be real objects existing by themselves—nothing in my senses suggests that they are intrinsic parts of larger wholes.

The first move beyond the stance of *naive individualism* generally occurs (and historically occurred) by understanding that the visible organism (UR) is intrinsically interconnected with the visible environment (LR) in systems of mutual interaction—and these systems are at least as real as the individuals interconnected and interwoven in them. In other words, a sophisticated tracking of the sensorimotor behavior of single objects soon discloses (especially to 2nd-tier cognition) that individual objects are following systemic patterns of behavior *that are not indicated by anything in the individual objects themselves*. Individual objects appear to belong to wider systems that to some degree govern the behavior of those objects that are components of the system. The evolution of an individual organism, for example, cannot be

understood apart from the ecological system in which it is embedded. In some sense, individual organisms do not exist on their own; what actually exists is an organism-environment system, an ecological web—itself embedded in even larger webs—and it is an understanding of these systems and webs that constitutes significant knowledge. Thus, it is not the *behavior of objects* but the *behavior of systems* that becomes the focus of this mode of inquiry.

Historically, this perspective resulted in everything from *genealogical anthropology* to *evolutionary systems theory* to the *ecological sciences* and *Web-of-Life theories* to the wide variety of *dynamic systems theory* (from cybernetics to general systems theory to functionalism to chaos and complexity theories and network science). All of those are still an essentially 3rd-*person inquiry*, but now executed with an eye on the plural and the collective, not the singular and atomistic. In systems theory you find no 1st-person accounts of desire, feelings, impulses, visions, poetry, dreams, satori, and so on (not in their own nonreductionistic 1st-person or interior terms); and you find no authentic (or nonreductionistic) 2nd-person accounts of mutual understanding, hermeneutics, collectively shared horizons, semiotics; nor any account of the interior of states of consciousness, stages of consciousness, streams of consciousness, and so on. Those items are sometimes acknowledged, but all of them are reduced to their exteriors appearing in dynamic systems of interwoven its (digital data bits and so forth).⁴⁴ Despite

⁴⁴ This is why many systems theories and ecological sciences are still within the fundamental Enlightenment paradigm (the representation or reflection paradigm): what is now being represented is the *behavior of systems*, not the behavior of individuals, but the “mirror of nature” is still in place, with nature conceived as systemic, not atomistic. The Enlightenment paradigm itself was actually a systemic reflection paradigm (what was represented was the “great system of nature” and “the great interlocking order”), contrary to the pop histories of it given by web-of-life theorists who insist the Enlightenment paradigm was atomistic in essence. But the point is, both atomism and systems theory are map:territory or reflection

attempts to introduce a “soft systems theory,” the vast majority of influential systems approaches—starting with von Bertalanffy and running through Parsons and Merton to Maturana, Varela, Luhmann, Prigogine, Goertzel, Warfield, Laszlo, Wolfram—are all primarily forms of 3rd-person plural inquiry, which, relieved of any quadrant absolutisms, are crucial resources in any Integral Methodological Pluralism.

In other words, when I engage in systems-theory-type inquiry, *I am lighting up the 3rd-person plural dimensions of being-in-the-world* (the Lower-Right quadrant). These dimensions are real, they are there, and they are—exactly as systems theorists claim—relatively objective facts about systems in the world. They disclose the Lower-Right quadrant, or the exterior (“objective”) dimensions of communal holons.

The more leading-edge schools of dynamic systems theory acknowledge that the Upper-Right organism does not merely *reflect* its pregiven Lower-Right environment but rather *enacts* it and *co-creates* it (the enactive paradigm). This is surely true; but it is still a 3rd-person account of those realities, as we will see in detail in later sections. This does not invalidate autopoietic theories, but merely situates them in the larger scheme of an Integral Methodological Pluralism.

All of those interobjective approaches—there are literally dozens of others—are tapping into the fact that all holons have a Lower-Right quadrant, a holistic web of mutually interpenetrating patterns across space and time that can be described in a 3rd-person plural perspective—and which, although far from the whole story, are a crucial aspect of a more integral view.

paradigms (one gross reductionism, the other subtle reductionism, but both reductionistic), because neither grasp the constitutive nature of 1st- and 2nd-person dimensions.

Lower-Left Inquiry

Historically, and coming right on the heels of the discovery that individual organisms exist only as inseparable aspects of webs of ecological interaction, it was discovered that those interobjective webs actually have interiors that cannot be reduced to, or explained by, the webs themselves. That is, social systems (3rd-person its) actually possess interiors of 1st- and 2nd-person realities that escape detection by ecological and systems sciences. Worse, the objective and interobjective sciences themselves arise only as an inseparable aspect of extensive fields of cultural interpretations: intersubjectivity touches all other endeavors. Thus, modern systems theory gave way to postmodern contextualism—both of which are now being transcended and included in integral theories at the leading edge.

But to focus on the great postmodern discovery: every holon has an intersubjective dimension, every holon has a Lower-Left quadrant. Moreover, this intersubjective field is truly irreducible; it is not some sort of product of the interaction of priorly separate subjects that somehow come together, interact, and form a shared intersubjective horizon. Rather, intersubjectivity is there, from the start, as an intrinsic aspect of the tetra-arising of this and every moment.

Even evolutionary sciences support this conclusion, in that they all agree on (even if they cannot explain) the fact that *there are no first instances* in evolution. When the first instance of a new species arises—for example, the first mammal—*it never arises by itself*; what first shows up is an entire population of mammals. It makes sense if you think about it. For a new species to arise, there must occur several major beneficial mutations. The odds against that happening are of course astronomical; but worse,

the *same* several mutations must occur in another animal of the opposite sex; and then, on the entire world-wide planet, they must find each other, and then mate, and then their offspring have to survive and mate—and the odds of all of that happening are of course off the scale of the believable or even the possible. No, in some mysterious way, *entire populations simply show up*—and that means, *the interiors and exteriors of the singular and the plural arrive on the scene together*: the four quadrants simultaneously arise and mutually tetra-evolve, as we have been saying all along.

(How do entire populations simply show up? What “mechanism” can possibly account for that? The short answer is: Eros. See the endnote on involutory givens.⁴⁵ But whatever we decide on the “how” of it, the factual “what” of it is that the interior and the exterior of the singular and the plural arrive on the scene simultaneously: the quadrants tetra-evolve. Science truly cannot account for this; Darwinian mutation and natural selection come nowhere close to doing so; you have to have, at a minimum, a self-organizing force—Eros—inherently and intrinsically present in all 4 quadrants to even consider getting this going.)

By the time the Lower-Left or intersubjective dimension flowers in self-reflexive humans, entire modes of inquiry have also evolved that help to enact, disclose, and illuminate this intrinsic dimension of being-in-the-world. Foremost among these modes of intersubjective inquiry is *hermeneutics*—the art and science of interpretation—in its many forms. Of course, hermeneutics in its prereflexive mode exists “all the way down”—holons, even at the subatomic level, are engaged in interpreting their environments. Signal systems and exchanges of particles/energies/forces exist at even the most fundamental of

⁴⁵ For involutory givens, including Eros, see note 41.

levels. Unfortunately, because the creative novelty of the most fundamental holons approaches (but never reaches) zero, it mistakenly appears that interpretive freedom is completely absent at the ground levels, whereas, as Whitehead knew, it is merely at its nadir. The intersubjective dimension of evolution can be followed from its humble beginnings in the most fundamental holons (as systems of proto-prehension), through its more elaborate forms in plant and animal signal systems (chemical, biological, hormonal)—but all of them involve not just exchanges of *signifiers* in a system of *syntax* but the evoking and enacting of *signifieds* in a shared *semantic*: the four quadrants arrive on the scene simultaneously and tetra-evolve. (For syntax and semantics, see [“Integral Semiotics.”](#))

In humans, this shared semantic appears as extensive networks of cultural backgrounds, prereflexive shared prehensions, mutual understanding, and overlapping horizons of intersubjectivity, values, goals, meanings, semantic fields. These shared interpretive moments constitute an essential ingredient not only of mutual understanding between subjects, but of the arising of subjectivity itself: such is the essence of the great postmodern discovery. Agency is always agency-in-communion, in both its exterior or ecological forms, and its interior or cultural forms.

The explicit investigation of the many nuances of cultural intersubjectivity (including the exploration of the “we” space) is the key ingredient in the methodologies of the Lower-Left quadrant. *Hermeneutics, collaborative inquiry, participatory pluralism, cultural anthropology, ethnomethodology, cultural studies, and action-inquiry* are a few of the many modes of this enactment and disclosure. The important point is that when I engage in hermeneutics and collaborative inquiry, *I am lighting up the 2nd-person (and 1st-person plural) modes of being-in-the-world*. Those modes are real, they are there, and they constitute a

crucial ingredient in any Integral Methodological Pluralism.

All of those intersubjective approaches—there are literally dozens of others—are tapping into the fact that all holons have a Lower-Left quadrant, a holistic web of mutually interpenetrating prehensions across space and time that can be felt and described in a 2nd-person (and 1st-person plural) perspective—and which, although far from the whole story, are a crucial aspect of a more integral view.

(What we will also find, in subsequent sections, is that the quadrants themselves can be viewed from the inside and from the outside, giving us not just 4 basic dimensions but 8. The fundamental methodologies that we have just introduced will be found to fall into, not just 1 of 4 quadrants, but 1 of 8 zones. This sounds somewhat complicated, but it actually simplifies methodologies into easily recognizable—and useable—forms of human inquiry. But the above has introduced the way by showing that the quadrants—which are really different perspectives that humans can take on reality—each generate a different type of inquiry, with different methodologies, that disclose and enact different—but equally real—phenomena. One of the main reasons that we have so many fragmented, partial, and broken views of reality—and our very lives—is that few of our approaches are truly inclusive, holistic, comprehensive, and integral, and thus are constantly leaving out realities that nonetheless bombard our lives constantly, but which, without explicitly recognizing them, merely blind-side us. An Integral Approach is designed specifically to alleviate this major problem. So stay tuned!)

Integral Operating System (IOS)

Those are simply some of the major, time-tested, widely accepted quadrant inquiries. In later chapters, we will focus on wave, stream, state, and type inquiries (there are abundant existing examples of all of those).

But in each of these discussions of some of the more important modes of human inquiry, we are not discussing them merely as an academic item of historical interest. We are driving towards a practical, hands-on, Integral Methodological Pluralism, the backbone of what we are also calling the *AQAL Framework*, which specifically combines the very best of the time-tested modes of inquiry (from empiricism to phenomenology to hermeneutics to systems theory) in order to produce the most balanced and comprehensive approach to the Kosmos possible.

AQAL, when mastered, is psychoactive. It actually impacts your system in such a way that the mind automatically scans its reality and checks to make sure it is covering all the bases outlined in the AQAL Framework, and if not, it actively seeks to redress this inadequacy. The more you incorporate AQAL, the more you can actually feel your life become Freer and Fuller, touching on areas of your own being that you might never have consciously considered, and thus left on the wayside to rot.

AQAL, rather, *combines the strengths of all of the major types of human inquiry* in order to produce an approach to any occasion that “touches all the bases,” that refuses to leave some dimension untouched or ignored, that honors all of the important aspects of holons in all of their richness and fullness. AQAL, as we said, *is itself merely a 3rd-person system of signifiers* (i.e., it is nothing but a system of abstract ideas, symbols, and concepts, all of which are merely 3rd-person symbols, not 1st-person or 2nd-person realities).

However, if AQAL is properly downloaded and installed, it essentially *activates the 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-person dimensions themselves*, simply because those are the active signifieds (and referents) of the AQAL signifiers. The result is that any brain hardware system operating on AQAL automatically scans all phenomena—interior as well as exterior, individual as well as collective—for any quadrants, waves, streams, or states that are not being included in awareness. AQAL then acts to correct this imbalance and help move the system toward a more integral and inclusive stance. AQAL acts as an autopoietic holism, if you will.

To repeat: AQAL itself does not deliver 1st- or 2nd-person realities, nor is it meant to; rather, it simply alerts the system to the fact that those realities exist, and urges the system to directly take them up (and then it gives the types of action, methodologies, inquiries, and paradigms/exemplars that can themselves directly enact and engage these dimensions). But that means that the person then has to actually engage in those other modes of inquiry, whether contemplative phenomenology, body work, intersubjective group processing, interobjective institutional organization, meditation, collaborative inquiry, and so on.

We will continue to discuss AQAL in subsequent sections. But don't let the 3rd-person signifiers mislead. What we are talking about are the contents of lived, felt, breathed awareness. We are talking about what aspects of the Kosmos we will allow ourselves to feel. Can we allow ourselves to feel deeply into all dimensions of the self-disclosing Kosmos, or we will recoil, contact, pull away from the Kosmos, and from our Self, and run instead into one partiality or another, one absolutism or another, one broken fragment or another? AQAL, although a 3rd-person operating system, simply acts as a reminder, a self-scanning alert, that there might be more feelings than are presently being allowed to surface, and points one in the direction of a more integral and enlightened embrace.

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Ken Wilber is a preeminent scholar of the Integral stage of human development. He is an internationally acknowledged leader, founder of Integral Institute, and co-founder of Integral Life. Ken is the originator of arguably the first truly comprehensive or integrative world philosophy, aptly named “Integral Theory”. You can find Ken’s full biography, as well as all of his recent media offerings, on his [Integral Life author page](#).