

DEMYSTIFYING MYSTICISM: FINDING A DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT WAYS OF KNOWING

Len Flier
Suva, Fiji

As rivers lose name and form when they disappear into the sea, the sage leaves behind all traces when he disappears into the light. Perceiving the truth, he becomes truth; he passes beyond all suffering. Beyond death, all the knots of his heart are loosed. -Upanishads

I tell you, as truly as God is God and I am a man, if you were quite free from self, free from the highest angel, then the highest angel would be yours as well as your own self. This method gives self-mastery. -Meister Eckhart'

For thirty years, God was my mirror; now I am my own mirror. What I was I no longer am, for "I" and "God" are a denial of God's unity. Since I no longer am, God is his own mirror. He speaks with my tongue, and I have vanished. -Abu Yazid Al-Bistami

*Some say that my teaching is nonsense.
Others call it lofty but impractical.
But to those who have looked inside themselves,
this nonsense makes perfect Sense.
And to those who put it into practice,
this loftiness has roots that go deep. -Lao Tzu"*

MYSTICISM VERSUS REASON

Poetry, revelation, and inspiration for billions, the words of the world's great mystics remain timeless, as fresh today as the day they were spoken. And (we might as well add) just as confusing. For, however often we repeat them, contemplate them, or meditate on them, it does not seem that we are able to understand them in the way that the masters meant them. Their words are a product of a different way of knowing that we are unable even to grasp, let alone share in. Frustrated, we turn back to the world that we know. But the optimism and promise of the words-boundless love, peace, and the vanquishing of fear-draw us back to them, over and over again.

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Some of us. Those of us who choose not mysticism, but reason; those of us with faith in the human ability to observe and to comprehend; those of us who appreciate poetry but trust facts, have sought our inspiration elsewhere. And we have found no lack of it. Filled with wonder and surprises around every corner, the natural world holds our imagination both personally, in countless laboratories late into the night, and collectively, in recent photographs from the Hubble space telescope revealing the birth of a distant star. What we would know about ourselves we find in the developmental psychologies of Freud, Erikson, and Piaget. Bliss is not a mystical state; it is a satisfaction that can come from a life well lived.

Which vision is real: mysticism or reason? Can the two be reconciled? "If the mystic knows something," challenges the man of reason, "why can't he explain it so that I can understand it?" Why, indeed? Such questions might be easier to answer if true mystics were more accessible. But there aren't many around, and those that *are* around tend to keep their mouths shut. "He who speaks, does not know," reminds Lao-Tzu, "and he who knows does not speak" (Mitchell, 1988, chap. 56).

Transpersonal psychology has set for itself the goal of constructing a paradigm that accounts for the full range of human consciousness. This means, among other things, reconciling reason with mysticism. In recognizing the value of religious traditions and what has been called the *perennial philosophy* (Walsh, 1993; Wilber, 1990), transpersonal psychology has opened up new avenues of inquiry into mysticism. Much of the research has proceeded along the lines of characterizing altered and meditative states of consciousness (Murphy & Donovan, 1989; Tart, 1983; Walsh, 1993; Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). Such states have been shown to be distinct and reproducible. An important and unanswered question, however, is how *temporary* and *induced* unitive states of consciousness, such as those experienced in meditation and peak experiences, are related to the apparently *enduring* and *non-induced* unitive perspectives of the religious mystics. Does a single-or even multiple-meditative or peak experience constitute mysticism? Clearly not. We would expect to see a change in the individual's normal waking consciousness-some kind of "high plateau," as Maslow (1968) termed it. But what is the nature of this high plateau, and how does an individual get there? And why do religious mystics insist that the transition to mystical knowing involves sacrifice and suffering? Meditative states and peak experiences are not characterized by suffering-indeed, the experience is ordinarily reported as being quite the opposite.

Observations such as these suggest that there is more to mysticism than can be explained in terms of transitory states of consciousness. It appears that structural development is required-development in what Wilber (1990) has termed *basic structures of consciousness*. Such structures are revealed in several stage theories of development, such as Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969; Kohlberg & Ryncarz, 1990) theory of moral development and James Fowler's (1981; 1991) theory of faith development, both of which place mysticism at the end of a chain of qualitatively distinct stages. This essay will describe and build upon a theory of basic structures introduced by Robert Kegan (1982; 1994). It will propose that the relationship between reason and mysticism is grounded in a *developmental* relationship between basic structures (or orders) of consciousness. It will also propose a specific mechanism for the *evolution* of consciousness-e-a mechanism that explains suffering. And,

hopefully, it will demonstrate that this model represents a more satisfactory explanation of mysticism than a model based on altered states.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF KNOWING

At the heart of the distinction between reason and mysticism is the assignment of meaning. Reason assigns meaning only to those ideas and observations that can be expressed in terms of pairs of opposites: hot vs. cold, good vs. bad, etc. Mysticism assigns meaning to that which is "beyond" reason; it holds dualistic distinctions to be (ultimately) meaningless. It seems that mysticism and reason represent two entirely different ways of *knowing*. In other words, it is not so much *what* is known that is different but *how* it is known.

Both Kohlberg and Fowler acknowledge a debt to the cognitive-developmental psychology of Jean Piaget, and it may help us if we, too, turn for a moment to this pioneering developmental psychologist. Piaget's elegant experiments revealed that there are qualitatively distinct ways of knowing that everyone experiences during childhood. A seven-year-old child, for example, has a different way of knowing than a four-year-old child. Piaget (1970) demonstrated this using glasses of water. After pouring equal volumes of water into two glasses, he would ask a child if the amounts were the same. The child would agree. Then he would take one of the glasses of water and pour it into a narrower glass and ask the child if the *amounts* of water were still the same. A four-year-old child would reply that the narrower glass has *more* water. In an effort to show the child that the amounts are really the same, Piaget would pour the water back into the original glass. However, the child would reply, "Yes, they are the same-now, but they weren't before."

Although an older child will disregard her perceptions and recognize that the amount of water is the same regardless of its appearance in the narrower glass, the younger child is not capable of this mental manipulation. The younger child makes meaning in terms of what she sees. The older child disregards what she sees and makes meaning in terms of what she knows: that the amount of water remains the same even though its appearance may change. The younger child's way of making meaning has come to be called *preoperational* and the older child's, *concrete operational*.

In the preoperational and concrete operational child, we have a parallel to the relationship between reason and mysticism. The preoperational child represents reason: she assigns meaning to what is obviously true. "The narrow glass has more water. Anyone can see that." The concrete operational child (imagine that she is the only one in the room) represents mysticism: she disregards what is obvious and pronounces that, in fact, there is *no difference* between the amount of water in the narrow glass and the wide glass. "Nonsense!" shout the preoperationalists (or something to that effect), and the debate is on. But it will never be resolved because preoperational thinkers cannot be "convinced" to think concrete-operationally; that is a cognitive leap that they will have to take on their own. This is, of course, not to suggest that *reason-able* people are preoperational and that mystics are concrete operational, but it does show *developmentally* how such a difference can arise.

Piaget also identified a third way of knowing, which he called *formal operations*. Formal operational children are able to consider abstractions, whereas concrete operational children are only able to consider concrete examples. Most children shift to formal operations in their early teens. The difference between preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational children is revealed in the following syllogism: "All purple snakes have four legs. I am hiding a purple snake. How many legs does it have?" The concrete-operational child, being unable to think out of the concrete, will politely suggest that you are talking nonsense because there *is* no such thing as a purple snake with legs (although you probably mean a lizard that changes color and she'd be happy to tell you about that). The formal-operational child, being capable of abstract reasoning, will see that despite the absurdity of the premises, a valid conclusion can be drawn: the presupposed snake has four legs. The preoperational child will have no problems with purple or leggy snakes and is as likely to say, "My brother has a snake" (Kegan, 1982).

CONSTRUCTIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ULTIMATE REALITY

The distinguishing feature of Piaget's cognitive-developmental psychology is that individuals progress through qualitatively distinct stages in which their way of knowing *becomes* progressively more complex. It is not only that the seven-year-old knows *more* than the four-year-old: it is that she knows *differently*, in a more sophisticated way. The seven-year-old can see the mistake the four-year-old is making with the narrow glass of water, but the four-year-old cannot see it herself. It is as though the seven-year-old is able to step back and take a perspective on her perceptions. She can say, "The narrow glass *looks like* it has more water." The four-year-old, however, cannot do this. She can only say, "The narrow glass has more water." She is one with (or *embedded in*) her perceptions.

Piaget's cognitive-developmental psychology ends in adolescence with the emergence of formal operations. Thus it would not appear that it can help us understand the development of mystical thinking in adulthood. But Piaget's observations *have* suggested a possible developmental relationship between reason and mysticism. What remains is to define this relationship and find a mechanism by which the individual may progress from one to the other.

The constructive-developmental psychology of Robert Kegan (1982; 1994) may help us to do both. Kegan has broadened the ideas of Piaget to include not only cognition but personality, and he has extended them from adolescence into adulthood. What is basic to cognition and personality, according to Kegan, is the level of complexity at which an individual constructs his *subject-object relations*, where *object* refers to elements of knowing that can be reflected on or manipulated, and *subject* refers to elements of knowing that the individual is identified with or *embedded in*. In a subject-object relationship, the individual can distinguish himself from what is object, but he cannot distinguish himself from what is subject. Thus it may be said that the individual *has* objects, but he *is* subject. For example, Piaget's concrete-operational seven-year-old can take her own perceptions about the water as an *object* and reflect on them, saying in effect, "I know it looks like the narrow glass has more

water." The preoperational four-year-old can only take the water as object; her perceptions are still *subject*. She can only say, "The narrow glass has more water."

Kegan's psychology is *constructive* in the sense that reality is not "out there" waiting to be apprehended; the individual constructs it according to his subject-object balance. It is *developmental* in the sense that the individual's subject-object balance becomes progressively more complex. Kegan identifies five *orders of consciousness* which represent increasingly complex orders of subject-object relations. The first three are attained in childhood and subsume Piaget's cognitive stages. The final two are attained in adulthood, but, like Kohlberg's moral stages, not all adults attain them at the same time, nor do all adults reach the final order.

An order of consciousness is a general principle of organization, so one would expect that, when an individual develops a more complex order, the changes will be manifested across his whole experience, including thinking, feeling, and social relations. In fact, this is what happens. The change in cognition which Piaget termed *concrete operations* is accompanied by a drastic change in personality. Let us consider once again the four-year-old and the seven-year-old, this time in the realm of personality.

A typical four-year-old is an example of Kegan's first order of consciousness or, as he called it originally, the *impulsive balance*. He is, quite literally, a bundle of impulses. He is squirmy, has trouble sitting still, and at any moment he is able to drop whatever he is doing and dart off to some new activity. After beginning a conversation with his parents, he is likely to interrupt it himself with an entirely unrelated thought: re-engaging them in a conversation he himself had started. A seven-year-old, however, is a remarkably different child. He is capable of sustained periods of attention, and he undertakes self-managed projects which he continues over long periods. Whereas the four-year-old child will frequently interrupt conversations he has begun himself, the older child will never do this.

It is apparent that the seven-year-old has succeeded in managing a part of himself that the four-year-old has not. He is not just "bigger" along the same lines as the four-year-old, but qualitatively "different." The difference is that the older child is operating at the second order of consciousness. Whereas the first child takes as object his sensations, the second child organizes his sensations into *durable categories*; the category itself being taken as object. One such durable category might be called "perceptions." Because he is able to consider his perceptions as an object, the second-order child is able to reflect on how water maintains its volume even though the volume appears to change. Another category might be called "impulses." Because he is able to consider his impulses as an object, he can reflect on them and control them. Whereas, to the first-order child, perceptions and impulses are subject, to the second-order child, they are object. Another way of looking at it is to say that the first-order child is *embedded* in his perceptions and impulses, whereas the second-order child has emerged from his embeddedness and can take these as object.

Kegan's model is elegant because it explains the transition to each new order of consciousness—even those that occur in adulthood—in terms of the same basic

motion: taking what is object and subsuming it to a higher structure which, itself; is then taken as object-or, to say the same thing more simply, taking what is subject and recognizing it as an object. This motion might be represented graphically as drawing a large circle around a group of smaller circles, but this does not convey the full complexity of the act. The individual's perspective is not that of looking down on a sheet of paper with a group of circles drawn on it; it is that of being *on* the paper *within* one of the circles. From this perspective, he would have difficulty seeing his *own* circle, let alone any of the other similar circles nearby. The situation is like that of a frog in a puddle trying to imagine the ocean. Another frog might come along and tell him about it, but until he is able to jump high enough to see his own puddle, he will imagine that he is already *in* the ocean. How, then, does the frog-if he is unable to see even his own puddle-s-jump out of it and see it as just one of many possible puddles? More importantly, what would *motivate* him to jump out of his puddle in the first place? Deep reflection reveals that there are only two things that could make a frog leave his puddle. The first is if the puddle dried up. The second is, of course, *lady frogs*.

It is probably no coincidence that Kegan's third order of consciousness is forged in early adolescence, for it *is*, at least in part, romantic relationships that reveal the limitations of second-order consciousness. In the second order, an individual is able to take his impulses as object, but he is still embedded in his own needs and desires. Although he recognizes that other people have needs and desires, too, these exist only in relation to *his*. Thus, morality at the second order is confined to a *tit-for-tat* style of fairness: "I get mine; you get yours." But as he is confronted with a relationship to another individual with similar interests, needs, and desires, the individual is led to consider that this other individual also has *feelings*. As his circle widens to encompass the needs *and* desires of the other individual, feelings-empathy, commitment, and self-consciousness-become the new order in which needs and desires are subsumed. Thus, morality at the third order is based on feelings and commitments: "We made a commitment; how would *you* feel if *I* broke it?"

To continue with the frog analogy, then, the new puddle is third-order consciousness. Of course our frog (perhaps this time a young lady frog), blissfully in love, does not see it as a puddle: she thinks she's found the ocean. Sometime in adulthood, though, the puddle begins *to* dry up. The drought comes in the form of conflicting commitments and expectations from so many relationships. She feels like everybody has a piece of her, but she doesn't have herself. She feels like she has no voice of her own and that she is subject to the demands of her husband, friends, parents, and herself, with no way to mediate them. The realization dawns that, if she has to live in this puddle any longer, she is going to kill herself. Thus motivated, and aided perhaps by friends, a job, or education, she begins to step out of the puddle and expand the circle of her knowing to take in *systems* of relationships. This is not easy, but if she succeeds, she emerges into fourth-order consciousness: independent, free-thinking, and secure; concerned with what other people think but not controlled by what they think.

Is this the ocean? Well, not yet. Even fourth-order consciousness-for some frogs, at least--eventually dries up. To see how this happens, let us again consider the

question of morality. In third-order consciousness, morality was based on commitment and mutual expectation within relationships. Thus, "The law is the law because we all commit to it." But in fourth-order consciousness, relationships are no longer seen as "ultimate reality." Ultimate reality is something higher than relationships; higher even than the law. Relationships are now subject to principles—life, justice, freedom—and so is the law. And when the law—or relationships—are in violation of these principles, then morality demands that the individual stand by the principle. This was the morality that led Henry David Thoreau, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King to commit their acts of civil disobedience, and it was on this morality that Thomas Jefferson anchored *The Declaration of Independence*. Ultimate reality, then, in fourth-order consciousness, consists of principles. Very good. But what happens when *principles* conflict?

MORAL CONFLICT: THE ENGINE OF TRANSCENDENTAL EVOLUTION

We have followed Kegan's orders of consciousness up to the fourth order. Each successive order is a more complex subject-object relationship in which the old objects are subsumed in a larger category, which *itself* is taken as object. Another way of looking at this is to say that the old subject (or puddle) becomes the new object when the individual steps out of it. Each order of consciousness is a qualitatively different way of *knowing*. This is revealed in the morality of each order: in the second order moral issues are decided on the basis of fairness, in the third on commitment, and in the fourth on principle.

One thing that has been lacking in Kegan's system, however, is an explicit and compelling motivation for evolving new orders of consciousness. I have compared the situation to that of a frog in a puddle. What exactly is it—apart from lady frogs (which only works once)—that motivates him to jump out of his puddle and construct a more complex system of knowing? Kegan isn't specific. We might say that nature tends toward complexity, but this doesn't answer the question: Darwin has shown us that there has to be a *reason* for complexity—like competition and survival. Or, we might say that the development of consciousness is genetically programmed, but this denies the very principle of constructivism that serves Kegan's theory so well. Our solution, then, must be compelling, and it must be constructivist. I propose that *moral conflict* satisfies both of these conditions. Kegan and Kohlberg have shown that morality is an *outcome* of the subject-object balance; however, I propose that morality is not only an outcome but the very *engine* of the evolution of the subject-object balance itself.

How would this work? Consider, for example, the morality of the first order. The first-order child is embedded in his impulses, and, thus, his morality is also based on impulses: "What is right is what agrees with my impulses" (if you doubt me on this, ask a three-year-old). But what happens when impulses collide? The system blows up—literally—overload. There is no executive to mediate impulses, so the child-as-system crashes and reboots. And, although a computer is not creative enough to reconfigure itself so that this does not happen, a child *is* and he *does* reconfigure himself by constructing a second order of consciousness.

What about the other orders? Second-order morality is founded on needs and preferences, but needs and preferences can also conflict, especially in relationships. Thus, "I need what I prefer, but I also need my relationships." This moral crisis may not be acted out in such dramatic fashion as the first-order crisis, but it is surely acted out. It is equally painful as the first-order moral crisis, and it cries out for a solution. The solution comes not from choosing between one or the other need, but from *transcending* the conflict by constructing a new order of consciousness in which needs are taken as object. In the third order, a similar situation occurs. The moral crisis is in terms of conflicting expectations. The situation is ultimately resolved, not by choosing between them, but by transcending them with the construction of a fourth-order consciousness.

Ironically—to the rest of the world—each transcendent solution looks like an abandonment of responsibility. Thus, the first boy in the class to fall in love is seen by his peers as violating sacred principles. And the wife who masters her relationships and seeks her own career is viewed by family members—and perhaps *even* her husband—as abandoning her commitments. But this is how third-order consciousness looks when viewed from the second order, and how fourth-order consciousness looks when viewed from the third order. To boys embedded in second-order consciousness, a third-order consciousness with a morality based on empathy and commitment is *inconceivable—if* they could conceive it, they would be there themselves. The same can be said for in-laws who are embedded in third-order consciousness.

But what about progress through Piaget's cognitive stages? Is it possible, for example, for a child to construct second-order consciousness on a purely intellectual basis, without such a moral conflict? Let us consider, once again, the glasses of water. To a first-order child, ultimate reality is what he sees. He sees that the narrow glass has *more* water and *that* is reality—at least as long as the water is in the narrow glass. When the water is poured back into the original glass, reality changes. The child has no problem with this because it happens all the time. Since there is no problem, no transcendent solution is necessary. Now, let us put the same child in a classroom with a progressive curriculum using measuring devices. The curriculum builds the child's confidence in a measuring device so that he considers it to be absolutely reliable. Now let him apply the measuring device to the problem of water in a narrow glass and invite him to compare the output of the measuring device with his observations, which he considers to be equally reliable. Uh oh! Conflict. Not quite a moral conflict, but a similar challenge to ultimate reality. Once again, conflict invites the child to come up with a transcendent solution: "Ultimate reality is not defined in terms of what I see: it is defined in terms of something else—conservation of physical properties."

On the whole, however, the concept of an intellectual bridge to transcendence is a bit of a stretch. It seems more likely that the child would have constructed second-order consciousness well before the time he reaches proficiency with measuring devices. And, although an intellectual bridge is conceivable, the immediacy of social interaction and the intensity of socio-moral dilemma almost guarantee that the first step to a new order of consciousness is a moral crisis. Subsequent intellectual problems, such as the conservation of physical properties, are probably more a question of applying an order of consciousness that is already present to a new situation. Still, we might

rephrase the motivating principle more broadly as *an irrefutable challenge to ultimaterality* Stated as a hypothesis: challenge to ultimate reality is the engine that drives the transcendental evolution of consciousness. Without such a challenge-c-that is to say without the puddle drying up-there is no evolution. The principle has implications for education, psychotherapy, and religion which I will discuss briefly later.

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

If metaphysics is the quest for ultimate reality, then by the time we reach fourth-order consciousness we are all expert metaphysicians. We have successively defined "ultimate" reality in terms of impulses, needs, relationships, and principles. And now is it surprising?-even a reality based on principles shows signs of weakness. The fourth-order individual is on the verge of a new moral crisis: an irresolvable conflict of principles-a conflict equally devastating and painful as the conflict of expectations that led him to construct fourth-order consciousness to begin with. So what is the answer?

Fortunately, we are not the first to come up against this problem. A classic example of principles in conflict occurs in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in which Krishna initiates his student and friend Arjuna into the knowledge of *dharma*-the Hindu version of ultimate reality. As the story begins, Arjuna has a problem. He has hired Krishna as his charioteer for the war to end all wars. Banners are flying, conches are blowing, and swords are gleaming in the morning sun as the two great armies stand opposite each other preparing to fight. Arjuna asks Krishna to drive his chariot through the center of the plain so that he can survey the scene. He sees on his own side thousands upon thousands of elephants, chariots, and men, including his own son and his four brothers. He sees on the other side even more elephants and chariots, his revered teachers, and one hundred of his cousins. The cousins, led by their eldest brother and with the blessing of their blind father, had long ago defeated Arjuna's family in a crooked dice game, in which they publicly shamed his sister-in-law and subsequently banished Arjuna's entire family to the forest for twelve years (with one additional year to be spent *incognito*). After suffering this injustice and living up to every crooked letter of the conditions placed on them, Arjuna and his family have returned to claim the kingdom that was theirs. However, their cousins have refused to give even a postage stamp of land for them to live on. Negotiations have broken down and even a last-ditch diplomatic effort by Krishna himself has ended in failure. There is now nothing left but to fight it out.

You might expect Arjuna, a born warrior and leader of his army, and possessing an unimpeachable cause, to be at the top of his form. But he is despondent. He tells Krishna, "I see among our opponents members of my family and my own dear teachers who are as Gods to me. It is better I should be killed than to harm a hair on their heads. But I see among our friends my brothers and my son who will surely be killed if I do not fight. What can I do?" And he slumps in his chariot.

Krishna, being divine, is amused, and he gently chides Arjuna for his weakness. He has an answer for Arjuna, but it is not the one you would expect. He does not order

him to fight. Krishna knows that Arjuna is no longer a man governed by law; he is a man governed by principles—in short, a fourth-order thinker. To issue a command—even as God—would be to ask him to return to third-order thinking, and Krishna, who is as concerned for Arjuna's spiritual growth as he is for the outcome of the war, will not do this. Nor does Krishna argue with Arjuna over principles: Arjuna is well aware of all the principles involved; that is his problem. No, the only way out for Arjuna is straight ahead, and in the rest of the *Gita* Krishna leads Arjuna into fifth-order consciousness, in which ultimate reality is realized not in terms of principles, but in terms of *dharma*. Having thus transcended his dilemma, Arjuna stands up, enters the battle unattached to its outcome, and wins the war *with* a clear conscience, although his son and most of his army, along with the entire opposing side, are indeed slaughtered.'

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a historical epic in which the characters and forces symbolize inner conflicts and choices that face us all. There is no way for Arjuna to *solve* his dilemma, he has to *transcend* it; and when he does, he discovers a new "ultimate reality" from which he is able to participate in the battle unaffected by the outcome. Once paralyzed, he is now free to act with a clear conscience. And, although it may appear to some that Arjuna has attained his freedom by abandoning his morality, let us remember the example of the first teenager to fall in love and the housewife who suddenly emancipated herself. Like Arjuna, these people have also attained a new freedom, which, to their peers, appears to have come at the expense of abandoning morality. But it is not morality which has been abandoned: it is a new reality which has been discovered. We will understand that reality when we discover it ourselves.

FIFTH-ORDER CONSCIOUSNESS: ENLIGHTENMENT IN SECULAR TERMS

To God all things are jail' and good and right, but men hold some things wrong and some right. -Heraclitus

I doubt that Arjuna would have been immediately able to follow the arguments of constructive-developmental psychology, so we can excuse twentieth-century Western men and women if they do not follow the arguments of Hindu theology. But the point is that as a way of constructing reality, there is not much difference. Fifth-order consciousness *is* enlightenment in secular terms. I will argue later that there can still be enormous differences *in* integrity and sensitivity between fifth-order individuals, just as there can be differences between fourth-order individuals. But, in terms of their basic structures of consciousness, two fifth-order individuals are on the same plane, regardless of their religious or philosophical traditions.

How is this conclusion justified? Consider the subject-object balance of the fifth-order individual. Although he was previously embedded in principles and systems of knowledge, the fifth-order individual has stepped out of these principles and he has drawn a much larger circle encompassing all of them. This means that the pairs of opposites on which principles are based—wealth vs. poverty, freedom vs. bondage, life vs. death—are as one to him. Whereas fourth-order consciousness sees death from the perspective of life, fifth-order consciousness sees the *relationship* that creates life *and* death. "In other words," says the fifth-order individual, "it is not that

life is good for me and death is bad for me, and that I am either living or dead: I am both-s-end neither-s-at the same time. I am *the relationship that creates them*. Furthermore, there is no longer a distinction between *me* and *you*. My self is identified with neither-or both-simultaneously. "6

In fifth-order consciousness we have stepped right off the map! Words and dualistic distinctions no longer serve to convey reality. That is why Lao-Tzu begins the *Tao Te Ching* with the lines, "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao/The name that can be named is not the eternal name" (Mitchell, 1988, chap. I). If reality is neither light nor dark, but the relationship that creates them, how do you describe it? The words of the mystics now begin to make more sense. If we do not yet construct reality from fifth-order consciousness ourselves, then at least we can see how it is possible. And if mysticism is not quite reason, at least it begins to look more reasonable.

Fifth-order consciousness answers our original question about mysticism and reason. Reason demands that mysticism explain itself in terms that reason can understand. Constructive-developmentalism explains why it cannot.' Mysticism-now revealed as fifth-order consciousness-s-is not something you can *know*: it is an entirely different way of *knowing*. It is not a new idea; it is a new perspective; and, although an idea can be explained, a perspective cannot. It is a "you had to be there" kind of experience. A fourth-order thinker, who constructs a reality based on principles and pairs of opposites, is not able to conceive of a reality based on relationships which *create* opposites until he jumps out of his puddle. But then, when he suddenly sees reason as a limited system, reality changes forever.

The best confirmation that mysticism is a way of knowing and not something to be known comes from the mystical traditions themselves. Zen is particularly clear about this. In Zen the goal of the student's training is the experience of *satori*. *Satori* is not knowledge that can be transmitted by word or example: it is an understanding to be experienced. D.T. Suzuki (1934) defines *satori* this way:

The acquiring of a new viewpoint in Zen is called *satori* . . . Without it there is no Zen, for the life of Zen begins with the "opening of *satori*." *Satori* may be defined as intuitive looking-into, in contradistinction to intellectual and logical understanding. Whatever the definition, *satori* means the unfolding of a new world hitherto unperceived in the confusion of a dualistic mind (p, 88).

If *satori* is amenable to analysis in the sense that by doing so it becomes perfectly clear to another who has never had it, that *satori* will be no *satori*. For a *satori* turned into a concept ceases to be itself, and there will no more be a Zen experience. Therefore, all that we can do in Zen in the way of instruction is to indicate, or to suggest, or to show the way so that one's attention may be directed towards the goal. As to attaining the goal and taking hold of the thing itself, this must be done by one's own hands, for nobody else can do it for one (p, 92).

What Suzuki is saying is that it is impossible to grasp Zen with dualistic reason. Indeed, all of the paradoxical puzzles or *koans* that are given to students of Zen (e.g., "What is the sound of one hand clapping?") are intended to show the student the *limitations* of dualistic reason and to create a state of extreme inner conflict in which the student becomes *stuck*. The student is not expected to go to his laboratory and with sensitive equipment record the actual sound of a single hand clapping (indeed, such

an achievement, however worthy in the world of science, would be greeted with outright ridicule in the world of Zen), but rather to transcend the question, and his stuckness, by entering into a new way of knowing.

The Zen student's *stuckness*, which constructive-developmentalism would interpret as a moral conflict or challenge to ultimate reality, is regarded by Zen masters as an essential part of the training. Seen in this light, Zen is revealed to be a straightforward technique for advancing students to fifth-order consciousness. It will be important to verify, using Kegan's subject-object interview techniques (Lahey et al.), whether fifth-order consciousness does indeed correspond to *satori* and other forms of religious enlightenment. A positive result would open up new avenues for cross-fertilization between monastic disciplines, psychology, psychotherapy, and education. In psychotherapy, for example, Kegan (1982; 1994) provides ample evidence to suggest that a frequent reason for seeking therapy is the same kind of stuckness that the Zen monk is driven toward by his master. Such stuckness can (and must) occur not just between fourth-order and fifth-order consciousness, but between every order of consciousness. And, not only in therapy but also in education, helping students to transcend their current order of consciousness is simultaneously a cherished goal and an urgent, but poorly understood problem, especially in the area of adult learning. The limitations of a student's order of consciousness represent a genuine barrier to further learning and frequently create a mismatch between what is being learned and what is being taught (Kegan, 1994).

FIFTH-ORDER MORALITY

We said earlier that an individual's system of morality is determined by the subject-object balance of her order of consciousness. With the exception of a morality based on impulses, all of the other moralities—fairness, empathy, and principles—are good and defensible standards. What about a fifth-order morality? What would it be based on? Unfortunately, the English language does not have a word for it, but Eastern languages offer two: the Sanskrit word *dharma*, and the Chinese word *tao*. *Dharma* is roughly translated as "sacred duty" (Miller, 1986), but, like all fifth-order concepts, translations do not do it justice. *Tao* is often translated as "the Way." But what is "the Way," and what is one's "sacred duty"? This is the trick. Being fifth-order concepts themselves, *dharma* and *tao* defy definition: define them and you've lost them. But perhaps the least inadequate way of defining them is to say that, when all principles have been tried and exhausted and when the individual is possessed of a clear and open "beginner's mind," what *dharma* and *tao* come down to is *intuition*.⁸

One can immediately see why we do not have any Taoist judges. The Tao is not the kind of thing you can defend with words, and a real Taoist would not try. When you get right down to it, though, even fourth-order principles are fairly tricky to defend, and this might be why thoughtful judges try to stick to third-order laws, however badly they may be written.

Assuming she is not a sitting judge, however, what is there to keep a fifth-order individual—once she has discovered it—from calling the Tao anything she pleases? The key qualification is "once she has discovered it." An individual who has

constructed fifth-order consciousness is *already* a highly-principled individual. In the course of her life she has confronted four deep moral crises, and *she* has agonized over them long enough and hard enough to arrive at the inconceivable solution of a new order of consciousness. Most people never get this far (Kegan, 1994). But, in a sense, this is dodging the question. The real question is, is it not possible for a fifth-order individual to be mistaken about the Tao, or even to mislead herself? And is there not a range of integrity and sensitivity among fifth-order individuals?

The answer to both questions is a qualified yes. Just as fourth-order and third-order individuals can mislead themselves, so can fifth-order individuals. There is nothing inherent in an order of consciousness that prevents a person from acting foolishly or selfishly. What prevented Jesus from robbing grocery stores? Nothing—nothing, that is, except his own sensitivity and integrity. This is because morality is no easier at the fifth order than it was at the fourth. In fact, it is even harder. There is a progression of difficulty through all three of the adult balances. The third-order individual bases her morality on commitments, but her task is made easier by the fact that these are frequently codified as laws, contracts, and social obligations. The fourth order individual, in recognizing that laws are fallible, bases her morality on principles—but it then becomes *her* responsibility to reveal the principle. As if this wasn't hard enough, the fifth-order individual, in recognizing that even principles are not absolute, bases her morality on the Tao, and what is *that*? Fifth-order consciousness is not an escape from responsibility; it is a challenge to a *higher level* of responsibility.

PEARLS OF WISDOM

We fail to get our way with God because we lack two things: profound humility and an effective will. Upon my We I swear that God in his divinity is capable of all things, but this he cannot do—when the soul has these two things, he cannot leave her unsatisfied.

—Meister Eckhart

At this point, psychology should give religion its due.¹⁰ The orders of consciousness which psychologists have just begun to accept and explore were already familiar to religion thousands of years ago. However, to be fair, much of religion is a murky, muddy quagmire full of resplendent vanity and enshrined misconceptions, and scientists may be excused if they find empiricism, in spite of its acknowledged shortcomings, to be a more reliable road to the truth. In fact, as Fowler (1981; 1991) has pointed out, there may well be a point in an individual's spiritual development where empiricism is exactly what is required. But there are pearls buried in the mud, and if religious mystics *discovered* fifth-order consciousness, then they probably know something useful about it.

Two useful things that we might hope to learn from the religious mystics are a discipline for attaining fifth-order consciousness (or discovering the Tao) and hints for following the Tao once we have discovered it. If we comb the teachings of the world's major religions with this in mind, we find three ideas repeated over and over again. These are (1) moral integrity, (2) what I will call "transparency," and (3) love. Traditionally—especially in the West, but also in the East—these ideas are cast as *commandments*: "Thou shalt have integrity"; "Thou shalt not display thine ego"; and

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor." Following in the footsteps of tradition, the faithful take these commandments as their cue to go out and spy on each other to see who is disobeying the rules: "Did you hear about so-and-so? *Such* a display of ego! Why, I never display *my* ego ... ," and so on.

This, of course, is just the kind of ignorant hypocrisy that drives young people out of the church in droves. But if we can hold our noses long enough, we might be able to snatch some unseen pearls and run off to a quiet place where we can examine them. The first pearl is *moral integrity*, or what Eckhart calls "an effective will." Obviously, integrity is a good thing. But why? To keep other people from gossiping about us? *No, they'll do it anyway.* Because it makes us feel good? *Well, sort of.* Because it's good for our spiritual growth? *Yes.* Among the many things spiritual growth is associated with is the development of the next order of consciousness which, as we have already seen, is dependent on moral conflict. But one cannot experience moral conflict if one has no genuine loyalty to one's own morality to begin with. Integrity must come first. Directly stated: the absolute fastest way to come to a moral dilemma is to put your own morality into full and consistent practice. "Thou shalt not put thy God to the test," but "thou *shalt* put thy morality to the test."

The second pearl is *transparency*. This is an unusual name for a pearl, and its meaning might be clarified if I list some of the names other people have given it. For example, Eckhart's "profound humility" comes close to what I mean by transparency. An act done with profound humility is done with forgetfulness of ego. Thich Nhat Hahn (1976) uses the term "awareness" in a related sense. Nhat Hahn's awareness is a non-judgmental state in which an individual is fully engaged in her experience in the present moment. If one is eating an orange, one is fully engaged in the orange: its smell, taste, feel, moisture, etc. And if one is experiencing an unpleasant emotion, one experiences it like one experiences the orange—s-noticing its feeling, direction, intensity, and cause—this way one can master it. *Meditation* is another word that describes what I mean. In Buddhism, meditation is a state in which awareness is heightened, and the Buddhist monk is encouraged to meditate on every pleasant and unpleasant aspect of the human body and human life until she reaches a state of equanimity (Nhat Hahn, 1976; Walsh, 1993).¹ Finally, Jesus (Matthew 18:3-4) said that if one does not come to the kingdom of heaven as a little child, one will not enter. Jesus was also talking about transparency. A transparent person is without ego and self-consciousness, as children can be when they are at their best. What transparency is, then, is a state of unselfconscious equanimity, in which things are seen for what they are and not colored by fears or expectations. Only in transparency can an individual experience *stuckness*, and only in transparency will she accept the transcendent solution.

The third pearl is *love*. Scott Peck's (1978) definition in *The Road Less Traveled* comes close to the religious-mystical meaning of love. Peck defines love as a volitional act of self-extension: it is the will to extend oneself for the growth of another person.¹² But, while mystics would probably agree with the idea that love is an extension of self, they would probably *not* agree that love is volitional (something you can *will* or *not will*). Love, to the mystics, is more like *a force* that you can either block or allow to pass. A perfectly transparent person is perfectly transparent to love: it flows right through her. An "opaque" person, someone who is full of ego, is opaque to love. Try as she might, she cannot get it to flow because, to turn on love, she has to

tum off herself. One who sees this clearly will recognize that all she can really do is stand back and allow love to pass through her.¹³ The trick, of course, is in recognizing when one is truly standing back. More often than not, what one imagines to be love is really ego, and this is very likely the origin of Jesus' warning about false prophets: "By their fruits, you shall know them" - a very practical criterion equally applicable to self as it is to others." Love, then, is not something that can be cultivated like integrity or transparency: it is what integrity and transparency are cultivated/or. If moral conflict is the engine of transcendence, love is the fuel that makes it run.

The interesting thing about these three pearls is that they apply equally well in every order of consciousness. It is not that one needs integrity and transparency to go from fourth-order consciousness to fifth and not from third to fourth. It is not even that one can discard her pearls once she has reached a new order of consciousness although people do. But the people who discard their pearls are missing something, because integrity, transparency and love work their magic within each order of consciousness to produce an even bigger pearl, which I call Peace. Peace is the feeling that you get when you are doing with your hands, what you feel in your heart, and what you know in your mind is good. This pearl is a triple unity of body, mind, and spirit - and it is just this Pearl, I believe, that the man in the parable sold everything he owned to purchase it.

FAITH AND THE HERO'S JOURNEY

The happy ending of the fairy tale, the myth, and the divine comedy of the soul, is to be read, not as a contradiction, but as a transcendence of the universal tragedy of man. The objective world remains what it was, but, because of a shift of emphasis within the subject, [it] is beheld as though transformed. Where formerly life and death contended, now enduring being is made manifest - as indifferent to the accidents of time as water boiling in a pot is to the destiny of a bubble, or as the cosmos to the appearance and disappearance of a galaxy of stars. - Joseph Campbell"

Faith and myth are two more pearls which neither empiricism nor rationalism have, as yet, been able to invent or supply.¹⁴ This is not to say that there is always a felt need for them. In fact, in the transition from third- to fourth-order consciousness, conventional religious faith is a good candidate for rejection (Fowler, 1991). But in a broad sense, faith and myth are essential elements. It is no child's journey to leave one's morality behind and step out into the unknown, for the bridge (to the next order of consciousness) on which one must walk is perilous. He who would cross must be absolutely sure of his footing before he steps onto it. Behind lies his morality, which, with the first step, will be decisively rejected; below lies the threat of insanity - a lost grip on ultimate reality - and ahead lies *what?* It is really faith that keeps one moving - faith that there will indeed be a new rock on which to anchor one's morality. To the extent that an individual's personal religion is able to support that faith, it is a good and helpful thing.

Another good and helpful thing is a pattern to follow - a myth or a story - which doesn't necessarily tell one where to go or what to do, but which serves to assure that the journey is possible. Every major religion has one or more such stories. Hinduism has the stories of Arjuna and Rama; Buddhism has the story of the enlightenment of

Gautama Buddha; Islam has the story of Mohammed; the Old Testament has the story of Moses; and the New *Testament* has the story of Jesus. A common element in these stories is a period of uncertainty, emptiness, or searching that corresponds to the point where the old morality has been abandoned but the new morality has not yet been found.¹⁸ This is followed by a battle or divine revelation, and then return and renewal. Joseph Campbell (1968) shows how all of these stories are really one story—one myth—the myth of the hero, who first renews himself and then brings renewal to the world:

Whether the hero be ridiculous or sublime, Greek or barbarian, gentile or Jew, his journey varies little in essential plan. Popular tales represent the heroic action as physical; the higher religions show the deed to be moral; nevertheless, there will be found astonishingly little variation in the morphology of the adventure, the character roles involved, the victories gained (p. 38).

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellowman (p. 30).

The hero's tale—to stretch a metaphor—is the tale of the frog who becomes a prince. Leaving the known world behind, he seeks out and confronts unimaginable powers and—with the aid, perhaps, of a beautiful woman—he somehow exceeds himself. Of course! He was a prince all along! It is the archetypal transcendent experience, an experience which takes us not farther from ourselves, but closer:

Furthermore, we have not even to risk the adventure alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god. And where we had thought to slay another, we shall *slay* ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with the whole world (p. 25),

In the transition to a new order of consciousness, we have located the very *source* of the hero myth. The hero myth is the same myth that we live out over and over again as we struggle from one order of consciousness to the next: quest, emptiness, miraculous revelation, and return. Each of us is the hero three, four, perhaps five times over. Would that we only knew it and that our culture only recognized it. "Where are the heroes?" we cry, when they are all over the place! But our culture does not recognize this kind of heroism, and it becomes the role of myth, preserved in stories such as the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and reborn in popular films such as *Star Wars* and *The Lion King*, to remind us that the hero is our own self.

THE

IDEAL

*Not "Revelation't-« 'tis, that waits,
But our unfurnished eyes—
—Emily Dickinson?*

In the world of spiritual seeking, it is easy to jump to the conclusion that, once one is enlightened, she is instantly a perfect being—radiating vibrations of pure love for all

of humanity and bestowing her blessings on all of nature. I have taken great pains here, after once having fallen for a similar fantasy myself, to point out that an order of consciousness tells us nothing about an individual's integrity or her transparency, aside from the fact that she had enough to get there. We still attain our sainthood the old-fashioned way, and there is nothing inherent in fifth-order consciousness that entitles the possessor to sainthood over, for example, a third- or fourth-order missionary who goes to help lepers in a slum in Calcutta."

Still, many of us maintain the vision of the fully enlightened man or woman who possesses an otherworldly presence and an unlimited capacity for love as an ideal that we might one day attain. This is a good thing because it gives us a goal to aim for, and there is, in fact, something about each successive order of consciousness that brings us a step closer to that ideal. In third-order consciousness the individual is for the first time able to experience empathy in a relationship. In fourth-order consciousness, she is able to sufficiently distance herself from the relationship so as to serve the interest of the other person without being blinded by her own interest in the relationship. And in fifth-order consciousness there is another step, which is made clear by the following Zen parable:

After Bankei had passed away, a blind man who lived near the master's temple told a friend: 'Since I am blind, I cannot watch a person's face, so I must judge his character by the sound of his voice. Ordinarily, when I hear someone congratulate another upon his happiness or success, I also hear a secret tone of envy. When condolence is expressed for the misfortune of another, I hear pleasure and satisfaction, as if the one condoling was really glad there was something left to gain in his own world. In all my experience, however, Bankei's voice was always sincere. Whenever he expressed happiness, I heard nothing but happiness, and whenever he expressed sorrow, sorrow was all I heard' (Reps, p. 30).

No one can fail to identify with this story. How distasteful it is to inwardly wish harm on a person we are outwardly congratulating or consoling. Until we reach fifth-order consciousness, there isn't much we can do about it, aside from swallowing our jealousy and remaining true to our principles. "I am I and you are you, and what you get I may never get, but at least I can be nice to you." Having lived so long, however, the fifth-order individual has just about had it with such recalcitrant jealousy. "She may feel that she would sooner die than ever experience it again. And this is the turning point, because fifth-order consciousness invites her to die in just this sense. There is no other; therefore there is no self. No self means no selfishness; no fear (even of death); no desire for self-aggrandizement, wealth, power, or anything that would bring harm to another person." This death is the birth of the mystic's life, and it is the source of her potential for love without fear, jealousy, or desire.

SUMMARY

A human being is part of the whole that we call the universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical illusion of his consciousness. This illusion is a prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for only the few people nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living beings and all of nature. —Albert Einstein

It is not usual to think of Einstein as a mystic, but these words reveal him to have been one. His example, if anyone's, demonstrates that reason and mysticism are not incompatible modes of thought, and his contributions, both as a physicist and as a peace activist, are sterling examples of the fruits of both ways of knowing.

What I have attempted to do is to build a bridge between mysticism and reason using the constructive-developmental psychology of Robert Kegan. In Kegan's scheme, an individual's consciousness may evolve through five increasingly complex orders, each of which represents a qualitatively distinct subject-object balance. The individual constructs his own system of morality according to the "ultimate reality" of his current subject-object balance. I have suggested that Kegan's fifth-order of consciousness represents the structural foundation of mysticism and that the engine that drives the evolution of consciousness is moral conflict or, more generally, an irresolvable challenge to the current order's ultimate reality. I have also argued that *transcendence*, a term frequently applied to the transition to mysticism, applies equally well to the transition between any two orders of consciousness because the moral conflict that leads to the construction of a new order of consciousness is not resolved—it is transcended. In order to experience moral conflict, and thereby advance, an individual requires moral integrity and transparency, two universally nonnative principles which may be found in the major religions. Two other elements of religion, faith and myth, are also essential, although the individual may not be consciously aware of them, and constructive-developmentalism reveals the root of the hero myth to be the repeated pattern of evolution of new orders of consciousness.

What I have *not* attempted to do is propose a comprehensive psychology of religion. Mystical knowing is only one aspect of religion. For some religions, such as Zen, it is the central aspect. But for others, such as Christianity, the popular emphasis seems to be on the relationship between human beings and God. Constructive-developmental psychology has nothing to say about God in this sense and, therefore, nothing to say about that relationship. Nor have I attempted to diminish the value of religion to individuals at all orders of consciousness, nor the ultimate value of any order of consciousness. Quite the contrary. The transition to fifth-order consciousness is no more courageous than the transition to second or third order. Thus, we may now appreciate the child, who struggles to master his impulses, in the same sense that we appreciate the adult devotee as he struggles with his relationship to God. Each transition involves an expansion of self and is, therefore, equally *holy*,

Another potential misunderstanding that I want to avoid is the idea that mysticism represents a "New Morality" for mankind, which we are now all supposed to embrace and live up to. To suggest this is to misunderstand constructive-developmentalism. Constructive-developmentalism says that morality is *constructed by the individual* according to his subject-object balance. This means that a system of morality based on a single order of consciousness cannot be socially imposed, because, to any individual not at that order, the system will be meaningless: either over his head or beneath him. Furthermore, the fact that a higher-order morality exists as a potential does not invalidate a lower-order morality. Thus, the potential for a morality based on the Tao does not invalidate a morality based on principles. The only person for whom

a principled morality is no longer valid is the person for whom a morality based on the Tao exists as a *reality--and* that is *his* problem; not ours.

As an interpretation of mystical knowing, a constructive-developmental model succeeds where an altered-state-of-consciousness model fails. An interpretation of mysticism based on meditative states and peak experiences fails to account for sacrifice and suffering in the transition to mysticism. It also has difficulty accounting for the "high plateau" of mystical knowing. Constructive-developmentalism interprets transitional suffering as the unavoidable outcome of a severe emotional challenge: that of leaving an old morality behind for a new one yet unknown and of surrendering one's old self for a larger and more incorporative one. The "high plateau" in constructive-developmentalism is fifth-order consciousness: a permanent and qualitatively distinct way of knowing based on non-duality. Although it does not deny the utility of meditative states in the transition between orders of consciousness, constructive-developmentalism insists-s-in agreement with Zen-that the "proof of the pudding" is a change in the individual's ordinary waking state, not just an insight gained from a transitory meditative state. As a bonus, constructive-developmentalism reveals how spiritual progress is tied to the perennial religious values of transparency and moral integrity. More than just "good-ideas," these qualities are shown to be *absolute prerequisites* for the evolution of consciousness-an encouraging message our world could stand to hear.

As a developmental model of basic structures of consciousness, constructive-developmentalism represents a departure from models based on metaphors of "activation" or "unfolding." The perennial philosophy-s-expressed as yoga *chakras*, for example-has been interpreted to mean that *pre-existing* or *latent* orders of consciousness are sequentially "awakened" by spiritual practice. Constructive-developmentalism, however, says that such consciousness structures *do not exist* until they are constructed by the individual. The appropriate metaphor for the development of consciousness, then, is not *awakening*, but *evolution*. Just as Darwin would say that there is no "latent zebra" hidden in the deep structures of the Earth, constructive-developmentalism says that there is no "latent fifth-order of consciousness" hidden in the deep structures of the individual. Zebras evolved in a specific ecosystem as a response to a specific set of environmental challenges. Likewise, an order of consciousness evolves in a specific individual as a response to a specific set of ontological challenges. Although a theory of the evolution of consciousness could prove as hard for theology to swallow as a theory of the evolution of life, I think there is much more agreement than disagreement between constructive-developmentalism and religion, and I believe that a theory of the evolution of consciousness can be viewed as a vindication of the perennial philosophy rather than as a challenge.

Speaking of the problems of faith and reason in a modern age, Kegan (1976, p. 25) observed, "A modern dilemma seems to be that we desperately need, on the one hand, to be reunited with the sacred (to have faith in faith), while on the other hand, we need to have our faith in reason go unmolested." I cannot think of a better way to sum up the value of the ideas I have presented in this essay. Mysticism, interpreted as fifth-order consciousness, is substantially "demystified." It is not *anti-reason*; it is a perspective *on* reason. And even if one does not immediately see the world from a

mystical perspective, one sees how it can be achieved. Moreover, the experience of mystical knowing is left open to anyone--not just "great souls" who are somehow born that way. Fifth-order consciousness does not, however, hold out the promise of an irreversible promotion to sainthood. There is nothing inherent in an order of consciousness that guarantees integrity or transparency. However, each successive order of consciousness is a step closer to the ideal of true selflessness, and in fifth-order consciousness it becomes available. Its realization depends on the individual.

NOTES

¹Quoted in Mitchell (1989), p. 4.

²Eckhart (1993), p. 131.

³Quoted in Mitchell (1991), p. 76.

⁴Mitchell (1988), chapter 67.

⁵Arjuna's dialogue with Krishna is the text of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Bhagavad Gita* itself is a chapter in the great Indian epic, *The Mahabharata* (see Krishnamacharya, 1983).

⁶It is amusing to consider that subject-object psychology meets its Waterloo in the fifth order of consciousness--the fifth order recognizes no distinction between subject and object.

⁷Some may object to my use of the term *constructive-developmentalism* in place of *constructive-developmental psychology* because it raises the question of making psychology, which is (more or less) a science, sound like philosophy, which is not a science (others may simply lament its passing into the realm of "isms"). When I first caught myself doing this, I thought it was simply because "constructive-developmentalism" is stylistically more compact, like "Freudianism," "behaviorism," and "humanism." But now I realize that there is a deeper reason. The conclusions of constructive-developmental psychology are so far reaching--encompassing development, morality, and even parts of a religion--that it hits me more like a philosophy than a psychology.

⁸I use the word *tao* in the rest of this essay, although I might as easily have used *dharma*. Another word that fits is Robert Pirsig's *Quality*, from *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. Pirsig shows how *Quality* is impossible to define, and he equates it with the *tao*, *dharma*, and the Greek concept *arete*.

⁹Eckhart (1993), p. 134.

And to its enduring credit, transpersonal psychology has already done this,

¹⁰Patanjali's yoga meditation is different: awareness is decreased rather than heightened. See Walsh (1993) for a discussion.

¹¹Love has also been popularly defined as the set of physical symptoms one experiences in the presence of an object of affection, thus creating a lot of confusion about love. Sanskrit and Hindi solve this problem by having two words for love: *pyara* and *prema*. *Pyara* is romantic love: the Hindu love you, you love me, let's go under the coconut tree" kind of love. *Prema* is selfless, divine love: more along the lines of Peck's definition. The fact that popular English has only one word for love is not just an indication of a weakness in our language; it is an indication of a weakness in our culture. We might infer that Indians--like the Eskimos, who have more than a dozen words for snow--have more than one word for love because they have looked into it more deeply.

¹²Although it is not what he was referring to, this is one sense in which Freud was *right* when he said, "The ego is like a clown in a circus, always trying to stick in its oar to make it look like it has something to do with what is going on" (Freud & Jung, 1974, p. 404).

¹³I cannot resist, *here*, inserting a bit of metaphysics. Many spiritual thinkers have come to the conclusion that life is a learning experience that is part of a larger game. One is led to (or tricked into) this conclusion by the very observation that Jesus made about the false prophet--the only way we can tell how we are doing

is by observing the physical consequences of our actions (or "non-actions" as the Buddhists would put it). This is perhaps the only justification for having a physical world in which people suffer. From this perspective, then, the "meaning of life" is revealed as akin to the meaning of a school in which individuals learn to be transparent to love. Although this is an attractive answer, it doesn't really solve the problem - it just puts us up to a higher level - and one is still forced to conclude that the meaning of life cannot be found *this way*. This is just the sort of metaphysical problem that can drive one to non-dualistic thinking - or drive one to drink.

15 Matthew, 13:45-46.

16 Campbell (1968), p. 28.

17 And if we are expecting such pearls from empiricism or rationalism, we probably do not understand them very well. See Wilber (1990) for a discussion of the limitations of empiricism, rationalism, and mysticism.

18 Culture can help the individual through his uncertainty by formally recognizing it as a stage of development. Robert Bly (1990, pp. 79-80) cites a fascinating example of an ancient Norwegian culture that recognized an "ashes" period in adolescence. In those days, people lived in long communal houses, similar to North American longhouses, with beds on either side and a fire in the middle. Youths (who were almost certainly experiencing the uncertainty of the transition from second-order consciousness to third-order consciousness) were permitted to spend two to three years in relative inactivity, lying in the ashes near the fire, after which they took up their adult responsibilities (Bly doesn't tell us if young women were allowed similar consideration. Presumably not.)

19 Quoted in Mitchell (1989).

20 see *The City of Joy*, by Dominique Lapierre (1985) for an example of what a saint is.

21 The developing fifth-order morality, what the rest of the world sees as "normal jealousy" is shockingly revealed as *self-hatred*. The emotion of this realization drives the individual on to the next step.

22 Word trap me here. Of course there is a *self*, but not the individual self of the fourth-order - it is a universal self (which does not experience unity as a "rush," but knows it in its bones).

23 Quoted in Mitchell (1991), p. 191.

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