



Emergence and the Integral “I”

(An Integral Inquiry into the Emergence of Humanity)

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Introduction

The validity of any theory is highlighted when it elegantly and introspectively illuminates that practice with an insight into itself. When done with genuineness, this can provide not merely a tautology, but a surprise existential confirmation of both the practice and its practitioners.

Integral Theory, as the most comprehensive theory yet developed to explain the human experience, provides us with a viewing scope into all parts of our collected knowing. It also provides us with the scope to critically inquire into our *collective* knowing. In doing so Integral Theory also turns the lens onto itself.

This paper explores the application of Integral Theory to the field beyond itself with a view to examining what lies beyond ourselves, as the practitioners of the known and as participants in the unknown. What we risk is the discovery of our own humility and our own humanity.

Integral Theory

Integral Theory is a comprehensive and evolving philosophical discipline which is inseparable from its embodied practice.¹ It provides a number of different philosophical concepts as aspects of its many sub-disciplines which can be applied in different forms, combinations and at different levels of rigor with respectively sound results.

Due to the broad scope of this particular inquiry, only two of its many conceptual foundations are relied on for this inquiry, being the *Twenty Tenets* and the *Four Quadrants*.

For simplicity, the explicitly presumed assumptions of this paper, drawn from those two conceptual foundations are (Wilber 1995, 2000):

1. The 'first' of the *Twenty Tenets* which states: *1. Reality is not composed of things or processes, but of holons.*
2. The 'fourth' of the *Twenty Tenets* which states: *4. Holons emerge holarchically.*
3. Addition III of the *Twenty Tenets*: *Addition III: All IOUs are redeemed in Emptiness; - holons are conventional truths - Emptiness/Spirit is ultimate truth.*
4. There are four major quadrants or four major aspects to each and every holon. These are the *Upper Right, Upper Left, Lower Right* and *Lower Left*.
5. The Upper Right (UR) quadrant is the *exterior* form or structure of an *individual* holon. The Upper Left (UL) quadrant is the *interior* form of an *individual* holon. The Lower Right (LR) quadrant is all the *exterior* forms of *social* systems. The Lower Left (LL) quadrant is all the *interiors* of *social* systems.

An attempt to summarise or paraphrase these principles of Integral Theory will not be made (as the theory is best read at source). The first-time reader is referred specifically to the introduction summary of these key principles in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of Book I of *Sex Ecology and Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution* (Wilber 1995,2000) before reading further.

Finding the Holarchy

Arthur Koestler (1967), in the last of his trilogy of scientific books on the mind of man, introduces us to the concept of holons and holarchy.² The term holon is formed from the Greek *holos* meaning the whole, and the suffix *on* - as in *proton* or *neutron*, to suggest a particle or part. Literally, a whole/part.

Wilber (1995) adopts the coined terms and clarifies that the term *holon* refers to that which, being a whole in one context, is simultaneously a part in another. He explains that:

“Normal hierarchy, then, is simply an order of increasing holons, representing an increase in wholeness and integrative capacity – atoms to

molecules, for example ... Hierarchy, then converts heaps into wholes, disjointed fragments into networks of mutual interaction. The 'whole' provides the context and can therefore determine the meaning and function of a part." (1995:25)

Wilber adopts the term *holarchy* to explain the concept of 'higher' in Integral Theory by defining a middle ontological ground between extreme hierarchy (a world of undifferentiated wholes) and extreme heterarchy (a world of undifferentiated parts). A normal or natural holarchy is then '... the sequential or stage-like unfolding of larger networks of increasing wholeness, with the larger or wider wholes being able to exert influence over lower-order wholes.' (1995:30). This is contrasted with heterarchy, or organisation without hierarchy, which is differentiation without integration, disjointed parts recognizing no common and deeper purpose or organisation: being heaps not wholes.

The holarchy as a principle for organisation within the universe, while a fictional construct, is however a functionally excellent device to define a scope of inquiry. It enables us to draw a fictional boundary around a set of phenomena and examine it as a part only (as we as humans have the distinct tendency to always do) with reference to its open-endedness. Integral theory when applied to a holarchy of inquiry – is by definition then partial – even to the extent that it extends that inquiry both upwards and downwards into the inter-connections of the holarchy within the All.

With this qualification, a holarchy can be created by defining it by its largest whole/part. What then is identified as that becomes a 'span of one' for the purpose of examination and being somewhat less than the 'All' (meaning all phenomena and its emptiness) allows us to create an artificial distinction for the purpose of inquiry into its properties, both present and future. ³

By convention, the first step then in any application of Integral Theory to a set of phenomena is the definition of the holarchy of inquiry. In this paper, the holarchy for inquiry is defined as the aggregate of the phenomena that is *humanity*.

Humanity as a Whole/Part

Humanity is usually defined in a dictionary as '*human beings collectively*'. Our inquiry seeks to extend beyond the phenomena of the collective whole/parts to know humanity as the phenomenon of the whole. To do this we may first need to define the parts of that whole.

Integral Theory suggests that a definition of *human beings* (who collectively comprise a conventional definition of humanity) is one that can be determined biologically (Upper-Right), systemically (Lower-Right), culturally (Lower-Left) and psychologically (Upper-Left). It is arguably not appropriate for the parts of a holon to be determined by a member of the holon – as that perspective of the whole of which they are a part is by definition not available to them.

While the ethicists, geneticists, anthropologists, moralists, extremists, humanists and transcendentalists within us can disagree on a definition of ‘who is in and who is out’ in this definition of the member parts of humanity – everyone by default is within. To avoid that debate (which if held would be to miss the point entirely) the definition of *human beings* for the purposes only of our inquiry is the ‘*membership of the holon that is humanity as perceived by the mythical external perceiver*’.

We have then a definition of our subject for inquiry that is undefined. The *method* of its definition is in fact the inquiry we are making. To succeed is, therefore, simply to begin.

To enable us to begin, a workable classification of *human beings* (as the whole/parts of humanity) is those beings who are existent members of the human species. This is possible to determine as (prior to bifurcation of the species from our own cloning or self-prescribed genetic manipulation) we consider ourselves to be members of one definable species (all other hominids having apparently become extinct in their competition with our pre-occurring genetic selves) and at the same time we are each unique genetic individuals within that group. We are by definition uniquely definable individual parts of a common whole in physical existence.

Having now a mythical holarchy, the myth of its highest whole/part and the myth of its parts that make up that highest whole clarified, how are we to study this (mythical) phenomenon? How are we to study the phenomena of humanity in its four aspects? While there are other modes possible (e.g. meditative transcendent inquiry) the answer that presents itself to us as ‘the most comprehensive’ is Integral Theory.

The Artifice of the “I”

In the Tibetan practice of Lojong within the Mahayana disciplines of Tibetan Buddhism we are reminded in the practice of the ultimate training of the awakening mind to:

“Examine the nature of the unborn awareness”⁴.

(Chekawa Yeshe Dorje’ 1101-1175)

This examination leads us to the understanding that, not only the world we create as our reality, but also the mind that perceives that created reality, does not inherently exist from its own side. On the ultimate level, no phenomena is primordially established. We create a sense of “I”-ness from the experience of our mind, our ego and our body combined. We create a sense of our body from our mind and our ego experience. We create a sense of our ego from our body and our mind experience. We create a sense of our mind from our ego and our body experience. Yet none exist from their own side. We are left with the solution:

“Like the center of a spotless sky, all phenomena are one.”

Yet to understand all phenomena, we divide the inseparable. We make it into parts, whole/parts and wholes. We then must place these parts back together again. To do this we must first acknowledge the artifice of the distinction and the artifice of the inquiry.

Integral Theory acknowledges this in the distinction of the Big Three – the truth perspectives of the “I”, “We” and “IT”, which hold a deeper truth (Wilber 2000). The dominions of the Big Three exist for each of us, with each of them being necessary to create the other. Our conception of “I” is a construction from our second and third person perspectives. Our conception of “WE” is a construction from our first person perspective confirmed by our third person perspective. Our conception of “IT” is a construction from our first person perspective confirmed by the second person perspective. Together they are associated and form a whole. In making an Integral Theoretical inquiry into the humanity of which “I” am part, we acknowledge that there is in (absolute) reality no separate and distinct “I”. We are simply phenomena of our own making.

Individual Holons

Wilber (1995) acknowledges this artifice of the “I” and places at the base of Integral Theory the understanding of the illusory nature of our own artificial distinctions. The artificiality of the “I” is expressly acknowledged in the constructed definition of the whole/part (with which we are most familiar), being the *individual holon*.

Wilber writes:

“This distinction between an individual holon and its social holon (environment in the broadest sense) is not as easy to draw as it may first appear, however, because it’s almost impossible to define what we mean by an individual in the first place... On the other hand, we do recognize that enduring holons possess a specific form or pattern, and this pattern is to some

degree autonomous, or resistant to environmental obliteration. And this is usually what we mean by calling a holon an “individual” - we mean an *enduring compound individual*, compounded of its junior holons and adding its own defining form or wholeness or canon or deep structure (which is the novel holon in its own compound individuality) ... In other words, even though an “individual holon” exists inseparably from its social environment, its defining factor is its own particular form or pattern. To the degree that we can reasonably recognize that pattern, we will refer to an individual holon.” (1995:72)

Integral Theory informed by this understanding entreats us into this game of construction of the non-existent “I”, but with a different sense of knowing. ⁵

Social Holons

To draw a distinction between an individual whole part and its environment (which provides it with context and the reasons for its content) is to separate the inseparable. Wilber writes:

“The word [individual] itself, from the Latin *individualis*, means not divisible or not separable; by that definition, there are no individuals anywhere in the Kosmos. There are only holons, or dividuals. ⁵¹” (Wilber 1995:72)

Integral Theory has, as its strength, that it does not make an artificial distinction between individual parts and their environment. Instead it places these two aspects next to each other as parts of the same and creates only an arbitrary line that simply reflects universal integrative and self-assertive tensions we are already familiar with.

Any confusion regarding the distinction between individual and social holons is then unwarranted. It arises only from our attempt to separate the inseparable. Simply, they are not separate, or separable. It is only our mind that desires to see them so. Hence, when using Integral Theory, they are always represented together. In Koestler’s words: “No man is an island- he is a holon.”

At source, this is explained clearly and succinctly, referring to the four quadrants:

“The upper half of the diagram represents *individual* holons: the lower half, *social or communal* holons. The right half represents the exterior forms of holons - what they look like from the outside; and the left half represents the interiors – what they look like from within. Thus we have four major quadrants or four major aspects to *each and every holon*.” (Wilber 1995:127) (*emphasis added*)

The individual and collective forms of any identifiable whole/part are simply to be held as one concept. It requires of us to hold two separate concepts together as one in relational exchange. Koestler (1967) uses the metaphor of the two faces of the Roman god Janus, being the keeper of doorways, facing both inwards and outwards and symbolizing the transition space between both beginnings and endings. Because holons exist only within holarchies, one face is the face of the master (individual) and one face is the face of the servant (social). The holon is then the door keeper to 'a hierarchy that is as open-ended downward as it is in the upward direction.' (Koestler 1967:62).

Just as the Ying and Yang are held together as one in the Tao, where one arises the other must necessarily also arise, and then so must the resultant third. In this way we are always returned to the Tao, to the All, to the One. In an Integral Theoretical view we are simply asked to see any part as a whole/part within the All. While this may take a particular form of mind, it is a conceptualisation available to each of us. For those not able to comfortably do this, the application of Integral Theory is extraordinarily difficult.

The secret of understanding and seeing the resultant in the relational exchange is more simply and succinctly said in the form of the common and profound Sufi parable:

"You think that because you understand one you must understand two, because one and one makes two. But you must also understand 'and'."

To create social holons separate to their individual holons is to fail to understand the 'and'.

It is for this reason that an Integral Theory analysis of *humanity* does not seek to create a non-existent holon from a heterarchical heap, but must instead inquire with clarity of mind into all the phenomenon that arises to and within its essential whole/parts.

The Human Holon

The definition and distinction of the *individual holon* and its resultant *social holons* for the purposes of this inquiry into the nature of humanity allows us to define the whole/parts that may make up that whole.

The *human holon* (or more correctly the *individual aspects of the human holon*) is not to be confused with the whole of humanity, but is instead me, you, each of us and all other human beings as separate individuals. It is the interior and exterior aspects of each of us individually (being the upper quadrants). When we place all these

individuals together, we may talk about the *human social holon* (or more correctly the *compound aspects of the human holon*). The human social holon (being the lower quadrants) is the interior and exterior aspects of the whole of all of us collectively.

Each of these terms refer to the individual and collective representations of our interior and exterior selves – the four quadrants (or four aspects) of humanity. They, however, do not describe *humanity* – only some of its parts.

In defining then what the human holon is (and is not) for this inquiry we look to the whole/part we are examining. We are inquiring into the holon that has the individual human as its individual holon and the collective forms of all humans as its social holon. Essentially, we are looking at a limited fragment, a mere ‘slice’, of the whole holarchy of existence.

Above this ‘slice’ is *humanity* the name given to the resultant phenomena of the individual and collective human holons together (i.e the level that is trans-personal, trans-homosapien) and ‘below’ (or more precisely – outside) this is existence as experienced by any form of consciousness other than the human species. However, from this limited slice we take in the whole holarchy of the human experience.

The extent to which sentience is attributed to different degrees of prehension or consciousness in the material and biological realms and the extent to which those forms existing in physical relational exchange can be said to also ‘share’ a interior worldview, is irrelevant for the purposes of this inquiry which looks only into the human experience of consciousness. We need only accept for the purposes of an Integral inquiry into human phenomena, which necessarily involves the assumption of the existence of uniquely individual interior worldviews, that we as members of a human (socio-cultural) holon are ourselves sentient and have individual consciousness. As we are told by Wilber:

“Let me emphasize that it really does not matter, as far as I am concerned, how far down (or not) you wish to push consciousness. ... But my main point is not where precisely to draw this line – draw it wherever you feel comfortable – but that the line itself involves pre-eminently the distinction between interiority and exteriority.” (1995:126)

There is an argument that we must be satisfied that the individual holon that forms the basis for an inquiry has (to use a term from a different theory) a dominant monad, so that in effect it has the ‘I’-ness of agency. If the presence of an “I” is a necessary feature of a valid application of Integral Theory, a question arises as to whether Integral Theory can be used for the purposes of inquiry into the present and future existence of humanity as a holon.⁶

If our answer to this theoretical question is that humanity as a holon is itself not yet existent because it is not sentient as a separate and autonomous entity that can exert influence over its lower-order holons, the question of inquiry into humanity must cease – as it would be considered a non-existent phenomenon and outside the scope of Integral Theory to examine. The only qualification to this question then is how would we as members of that ‘whole/part’ know when this momentous event occurs – or even if it had already.⁷

Even if the phenomenon of humanity is only a potentiality, the inquiry is sufficiently important for us to undertake this application of Integral Theory in any event, simply as a thought experiment into our future. Whether Integral Theory can apply to the answer is less important, than whether it is the best available means to undertake the question. The depiction that follows should therefore be read not as a description of the unknowable, but rather as a meditation on the as yet unknown.⁸

With the preliminary steps completed, and the conceptual distinctions made clear, the next step towards this unknown, is simply to open our minds and inquire using the platform Integral Theory provides.

IT-ness of Humans

In an Integral Theory analysis of the holon that is humanity the Individual Exterior aspect of that holon is all humans within the species *homo sapiens*. This is no less than the complete analysis of humans. It is all our biological forms both past and present and includes everything that is encompassed in the human reality.

Wilber (1995, 2000) describes the depth and span of the dimensions of the IT-ness of humanity’s own reality in a comprehensive analysis of the ontological existence of humans as an entirety. This comprehensive view of reality is vast in its complexity. It is a composite reality of the interiors and exteriors of all existence as seen by our species.

This aspect comprises the IT that I (and each human) as a human interpret as reality (I of IT-ness), the IT that all other humans interpret as a reality that can be shared (WE of IT-ness), the IT that I (and each human) as a human experience as reality (IT of IT-ness) and the IT that all other humans experience as a reality collectively (ITs of IT-ness).

Together these four aspects co-arise and tetra-evolve and as experienced and interpreted by all the members of humanity individually and together moment by moment they comprise the IT-ness of humanity.

The four aspects of the IT of humanity are then:

What does human reality feel like to me?
 What does human reality feel like to you?
 What does human reality look like to me?
 What does human reality look like to you?

where the I and the you are in each case *all* the members of the all.

I-ness of Human-ness

In an Integral Analysis of the holon that is humanity the Individual Interior aspect of that holon is the human experience. This is no less than what it means to be human. This aspect is the essence of our human-ness. It is all that interpreted experience in each and every moment and encompasses all experience that has occurred in every previous moment that is brought into the present (genetically, socially, culturally or reflectively). It is the sum of the individual experiences of humanity.

Dr. E. F Schumacher, an economist and academic, in *A Guide for the Perplexed* (a work published shortly after his death) describes the philosophical maps, the levels of being and the four fields of knowledge of the human experience (Schumacher 1977). The work is elegant in its simplicity.

Dr. Schumacher asks the question: "If the current methodology produces an incomplete, one sided and grossly impoverished picture, what methods would need to be applied to obtain the full picture." (1977:75). He concludes (in concordance with the essential platform of an Integral Theoretical approach):

"It has often been observed that for every one of us reality splits into two parts: here is I; and there is everything else, the world, including you. We have also had occasion to observe another duality: there are visibilities and invisibilities, or we might say outer appearances and inner experiences. ... From these two pairs – 'I' and 'the World', 'Outer Appearance' and 'Inner Experience' – we obtain four 'combinations' which we can indicate thus:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) I- Inner | (3) I- Outer |
| (2) the world (you) inner | (4) the world (you) outer." |

To continue our inquiry in the same lines our perspective must shift. Rather than an inquiry of what does human reality look like objectively as a composite of all human perspectives (the IT) we adopt the perspective of what does the phenomenological experience of all humans feel like subjectively as a composite of all human perspectives (the I). Our perspective on ourselves shifts to the experience of humanity by its individual members individually.

This aspect comprises the I that I (and each human) as a human feel about being human (I of I-ness), the I that all other humans feel as a human about being human that can be shared (WE of I-ness), the I that I (and each human) appear to be in expression of my humanness (IT of I-ness) and the I that all other humans appear as, to all other humans collectively (ITS of I-ness).

Together these four aspects co-arise and tetra-evolve and as felt and seen by all the members of humanity individually and together moment by moment they comprise the I-ness of humanity.

To simplify in an extreme manner (being Schumacher's words), the four aspects of the I of humanity are then:

What do I feel like?

What do you feel like?

What do I look like?

What do you look like?

where the I and the you are in each case *all* the members of the all.

ITS-ness of Man

In an Integral Analysis of the holon that is humanity the Collective Exterior aspect of that holon is the organisation of man as a species. This is no less than the entirety of the visible aspects of all human collective existence. It is all that mankind has accomplished and is presently accomplishing in all the combinations which we create through the 'growth of social holons in the newly emergent noosphere' (Wilber 1995:107).

Arthur Koestler (1967) describes the predicament of man as having coinciding individual and collective forms and the inherent benefits and tensions:

"The integrative potential of a holon makes it tend to behave as a part of a larger, more complex unit; its self-assertive potential makes it tend to behave as if it were self-contained, autonomous whole. ... In social bodies the dichotomy between co-operation and competition is all too obvious – from ambivalent tension in the family, to the agonised coexistence of the United Nations." (Koestler 1967: 225).

The individual within the collective of man looking inward sees a self-contained unique whole and looking outward sees a dependent part. However, this tension is

a unique stabilising property of all life in the universe. It is this stabilising force, the dynamic equilibrium between eros the offspring of the integrative and thanatos the offspring of the self-assertive, that gives all existent forms both freedom and function within the wider whole (Koestler 1967). We should not be surprised that resulting from the diversity of individualism is also a pluralism of social forms as each finds their places for freedom and function within the whole.

In this organisation of connections and memberships we may identify ourselves as a citizen of a particular country, we may feel a connection with an identified group, we may be in connection through structures of employment and we may be in connection through complex systems of economic exchange. The ITS-ness of mankind incorporates all the organising principles of man into families, genealogies, associations, organisations, networks, nations, activities, movements, markets, teams, exchanges, communes, collectives, cooperatives and communities.

This aspect comprises the ITS that I (and each human) as a human feel connected to (I of ITS-ness), the ITS that all other humans feel connected to with other humans (WE of IT-ness), the ITS that I (and each human) as a human are connected into (IT of ITS-ness) and the ITS that all other humans are connected into with other humans (ITS of ITS-ness).

Together these four aspects co-arise and tetra-evolve and as experienced and interpreted by all the members of humanity individually and together moment by moment they comprise the ITS-ness of humanity.

The four aspects of the ITS of humanity are then:

Who do I feel connected to?
Who do you feel connected to?
Who am I connected to?
Who are you connected to?

where the I and the you are in each case *all* the members of the all.

WE-ness of Mankind

In an Integral Analysis of the holon that is humanity the Collective Interior aspect of that holon is our experience of mankind. This is no less than what it feels like to be a member of the species. This aspect is the essence of our collective sense of commonality. It is all our shared interpreted experience of our communal belonging in each and every moment and encompasses all experience that has occurred in

every previous moment. It is the sum of the collective sense of mankind's sense of shared-identity.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin describes in *The Phenomena of Man* (1959) (in a work that waited until after his death for publication) the complete expanse of our evolutionary progression to our own self-discovery. Of mankind he writes:

"Mankind: the idea of mankind was the first image in terms of which, at the very moment that he awoke to the idea of progress, modern man had to try to reconcile the hopes of an unlimited future with which he could no longer dispense, with the perspective of the inevitability of his own individual death." (Teilhard de Chardin 1963:245)

Being a Jesuit Priest and palaeontologist, he saw the quarrel between science and spirit as reconcilable. As the marriage guidance counsellor in the conjugation of sense and soul he observed: 'Both these and those fight on different planes and do not meet; each only sees half the problem' (1963:53). That problem he saw clearly:

"I am convinced that the two points of view require to be brought into union, and that they soon will unite in a kind of phenomenology or generalised physic in which the internal aspect of things as well as the external aspect of the world will be taken into account. Otherwise, so it seems to me, it is impossible to cover the totality of the cosmic phenomenon by one coherent explanation such as science may try to construct." (1963:53)

To resolve this Teilhard de Chardin created a (now familiar) distinction between the '*Without of matter in its connections and measurable dimensions*' (Right Hand Quadrants) and the '*Within of that same matter*' (Left Hand Quadrants) intuiting the co-evolutionary nature of all existence and affirming that '*co-extensive with their Without, there is a Within to things*'.

Expressed in his Three Qualitative Laws of Growth is a profound description of (what we now call) holons and their holarchy, and the relationship between the two in the higher and the lower as different aspects of the same expression of consciousness. These are translated as (1963:59-60):

A. First Observation

Atomicity is a common property of the Within and the Without of things.

B. Second Observation

Refracted rearwards along the course of evolution, consciousness displays itself qualitatively as a spectrum of shifting hints whose lower terms are lost in the night.

C. Third Observation

Spiritual perfection (or conscious 'centerity') and material synthesis (or complexity) are but two aspects or connected parts of one and the same phenomenon.

In following the evolution of mankind into the confluence of human thought, Teilhard de Chardin goes on to describes the question we face in identifying the WE-ness of humanity. He writes: "Being a collective reality, and therefore *sui generis*, mankind can only be understood to the extent that, leaving behind its body of tangible constructions, we try to determine the particular type of conscious synthesis emerging from its laborious and industrious concentration. It is in the last resort only definable as a mind." (Teilhard de Chardin 1963:248)

This aspect comprises the WE that I (and each human) as a human feels in being a member of mankind (I of WE-ness), the WE that all other humans feel in being a member of mankind that is also shared (WE of WE-ness), the WE that I (and each human) appear to have as a member of mankind (IT of WE-ness) and the WE that all other humans appear to have as members of mankind collectively (ITS of WE-ness).

Together these four aspects co-arise and tetra-evolve and as they are felt and seen by all the members of humanity individually and together moment by moment they comprise the WE-ness of humanity.

The four aspects of the WE of humanity are then:

What do I as a member of mankind feel like?

What does being a member of mankind feel like to you?

What do I as a member of mankind look like?

What does being a member of mankind look like in you?

where the I and the you are in each case *all* the members of the all.

And in holding each of these four aspects in their individual and collective combinations for every human holon simultaneously in our mind we are provided with the perspective from which to view the totality of the human experience.

The Immensity of the Diversity

In understanding the phenomena of the I, WE, IT and ITs of humanity we are spontaneously taken with the awe and wonder for all that we are.

The infiniteness of the diversity of the experiences of the individuals that are members of the human holon is only limited by the genetic and environmental diversity in which those individuals find themselves. The genetic combinations of each new human makes a newly distinct and diverse individual. Moment by moment those individuals are changing in their biological form as cells change, skin ages and neural nets configure or decline. Minute by minute new individuals are born and experience the world in new ways and other individuals do the same as their worldviews and experiences change. Second by second environmental conditions alter in the micro and in the macro affecting our existence and our experience of that existence. In all of these exterior changes continuously in the ever changing present all of us are being and becoming in our own individual forms.

To this infiniteness of being we add the social aspects of the communal collectives of all individuals. The infiniteness of all individuals is expanded to included the infinite diversity of all the combinations those individuals can form. In families, personal relationships, communities, communalities, in systems of forms and forms of systems, representative groups, purposeful organisations, national and international bodies. All are in continuous formation and reformation, multiple and interlinked exchanges of a continual hyper-dance of relational exchange, contribution and attribution. Each individual is within a collective process of individuals and no person is not within, the dance of the Without.

To this exterior of possibilities there is the variety of interior potentialities as to the shared meaning continually developed in conversation, conjunction, opposition and proposition. Dialogue and intimacy within unfathomable depths of interiors, expressed in the present and in artefacts of the past, as communicated knowing, in dance, poetry, literature and countless forms of voiced and unvoiced felt-shared experience. Culturally nuanced and enriched by language, symbol, sign and word, as commonly understood artefacts of a greater Kosmic embrace that brings source to the soul and joy to the lips in a shared unity of common understanding.

And to this we add the infinite I-ness, the simple feeling of unexpressed being that arises in each and every exquisite moment of becoming. An unravelling of the Kosmos in thought, feeling, recognition of that thought and feeling, in anxious anxiety and blissful bliss, finding within the world our world within. A connection of experience to each passing moment and each moment passed, known only forever to the knower and held deep within each individual person's continuum of every expanding being-ness of self, and the unexpressed Self expressed within.

It is a wonderland of the dimensions of the human experience and the phenomena that is all human-ness. And in all of this, in all these parts, in all their dynamic interplay, we have all that we need, but have not even begun to touch on the description of humanity.

The Emergence of Humanity

An Integral Theory inquiry into the holon of humanity maps for us the aspects of inquiry into that phenomenon. That phenomenon is one that is in dynamic emergence. That holon is part of a holarchy which includes all the experience of other sentient beings and all existent matter. All of these parts are also in a dynamic emergence.

It is at this point, in seeing all of the parts of the whole, that we reach a limit in our Integral Theory inquiry. To see the phenomenon of the parts we must let go of that order of immense detail and see the resultant of those parts. Just as the non-existent "I" is not known by its parts – so the non-existent *humanity* is unknowable by its. We need instead to see the resultant form.

To look at the resultant form we will need to see the dynamic interplay between the multitude of parts arising from moment to moment. We will need to see a different set of phenomena, being the properties of the whole in emergence, revealed at its next level of height. It is a perspective of the whole from within.

Obviously this type of seeing takes practice. It is also a perspective that cannot be developed by one. By its nature, the holding of the immensity of the perspectives, and a perspective on those perspectives from outside of all of those perspectives, requires a different approach - and a different discipline.

When we are ready to look to the emergent dynamics of humanity, to know not only what we are and where we have come from, but also what we are likely to be, in this moment, and each other moment, being the next, and the next, and the next – we will need to develop a perspective that 'integrates the integral', returning the four aspects into one – which will allow us to see ourselves, as a dynamic emergent whole, for the first time.

What the experience of this will be like, is best described from the future:

'The consciousness of each of us is evolution looking at itself and reflecting. With that very simple view, destined as I suppose, to become as instinctive and familiar to our descendants as the discovery of a third dimension in space is to a baby, a new light – inexhaustibly harmonious – bursts upon the world, radiating from ourselves.'
(Teilhard de Chardin 1963:221)

The Whole (by its Parts)

An inquiry into the individual perspectives of the phenomena experienced as human reality (IT), the individual phenomena experienced as our human-ness (I), the collective phenomena of the species of man (ITs) and the collective phenomena of our experience of mankind-ness (WE) reveals to us the integral parts of our humanity. In it we find ourselves as both a part, and as a whole.

But outlined here is only the discipline for that inquiry, not the answer itself. To participate further in the discipline of this inquiry requires of us a perspective that only arises from a deep desire for our own collective emergence and the deepest compassion for all those who are participants in this process.

Its further inquiry can only be accomplished in participation with each other, for we are all parts of, and are *all the parts of*, this emergent whole. In this we are reminded of the great kindness of all and the suffering that is of any is the suffering of the one, the all, and ourselves. It is with this mind that we find the reason why we would inquire further into the emergent phenomenon of our own humanity.

This *humanity* is ours to see - as perceiver, perceived and the Witness.

It is *humanity* as can be seen by the Godhead.

It is the *humanity* that is known already by you.

It is the *humanity* felt as a whole/part of you at your deepest level of being.

It is that part of *you* where you and all - are simply *one*.

It is the *humanity* that is yours to bring into being ... for each and every human being.

By **William Varey**

(18 August 2006)

Footnotes:

1. Integral theory is an undefined philosophical discipline that is in continuous evolution both in theory and practice. The reference to Integral Theory (capitalised) in this paper is used to refer to the collection of the philosophical concepts described by author and philosopher Ken Wilber. As such, the reference to its use here is inaccurate, as the application of that discipline is multi-faceted and each use here has the omission of a number of aspects. The phrase is therefore used to simply note that this is a work informed by Integral Theory while not a full application of it and to distinguish this inquiry from other 'integral' approaches.
2. Arthur Koestler (1905-1983) was a war journalist and novelist, who wrote on questions of both science and mysticism. In explaining these divergent interests he (not surprisingly and in a recurrent theme) writes: "Out of my quarrels with the human condition I made my novels; the other books are attempts to analyse that same condition in scientific terms. In my more optimistic moments it seems to me that the two add up to whole." We are also indebted to Koestler as from his sixty six properties of open ended systems (arranged into ten parts) we obtained Wilber's expanded and simplified twenty tenets (arranged into twelve parts) to complete our experience of the complexities of the conceptual nature of holarchy.
3. From this simple distinction and the use of descriptions such as 'depth', 'span', 'larger', 'wider' and 'higher' has arisen the myth of the spiral as part of Integral Theory. Koestler (1967) in introducing these terms was careful to avoid archetypal images, being the superficial analogies he was attempting to dispel. The depiction of a holarchy as other than a network of mutual interaction with reference to the nature of the interaction in an open-ended system brings with it a limiting graphical representation. The spiral is a useful, but unfortunately limiting metaphor, that does not feature highly in Wilber's diagrams. Within the depiction of a holarchy in this way can be a paradigmatic bias towards ascendancy and a hidden assumption that with depth there is *increased* span. This can create a tendency towards a subtle loss of perspective of the continuous interplay of integration and disassociation and the dynamics of the openness of the system, instead implying some form of structural linearity and integrity. Wilber describes this approach as a 'wilber-2 type of model' (Wilber T.O.E page 146 fn. 6). Where the interconnections of the holarchy being inquired into are not rigid or confined, the metaphor breaks down, and is not useful as a predictive tool of emergence or a descriptive model of a presently existing emergent equilibrium. The construct can restrict our opening to the perception of subtler forms.
4. The root lines, annotated root lines and commentary on the root lines of the root-text of the Mahayana 'Seven Point Mind Training' contain different transcriptions of the ultimate practice. Chekawa Yeshé Dorjé's annotation to Atiśa's teaching as penned by Geshe Chekawa's pupil, Sé Chilbu Chókyi Gyaltzen, is taken here as the appropriate teaching within that lineage for this quote (Thupten Jinpa 2006).

- ⁵ Integral Theory is a way for humans to understand a human reality – nothing more, nothing less. Integral Theory therefore comprises a ‘theory of everything’ only to the extent that humans have the capacity of understanding ‘everything’. Its silent subtitle should perhaps be ‘*A Theory of Everything (as understood by many humans)*’. It is, however, a comprehensive understanding of how we understand our collective reality drawing from the depth and breadth of the human experience across time and across states of consciousness. In that accomplishment, no other conceptualisation is as integral. It is therefore the most useful philosophy for studying the emergent phenomenon of humanity, as seen by and as relevant to, the participants in that emergence.
- ⁶ We may for the purposes of an inquiry into a *part* of the human phenomena chose to look at only some of the individual members of the entire human holon (i.e. those residents of a particular city, or employees of a particular organisation – and exclude non-residents or non-employees, who may never-the-less be in social and environmental interaction with the included individuals). The collective social and cultural aspects of those groups of individuals are sometimes said to form social or cultural holons, distinct from the particular individuals, and the dynamics of their intersections. This approach contains an ontological error that causes significant problems of distinction that cannot be reconciled in an application of Integral Theory (Wilber 2006). This mode of partial inquiry (while valuable) is not used to inform any part of this piece – which only looks at the phenomenon of all individuals within the human holon, without exception.
- ⁷ Theorists and purists may cease reading at this point of the paper if the inquiry may offend in any way, as we are seemingly inquiring into something that cannot be known, and seem to be applying the whole, as a mere part. Apologetically then, offence to limits of thought has never been an intention, but has necessarily always been a by-product, of any integral inquiry – especially offence to those limits which are our own, as the inquirer. The strength of Integral Theory as a theory of philosophy is that it acknowledges ways of knowing outside of accepted knowledge. This then creates problems in the application of an Integral Theory analysis that has to occur within accepted knowledge.
- ⁸ The challenge in this inquiry is that rather than being an application of Integral Theory within our span of knowing to the entirety of our span of knowing, we are asked to apply Integral Theory *on* our collective span of knowing. While we have an ontological basis for this (being our perspective on our ontological reality provided by Integral Theory itself), our epistemological and methodological experience of this level of inquiry (in words) is limited. In interpreting the analysis from this perspective our tendency will often be to re-interpret the words used from within our present perspective, at which time our consciousness will seek to re-frame what is described. The practitioner who can hold the required perspective will read the words used without the need for re-interpretation. The mind that is asked to do this, is the mind of humanity, and not the mind of the human member participant. In this way and for this reason this piece is described, not as a theoretical analysis, but simply as a meditation to be used in the training of the compassionate mind.

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