

ON THE MEANING OF TRANSPERSONAL: SOME METAPHYSICAL PERSPECTIVES¹

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One of the major difficulties in "states-of-consciousness" research, in working toward the development of a "science of consciousness," is that a satisfactory vocabulary does not exist and it is necessary either to create some totally new words, use Sanskrit words, or use general words with which we are already familiar, and define them by our usage so they are no longer general when applied to our universe of discourse. "Transpersonal" is one of these words.

Some remarks concerning the transpersonal were received recently in a letter from Susan and Jim Vargiu of the Psychosynthesis Institute of Palo Alto, California. In discussing dimensions of consciousness, the Vargius mentioned that Roberto Assagioli, the author of *Psychosynthesis* (1965), has been working on what he calls "Height Psychology" for about 40 years. They also mentioned Maslow's recent paper "Theory Z" (1969) and pointed out that his *non-transcending* self-actualization and *transcending* self-actualization are described in a way that is almost identical to Assagioli's *personal* psychosynthesis and *spiritual* psychosynthesis, the latter being "at the core of Height Psychology." In essence these various references are concerned with the definitions of, and experiential differences between, what we are calling personal and transpersonal being.

These two kinds of qualities of being, with differing characteristics, are said to be perfectly integrated in a "realized" person, such a one as the guru of Baba Ram Dass may be (Ram Dass, 1969). Whatever uncertainty or inner conflict we feel about the nature and relationships of personal and transpersonal roles usually revolves around the problem of being or

*personal and
transpersonal
being*

¹This paper is based on the authors' preview of transpersonal presentations at the annual meeting of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, Miami Beach, Sept., 1970.

not being in the world, but it is said by some investigators that the achievement of an *integrated* personal-and-transpersonal condition is the sine qua non of service to humanity and is a state of "being in the world, but not of it" (Aurobindo, 1955; Bailey, 1934; Ramakrishna, 1952).

The cognitive framework that encompasses most of these ideas can be symbolized as in the accompanying diagram (Figure 1), which was first outlined a number of years ago for a psychology class to conceptualize the major similarities and differences in Freudian and Jungian psychological systems. Since then the diagram has been expanded in stages until now it relates to various Eastern and Western metaphysical systems and also is useful for the discussion of psychological and parapsychological ideas. Many names, titles, descriptions, and additional lines could be included in the diagram to indicate perceptual subtleties, but it seems of more value to keep it a simple conceptual framework in our attempt to relate these metaphysical ideas to each other and to present-day investigations in this area.

*basic feature
of diagram*

The basic feature of the diagram, as a representation of many, if not most, of the world's systems of occult physics, is a concept of energy (and a related field theory) remarkably similar to that of modern physics. Namely, there is one primary form of energy from which everything else is constructed. In occult physics, however, it is postulated that the elaborated structure of the one basic energy includes not just physical substance but also emotional substance, mental substance, and other more rarefied materials, and that in the human being (and only in the human being as far as our planetary life is concerned) all these materials are brought together. The early Greeks explained that this union of the substances (symbolized by earth, water, fire, air, and ether) was what made man the microcosm. In him, they said, were found all the materials of the macrocosm, the universe (Hall, 1947). These ideas do not seem essentially different from the Judeo-Christian concept of man made in the image of God.

*idea of
transiormablility*

In some metaphysical systems the basic material is called "mind," not in the Berkeleian sense that it is "all in your head" but in the sense that mind and matter are inter-transformable, an analog of the familiar $E = mc^2$ of physical science. Aurobindo, in considering this idea of transformability, says that one can think of the universe as all spirit, with "matter" being its densest form, or one can think of the universe as all substance, with "spirit" being its most rarefied form,

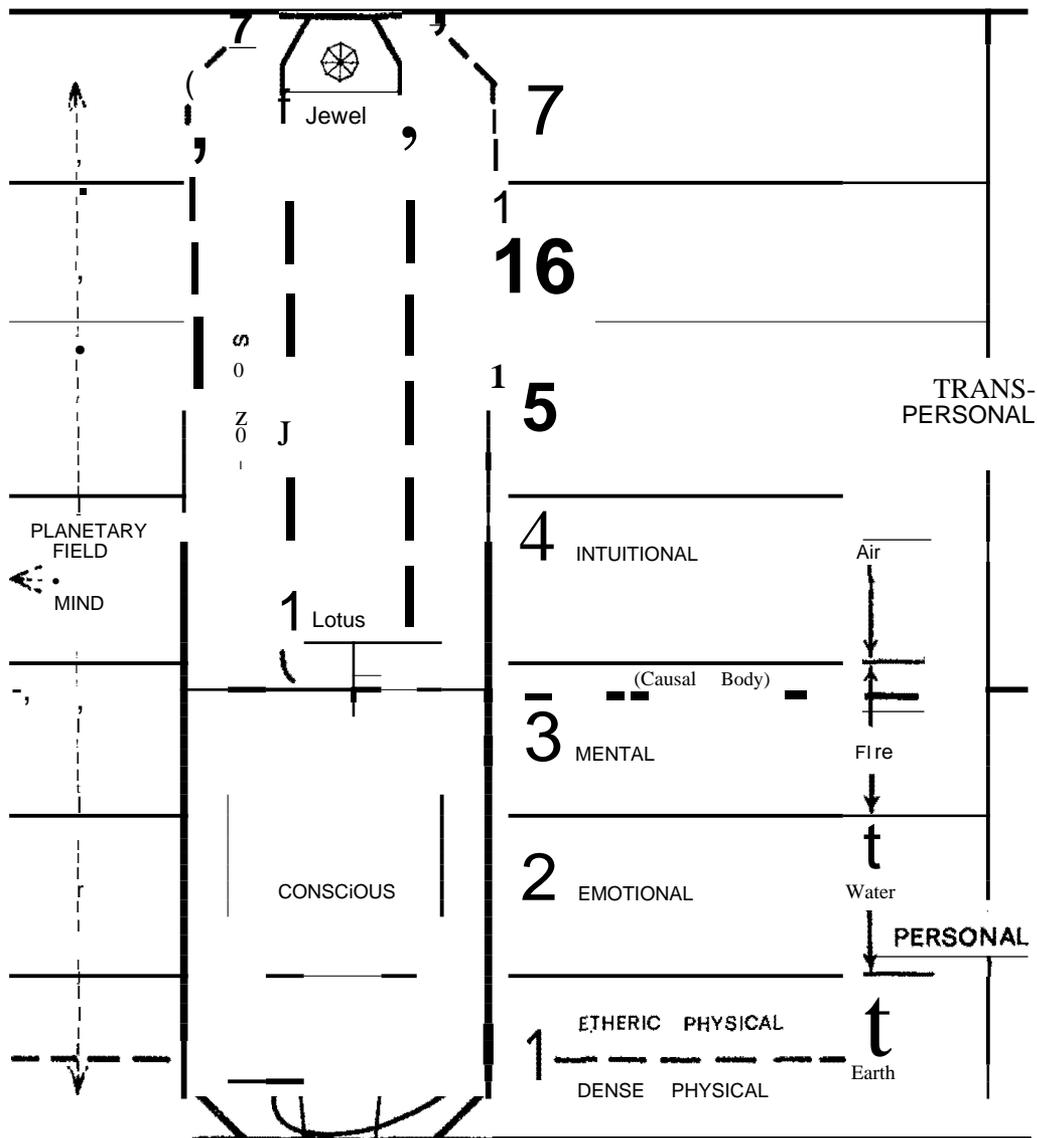


FIGURE 1. Symbolic Interpretation of Man's Substance and Perceptual Structure

In using a diagram it is worth remembering, along with Korzybski (1948) and the Institute of General Semantics, that the map is not the terrain, the name is not the thing. With that caution in mind, one can view the accompanying drawing as an hypothesized structure of substance and of perception. Each structural line represents two things: first, a conceptual boundary between *substances* organized in different ways or of different kinds, and second, a boundary between *perceptions* of different kinds. Although the drawing is separated vertically into levels for easy visualization, the substances of these levels, are properly visualized as totally

*substances,
perceptions
and inter-
penetrating
levels*

interpenetrating. This basic idea was made explicit in C. S. Lewis' science fiction trilogy of the planets (1965) and was partially developed in Tolkien's trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* (1965).

*delineation of
personal and
transpersonal*

The most obvious feature of *this* diagram is the delineation of transpersonal and personal substances and perceptions. The personal self (personality) is constructed of physical, emotional, and mental substances, and the transpersonal self is constructed of mental, intuitional, and other more rarefied substances to which names have not been attached though named and discussed in various phenomenological ways by some authors (Aurobindo, 1955; Bailey, 1930; Evans-Wentz, 1957,1958; Govinda, 1960). In their horizontal extensions, the entire set of substances that comprise the transpersonal and personal domains make up the planetary "field of mind" (Alexander, 1954). The noosphere of Teilhard de Chardin (1959) is a related concept of a field of mind that surrounds the planet. In the Jungian system of psychology the planetary field might be referred to as the racial unconscious.

Man in this scheme is an open-closed entity in whom are found substances of every kind, some of which we can call conscious (in the sense that we are conscious of some parts of our nature), some subconscious, and some superconscious. Freudian psychology in this framework is especially concerned with the conscious and subconscious areas of the diagram. Jungian psychology, being open-ended and not exclusive of so-called occult knowledge (especially through the perception and interpretation of race-mind archetypes), includes all three differentiations of mind-conscious, subconscious, and superconscious.

*open-closed
nature of man*

The open-closed nature of man is indicated by solid (closed) lines in the personal domain and by open (dashed) lines in the transpersonal domain. The meaning is that we are uniquely separate and closed to one another as personalities, but as transpersonal beings we possess, in spite of being "ourselves," a sense of being all other persons and all nature. Bucke (1961) refers to this awareness as cosmic consciousness, but much more fully articulated are the divisions of consciousness by Aurobindo into self, cosmic, intuitive, overmind, and supermind. His self consciousness corresponds to that which is labeled conscious in the personal domain of the diagram. Intuitive mind, overmind, and supermind together correspond to the transpersonal (Aurobindo, 1952).

Cosmic consciousness is seen by Aurobindo as a *horizontal* extensl.« of awareness beyond the normal boundaries of self consciousness in mental, emotional, and etheric physical substances. His intuitive mind, overmind, and supermind are described in terms reminiscent of the Lotus and the Jewel of Tibetan Buddhism. The horizontal expansion of awareness in levels 1, 2, and 3 of the diagram (the "three worlds" of mystic literature) through personality-oriented meditation, or through drugs, or naturally as in mediums and psychics, seems to be responsible for a large number of the reports of cosmic consciousness these days, and the resultant experience of "union" seems to be more mental and emotional (astral) than intuitional.

Turning to the physiological part of man in the diagram, it is seen that the brain and spinal cord (drawn simply as a brain) contain both conscious and subconscious parts. In addition, the brain and spinal cord are constructed of both "dense-physical" and "etheric-physical" parts. The existence of etheric organs (for handling energy) is a basic hypothesis in all the major systems of occult metaphysics and is posited as an experiential "fact" by those who are practitioners of "psychic" healing, which may be thought of in this context as a form of etheric telekinesis. This form of energy is said to underlie the multitudinous phenomena of psychokinetics, poltergeists, etc. The etheric organs of perception and action are referred to in the East as chakras, and when perceived by mystics in the West, as auras. They were drawn in most medieval Christian texts as halos or other kinds of radiation, as from the heart of Jesus.

*etheric organs
as a basic
hypothesis*

The dense physical organs of perception and action associated with the brain and spinal cord include the special and general sensory modalities and the various effector mechanisms studied in medical school. In addition to this, however, in the present theory the brain is the interface mechanism that mediates between the physiological apparatus and the etheric organs. The etheric organs, or chakras, in turn are conceived as the direct sensors and effectors for all "higher" levels of mind, personal and transpersonal, when acting through the brain. Eccles' concept (1953) of the brain as the transducer of mind is essentially the same idea. Little evidence is available on this subject, however, except for a few investigations by parapsychological groups, journalistic reports such as *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain* (Ostrander and Schroeder, 1970), and reports of unusually gifted "sensitives" as in *Breakthrough to Creativity* (Karagulla, 1970).

*etheric
energies-
pranas*

The etheric energies are said to fall into four major categories, which are progressively more rarefied than the solid, liquid, and gas of the dense physical. They are most easily visualized as forms of electricity, or rarefied gaseous substances, and are referred to in the classical oriental literature as *pranas*. Specific *pranas* are said to be the agencies through which one establishes direct conscious control of the heart, lungs, gastrointestinal tract, and other sections of the physiological machinery (Rama, 1970).

The balloon-shaped "conscious" envelope has been drawn with its greatest expansion in the emotional realm and a lesser expansion in the mental realm in keeping with the generally accepted development of average man. The narrowing of consciousness in the physical level is consistent with the idea, or possibly fact, that this level is primarily filled with unconscious homeostasis-maintaining machinery for control of physiological processes.

The Path

Connected to the top of the conscious envelope is a tunnel or tube, made of the most refined mental substance, which opens into an intuitional structure. In Zen this structure is the True Self; in Tibetan Buddhism it is the Lotus self or the Rainbow Body. Aurobindo calls it the "true psychic being within the heart." Ira Progoff (1970) refers to this as the deep level of Self which can be reached by going "down the inner well." If it is remembered that the levels of the drawing are arranged only for convenience in visualization and that the various domains are hypothesized to be totally interpenetrating, such as different dimensions of one space (Muses, 1970), then Progoff's Jungian-type symbol is peculiarly appropriate. In many mythologies the Lotus is symbolized as a lion or as a swan. The Lotus nature, according to the Tibetan concept (Evans-Wentz, 1958), rises from the earth (physical realm) through the water (emotional and mental levels combined, as *kama-manas* in Sanskrit) and blossoms in the air, revealing the Jewel in its center. *Om mani padme hum*, the foremost Tibetan mantra, can be translated as "Hail, Oh Thou Jewel in the Lotus." The tunnel, or well, may symbolize what is called the *antakarana*, or Path, in India and Tibet, and is known in Christian mysticism as Jacob's Ladder. In China this Path was called Tao, the way.

*laws of sub-
stance in
transpersonal
levels*

To some writers, The Path was thought to mean only the path to follow through life, how to behave when confronted by various life situations. In the Tibetan psychophysiological system, this is what it means *psychologically*, but each man

as he treads the path, literally, not figuratively, constructs a Path of *substance* at the level of abstract mind (the causal body of the diagram), which connects him consciously with his own superconscious self. This connecting structure is visible to the highly clairvoyant eye, it is said, and gives the developed guru a way of evaluating the level of consciousness and the progress of his students. The rules for the construction of this bridge are the laws of substance in transpersonal levels. These laws have in the past given rise to systems of morals, however distorted they may have been in the various religions and cultures. In the Tibetan system, the way in which one is supposed to behave is dependent on the laws of substance. The general law that governs the substances in levels 1, 2, and 3 of the diagram is called the law of Karma in the East and is probably what was referred to in the Biblical phrase "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." It also corresponds with Newton's third law of motion for dense physical substance, "Every action has an equal and opposite reaction."

Above the highest and most abstract mental level are four major levels, or grades, of substance, starting with the intuitional. Each of these grades is divided into seven subgrades, making 28 subdivisions of matter. The region that includes the upper part of the Lotus up to the top of the diagram is called the Void, which is not describable in words, it is said, but must be experienced to be understood. It is interesting that Evans-Wentz was told by his Tibetan teacher that there were 28 *different kinds of experience* of the Void. Although attempts have been made to reach the transpersonal Void through hypnosis (Aaronson, 1969) it is doubtful if it can be reached in this way. Eastern teachers (Rama, 1970) believe that if the perceptual bridge to the Lotus (the door to the Void) does not already exist, it cannot be constructed by hypnosis, and if it does exist, then the person is too "positive" to be hypnotized.

According to Bailey (1930, 1922) the antakarana can be most easily constructed in Western man by two conscious efforts: (1) personality control through the establishment of right human relations in groups (one of the goals of humanistic psychology), and (2) direction of personality energies toward transpersonal unfoldment through meditation. The power of meditation to bring transpersonal awareness is beautifully illustrated by the case of a thirty-year-old physicist with whom we discussed occult metaphysics. During meditation he became aware of being in a long gray tunnel at the end of which was a bright light. With great joy he realized

*transpersonal
unfoldment*

that this light was his life's goal and began running toward it. As he neared the light, however, its brilliance began to hurt him and he saw that the light came from an intensely illuminated figure of himself which was upside down, balanced head-to-head on top of another figure of himself. The lower figure was nonilluminated and was his normal self and he wanted to run up and merge with the illuminated man. The pain of the brilliance became so terrifying, however, that he was forced to flee back down the tunnel. At this point the experience ended and he began an examination of his inner nature. The symbol of the illuminated man balanced upside down on the head of his normal self is particularly meaningful because it is generally maintained by teachers that the upper levels of man's nature have a correspondence in lower levels, highest to lowest, etc., and that man's personal and transpersonal natures meet at the fourth level, the place of balance. Merging with the illumined being consists of folding him down so that his feet come to the ground and the resultant figure is a completely integrated man. This is, in essence, Aurobindo's idea of the necessity in modern times of bringing *down* the transforming power of the overmind and supermind so that the man and his environment both benefit. This is considerably different from the old yogic idea of escape into Nirvana (the Void) by lack of involvement in the world, without personal-transpersonal transformation.

Returning to the diagram, we see that the transpersonal region of man *is* shown without a solid barrier to separate it from the transpersonal levels of the planetary mind, because it is said that awareness at these levels includes all other beings and humans of the planet. According to Eastern teachers of yoga, the Lotus is an immortal (though originally unconscious) entity who works through a sequence of personalities (reincarnations) for obtaining experience and developing consciousness. To complete the Tibetan conceptualization, eventually the Jewel, the Lotus, and the personality become unified and the fully integrated man exists consciously on all levels at the same time. If a physical body is retained, then the perfected human (the Bodhisattva) works in the world to hasten the evolution of consciousness in the race. If the physical body is not retained, say various texts and teachers, the perfected "individual" generally moves on to a series of developmental levels which lie beyond the Jewel. Regardless of the "individual" direction of future development, the completely integrated Being is developed through the voluntary control of subjective energies. The Lotus and the Jewel "bodies" are present in partially inte-

*development
through volun-
tary control
of subjective
energies*

grated humans all the time, according to oriental tradition, but we are usually not aware of this until we voluntarily direct our personal energies "inward," that is, upward in the diagram. According to Tibetan and Indian yoga, the basic manifestation of physical energy in man is through a power center in the "subtle" body, the etheric template of the physical body. The energy itself is called the *kundalini*. Many people have equated kundalini with sex energy, but yogic texts and teachers generally maintain that sex is merely the usual way in which this energy is perceived and expressed. In both Integral Yoga (Aurobindo, 1955) and Tibetan Buddhism, all physiological energy in every organ is an expression of kundalini. If the energy is not used in personal levels, but is focused toward awareness at the Lotus level through meditation and various breathing exercises, there will ensue an activation of specific chakras (etheric organs) which are especially sensitive to superconscious grades of matter (Ram Dass, 1970). According to the Tibetan idea, the world's religions have been much concerned with sex because of these facts, even though they are not generally understood by religious leaders. The modern tendency to discard all ideas of self-regulation, especially ideas relating to sex, may be premature. For experimental purposes, a two- or three-month effort to direct the kundalini to the Lotus level and away from sex might be educational to most people. Awareness, it is said, goes where this energy is *directed*.

Having provided a general theoretical structure that is consistent in its major parts with Buddhism, Integral Yoga, Esoteric Christianity (Besant, 1906), Sufism (Shah, 1968; Vilayat, 1970), Zoroastrianism (Bode, 1952), Esoteric Judaism (Levi, 1968), Egyptian and Greek Mystery Schools (Hall, 1952), Theosophy (Blavatsky, 1917), Anthroposophy (Steiner, 1950), Polynesian metaphysics (Long, 1948), and various Central and South American pre-Columbian religions; and having hypothesized this theoretical structure, what is its general relation to psychism, parapsychology, hypnosis, brain-wave feedback, yoga, drugs, meditation, symbols, siddhis, chakras, and psychology-behavioristic, psychoanalytic, and humanistic?

*outline of
general
relational task*

To do justice to the subject, each of these relationships could be expanded to many pages, so in considering the thumbnail discussions below it is hoped that the reader will make allowances for various aspects of experiential knowledge not discussed.

1. *Psychism and parapsychology* are generally concerned

*psychism and
parapsychology*

*para-
psychological
events not
necessarily
transpersonal*

with the same subject matter. Parapsychology can perhaps be defined as the scientific study of psychic phenomena and faculties (Le Shan, 1969; Murphy, 1961; Meyer, 1954), but despite their sometimes unwordly quality it is notable that these subjects cover almost exclusively the personal levels of the diagram. There are literally hundreds of books and articles in which psychic phenomena are discussed, but most of them are concerned with mental, emotional, or etheric perception or projection and are clearly personal rather than transpersonal. In short, parapsychological events are not necessarily transpersonal. Psychic phenomena generally relate to events in Aurobindo's "cosmic" levels, the horizontal expansions of mental, emotional, and etheric physical awareness into the planetary field of mind. If the *thinness* of the line between conscious and subconscious areas is taken to indicate that the conscious-subconscious barrier is relatively easy to penetrate, then the *thickness* of the line between the subconscious and the adjacent planetary field of mind indicates that that barrier is relatively difficult for consciousness to penetrate. In mediums and natural psychics, however, this normally tight barrier is often penetrated at will. It is interesting that the etheric physical organs of perception and action (the etheric chakras) are said by some clairvoyants to correspond with similar organs constructed in substances of emotional, mental, intuitional, and higher levels. The interpretation of this is that every perception or action, at whatever level, is mediated by a substantial organ and it follows that good psychic receivers may be those who are perceptually sensitive because of their unusual development of a special sensory system. Good telepathic senders presumably have well developed mental and/or emotional effectors with which ideas and/or emotions can be shaped and projected through the planetary field of mind.

hypnosis

2. In yogic theory, *hypnosis* for the relief of pain or control of bleeding seems to depend on mental and emotional acquiescence on the part of the patient so that manipulation of his etheric physical machinery can be effected, and eventually reflected in neural circuits. The mechanism of this is not difficult to imagine if in fact the various substances (bodies, or levels of the human) of the present diagram actually exist and interpenetrate. Each of the seven etheric chakras associated with the brain and spinal cord might be visualized as a transmitter and receiver of energies from higher levels in the diagram. This concept is, in fact, the basic structural idea of man's nature in most of the ancient metaphysical systems, and it may be hypothesized that the way in which

any thought or emotion is expressed in action, conscious or unconscious, is through this "exquisitely articulated" structure (Ram Dass, 1969).

3. *Brain-wave feedback and bio-iefedback in general* are receiving a good deal of attention at this time because it seems that through the use of newly developed electronic instrumentation one can enhance voluntary control of physiological and psychological processes (Brown, 1970; Budzynski, Stoyva, and Adler, 1969; Green, Green, and Walters, 1970; Kamiya, 1969; Mulholland, 1963; Nowlis and Kamiya, 1970, to cite a few recent reports). The psychological correlates of voluntary control of physiological variables are of particular interest to students of consciousness, but it is worth noting that even though physiological and psychological processes may be as intimately related as the halves of a zipper, they are not necessarily identical. The diagram implies that from a metaphysical point of view all of the body is in the mind, but not all of the mind is in the body. Tart's research (1969) *with* out-of-body experiences may have a bearing on this mind-body problem, but the experiences of his subjects and those reported by others (Muldoon and Carrington, 1958) seem to be primarily personal in nature, horizontal extensions of conscious "structures" into the planetary field of mind in levels 1, 2, and 3.

*brain-wave
feedback and
bio-iefedback*

4. The best analysis of *yoga*, at least for the Western mind, may well be found in *The Synthesis of Yoga* by Aurobindo (1955), and from it it is clear that much of what nowadays is termed yoga, both in the East and in the West, is concerned with the enhancement of personal powers. The development of the totally integrated man, a personal and transpersonal synthesis, is the affirmed goal in modern yogic teaching, but the need for voluntary quieting of mental, emotional, and physiological processes, with an accompanying focus of attention on transpersonal awareness, is not easy for the personal self to accept. The personality wants personal powers. In Victorian Christian terminology, there is a recognized conflict between the Christ (the Lotus) and the antichrist (the personal self), but in Tibetan Buddhism and in Integral Yoga the personal is not negated so much as transformed by alignment with transpersonal being, and personal powers are transformed into their transpersonal counterparts. Modern Christianity has accepted the personal self to some extent as a good (rather than evil) part of nature, but the transformation of life through voluntary integration of personal and transpersonal processes is not much practiced. Some Christians, of course, hope to be

yoga

"saved" without any effort or sacrifice on their part, but to make the personal-transpersonal integration demands personal change in which the mystic "sacrifice" is the relinquishment of selfishness for selflessness. According to some commentators (Aurobindo, 1949; Radhakrishnan, 1933; Vivekananda, 1955), this sacrifice is essential to yoga. It is equivalent to the Biblical statement that in order to save one's life one must give it up. Ram Dass emphasized this point by saying that first one must give up one's roles and "melodramas," then, even though the roles are still to be lived, our value system is no longer personal, but transpersonal.

*psychedelic
substances*

5. Through personal experience with *psychedelic drugs* some millions of people have been convinced for the first time in Western history that "inner space" really exists. Most of the experiences reported seem to be the result of breaking through horizontal barriers, but a few cases appear to be transpersonal (Grot, in press; Masters and Houston, 1966; Ram Dass, 1970).

siddhis

6. Personal *siddhis* are psychological and physiological powers that are obtained through the development of various physical, emotional, and mental faculties. It is said that this development almost always results from stimulation of the personal-level substances in chakras by release of the primary energy, kundalini, but if the energy is focused on transpersonal development, personal *siddhis* are transformed and expanded into transpersonal faculties and powers. When this occurs, mental and emotional psychic faculties with their limited range and non-volitional reaction-inducing (karmic) consequences are replaced by direct knowing (intuition) and volitional non-reactive (non-karmic) consequences.

The reason students are warned (somewhat paradoxically) by yogic teachers against a development or a concern with *siddhis* is that the first powers to develop are usually personal and tend to delay the aspirant in his transpersonal progress. They delay the development of his consciousness because of their fascinating, attention-getting nature. They appeal to the personal self (the selfish self) and are a trap according to Aurobindo. He suggests that the student who wishes to develop *siddhis* and explore the planetary mind at personal levels should first anchor himself in the overmind (Lotus) level so that the bewitchments of astral travel and investigation cannot permanently hold him, so that a "line" to the overmind can be followed for extricating himself from cosmic beguilements and confusions. In Greek mythology, the golden (solar, Lotus) thread followed by Theseus to guide him

through the labyrinth (of subconscious processes) after killing the Minotaur may symbolize the same idea.

7. *Symbols* seem to be the elements of communication between levels of mind, or being, both within an individual (between levels of his own nature) and between individuals. Two siddhis are needed, it seems, for the proper handling of symbols: the first siddhi is the ability to perceive them clearly, and the second siddhi is to know what they mean through direct awareness. Symbols, ranging from personally-constructed thought forms to racially-constructed archetypes, can be thought of as substantial structures carrying a meaning, just as a letter carries a message though the letter itself is not the message. It is clear that symbols and their perception and understanding are not necessarily transpersonal.

symbols

8. *Meditation* has been advocated in all ages as the best way to develop one's inner nature, but it must be obvious that meditation, like every other subject we have discussed, is not necessarily transpersonal. If meditation means the focusing of attention on inner processes, then personal and transpersonal meditations both exist. An important advantage of meditation over the relatively violent approach to inner awareness afforded by drugs, however, is that new experiences can be integrated into one's life, or rejected, with little danger of disruption of a healthy "reality" testing attitude. Meditation usually propels the student into awareness of planetary realms at a rate consistent with the development of his ability to control psychic events. Castaneda's experience with astral-etheric entities (1971) suggests that he was moving into contact with planetary realms of consciousness at a rate faster than the development of his abilities to defend himself from psychic and etheric dangers. Meditation would have been slower, more certain, and less dangerous, but probably not as exciting.

meditation

9. Concerning *dangers*, the evidence of thousands of years of experience should not be lightly disregarded. According to Tibetan, Indian, Zoroastrian, Theosophical, and almost all other systems for inner exploration there are two dangers for the explorer who has not developed, over a period of time, first, a sharp faculty of discrimination for the destruction of illusions, and second, a psychic protective screen. The danger of illusion and hallucination is more or less obvious, the other danger is not. According to various warnings, the persistent explorer in these horizontally extended realms of personality substance brings himself to the attention of indigenous beings who, under normal circumstances, pay very little attention to humans. The above-mentioned systems

dangers

for inner exploration describe these indigenous beings as entities whose bodies are composed entirely of emotional, mental, and etheric substance, and say that at this level of development they are psychologically no better than average man himself. They are of many natures and some are malicious, cruel, and cunning, and use the emergence of the explorer out of his previously protective cocoon with its built-in barriers of mental and emotional substance as an opportunity to move, in reverse so to speak, into the personal subjective realm of the investigator. If he is not relatively free from personality dross, it is said, they can obsess him with various compulsions for their own amusement and in extreme cases can even disrupt the normally automatic functioning of the nervous system, by controlling the brain through the chakras. Many mental patients have made the claim of being controlled by subjective entities, but doctors in general regard these statements as part of the behavioral aberration, pure subconscious projection, and do not investigate further. The Yaqui Indian whom Castaneda called don Juan was well acquainted with these dangers, it would seem, and it is interesting that at the end of Castaneda's experience with cosmic forces, don Juan sent him away for his "gap" to heal. This gap was presumably in the substantial psychic barrier that normally separates one's individual subconscious from cosmic levels.

don Juan

10. Behavioristic, psychoanalytic, and humanistic *psychologies* have shown respectively an evolution of thought (at least in the United States) from intense preoccupation with stimulus-response mechanisms of the brain and spinal cord, through concern with subconscious Freudian levels of man's nature, to the more inclusive developments of humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychology, because of its focus on group as well as personal processes, is in a way the forshadower of group awareness at transpersonal levels, such awareness implying that the individual has become to some extent aware of his transpersonal union with other persons and with nature in general, and finds himself part of a movement in which understanding among members is not primarily dependent on words, contact, or personality relationship. This is part of the union with life that ensues when transpersonal selflessness is dominant, rather than an exclusively personal orientation. It is probably this transpersonal transcultural understanding that can do the most to bridge the gap between East and West and between divergent cultures in general.

psychologies

11. In a remarkable way the behavioristic-psychoanalytic-

humanistic-transpersonal progression, Sutich's four forces in the development of psychology (1969), parallels the development in humans (according to yogic theory) of the first four *chakras* (first, the primitive kundalini center at the base of the spine; second, the center especially involved in sex; third, the solar plexus center developed for handling emotional power; and fourth, the "heart" center through which the Lotus provides transpersonal group awareness). The remarkable development of the third chakra in don Genaro (Castaneda, 1971) apparently made it possible for him to be-at-one with the emotional and physical aspects of nature. Don Genaro and don Juan seem to represent almost the highest development of an ancient stage of human attainment. The powers they embodied are also the object of much attention on the part of some of the Lamaistic Tibetan monks, but the main goal in modern times, both in Tibetan Buddhism and in Indian Yoga, seems to be the focusing of energy and consciousness through the fourth chakra and above, rather than the third, with an accompanying development of transpersonal (and eventually universal) consciousness rather than cosmic consciousness alone. Complete development of each higher chakra subsumes all knowledge of lower levels, says the theory.

In esoteric Christian terminology, this development of the fourth chakra, the heart of Jesus, is an at-one-ment of the personality with its own Christ nature, the Lotus self, that essence or "center" of each person which if cultivated leads to transpersonal group consciousness. The sacrifice, again, consists of the acceptance by the isolated personality of transpersonal goals and harmonious alignment with transpersonal being.

Before leaving the subject of chakras it is worth noting that the actions of the seven chakras are not entirely coincident with the hypothesized seven grades of substance. All the chakras associated with man's nervous and glandular system are composed of etheric energy, but each has as its *latent* function the ability to handle energy from all the different levels. The fully developed man has universal consciousness rather than cosmic consciousness, because he is fully functioning at every level and can shift his focus of attention and action from one level to any other at will. To work primarily at intuitional levels and above is the prerogative of advanced ascetics such as the gurus of Ram Dass and Swami Rama (Rama, 1970), but most students and teachers are unable to function without a measure of third-chakra activity.

qualitative significance of transpersonal

Having reviewed the basic structural concepts of occult versions of man's nature, what can now be said about the meaning of transpersonal? Substances, energy, field theory, and their relations to various states of consciousness have been mentioned, but what is the qualitative significance of transpersonal in a person's life? In a single phrase it can be said that transpersonal refers to a concern with values: ultimate values, those qualitative factors in living, in philosophy, and in psychology, that have been out of style in the West because until recently there was insufficient experiential consensus concerning transpersonal levels of being. The formerly private preserve of the mystics and occultists is now, however, being discussed in the public domain. Although it may not be possible to literally find ultimate values, that is not of primary significance. It is the *concern* with such values rather than the values themselves (which clearly must be reinterpreted in every age) that move men into transpersonal exploration.

transpersonal perspectives

If it is assumed true, as most systems of occult metaphysics maintain, that the Lotus is an immortal entity (though not necessarily eternal) who develops from unconsciousness to consciousness by means of experience gained through the projection of a series of personalities (incarnations), then it is clear that certain invariant human values necessarily depend on the goals and aspirations of the Lotus self. These goals, aspirations, and values cannot be determined, however, unless we ask the questions, "What am I? Who am I? What am I doing here?" In this metaphysical system it is hypothesized, then, that such values are necessarily dependent on the existence of a psychic center in each person that is beyond time and space in the ordinary sense of those words.

Transpersonal psychology might be defined therefore as the psychology of ultimate or highest meanings and values, and psychologists who explore in this area must be prepared to examine all institutions and activities from the point of view of such meanings and values. Many young people (and not only the young in years) who are questioning the values of "the Establishment", who are taking a fresh look at art, music, ethical systems, ecology, and everything else in life, seem to be responding to the flux and pressure of transpersonal energies in themselves. There is an almost desperate search for meaning and for expanded awareness at all levels. Concern for the problems of this "revolution in consciousness" led to the first Council Grove Conference on the Volun-

tary Control of Internal States (Green & Green, 1969). The conference was announced as follows:

The calling of a conference on states which have been variously termed altered states of consciousness, expanded consciousness, or states of internal awareness, is precipitated by the need for research in the domain of consciousness itself. We have reached a point in history at which the exploration of "internal states" has become not only a legitimate but also a high-priority business of science. In addition, many people are conducting their own explorations in consciousness with unknown chemicals in psychoactively unknown dosages in an attempt to enhance life, or to escape from it. This can be a dangerous route to "freedom." The Conference Committtees feels that at this moment it is especially important for stabilizing forces to . . . link what is useful from the past with the present and the future, uniting in some degree the existential wisdom and psychology of the East with the different psychological insight of the West.

*need for
research in
the domain of
consciousness*

"Uniting ... the existential wisdom and psychology of the East with the different psychological insight of the West ... " might refer in the context of the present discussion to the transformation of the individual (in Aurobindo's sense of that term) by the integration of his transpersonal energies and levels of consciousness with his personal energies and levels of consciousness. From both practical and metaphysical points of view perhaps this is what transpersonallife is all about.

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13. "Transpersonal" means "beyond the ego," so transpersonal psychology is the exploration of the unconscious to find a higher self. "Unconscious" includes both the personal and collective unconscious (Guest, 1980, p. 4). Some common features in them include the following ideas: that a transcendent reality underlies and binds together all phenomena, that individuals can experience directly this reality related to the spiritual dimension of human life, that doing so involves expansion of consciousness beyond ordinary conceptual boundaries and ego awareness, that such experiences have usually been defined in biased language by various religions and theologies. The main features of the transpersonal approach include: a focus on the whole person