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## Clare W. Graves and the Turn of Our Times

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### ABSTRACT

Clare W. Graves (1914 – 1986) was a psychologist and visionary who pioneered an evolutionary theory of human values. Based on research concerning differing views of “what is a mature human being,” he developed the idea of a universal progression of value-structures. According to the theory both individuals and societies may be placed in this progression. This paper attempts to summarize Graves’ ideas and his influences on others, while grappling with what I see as some of his theory’s most important problems. Refinements are proposed that bear on the theory as a whole, with a particular focus on how it applies to contemporary postmodernism.

*Keywords:* Graves; Beck; Cowan; Spiral Dynamics; meme; postmodern; integral

### 1 Introduction

*[T]he worst historian has a clearer view of the period he studies than the best of us can hope to form of that in which we live. The obscurest epoch is today.* Robert Louis Stevenson, The Day After To-Morrow

#### 1.1 Purpose

The influence of Clare Graves on integral theory today is considerable. Through the medium of Spiral Dynamics, his ideas have entered the currency of conversation, at least among those interested in theories of evolving consciousness. The spiral of consciousness-stages he pioneered makes for a vision that deserves to be recognized, both for its sweeping breadth and for its penetrating insight into deep social structures. Yet it is disturbing that Graves' ideas are nowadays more often cited, used in conversation, or otherwise recognized tangentially, than they are examined straightforwardly and thus subjected to deliberate acceptance, refutation, or criticism. The editors of Graves' posthumous manuscript (Graves 2005) acknowledge that his aversion toward subjecting his theories to professional critical scrutiny led him to withhold much of his work from publication in his lifetime. He seems to have preferred the role of a kind of prophet, promulgating his views without inviting further discussion or elaboration, instead of entering the messy arena of active scholarship. In leaving his legacy in not-quite-finished form, and in cultivating followers who have elaborated his ideas leaving them essentially unquestioned, he appears to have succeeded in leaving us a provocative and important theory, while so far avoiding anything like a debate about its merits.

My purpose in this essay is to provide what is as far as I know the first public, in-depth evaluation of Graves' theory, describing what I see as its most important explanatory features, while also pointing out and attempting to address significant areas needing refinement. In the course of this investigation I will end up offering up three proposed elaborations to the theory, touching among other things on the fundamentals of how the theory's levels of consciousness should properly be conceived. The theory as I have proposed amending it should still be recognizable as Graves' creation, albeit with more complexity added to its structure.

The continuity between Graves' ideas and mine is strongest with regard to the historical (“first-tier”) levels of consciousness dominant up to the present time. “Second-tier” levels are those Graves considered to be just

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beginning to emerge in our era, radically distinguished by certain ethical features, and to be urgently needed to address current world-problems. Here, I have a more limitative conception than did Graves about how far such second-tier levels can as yet be reasonably discussed. On the other hand, the final first-tier level of postmodernism should in my view be conceived in somewhat broader terms than Graves', and this broadened notion of postmodernism may be helpful for contemporary readers, it is hoped, in inviting the recognition of our own personal aspirations as also reflected in the underlying structure of postmodern culture.

## 1.2 Organization

This essay is organized in three major sections (following this brief introductory section). Section 2 introduces Graves' original material and provides some overall commentary. Section 3 presents the elaborations to Graves' theory mentioned above. Section 4 places my evaluation and elaborations in context, first tracing Graves' influence on contemporary integral theorists, and then considering the place of his theories in the broader cultural context.

A more detailed summary is as follows. Since Graves' original work, though available,<sup>1</sup> is not widely read in the integral theory community, having been mainly popularized by Beck and Cowan under the name Spiral Dynamics (hereafter, "SD"), some kind of recap seems useful, even for those already familiar with SD concepts. Subsection 2.1 provides a brief overview of Graves' major (2005) manuscript; it is aimed to be as free as possible of my evaluation of Graves' work, so as to serve as a source of neutral background material. Subsection 2.2 is devoted to general, high-level critical remarks on the overall strengths and weaknesses of Graves' legacy.

The next major section presents this essay's three refinements to the theory. In §3.1, I develop a slightly-elaborated version of how the structures in Graves' theory may be conceived as progressive "turnings" between *pairs* of privileged values, as opposed to their original conception as oriented toward single privileged values, along with the reasoning for why this slightly more complex elaboration is believed to be necessary. Subsection 3.2 addresses the application of the theory to postmodernism, arguing for a wider conception of this stage. The version of postmodernism explored here centers on an awakening toward personal authenticity, a notion that ultimately will be seen to include as a special case Graves' notion of postmodernism as feelings-based communitarianism (privileging the value of "inclusivity"). Subsection 3.3 explores several alternative notions of Graves' basic structural concept of alternating individualistic and collectivistic value-structures.

As a postlude to these refinements, §3.4 summarizes my perspective regarding what can reasonably be said at this historical moment about putatively emerging second-tier structures, in reply to Graves, as well as to others in the integral theory community.

Section 4 (much shorter than section 3) is devoted to context. Subsection 4.1 investigates the influence of Graves on integral theorist Ken Wilber, followed by a summary of his influence on other integral theorists and in integral-related academic discourse (§4.2). In §4.3, I summarize perspectives on postmodernism that appear prevalent in mainstream academia today, pointing out Graves' originality as perhaps the most constructive and original theorist to date in describing this stage. Subsection 4.4 concludes the essay with still more general reflections on the significance of the matters at hand in the history of philosophy.

Finally, two brief appendices cover areas of detail relevant throughout. Appendix A goes over the work of the SD authors in popularizing and sharpening Graves' theory. Its main purpose is to disambiguate as far as possible their important contributions from Graves' original work; some criticism specific to the SD material is also included. Appendix B provides clarification on terminology: justifying the choices made here among slightly different potential names for stages, and among the terms chosen to represent their associated values.

### 1.3 Methods

Graves' stages of consciousness, when subject to testing and reconsideration, are mainly considered in this essay using examples intended to describe their earlier known historical appearances, i.e., as "leading-edge" stages, as opposed to their continuing existence in populations with later stages already active as well. This is partly for clarity in identifying individuals and phenomena already associated symbolically with a given stage as it first developed, and also because their early appearances may best help to illustrate stages in a relatively pure form.

While examples from various spheres of life appear, historical surveys of certain art-forms (music, painting and sculpture, literature) are used extensively in the sections involving original investigations (§§3.1, 3.2, 3.3).

If I may anticipate a likely objection -- that the art surveys reflect various biases (e.g., in favor of North American and European art), and are therefore not properly generalizable to other cultures -- I would ask the reader to remember that these surveys are attempts to summarize the historic appearances of certain leading-edge evolutionary developments *only*. Whatever their limitations as systematic surveys, these explorations are intended to convey detailed and impressionistic associations as broadly as possible, and therefore are structured to rely on canonical examples, as nearly as I could find them.

## 2 Graves' Legacy

### 2.1 The Never-Ending Quest

Graves originally developed his spiral model of evolving levels of consciousness based on his research in the 1950s and '60s on the varied conceptions of "the mature human being" among his students and research-subjects. He came to the view that the substantial variety he found represented a slice-in-time microcosm of the history of human beings, in which persons who are contemporary with each other may nevertheless be rooted in very different stages of consciousness-evolution. According to this view, a society at any given time may be viewed as distributed over a kind of spiral of ascending development, within which both groups and individuals move around from time to time, but in which their centers-of-gravity nevertheless remain fixed with a certain stability -- i.e., true transformations between levels are possible but infrequent. Thus, at a given moment of history, the "modern" worldview of maturity (say) might perhaps be considered the "leading edge" stage of overall human development, but only a small fraction of the human beings alive at that moment would realistically be centered there. Very near all of the rest would be centered in worldviews that represent "leading edge" structures from humanity's past -- much as in "ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny"<sup>2</sup> in biology.

Graves' levels or stages, called "v-memes" in SD materials (from "value-memes," taking the latter word from Dawkins), are acknowledged to be complex, with many opportunities for individual variation within them. He presents many examples of shadings of partial-progressions between v-memes. However, the overall presentation is quite straightforward: strong, contrasting portraits of the successive memes are drawn, and the claim of a law-like progression between memes is made. Further, Graves notes a fundamental oscillation between memes that emphasize individualistic values (upper-quadrant perspectives, in Wilber's terminology<sup>3</sup>) and those that emphasize communitarian (lower-quadrant) values. The SD authors (Beck and Cowan 1996) later assigned "warm" colors BEIGE, RED, ORANGE, YELLOW, to the first group, and "cool" colors PURPLE, BLUE, GREEN, TURQUOISE, to the latter.

Graves is careful in his writing to emphasize that later ("higher") value-systems should not be considered "better" in implying any moral superiority for those who have graduated to them -- only a more evolved sense of maturity. The particulars of his levels of human "existence" bear a limited resemblance to the hierarchy of needs popularized by his better-known contemporary A.H. Maslow, also a professional colleague of Graves' in

psychology. The first six (first-tier) memes are all supposed to be based in some psychological sense on survival -- like Maslow's basic (or "deficiency") needs -- whereas the last two (second-tier) memes are based on an expanded notion of being -- like Maslow's "self-actualization" needs (Maslow 1954; Maslow 1968). Each level in Graves' theory focuses on one particular privileged need or imperative, as summarized in the list below:

level (SD label)	privileged need
BEIGE	organismic survival
PURPLE	safety, security
RED	personal efficacy, power
BLUE	social belonging (thought-based)
ORANGE	personal achievement, innovation
GREEN	social belonging (feelings-based)
YELLOW	engagement (on behalf of Kosmic <sup>4</sup> survival)
TURQUOISE	appreciation (of Kosmic mystery)

Thus, at level BEIGE, the individual is motivated chiefly by a more-or-less continual perceived threat to basic physiological survival: if his hunger is satisfied, some other instinctual need related to bodily survival--thirst, cold, fatigue, sexual excitement, etc. -- soon becomes an overriding preoccupation. The transition to PURPLE occurs precisely when some sense of a reality beyond these instinctual imperatives attains enough psychic gravity to replace BEIGE preoccupations with new ones. The overriding idea is that the "solution" to any set of human life-conditions tends to create a new pattern of conditions, and new types of problems, that ultimately give rise to a newly creative pattern of solutions and further new problems (thus, the title of Graves' manuscript, "the Never-Ending Quest"). Within this view, the next set of problems after those of BEIGE have successfully transitioned *must* involve the need for personal safety (PURPLE), historically secured by humans via strong tribal bonding, appeasement of magical-seeming natural forces (e.g., through the sacrificial rites of nomadic tribal peoples) and strict observation of rhythms of behavior thought to be in harmony with spirits and with nature.<sup>5</sup>

The next four levels may seem based on their very brief descriptions above to be subject to more nuanced differentiations. In Graves' telling, they are nevertheless radically different from one another. RED consciousness is all about open aggression and "taking what one can get"; ORANGE (modernism), while also about individualistic "getting ahead" is based on much more intricate forms of competition than are possible in a world of naked conflict. Unlike RED, with its still-close ties to instinctual urges and fears for immediate survival, ORANGE relies on a balance of somewhat stable social norms (e.g., competitive behaviour within a general rule-of-law framework, inquisitive science within an overall materialist worldview) and continually evolving means (innovative technology). Likewise, BLUE (traditionalism) and GREEN (postmodernism), though both communitarian memes, are quite different: whereas BLUE is about individual submission to the a single "right way" as defined by a socially-agreed authority, GREEN is about respect for the "many right ways" that can coexist when there is no undue domination of a single perspective pretending to universality.

A really thorough synopsis of Graves' system is beyond the scope of this essay; readers wishing for extensive exposure should consult one of several available sources.<sup>6</sup> A slightly more detailed summary, courtesy of the SD authors (Beck and Cowan 1996, 41), is presented in the following table.

<u>orig</u> <u>trms*</u>	<u>vMEME</u>	<u>Generic Names**</u>	<u>Popular Names</u>	<u>Basic Motives</u>
AN	BEIGE		<i>SurvivalSense</i>	staying alive through innate sensory equipment.
BO	PURPLE		<i>KinSpirits</i>	blood relationships and mysticism in a magical and scary world.
CP	RED	Despotism	<i>PowerGods</i>	enforce power over self, others, and nature through exploitative independence.
DQ	BLUE	Traditionalism	<i>TruthForce</i>	absolute belief in one right way and obedience to authority.
ER	ORANGE	Modernism	<i>StriveDrive</i>	possibility thinking focused on making things better for self.
FS	GREEN	Postmodernism	<i>HumanBond</i>	well-being of people and building consensus gets highest priority,
A'N' <sup>7</sup>	YELLOW		<i>FlexFlow</i>	flexible adaptations to change through connected, big-picture views.
B'O'	TURQUOISE		<i>GlobalView</i>	attention to whole-Earth dynamics and macro-level actions.

\* Graves' original labels for his eight vMememes.

*(Neither Graves' nor my labels, first and third columns above, are in the original chart.)*

\*\* These are my preferred common-language generic labels.

Graves' original labels for the levels (leftmost column above) are intended to indicate progressions both of life-conditions and of neurological systems activated in order to deal with those conditions. Thus, for the first v-meme (Graves' system AN), life-conditions set A indicates a basic situation in which maintaining bodily homeostasis is a continual challenge. Neurological system N indicates the instinct-based neurological tools with which primitive humans (then and now) deal with these conditions. In proposing eight stages with parallel progressions of conditions and organismic systems for addressing them, Graves is claiming actual neurological structures that have been activated at each transition-point in consciousness-evolution. The reason the seventh and eighth v-memes (A'N' and B'O') return to modified versions of the first names is that Graves discerns a larger cycle in which after the first six levels, motivations are recapitulated in a much vaster conceptual context. The first (AN) stage is all about maintaining individual survival; stage A'N' is about maintaining planetary survival. Similarly, stage BO is about tribal-bonding; B'O' about planetary "bonding" through the vehicle of individuals' vastly broadened sense of mutual and other-directed concern.

Other notable features of Graves' 2005 presentation include his frequent emphasis on what he sees as the empirical foundations of his theory, and his business-minded applications. Each level is described in general terms as a stage of human consciousness with examples of the statements of the original research-subjects. Further discussion about individuals at each level includes significant sections about how each type should ideally be managed in a business enterprise. More particularly, he addresses the question of what type of rewards, incentives, directives and control-mechanisms are most suitable in attempting to manage a person who is centered in each of these levels. He also asks how such a person is likely to respond to various typical contemporary management techniques.

A few excerpts from Graves' manuscript may provide a useful sense of the flavor of his original presentation (since the SD popularization is so much better known). I will look at Graves' summary descriptions of postmodernism (GREEN) and his next-level consciousness (YELLOW), as these will serve the dual purpose of providing both a taste of his prose, and ready references for some concepts that will be discussed later.

Here is Graves on the "basic operation" of postmodernism:

In the [postmodern] state the person's struggle for individuality is over. One's own and others' individualities' are recognized. When the person begins to think this way, the person is free from the *struggle* for life, free of the struggle for control, free from the struggle for ego definition, free of struggling to help others, free of the struggle for freedom, free from guilt, free of having to develop feelings for others. This person is much more affectively warm than in any of the other systems that we have. They exude warmth for other human beings and they show a tremendous capacity to extend the right of the other person's full expression to that other person. They just wouldn't think of moving in on another person and in any way suggesting how that person should think or believe or behave.

As the sociocentric [postmodern] state begins to develop, the person begins to think in terms of being different from others, as living in different situations and in terms of not 'the one and the only way to behave,' not in terms of 'the best way to behave,' but in terms of 'the most appropriate way to behave in that particular situation.' He and she have found that some people survive living one way; some people survive living in another way.

So, it gives birth to what we call relativistic thinking; that is thinking in terms of behaving as the situation calls for, trying to get along with the unassailable laws of the universe, and in terms of trying to live in a way that many ways of thinking can live together at one and the same time. (Graves 2005, 347-48)

Another excerpt is from an example within Graves' presentation of a quoted original response about "what is a mature human being," in this case from one of his research respondents who was judged to be postmodern (at stage GREEN):

"... The mature personality is a participating, creative personality which in its operation does justice to every type of personality, every mode of culture, every human potential without forming anyone into typological models.

The mature personality provides a means for bringing relations of reciprocity and willing amity to the entire family of human beings...." (Graves 2005, 342)

On the next stage beyond postmodernism (YELLOW, the first second-tier level), here is Graves again:

Values here, at the Cognitive Existential State, are very different values [from first-tier values]. Seventh-level [YELLOW] values come not from selfish interest but from the recognition of the magnificence of existence and from the desire to see that it shall continue to be....

[YELLOW] thinking is in terms of the systemic whole and thought is about many different wholes in different ways. Thought strives to ascertain which way of thinking or which combination of ways fits the extant set of conditions....

He [the person at YELLOW] sees the world and all its things -- all its beings and all its people -- as truly interdependent.... He values that which will enable all animals, all plants and things to be, and all mankind to become. His ethics are based on the best possible evidence as to what will benefit *all* [Graves' emphasis] -- [benefitting only] the majority, the needy, or the desiring is not enough. (Graves 2005, 369-70)

I will close this recap subsection by noting briefly the history of Graves' work. Gathered over many years for intended publication, his manuscript was in the end kept largely private during the author's lifetime, apparently due partly to his health problems and partly to his reluctance to subject this work to professional criticism without first meeting highly exacting standards of rigor in supporting his conclusions (Graves 2005, i-v). Published nearly twenty years after his death, the manuscript runs to more than 500 pages and seems in

some ways quite exhaustive in its treatment, given the presuppositions inherent in Graves' methods. His ideas awaited popularization by others, primarily the SD authors.

## 2.2 General Commentary on Graves' Methods and Conclusions

Graves' important overall contribution, in my view, was to see in the welter of human values prevalent in his lifetime (and today) a picture of a variegated human history, and to see an evolutionary flow in that history. The v-memes he depicts, often with colorful and skilfully-chosen examples, represent on reflection mostly familiar human developmental types (staunch traditionalists, ambitious modernists, label-defying postmodernists). What is new with Graves' theory is both its claim of systematic breadth and the idea that these memes are linked together in a universal progression of evolution -- not only in the various historic contexts when they first arose (a fairly uncontroversial idea), but also for the very many individuals who retain value-structures in later eras when they no longer represent the "leading edge" of overall human consciousness.<sup>8</sup>

It is in his bold approach to the more familiar stages of the period of written human history over the past five-or-so thousand years (RED, BLUE, ORANGE), along with his developmental interpretation of how these memes affect later eras, that Graves seems to me to provide his most solid and unambiguous contribution. His stereotype-descriptions, again, would seem familiar for most educated people, especially in their original historic context: the optimistic, rationalist ambition characteristic of the European Enlightenment period, succeeding the religiosity and self-abnegation of the medieval era, which in turn succeeded the organized savagery of ancient empires. The idea is more novel that these three levels represent a stage-like evolution corresponding to existing structures among people throughout many overlapping eras, and in a broader sense that they mark out a universal human developmental progression: from the struggle for raw power or ability to affect one's own condition (RED), to that for order, for a cosmos within which we can mentally orient ourselves in relationship (BLUE), to that for focussed innovation, continually "reinventing ourselves" based on changing external conditions (ORANGE). Much of this appears not only new with Graves, but also increasingly resonant with the work of many other contemporary thinkers in the years since he wrote.<sup>9</sup>

Personally, I find Graves' treatment of earlier stages (BEIGE, PURPLE) much less interesting; it seems to me that our knowledge of the corresponding historical structures is so remote that it is difficult to have a distinct sense of resonance with the theories as advanced. Surely it seems reasonable to suppose that instinctual, survival-based reactivity (BEIGE) is the most primal, pre-cognitive mode of proto-human "being." But how far it is possible to generalize about the supposedly universal transition from BEIGE to safety-oriented magical thinking (PURPLE), as ascribed to early tribal cultures, seems to me very difficult to say definitively, given our distance from these developments.

With regard to Graves' description of the postmodern level (GREEN), so important in the here-and-now for those of us living in post-industrial societies, my response is ambivalent. On the one hand, Graves' approach to postmodernism as a relatively recent leading-edge development is certainly new and provocative. He seems to be the first theorist to provide a unitary, concrete and coherent interpretation of postmodernism that is broadly intelligible in human, and not merely abstract, terms. His notion of feelings-based inclusivity as a guiding imperative seems to me an important step forward from the more minimal and often vague notions of postmodernism current among academic scholars today. (No doubt the very strength of postmodernism in academia today has much to do with why genuine criticism of postmodernism *per se* seems relegated to a certain renegade status in academic circles.<sup>10</sup>) On the other hand, whether Graves' description of the spirit of postmodernism may actually be considered complete even in essentials, or whether instead it represents only a partial view, seems to me highly debatable, as discussed more fully below (§3.2). Nevertheless, it remains an important contribution, even if only a partial one, perhaps in some ways more unique and original than his treatment of the three preceding earlier stages.



On the later descriptions of second-tier structures (YELLOW and TURQUOISE), I find myself in more distinct disagreement with Graves. Though clearly deeply-felt and important to their author, these second-tier ideas appear to me mainly inspirational in nature at the present time and without adequate foundation as currently-discernible stages of development. Though Graves (like Wilber) pays a certain reluctant respect to postmodernism,<sup>11</sup> it is clear that both these authors regard themselves primarily as heralds of a "post-postmodern era" and as well that they both have enormous axes to grind with postmodernism itself. I am less optimistic about the nearness and definability of a leading-edge stage that may be replacing postmodernism in our immediate time, and am therefore more interested in looking into the healthier and more hopeful aspects of postmodernism itself, rather than in looking particularly for its successor. Further, I believe there is evidence pointing toward a broader reinterpretation of this stage, as will be discussed here (§3.2).

Moving on to consider overall stylistic and presentational issues, I find myself struck at times by what seems an astonishing apparent naïveté on Graves' part, peculiarly matching the astonishing boldness of his ideas. Writing largely privately he takes an extraordinarily bold stance in asserting the universality of his developmental theory, apparently with the hope that by supporting his views with voluminous examples and vague evidence he might compel a broad acceptance of the theory.<sup>12</sup> Further, he leaves some basic questions (e.g., about human development in historical context) apparently unconsidered, or any rate unaddressed, in his otherwise far-reaching manuscript.<sup>13</sup> Finally, Graves appears curiously unconscious of how his own style as presenter jars with the prophet-like stance he takes as progenitor of a radically-new developmental theory. On the one hand, he is quite capable of casually asserting the contemporary importance of his own teachings. And on the other, he seems to ignore a certain necessarily timeless aspect that must inform the prophetic stance. When Graves presents his structures, often brilliantly but with an unquestioned style that seems reflective of a specifically late-modern preoccupation with individual productivity -- repeatedly explaining, for example, how employees at each level of existence are best managed in a business setting -- it is hard not to notice that Graves himself is operating in what is clearly still at least in part a modernist-informed milieu fundamentally oriented to individual efficiency and achievement, even while he is claiming in almost the same breath to have discerned structures of consciousness that supposedly transcend the entire modernist outlook (and even a fully-separated post-modern outlook as well). As well, his broad empiricism and continual insistence on basing his developmental constructs on physically-based, economic "life conditions" may be striking to some readers in their implied presuppositions. Grand philosophical endeavors like his that involve transformation of consciousness may be expected inevitably to invite paradoxes as regards the grounding of the particular perspective of the philosopher, but Graves gives no sense of awareness of these paradoxes as they arise.

Such are some of the general omissions and defects in the presentation, as I see it. On balance, it still seems to me a highly interesting and worthwhile contribution, as far as it goes, especially in the broader context of the germination and growth of integral theory. It seems strange to me that despite pervasive influence in the integral theory community, as detailed further below (§§4.1, 4.2), few nowadays seem to bother to read Graves in the original, content perhaps with the summary of his views communicated via SD materials.

### 3 Proposed Refinements to the Theory

#### 3.1 Proposal for a Refinement of Graves' v-Meme Concept, as Suggested by Evidence from Art History

The developmental stages in Graves' system have been introduced as social systems that address human needs, each with a specific emphasis on certain particular needs, through the means of a specific structure of values. Modernism (ORANGE), for example, privileges the need for *achievement*, for mastery over the

external challenges of worldly existence and the satisfaction as far as possible of human desires. The means for this privileging is a memetic value-structure that effectively communicates the importance and value of consensually-defined material "success" -- a value which in turn typically necessitates a strong work-ethic on the part of individuals, as well as an objective mental orientation (scientism, once traditional religion has been replaced) and an imperative toward flexibility of means (innovation) and continual adaptation in the face of ever-changing external life-conditions.

From a psychological viewpoint, Graves' summarizes the theme of this stage with the maxim to "express self for what self desires but in a fashion calculated not to bring down the wrath of (important or influential) others," describing it as "the dominant mode in existence in America today" (Graves 2005, 310). We can indeed recognize in the capitalist social structure of the contemporary American milieu the strong push (arguably increasingly beleaguered nowadays) toward hard-work-in-service-of-prosperity as tacitly expected ordinary behavior, and also toward occasional "self-reinvention," as commonly to be expected on the part of the individual in his relations with the perceived demands of the external world.<sup>14</sup>

Graves' model thus captures something about how contemporary culture inculcates a certain mode of perception and a certain mode of thinking on the part of many individuals. Persons operating in a society with a good deal of gravity at the modernist (ORANGE) stage of development, like present-day America, will likely be at least somewhat influenced in their thinking (upper-left quadrant perspectives, in Wilber's terminology) by socio-culturally transmitted (lower-left) materialist/scientistic (ORANGE) values, though the individual is also empowered to evolve on a trajectory that is not entirely determined by social forces and indeed to influence in return (typically in a microscopic way) the evolution of the larger society to which he belongs.

But if the historical picture drawn so far captures neatly some aspects of human consciousness-evolution, other aspects seem to fit the theory less well. In particular, there are aspects that show up via artifacts of certain kinds of social behavior that appear to resist the timing of the theory as elaborated so far. I will focus in this subsection on the artistic legacy of modernism and the memes around it. In the West, with the advent of modernist consciousness comes the gradual secularization of painting, music and the other fine arts, and the rapid development of radically more complex forms of artistic technique than in earlier structures (e.g., the technique of visual perspective in drawing and painting). Beginning with the burst of creativity we now call the Renaissance, an epic journey by these forms through the modern age takes place. In Western tonal music, the progression from Renaissance polyphony through the Baroque to the Rococo to the "Classical" (of Haydn and Mozart) to the Romantic styles, all of which we collectively call "classical" music today, nicely illustrates the arc of modernist development. With the postmodern "break" that occurred most dramatically in the West around the early decades of the twentieth century, many of these elaborate technical forms collapsed and were abruptly replaced with a kind of chaos of even more radically new activity that would have made no sense in the old structure (atonal music; non-representational visual art). Both the actual practice of art and its tangible results immediately becomes vastly more formally *innovative* in the postmodern stage, which is peculiar under a Gravesian view, because "innovation" is supposed to be the elevated activity *par excellence* of modernism, rather than of postmodernism. Put differently, while innovation is recognizable as a kind of gradual attractor in the progression of modernist art (e.g., in the slowly evolving and increasingly innovative forms within classical music), actual innovation in practice explodes with the advent of twentieth-century postmodern art<sup>15</sup> in a way that is far more abrupt and outwardly obvious from the relevant artifacts that are left to us.

The resolution of this conundrum appears to me to necessitate a redefinition of Graves' core concept of v-memes. Staying with the initial example of modernism as expressed via art, let us provisionally consider "modernism" to mean not simply a value-structure somehow privileging individual achievement, and innovation as a key means toward achievement, but instead to mean a structure *in tension between* the privileging of these values, on the one hand, and the still-potent older social expectations of respect for

(consensually defined) "cosmic order" (BLUE's privileged value, in Graves' system), on the other. Modernism (ORANGE) could then be better understood as an *attraction* toward innovation, while still importantly under the *restraint* of another set of values that appear to be integral to the modernist value-system itself. If we provisionally consider "order" as the "restraining-value" of the ORANGE system, we have the beginning of a more general picture. For this pattern can be continued: achievement/innovation as the "attractor-value" of ORANGE will become the "restraining-value" of the next system (GREEN). And it will specifically await the advent of GREEN, largely during the twentieth-century, for "innovation" as a value to be itself played out in its more unrestrained forms -- while the "attractor-value" of the overall system of Western culture is turning in another, quite different direction ("inclusivity" per Graves).

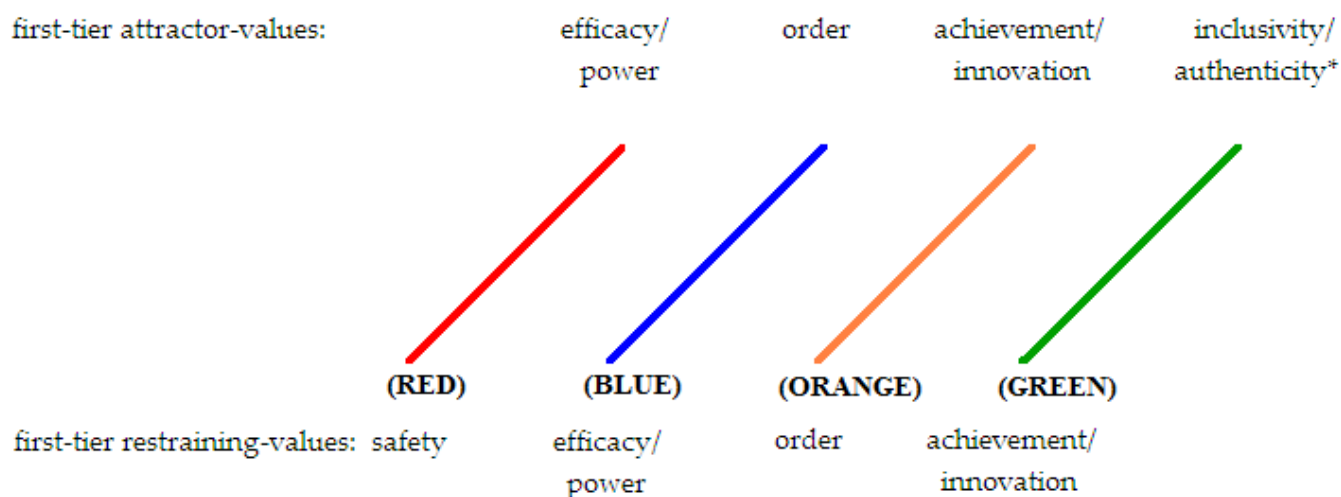
The modernist age can provisionally be seen according to this new conception to consider itself beholden *both* to an attractive new value of innovation/individual-achievement *and* simultaneously to a restraining sense of "cosmic order"; per Graves the latter value would have to be considered to be part of traditionalism (BLUE). I am suggesting that this overlap or tension between values operates not only in the trivial sense in which all previously-privileged values retain some degree of importance (e.g., "survival", the *telos* of the earliest developmental stage, obviously becomes important whenever threatened at any later developmental level). Nor is its operation a function of differential development (i.e., of tension between some people operating at ORANGE, and others operating at BLUE, at the same time, or within a given person at once embodying both systems). Rather, "modernism" is linked to "order" in the sense that the entire dynamic of the stage will be seen to "turn" actively toward the newly-emerged values of innovation and achievement, while still restrained in an important sense by the older value of respect for inherited order. There is in a modernism a kind of baseline of an undoubted and consensually-held sense of an ordered cosmos in which individuals' values within the same community are if not identical at least mutually intelligible. It would appear that this baseline system operates largely through a kind of "social unconscious" since everyone in a given system seems very much aware of the new value to which they are all "turning," while the baseline is normally tacitly presumed as the ordinary and natural expectations we all have for one another.

One explanation for the lack of fit between Graves' theory and this single (so far) group of examples from art history (successive styles of modernist art up to the postmodern break) could be a kind of individualistic bias inherent in the theory: its stages as defined seem to be influenced primarily by patterns in how people consciously see their own goals and strivings (e.g., excitement about "newness" of individual expression in both art and science since the dawn of modernist stage), to the detriment of other aspects of the self-image of the age, aspects perhaps better understood as tacit expectations for ordinary human behavior -- for modernism, the aspect that may be summed up in the *formal conservatism* evident in the legacy of modernist art (and as well in key modernist institutions<sup>16</sup>). True, Graves' modernist maxim "express self but calculatedly" also implies a certain sense of restraint -- and even when examining modernist innovation in some of its classic domains (technical inventiveness, free enterprise) it is evident that modernist individualism is generally understood as restrained within a rule-of-law framework. What is new here is the observation that in the artistic domain modernism is not merely restrained by certain unavoidable external limits; rather, the values underlying the modernist structure show themselves in this domain to be at least in certain aspects inherently backward-looking and traditional. It is the *veneration* for inherited forms, and not merely their "observance," along with the paradoxically insistent influence of the impulse to change those forms, that marks the evolution of the fine arts in the age of modernism. By defining ORANGE simply as the attraction toward "innovation," etc., it therefore appears that Graves is actually using a concept that is in a sense temporally inflated, in the sense that tacit social expectations (i.e., under modernism, of "order") are ignored in favor of a picture that seems to privilege individuals' self-images, based on their own striving (toward "innovation"). The remainder of this subsection will extend and attempt to support this notion as applied to other stages/periods and domains of artistic activity. To summarize the idea as expressed so far, though, it seems that Graves' theory in ignoring

restraining-value that seems built into modernism (and, as we will see, the other memes as well) is temporally a "half-step" off.

I will now move on to discuss the implications of this proposed refinement beyond the modernist stage. The pattern proposed here for modernism, if carried over to the other first-tier v-memes, would imply a tension between, on the one hand, the privileged value identified in Graves' theory as an attractor-value that is not actually fully embraced but only tentatively approached, and on the other hand, the privileged value of the previous meme (per Graves) as a restraining-value: a still-potent source of opposite tension, albeit possibly unconscious tension, within the very concept of the "mature" (or well-developed) human being. The diagram below illustrates this simple pattern.

Figure 1 - Schematic Diagram of Proposed Value-Structures



\* See discussion in §3.2 below for clarification of "authenticity" as extension of Graves' "inclusivity."

For traditionalism (BLUE), this would mean a tension between "cosmic order" (the value associated with BLUE in Graves' theory) and that of "power" or "efficacy" (associated with RED). In other words, the view of the person in a traditionalist worldview could be seen to be unconsciously still anchored to the notion of a being who naturally and properly derives a sense of self-esteem from the exercise of power -- either via the functioning of existing social institutions or by the forcible changing of those institutions. In the case of the lord of a medieval feudal manor, to take a classic BLUE example, the collecting of rents and administering other aspects of rule over the manor's tenants could be understood as exercises of power via existing institutions; the conquest of one of manor's domain by another as exercises via modification of those institutions. In tension with the view of the person as somehow essentially defined by his efficacy would be the more conscious sense of a person as a being obliged to find and recognize some sense of overarching *order* -- an order transcending and including the local conditions that define the demands on, and powers vested in, the individual in his nexus within the social structure -- an order that is meaningful in its totality (classically, via a religious worldview) and that therefore makes for the possibility of a surrender and submission that is somehow satisfying and felt to be ultimately necessary. And it should be the latter sense of order that would become marked as signs of the era in the minds of those operating in the leading-edge





Figure 2a - Peter of Eboli - "Barbarossa on the Third Crusade Campaign in Hungary," dated to the 12th century A.D.

(image available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barabrossa\\_3krizovka\\_uhry.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barabrossa_3krizovka_uhry.jpg))



Figure 2b - Anon. - miniature portrait of Minnesinger Boppe from Manesse Codex, dated c. A.D. 1304

(image available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Codex\\_Manesse\\_418r\\_Boppe.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Codex_Manesse_418r_Boppe.jpg))

traditional structure of medieval Europe: the restraining-value of power would (if this modification to Graves' theory is right) tend to form an unobtrusive and unremarkable socially-validated background structure, subjectively experienced as rather like the air we breathe, even as the attractor-value of order would seem something bold and both requiring and deserving of conscious attention.

It is difficult at our moment in history to assess without landmarks whether the sketch just drawn in the above paragraph of the psychology of the (BLUE) traditionalist improves the theory, in relation to Graves/SD version. The European Middle Ages, the heyday of Western traditionalism, is sufficiently distant from our time that recourse to empathically imagined experience seems a considerably far-reaching imaginative act, especially relative to the much more ready recourse to which we have access in regard to modernism. But as with modernism, there is the advantage of a rich and familiar source of a certain kind of information in the artistic legacy from the medieval period.

The three groups of paired figures presented over the nearby pages are intended as representations of the visual art typical of the traditionalist (medieval), the early-modern (Renaissance) and the early-postmodern periods and thus to provide at least a few actual glimpses of these three v-memes at work. It is interesting first of all to notice in these three pairs of paintings the different relations between the individual and the group: in both the traditional (medieval) and postmodern works, the group seems to form a relatively undifferentiated mass, with the individual figures (e.g., the king in the Fig. 2a on the preceding page) staring out to the viewer very much as an isolated expression of an individual self. In the modernist works, by contrast, the group itself seems to come to life dramatically as a dynamic whole being; the group is absorbing, holding, perhaps magnifying, the energy of the individual figures comprising it. The third pair of postmodern examples seem to show once again groups that fade back into the background, while the individual variety within them comes to the fore (see especially Fig. 4b). As I shall discuss in more detail below, these observations appear suggestive of a larger pattern, subject of course to the limits of such a highly abbreviated survey.<sup>17</sup>

Note that the observation of group- versus individual-oriented focus in works of art appears to contradict explicitly the emphasis of Graves' theory: traditionalism (BLUE) and postmodernism (GREEN) are supposed per Graves/SD to be communitarian-oriented v-memes, emphasizing the responsibility of the individual to support and assimilate in some manner into the collective, whereas modernism (ORANGE) is supposed to be individualistically-oriented, emphasizing the liberation and exploration of some kind of individual capacity or freedom. The relations between individuals and groups in the works of art shown here seem to be just the other way around!

But it isn't a simple contradiction of Graves' ideas that I am positing here: rather, I am suggesting the possibility of an additional layer of complexity at work, namely, the notion of a subconscious aspect of each of these memes, anchoring and holding in tension the conscious striving of the age with a more basic (perhaps more often unspoken) underpinning that in Graves' theory is associated with the predecessor stage. In the face and pose of the medieval emperor-king Barbarossa as rendered in Fig. 2a, there is an expression that suggests above all agency and power. The upraised finger seems to be pointedly asserting kingly rights. As for the indistinct mass of soldiers at left, the crude axe-wielding soldiers at right, and even the horses, all these characters appear also intent on the exercise of their individual roles as actors. There seems to be little sense of interaction within the group considered as a single whole, only of the actors fulfilling their various individualized roles.

In Fig. 2b, a miniature that seems emblematic of the art of the later Middle Ages ("high gothic" style), the beginnings are evident of a sense of greater dynamic energy *between* the bending and swaying figures as they are posed in grouped relationship to one another (i.e., the group is much less undifferentiated than the mass of soldiers in Fig. 2a). Nevertheless, self-expression of individual characters seem again (as in Fig. 2a) to dominate the overall artistic expression of the piece as a whole; the tentative beginnings of a group-dance as





Figure 3a - Tommaso Masaccio - "Rendering of the Tribute Money," dated to the 1420's  
(image available at <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Masaccio7.jpg>)



Figure 3b - Rembrandt van Rijn - "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp," 1632  
(image available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anatomie\\_Nicolaes\\_Tulp.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anatomie_Nicolaes_Tulp.jpg))

depicted are highly stylized and appear subordinated to the background symbols of individuality (swords, variously colored robes, shield and helmet, in addition to individualized gestures) adorning the characters.

In the next pair of examples (Renaissance fresco in Fig. 3a and Dutch painting in Fig. 3b, preceding page), by vivid contrast, it is the very basic sense of *orderedness* of the individual figures, their arrangement into a functioning larger group, capturing and their instantiating the individual figures' clear relatedness to each other, that seems to create the ground, as it were, out of which an exploration of new subtleties of individuality begins to emerge. Masaccio's New Testament scene features individuals frozen in a moment of intense interaction, as Jesus directs the disciple Peter to find the tribute money. Even the side-dramas featuring the disciple gathering money from a fish's mouth (at left) and handing it over to the tax-collector (at right), as described biblically (Matthew 17:27), serve to place the central drama in context in a strictly ordered and clearly-highly-symbolic artistic universe. Perhaps even more dramatically, if less symbolically, Rembrandt's painting of the anatomy lesson depicts the collective self-expression of a well-ordered group participating in a ritual of the new scientific age of modernism. The group becomes the subject of a new level of nuanced portraiture at this stage in history, though the details of the individuals comprising these groups are by no means sacrificed to this larger-scale group-representation; to the contrary, they too are shown with a new exactitude and expressiveness of gesture and appearance.

Notice that in these early modernist artworks that it seems to be precisely the *role differentiation* of the characters that brings a new level of tension and liveliness to the representations of the group. Individual differences played out in action, most obviously between Jesus and the apostles, or Rembrandt's anatomy-instructor and his pupils, but also among the different apostles/pupils with their differing attitudes, give rise to a new rendering of a functioning group that appears on the canvas (perhaps for the first time in history) as a single transcendent organism.<sup>18</sup> Note this new role differentiation proceeds from differences in the characters' *inner* attitudes and personality differences, not just or even mainly by external role differences, as with medieval art. While the medieval king in Fig. 2a was also clearly differentiated both external and individual markers as holder of a particular role, the Renaissance characters seem to reflect more naturalistic role differences, arising spontaneously from the qualities of the individuals themselves. Thus, modernist art does indeed show a certain individualistic focus in the foreground, with its emphasis on individual personality (as Graves' theory suggests it should), but on another, apparently more "group unconscious" level, this individualistic focus actually brings into relief a dominant collectivist theme in the background. That is, the overall, background *gestalt* of the paintings, which seems to reflect basic unconscious attitudes, has shifted decisively toward a group-level emphasis. Further, both these foreground and background phenomena contrast with those in medieval art. Comparing the groups in Fig. 3a and Fig. 3b with that in Fig. 2b (the partially-differentiated medieval group, or the mass of soldiers in Fig. 2a at left, which is more or less completely undifferentiated), one can see that individualistic role differentiation (in the foreground) has taken a giant leap forward with the transition to Renaissance (modernist) art, as has the depiction of the group's functioning as a unit (in the background).

Alongside medieval and modernist art, it will be useful to consider also the implications of the theory as elaborated so far for postmodernism, the dominant emerging v-meme of our time. According to Graves' theory, postmodernism is supposed to be about the privileging of "inclusivity." Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether inclusivity precisely describes this stage's attractor-value (to be discussed in §3.2 below), I will begin by looking loosely for a tension between some kind of value of this kind (affiliation, feelings-based community, finding one's "real self" [while respecting others' attempts to do the same]), and an unconscious anchoring concept based on the previous meme's privileged value: modernist achievement/innovation. The tentative idea, then, is that postmodernism begins with an unconscious background (restraining) sense of the human being as an innovator, a transformer of inherited memetic





Figure 4a - Pablo Picasso - "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)" 1907 (image available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Les Femmes d'Alger \(O. J.\) by Pablo Picasso.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Les_Femmes_d'Alger_(O.J.)_by_Pablo_Picasso.jpg))

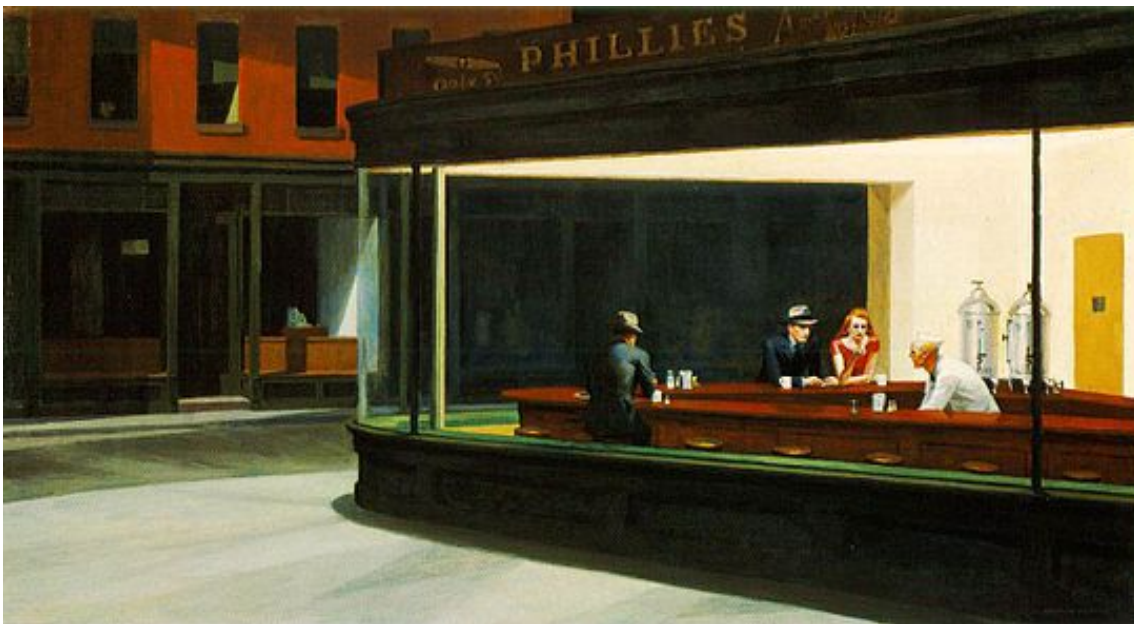


Figure 4b - Edward Hopper, "Nighthawks," 1942 (image available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nighthawks.jpg> - note image is low-resolution due to copyright restrictions still in effect - as explained on web-page - fair use claimed here for educational purposes only)

structures of information, values, behavior. In tension with this vision is a sense of collective searching for some kind of communitarian resonance in order to make personal meaning out of life's transformations, or perhaps to put our lives in greater harmony with the larger cosmos as a whole -- a goal which could in turn be interpreted as an externalized view of "personal meaning."

On this tentative view of postmodernism, then, it is the foreground, more conscious emerging set of values (the attractor-value) that appears to sacrifice some aspect of unfettered individuality to a new, communitarian imperative in favor of shared meaning. The background, less conscious (restraining) value, is the dynamic, self-striving, endlessly protean individualistic searching associated by Graves with modernism. The pattern drawn so far would point toward artifactual evidence that may provide a window on this less conscious side of postmodernity.

And in the third pair of visual artistic examples (twentieth century paintings in Fig. 4a and Fig. 4b, preceding page), there indeed appear groups of essentially isolated individualized figures looking out at us, as in the first pair of medieval pictures. This time it seems a kind of helpless individuality (rather than an efficacious, partially-untamed will, as in the medieval art) that is embodied in each of these highly divergent and curiously disconnected figures. It is their already successfully-realized individuality, which has become effortless and ineluctable -- what could perhaps be understood as their *basic innovativeness* -- that becomes the ground for the expression of a postmodern worldview, in which the drama of fully-felt acceptance (or not) of these figures by the audience (and by themselves) takes center stage.

Picasso's menagerie of prostitutes (Fig. 4a), at once bold and muted, two in postures of self-revelation, two at right apparently masked and so reminiscent of African tribal figures, the other in shadow, seem to emerge out of separate-yet-related universes into an oddly-abstracted hodgepodge that nevertheless stands for their collectivity. Hopper's more grimly isolated nighttime-denizens (Fig. 4b), while harder-edged and more clearly surrounded by the trappings of modernism (nicely symbolized by the sleek art-deco coffee-shop), are also likewise separated into disconnected-yet-related individualized portraits. On close inspection, the characters each reveal personalized states of alienated anomie, hooded by thought and removed from the ostensible interaction taking place, such states as characterize most of this artist's subjects. In both paintings, as in so many other postmodern works of art, it is the *pathos* of individual lives that makes up the dominant mood.

The elaboration sketched here has been applied to BLUE, ORANGE and GREEN. The artistic legacy of RED will also be considered in light of this elaboration of value-privileging over an attractor/restraining value-pair, but this discussion is postponed to §3.3 below, as it is also useful in limning another theoretical refinement of Graves' work.

Moving back now from the details of the three memes considered so far to consider further aspects of the larger pattern, let us note that the refinement proposed here implies some more complex dynamics for those liminal periods in history when one dominant stage gives way to be replaced another. For example, instead of "achievement/innovation" simply being replaced by "inclusivity" as the leading-edge privileged value during those early twentieth-century decades when postmodernism "broke through" (at least in certain influential circles of artists and intellectuals), the theory as amended here now suggests a shift that is more elaborate and in some ways more profound: a structure (modernism) that had consciously been approaching "innovation" as a kind of attractor-value, while simultaneously holding to certain aspects of traditionalism, was replaced by one (postmodernism) in which the former conscious attractor-value (achievement/innovation) becomes the largely unconscious "baseline-picture" of humanity for the succeeding worldview.

Finally, in working out the implications of the newly refined theory, we may wonder about the values of prior stages after they are no longer to be considered even restraining or unconscious parts of the privileged value-structure. What becomes of "cosmic order" under postmodernism, for example, after it has served as the attractor-value under traditionalism and the restraining-value under modernism? Without attempting anything

like a complete description of the dynamics whereby evolutionary v-memes transcend and include their predecessors, it may be useful to hazard the observation that "order" as a value appears under postmodernism to be a relatively more personal affair than it is under modernism and traditionalism. On the one hand, the pluralism of the postmodern world seems to encourage and even to require tolerance and a degree of social complexity that could be understood as defying any simple or static overarching social order. On the other hand, however, the complexity of rapidly transforming forms of postmodern social interaction, exemplified by the phenomenon of computer-assisted social networking via the internet (to take a single group-behavioral example), gives rise to complex new forms of tightly scripted social "sub-orders" for those who choose to participate in them. Perhaps attractor-values from predecessor v-memes prior to that immediately preceding the meme under study pass into a more "open" state somehow and are (temporarily?) relatively free from becoming the object of social attention, influence and/or coercion. This eventual "freeing" is only a highly provisional hypothesis as enunciated here; we will have occasion to consider it further (in §3.4 below) when assessing the implications of the refinements discussed in this subsection as regards possible "post-postmodern" stages of development.

### ***3.2 A Broadened View of Postmodernism as Attracted to "Authenticity"***

A second area of Graves' theory in need of further refinement, as I see it, relates to his path-breaking conception of postmodernism as the privileging of "inclusivity" (or more generally of feelings-based communitarian values, "openness to multiple perspectives," and secondarily of finding and experiencing one's "inner self"). Graves' ideas about the postmodern orientation to inclusivity appeared with great originality as perhaps the first fully constructive notion of the postmodern phase of development considered in its full breadth. But even if Graves is correct in picking up on an important trend (as I think he is) in identifying postmodernism with inclusivity, has he thereby captured the postmodern stage in its wholeness?

The question of whether "inclusivity" is both an accurate and a substantially complete description of the attractor-value for the postmodern phase (so far as these things can be reduced to simple concepts) -- a question surely complicated by the fact that current society is still experiencing this phase, even as we attempt to observe it -- is the primary topic of this subsection. I will make a case for a broader conception of postmodernism that extends the notion of inclusivity. I will also continue referring to and fleshing out the elaborated theory from §3.1 above, which implies that "achievement/innovation" (associated only with "modernism" under Graves' theory) forms a (largely unconscious) restraining-value still active within the postmodern value-system, one that acts in tension with the new attractor-value in a more nuanced dance that can better characterize this stage overall than either the attractor-value or this restraining-value on its own.

Graves calls his version of postmodernism the "Relativistic Existence" -- the "Sociocentric, Personalistic, Sociocratic Existential State" (Graves 2005, 337). After perhaps having subtly biased previous meme descriptions toward the viewpoint of the individual (as surmised in the previous subsection) -- even the previous "communitarian" memes like PURPLE and BLUE are often described in rather vividly individualistic terms in Graves' manuscript -- with postmodernism (GREEN), Graves seems to dive fully into a "group-think" emphasis that arguably understates individualistic aspects of this stage. True, he does discuss some opening up to a feelings-based "inner self" that is new with this stage, but clearly subordinates this opening in a primarily communitarian framework, as the following excerpt illustrates:

He [the individual at the postmodern stage] has learned how to live with want and how to live to overcome it; but he has not learned how to live with abundance. He has achieved his status, his material existence at the expense of being rejected. Now he has a new problem and now he must seek a new way of life and a new value system. The successful want to be liked; and the passed-over want in.

This perception begins man's move to his sixth form of existence, to the state of sociocentric being, to a concern with belonging, being accepted, and not rejected. Man becomes centrally concerned with peace and his inner self and in the relation of his self to the inner self of others. The belonging need arises as the *adjustment to the environment* [Graves' emphasis] component ascends to the dominant position. But this time, the conforming tendency -- the adjustive tendency -- is not to external stimuli or absolutistic authority. It is to the peer group. Man becomes concerned with knowing the inner side of self and other selves so harmony can come to be, so people as individuals can be at peace with themselves and thus with the world. The team concept, the 'we are all buddies, let us break bread together' system of thinking develops.

Now he feels the need to belong to the community of man, to affiliate himself rather than to go it alone. When he finds his peers critical of his opinion, he'll change it.... He values pleasing his others, being accepted by them and not being rejected. What he values is what his contemporary group indicates it is right for him to value.... "What the group of people I like say a healthy personality is, that's what it is." (Graves 2005, 338-39)

Graves was developing his materials and actively writing through the 1960's and 1970's, decades that witnessed the historic first growth of a certain kind of mass postmodernism in America and Europe (let us call this "hippie postmodernism," for lack of a better term). He seems aware of the influence of his own colorful immediate surroundings, citing some contemporary illustrations:

Using this framework to approach current American society, we can easily see an efflorescence of personalistic (FS [GREEN, or postmodern]) values in the popularity of such things as Esalen, yoga, the encounter group, the humanistic psychology movement, and participatory decision-making in management.... Using the E-C [i.e., Graves' own] theory, we see the so called *generation gap* of the recent past was in reality a *values* gap between DQ [BLUE] and ER [ORANGE] and the FS [GREEN] levels of existence. For example, many of the parents of FS [GREEN] youth subscribed to ER [ORANGE] values which emphasize proving one's worth by amassing material wealth.... (Graves 2005, 359)

But it is one thing to incisively pick up on certain communitarian trends among even a very important outgrowth of certain then-contemporary currents in youth psychology, and quite another to offer a complete description of what is after all being purported as a universal stage of human development, common to all cultures, times and places. And so we arrive at the question of whether "inclusivity" -- a term which bridges the "sociocratic" tendencies described above and the political correctness of certain aspects of more recent American life (notably, campus culture in many post-1960's educational institutions) -- really captures the essence of this vast phenomenon of postmodernism that so influences all of our lives who are living amidst its flowering.

To answer this question, let us start by going back to the earliest beginnings of postmodernism. Though not quite precisely identified by Graves,<sup>19</sup> his followers have identified the inception of this stage in the Romantic literary and philosophical movement that followed the European Enlightenment, specifically in early nineteenth-century poetry like that of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Byron and Blake in England, and in the works of such philosophical and literary figures as Hegel, Herder, Schelling, the Schlegels, Fichte and Goethe in Germany.

Having shifted our focused to such a well-studied group as the Romantics, I can refer to a much wider universe of commentary than is available either with regard to Graves' memetic theory, or even to postmodernism in general. And turning now to the views on the Romantics of a well-known scholar from mainstream academia, I will find in the work of Isaiah Berlin some incisively pertinent commentary. Berlin's views are cited here both to help clarify the nature of the human longings that originally expressed themselves

as Romanticism, and also to contextualize them in relation to such twentieth century movements as fascism and existentialism (he calls the latter "the truest heir to romanticism" (Berlin 1965/1999, 139)).

In a series of celebrated 1965 lectures on the topic, Berlin traces the development of early Romanticism mainly through the work of German philosophical figures ranging from the well-known (Kant, Schiller) to the obscure (Hamann, Herder). He develops the Romantic themes of will (as opposed to reason and understanding), and of cultural and national identity as vital and fundamentally inscrutable influences, as opposed to the "classical" influence of post-Revolutionary (modernist) France, which stresses reason and understanding as liberating influences, and depicts these influences working through the intermediaries of a largely oppressed German middle-class ultimately to give birth to a new way of thinking and being<sup>20</sup>:

The great achievement of romanticism, that which I took as my starting point, was that, unlike most other great movements in human history, it succeeded in transforming certain of our values to a very profound degree....

... a new cluster of values appeared with the romantic movement. Since we are wills, and since we must be free in the Kantian or Fichtean sense [i.e., as agents understood either in a predominantly moral or in a predominantly self-creative frame, but in either case possessed of ineradicable free will], motive counts for more than consequence. For consequences cannot be controlled, but motives can. Since we must be free, and since we must be ourselves to the fullest possible degree, the greatest virtue -- the greatest virtue of all -- is what existentialists call authenticity, and what the romantics called sincerity. As I tried to say before, this is new: I do not believe that in the seventeenth century, if you had a religious conflict between a Protestant and a Catholic, it would have been possible for the Catholic to say, 'The Protestant is a damnable heretic and leads souls to perdition, but the fact that he is sincere raises him in my estimation....' The notion of idealism is new. Idealism means that you respect people for being prepared to give up health, wealth, popularity, power, all kinds of desirable things which their emotions demand, to relinquish that which they cannot control themselves, what Kant called the external factors, emotions which are themselves part of the psychological or physical world, to lay that aside for the sake of something with which they truly identify themselves, no matter what. The notion that idealism is a good thing -- that if I say I am something of a realist I mean I am about to tell a lie or do something peculiarly shabby -- is the result of the romantic movement. Sincerity becomes a virtue in itself.

...The fact that there is admiration, from the 1820s onwards, for minorities as such, for defiance as such, for failure as being nobler in certain respects than success, for every kind of opposition to reality, for taking up positions on principle where the principle may itself be absurd ... -- this is significant. What romanticism did was to undermine the notion that in matters of value, politics, morals, aesthetics there are such things as objective criteria which operate between human beings, .... (Berlin 1965/1999, 139-40)

Berlin's allusion to the "authenticity" of concern to such later thinkers as Heidegger and Sartre thus serves as a bridge between twentieth-century preoccupations and their earlier proto-history among the Romantics. To be "authentic" in this sense means to be in touch with a certain primordial wholeness, even as one participates in various inevitably fragmentary and dualistic, even alienating, aspects of worldly existence. Authenticity is often conceived as an easily endangered quality and as one subject only with difficulty (or not at all) to conventional definition. But it is nevertheless a key concept in postmodern discourse up to the present time. It is a concept with which we should already be familiar: authenticity, in the sense of knowing our own deeper inclinations and the responsibilities implied by our own emotional commitments, is the virtue to which nearly all can agree to venerate in a postmodern age, especially, perhaps crucially, because no one can define it for another. Consider the words of contemporary vocalist and choreographer Meredith Monk in

discussing creativity: "[The] inner voice has both gentleness and clarity. So to get to authenticity, you really keep going down to the bone, to the honesty, and the inevitability of something." (Monk 2004) Does this not ring a bell as a touchstone of our times? Both the specific concern with "getting to" this mysterious authentic quality, and even the simple, downright manner of discussing it, as evinced by this particular artist-performer, seem emblematic to me.

Berlin traces Romanticism, the first flowering of what we now call postmodernism, involved already somehow with this aspiration for authenticity, and we may ask, how does all this square so far with Graves' emphasis on "inclusivity"? The two terms appear at face value to refer to much different notions, in that authenticity appeals to the subtleties of the inner world, while inclusivity is a relational term that seems based in ordinary (i.e., unsubtle) perceptions of everyday social reality. But though they are different, they are not unrelated; a stress on inclusivity (e.g., of previously disenfranchised minorities) can be seen as pointing to a hope for a more authentic group-coexistence, an elusive harmony that will in turn allow for a potentially more fulfilling state of being on a collective level. The two concepts appear to operate at different levels of metaphor, as well as at different scales of reality: authenticity seems to be the broader term, describing more completely a desirable state of connectedness to one's own roots (whether the emphasis be on ethnic, psychological, ritualistic or other ties); the valuing of inclusivity seems to make sense as a particular kind of striving-for-authenticity. This striving operates as an injunction on the individuals with the implicit goal of attaining a kind of group-authenticity, in which all group-members (who could be said to be metaphorically analogous to the thoughts or feelings within the consciousness of a single individual) are respected and heard by each other, as well as by those in authority, in an appropriate way (metaphorically, much as the authentically-functioning individual must be grounded in the nuanced details of his own experience).

For the remainder of this subsection, I will consider the consequences to Graves' theory of the proposition that the notion of "inclusivity" as privileged value may be not exactly wrong, but incomplete -- that a better description of postmodernism in its totality would be as a movement attracted to the value of "authenticity" in all of its manifestations, some in the group-oriented framework in which the "inclusivity" metaphor also makes sense, and others (e.g., those of the French existentialists) in which it does not.

Recall as well the proposed modification to the overall theory of the previous subsection: the attractor-value of "authenticity" is to be balanced with an restraining-value of "innovativeness" (the attractor-value of modernity); postmodernism is a system in tension between these poles, so that the social memes that will generally influence the postmodern view of the "good human being" is conditioned by a (typically unconscious) expectation of innovativeness (as opposed to *stasis*, or conformity with one's direct inheritances), while the leading-edge "turn" of values within the postmodern system is attracted toward some kind of authentic groundedness -- perhaps toward a return to the particular rituals of one's traditional ethnic culture, in so many cases ignored or repressed for generations under the pressures of modernism, or to some other form of communion with the roots of one's being.

Postmodernism as seen in this way is potentially in conflict with itself -- at once (unconsciously) repudiating tradition, while also turning toward it -- but not necessarily more so than the great movements considered previously: modernism with its tension between order and innovation, etc. A more balanced manifestation of the postmodern impulse will presumably include some awareness of such contradictions (the appreciation and acceptance of one's own internal contradictions being yet another contribution of the postmodern stage), while a less balanced manifestation might mindlessly press the individual toward a harmonious-seeming group-attitude, with little or no awareness of the inharmonious roots from which this very impulse arises.

The critical attitude toward postmodernism evinced (gently) by Graves, and more sharply by Wilber, seems largely justified, if we restrict our view of postmodernism to its more dysfunctional manifestations, as may be seen (for example) in the "political correctness" prevalent among so many American universities since



the 1960's, particularly in the humanities. But might this be only one face of something so vast as a universal stage of human development? Perhaps the "soft" postmodern style decried by Wilber represents only a particular (less balanced) style of postmodernism, influenced at least in this country by certain specifically American cultural trends: a stress on being agreeable and "nice" as part of a kind of communitarian counterweight to the individualism that operates in other spheres of American life.<sup>21</sup>

Two insights seem to follow from the conception of postmodernism suggested here, one rather striking and another more diffuse. The first and more immediately striking of these concerns the less-balanced postmodernism ("all perspectives are equally valid") that Wilber (1995, 207) rightly decries: if the deeper and potentially more balanced tendency of the postmodern impulse is really toward the value of authenticity, what a tremendous irony is represented by the triumph of "politically correct" discourse within many contexts of postmodern American life. For "politically correct" speech is precisely speech that has been essentially denuded of the authenticity of ordinary, spontaneous self-expression -- via its careful compliance and burdensome rules, mandating what we (outside the system) may critically see as undue levels of interpersonal sensitivity. In short, there seems in some circles to have been a wholesale abandonment of actual everyday interpersonal authenticity, putatively (if this theory is right) so that the group can enjoy some kind of imaginatively hoped-for authentic existence on another level, should sensitivities be raised and interpersonal harmony be achieved. What formerly may have seemed simply like silliness now appears as a poignant confusion involving individual- and group-level consciousness, in which the vestiges of health are chased away in order with greater zeal to fight the disease. I would like to propose the term "flat postmodernism" (closely related to Wilber's "flatland" for reductive materialist worldviews in general) for this kind of mindless push toward "group sensitivity" at a given, fixed level of organization. Most ironically, given its egalitarian stance, "flat postmodernism" implicitly privileges this given level, often the social group as "officially" conceived (e.g., a school's cohort of students, or the citizens of a given country), without due appreciation for the consequences of its own aggressive injunctions throughout the many other levels (i.e., the space of speech between persons) that are also simultaneously active.

The second insight following from the "authenticity-innovation" notion, perhaps more diffuse than the first, concerns the extent of postmodernism as a broader phenomenon. As discussed earlier, Graves and those he has influenced have pioneered the discernment of a single animating spirit amid the heterogeneity of the postmodern milieu, a spirit oriented toward inclusivity (for Graves), or a "descending" spirituality that tends inescapably toward an instrumentalist reductionism (for Wilber<sup>22</sup>). Wilber's version of postmodernism seems broader than Graves', explicitly encompassing a wide grouping of contemporary environmentalists, feminists, multiculturalists and others, along with intellectual figures going all the way back the nineteenth-century Romantics. Graves, writing a few decades before, seems by contrast more exclusively focused on then-contemporary "hippie" types in his descriptions, though in tracing the historic emergence of GREEN he of course implicitly acknowledges at least some few predecessors, and his followers have gone back a bit further than he. But if postmodernism is understood as the value-system attracted toward authenticity, while still subject to the unconscious pull of innovation, the postmodern universe begins to appear much broader even than Wilber's version. For who among us living today is so sure of his own authenticity -- that is, to his own constant connectedness to the source or sources of inner unity, however conceived -- that he can honestly relax even momentarily any inclination he may have to seek some kind of authentic connection? Put differently, if postmodernism fundamentally includes the pull of this important, elusive virtue of authenticity, does it not lay more claim on us all than is acknowledged by pointing to its more absurd and reductive manifestations?

To find some real-life examples of actual behavior or consciousness that might fall under our broadened postmodern umbrella, but which would get left out by Graves' definition, I will look beyond the sources considered so far. Jean Gebser, an acknowledged seminal contributor to the beginnings of integral theory, provides a great profusion of artistic and cultural examples placed within his theory, and as well a somewhat

less stage-like theoretical structure than Wilber and Graves, so that his developmental labels are looser.<sup>23</sup> Gebser was excited to notice what he took to be signs of an integral (i.e., post-postmodern) stage of development in the work of relatively early post-representational artists like Picasso and certain atonal musical composers originating in early twentieth-century Europe, such as Schoenberg, Krenek and others. From our later vantage-point, such figures seem like they should be considered squarely within the currents of postmodernism. Consider the broader artistic context of which these early avatars of integralism (as Gebser would have it) formed a part: abstract art, until it was supplanted by "pop art" in the 1960's, was seen as both the leading-edge of artistic innovation and the heir of the pre-World War European *avant garde*. All of the many movements comprising abstract art (impressionism, cubism, expressionism, surrealism, etc.) have in common a search for some kind of increasingly raw aspect of the artist's actual experience, accompanied by an increasingly tense relation between artist and public -- until this relation became suffused with irony under "pop art." If we identify postmodernism not by its communitarian stance (like Graves), nor by the playfully ironical modes of its surface expression, but by its fundamental attraction toward some kind of felt authenticity (albeit perhaps an incomplete turn toward authenticity, restrained still by the pull of unconsciously-expected innovativeness), all of twentieth-century post-representational art seems rather neatly to fall into this broadened notion of the postmodern stage.

In other domains besides the self-consciously creative arts, it is also useful to attempt to identify seminal postmodern figures, as a check on the definition-shift being proposed here. Twentieth-century scientists like Einstein, Bohr and Heisenberg, in confronting the limitative frontiers of physics in our time, have played a clear role in the formation of the contemporary worldview. More centrally for postmodernism (since physical science itself seems classifiable as essentially a modernist development), innovators in psychology like Freud and Jung have also shaped attitudes for the whole epoch about what categories of interior phenomena are worth investigating. If we ask ourselves, in relation to such figures, whether "inclusivity" (e.g., of multiple perspectives) captures the essence of the new values they helped promulgate, perhaps the most we can say is that Freud's persistence in uncovering unconscious motivations may be taken metaphorically to reflect a kind of inclusivity (i.e., of the whole human mind, formerly in large part repressed). On the other hand, the value of "authenticity" seems to me much more clearly and simply to capture the imperatives of psychoanalysis, and all the more so of Jung's psychology of archetypes. Even the scientists' value of equanimity amidst the bewilderment occasioned by twentieth-century physics may be linked to authenticity, as calling for a kind of internal simplicity and fidelity -- i.e., for science-minded people, fidelity to the models best supported by current observation, no matter how strangely opposed these models may appear to "common sense."

Finally, in a more humble vein, in case this wide-ranging collection of examples seems less than fully satisfying as a picture of the broadened idea of postmodernism suggested here, it may be necessary also to acknowledge possible biases inherent in our own search for a coherent summation of the era. For a central part of the vast project of postmodernism involves the destabilization and questioning of the assumption of straightforward narrative explanation of such complex phenomena as our evolving collective consciousness. Though it is an important aim of this essay to inspire the perception that more balanced aspects of the postmodern age may possibly be found all around and within us, it must finally be acknowledged that there is no clear map in place whereby such examples may automatically be found. For if we are not really as finished with postmodernism as we may sometimes like to think (of which more in §3.4 below), we may need to acknowledge our very urge for developmental map-making as fair game for possible continued deconstruction, as in some way unbalanced. To grasp even the most central theme of one's own era while it is still in progress is difficult, as was noted by Stevenson in the epigraph at the top of this essay. What is suggested more positively by the new definition of postmodernism proposed here is that ultimately a fully-felt connection with our own authentic, in-the-moment intentionality may at last render such postmodern critique



obsolete, and to allow us as individuals a stable sense of developmental "place" -- without necessarily allowing for a communicable map or understanding of this sense.

### ***3.3 Macro-Structure of Alternating Individualistic/Communalistic v-Memes Reconsidered***

If postmodernism is really about "authenticity," this implies another problem for Graves' theory. For the v-memes are supposed to alternate macroscopically between privileging individual and collective values (i.e., between warm and cool colors in SD terms), and "authenticity" seems on the whole to be a more individual affair than does "inclusivity." In this subsection, this macro-pattern posited by Graves, and elaborated in historical terms by the SD authors,<sup>24</sup> will be reexamined. Once again, I will propose some modification to the theory, not so much with the view that the individual/collective pattern is simply wrong, but that history is better explained in broader terms that make room for some additional subtleties. The concepts explored here will involve polarities between "will" and "submission" as broader focal poles for alternating systems -- at infra-individual and transpersonal, as well as interpersonal, levels (to be explained below). As will be seen, the proposed new polarities overlap somewhat with the old, but also add new dimensions, with implications for our understanding of evolving value-systems, and also for certain other basic aspects of integral theory as well.

It will be useful first to acknowledge areas where the existing theory does seem well-grounded. To focus on a single historical example, the shift from BLUE to ORANGE, as exemplified by the European Enlightenment, the scientific revolution and the emergence of representative democracy, seems properly identified with a fundamental change in emphasis toward favoring individual over communal perspectives. In traditionalist (BLUE) value-systems, individuals are generally considered as subordinate to their relations with the communities to which they belong.<sup>25</sup> With the arrival of modernism (ORANGE), the relationship between individual and society shifts decisively toward a new balance in which the individual is for the first time understood as a pivotal locus of irreducible value.

To explore how far this pattern can be generalized, however, we need to look further, for a shift from collectivistic BLUE to individualistic ORANGE doesn't show that the pattern applies to the other v-memes. GREEN was discussed at length in §3.2 above; it would risk question-begging at this point to re-approach individual and collective concerns in relation to postmodernism. Instead, I will focus here first on the test-case of RED, for the Graves/SD theory the last "individualistic" v-meme to emerge prior to modernism, and return later in this subsection to GREEN.

RED is first exemplified in history by the appearance of large-scale settled agriculture (the so-called Neolithic Revolution, occurring about 10,000 years ago); it reaches its historical climax with the flourishing of the agriculturally-based empires of the ancient Middle East, on the order of 5,000 years ago: e.g., those of the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and the Hebrews. In the contemporary world and throughout history, whenever raw power is of paramount value, from the schoolyard gang to bare-knuckled politics practiced in all contexts, RED is thought to hold sway. In SD terms, it is also considered linked to individual child development on a universal level, as exemplified by the impulsive, egocentric behavior of toddler-aged children, who tend to test their limits as the "willful" ego initially develops (i.e., the "Terrible Twos," to quote one of Beck and Cowan's examples (1996, 45)). In short, RED is all about power and ego, according to the theory, and a RED society seems to be little but an extension of the expansive, ego-driven energy of its leaders.

One problem with this view of RED as extreme (or egocentric) individualism is that it doesn't seem to account for the immense historic organizational achievements of this stage, as implied by empire-building. When RED first appeared, scattered, nomadic, relatively small tribes somehow coalesced into much larger and more stable communities. What were previously intimate communities akin to extended families for the first time in human history became something like what we have since recognized as "society." The idea that the

raw, individual agency and charisma of individual leaders could serve as the main motivator of such a vast and multi-level process, without the ready participation of a much more complex set of evolving social arrangements (i.e., without multi-level spontaneous self-organization) seems to me frankly incredible.<sup>26</sup>

Though nearly all the details of how early empires actually formed are now lost to us in the mists of pre- and proto-history, I will make use here (as in §3.1 above) of available artistic evidence to make an independent approach to early (or, "fresh") RED, with as much immediacy as possible given the difficulties of historic evidence involved. Ancient Egypt seems at first blush to be the most outstanding example of a RED empire that has left us a rich and approachable artistic legacy, from the massive monuments of its pyramids to many smaller-scale works of representational art found among its tombs. Unfortunately for our purposes, despite the visually impressive relics of this period, the artistic legacy of the Egyptian empire does not comprise a substitute for a detailed historical or verbal-artistic record, in which we might read of the thoughts, aspirations, fears and other indications of the consciousness of its protagonists. Further, the artistic legacy of ancient Egypt, considered together with those of other, neighboring empires roughly contemporaneous with it, seems strangely balanced over a divide between artworks interpretable as early signs of BLUE thought (those with a religious or interior focus; see, e.g., Figures 5a and 5b, next page)<sup>27</sup> and artifacts that seem continuous with much-older (PURPLE) modes of expression (Figure 5c).<sup>28</sup> Even such a story as RED imperial art may tell, once interpreted, is therefore subject to additional difficulties of memetic assignment.

To sidestep some of these issues, I will focus here on early epic poetry, specifically that of the Greeks, in preference to visual art. In this area, too, I will have to face the problem that the most-finished forms may reflect more clearly the BLUE historical currents that led to their preservation, relatively far along on the spectrum of the RED-BLUE historical transition that tends for us to veil the primal expressions of the earlier meme. Nevertheless, in interpreting the written word, the greater intimacy with authorial thought provided by this means of expression, as compared with visual art, and as well a highly-developed philological tradition will be of assistance.

Greek poetry and prose, over the period from Homer (*circa* 700 B.C.) to the classical era about three hundred years later, certainly forms one of the best-studied periods in the history of human language. From its beginnings in the epics of Homer and Hesiod (which continued earlier oral traditions), through the lyric poetry of Pindar and Sappho and the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes, to its culmination in the philosophic writings of Democritus, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle, ancient Greek thought marks a definite progression. Though it is possible to discern hints of later memes occasionally present, it will be helpful to summarize this overall progression as the gradual transition from RED to BLUE consciousness.<sup>29</sup> I will consider here *The Iliad* of Homer, who represents the early end of this continuum. By choosing *The Iliad* (the earlier and more war-like of Homer's two extant works, and thus the "more RED," though also already influenced by later BLUE developments<sup>30</sup>), I will be able to make perhaps the nearest available approach to the fresh RED consciousness of ancient times. For though many BLUE civilizations have left us complete artistic records of the inner life of their inhabitants, fully RED ones have left us rich collections of artifacts, but apparently nothing like a sufficiently-rich tradition of actual, self-consciously expressive art.

One of the remarkable features of *The Iliad* is that all of the most pivotal, decisive actions are initiated not by its vividly-drawn human actors, but by the Olympian gods, who interact with and through them: the gods are everywhere in *The Iliad*. And it is natural to ask about the religion of the early Greeks, were these gods magical figures who were thought somehow to appear to and interact with people, or are they names for universal forces *within* people, in which case the outlook of Homeric man does not necessarily seem so very far from our own? An eminent classical scholar, after making the observation that Greek historians like Herodotus "translated" other cultures' (e.g., Egyptian) deities as simply foreign versions of the Greek gods (a practice that would have been anathema to the ancient Hebrews, as to later Christians and Jews), seems to



Fig 5a - Anon. - Grave-Chamber of Vizier Ramose - dated c. 1400 B.C.

(image available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maler\\_der\\_Grabkammer\\_des\\_Ramose\\_002.jpg#file](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maler_der_Grabkammer_des_Ramose_002.jpg#file))

(image at top-right available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nefertiti\\_berlin.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nefertiti_berlin.jpg))



Fig. 5b - Thutmose (sculptor) - Bust of Nefertiti - dated to 1345 B.C.



Fig. 5c - Anon. - Minoan Bull Fresco (reconstruction) - date uncertain (approx. 1700 B.C. - 1400 B.C.)

(image available at [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Knossos\\_-\\_06.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Knossos_-_06.jpg))

come close the view that the Homeric gods are but names for aspects within us: "The existence and the power of the gods are no less certain than the reality of laughter and tears, the living pulse of nature around us, the plain fact of our doings whether they be sublime and solemn, or bold and hard, or bright and serene." (Snell 1948/1960, 25) Another scholar, in drawing the more radical conclusion that Homeric man should not be considered conscious at all, but only on the threshold of consciousness, emphasizes the remoteness of the ancients' perceptions of their gods, stressing the magical aspects of these god-figures (though also in a way that makes them understandable to us as in some way partially-interior projections)<sup>31</sup>:

The characters of *The Iliad* do not sit down and think out what to do. They have no conscious minds such as we say we have, and certainly no introspections. It is impossible for us with our subjectivity to appreciate what it was like. When Agamemnon, king of men, robs Achilles of his mistress, it is a god that grasps Achilles by his yellow hair and warns him not to strike.... (Jaynes 1976, 72)

There seem to be parts of *The Iliad* that might support either view. The passage to which Jaynes is referring, from the early verses of the epic, concerns the appearance of the goddess Athena (one of the Greeks' principal allies and protectors) to their greatest warrior, as the Greeks suffer internal quarrels in their war with the Trojans:

Rearing behind him Pallas [Athena] seized his fiery hair --  
only Achilles saw her, none of the other fighters --  
struck with wonder, he spun around, he knew her at once. (*Iliad* 1: 232-34; Fagles 1990, 84)

It would seem distinctly unnecessary for the poet to mention that no one else saw Athena, were she understood as a fully-interior projection within Achilles' mind. The appearance of the goddess thus seems here to be portrayed as a magical occurrence. And yet, those familiar with the work may also recognize a certain inner knowing, often a tragic knowing, that at times comes over the characters in a way that seems at once more familiar (to our worldview), and also less magical and more mystical (or, mythical). In these moments, the gods may very well represent deep parts of our own being, aspects that somehow transcend the inter-subjective divide between persons, so that though they be fully-interior phenomena, they still can and do decisively alter the outward course of events. After the Trojan hero Hector has penetrated his defense of the Greek ships, the Greek warrior Ajax encounters such a sense of knowing:

And deep in his brave heart Ajax knew and shuddered --  
here was the work of gods, thundering Zeus on high,  
cutting him off from battle, dashing all of his plans,  
Zeus, determined to grant the Trojans triumph now. (*Iliad* 16: 143-46; Fagles 1990, 416)

Both these views add something to our understanding of the motivations of *The Iliad's* human characters. On the "magic" view, the characters are merely the playthings of supernatural forces, close perhaps to how we might think of human participants in a PURPLE culture. On the "mystical" view, they are struggling but more-fully-realized individuals, simultaneously discovering and acting out their destinies. In either case, the simple label "egocentric" seems to leave out the combined sense of both power and mystery, not personal power but cosmic power, that characterize these characters' views of their world.

The overriding background mood in *The Iliad* is a sense of awe, often on the characters' part and also very much on the narrator's: awe at the great hosts assembled, at the momentous turns of events, and above all, at the gods and their actions. This background sense of awe is important, both as a tacit focus of the entire epic (from which one might draw inferences about the restraining-value of the RED stage, continuing the analysis from §3.1 above<sup>32</sup>) and for the subtlety it importantly adds to our sense of the flavor or the central RED value of power.



The version of RED in the Graves/SD theory, by contrast, stresses a straightforward and thoroughly individualized notion of power, involving no particular sense of awe or generalized piety. The SD authors (who add virtually all of the theory's explicit historical references) emphasize only the power of the individual, or of society as the proxy of the individual. They do not exclude religion: it is not claimed that religion is invented with BLUE; indeed, primitive religious cults are present already in PURPLE tribes. But RED religion is supposed to be a pure affair of power-rivalry: e.g., in the celebration of our culture's victories as exalting "our gods" or God (e.g., as in many of the Old Testament psalms). More broadly, RED society is supposed to be all about conquest:

For humanity at large, RED-dominated periods are marked by warlords, exploration, exploitation, empires, and the idea that nature is there to be conquered.

RED stubbornly resists power exercised over it. When thwarted, the v-meme produces a cauldron of negative emotions such as rage, vengefulness, hatred, and furious anger. When properly handled, this raw self-assertive power contributes to a positive sense of control, lets the group break form pro forma constraining traditions, and energizes a society to reach for the very ends of the Earth. (Beck and Cowan 1996, 216)

Looking back to a source like Homer's *Iliad*, I do indeed find a great number of expressions of warrior *machismo* scattered throughout, and thus evidence of a worldview in some ways consonant with the SD description of RED. But there is also at the same time a pervasive and puzzling aspect to what we can gather of RED consciousness. The "self" that is struggling to emerge at the RED stage is often dominated by what one might call "infra-individual" aspects of self -- impulses or aspects of self that seem to take on an independent life of their own. It is true that these aspects often reflect power, lust, the will toward domination, but they also at times reflect fear, awe, bewilderment, and various other impulses or states, many that can be directly identified with the actions or presence of the Olympian gods. Beck and Cowan seem to be encouraging us to identify RED with a familiar, rather adolescent-seeming (or even pre-adolescent) egotism. But by studying Homer more closely, what I observe is that at this stage of cultural development *the self is not quite unitary*. In some ways (by no means all ways)<sup>33</sup> like the self of a contemporary toddler, and also in other ways that are quite unfamiliar to us living under much later cultural conditions, the self at early RED seems to be a self still in formation.

If the self is not quite formed, and thus under-determined as a locus of truly autonomous agency, then the world -- i.e., the gods, along with all other supernatural powers -- seems to be *over-determined*, in Homer's world. The notion of destiny (or, "fate") comes up quite often in *The Iliad*, in the warriors' frequent taunts toward one another as they fight, and in the gods' deliberations about previously-determined or partially-determined aspects of various heroes' fates. But at least among the human characters, there are also expressions of doubt about destiny (commonly to themselves, as in "maybe it's not my fate to die," or "...not to die just yet"). It is in the thick of their relations with their own internal states, with the momentum occasioned by wild, grief-stricken rage, or by fear, or other states, that these possibilities arise throughout the drama.

To draw some central conclusions from all this: it seems to me more useful to think of RED as oriented not exactly to "power," but instead as oriented to the more general property of *efficacy*. Power, in our modern/postmodern understanding of the term, is usually understood at least in its paradigmatic form as interpersonal, and is thus generally assigned among persons by implicit or explicit agreement, based on various forms of more-or-less conscious persuasion. Efficacy, on the other hand, is the ability for persons (or, for forces outside or within persons) to decisively affect their own situations, in all ways, through whatever means. For a person, basic natural means (simple physical strength), or interpersonal means (persuasive rhetoric), or "divine" means, meaning some special relationship with inner spirit-forces that are able to



light on our own times, I will consider three possible theoretical approaches. In terms of connections with other theories, references to integral theory will be more central here than in the rest of this essay, with its simpler focus on Graves. All three approaches considered will encounter some unavoidable complexities in approaching contemporary GREEN consciousness, but together they may hopefully add up to something greater than any one alone.

The first and simplest approach is to view the warm-colored memes simply as the stages where the most important outward forms of human life change dramatically. At RED, organized empires arise; at ORANGE, human technology begins to transform the world much more dramatically than before. By contrast, the "cool colored" v-memes seem to reflect periods of consolidation and organization of existing forms of thought and behavior (power-relations at BLUE, perspective-taking at GREEN), rather than the birthing of radically new forms, and their associated value-systems accordingly privilege values that reflect affiliation, submission, belonging (lower-quadrant perspectives, in Wilber's terminology; refer to footnote 24 for an explicit tie between SD and Wilber's upper/lower quadrant distinction). Warm-colored memes seem to foster new forms; cool-colored memes, to nurture interior transformations related to the integration of those forms into stable culture. It might be appropriate and more properly generic, under this view, to call the value-systems of the warm colored v-memes *evolutionary* value-systems, i.e., those tending to accompany the emergence or evolution of new forms, while calling those of the cool colored v-memes *involutionary* systems, those tending to accompany the strengthening or solidifying of older structures.<sup>35</sup> Evolutionary systems arise to accompany the birth of a new way of relating with reality, which is then elaborated and perfected in the less dramatic climate afforded by involutionary systems, until the restrictiveness of the old way becomes too great, and then the macro-cycle repeats.

A nice corollary of this view can also be provided by associating *evolutionary* predominant values with *exterior* (right-quadrant, per Wilber) perspectives, and *involutionary* values with *interior* (left-quadrant) perspectives. The main privileged value of RED (whether "power" or "efficacy") is clearly most directly comprehensible on an exterior view; likewise that of ORANGE (achievement/innovation). By contrast, the values of PURPLE (safety), BLUE (order), and GREEN (inclusivity/authenticity) could all be considered mainly to reflect left-quadrant, interior perspectives. The one complexity that immediately arises is with regard to GREEN: "inclusivity" seems like an interior value on the level of the group, but from the viewpoint of the individual it takes on a more outward-focused character. The injunction to be "inclusive" relates directly to the social environment of the individual: it could therefore be considered a value with a certain ambivalence as regards to the interiority or exteriority of perspective (LL/LR perspectives, again per Wilber) that it mirrors. The replacement of "inclusivity" with "authenticity" as suggested here clearly moves things in the interior direction, and thus points in the direction of the simple pattern just suggested for our understanding of the macro-pattern of warm and cool memes.

But this generalization about shifting exterior and interior memetic focus (i.e., shifting from a notion of the macro-pattern as alternating between upper-/lower-quadrants, toward a left-/right-quadrant alternation), while perhaps fine as far as it goes, seems simplistic in leaving open the question of how this shifting impacts the ways individuals and communities relate to one another. In other words, even if the left/right pattern provides some additional explanatory power, can it be that the upper/lower pattern of the Graves/SD theory is itself without merit?

In a second approach to defining the macro-pattern I will attempt to address the upper/lower quadrant question, but in order to do so with sufficient generality to deal with issues like infra-individual entities at RED, I will necessarily have to use somewhat more abstract terms. And to deal with the necessary abstractions, a related difference of interpretation must be mentioned. I have made references to Wilber's four-quadrant model throughout this essay, as it relates to the topic at hand. In particular, Wilber's distinction between upper-quadrant and lower-quadrant perspectives, originally expressed in terms of an

agency/communion polarity, but also expressed in many places in Wilber's work as also representing an individual/social dimension,<sup>36</sup> is an important touchstone that neatly fleshes out this key distinction, and is hopefully familiar to many readers. Unfortunately, Wilber's version partly parallels the very dimension being called into question here -- the essential reducibility of the "agency/communion" notion (as conceived more broadly here) to the "individual/social" distinction. It might indeed have been partly due to his exposure to Graves' earlier work that Wilber came up with these alternative definitional polarities (for discussion of Graves' possible influence on Wilber, refer to §4.1 below), but be that as it may, after initially presenting these important concepts using both metaphors but without explicitly linking them, Wilber leaves no doubt in his more recent writings that he regards the individual/social distinction as a conceptually sufficient one to differentiate the upper and lower quadrants.<sup>37</sup> With regard to the case made here for refining Graves' individual/collective macro-pattern to include a broader upper/lower quadrant macro-pattern, then, it must be pointed out that the use here of "upper and lower quadrant" shorthand is *also* departing somewhat from Wilber's conceptions, to reflect "upper-" and "lower-quadrant" perspectives, defined as perspectives of agency and of communion (respectively) that transcend the individual/social-group polarity.

How these "upper" and "lower" perspectives can be conceived more broadly seems to me better conceived in terms of another concept popularized by Wilber, that of the holarchy. A holarchy is a system of holons, or "whole-parts" defined both as individuals and as constituents, along with their relations of belongingness to one another. All naturally-occurring self-organizing systems can be conceived in holarchic terms, and organisms such as ourselves can be considered paradigmatic holons, individuals with certain degrees of freedom as such, also crucially immersed in many kinds of larger systems. Higher-level holons (Wilber calls them "senior") depend on the lower (junior) as their constituents: e.g., in biological evolution, there cannot arise multi-cellular organisms until individual cells have first evolved. Beginning with the paradigmatic individual/group polarity (i.e., staying with Wilber for the moment), it is relatively easy to see first how a "we" or "its" (i.e., lower-quadrant, communion-oriented) perspective can be holarchically defined. An individual's perspective is communion-oriented when his relation to his group(s) is central to that perspective, i.e., when the divisions normally present *within* the individual (e.g., ambivalence about some group-favored intention or activity, or perhaps about belonging to the group in the first place) are made secondary to individual's interplay with the group's "larger" activities, intentions, feelings, and states. An upper-quadrant perspective can conversely be defined as having only a limitative involvement with the group: when the individual reserves the right to demand limits on the group's claims, ultimately when he reserves the right to decide whether to leave the group altogether, an upper-quadrant perspective is being invoked. But this last is a definition by negation; for a more positive definition, it would seem necessary to refer to sub-holonic<sup>38</sup> states. An individual's upper-quadrant perspective will properly be dominated by consideration of his interior states (beliefs, needs, impulses, wishes, etc.), conceived as relatively distinct from socially-validated reality. For our purposes, such sub-holonic states will be considered lower in the holarchy than the individuals they inhabit. Now, under the new view suggested here (as distinct from Wilber's -- refer to footnote 37), *groups themselves* might also have both lower- and upper-quadrant perspectives, as might various other levels of entity (e.g., stable states conceived as infra- or trans-individual, such as the Homeric gods). From a philosophical point of view, this broadened definition should be acknowledged to leave potential problems in terms of conceiving of a holarchy that is always both well-defined and stable,<sup>39</sup> but these can be left as beyond the scope of this essay. The idea of upper-quadrant perspectives as relating mainly *down-the-(extended)-holarchy*<sup>40</sup> (i.e., to often-unstable inner states), and lower-quadrant perspectives as relating mainly *up-the-holarchy* (to higher-level groups and other more-stable, higher forms of organization), I will summarize here under the (broadened) terms *agency*<sup>41</sup> and *communion*.

Perhaps the clearest examples in history of *down-the-(extended)-holarchy* and *up-the-holarchy* overall patterns of relating are provided by the historic emergence of the ORANGE and BLUE memes, respectively.



It is at BLUE that the individual begins systematically to understand himself as encircled by a holarchy of social relations extending indefinitely "upwards," eventually to encompass the totality of existence and given the name "God." By contrast, at ORANGE, a new level of specificity of "downwards" understanding -- chiefly by individuals, with respect to their own intentions and desires -- breaks through the eventually-stifling politics and social relations held together by the BLUE worldview. Not so coincidentally (for reasons we will come to shortly), this particular memetic divide (between BLUE and ORANGE) was noted earlier as the place where Graves' individual/collective pattern-idea seemed to hold up best.

Using the broadened notions of agency and communion sketched out above, one could perhaps say that the warm-colored memes are those in which new *forms of agency* arise, and the cool-colored memes those in which new *forms of communion* develop. RED and ORANGE are "warm memes," on this theory, because new forms specifically of *down-the-(extended)-holarchy* relating emerge, whether at RED the weighing of relative felt efficacy of interior forces, or at ORANGE the observation of the relative external effectiveness of individually-chosen strategies in a world jointly conditioned with other actors. PURPLE and BLUE, by contrast, are "cool" in that they illustrate stages of what we can with the hindsight of history see as predominantly *up-the-holarchy* relating: at PURPLE, up to the emergent notion of the group/tribe itself, with all its associated spirits and their shamanic interpreters; at BLUE, up to that of a transcendent God, likewise considered alongside the body of religious custom and institutions. This conception, as far as it goes, seems to work somewhat better than the simple individual/social polarity, as is perhaps easiest to see for the "cool" memes we have considered. For PURPLE and BLUE, the qualities of submission and emotional surrender, whether to the spirit(s) of the group or to God, for each respective system, are central.

Combining both our first and second attempts at a macro-synthesis, we can see as well that they cohere nicely to suggest a broad conception of meme-pairs, each comprising first an evolutionary and then an involutory meme: at BEIGE/PURPLE we have overall modes of relating (first *down-the-(extended)-holarchy*, then *up-the-holarchy*) that might be holistically called "pre-mental"<sup>42</sup>; at RED/BLUE relating could be characterized as embodying the operation of "direct mind" (*ordering* first the social world via action, and then the cosmos via thought); and at ORANGE/GREEN, "flexible mind" (similarly *elaborating* or *refining* the orderings, first of the social world and then of the cosmos).

Where our two attempts so far break down, when considered as a general theory, is in relation to GREEN, for if contemporary GREEN essentially involves relating *up-the-holarchy* (rather a different conception than the ideas of GREEN entertained in this essay so far<sup>43</sup>), exactly what is the ultimate higher-level of holonic organization to which persons at GREEN are striving to relate? GREEN has long abandoned the BLUE God and seems to be searching for something (perhaps "authenticity" as suggested in §3.2 above), but it seems generally quite diffident in making clear what that something may actually be. The notions of "a balanced ecosystem," or alternatively of "a compassionate society," both ring true but partial. Possibly, in the hindsight of future history, someone may be able to look back at our current age and see clearly that GREEN's general orientation to states of *feeling* (in preference to states of *thought*) mark it as a precursor to some kind of emergent communion with a spirit or divinity, one that more specifically transcends the conscious mind than do the various forms of spiritual communion recommended via the legacies of prior ages. However, this must for now be considered mere speculation, in that it goes far beyond the clear notions today collectively available to us today.

In order to provide a general notion of the dichotomy between warm- and cool-colored memes that addresses holarchic relations among levels and that does not essentially leave out GREEN, a third and final attempted approach to the macro-pattern will make use of the dynamics of different levels of holonic organization. To see this, it will be useful first to consider reversed meme-pairings. Two paragraphs above, memetic-pairs were defined as might seem at first most natural: warm memes (those that seem to introduce new external forms of life) were paired with the cool memes (that consolidate and interiorize these forms) that

follow. If we now consider the opposite pairings (first cool memes, followed by warm), PURPLE and RED may be seen to have in common a certain focusing of consciousness at the group-level of holonic organization. At PURPLE, the group or tribe first emerges as an effective holon; the notion of "group-think" becomes a possible and even necessary phenomenon, which (like language itself) is best defined as the product of some kind of group-collective mind.<sup>44</sup> At RED, the external, action-oriented potential of group-consciousness (e.g., the well-structured empire as paradigm) becomes a possibility, and the internal, perceptual domination of "group think" seems to continue much as before: a person who rejects the group's worldview is as unthinkable, or perhaps as laughable,<sup>45</sup> in the world of *The Iliad* as in some PURPLE hunting band.

It is at BLUE, despite the continuing complete domination of the individual by the group in external (i.e., socio-political) terms, that the possibility of a truly individualistic perspective becomes a *perceptual* possibility. Consider that the dominant narrative of medieval times, the Jesus-story, is clearly that of an individual in conflict with his social surroundings; he cannot forcibly change the group's viewpoint, but he steadfastly refuses to be dominated by it within his own perspective. Likewise, the story of Socrates (another influential *ur*-BLUE narrative), or even that of the early Christian philosopher Boethius (incidentally, a highly influential author throughout the Middle Ages), are sublimated tragedies of nascent individualism. Though the behavioral rebellion of the empowered individual awaited such properly ORANGE figures as Martin Luther, this rebellion could be considered to be rooted in millennia of BLUE contemplation of a story of tragic or partially-tragic, because sublimated, thwarted individualism.

This cool-/warm-colored holonic-memetic pattern suggests some promising theoretical possibilities. First, the cool-colored memes *all* seem to involve a shifting focus of perception, in terms of holonic levels where the decisive acts of perception seem to occur. At PURPLE, primordial perceptual acts -- however conceived, whether as arising separately among individual organisms or as the first stirrings of a more collective human consciousness that has nonetheless not yet fully "bonded" -- first coalesce into group-consciousness.<sup>46</sup> At BLUE, truly independent individual perspectives evolve, albeit under the aegis of a collectivistic socio-political structure. And at GREEN, still newer relations between the individual and the group may be becoming possible (to be discussed below). Meanwhile, under this view, the warm memes are actually *less* dynamic, when considered purely with respect to perception -- they simply represent stages where "acting out" the possibilities implicit in newly-formed perceptions come to fruition. So a different measure of the memes, using the interplay of holonic levels brought to bear in greatest focus in the act of perception, becomes possible.

Notice that RED and BLUE are reversed under this new measure, with regard to the individual/social dimension, from their positions in Graves' theory: RED is now to be considered a group-oriented meme (though still upper-quadrant, and therefore properly warm-colored); BLUE, an individual-oriented one (though still lower-quadrant). This accounts nicely for why ORANGE and BLUE resonate as the memes where Graves' individual/collective dimension rings truest: both are essentially and deeply individualistic memes, resonant with the worldview we still take for granted today under the historic influence of modernism, even as our collective perspective is shifting, and thus their legacies uniquely make a certain ready, intuitive sense to us. Because in BLUE the external, political forms are still dominated by collectivistic thinking, it may seem to be a collectivistic meme, but it is better described as only superficially collectivistic and more deeply individualistic, as compared to the multi-level individualism (both political and perceptual) of ORANGE.

This new conception of the cool memes as decisively altering the holonic structure of perception helps to provide a more satisfying account of the role of the cool-colored memes in the overall spiral of evolution: the cool-colored memes progress through shifting holonic arrangements, with regard to how consciousness conceptualizes and perceives reality, while the warm-colored memes involve new outward expressions of the possibilities manifest by such a relation among holonic levels in organizing perception, once it has stabilized.

This pattern could be considered overlaid with the pattern between warm/cool colored pairs mentioned earlier (relating *down-/* then *up-the-holarchy*), in that the latter perhaps better characterize the relevant "flavors" of actual thought (pre-mental, direct mind, flexible mind), while the cool/warm pattern shows more clearly the dynamic inner relations among different holonic levels of organization.

Finally, note that this view of the cool memes as dynamic regimes of holonic reorganization also helps to account for some of the puzzles regarding the difficulties of defining GREEN in our own times. If cool memes are stages in which holarchies somehow rearrange themselves, particularly as regards the function of perception, it seems natural that a certain cloudiness should result at these stages, in terms of peoples' ability to perceive their own epochs in large terms. And history does indeed appear to help support the view that the cool memes are generally harder than the warm memes to see clearly, from within their own perspectives. Consider the case of BLUE: we have little sense of the medievals' self-image, except what may be inferred from the prevailing religiosity of their times. Whether or not they shared the generally disparaging views of the Middle Ages that historians later made familiar,<sup>47</sup> there seems to be an absence of clearly expressed self-definition on the part of medieval culture and possibly a degree of BLUE cultural self-abnegation,<sup>48</sup> in marked contrast both with successor and with predecessor times. Witness the conscious excitement and sense of optimism that marks the advent of the early modern (ORANGE) period in the West (e.g., consider the Renaissance among artists and connoisseurs, the scientific revolution among scholars and early technologists, the American and French revolutions among the affected general populations. As for RED, though the collective subjective self-image of the ancient RED world is again not easy for us to assess at such great historical distance, the greatness of the RED empires of the Near East (and, in the West, eventually of Rome), certainly greater than anything known as preceding them, would (along with what subjective clues we have) seem to render obvious a generalized sense of proud cultural attainment among their inhabitants. If at GREEN our perception is in the process of being reorganized (an idea discussed further in the last part of this subsection), some obscurity surrounding the process is perhaps only to be expected.

\* \* \*

I will proceed now to consider in somewhat more detail how the largely-GREEN present (at least, of the post-industrial world) may be manifesting the macro-pattern, as seen through the theoretical lenses just discussed. The far-off-seeming observations about the incompletely-formed self of Homeric man have also some relevance to postmodern society, in that the postmodern self seems to be undergoing a process of *disintegration*. In psychology, in literature, in casual contemporary discourse, the threats to the once-stable modernist self, whether those imposed by inner forces (e.g., of repressed emotions) or those by outer forces of social or technological over-complexity, are everywhere increasing. And so the fragmented voices of split-off "infra-individual" sub-personalities are once again culturally relevant. (Actually, the label "infra-individual" is probably even better applied to contemporary than to ancient phenomena, whereas the term "transpersonal," a term that has evolved in our time, could as well be applied to Homer's gods.<sup>49</sup>) Earlier (in §3.2), I explored "authenticity" as the attractor-value for postmodernism. Consider that the very *possibility* of authenticity (i.e., the possibilities in any given moment of being either authentic or inauthentic) depends on there being multiple aspects to the seemingly unitary self, with varying levels of groundedness in something that could be called enduringly true. This may help to make clear the centrality of this potential multiplicity of self for postmodernism.

But postmodernism doesn't seem to go through with a complete embrace of the individual as literally comprised of multiple selves. It is a more tentative approach to this idea, balanced uneasily with that of a unitary, sovereign self (presumably, inherited from ORANGE and BLUE), that characterizes our era and its most trenchant thinkers.<sup>50</sup> Instead, this multiplicity seems to hover ever nearer as an encroaching possibility. To be clear, I am not speaking here of having "multiple selves" in a pathological sense (i.e., a full-blown

dissociative disorder), a notion that has been around for about a century,<sup>51</sup> nor the idea of channeling or possession by spiritual visitations.<sup>52</sup> Rather, it is the notion that all of us already in our ordinary states seem to have multiple selves, continually jockeying for what is perhaps an illusory sense of coherence and control, still quite a difficult idea to comprehend in its full implications, which like a kind of attractor seems to be growing in relevance, steadily (but as yet incompletely), for contemporary postmodern consciousness.

To see how questions of multiplicity in the self actually manifest in slightly more detail, I will undertake another abbreviated artistic survey, this time of postmodern literature. The gradual lessening of the unity and stability of the self, as evinced over the micro-evolutionary stages of the postmodern novel, is hopefully a phenomenon that is evident enough on reflection that a few simple examples will suffice to illustrate it. Even the most daring of early postmodernism's experiments with formal innovation -- say, those of James Joyce or Gertrude Stein<sup>53</sup> -- remain peculiarly attached in their characterizations to the use of the idiosyncratic, individual voice. This is surprising when we consider the degree and scope of these experiments in regard to most other aspects of the form of the novel. In Joyce's *Ulysses*, the fantastical ramblings of the main protagonist, Bloom, describe many confusing, liminal states, surprising to himself as much as to those around, particularly as regards his complex, Jewish-Irish diasporic ethnic identity, and yet the voice that speaks up in dialog in the novel is unambiguously Bloom's own, conditioned by his unique racial and psychic history. Interestingly, though often described as a "stream-of-consciousness" novel, *Ulysses* seems to stand at some remove from its main character, often asking questions from an arch, detached narrative point of view that is distinctly *not* Bloom's. It is only in the last chapter that the author gives way into a fully-imagined stream-of-consciousness monolog, in shifting to the point of view of Molly Bloom, who is less definitely Jewish than her husband, and thus at once both more distant (as a woman) and in another way potentially closer to Joyce.

More generally, comparing the characters of contemporary-postmodern novelists like Thomas Pynchon or Jonathan Franzen with their earlier-postmodern predecessors of a century ago, those (say) of Herman Melville, or Henry James, or Edith Wharton,<sup>54</sup> one can see a great deal of more easily-induced and much faster character change in the former, as well as a much greater sense of indeterminacy and bewilderment as regards their own uncertain values and reactions to those around them. A case for a definite progression could perhaps also be strengthened by pointing to a middle state, in regard to self-indeterminacy, in the works of midcentury authors like John Cheever or John Updike, postmodern ironists in their own way (though much less pervasively so than many contemporary authors). Nonetheless, all of these authors still do feature distinct characters with more-or-less unitary identities that persist over time. Despite all its vast experimentation with indeterminacies of space, time, place and race, to name but a few categories, postmodern literature retains certain conventions of stable character formation for fairly obvious reasons -- it's difficult to tell a story without them -- and with rare exceptions<sup>55</sup> shows a certain diffidence with regard to the "transpersonal" attunements of its characters toward pluralistic aspects of their own identities.

Given all this, what generalizations can be made, in terms of how contemporary literature may reflect the forces of evolution leading our culture, as regards the memetic structure of postmodernism? Looking with regard to the macro-pattern explored over much of this subsection, can we see more clearly the marks left by putatively large historical-structural patterns (e.g., *up-the-hierarchy* patterns of relating) in any of the detailed patter of contemporary literary art surrounding us? The proposed postmodern attractor-value of "authenticity" would seem in the literary domain to translate into valuing simple, clear, natural modes of expression. Though direct evidence for the attractor-value may be overlaid with much else in a cultural setting, it is striking that many of the more obviously postmodern literary examples mentioned above, from Joyce to Franzen, could be considered "formal expansionists," that is, as more concerned with experimenting with radically changed conventions than with polishing or refining basic modes of communication.

I will continue this literary mini-survey to include as well more stylistically conservative postmodern currents, but first ask one more organizing question that will help lead back to answering the others posed

above: if the progress of postmodernism seems to chart the gradual fragmentation of the unified self, what is the fate of the postmodern consciousness of the *group* (i.e., the qualities of collective consciousness at various levels of social holon)? In other words, if the human individual (as hitherto conceived) is undergoing some process of postmodern dissolution, is the postmodern group also in the process of fragmenting, or on the other hand, might group-consciousness actually becoming more tightly unified? This seems, on the face of it, to be a difficult question, for there appears to be ample evidence on both sides. Looking beyond literature at all of contemporary postmodern society, to begin with the obvious, one might notice that much greater scope is permitted and left to the choice of the individual, relative to the social rules and strictures of previous stages. In this way, group-consciousness under postmodernism seems to have grown radically more fragmented: people can dress this way and that, and behave this way and that, when compared to the relative conformity of earlier times (say, 1950's of America). There is a certain obvious case to be made for group fragmentation.

On the other hand, even though postmodernism may mark a major diminishment of *coercive* group-consciousness (e.g., top-down injunctions on the individual, whether subtle or overt), it is possible that other forms of group-consciousness, based on persuasion or manipulation, may more than compensate. I believe this to be the case: witness certain aspects of contemporary life, such as society's response to the threat of terrorism, as compared to that of a century ago: though nations have long become galvanized into collective states of great emotion in the face of terrorist outrages, the collective subjective response under the influence of technology (social networking) has become so much more instantaneous and intense than in any prior known age, as to provide clear evidence for a more densely connected "we-space" (on a societal scale) under postmodernism than has hitherto been seen under earlier memes. In other words, the collective consciousness seems to be growing more coherent as the postmodern structure evolves: greater and more tightly-organized energy characterize the social collective responses to shared concerns, as expressed through voluntary, though often fragmentary, individual acts. (I should note that this very brief analysis follows roughly a pattern laid down by an early theorist concerning group-consciousness.<sup>56</sup>)

But just as postmodernism does not seem to go through entirely with the dissolution of the individual consciousness, so the increasing cohesiveness of postmodern group-consciousness is incomplete, even as it seems to be present and growing. The idea of a fully formed collective group-agency that perceptibly "acts" in the moment-to-moment frame of its members' experience, rather than over a more historical frame, still seems to me on the whole a somewhat foreign notion for our times. Some groups active today are attempting to explore this possibility, but such explorations clearly at this moment have a tentative character.<sup>57</sup> There seems under postmodernism to be a historical symmetry between the processes of fragmentation and unification for individual and group consciousness, respectively, in that both processes are progressing (perhaps to some eventual meeting-point), but this progress on both sides is as yet far from complete.

To return to literature, in order to complete the survey that began with the "formal expansionists" mentioned above, I now take note of a different, more formally conservative postmodern tradition that stresses naturalistic portrayal of individuals struggling to confront their social surroundings. This line begins with some of the most famous names in European Romantic literature, from Jane Austen to the Brontë sisters, proceeding to George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, and in continental Europe to the works of Flaubert, Ibsen, Strindberg and Chekhov. One could perhaps call this tradition "resigned," or perhaps even "despairing postmodernism," as its chief subject is the often-calamitous conflicts between individuals and large, impersonal social forces. A story like Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857), to take a famously well-crafted example, relies for its interest on the collision between a deluded and relatively isolated individual (though still a representative of the bourgeois class) and a relatively stable (though already shifting) social order. Many more sympathetic heroes than Emma Bovary appear in nineteenth-century novels, but they often meet similar fates. It is still-largely-unified individual selves, confronting the faceless and largely-inchoate group consciousness of their times and societies, that these early postmodernists were drawn to portray.

There are certainly many survivals of this sober, realist tradition with continued activity much more recently than these early examples: there is still plenty of market today for the traditionally-told literary tale. But contemporary followers of this type do seem on the whole to be less individually well-known, relative to (say) formal expansionist types, in American and Europe today. Another difference from these early "resigned postmodernists" of the nineteenth-century is that few or no authors nowadays seem to write anymore about straightforward collisions between individuals and oppressive social conditions. The reason would seem simple: at whatever difficult-to-define stage of postmodernism current literature inhabits, unironically bemoaning active social oppression has become such a cliché, that it repels creative artists almost univocally. To be sure, the legacies of *past* oppression are everywhere and still today comprise a major literary theme. But the past may be refracted through many perspectives, and may occasion many possible responses while retaining its elusive quality of being open to multiple interpretations. Because of its distance from the active passions of the politics of the moment, the past is also more likely to be a vehicle for opening unexpected moral questions than for settling them simply or definitively.

To examine some more detailed aspects of the work of a reasonably well-known contemporary author who can be regarded as a current representative of "resigned" postmodernism, I will use the South African novelist J.M. Coetzee (since migrated to Australia), also a formal innovator who is at the same time a naturalistic confronter with his own set of particular oppressive historical legacies.<sup>58</sup> Coetzee's first work to achieve major renown, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), is the story of an alienated colonial administrator serving a decaying, oppressive regime. The protagonist is vaguely sympathetic toward the oppressed outsiders against whom his regime gradually begins to make war, though he is often ridden with guilt and uncertainty. He engages one of the elusive "enemy" in a strange, intimate relationship, and through the vicissitudes of this relationship eventually separates himself from his own government. After enduring a Kafkaesque imprisonment, he ultimately emerges as a chastened popular leader of sorts, in a world turned upside down by mass manipulation and social decay.

A later Coetzee novel, *Disgrace* (1999), perhaps the best-known of his more recent works, features another alienated, middle-aged main character: a professor of literature who brings down official censure on himself by seducing a student. After leaving his university town for an extended visit with his adult daughter in the countryside, the hero (or anti-hero) struggles to accommodate himself to country life; his concerns over treatment of animals becomes a minor motif. When his plucky but brittle daughter is raped by a gang of local youths, the ex-professor's life is again disrupted. The daughter confronts what she sees as local political realities by agreeing to a marriage of convenience with a neighbor, causing further familial rifts and tensions that set the protagonist adrift yet again.

The themes of guilt and humiliation in Coetzee's work provide shocks that tend dramatically to move the plots along, but alongside these pyrotechnics there is a painful emotional confrontation with an inscrutable and harsh, though not necessarily malevolent, outside reality. This bumpy confrontation, somewhat reminiscent of Melville's work (e.g., *Moby Dick* (1851)) also adds some markers more characteristic of present-day consciousness. There is an uncanny relationship between the individual worlds and subsequent outer circumstances of Coetzee's protagonists: the administrator in *Waiting for the Barbarians* exercises the powers of the state, reluctantly and (as he sees it) somewhat humanely, and then comes through events to experience those very same powers exercised upon himself; the professor in *Disgrace* gives free rein to his own sensual desires, and then experiences the social and familial chaos wrought by the unrestrained desires of others.

Whereas all this might come off as moralistic, symbolic or otherwise metaphysical, were it written in an earlier style like that of Melville, something discourages such an interpretation here. The often-sullen, but also at times coy, sense of indeterminacy that characterizes the overall milieu in Coetzee's writing seems to suggest something less otherworldly than a strict accounting of *karma* operating beneath the surface in his world. Instead, his spare prose hints at mysterious (and perhaps uncertain) patterns of events that drive both

individuals and larger social processes, moving at times along seemingly relentless trajectories, and yet also subject to vagaries of chance and choice.

Coetzee's main characters, at the beginnings of both stories mentioned here, evince a scathing contempt for hypocrisy and falsity in their social surroundings. After their buffetings by fate, whether or not they have changed at the core, the reader senses at least that their tendency toward judgment of the social patterns will at least be more circumspect. What I would like to suggest is that these books capture a sense of the individual poised to enter into a new potential relationship to the group-level holons that surround him. Coetzee's characters are suspended between a continual confrontation with obdurate social reality, like many in nineteenth-century literature, and a new, more uncanny reality in which abiding conflict between the individual and the group is literally unthinkable, simply because the individual's life-process and the group's life-process are beginning to be seen as *co-arising*, according to the same laws, and therefore ultimately as mirroring one another.

If this farther pole of multi-level holonic "co-arising" is difficult to see, or to sketch out in a more self-evident way, it is perhaps because in our time it is only an evanescent possibility that as yet needs to become grounded. It is enough for now simply to outline the increasing, but as yet incomplete, coherence of group consciousness, alongside the continuing and insistent claims of individuality, as indicating some kind of multi-level spontaneity emerging in our times, in which consciousness participates though individuals simultaneously in their role as unitary selves and as participants in larger communities. The spontaneous expression of individual agency in this emerging framework may be seen as at times truly individual, and at other times more an expressions of a group's impulses transmitted *through* those of its individual group-members.

And so, to bring together the many strands proposed in this subsection, the macro-pattern of alternating memes may be summarized as follows: as an alternation between those values (warm) that are mainly *exterior*-focused and those (cool) that are mainly *interior*-focused (across many holonic levels); as a tendency to relate most intensely *downward* (warm) versus *upward* (cool) within holarchic structures; and as a reorganization of outward forms of *activity* (warm) or of holarchic structures as means of *perception* (cool). Though quite subtle and difficult to see in its completeness at present, the postmodern emergence of a new form of perception that explicitly encompasses group- and individual-level perception as simultaneous and mutually influencing one another (i.e., the emergence itself, not the new form, which as yet remains rather obscure) is perhaps the clearest example of the manifestation of the macro-pattern as actually operating in our time.

### ***3.4 Integral Theory and its Claims of Discerning Developmental Stage(s) Beyond Postmodernism***

There appears to be a consensus in the integral theory community today that development beyond the postmodern stage is still currently in a nascent state: none of the major authors in the field are saying that a fully-formed "integral stage of development" (as the next stage posited after postmodernism is usually called) has matured. None say, that is, that there are as yet fully-formed "integral" institutions, or even necessarily well-defined "integral" patterns of individual thought or action. Nevertheless, the best-known authors have put forward a basic vision of aspects that are held to be central to an integral stage said to be emerging, presumably among "leading-edge" individuals in our midst. And unsurprisingly, the members of the community attracted to studying these matters tend to consider themselves as embodying such a stage, and to take for granted, at least for purposes of conversation, that dialog on these matters presupposes such personal development. This has become common to the point that distanced, sober reflection on the topic of what aspects of this next stage may truly have been realized at this point in history, which is after all a matter of foundational concern to the integral theory community, is often difficult or never considered at all.

Matters of stage-definition are further complicated by the phenomenon of "stage inflation," or the tendency to refer casually to levels of development well beyond our usual understanding. Both Graves and Wilber (among others) have gone more formally well beyond the integral stage in their theories, discussing various stages of development beyond integral.<sup>59</sup> Staying with the integral stage for purposes of this discussion, I note that the precise conceptions of an integral stage due to these two thinkers -- and their predecessors (such as Gebser), and their followers -- are not identical, but there does appear to be a significant overlap. As Steve McIntosh puts in, in a recent synthesis of the views of influential integralists like Wilber and others, the emerging integral stage is like earlier stages in responding to a "push" of problematic life-conditions and a "pull" of attractive newly evolving values (McIntosh 2007, 74). The "push" for the integral stage includes the tremendous difficulty of agreeing on or resolving anything contentious in the public space, given the strong emphasis under postmodernism of respecting all perspectives. This leads to a kind of social paralysis quite familiar to many of us today. The "pull" has to do with an "enlarged understanding of life itself" (a notion more or less straight out of Graves -- see §2.1 above). There is thought to be a new kind of earnestness on behalf of larger goals -- even a *much* larger goal than is usually conceived in human terms: the saving of life on earth -- that is emerging out of the crises of the postmodern era. But beyond the drama of "saving the planet," persons at the integral stage are thought to be focused on the process of evolution in all ways, large and small. As McIntosh writes:

Of all the values of the integral worldview, that which it most esteems is the value of evolution itself. And with this exaltation of the value of evolution comes the ideal of "the prime directive" [a phrase used by Wilber]. The prime directive is to work to maintain the health and sustainability of the entire channel of cultural evolution, the spiral of development as a whole [note the implicit reference to SD]. Because every infant begins life at the level of archaic consciousness, the flow of evolution through the levels is unceasing. So the prime directive instructs us that for cultural evolution to be sustainable, the enduring contributions of each stage of the system must be healthy and functioning within the greater society. Caring for the spiral as a whole means preserving the evolutionary opportunities for every person, regardless of that person's place in the sequence of evolution.

However, the values of the prime directive include not only the values of progress and development through the stages, but also the inherent value of each stage as it is in itself. One of my favorite quotes by Clare Graves is his famous exclamation: 'Damn it all, a person has the right to be who he is.' And this of course applies not only to the people living in fragile tribal cultures, whom we all want to protect, but also to people living in fundamentalist cultures who may not be as appealing to postmodern sensibilities. So in addition to valuing the channel of evolution of consciousness and culture as a whole, integral consciousness is also able to appreciate the healthy values of each stage in a new way.

Integral consciousness achieves its evolutionary advance partially by being able to metabolize all the values of the spiral. This does not mean that integral thinking values everything equally (a pathology of postmodern consciousness), but rather, that it recognizes how the real values of every historically significant worldview must be included within our larger estimates of what is good and worthwhile. And this applies even to the oldest human worldviews. For example, an enduring contribution of tribal culture can be seen in the necessity of family loyalty -- and this same sense of primal loyalty can be magnified by the values of the higher levels to include not just loyalty to our blood kin, but loyalty to the entire family of humanity. Similarly, the fierce sense of



individual autonomy that arises with warrior consciousness [despotism, as it is called here] can be carried forward to preserve personal freedom and individual liberties even within complex, interdependent societies.

People whose center of gravity is within integral consciousness are able to effectively use the appropriate reactions for all life conditions that have evolved over the millennia. For example, when it comes to setting up an organization, postmodern consciousness naturally wants to create a nonhierarchical, consensus type of organization. And for some conditions this is entirely appropriate. But for other life conditions, such as organization can be highly dysfunctional. Integral consciousness, however, can better read life conditions and thus create the kind of organization most appropriate for the members and for the task. If the situation calls for a command-and-control military-style organization, integral consciousness can create this, or if a group's purposes can best be served through an incentive-based corporate organization, integral consciousness can create this as well. (McIntosh 2007, 79-80)

This passage provides a fairly concise example of thinking typical in the integral theory community today: only at the integral stage can the whole spiral be appreciated, and we who are interested in this theory are presumably likely to be among the few today beginning to embody this stage, and so it is our privilege and our responsibility to be able to appreciate the grandeur of all this evolutionary structure -- perhaps for the first time, or nearly the first time, in human history.

I find myself personally sympathetic to McIntosh's individual style in pithily summing up communal aspects of the self-image of many involved in contemporary integral theory (and as well to some of his own theoretical innovations<sup>60</sup>), but I am quoting him at length here mainly to bring up for review a theme running throughout the dialog of the integral theory community that I believe calls for strong criticism. This theme can be summarized under the heading of "subtle grandiosity" (or perhaps even "not-so-subtle grandiosity"): while taking an agreeable-seeming tone, McIntosh is actually making enormous assumptions about past humans and about purported current human capacities. He asserts that people he considers at the integral level, who can for the first time appreciate the spiral of previous developmental levels as described by Graves, attain the ability to "switch gears" and to embody levels of consciousness and behavior appropriate to the situation, whereas all the previous people in human history were essentially imprisoned in their respective levels of development. This comes close to saying that a full intellectual appreciation of the concept of the spiral as elaborated is enough to transcend it -- which, when viewed carefully, is a statement far out of resonance with many of the views even of those thinkers (like Wilber<sup>61</sup> and others) who have given the main impetus to the formation of the integral theory community.

I don't believe that there is enough understanding today of an "integral level" to make such claims (of personal capacity to embody different stages at will) in a responsible way. Nor is there a clear enough understanding of such cognitive styles as "vision logic" (Wilber's term) or "paradoxical thinking" (related to Graves' terms)<sup>62</sup> to discern these styles reliably in ourselves. It is too easy to dignify sloppy thinking and common egotism as "new forms of cognition" or "new levels of capacity," when we give ourselves license to use such labels in a knowing way in our own internal dialog with ourselves, much less in dialog with others.

One can describe well enough the "push" of the integral level (as McIntosh put it): the social paralysis of (dysfunctional) postmodernism that makes everyone soft in appreciation of feelings and alternative perspectives, but which can grossly inhibit conscious group focus and potential for coherent collective action. As for the "pull," we can perhaps begin to discern in ourselves (in our better moments) a certain ruthless internal focus as we confront the current situation of our world, an earnestness and an all-embracing compassion that *may* in some ways be new, but only in the way every new situation may be truly or deeply novel. It is simply far too early to categorize and give a concrete name to and stage-like finality to the

transition from postmodernism to this supposedly new level of the integral. Yes, there is a collective weariness with the endless argumentation of postmodernism (and of the mental stages in general). And perhaps this weariness may be counted a good thing, as far as it is actually pushing us forward somehow. "Integral" is a fine name for the resulting impulse to make it a priority to find agreement, to seek common ground among different perspectives and persons, and at once to learn a way of seamless functioning amid the diverse impulses and needs of our inner selves. This impulse simply does not at present seem to me like a coherently definable "stage of development"-- particularly not in the theoretical context of a broadened notion of postmodernism (as explored here), and particularly not in the interpersonal terrain of a community of persons trying to apply such labels to themselves.

It certainly seems interesting to ask the question: what might an integral stage possibly look like, should the patterns and distinctions discerned in this essay hold up as valid and continue through another era? Using the concepts explored in this essay, it is simple enough to extrapolate the applicable concepts (though perhaps less simple to infer the consequences): if authenticity, as the attractor-value of postmodernism, were to become the unconscious restraining-value for a new structure of consciousness (i.e., a common baseline beyond which people would turn toward some new attractor-value), what might that look like? Presumably, this would seem to have to be a much *quieter* era than we are used to in the age of postmodernism, for there would need to evolve social institutions that would filter out all the enormous amount of inauthentic communication that people commonly engage in. Recall that a restraining-value is normally a baseline that is simply assumed, usually in a tacit way. Modernism assumes a basic orderliness of the cosmos (and thus also an obligation for individuals to behave in ways respecting that order); postmodernism assumes a basic innovativeness (again, both among groups and individuals, in their being implicitly seen as functioning in importantly ever-changing ways). Can one conceive what it would be to assume a basic authenticity in ourselves and our fellow humans, in a broad and general sense, as should befit a structure governing the values for society? The last qualifier is important, for those who already have some degree of intimacy -- families or circles of close friends -- have *always* been able to sense when a person in the group is acting or communicating authentically, and when such a person is merely play-acting, imitating, mocking, faking, or otherwise communicating less-than-authentically. The ready (indeed, automatic) discernment of authenticity, when it is experienced mutually, would seem to be part of what intimacy *is*. Again then, what would such ready discernment mean on a general level -- universal intimacy? That would seem to require too much of post-postmodernism, for what is needed would be a baseline sense of authenticity only among those who are actually interacting. All the people outside one's zone of immediate interaction would not matter to this baseline (provided one was not paying significant attention to these others). So it isn't the knitting of the entire world into intimate community that is being contemplated, but it is still a large shift. The idea of a "baseline of authenticity" (even among small communities) would seem indeed to imply a world much different from the noisy postmodern world of today -- a world where interactions are attended with a presumption of authentically-grounded intent as the necessary precursor to utterance -- all of which seems in the present to hint at, rather than fully to describe, some intriguing and elusive possibilities.

What could be the attractor-value for such a world? Perhaps some form of creativity beyond our current collective understanding. But that is only a highly speculative answer. I cannot fully define the value, given the evidence available to me at this time. Using the theory developed in the previous subsection, and making the assumption that the macro-pattern investigated there continues into the future, I might surmise that the next meme when it truly arrives will be a "warm" meme with the same basic properties of that family: an exterior-focused main value that is somehow agentic in character, that is, a value that involves relating predominantly *down-the-(extended)-hierarchy*. The idea of an exterior, agentic attractor-value in a much quieter world may possibly seem incongruous, but this only shows how historically conditioned we still are by RED and ORANGE, which certainly seem to be relatively noisy memes (particularly interpersonally). There

is no actual contradiction between quiet and exteriority, and a focus on some exterior but (let us say) quite subtle aspect of outward reality could well match the tentative description of the next stage given here.

Most provocatively, the idea of individual/group perceptual co-arising, introduced (albeit only very lightly) at the end of §3.3 above, would reach its fruition in the next warm-colored meme, and would give rise to a new form of action and presumably to new forms of life. When such a meme arrives, though I cannot at present say what it might actually look like, I would speculate that those who have the privilege of witnessing its emergence will know beyond any doubt that something important and new has arrived, just as many who witnessed the arrival of the last warm meme (ORANGE) in the European and North American Enlightenment experienced consciously their time as embodying a momentous historical shift.

There are a few more minor inferences about the next meme after postmodernism that follow from Graves' theory as extended here.<sup>63</sup> But they do not add much to the picture already drawn. I would like to emphasize the speculative nature of this picture, as my main purpose in this subsection is limitative. Though anyone can say what they might *like* to succeed our current state of cultural evolution -- and though perhaps many have strong feelings as to what *must* happen if we human beings are collectively to survive -- it is not ours to anticipate evolution, and this new turn is not yet complete. In discussing such matters, we are communicating with one another through what might be called the "cultural ether" of what is yet still a postmodernist world at this stage, much as these words are written in the English language.<sup>64</sup> Until the language itself truly "turns" us in a new way, we would do better to respect our place within its organically-evolving form, and to avoid claims of well-defined new stages that are not as yet widely apparent in the culture at large.

## 4 Graves' Theory in Context

For purposes of this essay, it remains now only to provide some additional context on the place of Graves' thought. In this section, this is sketched out very briefly, first within the immediate context of the integral theory community, and then (more diffusely) in that of the culture at large.

### 4.1 Graves' Influence on Wilber

In the writings of Ken Wilber, the best-known contemporary exponent of integral theory, Graves' name appears beginning at the time of his introduction of the four-quadrant model (Wilber 1995). Graves is generally treated as a respected predecessor, though typically as only one among a group of recent, relevant developmental thinkers.<sup>65</sup>

Wilber's focus is somewhat different from Graves': his orientation to certain Buddhist traditions, while not bearing directly in any obvious way on his attempt to describe a grand historical cosmology of evolutionary development (somewhat parallel to Graves'), seems a significant influence as regards Wilber's interest in the possibility of greater, more stable access to mystical states as related to possible future human development. (This influence has been noticed and criticized by other integral theorists, e.g., McIntosh (2007, 195).) But there is also a clear and acknowledged borrowing of Graves' work, as amply cited in Wilber's works, in the latter's grand evolutionary synthesis.

What I would like to point out here briefly, and have not seen mentioned elsewhere, is that the specifically-admitted tone of "anger, or perhaps anguish" in Wilber (1995, xxiii), as regards the state of contemporary postmodernism, seems to have appeared following directly on Wilber's exposure to Graves' work. His immediate predecessor book (excluding his personal memoir on the death of his wife), *Transformations of Consciousness* (Wilber et al. 1986), though covering the theme of a spectrum of development, is silent on the subject of the problems of postmodernism. This book, though written with co-authors and aimed specifically at a discussion of different psychotherapeutic-treatment modalities, shares with

other earlier Wilber works an interest in a spectrum of personal psychological development (and also a related spectrum of possible psychopathologies); it seems quite remote from and unaffected by contemporary impressions of the field of cultural studies (i.e., of postmodernism).

It would be too much to assert that Wilber was solely or even directly influenced by his reading of Graves to develop his stridently angry critique of postmodernism; there was a long hiatus (about a decade) between the works in question. But it is a notable coincidence that Graves -- who has also described the postmodern stage with a bold and possibly unique definitiveness (more on this in §4.3 below), and as well a critical attitude toward postmodernity in general -- first comes up among Wilber's lengthy list of references just at this point in the latter's own development. Even if there is influence here that is more profound than Wilber's acknowledgements suggest, that in itself offers no reason for additional criticism of either author's perspective; influence can often be murky and difficult to trace. The point here is simply to recognize the uniqueness of Graves' historical contribution, especially as regards defining the postmodern stage of development.

#### ***4.2 Graves' Influence on Other Integral Theorists***

The question of Graves' influence among integral-theory writers other than Wilber (and on the culture at large) is difficult to summarize precisely. Though considerably less frequently cited as an author than Wilber, Graves does come in for respectful treatment by a range of thinkers and writers in the areas of cultural studies and also such diverse fields as psychology and management. The SD authors have of course treated him as the acknowledged originator of the theory they have been propounding in various formats (besides their book, each of these authors has had a career as business consultant, workshop leader and in the case of Beck, an international activist as well). A handful of other authors have also made repeated reference to Graves' work.<sup>66</sup> Most importantly, in informal dialog among persons interested in integral theory, the SD labels ("ORANGE," "GREEN," etc., as used throughout this essay) seem to have taken on an irresistible cachet as convenient tags for complex structures in the human environment and in ourselves. But as this occurs mostly in conversation, there is little formal record of it.

Among references with a paper trail that can be traced in academic developmental psychology today, a number of authors have also created a body of work that in many ways overlaps with integral theory, as expounded by Wilber, McIntosh and others.<sup>67</sup> In one work in this area (Wade 1996), the author provides a version of Graves' theory, with multiple respectful acknowledgements to its originator, while attempting to support her own modification of the theory. Wade believes that traditionalism (her "conformist consciousness") *may*, but in some cases need not be, followed developmentally by what we have been calling modernism (her "achievement consciousness"). Instead, in her version of Graves' theory, the universal progression of development is bifurcated after the traditional stage (but only at this point), and an alternative path goes directly to postmodernism (called "affiliative consciousness" by Wade). She believes this second path may be of particular significance in the developmental psychology of women.

Without attempting an evaluation of Wade's theoretical modification, it is still of interest here to note that she seems to place Graves in a unique position of a kind of "contributor from afar" to an intense academic debate on certain details of development. While she singles out for criticism a range of predecessors in academic psychology, at least in the chapters on "Achievement Consciousness and Affiliative Consciousness" in Wade (1996), Graves is mentioned only as a neutral, important source: "[t]he Gravesian typology called the Manipulative or Success-Oriented stage [modernism] represents the fullest description in the literature of awareness dominated by the left [brain] hemisphere...." (Wade 1996, 135). Here, on the other hand, is Wade on her predecessors in academia and in psychoanalytic circles:

Male writers, especially those from earlier periods, tend to treat the separate rational self as the ultimate or penultimate ideal.... Winnicott, Sullivan, Kohut and Kegan typify theorists whose idealization of post-Conformist stages seems to include all kinds of

positive qualities that researchers have not found. This overreaching may in part be due to an inability to distinguish among stages higher than Conformism, or it may simply reflect the indiscriminate lumping of all end states and ideal qualities because critical elements of their theories have been resolved. (Wade 1996, 142)

Wade goes on to quote skeptically from Kegan (1982) on his final "interindividual balance," where he extols an evolutionary zone (Kegan seems to dislike the notion of "stages") in which he believes "emotional conflict becomes both recognizable and tolerable to the 'self.'" This criticism of Kegan by Wade seems shocking to me, given her uncritical treatment of Graves, and the far greater messianism with which the latter announces his "second tier" stages.<sup>68</sup> (Possibly Wade's exposure to Graves may have been only second hand, given her citations of his work via other sources.)

Graves has thus taken on a kind of "elder statesman" role in at least some circles of current psychological debate. Perhaps this exemption from academic infighting is exactly what he sought as an author in holding back (at least his major manuscript) from publication during his own lifetime. One main purpose of this essay has been to deny him this role, in favor of a more complete and intimate treatment, both honoring and subjecting to critical scrutiny his legacy.

### ***4.3 Views of Postmodernism in the Broader Contemporary Context***

Though Graves' direct influence appears at present confined mainly to the circles mentioned above, his indirect influence works through them as well, radiating outward to larger communities. His original ideas have some of their greatest effects, as it seems to me, with regard to his interpretation of postmodernism. A very brief survey of contemporary academic literature, which seems to be the main venue for discussions about the nature of postmodernism, is enough to illustrate the tremendous originality of Graves' thesis that postmodernism actually has a motivational focus -- i.e., on "inclusivity" with regard to multiple categories of persons and perspectives. Though I have argued above (§3.2) for a broadening of that focus, I feel a personal indebtedness to Graves (and to the integral theory community, through which his ideas were first communicated to me), for introducing the general notion of there being such a focus behind the often faceless-seeming phenomena of postmodernism. Though this "human face" of postmodernism now seems obvious to me, as I encounter its many facets in the postmodern culture in which I live, its obviousness became visible to me only in hindsight, after the idea was properly introduced.

In academia today, where Graves' ideas do not have a broad currency, the best-known attempt at summing up postmodernism is still probably that of Lyotard, for whom the postmodern attitude may be defined ("simplifying to the extreme") as an "incredulity toward meta-narratives" (Lyotard 1979/1984, xxiv). Incredulity in favor of what? A profusion of "little narratives" which legitimate themselves through "performativity" -- that is, through competing with one another to be heard and to generate related further discourse (Lyotard 1979/1984, sections 11 and 12).<sup>69</sup> He sees what could perhaps be called a marketplace of increasingly noisy conversation, replacing the modernist ideal of a marketplace of ideas. Other writers have referred in a related vein to "the laid-back pluralism of the post-modern, that heterogenous range of life-styles and language-games which has renounced the urge to totalize and legitimate itself"<sup>70</sup> -- or, to a "particularist"<sup>71</sup> worldview emphasizing actual occasions over abstract principles. But it is hard to give a coherent, qualitative account of what this conversation (or pluralism, or ensemble-of-occasions) is actually like or is about in some overall sense (if indeed it is "about" anything, from these viewpoints), unless we allow ourselves to lapse into an overall meta-narrative description, and thus risk sliding back into a modernist-informed approach.

Does this imply a disordered, chaotic, or opaque overall quality to postmodernity? Possibly, though not necessarily: it may be the act and manner of a discursive self-concept, as much any content, that is really at issue here. For though "gross" meta-narratives imposed from "on high" are taboo for postmodernity, more subtle forms of meta-narrative seem to be unavoidable in language-using communities, even as the very

vehicles whereby meta-narrative is recognizable. As Wilber (1995) has pointed out, it is only through subtle hierarchy that one can collectively oppose hierarchies (by placing them *below*, in some important preferential sense, those organizational forms that are seen to be less hierarchical). And so, postmodernism's "little narratives" may or may not cohere into something collectively transparent, as they "happen" to move or not move coherently in their self-regard -- though such coherence might realistically seem likely to be fragile. Put differently, there seems to be no block against an overall self-description of postmodernity somehow emerging, in the context created by its better-known academic commentators, but neither are there many established ways forward from minimally descriptive constructs.

In groping for a defining, if elusive, overall quality of the postmodern, a few contemporary academic scholars have generalized a bit more deeply. Ihab Hassan, an early commentator on the topic, has emphasized a kind of transition-toward-formlessness: "By [postmodern] indeterminacy, or better still, indeterminacies, I mean a complex referent that these diverse concepts help to delineate [long list].... Through all these signs moves a vast will to *unmaking* [emphasis added], affecting the body politic, the body cognitive, the erotic body, the individual psyche -- the entire realm of discourse in the West" (Hassan 1987, 90-92). If the postmodern is in essence the "decay" of formal discourse, can one say that this transition has itself some positive goal or *telos*, or alternatively that it has no currently-definable positive goal but represents instead a kind of purgation of particular qualities (e.g., dominance of naïve-realist perspectives), of which our collective consciousness somehow needs to cleanse itself? On these questions, contemporary academic discourse appears silent.

Only Graves, it would seem, with his notion of "inclusivity" has given us a more constructive initial answer to the vexing question of what the spirit of postmodernism is really, centrally about. In delineating a turn from the exhausting complexities of late modernism towards the beginnings in "inclusivity" of a value-system that is somehow more heart-based, he has provided a stimulus that touches both Wilber's work and the entire integral theory conversation quite generally. One major purpose of this essay has been to continue grappling with this question.

#### **4.4 Epilogue: the Place of Philosophy in Our Time**

*Religion did not come to an end in the Enlightenment, nor painting in Impressionism. Even if the period from Plato to Nietzsche is encapsulated and "distanced" in the way Heidegger suggests [by abandoning its implicit emphasis on representational truth]... there will be something called "philosophy" on the other side of the transition.*

- Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature

The "death of philosophy" has been oft-heralded in the West for a very long time now -- perhaps about halfway as far back as to the heyday of early modernism, when Hume and Kant reignited debate over the nature of human knowledge, after centuries of philosophic concern over what now seems to us to be matters of little significance (e.g., dogmatic disputes among religious thinkers). For the past century or more, many practitioners of philosophy have been dogged by the sense that philosophy itself -- particularly, the tradition in modern Western philosophy since Hume and Kant, with its focus on epistemology -- is no longer in step with the changes in Western culture at large. Such well-known figures as Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Gadamer, Sartre, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and in America William James and John Dewey, have each in their own way challenged the traditional way of practicing philosophy as a systematic enterprise, instead trying to meld fundamental criticism (postmodern criticism in all these cases, by the way) with various alternative forms of systemization. Gebser, to cite an example from among the authors considered here, appears to consider philosophy in his own time to be in a kind of twilight period indicative of the overall waning of the mental stage of consciousness (Gebser 1953/1985, 402-12).

As Graves says of development in general ("[b]y now he [man] has felt many times that he has arrived, but arrived he has not..." (Graves 2005, 362)), one could perhaps say in reference to contemporary philosophy that "many times have humans felt we can banish altogether this impulse to conceptualize, but banish (altogether) we cannot!" For philosophy does not seem to be quite done with us, even if its peculiar hold on humanity is indeed changing. Richard Rorty, an eminent twentieth-century academic philosopher, in discussing the transition from unapologetically systematic thinkers like Kant to the figures mentioned in the paragraph above, introduces the idea of "edifying philosoph[ers]" as a description of those who refuse to accommodate the Western tradition of practicing philosophy as a means to ground objective knowledge; "edifying philosophy" instead insists that only the process of changing states or styles of consciousness (i.e., of "edification") can be properly described (Rorty 1979/2009, 365-72). (The epigraph of this subsection is taken from the final paragraph of Rorty's most famous work (Rorty 1979/2009, 394).)

The emergence of the entire area of integral theory may perhaps be considered under the heading of a philosophy that takes this step from the "systematic" to the "edifying" a large step further. By connecting philosophically systematic reasoning with an explicit recognition of the moral importance of consciousness evolution, integral theorists have subordinated the collective search for "objective truth" to the personal search for integration and harmonization of consciousness. Philosophy is thus linked to the maxims of those who would guide us toward personal consciousness evolution -- i.e., to teachers of meditation, spiritual practitioners of all sorts, traditions of mysticism from East and West -- much as in the Middle Ages in the West, and doubtless in many other places and ages as well, philosophy and religion became at least for a time more intimate.

And yet the hold of "objective knowledge" is still strong enough in our collective culture that the abandonment of scientific evidentiary standards, or the denial of facts actually apprehended, does violence to certain aspects of our minds. Indeed, the integration of such objective standards with deeply-felt "interior" intuitions, along with a pull toward systemization, seems to be a key theme throughout Wilber's work. Thus, for those of us influenced by the integral theory conversation, there appears to be a balance to be struck in which philosophy may have some kind of important brokering role between the claims of private spirituality and those of collectively-verifiable objective knowledge. McIntosh suggests such a balance aptly, in my view (McIntosh (2007, 226-34). Alongside this brokering role, my personal notion of philosophy and its proper place would also include a dialectically-influenced rigor that in turn influences the "grammar" of our own private thoughts. That is, one philosophizes and talks to others about long and intricate matters, ultimately so that one can talk more simply and perspicaciously to oneself.

Among the things for which philosophy does *not* have any reasonable place in today's world, as it seems to me, is prophecy: the deliberate limning, for whatever purpose, of imaginings that are not supportable with some kind of reasonable basis in contemporary reality, speculations tying in fervent hopes and passions about developments that are merely *possible* into supposedly universal progressions extrapolated from past data, and the like. And so it is at once in both the bold spirit of a new chapter of an ancient enterprise, and also in the restrained spirit due where boldness appears to have overreached, that the ideas presented here are offered.

## Appendix A - SD Popularization of Graves' Work

The functional importance of the SD authors in the distribution and Graves' theory would be difficult to overstate. Besides providing helpful, catchy labels and much-needed historical context for his stage-descriptions, they served as the main link between Graves and those who have been influenced by his legacy. Without them, many of us reading these words (probably, nearly all of us) would never have heard of Graves.

On the other hand, the SD authors seem also to have magnified some of the weaknesses in Graves' approach. The occasional messianism, unevenness of presentation and constant business-orientation of Graves' (2005) manuscript is transmuted in the SD authors' book (Beck and Cowan 1996) into a sometimes-bewildering array of references to world history, pop culture and other topics, often made in helter-skelter fashion. The pitch to readers to understand the materials as a tool of business-oriented leadership, rather than as a philosophical enterprise, is arguably stronger and more focused in the SD presentation than in Graves' original. Though perhaps understandable as a means of promotion, this pitch seems to me essentially inappropriate to this material.

That said, the SD authors do provide a summary that in many ways usefully sharpens and focuses many of Graves' contributions. In particular, the reliance of the latter on his experimental subjects and vagueness in referring to human history when describing the levels of consciousness -- which are after all supposed to represent historical modes of human consciousness -- are in the SD material explicitly linked up to familiar historical episodes and generalities.

Also, the pithy color-labels used throughout this essay for Graves' stages, and as well some very effective "popular names" are due to the SD authors. Those for what I see as the most important of the stages are as follows: *PowerGods* (RED), *TruthForce* (BLUE), *StriveDrive* (ORANGE) and *HumanBond* (GREEN). (In view of the broader concept of GREEN advocated here (§3.2), beyond Graves' communitarianism and in favor of embracing a search for authenticity, I would propose renaming the last of these, for GREEN, *MakeMeaning*.)

To get a sense of the details of the additional material added, at least one quotation may be helpful. In the very beginning of their discussion of modernism (ORANGE), for example, the SD authors lead with some basic historical reference-points:

In the context of European history, the **ORANGE** vMEME spring to life with The Enlightenment after the Middle Ages. The old (**BLUE**) world had been resplendent with sacraments, formalities, and rigid social structures. Its success, however, planted the seeds that were to threaten the underpinnings of that established order. Five forces set into motion five or six centuries ago are still resonant in the 'modern' age: [capitalism, utilitarianism, focussed science, widespread technology, individualism]. (Beck and Cowan 1996, 244-45)

They also helpfully expand some of Graves' basic concepts, such as the alternation between v-memes based on imperatives to "express [the] self" and those based on "sacrificing [the] self." The SD authors' more expansive notion of a macro-alternation between a "me-space" and a "we-space" (to paraphrase Beck and Cowan using Wilber's terminology) is an important example that helps flesh out the basic Graves/SD view of an alternation between individualistic and collectivistic memes. (See footnote 24 for a direct quotation from the SD authors on this point.) Though still wider conceptions of the macro-pattern between memes have been advocated in this essay (§3.3), the expansion of Graves' concept of the pattern that may be found in the SD materials must be considered an improvement on the original.

Other historical examples and references are sprinkled through the chapters on other v-memes in their 1996 book, and in other materials. In addition to the 1996 book cited here, the SD authors have presented many workshops on these topics, both together and separately; various ephemeral material summarizing their



ideas is easily available on the web. How much of their material not directly traceable to Graves' (2005) manuscript the SD authors may have gathered from personal communications with Graves (both SD authors had contact with Graves late in his life), I am not in a position to say. Based on the published record, their integration of history with development seems to me to remedy nicely the most obvious problem in Graves' original presentation (lack of historical references), and their work seems otherwise to remain reasonably faithful to Graves' concepts, at least for the first six first-tier memes.

There is one further point I would like to make about the treatment of supposed second-tier developments. In the case of the YELLOW meme, the SD authors seem to me to water down Graves' ideas quite markedly. In contrast with the strong ethical imperative evident in the citations from Graves (quoted in §2.1 above) and elsewhere in his manuscript ("[YELLOW] values come not from selfish interest [unlike first-tier values] but from recognition of the magnificence of existence and from the desire to see that it shall continue to be" (Graves 2005, 369)), the SD authors emphasize only the *means* of "flexible" and "paradox-embracing" thinking in their chapter. But for a single reference to an "Existence Ethic" (Beck and Cowan 1996, 279) as "foundation stone" (not elaborated), these authors go on for an entire chapter (Beck and Cowan 1996, ch. 15, 275-85) about the supposed breakthrough represented by "flexible thinking," with much fulsome praise about its virtues but no examples. Their presentation of the levels thus comes to a close with a concept I find already problematic in its original presentation by Graves (as argued in §3.4), related in a vitiated form with its most trenchant and noteworthy feature, the *ethical* revolution he sees as fundamental to "second tier" functioning, almost entirely absent. For better or worse (as I've made clear in this essay, I think it's for worse), it is this vague notion of YELLOW as "flexible thinking/doing" that seems in many instances to have taken root in contemporary integral theory discourse.

## Appendix B - Some Notes on Terminology and Usage in Relation to Graves' System

The usage of terms such as "modernism," "postmodernism," and the like, is highly context-dependent. Add to this Graves' own idiosyncratic terminology (described in §2.1 above), and the alternative color-labels later provided by the SD authors, and there is much potential for terminological confusion.

In this essay, I have mainly used the convenient and memorable SD color labels for the main developmental stages of interest -- RED, BLUE, ORANGE, and GREEN -- but have sometimes also substituted generic labels like despotism (RED), traditionalism (BLUE), modernism (ORANGE) and postmodernism (GREEN), as these latter have the virtue of common-language descriptiveness.

It should be noted that specific context-dependent uses, especially of "modernism," are often different from general usage: many historians (especially, Western art historians) reserve use of this term for developments in the arts beginning in the nineteenth-century or sometimes starting later (e.g., visual art from nineteenth-century French Symbolism through abstract expressionism is often called "modern art," while 1960s' pop art and the like is called "postmodern"). In literature, similar usage prevails: the novelist Coetzee (whose work is summarized in §3.3 above) has referred in an interview to the twentieth-century playwright Samuel Beckett as "a high modernist or even a proto-postmodernist" (Attwell 2003).

Hopefully, in the present philosophical context, it should not be controversial to use "modernism" in a broader sense (as the related term "modernity" is sometimes used), embracing developments all the way from the Renaissance through the European Enlightenment to the twentieth-century achievement-oriented cultures of individualistic America and communist Russia and China. Likewise, taking a longer philosophical view, "postmodern" may plausibly spill over a longer region than contemporary art history or literary usage suggests, encompassing the shift from representational to non-representational modes of artistic expression more generally (i.e., early twentieth-century abstract painting, though often called "modern" by Western art historians, would be considered a paradigm of the "postmodern" in our usage).

The term "traditionalism" for BLUE is used elsewhere in the integral theory literature (e.g., Wilber 1995). "Despotism" is a term that could perhaps also be used for the RED value-structure, which is based on an orientation toward power or efficacy as a guiding concept. This term seems to me to capture the mentality (whether of ruler, or of the ruled) that gave rise to the ancient empires of Egypt and the Near East, and that survives in various (usually, attenuated) form in later cultural settings.

On the subject of RED, the term for its favored value in the SD literature is "power." I have added the term "efficacy" as it seems more reflective of the flavor of this system when viewed in less personalized terms (as suggested and more fully explained in §3.3 above). Likewise, I have added the term "innovation" to the more typical "achievement" motivation described by Graves and others in relation to modernism (ORANGE). Given the notion proposed in this essay (§3.1 and throughout) of v-memes as balanced between attractor-values and restraining-values, it seems the very notion of "achievement" is understandable as a turning toward "innovation" within the context of some assumed level of socially-defined order that restrains the scope of innovation and provides some sense of functional challenge. To "achieve" something significant in a market-driven social context would seem to involve persuading other market-participants of there being significant value in something new, whether a new product, or a new way of using old products, natural objects or concepts -- i.e., necessarily to involve some kind of innovation, in a way that is eventually socially validated.

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## **END-NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Graves' major manuscript (Graves 2005) was published nearly twenty years after his death under the editorship of Cowan and Todorovic and is available, though expensive, hard to find, and seemingly seldom read by those in the integral theory community today. The same editors also maintain a web-site (<http://www.clarewgraves.com>) with various Graves papers.

<sup>2</sup> This famous observation, that stages of embryonic development in certain ways resemble the changing morphology of species over evolutionarily significant periods of time (i.e., a human fetus that resembles various animal stages of development over the period of gestation), is often connected with the name of the nineteenth-century German biologist Haeckel, who controversially advocated a more generalized version.

<sup>3</sup> References to Ken Wilber's foundational integral theory ideas (Wilber 1995, 11-198) are distributed throughout this essay, as generally relevant. They are not essential to the main points made here, excepting in some of the sections on Graves' macro-structures (§3.3) and on integral-theory-related context (§§4.1, 4.2).

<sup>4</sup> The term 'Kosmos' is defined in Wilber (1995) in a usage echoing ancient Pythagorean thought as encompassing the physical cosmos and as well all the interior experiences of its inhabitants.

<sup>5</sup> Though Graves' 2005 presentation is quite bold in positing law-like relations as regards the progression of v-memes, there appears to be a simultaneous recognition by Graves of the endless variety of ways in which these law-like patterns may actually manifest in individual cases. Further, Graves' stage-descriptions are complicated by the idea of partial-progressions (e.g., "early DQ," "late FS") that tie together themes from developmentally adjacent v-memes. In their 1996 popularization of Graves' work, Beck and Cowan also continually emphasize the complexity whereby v-memes

may "brighten and dim as Life Conditions change" (p. 43), even as they appear to regard the basic progression of v-memes laid down by Graves as sacrosanct.

<sup>6</sup> Of the available original Graves materials (see note 1 above), Graves (1974), available on the website mentioned, provides a lively summary. Of the SD materials, Beck and Cowan (1996) is the best-known single source among other materials, many published on-line by and about the same authors.

<sup>7</sup> Labels A'N' and B'O' as used in Graves (2005) appear as GT and HU (respectively) in some earlier Graves materials.

<sup>8</sup> It seems important to remark in passing that the idea that they are not "leading edge" is a conclusion that any of those people who are posited to be at non-leading-edge stages would themselves be most unlikely to accept, or perhaps even to entertain seriously, were it presented to them in the form of a scholarly theory: to lead people to see the next rung of evolution beyond their own is the role of a prophet, not a scholar. This has considerable implications for the theoretical conversation itself, as regards Graves' theory (and integral theory as well), as it invites the group conversing to place itself in a special "leading edge" position and perhaps to indulge a certain degree of "group-ego" in its stance as regards the larger social contexts in which it is embedded. Some of these implications are considered more explicitly in §3.4 below.

<sup>9</sup> Aside from Graves' influence on Ken Wilber (explored in §4.1 of this essay), another of many possible examples is Wade (1996) (also discussed in §4.2). Though she quibbles with Graves about the universality of the GREEN following ORANGE, Wade is clearly influenced in a central way by Graves and provides helpful linkage to other work in contemporary developmental psychology.

<sup>10</sup> To this day, though regarded as key texts in integral theory circles, and as well among a wide group of independent readers, Graves (2005) and Wilber (1995) appear to receive fairly scant attention in contemporary academia. This lack of attention, along with both these authors' sometimes-troubled relations with academia (Graves was a practicing academic himself throughout his career, but in the main withheld his work on developmental structures of consciousness from scrutiny by his professional colleagues) seem to justify the "renegade" epithet. As for whether there is any broad and genuine criticism of postmodernism from *within* academia today, the theorists quoted in §4.3 of this essay certainly pay much attention to the term, but their often opaque formulations might well be categorizable as overly complex precisely because of being overly influenced by postmodernism itself, as understood in Gravesian (or Wilberian) terms.

Other well-known academic work on the topic of postmodernism (to be discussed in summary form in §4.3 below), such as may be seen in Jameson (1991), promises greater clarity of exposition (than, say, Lyotard 1979/1984) but shares with earlier theorists a certain non-constructive quality: there is much hand-wringing about what has been lost in the postmodern era (for Jameson, a sense of historicity), but not much of a coherent account of where if anywhere the human impulses that have crafted the era may actually be leading us. The attitude informing this critical work -- a rather despairing one in Jameson's case, it would seem -- may also be seen as a symptom of postmodernism itself.

<sup>11</sup> Graves (2005, ch. 12) paints a picture of postmodernism that is fundamentally problematic in its refusal to accept what he sees as the necessity for struggle. "Something is missing. FS [GREEN] man doesn't have a means to the end of trying to think about the things his innards tell him he wants to think about," Graves begins one of his paragraphs in discussing postmodern inertia (2005, 352). "As he tries to let everyone have their way, he loses sight of the fact that you just can't do that. That's something in this world that is just against the "laws of nature" which will get you into trouble if you are not careful," he says (2005, 348). And yet, Graves does acknowledge the basic step represented in postmodernism (as is implicit in his own stage-like conception):

When some people see fifth-level [modern] values changing into the values of level six [postmodernism], again, they see decay all around them. In a sense this is true, because man transforming into sixth-level thinking lays authority aside, because he rejects strongly non-dignified ways of living. Sixth-level values are those of "The Lonely Crowd," [ref. cited by Graves] those of the chameleon-like "Marketing Character," [another ref. cited by Graves] but they are, within this point of view, *a giant step forward for man*. [emphasis added] (Graves 2005, 345)

Wilber (1995) likewise parallels this last point: despite even greater pyrotechnics in his pointing out the fallacies and absurdities of contemporary postmodernism, he is careful to make repeatedly clear that he regards postmodernism as a

tremendous and indeed essential developmental achievement within the larger context of human consciousness-evolution.

<sup>12</sup> Nowhere is this clearer than in the late chapter in his manuscript (2005) on "Verification." Even making some allowance for a manuscript its author did not necessarily see as completely ready for publication, it still seems remarkable that he can assert:

A search of the [psychology] literature certainly suggests that this conclusion [Graves' theory of progressively activated neural structures corresponding to his levels] is more than an assertion.... There is a plethora of data to support the contention. The data of [list of researchers] suggest that the lowest order dynamic neurological system is the habituation system ... The next and apparently higher order system O must consist of different tissue anatomically and must function differently.... Later systems are not as clear but the fifth system could well be the expectancy system of Rotter and the sixth, the observational system.... (Graves 2005, 408-10)

Graves fills several pages with multiple allusions to the nascent ideas of a long list of brain researchers about what *could* comprise the various physiological structures that form the underpinning of his theory -- and takes this as support or "verification" for his overall broad construction! Certain other integral theorists entertain similar ideas and speculations about higher-level brain structures (e.g., Wilber (1995, 197-98) uses deliberately vague levels for higher level brain structures "currently being mapped"), but are considerably more careful and less sweeping in their presentation. Graves appears in his relative isolation to have convinced himself of greater scientific support than can reasonably be claimed for a particular developmental view such as his, however great its appeal and other merits. That Graves did not have real support for some of his speculations (particularly those involving neurological structures) has been noted in one of the few published reviews specifically devoted to Graves' 2005 manuscript (Combs 2007). Like this essay, the cited review concludes that Graves' theory on the whole still has considerable interest as a theory of evolving consciousness, despite its occasionally unsupported claims.

<sup>13</sup> One example of such an unaddressed question is how various human personalities might interact with the v-memes. In the first excerpt quoted in §2.1 above, Graves asserts that people functioning at level GREEN are "much more affectively warm" than those at other levels. Could this be simply true across the board, in reference to a universal stage of human developmental evolution? Is it not possible for people with more reserved personalities to progress through the GREEN stage in some fashion, without becoming changed beyond recognition with regard to their individual affective styles? Surely, there is a "lower-quadrant perspective" (in the language of Wilber (1995)) that might elucidate certain *layers* of a person's functioning, which might indeed have elements of (say) affective warmth at GREEN, and which could plausibly function alongside very different layers that are more individually determined -- as in the example of a reserved social style within the "warm" social framework of GREEN.

The situation would appear analogous that of a person who speaks a given language (say, English) determined by the social conditions of his development (inherited national upbringing), which may differ from his particular individual psychological structures, and as well other ethnic and family inheritances, etc., that will doubtless influence the things he chooses to *say* within the inherited language. With some torturous reasoning, we can perhaps see a legitimate point that Graves is trying to make in referring to GREEN affective warmth, but he still makes it far too baldly.

To point to another example, potentially one leading to more general concerns, how might subsequent history influence the internal development of a v-meme? It would seem that there must be a difference between existing at a leading-edge stage and one that functions deep within the available structures for a given society. Consider, for example, someone in contemporary American society functioning at level BLUE -- surely this must be a more somehow "tired" BLUE than the BLUE of a person in medieval Europe, when that system represented the leading-edge of overall human development. Both Graves (2005) and Beck and Cowan (1996) make the point that small groups at a more highly-developed stage can be capable of astonishing levels of performance, potentially influencing much larger numbers of their contemporaries. Is this merely a comparative difference, or are the non-leading-edge people (e.g., the BLUE person today) somehow affected by the global evolutionary pull that has so far not acted on them to bring them to another level. It is interesting to inquire whether even in a local enclave of similar conditions (e.g., "conformist" 1950's

America, which supposedly nurtured many such BLUE communities), developmental structures might still not be decisively different from the "fresh" BLUE of medieval times.

That non-leading-edge v-memes may be influenced in their expression by the contemporaneous existence of leading-edge memes – whether spontaneously or via direct intervention by those who are genuinely operating at a more leading-edge stage on those who are not – could possibly become topics for considerable further and more systematic inquiry than is evinced in Graves 2005 manuscript or in the SD materials.

<sup>14</sup> Though perhaps reasonably paradigmatic of (late) modernism, American-style individualist capitalism should not be confused as defining modernism *per se*. In a world-historical sense, the communist societies of twentieth-century Russia and China also show a different but related developmental pathway, in which a modernist (scientific) worldview and achievement-oriented mentality is fused with group-based *anti-individualist* consciousness.

<sup>15</sup> The postmodern art of the early twentieth century in the specific context of art history is often confusingly called "modern art"; see Appendix B to this paper for disambiguation of these and related terms.

<sup>16</sup> I have begun the discussion of "attractor" and "restraining" values with modernist art, as it forms a particularly good way into exploring the evidence for the latter, but similar "turnings" are evident in other aspects of modernist life, once one is oriented toward them. In politics, the famous writings of the eighteenth-century founders of the American republic show clearly their overriding concern with order and stability, the deference due to tradition that must somehow be balanced against the realization of liberal ideas that have (relatively suddenly) gathered great force. It is true that other great modernist political movements (the revolutions in France and Russia) had more radical phases, in which the restraint of the American founders was lacking, but the institutions resulting from moderate modernist revolutions in general have proved more enduring and thus influential through the modernist age.

Even in economics and in science -- areas where technological innovation and tough-minded empiricism seem most emblematic of modernism overall -- the moderating forces of traditional forms are apparent. The growth of the institution of the paternalistic corporation (against the predictions of Enlightenment economist Adam Smith, who thought individuals would mainly become micro-producers), though perhaps in decline in America today, has historically clearly shaped and softened the way in which individuals have generally experienced market capitalism over the course of the modern age. In science, the institutions of community-based science (peer-review of new findings; professional self-disciplinary bodies) provide likewise an indication of the still-crucial underpinning provided by a restraining-value of "cosmic order," intimately vying with and bound up with the very notion of acceptable innovation, within the modernist structure.

<sup>17</sup> Since an art history refresher-course would of course take us too far afield for purposes of this essay, I have relied here on just these three pairs of examples. The reader is encouraged to investigate further and to consider how the work of other Renaissance artists such as Botticelli and Raphael, and of other seventeenth-century Dutch masters like Vermeer and Rubens, to cite just a few examples of early-modernist art, seems often to show a certain dynamism associated with *groups* of figures in intense relation to one another; whereas postmodern art from Rodin to Seurat to van Gogh seems more often to focus on the isolated individual, even when surrounded by other figures, as does the typically anonymous art of the medieval period.

<sup>18</sup> The idea of differentiation of individual characters as a distinctive mark of modernist art (or at least of some major examples of modernist art) parallels that of modernity's great achievement of differentiating interior and exterior worldviews (i.e., religious vs. scientific thought). Wilber (1995, ch. 11-12) richly chronicles this topic, along with lesser but still vastly important differentiations (e.g., of the physio- and the biospheres), and what he calls the "great disaster" of the *dissociation* of interior and exterior modernist perspectives.

<sup>19</sup> Graves (2005, 344) indicates that the first appearances of postmodernism occurred about the year 1900. In a slight disagreement, Beck and Cowan (1996, 51) point to earlier indications of this stage, around midpoint of the nineteenth century. I had my personal introduction to the Spiral Dynamics system in a day-long seminar in 2008 with Raphael Nasser, who studied with SD author Don Beck, and who taught in further detail that the beginning of postmodernism may be identified with the Romantics, who flourished even a bit earlier than this. Yet as discussed in §3.1 above, the period around 1900 (and following) was also an important one for the larger dissemination and growth of postmodernism in society (e.g., widespread transition among musicians and artists toward non-tonal structures and non-representational techniques). And the emergence of "mass postmodernism" can be said to have awaited further

developments of the 1960's, the better part of a century later. So the question of "when postmodernism began" appears sensitive to the scale of the inquiry: if one is looking at microscopic influences in literary and philosophical evidence, one may come to a much earlier answer than if one is looking at society from a "top-down" perspective and assessing the overall state of the great mass of people of a given period.

<sup>20</sup> Though Berlin's notions of will and nationalism as Romantic themes are quite removed from, e.g., Graves' and Wilber's views of postmodernism (also traced back to Romanticism, at least by Wilber), they have in common at least the opposition toward Enlightenment (modernist) optimism about reason and its uses. The other themes commonly discussed in the literature on the Romantics include the importance of nature (e.g., for poets such as Wordsworth). It seems useful as well to observe that the importance of human *relationships* (as opposed to individualistic human *achievement*) seems to have enjoyed a major cultural upsurge since the advent of the Romantics (and indeed throughout the era of postmodernism). This would of course include the charged and symbolic power of sex as experienced when fused with emotional intimacy (as evoked by the phrase "romantic love"), but could also be considered a broader phenomenon as regards the importance of human relations in general, as distinct from the stress placed by modernism on the importance of human achievements.

<sup>21</sup> Both Graves and Wilber seem to direct their presentations to an American audience and to focus on largely American examples -- though both as theorists both aspire to theories with a global reach. Clearly, much of Europe is influenced like America by postmodernism. The differences of style between American "hippie postmodernism" and its analogs in Europe would seem to be quite pronounced. Unfortunately, I am not aware of any systematic investigations into such differences that focus on such broad evolutionary cultural developments as are discussed here.

<sup>22</sup> Wilber (1995, ch. 12-13) begins his historical discussion of postmodernism with a distinction applied to Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought, according to an "ego" versus an "eco(logical)" orientation. The latter group eventually evolves into a full-blown version of a "descending" spirituality -- that is, one committed to moving toward ever more intimate and unmediated experience of this-worldly, bodily-felt experience, to an appreciation for the variety and irreducibility of experience, as opposed to an emphasis on "ascent" toward higher realms conceivable more or less exclusively through the mind. This descending spirituality appears to provide the underpinnings of postmodernism, Wilber's rhetorical *bête noir*.

Reductionism, or the privileging of right-hand (exterior) perspectives (in Wilber's terminology) to the eventual extent of a delegitimizing of left-hand (interior) perspectives, is concomitantly presented as a problematic tendency common both to the modern and the postmodern worlds. Wilber also presents a further corresponding distinction within this phenomenon: "gross reductionism" (conceiving truth exclusively as the faithful representation of objective facts) seems to be generally associated with modernism, while "subtle reductionism" (conceiving truth still objectively but with an emphasis on functional fit in a systems-oriented view) is associated more with postmodernism.

<sup>23</sup> Gebser (1949/1985) in Part One of his magnum opus describes five sequential structures of consciousness spanning human history: the archaic, the magic, mythic, the mental, and the integral -- but unlike the stages of Graves and Wilber, Gebser's structures appear to overlap significantly with one another, so that the early signs of the arising of an integral consciousness is not precluded among individuals themselves identified with "late" or declining mental phenomena, where one would presumably place postmodernism.

<sup>24</sup> Graves (2005) discusses the macro-pattern only from the individual's point of view; privileged value-systems alternate between those featuring imperatives to "express [the] self," and those stressing imperatives to "sacrifice [the] self." Beck and Cowan (1996) elaborate this alternation as explicitly implying an "individualistic" and a "collective pole," between which systems seem to be attracted. Further, they make explicit some basic generalizations about these groupings that are absent in Graves' published manuscript:

The Individual/Elite v-meme family [warm-colored memes] is focused on the external world (outside the self) and how to gain power over it, to master it, to change it. Control is located within the particle-like individual who strives to bend things in his/her direction. The Express-self systems it forms are more loosely bound, less constrained, more accepting of change, willing to take more risks, and markedly increase our degrees of behavioral freedom when awakened. They tend to break shackles to free up more expansive views, but they also unlink chains that keep parts organized into wholes. As the free-standing, 'special' individual becomes more centralized; [sic] demands for personal rights and

liberties, perks and prerogatives, and empowerment for every-'one' surges. The family crest says, "I am the captain of my fate... the master of my soul."

The other pole [cool-colored memes] is home to the radar-like Communal/Collective ('us/we') v-meme family. In this self-sacrificing zone, control is anchored in something more powerful than any individual -- the kin and folk, the unifying Higher Power, the community of mutual interest, or Earth's living system. Yet, just as the Express-self group focuses energy on impacting the world 'out there,' the Sacrifice-self person's deep concerns are inside -- efforts to come to grips with who, or what, or why one is and find peace with that. Because of this emphasis, thinking within this v-meme group tends to be more conservative of the *status quo* (whatever its politics) and order-seeking. The Communal/Collective energy promotes consolidation, acceptance of the external world as it is, and surrender of immediate self-interest for what is in the best interest of one's reference group(s). While there is some enlargement of conceptual space as the pendulum swings across the Spiral into this range, more energy goes to building trustworthy structures, finding stability, and building uniform consistency into living -- "Duty, Honor, Country;" "...Thrifty, Brave Clean and Reverent." (Beck and Cowan 1996, 57-58)

These summaries are important and closely related to ideas to be developed here (§3.3). They also show obvious relations to Wilber's (1995) categories of upper-quadrant and lower-quadrant perspectives, corresponding to warm- and cool-colored memes, respectively. Beck and Cowan go on after the passage quoted above to further observations about individualistic memes tending to build hierarchies, and communal memes tending to level them. Importantly, they add historical context via multiple examples, sorely lacking in Graves' (2005) treatment. However, as noted in Appendix A to this essay, these comparisons between Graves and the work of his followers are based only on the published record and may not reflect further teachings Graves may have communicated privately.

(As an afterthought, I cannot help but to point out that the idea of GREEN as a "communal v-meme" being "conservative of the status quo" -- as expressed in the quotation above -- does seem somewhat odd, given Graves' and the SD authors many references to 1960's counter-culture as a paradigmatic example of this meme. Evidently, the authors are referring to a cosmic "status quo" involving humans' relations with nature, where GREEN is concerned, rather than the more conventional "status quo" implicit in most political discourse.)

<sup>25</sup> This generalization about BLUE (that the individual and his interests are subordinate to those of the community within the system), and the related generalization about ORANGE that follows, should hopefully be uncontroversial to those familiar with Gravesian or with SD theory. While considering the historical evidence on this point, it is interesting and also relevant to observe another important social-individual macro-pattern that proceeds linearly (unlike the individualist/collectivist pattern), through the v-memes of particular importance for this essay (RED, BLUE, ORANGE, GREEN), and that is particularly evident at the divide between BLUE and ORANGE. This is the phenomenon of empowered minorities: at RED the importance of the tiniest of minorities, i.e., of the individual ruler, seems an important focal point for social development (though the argument of this subsection §3.3 will recognize some limitations on this importance in positing system-wide self-organized development, mirroring the rulers' influence). In BLUE cultures, the not-quite-as-tiny minority comprising the nobility seems to assume a greater relative importance or focus for overall social development than the isolated sovereign. Think of the psychological resonance of courtly romances in a segment of medieval society, or of the political importance attached to the late-medieval Magna Carta, an instrument that affected not the universal "rights of man" but only those of a small portion of the population (i.e., the English nobility). In early ORANGE, the rights of man really are importantly expanded in principle to a vastly larger circle of humanity, and in practice at least to a considerably larger one (the incipient middle class), though enormous groups remain excluded (e.g., women, persons in colonial societies unsuited to participation in modernist developments, etc.). GREEN involves still a further, powerful expansion of social concern toward the utmost frontiers of humanity.

<sup>26</sup> That individual agency cannot fully explain the formation of empires in terms of simple causality seems all the more clear, given the historical importance of hereditary dynasties, as a completely individualistic explanation implies that the influence of the most-able rulers would not only provide the motive organizational forces at all levels, but also outweigh that of all their less-able relatives. Some kind of *self-organizing* value-system that decisively alters the consciousness of individuals throughout the many stratified levels of such a society, rather than a top-down value system imposed directly by a ruler with a newly empowered sense of self, would seem to be the only plausible factor involved in such a vast

organizational shift. And though this value-system for the common individual might privilege a sense of efficacy of the empowered individual (as argued later in this subsection), and the sovereign may effectively symbolize the empowered individual for the group, it remains an important aspect of RED that all the other group-members carrying out the sovereign's bidding are *not* privileging efficacy of their own actual, individual selves, but only of the sovereign as somehow symbolizing the self.

<sup>27</sup> Though the kingdoms of ancient Egypt seem broadly classifiable as RED entities in terms of their gross institutional structure (centralization of agrarian economies under powerful warlords who become imperial monarchs), the details of how early elements of BLUE may also be discerned among certain social strata (e.g., courtiers, artists) must be for us largely matters of speculation, given the limitations of archaeology and the remoteness of the period. BLUE is thought by some to have reached its initial stable growth in classical Greece, as richly chronicled by Snell (1948/1960) (of which more later in this subsection) -- i.e., considerably later than the rise of the Egyptian empire. Beck and Cowan (1996, 230), however, describe BLUE's first appearance among the Hebrews of the Old Testament, contemporaries whose history intertwines with that of the ancient Egypt.

To appreciate some indirect visual evidence for BLUE aspects of ancient Egyptian high art, note the group of largely identical-seeming slaves moving in unison and shown in profile (Fig. 5a), a common motif among grave-paintings of the period. There is a resemblance to medieval (BLUE) group-depictions in art, especially those portraying soldiery (e.g., the group of soldiers at left in Fig. 2a in §3.1, or in the well-known Bayeux tapestry). The famous bust of Queen Nefertiti (Fig. 5b) also shows a degree of apparent introspection on the part of the subject that is far more consonance with classical-era (BLUE) Greek sculpture, than with the typical relics of most early imperial (RED) societies.

<sup>28</sup> Gebser has provided examples of primitive art from early empire-forming (RED) societies closely resembling that of earlier horticultural or foraging (PURPLE) tribes (e.g., Sumerian idols, Gebser (1949/1985, 58)). He also shows a long series of putatively RED/imperial art from ancient Egypt that seems more BLUE in orientation, closely relating to an elaborate religious belief-structure and paralleling visual modes often seen in medieval European art, as discussed in the previous note (Gebser 1949/1985, 205-235). Among his stages of consciousness-evolution (integral/magic/mythic/mental/integral), Graves' RED stage seems to straddle Gebser's magic and the mythic stages, which are identified respectively with "pre-perspectival" (timeless simplicity) and "unperspectival" (primitively time-bound) modes of visual representation.

The Minoan fresco shown in Fig. 5c is in some ways hard to place precisely among historic developmental stages, given our lack of knowledge about this civilization. Gebser (1949/1985, 62) places certain similar Minoan art as a "mythic" breakthrough. On the other hand, Campbell (1964, 61-64) stresses the differences between the goddess-worshipping Minoans and the masculine orientation of Near Eastern (RED) empires. However the case may be, the Minoans seem to have existed as a relatively large-scale, settled empire, thus fulfilling certain basic preconditions of RED development, and yet their playful and enigmatic artwork shows at least some resemblance to pre-historic (PURPLE) artifacts (compare the bull in the fresco with animals in stone-age cave paintings).

<sup>29</sup> Archaic Greek society as chronicled by Homer seems to be a warrior culture, with a clear orientation to the building up of empires; it is in many ways just such a society as Graves has envisioned for RED. And yet, already in Homer one can also see the emergence of a more settled world-view, in which canny intelligence and respect for various hierarchies can matter as much, or sometimes more, than the skills of warfare. Consider Homer's second epic, *The Odyssey*, in which the new protagonist, "the wily Odysseus" (who appears often in *The Iliad*, but whose role is only of secondary importance in this earlier work) must make his way through complex obstacles with patience and with guile.

The centuries between Homer and the classical era are marked by the emergence of various new literary forms and eventually by new forms of philosophical reasoning. The latter forms seem unmistakably to show up the appearance of a settled BLUE culture, perhaps the world's first. Aspects of this transition are recorded in countless works of classical scholarship, and a convenient summary may be found in the work of Snell (1948/1960) (a book which I would warmly recommend to the reader interested in the evolution of modes of consciousness). Snell's insights and prowess as a philologist make for a lively and fascinating summary of all the main literary modes over the periods in question.

As for ancient hints of later memes (beyond BLUE), authors in the integral theory community (e.g., McIntosh 2007) have noticed in classical-era Greek thought the elements of "proto-science" and thus an example of a precocious modernism, but one that "could not be sustained... [with its proto-science becoming] frozen in the writing of Aristotle



and Ptolemy, showing little progress for over a thousand years. It was not until the Enlightenment that philosophy and science become separated from their religious confines once again." (McIntosh 2007, 158) Classical-era Greek culture is thus basically to be considered one of the first stable BLUE communities, even as it interestingly shows early (and thus presumably unstable) signs of ORANGE. Classical scholars (e.g., Snell) have also made similar observations about the early Greek science (hints of ORANGE), and have also pointed intriguingly to what could possibly be interpreted as *very* early signs (again, likely unstable forms) of GREEN. Snell (1948/1960, ch. 11) discusses the advent of "humanitas" -- or a new sense of broad-based fellow-feeling -- in fourth-century writers like the comedic playwright Menander, particularly in their continuing influence on later literary traditions.

<sup>30</sup> The epics attributed to Homer have come down to us from much later (classical-era) manuscripts. Summing up lengthy scholarly debates about the actual authorship of Homer's poetry, while there appears to be historical evidence in favor of actual historical events as chronicled, reasonable inference also strongly suggests significant changes to the details of its presentation, made between its being first written down by Homer and the classical era several centuries later (refer to Jaynes 1976, 76-78). While it isn't known what was changed in the original poetry, it seems reasonable to surmise that changes made by people of later times left traces reflective of their own worldview.

<sup>31</sup> A psychologist rather than a classicist by training, Jaynes created some stir with his novel hypothesis that Homeric people were not actually conscious, in the sense by which that term is normally understood today. He went on to locate consciousness in the "breakdown of the bicameral mind," or, the mastering of right-brain auditory hallucinations, which he understood as the "appearance" of gods to Homer's people, by left-brain processes of ratiocination. Although a full evaluation of Jaynes' theory is beyond the scope of this essay, it may be useful in introducing his ideas to point out that they seem to depend heavily on a strict application of what is sometimes called the Whorfian Hypothesis, or the notion that language specifically delineates consciousness (or, that consciousness is specific to thoughts uttered by a well-defined self in language). While Jaynes has left a legacy of interested followers (see, e.g., <http://www.julianjaynes.org/>), within the context of integral theory, vastly different perspectives on consciousness would appear to have been more influential. Consider, for example, the position of Whitehead (as an influence on later theorists; see McIntosh, 2007, pp. 168-72, for a summary of his overall views) that consciousness is to be attributed not only to every stage of human development, but indeed to every naturally-occurring structure (i.e., even to individual cells or unicellular organisms). Consciousness, on this view, is a much more amorphous and omnipresent phenomenon, arising relatively spontaneously.

But this note is in no way meant to settle the interesting questions raised by Jaynes. It is not necessary for the purposes of this essay to settle the question of whether the Homeric gods are really only fully-interior features of the self, or whether they may be better explained as magical "auditory hallucinations" (as Jaynes would have it), or whether humankind at the stage of "RED consciousness" is indeed really "conscious" at all. This essay is concerned with the subtleties of value-systems as they succeed one another; the reason for bringing up Homer here is to explore the status of the self at RED, in its relation to its constitutive impulses and influences.

<sup>32</sup> According to the pattern suggested in §3.1 above regarding attractor-values and restraining-values, the restraining-virtue for RED must be the attractor-virtue of PURPLE, which per Graves is supposed to be "safety." Assuming that this pattern holds up (and that the placement and basic description of Graves' PURPLE stage are essentially accurate, matters which go beyond the scope of this essay), one would expect to see in RED societies a tacit expectation of safety as an unconscious focus, especially as manifested via group activity. And subject to the limitations of the brief survey made here, there do seem to be some indications in this direction: the awestruck and often fearful-seeming attitudes of most of the minor characters in *The Iliad* in their ordinary intercourse with one another -- with the striking exception of protagonists like Achilles -- seem to point to a state of pervasive fear. Fear may be normal in wartime for many societies (i.e., even at later stages of development), but this state of fear is broader than the wartime fear one might consider normal: it includes not only a general fear of death at the hands of the enemy, but also fear of being shamed before one's peers, the fear of justified and ever-ready punishment being delivered from on high. Consider the anecdote told in Book 2 of the pathetic figure of Thersites, "the ugliest man who came to Troy," who dares to echo Achilles' rebuke of Agamemnon and is savagely beaten down by Odysseus, seemingly with the moral that what is permissible for one is by no means permissible for most others.

<sup>33</sup> One immediate problem with the comparing a stage of human social-cultural developmental with a life-stage in the individual developmental life-cycle (e.g., RED with toddlerhood) is that basic social relationships shift across these life-

stages. The world of the toddler is normally heavily conditioned by the intensive involvement and presence of parents, or of substitute parent-figures. A RED human community, by contrast, must proceed to the next developmental stage, or fail to proceed, on its own. Even if human beings at certain stages are considered to invent collective substitute parent figures (i.e., the gods, or God), this process is surely different from relating to and interacting with actual parents, who have not been explicitly summoned within the thought-world of the child.

<sup>34</sup> The idea here is that efficacy as an attractor-value can include the valuation of *others'* efficacy -- and this broadens the picture of extreme egotism drawn by the SD authors into a considerably more subtle picture that includes a values' revolution at RED in the self-organization of society through enhanced social mutual appreciation (e.g., of heroic qualities) and resultant social ramification. Jaynes explicitly brings up some supporting evidence on this point:

*Objection* [Jaynes is going through potential objections to his theory]: If the bicameral mind [Jaynes' theory of right-brain hallucinations -- see note 31 above] existed, one might expect utter chaos, with everybody following his own private hallucinations. The only possible way in which there could be a bicameral civilization would be that of a rigid hierarchy, with lesser men hallucinating the voices of authorities over them, and those hallucinating yet higher ones, and so on to the kings and their peers hallucinating gods. Yet the Iliad does not present any such picture with its concentration on the heroic individual.

*Reply*: This is a very telling objection that puzzled me for a long time, particularly as I studied the history of other bicameral civilizations in which there was not the freedom for individual action that there was in the social world of the Iliad.

The missing pieces in the puzzle turn out to be the well-known Linear B Tablets from Knossos, Mycenae and Pylos. They were written in what I am calling the bicameral period. They have long been known, yet long resistant to the most ardent labors of cryptographers. Recently, however, they have been deciphered and shown to contain a syllabic script, the earliest written Greek used only for record purposes [source-reference deleted]. And it gives us an outline picture of Mycenaean society much more in keeping with the hypothesis of a bicameral mind: hierarchies of officials, soldiers, or workers, inventories of goods, statements of goods owed to the ruler and particularly to gods. The actual world of the Trojan War, then, was in historical fact much closer to the rigid theocracy which the theory predicts than to the free individuality of the poem....

This loosening of the social structure in the fully developed Iliad may in part have been caused by the bringing together of other much later stories into the main theme of the Trojan War. (Jaynes 1976, 79-81)

I would add only that, even without additional historical evidence, the question of how far the looseness of *The Iliad* should be taken as literal description, and how far it should be taken as an instance of poetic license subject to reading between the lines, is open to interpretation.

<sup>35</sup> These terms were suggested in group-conversation by Dylan Newcomb, recently a member of the Integral New York discussion-group.

<sup>36</sup> Wilber's earliest reference to the distinction that evolves into that between his upper- and lower-quadrants refers to the divide between *agency* and *communion* (Wilber 1995, 49), but is soon followed by a parallel version of the distinction that explains it as between *individual* and *social* (Wilber 1995, ch. 3), a version repeated in many of Wilber's works since (e.g., Wilber 2006).

<sup>37</sup> Wilber defends his view of "individual" and "social" as characterizing the parallel and stable, but importantly different, aspects of things as viewed from his upper and lower quadrant perspectives, as follows:

The example I usually give, of why individual holons are not the same as social holons (or, why the Great Web is greatly confused), is that of my dog Isaac, who is definitely a single organism on most days. Single organisms have what Whitehead called a *dominant monad* [Wilber's emphasis], which simply means that it has an organizing or governing capacity that all of its subcomponents follow. For example, when Isaac gets up and walks across the room, *all* of his cells, molecules and atoms get up and go with him. This isn't a democracy. Half of his cells don't go one way and the other half go another

way. 100% of them get right up and follow the dominant monad. It doesn't matter whether we think this dominant monad is biochemistry or consciousness or a mini-soul or a material mechanism -- or whether that nasty "dominant" part wouldn't be there if we were just friends all friends and cooperated -- whatever it is, that dominant monad is there, and 100% of Isaac's cells and molecules and atoms get right up and move.

*And there is not a single society or group or collective anywhere in the world that does that [Wilber's emphasis]. A social holon simply does not have a dominant monad. (Wilber 2006, 145)*

This excerpt is followed (on the next page) with a diagram showing half (the exterior) hierarchies of organization (as in Wilber 1995): upper-quadrant ("individual") forms begin with atoms and ascend to primitive nervous systems, and then to higher forms of brain-structure (still not yet understood) that are thought to underpin human consciousness; lower-quadrant ("social") forms begin with galaxies, then planets, then primitive and up to more elaborated forms of social organization (families, tribes, nations, ...).

And thus, in my view, continues the confusion over what Wilber acknowledges as the "difficult issue" of the individual and the social. For galaxies and planets clearly *do* generally move around physically, with respect to one another. (And even if galaxies, as more diffuse physical forms than planets, might sometimes allow pieces to break off and thus leave some "hair" around, then again so might Wilber's dog!) More generally, social holons can and are often usefully taken to possess a collective intention, even if that intention may be difficult to define in physical, particularistic terms (i.e., with regard to exactly how it comes about or where it's pointed).

To take an example, in the year 2003, the social holon we call "the United States" entered into a state of war with Iraq, and even though many of the individuals comprised as citizens of the U.S. surely disagreed with this advisability of this particular "social action," there was no doubt that this actually occurred. Even though it is certainly difficult to define "a state of war" in precise physical terms for something as large and complex as a society (i.e., in terms of strictly physical attributes or movements of persons and materiel), or about exactly *who* had taken this action (a divided government? a divided citizenry?), virtually all citizens of the U.S., excluding the very young and the mentally incompetent, can be expected in this instance to agree substantially on what a state of war actually means as a concrete phenomenon, and to agree that such a state did in fact occur. That the nation as a collectively entity had willingly entered this state is a proposition that might generate slightly more debate, but I submit that this collective way of thinking is both essential and unavoidable for common discourse.

I would like also to point out that the originator of the holon/holarchy concept appears to have used the term as to imply the possible agency (so to speak) of social holons. In a section titled "The Group Mind as Holon," Koestler (1967, 265-66) deplors the tendencies of "emotion-based beliefs" to gain the upper hand (e.g., in the extremism of a totalitarian state) and, implicitly, to act (as enabled by the conformity and passivity of its individual members). Admittedly, this is a (deliberately) extreme example, but it makes the point that social holons can be taken as actors.

To be clear, if social holons are considered to possess collective intentionality, this does not vitiate the upper-lower quadrant distinction, which seems to be based on agentic versus communitarian perspectives. The very notion of choice and of action proceeds downwards in a holarchic context: individuals (let us consider them the paradigmatic agents, even if they are not the only agents) make their choices precisely in those spheres in which they are acting as the "dominant monads" (i.e., as agents, or, from an upper-quadrant perspective). Similarly, if social holon X is understood to have taken a (collective) action, the consequences of that action play out directly on levels of the holarchy for which X may be taken as an upper-quadrant entity. However, from the (collective) perspective of higher level social holons to which X itself belongs, and which therefore stand in a lower-quadrant relation to X, overall conditions will be affected at most partially and/or indirectly by the actions of X. For example, in the case of the U.S. decision to go to war in 2003, the Iraqi army immediately became involved in operations as an agentic adversary (in effect, briefly disputing the boundary of dominance), but the "world community," while it also necessarily and immediately reflected this U.S. decision, collectively did so only to a limited, diluted degree and in an indirect way (substantively mediated by various others' perspectives). In general, *directly* affecting the communities to which one belongs can be seen as non-normal, both for individuals and for groups in relation to higher-level groups. As a member of the human species, I might say of myself that the large holon of humanity makes itself felt *directly* through me, and especially through my socially-

mediated intentions, dreams, ideals, etc., but I have no (ordinary) way to act on "humanity," except perhaps by way of serving as an example (i.e., indirectly).

It should be acknowledged that there are complications that result from allowing agency for social holons. Keeping only individual holons as agents allows for an appealing simplicity in applying the four-quadrant model: all events "tetra-arise" (to use Wilber's phrase), but the attribution of perspectives to individuals and the "we-spaces" they inhabit is simpler if all actions are assignable to individuals, and all collective perspectives to groups. Alternatively, if groups can be thought to act through the collective behavior of their member-individuals, the assignment of intentionality in a multi-level holarchy may potentially become very complex indeed. On the external side of the model, without agency as a unique distinguishing feature of the individualized objects perceived via an upper-right-quadrant (UR) perspective, as opposed to the systems that appear on a lower-right-quadrant (LR) view (to use Wilber's terminology, explained in Wilber (1995)), one may ask whether objects and systems can properly be distinguished at all, a question that has been raised in integral theory circles. (McIntosh (2007, App. B) disputes the foundations of the UR-LR distinction.) This appears to be a difficult and far-reaching question: one's answer may ultimately hinge on the ontological allowability (or not) of "objects" of effectively infinite complexity, that is, of ensembles-of-events with acknowledged objectively emergent unifying properties which are definitively unexplainable via simple chains of causation.

<sup>38</sup> Though Wilber begins his twenty tenets (basic metaphysics, or post-metaphysics, as he would have it) with the very broad idea that "reality is composed of holons" (Wilber 1995, 43), it seems clear he is thinking here of stable entities. (Later integral theorists have distinguished "heaps" from holons, even within the class of stable entities, for those essentially without self-organization.) No one seems to suggest that evanescent states or phenomena (thoughts, wishes, etc.) comprise holons. Thus, such states are categorized here as sub-holonic entities.

The introduction of this idea is thus another conscious departure from existing integral theory, but unlike the distinct disagreement mentioned in the previous footnote, the idea of sub-holonic states is intended here only suggestively: actually working out the metaphysics is beyond the scope of this essay. The basic thrust is that sub-holonic states refer to the "citizenry" of the interior worlds of individual conscious holons (i.e., wishes, thoughts impulses). The putative existence of such entities in a "sub-holonic" role is intended to give suggestive meaning to the idea of relating downwards in a manner analogous to that of larger social holons in their relations to individual-members.

<sup>39</sup> To take a problematic example that stays within the familiar individual/group paradigm, if an individual (intentionally) takes an action to decisively alter the destiny of a group to which he belongs, by "acting on" the group he seems to take a position that makes sense within an upper-quadrant perspective; the group has become the *object* of his action, and perhaps the individual (at that moment) could be considered above the group in a holarchy determined by his motives and other belonging-relations. Normally, however, one's actions are directed toward lower-level entities in the overall holarchy (refer to note 37 above for more on this).

Another paradox emerges from the example of Homeric gods acting through RED hero-characters. If Achilles "senses" the will of Athena and then "acts out" this sensing, is Athena a part of Achilles, or Achilles part of Athena? Which is higher in the holarchy? On the one hand, the goddess seems lower in acting through (as a part of) the mortal hero. On the other, she may and indeed would be expected to speak and act to others as well, though perhaps rarely as directly.

At the ORANGE meme, this latter paradox seems in some sense resolved, as the then-relevant sub-holonic entities – individualized wishes and desires, not gods – are now more clearly subordinated entities, relative to the individuals who entertain them. But on the other hand it becomes harder to see these entities as members of a well-defined holarchy or even an "extended" holarchy, whereas the RED gods are more clearly intended as fully drawn-out characters.

<sup>40</sup> These concepts of relating *down-* or *up-the-holarchy* as relating-styles are proposed here as somewhat generalized notions akin to Wilber's upper-quadrant and lower-quadrant perspective-taking, respectively. *Down-the-(extended)-holarchy* refers to a holarchy that also includes sub-holonic individualized states (thoughts, wishes, emotions, impulses) -- and is thus "extended."

<sup>41</sup> This polarity of "agency and communion" has been popularized by Wilber but has been used previously in the literature of social psychology, and was apparently coined by psychologist David Bakan, as a fundamental dichotomy regarding human perspectives, separating perspectives characterized chiefly by will, independence, self-determination,

from those having more to do with relationship, interdependence, participation (with respect to a larger whole). These polar terms are also related to still earlier dichotomies (e.g., Schopenhauer's "will and representation").

In view of some of the viewpoints suggested here, my own preference would be to replace the word "agency" by the somewhat old-fashioned term "dominion." (Thus, a holonic perspective of "dominion" would have as its focus those objects or other holons properly under the control of a given holon.) This term has the virtue of matching in breadth and meaning the term communion, whereas "agency" to me inappropriately suggests the unilaterally acting human *individual*, surely the paradigmatic example, but by no means fully representative of the broader class of holon. (Could an individual cell acting in a certain way, or a group acting in a given way, naturally be said to have "agency"?)

However, as a matter of chiefly terminological interest, this preference is not of any primary importance. Perhaps "dominion" sounds more old-fashioned than "communion" because of the continued cultural significance of Christianity, which re-familiarizes the latter. In any case, as the usual terms seem essentially adequate in meaning (even if imperfect), in the interests of using terminology that is already familiar to the integral theory community, I continue to use terms *agency* and *communion* here.

<sup>42</sup> Categorizing BEIGE and PURPLE as "pre-mental" accords well with the slightly more elaborate ideas of Gebser (see note 28, above). Per Gebser, RED as well as BEIGE and PURPLE, would also be considered distinctly "pre-mental"; I believe this last to be an arguable categorization, given the organizational achievements of the RED meme (empire-building).

<sup>43</sup> Using the notion of *up-the-holarchy* relating (tentatively) to characterize GREEN seems to fly in the face of Graves' original conception of the GREEN value-structure as privileging "inclusiveness" -- seemingly more a "top-down" value, which stresses concern for the weakest and most vulnerable individual members of a given social holon. Even setting aside the many amendments of this essay (e.g., replacing "inclusiveness" with "authenticity"), however, I don't think this should be viewed as an actual contradiction, given the complexity of the operation of values within a social holon. Perhaps GREEN might be described more exactly as characterized by a proliferation of rather superficial *down-the-(extended)-holarchy* memetic impulses (public injunctions toward "compassion" and the like), even as a deeper *up-the-holarchy* impulse (as yet, difficult to name) emerges. Such a more nuanced description would seem to cohere with the dual (attractor- and restraining-) value structure described in §3.1 of this essay.

<sup>44</sup> Notice that our broadened notion of agency as accessible to social holons, *contra* Wilber (see note 37 above), comes into play here: if one allows that the group itself is capable of willingly taking action, it may be said of the PURPLE tribe that the various group-acts through which this social structure seems most readily understood (development of language and tribal customs, shamanistic practices and the like), are indeed properly interpreted as the group-level of holonic activity that best defines them. Likewise, the prototypical RED empire can be understood as a classic group-level expression of the impulse to develop large-scale political structures.

<sup>45</sup> Consider again the figure of Thersites (refer to note 32, above), who in his gratuitous insubordination outrages the Homeric outlook like no other of character of *The Iliad*, and is immediately made into a laughing-stock.

<sup>46</sup> Attempting to approach PURPLE transformations of consciousness using actual historical evidence seems a daunting task, given the remoteness of "fresh" PURPLE civilizations. As noted at the beginning of this essay (§2.2), I find it more interesting to stay mostly with the RED, BLUE, ORANGE and GREEN stages, where Graves' theory adds most trenchantly to my own understanding. My claim that PURPLE "group think" represents a first-ever communal understanding at the *group*-level of human holonic organization (with autonomous initiative at this level more or less awaiting the RED stage) is therefore not one I will attempt to support with an independent, historically-based argument.

Briefly, I would point to Graves' own notion of the PURPLE meme as organized around "safety" (a central value which is not subject to any criticism here). If the individual at PURPLE is essentially interested in safety (via conformity with tradition, guidance as to the will of powerful spirit-forces, and the like), it would seem that anything like either independence of perspective or initiative in action is seriously constrained at the individual level, and that the *group* (collective) perceptions and decisions that determine the evolution of traditions (usually, over many generations), and that make intelligible the will of the spirits (via deputized shamans or similar figures), are in fact operative as the units of greatest importance under this structure.

For Wilber, and others, who see social-holons as incapable of autonomy, such group activity would presumably be more properly explained as the interplay of many individuals' actions. In my view, however, it is both more

parsimonious and more faithful to what can be gathered of PURPLE consciousness (with the help, e.g., of interpreters like Gebser) to consider its imperatives related chiefly to an emergent group-will that somehow operates on and through individuals, particularly clearly in LR-domains (Wilber's terminology again), such as those of language-acquisition and speech, and LL-domains, such as the understanding of myth.

Likewise, the glimpses of RED available to us, attainable via close study of sources like *The Iliad*, suggest a world in which the collective viewpoint is on the one hand coherent (in a way foreign to us), and is not amenable to challenge by individual acts or even thoughts: even the hero Achilles, while he can resist the will of the great king Agamemnon, and thus to some extent express a personal independence from the views of those around him as regards particular actions, can only express his reasons and motives in terms that are thoroughly in conformity with prevailing views of honor, appropriate self-regard and suchlike. In the awestruck tones of the poet, who imparts the tale of so many characters without the slightest sense of irony or psychological distance from them, a single "group-think" worldview, both unified and uniquely dominating, may be discerned.

<sup>47</sup> The very name "the Middle Ages" suggests a time of decrepitude, relative to its predecessor and successor ages. One well-regarded historian begins a large study as follows: "[T]he Middle Ages can be rightly understood only as period of convalescence -- slow at best, and with continual relapses -- from the worst catastrophe recorded in the whole history of the Western World [the fall of the Roman Empire]." (Coulter 1938/1955, 8)

<sup>48</sup> The emergence and flourishing of the BLUE meme in the West spans later classical times (aspects of Alexandrian Greece and the Roman empire) along with medieval Europe. Historians have noted in both these settings habitual tendencies to refer to the present as a "degraded" or "lesser" period, but comparison some imagined idyll in the more distant past. This tendency is exemplified by the Roman terminology used to refer to one's ancestors as "majores," i.e., literally (in Latin) as one's "betters."

<sup>49</sup> "Transpersonal" as referring to altered states of consciousness, in which union with entities that transcend the conscious (personal) ego, and possibly various aspects of the self-other divide, is one of the key terms for many today interested in contemporary integral theory (e.g., "transpersonal psychology" as a nascent field, Jung's "transpersonal unconscious"). The application to Homeric consciousness seems straightforward, on the view that access of the characters to the gods in *The Iliad* was essentially interior in nature, as discussed earlier in this subsection. "Intra-individual" could really refer to any form of introspection; to give this term a distinct and useful meaning, I would suggest that it be used for experiences of aspects of self that are not completely integrated into the whole -- i.e., experiences of "split-off" aspects of the self. This is not necessarily to make it into a pathological label: depending on one's view of the self, such aspects might be seen as inevitable. But it would in this suggested usage seem a term with less grand, and possibly more general, associations than "transpersonal."

<sup>50</sup> As a seminal figure of early postmodernity, C.G. Jung may serve as a nice example, emblematic for GREEN, of someone with at once an abiding interest in "sub-personalities" and as well a certain diffidence in clearly identifying them. Here is Jung on the operation of the unhealthy psyche in relation to its constituent parts:

Neurosis is an inner cleavage -- the state of being at war with oneself. Everything that accentuates this cleavage makes the patient worse, and everything that mitigates it tends to heal the patient. What drives people to war with themselves is the intuition or the knowledge that they consist of two personalities in opposition to one another. The conflict may be between the sensual and the spiritual man, or between the ego and the shadow. It is what Faust means when he says: 'Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast apart.' A neurosis is a dissociation of personality. (Jung 1933, 236-27)

Jung seems to take a rather crisp and precise tone, as regards the neurotic; on the subject of more hopeful cases he sounds considerably vaguer: "My aim is to bring about a psychic state in which my patient begins to experiment with his own nature -- a state of fluidity, change and growth, in which there is no longer anything eternally fixed and hopelessly petrified" (*ibid.*, 66). In both quotes (from different lectures, but there is not much more detail provided in either), there is a suggestion of a diversity of inner voices within the patient, but a disinclination (or an inability) to tease out the identity of any of these particular inner threads of consciousness, subordinate to the person-host, in order to give these inner "things" within a definite identity.

<sup>51</sup> Jung's mentor Eugen Bleuler coined the related term "schizoid" in 1908.

<sup>52</sup> Regarding channeling and "possession," long ideas in circulation, but often considered anathema topics in scholarly debate, the SD terminology is perhaps useful to interpret many of these ideas of mystical communication with spiritual entities as survivals of a PURPLE (animistic) worldview, typically vigorously opposed by BLUE (conventional) authoritarian types, though in our broader cultural context -- i.e., outside inscribed circles of traditional religions -- the latter commonly have at least to pay lip service to acting in the name of ORANGE "science," in contesting the validity of such claims.

<sup>53</sup> It is interesting to compare the history of major literary forms like the novel with those of the other arts: the postmodern break of the early decades of the twentieth-century had a much more decisive impact on classical, sit-down concert music and on painting (as discussed earlier in §3.1) than on literature. The former arts were irrevocably transformed, shifting to radically new forms for at least a century (e.g., atonal music), while the experiments of Joyce and Stein (the latter mixed socially with Picasso and Matisse, as it happens), though well-known, had much less pervasive, lasting impact.

Perhaps the novel (and even literature itself) might be thought to be already more of a GREEN phenomenon, from its beginnings, than music or painting, and thus less subject to the brunt of GREEN's arrival? The Romantic period was the beginning of the great age of the novel in Western Europe, and it is surprisingly difficult to come up with good examples of literary art that seem to represent ORANGE. (Voltaire's *Candide* is one the few examples that come to my mind.)

<sup>54</sup> In case the comparison of the five authors mentioned strikes readers as incongruous, in posing contemporary comedic writers like Pynchon and Franzen against venerable earlier names, I would like to point out that my selection of these authors (from among American novelists only; Europeans and others will be considered shortly) is based chiefly on perceived breadth and lastingness of appeal. It is of course much harder to say who among present-day authors will have lasting appeal than for the older group, but based on internet searches and the like, Pynchon and Franzen seem to be our collective best bets to last as "important" active novelists. The older names (Melville and Wharton were also social satirists) are the more based on received critical opinion, and further reflect exclusion of humorists like Mark Twain, whose is best remembered for his children's work and is thus in a slightly different category of authorship.

Gross differences in style between the two groups can perhaps be taken to reflect differences in the changing times.

<sup>55</sup> Though I am pointing here primarily to pluralistic personality *tendencies*, rather than fully realized dissociative "multiple personalities," for purposes of considering how this general type of phenomenon occurs in contemporary literature and popular culture, it is worth looking at appearances of the more extreme (dissociative) form. A lengthy enough listing of examples is available on the web ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/dissociative\\_identity\\_disorder\\_in\\_popular\\_culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/dissociative_identity_disorder_in_popular_culture)), but on inspection only a very few of these could be considered really well-known. Again, this seems on reflection somewhat surprising, given the great number of famous postmodern works concerning other forms of human psychological suffering; consider some of the classic 19th-century examples already mentioned (Flaubert, Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov); for a different kind of suffering, less personal but more generalized, the "social realism" movement includes further examples like *The Jungle* (1906) or *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

There are some examples, however, of "split personalities" in literature, going all the way back to the early Romantic Goethe (refer to note 50). Some of Poe's stories also furnish colorfully-drawn instances of the same epoch.

Probably the single most famous literary fully worked-out example of multiple personalities, Stevenson's story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), takes the form of a gothic tale featuring "good and evil" personalities (seemingly reflective of a BLUE social undercurrent, like many such tales, but also with distinctively GREEN aspects, e.g., in its depiction of incarnated "evil" as embodying a radical disconnection from others, as well as a generalized malevolence, in the person of Hyde). The first-time reader (nearly everyone has heard the story in some form) doesn't even come realize that the dualistic "persons" are really aspects of a single man until arriving at the story's dramatic ending -- a dramatic plot-feature shared by the only other truly famous example on the Wikipedia list mentioned above, the Alfred Hitchcock film "Psycho" (1960).

And yet, as Stevenson sensitively gives us Dr. Jekyll's final "confession," the phenomenon of a split personality is endowed with certain nuances that helps to transcend its rather garish appearance in this particular tale and to provide more universal overtones (in this case very pessimistic overtones) that might be associated with such multiplicity:

I thus drew steadily nearer to that truth, by whose partial discovery I have been doomed to such a dreadful shipwreck: that man is not truly one, but truly two.... It was on the moral side, and in my own

person, that I learned to recognize the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both....

[T]hat insurgent horror [Jekyll's other identity as Hyde] was knit to [me] closer than a wife, closer than an eye; lay caged in [my] flesh, where [I] heard it mutter and felt it struggle to be born; and at every hour of weakness, and in the confidences of slumber, prevailed against [me] and deposed [me] out of life. (Stevenson 1886/1979, 82-96)

<sup>56</sup> The French sociologist Émile Durkheim, an early user of the phrase "collective consciousness" (though some translators prefer "collective conscience") distinguished what he called "mechanical solidarity" (i.e., coercive group-consciousness, called "mechanical" because it reduces the scope for individual choice within the larger social "mechanism" and "organic solidarity" (achieved through differentiation of social roles, as in specialization of labor in economies). He made a claim that the latter gradually outstrips the former in the course of social evolution. Though I would quibble with some of Durkheim's notions, like his assignment of "beliefs and sentiments common to average members of the same society" to the mechanical category (Durkheim 1893/1985, 39), while apparently relegating mainly purely mental qualities to the organic category, the general outline of his argument as regards the two forms is mirrored in the text of this essay. (Perhaps one could add to Durkheim's idea that a century of GREEN societal evolution has shown us that states of collective "sentiment" can *also* form organic and differentiated dynamic wholes, along with states of collective thought.)

<sup>57</sup> As of this writing, I am aware of several groups around the US, in one of which I happen to be personally participating, that are formally devoted to attempting to create and experience an "awakened inter-subjective field." Some (few) details are currently available at <http://weppractice.org>.

<sup>58</sup> Having lived through the historic transition from apartheid to black rule in South Africa, Coetzee (born in 1940, of both Afrikaans and English heritage) has been inscribed with an (unwelcome, it would seem) political identity by virtue of his birth. The sometimes ambivalent early critical response to his work as offering no "moral anchor in the search for a humane response," since countered by those who argue that his work subtly employs deconstructive tendencies (presumably in a humane way), is summarized in Attwell (1993).

<sup>59</sup> For Graves, the stage after the integral (YELLOW) stage is TURQUOISE (B'O' in his original terminology). The use of the sequence AN, BO, ..., FS, A'N', B'O', ... also has further implications about stages much further out into a possible far future of still higher development. Presumably, the TURQUOISE (B'O') stage would be followed by a C'P' stage (and so on); and such a C'P' stage would have some kind of metaphorical relation to RED (CP), a stage which is all about will and personal efficacy, except that C'P' would be transmuted somehow onto a universal level -- much as A'N' and B'O' are said to transmute (vastly, to say the least) the initial AN and BO stages in Graves' system.

For Wilber, a whole series of ordered mystical states (associated with his psychic, subtle, causal and non-dual levels), each with implications beyond the integral stage, is discussed throughout his work. The integral stage itself is understood as a kind of transitional zone between, on the one hand, the larger zone of egoic consciousness (which encompasses such historical stages as despotism, traditionalism, modernism and postmodernism, with the last for Wilber still apparently understood as a plainly egoic stage, despite its purported orientation to at least a weakening of the behavioral excesses of egoic consciousness) and, on the other, a similarly larger zone of transpersonal consciousness. The transpersonal zone of consciousness would appear for Wilber to involve some kind of stable relationship to the mystical states he discerns. (N.B. These observations apply to the term "transpersonal" as it appears in Wilber (1995); it seems to have been used slightly differently in some of Wilber's earlier books.) The developmental particulars of this integral stage center around what he calls the "centauric" level of awareness/cognition: a kind of combined-body-mind-based balancing of attention toward the domains of matter, body, and mind (Wilber 1995, 268-72).

<sup>60</sup> McIntosh posits several refinements to Wilber's theories, notably a critique of the universality of the particulars of Wilber's sequence of mystical states as unduly influenced by Wilber's own personal Buddhist orientation (McIntosh 2007, ch. 8), and also including a tripartite model of spiral development (*ibid.*, ch. 9), and a more explicit set of implications for contemporary politics (*ibid.*, ch. 5). He also points out some troubling interpretive difficulties as regards the lower-right quadrant in Wilber's four-quadrant model (*ibid.*, App. B).



<sup>61</sup> The habit of considering the integral stage as depending specifically on a conscious awareness of the spiral of development in action seems more characteristic of those who claim to be influenced by Wilber than by the actual writings of the latter. The discussion of emergent "vision logic" in Wilber (1995, ch. 7) is typical in being tentative and allusive toward non-rational states, rather than definitive and emphatic as regards the potential of an evolutionary model itself to define a new integral stage. True, Wilber seems to have condoned the kind of thinking evident in the quote from McIntosh above (e.g., discussing in numerous interviews on the web being "integrally informed" or familiar with integral theory as a key criterion for being in a new integral stage), but in his published writing he is less definitive about stage boundaries as regards the putatively emerging integral stage.

Earlier theorists (such as Gebser; McIntosh (2007) provide a further history including additional precursors not mentioned here) also seem far less dogmatic in asserting the existence of a well-defined integral stage currently in existence. The figure who stands out in the history of integral thought as making a strong claim of there being already a well-defined integral stage at *this* moment in history, is Graves. It is he who has introduced a certain messianic tone of urgency about the emergence of this stage, no doubt out of a heartfelt sense that this is what really is needed in today's world (as the Graves quotes on YELLOW provided earlier in §2.1 seem to show), but with regrettable consequences, as I see it, for the quality of the philosophical dialogue which his work helped to inaugurate. Among the thinkers considered here, it is perhaps only Gebser -- far weaker as a systematic theorist than either Graves or Wilber, despite his virtues of catholicity of thought -- who seems in a playful way (perhaps one could say, in a "postmodern" way, without using that word derogatively) to have opened the way for a broad developmental theory describing the progression all the way through postmodernism and beyond with sufficient openness (if not always with sufficient clarity).

<sup>62</sup> Graves (2005, 377) says that an individual at YELLOW (A'N') "lives in a world of paradoxes. He knows that his personal life is absolutely unimportant, but because it is part of life there is nothing more important in the world."

<sup>63</sup> One such further inference that could be added (using the theory as developed here) would be with regard to *innovation*, the attractor-value under modernism and the unconscious restraining-value under postmodernism. Innovation would be freed to be a purely individual imperative in a truly post-postmodern stage, no longer subject to an unconscious attraction located within the social unconscious. No longer (in this imagined new world) would young people feel pressured toward hyperactivity in order to demonstrate an appropriate level of dynamism, communicated via social and parental expectations. Like "cosmic order" under postmodernism, the notion of innovative, exciting, achievement-oriented growth would (under the pattern suggested) fall somewhat out of social currency in such an era, to become a value kept alive mainly by the personal proclivities and inclinations of isolated individuals or micro-communities.

<sup>64</sup> The metaphor of a language-distinction -- part of what would be called a LR-quadrant view in Wilberian terms -- seems to me useful here as a reminder of the system-wide and emergent properties of (LR) judgments, such as are being made here, as well as earlier in this essay (refer to note 13 above). Though an entire holarchy of distinctions could of course be added on (e.g., this essay being written in "American English" but not "British English," and so on), the basic distinction of it being English versus in another language retains its integrity: being written in English means that this writing is (at least partially) intelligible to all competent readers of English, but not to those who lack this facility.

Likewise, basic distinctions about developmental levels -- such as the claims of second-tier levels as have been discussed here -- involve multiple levels of comparisons and boundaries that can seem endlessly complex if considered all at once, but also have some quite simple implications. If to be a postmodern person means primarily to privilege inclusivity above all (per Graves), then one can indeed perhaps leave this stage behind with some kind of "integral" balancing of respect for (inclusive) multiple perspectives with a renewed interest in rigor (presumably, along with a sense of when the latter is needed). On the other hand, if postmodernity has itself been misrepresented, and if it in fact includes as well an important *internal* turning toward a sense of groundedness, summarized here as "authenticity," the previous claims of newness must be evaluated anew and may themselves be found to be artifacts of a broader postmodern stage.

At risk of entering an endless regress of self-referentiality, one could perhaps even dig into the intentionality underlying works such as Graves' (or this essay) -- the attempt to reach readers elementally (outside normal channels of academic debate), and to connect in ways that are new (e.g., by providing an innovative history of consciousness), is

also perhaps symptomatic of its age in terms of the underlying urge to connect with readers in the first place and to face intellectually some kind of collective future, to encounter a developing "we-space," together.

<sup>65</sup> "Graves proposed a profound and elegant system of human development, which subsequent research has refined and validated, not refuted" (Wilber 2000, vol. 7, 6), runs a typical reference by Wilber (since 1995), leading into a summary of Graves' system. Graves' name is often listed alongside those of other pioneering developmental theorists, though he is occasionally singled out for treatment as an especially clear exemplar.

<sup>66</sup> Wade (1996) mentions several papers with common author Vincent S. Flowers (and several different co-authors) that summarize and refer to Graves' theory. Flowers appears to have published through the 1970's on topics related to managerial style and employee motivation.

<sup>67</sup> Robert Kegan is perhaps among the best-known of such developmental psychologists, and his work is of interest to many in the integral theory community, though for his part he makes no reference, at least in his best-known early work (Kegan 1982), to integral theory. A more recent contributor to the developmental psychology literature who is quoted here, Jenny Wade, has explicitly linked up her work with multiple references to integral theory, alongside references to other academic developmental psychologists such as Cook-Greuter, Kohlberg, Kegan, Loevinger, et al. (see Wade 1996).

<sup>68</sup> Wade's quote of Kegan on the latter's "interindividual balance" also appears to me perplexing as the sole example she provides of a supposed tendency to idealize "post-Conformist consciousness." Kegan's "interindividual balance" (described in Kegan (1982) and elsewhere) seems analogous to Wade's own "authentic consciousness" (YELLOW), perhaps mixed with postmodernism, while his "institutional balance" seems analogous to modernism (ORANGE). The latter stage would seem to be the natural place to begin for a discussion of "post-Conformist" (i.e., post-BLUE) consciousness, but she skips over it to discuss immediately the "end state" in Kegan's theory.

<sup>69</sup> Anderson (1998, 24-36) provides some helpful commentary on Lyotard's work, which can be difficult at first to understand without an introduction. As noted here, Lyotard provides an account of postmodernism that lacks much interior motivational content, focusing on a defining *lack* of belief (i.e., of meta-narratives), rather than any positive statement of motivation. However, his description of the dynamics of postmodern conversation is nonetheless impressive, as far as it goes, in pithily anticipating important developments in Western culture, and even in world culture. Writing twenty years before the advent of widespread internet use, he seizes on the competition for a certain centrality in the noisy discourse of our times, as an important social phenomenon. Though such competition has long been fairly obvious in academia (consider the ranking of scientific journal-articles by citations made in other articles), the popular use of search engines like Google, which rank web-sites by weighted references from other sites, essentially exports the academic value-system, based on the "performativity" hierarchy, into the culture at large.

<sup>70</sup> Quotation is from literary critic Terry Eagleton, "Awakening from Modernity," *Times Literary Supplement* 20 Feb. 1987, as cited in Harvey (1989, 9). Further perspectives on postmodernism that are well-known in academia today may be found in Jameson (1991).

<sup>71</sup> Borgmann (1992, 116-122) provides fairly concise context for this and related terms, such as his "focal realism." He cites (p. 129, n. 24) Michael Walzer's use of the term "particularist."

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