

[Note: this is an incomplete section of an incomplete book, work-in-progress, on Wilber and his interest in critical theory, theorists, and his critiques of that tradition. It seems the title of the whole book was entitled *Critical Integral Adult Education* – rmf 20/04/2019]

Ken Wilber's Critical Integral Theory: His Interest in Critical Theory

R. Michael Fisher ©2007

CHAPTER FIVE

What interest has Ken Wilber in critical theory, and how might his own critical integral theory be complementary to the project of critical theory past, present, and in the future?

Critical Theory: An “Optimistic” Cosmology

Introduction

Cosmology, or as KW prefers Kosmology, is about the ‘big story’ of the universe and our place in it. It is a story we live, we are told to live and which we create as we live. Some of us have more freedom than others to create a meaningful life, a happy life, a sustainable life. The degrees of freedom are determined, as KW argues, both *internally* and *externally* both *individually* and *collectively* (AQAL).¹ That journey is a dynamic we could call human development. It is made up of learning, and critical analysis of the conditions that limit human possibility and limit human-world sustainability. The best of education and critical theory unite on these basic elements.

Humans love to make meaning; it probably best defines our species (*Homo sapiens*) as unique from others. Earlier in this book it was mentioned that integralist philosophy² (at least in the West, back to Plato)

¹ This seems worth noting because so often in today's psychologized culture in the Western world, at least, the popular unquestioned ‘mythic’ assumption is that one's freedom is determined by individual free-willed choice (modernity's assumption about the nature of the self). But in KW's Kosmology there is no self as we moderns would normally think of it, and there is rather a self/System holon developing and evolving with a “self-sense” albeit, that's recognizable in our awareness. The full spectrum model of KW's challenges the modernist assumption that one individual in their interpretive Upper Left Quadrant (individual subjective or interior) can determine the whole reality of what is one's freedom or not. Psychological discourse has way over done it, and its hegemonic U.L. facism seriously needs challenging as Wilber's AQAL integral critical ‘map’ and integral methodological pluralism does so nicely (see Figures 3 and 4 in Chapter Four, as well as lengthy discussion in this Chapter Five around notions of “self” and “agency” etc.).

² Integralism is a philosophy that brings good relations between the One (Whole) and the Many (Parts). It was not used as a term until modern times, but Plato (later, Plotinus, and neo-Platonic

is a way of thinking critically about how we make meaning (*via* cosmologies) around the world, in organizations, in nations, and within smaller groups or intimate relationships—or even within one’s own belief and value system. Following KW in this book, these cosmologies and their worldviews will be continually examined based on an evolutionary developmental and historical logic, in which premodern, modern and postmodern (and post-postmodern) will be used as large categories to help sort out distinctions and differences and what grew as relatively simple meaning frames into later forms of more complex meaning.

Critical analysis usually shows disjunctures and contradictions in how a ‘big story’ is put together and implemented into practice. We will see continuities and ‘gaps,’ if not conflicts and wars, between the premodern, modern and postmodern world cosmologies or worldviews.³ Part of

thought), arguably, is one of the forerunners of this philosophy. KW takes this stream of wisdom thinking from integralism and incorporates Jean Gebser’s (1985) work and definition of “universal-integralism” as a structure of human consciousness, which evolves after rational-perspectivism (cf. Jürgen Habermas). It is also called “vision-logic” and is associated with the development of “post-rational” and “post-conventional” cognitive thought and a “worldcentric view,” or what Georg Feurstein called “Global or Planetary Culture” (see Wilber, 1995, pp. 190-191). Beck & Cowan (1996) refer to this as the yellow v-meme (see a short definition of “integral” and yellow v-meme in Three).

³ *Worldview* has many different definitions, depending on the theorist and their own orientation. KW has used v-memes (i.e., Spiral Dynamics theory) at times to help differentiate these, and at other times he has used egocentric, ethnocentric, worldcentric, and theocentric as broad worldview categories in evolutionary (and individual) development. My favorite basic definition relates to a biosocial evolutionary analysis (Count, 1973), where he argued that the moment enough members of a primate group (protohuman to human) have “... reached a level of brain organization, of corresponding psychic complexity, where the *representation of reality* not only could occur, but apparently was by nature the case inevitable.... It is a process of symbolization.... [and concomitant] myth...” (p. 298). Count’s definition of ‘*world view*’: “... is an attempt to translate the German *Weltanschauung*.... In Dilthey it means a complex of ideas and sentiments comprising (a) beliefs and convictions about the nature of life and the world, (b) emotional habits and tendencies based on these, and (c) a system of purposes, preferences, and principles governing action and giving life unity and meaning. The *Weltanschauung* of a person or a society includes that person’s or society’s answer to the fundamental questions of destiny which Dilthey calls the riddle of life’ (p. 298). What KW mapped out for us in all of his writings, more or less, was the way these worldviews, cosmologies, and so on fit together in a developmental logical fashion where each unfolded (evolved) in relation to the development of the brain, of the environment, of the culture, social systems, and so on-- where “habits” (worldviews) formed that were useful (at least for some time) only to be replaced (*via* include and transcend) by new ones that were able to solve the problems that the former worldview(s) could not. At any time, the world is a multi-compound of a full spectrum of worldviews, and KW shows convincingly that the human being is as well. Worldviews by their nature “clash”—today’s Culture Wars is a good example, as is when Westerners conflict with Middle-Easterners because they have very different interpretations of religion, politics, economics, art, freedom of speech, and so forth. Values clash across worldviews. The point of significance is that in managing worldview clashes—the big conflicts on this planet—one has to, according to KW’s CIT, take these worldviews into account, and see that they are pivotal in a critical analysis (*a la* Galtung’s work). “[re: Galtung] Central here was the search for positive peace [not mere prevention of war] in the form of human empathy, solidarity and community, the priority of addressing ‘structural violence’ [domination-subordination] by unveiling [critically] and transforming structures of imperialism and oppression, and the

critical theory and philosophy is always aimed at improving the internal consistency of a cosmology, as well as making sense of how different cosmologies influence the growth of the world—but more importantly, KW’s Kosmology, taken as a whole generalization or universal ‘big story,’ attempts to sort out the critical difference of differences in terms of the “best” ways to go for human development. And this makes his work especially controversial. And for some, who are not able to get beyond their narrower versions of the universal ‘big story’ (e.g., a mythic belief system), KW’s Kosmology is difficult to accept because it shows that each level of consciousness produced a concomitant worldview or cosmology and they are all “relative” within the larger spectrum of KW’s Kosmology.⁴ At their best, critical theories (and integral theories) ought to help resolve (manage, transform) conflicts within and between different cosmologies and worldviews.

KW’s integral critical philosophy, analysis and theory is not value-neutral but highly normative. There is a search for how we ought to live *best*. The goal is integral human development, or more generically, integral evolution of consciousness. Why? KW summarized the basic task as one the ancient wisdom traditions knew, that is, *for everyone to become free and to suffer less* (just imagine the different, if not warring, camps and ideologies that exist, and have existed, telling us which is the best way to go to be free and suffer less). What else ought to be ultimately most

importance of searching for alternative values [worldviews] in non-western cosmologies such as Buddhism” (Miall et al., 2000, p. 44).

⁴ As noted earlier in this book KW’s *Kosmos* is subjective as well as an objective *cosmos* and he believes it is a unique view he is offering (albeit, a synthesis). Reynolds (2004) wrote: “The twenty-first-century AQAL metatheory [i.e., Wilber’s Kosmology], therefore, presents a sophisticated method of differentiating yet integrating all the various levels and lines, states and quadrants of the entire spectrum of consciousness, exhibiting both interior (subjective) and exterior (objective) correlates intertwined within the intersubjective and interobjective dimensions of the Kosmos.... Yet it’s also a holistic system of Spirit-in-action introducing novelty and miraculous creativity set within a ‘morphogenetic field or developmental space’ of evolving Kosmic habits or the deep patterns manifesting as the AQAL matrix [see Chapter Four]. Or from an even more enlightened perspective, it’s nothing more than the divinely radiant Nest of Spirit, the transcendent Kosmic Mandala” (p. 68). The problem with the English language is that it sounds so possessive. The Kosmology referred to here is told by KW, it is not his Kosmology—in that the Kosmology is not that fixed, not that simply possessed, nor that simply understood. Kosmology is not the Kosmos itself, but only a way of mapping it. KW may have a Kosmological map he draws and presents to us but he isn’t in possession of the Kosmos. He does have, or claims to have, a full spectrum view of it (the best so far he claims), and this is in contradistinction to most people in the world who do not have or utilize such an integral Kosmology; but they rather have their own valid particular piece of a cosmology which they think is the Whole [“arrogant holon”]. This is where KW’s work is very controversial in that it challenges notions that everybody, in every culture, in every historical time, at every level of development, has the Whole in their worldviews systems (cosmologies), and none is better or worse, and none is more complete or less complete in its view of the Kosmos. KW’s CIT does not accept that flatland cultural relativism positioning (i.e., violent reductionism), especially in its extreme postmodern poststructural forms, as we shall see in this chapter.

important to our political and spiritual leaders, to parents, teachers, therapists, entrepreneurs and so on?

One does not have to look around far to see that most all people, leaders included, tend to look at the “surfaces” (the more visible) aspects of reality for deriving our goals of accomplishments. We like to “measure” successes and find ways to improve them even more. It is hard to do that assessment in regard to deep contexts that create meaning for those surface practices. Often we do not have the tools or know-how at hand in which to do the deeper analysis. Critical theory and KW’s work have, in their own similar and different ways, attempted to offer us more tools.

This book is a deep tool for transforming one’s comfortable or cherished worldview (cosmology). Yet, no book can do that. But perhaps this book can convince you that would be a worthy project in a world that is so quickly globalizing as differences overlap with their competing, or warring, worldviews and values. Applying what you read here is, of course, the real litmus test to the worth of anything in text. Yet again, readers are reminded that this is not a “how to” book but rather the text ought to demonstrate ways of thinking and it attempts to perform some of the valuable functions of critical theory, in some of its more overt textual and philosophical practices. Ideas for other field applications are included at specific points in the last few chapters.

It was noted by Nelson (1981) that even the simplest behaviors, tactics, rules, strategies, plans, goals, and policies of individuals and collectives, are underlaid with “deeper” contexts, which shape the “surfaces” of everyday play and work. KW is a deep thinker, and draws on many deep thinkers, because he wants us all to think more deeply and critically about the foundations, or deep Kosmological “structures” and “habits” that influence everything we do. The deep context involves the more invisible part of our intentions and actions, this is where principle, purpose, vision, belief, faith, images of self-identity and sense of reality are constructed. They form a deep matrix (or mould) for what is created. For some problems human’s encounter a “surface” fix is adequate, but for the ‘big problems’ (wars, the ‘ism-diseases, etc.), a ‘big picture’ solution or therapia (transformation) is required, as Wilber would say.

Much of this deep context is intuitive, much is unconscious, and much is difficult to assess by reason and rationality alone. However, critical philosophy and its theories are never content with surface analysis and rationality (or trans-rationality, as Wilber also utilizes) can assist us to explore the anatomy, history, and politics within deep contexts. Making the unconscious conscious is a big part of the work of critical theory, KW and this book. As we follow in this chapter KW’s relationship to critical theory *per se* (as a social theory), we will encounter a more in depth view

of KW's Kosmology and the biases in the cosmologies of various chosen critical theorists (e.g., Fromm, Marx, Habermas) and critical theory generally. KW's up-date on critical theory as a tradition is eventually sketched out, and open for criticism. The chapter will set us up for investigating further in Chapter Six the various criticisms from this author and other writers who have published critiques on KW's work—albeit, those critiques will revolve around politics.

Whether a cosmology or Kosmology produces an optimistic or pessimistic, idealistic or realistic outlook will not be a major concern but such emotional 'big picture' orientations are always important to humanity's development. They also are rather forced inadequate labels as "false dichotomies" when it comes to positioning on a 'big picture' cosmology (Kosmology). This book, like KW, is more interested in 'truthing' of the Real (and constructed) state of our human nature, human condition, human potential.⁵ Whether such an analysis leaves one pessimistic or optimistic is merely a by-product of a rigorous inquiry. KW attempts, rather successfully, to err not on the side of overly-optimistic or overly-pessimistic interpretations. That said, all evidence that KW has collected and thought through, and it is massive, shows that it is probably accurate for one to be *optimistic-realistic* about the fate of the human-planetary relationship. It is not going to be a pretty past, present, or future picture that KW paints in his Kosmology,⁶ nor has it ever been such with critical philosophy and critical theory traditions. Wilber (1981), echoing Plotinus, cast his evolutionary 'big picture' in a nutshell,

But if men and women are up from the beasts and on their way to the gods, they are in the meantime rather tragic figures. Poised between the two extremes, they are subjected to the most violent of conflicts. No longer beast, not yet god—or worse, half beast, half god: there is the soul of [hu]mankind. Put another way, humankind is an essentially tragic figure with a beautifully optimistic future—if they can survive the transition. (p. ix)

Everyone is welcome to interpret what is presented here with their own "colored" glasses. We certainly don't have to have complete consensus about our emotional-orientations to the human-planetary 'big picture.' We better ought to orient to working intelligently with the facts and the best interpretations we can muster—what KW calls theoretical "orienting

⁵ See definitions of these three distinctions in Fisher (1997, p. 47).

⁶ The most "tragic angle" (existential, conflict theory) focused of his writing is *Up From Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution* (1981). In general, the early-Wilber (first 20 yrs. of publishing) is somewhat more dark (and real?) than later-Wilber. The focus of this book on critical integral theory and its roots in Wilber's interpretation of the critical theory tradition, tends to more darkness and is mostly engaged with his earlier writing which seem to 'hit' harder on 'reality' overall than his later (less raw/radical/honest?) more functionalist (PC/marketable?) and abstract later work.

generalizations.”⁷ That explanation soon follows but let’s return to the topic of this chapter: critical theory and KW’s interest in it and contribution to it.

Defining Critical Theory: A Brief History

Although there is likely to be no final consensus of what exactly “critical theory” is, according to Rasmussen (1999),

Critical theory is a metaphor for a certain kind of theoretical orientation which owes its origin to [modern philosophers like] Kant, Hegel and Marx, its systematization to Horkheimer and his associates at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt [Germany], and its development to successors, particularly to the group led by Jürgen Habermas, who have sustained it under various redefinitions to the present day. As a term, critical theory is both general and specific. In general, it refers to that critical element in German philosophy which began with Hegel’s critique of Kant. More specifically it is associated with a certain orientation toward philosophy which found its twentieth-century expression in Frankfurt.... The term bears the stamp of the nascent optimism of the nineteenth century; a critical theory can change society.... a tool of reason, which, when properly located in an historical group, can transform the world. (p. 11)

Often the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory is seen by its followers, and detractors as rather pessimistic “... regarding the possibility of revolutionary change and human liberation” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 57). We will examine the works of some “stars” in this critical theory tradition, and through their work—through KW’s eyes (Kosmology)-- we’ll gain a feeling for the defining assumptions, qualities, orienting generalizations and characteristics of critical theory—as an alternative to trying to define critical theory in a scholarly review (see Brookfield, 2005 for a good general review, especially for educators).

KW’s relatively idealistic-realistic (optimistic-pessimistic) philosophical work, which underlies the development of *critical integral theory* and this entire book, is about “integral transformation”⁸ (and general liberation)--

⁷ Also called a “sturdy conclusion” based on a lot of interdependent research overlapping to suggest a theory that is quite reliable and helpful to orient us toward a truth (Crittenden, 1997, p. ix).

⁸ “Integral Transformation” (unique from so many theories of “transformation” today, e.g., Mezirow’s theory), refers to a KW version: “It appears, then, that approximately 1-2 percent of the [world] population is at an integral, second-tier stance [yellow v-meme or beyond], but that around 20 percent are at green [v-meme], poised for that possible integral transformation, for that ‘momentous leap,’ as Clare Graves [1974] called it. What are the conditions that can help facilitate

both individual and collective, both material and spiritual. However, *is Wilber really the latest 'bright star' in critical theory's evolution?* Or, is Wilber too far away, if not lost, from being seriously considered a critical theorist for the 21st century? This is a complex quest that motivates this chapter's exploratory nature. This author concludes he is a "bright star" for critical theory, but readers can make up their own mind after looking at the evidence and arguments here. Let's back up and see who the players are and how their ideas may overlap.

Rasmussen noted above that critical theory emerged within a relatively optimistic cosmology of early-Modernity (in some parts of the world)—as it was Hegel's critique of Kant, at critical theory's roots, that we witnessed a philosophical move toward a more general 'up-lifting' spiritual-centric view of evolution and history unfolding; which was to be turned "on its head" by the eminent critical theorist Karl Marx (after Feuerbach⁹), who generally ushered in the material-centric (late-Modernity) view of history and a hopeful revolution of society's class structure (at least hopeful for pure Marxists). Let us not forget that some three centuries ago Enlightenment Science (with Modernity soon to follow *via* the French Revolution c.1789) had already had begun the slicing and rather terrifying operation of pulling apart the Premodern worldview and its dominating mythic-religious doctrines (cosmologies). Postmodernity,

that transformation? Developmental theorists have isolated dozens of factors that contribute to vertical transformation (as opposed to horizontal translation). In my own view, catalytic factors from several dimensions need to be present in order for transformation to occur" (Wilber, 2000a, p. 33). Chapter Seven takes up the controversy around theories of transformation, radical, revolution and so on, through a critical integral lens (*a la* KW).

⁹ Wilber (1981) wrote further: Ludwig Feuerbach, a student of Hegel's was a critic of Idealism and religion; he "... announce[d] that *any* sort of spirituality, any sort of Ascent, was simply a projection [fear] of men and women's human potentials onto an 'otherworld' of wholly imaginative origin. And, according to Feuerbach, it is exactly this projection of human potential into a 'divine' sphere that cripples men and women and is the true cause of self-alienation" (p. 308). This philosophical move by Feuerbach was core to Modernity's differentiation of the value-spheres (It, I, We) and split between religion and science. A noticeably disturbed Wilber continued, "He [Feuerbach] is, of course, ignorantly confusing the old mythic [pre-modern, pre-personal] otherworldliness with higher and interior transpersonal potentials, but it is exactly this ignorance [fear] that allows him to embrace the Descended grid ["Flatland ontology," as KW would call it in later publications, e.g., Wilber, 1995, 1996] and maintain that nature alone is real" (p. 308)—and this error toward an ideological Natural(ism) or "It-ism" (over Cultural (I) and over Spiritual (We) domains), which Marx was to follow, is part of a pre/trans fallacy and over-reliance on the visible world as the only 'real' (using KW's own theory, as discussed in the introduction to Wilber in this book). Regarding Modernity's embeddedness in the "reflection paradigm" (objective worldview or cosmology)—from Descartes to Quine, or what "... [Charles] Taylor summarizes as 'To know reality is to have a correct representation of things'—KW concluded, 'And if it wasn't merely the Ego [Camp, see Wilber, 1995] *reflecting* on the Eco [Camp], then it was the Ego *working* on the Eco—the so-called 'production paradigm' (Marx)" (Wilber, 1995, p. 439).

in turn, would do its own slicing of Modernity and most everything else sacred.¹⁰

Modernity, struggling within contested discourses, was thrown (and continues to be so) by the oppositions of a progressive view of human existence tetering on an uneasy pivot between spiritualist and materialist worldviews; religion vs. science, respectively. While fighting over whether change, transformation or revolution occur because of material or spiritual forces, postmodern critical theory¹¹ appeared on the scene not long ago, and the whole ‘big story,’ got slammed—and a lot more complex to boot. To postmodernists, generally, religion and science seem nothing but oppressive to human freedom; but there is little else offered except a lot of anxiety with the unknowing and uncertainty created. KW is not satisfied with either premodern, modern or postmodern analysis (or its critical theories) and offers his version of a post-postmodern critical analysis (theory) and “Integral Culture”¹² as the better solution for the 21st century and a post-9/11 world.

¹⁰ It could be argued that each era, premodern, modern and postmodern had its “sacred” aspects that were unquestionable and thought to be stable truths, values, beliefs. The Ptolemaic notion of premodern societies was sacred until Copernicus came along and ‘proved’ the Earth was not the absolute centre of the Universe (and scientific modernity was on the rise). However, in a more strict qualitative sense this author uses “sacred” (at least) to include the epistemological (and ethical) sense (a premodernist with parts of a modernist ideal sense) of Denzin & Lincoln (2005): “A sacred, existential epistemology places us in a noncompetitive, nonhierarchical relationship [meaning in KW’s sense a “pathological hierarchy”] to the earth, to nature, and to the larger world (Bateson, 1972, p. 335). This sacred epistemology stresses the values of empowerment, shared governance, care, solidarity, love, community, covenant, morally involved observers, and civic transformation. As Christians observes, this ethical epistemology recovers the moral values that were excluded by the rational, Enlightenment science project. This sacred epistemology is based on a philosophical anthropology which declares that ‘all humans are worthy of dignity and sacred status without exception for class or ethnicity’ (Christians, 1995, p. 129). A universal human ethic [worldcentric], stressing the sacredness of life, human dignity, truth-telling, and nonviolence derives from this position (Christians, 1997, pp. 12-15)” (pp. 36-37).

¹¹ Note, this book will not engage all the complex and specific debates and definitions of what is post-modern or postmodern, and so on (see introduction to these at the beginning of the book). In this chapter, KW’s view of these periods and their cosmologies will be taken as is (he seems to have done the adequate homework academically to follow his interpretations with some confidence). Generally, philosophical heroes of the extreme postmodern temperament are French (the likes of Lacan, Foucault, Bourdieu, Derrida) “... who caricatured the insights of German [critical] philosophers (Freud, Nietzsche, Marx, and Heidegger respectively). The [postmodern] baby boomer generation then took the standpoints of these French philosophers to their extreme conclusions—despite the fact that the philosophers themselves often changed their mind about their extreme [relativist] standpoints during the course of their lives...” (see Wilber, 2002, Chapter five, note 20) (cited in Visser, 2003, p. 304). Elsewhere, Fisher (2003), this author argued that KW doesn’t particularly like the French philosophers or culture either, as they are just too “radical” for KW’s rather Americanist aesthetic sensibility, politics, and philosophy.

¹² KW distinguishes the overlap and difference in his notion of an “integral culture” compared to the rather popular interest in work of Paul Ray (and associates) on “cultural creatives” and “integral culture;”—KW argued that “... cultural creatives, most of whom are boomers, are not truly integral.... what Paul Ray calls the ‘integral culture’ is [green meme, not yellow, for the most part] actually what is *preventing* the integral culture” (pp. 30-31). KW is a stickler for definitions and clarity and this author will try to honor that throughout this book. Albeit, it can be tedious at

Without treading too quickly into all the differences and dizziness of new forms of critical theory today, the basic premise (if not fact) behind critical theory is that there are dominating oppressive forces that limit and impinge on human development and our education, informally and formally. Based on specific times and locations these forces are more or less violent, damaging, and toxic to the integrity of life itself. Critical theory, if all goes well, can change society for the better. Professional critical theorists, similar to classical sociologists¹³ are generally Modernists, who saw the great value of scientific rationalism (materialism, empiricism, positivism, functionalism) and its contribution to the advance of society, but they also saw and criticized vehemently its problems and pathologies induced by social modernization.

Wilber's Four Quadrant¹⁴ Kosmology

Human-planetary health and sustainability is threatened but not all progress is 'bad' says KW (Habermas and others). These often destructive systematic forces are, according to KW's general view (and others, like Fromm): 50% externally (structurally) imposed as *oppression* and 50% internally (psychically) imposed in the form of *repression* (also called internal oppression). In other words, following KW's four quadrants model (Wilber, 1995) there is an objective and subjective, an individual and collective, intimate matrix of interrelationships contributing to suffering¹⁵ (oppression-repression dynamics¹⁶). The *best* way, at least

times but it is essential toward understanding, at least intellectually (through language and concepts) the first emergent aspects of "integral consciousness" which is radically a quantum or momentous leap according to developmental theorists like Graves, Beck, Wilber and so on.

¹³ This critical stance, according to Wexler (2000), is equally typified by Weber and Durkheim, for example. "For all the emphasis on objectivity and scientific neutrality [of classical sociologists], they were all deeply *critical* of modern society, driven not only to diagnose social pathologies but to reverse and transcend them" (p. 5). Early-Wilber's (1981, 1983) more sociological (and anthropological) writings are directed toward a similar transcendent ultimate purpose (as is similar to the critical theorist Jürgen Habermas, of whom KW closely aligns, but also critiques—see later). The less obvious point here is that KW gives a lot of credence to tradition and history in his work, unlike most extreme postmodernists.

¹⁴ See Chapter Four (Figures 3 and 4). Wilber (1995) noted his most important insight during this time was that all ways of knowing and knowledge could be fit into a "four quadrant" basic system on a continuum of Objective (Right-Hand side of the quadrants) and Subjective (Left-Hand); as well the top quadrants are Individual and the bottom Communal. He then saw the language of description of the inquiry type and data from each quadrants was as follows: It (U.R.), Its (L.R.), I (U.L.) and We (L. L.). More generically, the U.R. is "Behavior," U.L. is "Mind," L.L. is Culture and L.R. is System (and Environment, Structure). Good critical integral theory (CIT) would utilize all 4 quadrants in analysis (at a minimum) and interventions. Good critical integral adult education (CIAD) would follow likewise.

¹⁵ It seems imperative to spend a moment on KW's (adopted) philosophy on *spirituality* in relation to ontological suffering (as source of unfreedom). Suffering is all about "interpretation" of experience, of reality, of our 'self.' This interpretive theme is paradigmatic in KW's writing. For example, Wilber (1979/81) wrote, "Suffering, then, is the initial movement of the recognition of false boundaries [alienation] [i.e., subject vs. object, life vs. death, mind vs. body, inside vs.

theoretically, is to understand these complex relationships from as many points of view as possible¹⁷ and to intervene to improve things likewise *via* the guidance of critical integral theory (CIT) and critical integral adult education (CIAD).

outside, reason vs. instinct]" (p. 86). Further he elaborated, "Correctly understood, it [suffering] is therefore liberating, for it points beyond boundaries [barriers, is the term he later preferred as does this author] altogether. We suffer then, not because we are sick, but because intelligent insight is emerging. The correct understanding of suffering, however, is necessary in order that the birth of insight is not aborted. We must correctly interpret suffering in order to enter into it, live it, and finally live beyond it. If we do not correctly understand suffering, we simply get stuck in the middle of it—we wallow in it not knowing what else to do" (p. 86). As we saw (indirectly) in Chapter Four, introduction to KW and his work, he has been a follower of some of the major premises of the *perennial philosophy*, and it is within that philosophy that his politics around freedom and unfreedom have their spiritual roots. The "Great Nest of Being" and or "Chain of Being" (as classic text refers to) notes there are levels of reality that unfold, senior levels from junior levels, body evolves from matter, mind from body, and so on. And various disciplines of knowing from physics (for matter), to biology (for bodies) to psychology and philosophy (for mind) and so on—these KW argued have been the basic assumptions of "... the dominant worldview, in one variation or another, for most of humankind's history and prehistory. It is the backbone of the 'perennial philosophy,' the nearly universal consensus about reality held by humanity for most of its time on earth. Until, that is, the rise of modernity in the West" (Wilber, 1998, p. 9). Later, we'll look at his postmodern souped-up version (neo-perennial philosophy). He wrote, "... [the] sixth major point of the perennial philosophy, namely, that enlightenment or liberation brings an end to suffering. Gautama Buddha, for example, said that he only taught two things, what causes suffering and how to end it. What causes suffering is the grasping and desiring [this author calls 'fear' patterning] of the separate self and what [p. 87] ends it [suffering] is the meditative path that transcends self and desire. The point is that suffering is inherent in the knot or contradiction known as self..." (Wilber & Wilber, 1991/93, p. 88). KW is a lot less traditional "Buddhist" or a proponent of *only* "meditation" to solve and heal all human problems. See his later writing on the Integral Transformative Practice (ITP) paradigm he and others have put together for postmoderns to practice integral transformation (body, emotions, mind, soul, spirit) in line with his AQAL (all quadrant all levels) model of human development (Wilber, 2005a). He advocates developmentally-appropriate (corrective) interventions for working through the "knot" and "contradiction" at all levels of being. This gets more complex with sociopolitical interventions, and this chapter will address some of his thoughts on that but it ought to be kept in mind his use of Spiral Dynamics and now his own version of sociocultural change theory, is very complex and not adequately dealt with in this book at all (see Wilber, 2002) for an overview of his use of Spiral Dynamics theory (Graves, Beck) as an integral approach.

¹⁶ In Chapter Nine this is referred to as the 'Fear' Project (a spectrum of fear management or security systems), of which KW has identified, albeit not to the extent or satisfaction of this author, in all his pre-1997 writings (e.g., "Dualism-Repression-Projection" in Wilber, 1977/82; "Immortal Atman-project" in Wilber, 1980/82; "Immortality Project" in Wilber, 1980/82, 1981; "Atman Project" in Wilber, 1980/82, 1981; "Phobos-Thanatos" in Wilber, 1995). See Fisher (1997, pp. 59-60, 65) for a more detailed account of the importance of this dark-side aspect to KW's work and how it has been neglected by theorists and practitioners interpreting KW (including the later-Wilber himself) and his readership in general. This author's purpose is to develop an adequate critical integral analysis (theory) and practices which would act as an effective 'fear' vaccine.

¹⁷ The other much more complex part of KW's CIT involves also using multiple developmental levels, lines, types and so on. But for our purposes in this book, the latter part of the 4QAL (or AQAL = all quadrant all levels) analysis/model will be kept in the background for heuristic purposes as this is an introductory text to KW's theory and many expected readers are not likely to be that familiar with even his basics.

Figure 5 (adapted from Wilber, 2000a, p. 51) offers a glimpse of roughly how an integral thinker, like KW, would place various theorists (and their methodologies) on his four quadrant map:

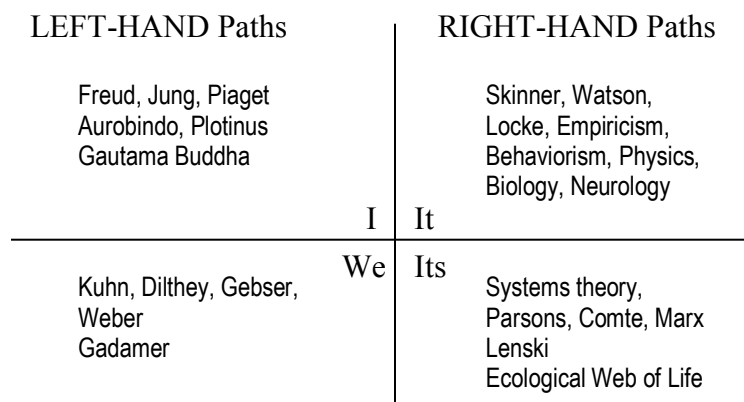


Figure 5 Wilber's Four Quadrant : Theories & Theorists

Overall, KW's work is extremely strong on correcting the repression-side, while critical theory overall is extremely strong on correcting the oppression-side. No doubt KW is going to show up as "too spiritual" for most social critical theorists.¹⁸ Although, most critical thinkers, if pushed, would admit that you have to work on both oppression and repression to be anywhere near successful in countering the destructive forces. KW's CIT (and integral education, e.g., Fisher, in press) are particularly useful to ensure a *both/and* holistic or integral orientation to emancipation that avoids the unfortunate divisiveness of *either/or* approaches (e.g., Left-Hand path only or Right-Hand path only); the latter far too common and often leads to a worsening of conditions in the attempt to improve them. Elsewhere (Fisher, 2005), the author has delineated that this contradictory

¹⁸ That said, KW is not a premodernist, nor traditionally religious type of spiritual thinker (nor is he "new age"). His realistic evolutionary sensibility (and political pragmatic interest) comes out in his writing (for e.g.): "Spirit as great Freedom is one thing; Spirit actually manifested as political democracies, quite another" (Wilber, 1996, p. 321). He doesn't see Spirit as some ontologically "pure" or "separated" place [as we find in the dualism of exoteric forms of so many W. religions], or thing, or Big Daddy in the sky. His advanced non-dual philosophy integrates the transcendent and immanent sides of Spirit or Kosmos, within a critical integral (evolutionary and developmental) epistemology: "Spirit gets denied or distorted or overemphasized [by Spirit itself developing], which sabotages Spirit's full expression and derails the spiritual process in its broader unfolding [i.e., repression and oppression occur at all levels on the spectrum of development]. We neglect the Good, or the True, or the Beautiful, and send Spirit crashing into the fragments of our self-contracting ways" (Wilber, 1996, p. 314). It seems that KW's philosophy of Spirit [distinct from, but somewhat similar to humanist thought] keeps humans and their actions totally responsible for the "health" and "sustainability" and "growth" of Spirit—no one else is 'out there' to do the job for us of living on this planet with our fellow beings in the best ethical and ecologically sound way. So what is "evil" in KW's view? That is still to come, as we explore oppression-repression dynamics in his CIT.

outcome of most sincere efforts to help, has been a characteristic of the “culture of fear” (e.g., Furedi, 1997; Glassner, 1999) dynamic which has invaded most social movements as much as it has the entire society (globalization included), especially in a post-9/11 context.

*Transformation*¹⁹ is a complex and contentious topic often used as a euphemism for *revolution*, and thus not all radical critical theorists have in the past, nor do they now, appreciated the emphasis on transformation over the use of revolution. Later in this chapter we’ll take up a discussion of the very notion of “transformation” and “radical” and their place in critical theory and place in CIT. The term “transformation” is thought to be essential to the development of CIT and CIAD but the term “radical” much less so. Simply, to begin with here, transformation means changing, moving and/or developing from a more limited (suffering-based) existence to a more liberated (freedom-based²⁰) existence-- with all four Wilberian

¹⁹ Wilber (1983, Chpt. 4) examined in detail his early (useful) distinctions necessary to understanding the developmental logic of his theory of human development and evolution; which are based on three conceptions: translation, transformation, and transcription.

²⁰ One can interpret “freedom” at many different levels of reality (awareness, consciousness) along the spectrum that Wilber maps out in evolution. In Wilber’s (2002) critique of “Boomer freedom” [Baby Boomers born between 1946-64 in W. industrialized nations], gives away a lot of where Wilber comes from politically. He wrote, “May 1968, the streets of Paris, shouts of ‘Marx, Mao, Marcuse’ filled the air. [The haunting echoes here of current street rioting in the outskirts of Paris today by disenfranchised youth of color, living in poverty conditions, is noteworthy in that ‘revolutionary’ impulse still stirs deep in the W.] ‘Down with structuralism!’ [down with Tradition, old values, authority, modernity itself – recall much of this was a highly intellectual affair led by critical theorists’s or at least the thinking of critical theorists at the time, e.g., Marx, Marcuse, Foucault, Derrida] was scrawled on walls across the city, the French equivalent of [American] ‘Fight the System!’ The ‘poststructural’ impulse did not fall on deaf ears across the Atlantic, for it would soon provide most of the intellectual equipment to fight the system [rebel].... Just the year before, the ‘summer of love,’ as Golden Gate Park in San Francisco was awash in flower power, free sex, and free-flowing drugs, LSD being the most paradigm blowing of them all. Then Chicago [riots of the Civil Rights Movement], Kent State [student riots], the massive [Vietnam] war protests, sit-ins.... Out of all of those events came the ingredients of the average or typical Boomer self: highly individualistic, with a pluralistic value system [view of equality and freedom for all]. But one bent on deconstructing any and all conventional truths, which had [p. 168] marginalized everything the Boomers felt they were fighting for” (p. 169). In short, then, KW (among other social critics, like Christopher Lasch (1978) and his “culture of narcissism” critique), were convinced that most, not all, of Boomer’s notions of “freedom” were flawed, self-centered (narcissistic), adolescent-like and so on. KW viewed this as a “stage” toward ultimate freedom, but it was one that did not know how to integrate the dualisms it was trying to overcome and only ended up inserting new dualisms (as false freedom)—making the “old” vs. “new” the rebellious mantra of the era. It was no solution to suffering and unfreedom. The ‘highest’ freedom he defines from the non-dual view (or fearless standpoint) as “... the supreme identity [where], you are established in radical Freedom... but that Freedom *manifests* as compassionate activity, as agonizing concern [for all beings]. The Form of Freedom is sorrow, unrelenting worry for those struggling to awaken. The Bodhisattva weeps daily; the tears strain the very fabric of the Kosmos in all directions.... the work is a passion, an agony; it is always fully accomplished, and thus never ending” (Wilber, 1996, pp. 316-317)—and here is where KW is not a “new age” spiritualist promoting a shallow pop-culture form of spiritual enlightenment. KW’s work is scholarly, theoretical and practiced. He summarizes what the wisdom traditions (E. and W.) actually have found out about the goal of “Freedom” through rigorous practice and philosophy (typically all

domains as major contributors: objective-25%, subjective-25%, individual-25%, collective-25%. In this author's own conceptual and emancipatory projects, transformation involves moving within an evolutionary dialectic (if not structural) imperative (*a la* Hegel, Habermas, Wilber) from a more 'fear'-based condition (system, organization) to a more fearless one. Taken far enough and completely enough across the four domains, such a shift can indeed be revolutionary!

Critical Theory: A Critical Adult Education

Back to the focus of this chapter. Referring back to Figure 5 above, the classic critical theorists have tended to operate from the Lower Right quadrant in KW's view (e.g. Marx; although Habermas, Lower Left quadrant, is a living contemporary of this movement; Weber is included in the Lower Left quadrant as part of the Conflict Tradition theorists which are closely related to critical theory as will become evident in this chapter). However, critical theory is evolving and KW's CIT is unique among them all in that it travels comfortably over all four quadrants.

The strengths and limitations of critical theory have been well written about and debated in scholarly circles (e.g. the edited volume by Rassmussen, 1999; Brookfield, 2005). This chapter is not the place to understand the rich span and depths of critical theory *per se* nor to guide the reader to make a fully informed critical response to it. Suffice it to say the roots of critical theory are created by philosophers²¹ and locates easily in philosophy, but there is no need to be a trained philosopher to effectively engage the contents of this chapter and find useful bits for application to the real world. Brookfield (2005) following Angela Davis (2005) nicely brings home the point this book intends regarding the roles of philosophy, theory and practice,

avoided by "new age" "new paradigmgers," according to KW). See Fisher (1997b, pp. 44-45), for a summary of KW's earlier critiques of "new age" movements and "new paradigms."

²¹ This claim is sound, depending on how one frames the notion of "critical theory." It is obvious this book chooses the route Brookfield and many other academics have taken, and that is to acknowledge the pivotal rigorous and reflective work of scholars in the development of critical theory. This however, does not intend to limit the philosophizing and theorizing to only such eminent scholars, and no doubt many less known (practitioner-based) folks have and will continue to develop the diversity of critical theory based on experiences in the field and their own critical reflective thinking and/or writing. The more the merrier; there's lots of room in the evolution (spectrum) of ideas and intelligence from all quarters and no "theory" ought to fixate and reify so that it cannot be changed with changing conditions and interpretations. However, there is a certain 'canon' to critical theory like all theories, because they are, by very definition as "theory," invoked as (the more stable knowns) "orientating generalizations" about reality (a term KW takes up and defends well in his own work). Brookfield (2005) summarizing several major critical theorists work, identified a fairly ubiquitous theme amongst them, whereby they believe critical theory inherently has to be self-critical. No doubt, KW would wholeheartedly agree and has applied this principle to his own CIT as well.

If we accept Davis' argument that philosophizing and theorizing are [more or less conscious] quotidian activities—something we cannot help doing on a daily basis [especially as adult educators]—then this distinction [theory vs. practice, academics vs. practitioners] breaks down. Practice becomes inherently theoretical, something that either perpetuates or challenges dominant ideological beliefs and practices. From this viewpoint one is equally a theoretician whether one teaches philosophy in a university-sponsored, noncredit continuing education course or auto-repair at a community education center. The way we treat adult learners, how we address them, how we explain our teaching processes to them, the extent to which we encourage peer learning amongst them—these are all practice acts with strong theoretical underpinnings. We do these things based on predictive understandings of how we believe people will respond to our actions and on convictions about what it means to act morally. Such understandings and convictions are derived from the empirical data [and interpretations] of our experiences rather than from published texts, but they are theoretical nonetheless. (p. 343)

This topic is of considerable complexity and will only be dealt with in a survey style of the basic aspects of mutual interest between KW's work and critical theory. A later publication will be more fully devoted to this important topic. The contextual emphasis of this chapter, although not totalizing, will generally default toward the interests of the field of adult education and in particular critical (radical) adult education (see Brookfield, 2005, *The Power of Critical Theory: Liberating Adult Learning and Teaching*).²²

Critical Theory & Wilber

... the central problem which has always faced critical social and political theorists is ... : why are men and women unfree? -Wilber (1981, p. 330)

Stephen Brookfield, an outstanding adult educator and internationally recognized scholar,²³ has done the field of adult education great justice by summarizing the major work of the prominent critical theorists of the past 150 years or so. KW, the eminent American integral philosopher, has been

²² The author acknowledges that not all adult educators, especially from the most radical extremes and traditions (e.g., Marxists, and activists) would see Brookfield's work as "radical."

²³ Currently Distinguished Professor at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN. He spent 10 years as professor in the Department of Higher and Adult Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Most of his early career as professor was in the UK. He has received several prestigious honorary awards in the field of adult education and honorary doctorate degrees.

publishing since the early 1970s, most prolifically in the past 20 years. One can say with relative assurance that no contemporary critical theorist²⁴ reviewed by Brookfield (2005) has ever cited KW, other than Cornel West, Princeton University's prestigious cultural critic, who has appeared in a cojoint commentary with KW on *The Matrix* sci-fi film trilogy (Wachowski Brothers (1999-2003), DVD Set, Warner Bros., Inc., 2003). And it is a very rare occasion that any academic philosopher, critical theorist and/or critical pedagogue has been attracted to read or cite any of KW's publications or educational projects.²⁵ See Fisher (in press) for a review of adult educators (and schooling educators) who have used KW's work.

Based on this fact of KW's absence in the cited documents of critical theory,²⁶ and his own interest in critical theory (and theorists), this chapter provides an overview of the most salient comments KW made about critical theory, critical theorists (focusing on the 13 written on by Brookfield), and how KW sees their value to his own overall emancipatory integral project and his CIT. It ought to be noted that although KW has written substantially on various critical theorists and their work, most often critiquing them, one is hard pressed to find any reference to "critical theory" or the "Frankfurt School of Critical Theory" in the indexes to all his books.²⁷ Only once in a book Subject Index

²⁴ Of the 13 critical theorists cited by Brookfield (2005) only four are living as KW's academic contemporaries: Jürgen Habermas, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Cornel West. Note: other critical scholars, for example Hegel, or Douglas Kellner, are quoted and cited in Brookfield's text but the 13 mentioned are the ones whose work he summarized in some detail. Note: Apparently the critical philosopher Thomas McCarthy, an eminent interpreter of Habermas, has written a chapter for an edited book (in progress) entitled *Kindred Visions: Ken Wilber and Other Leading Integral Thinkers*. Within that same edited volume is a chapter by the great Canadian contemporary philosopher Charles Taylor (cited in Wilber, 2000a, p. 106).

²⁵ Some academics who have tend to come from the field of transpersonal psychology, humanistic psychology, consciousness studies, and religious studies.

²⁶ That said, it ought to be kept in mind that this is a claim made from an English-speaking positioning of the author in North America. Edith Zundel, in interviewing KW in the early 1980s wrote "Your works are very influential in Germany, you know. You have had a major impact, not just on fringe areas, but in mainstream academic circles. All ten of your books have been translated into German" (Wilber & Wilber, 1991/93, p. 157). Many critical theorists came from this area and in particular the Frankfurt School writers. This could point out a "natural" affiliation of KW with Germanic critical (idealistic) philosophical thought and theory, although KW's work has also had big audiences in Japan and many other countries as well. More likely Germany's roots in paganism, transpersonalism, and German Idealism (e.g., Hegel) have led to a great interest in KW's universal philosophical-spiritual agenda.

²⁷ Albeit, he has referred to the "Frankfurt School" rarely (e.g., Wilber, 1981, pp. 268, 330) in the text, which did not make it into the Subject Index of the book. This omission is found also in the Subject Index of Visser (2003) and Reynolds (2004) who are summarizing KW's works. The omission of the term "critical theory" is a curious one because KW has seriously engaged Habermas in publications since 1981 and has declared often in his writing how important Habermas is as a philosopher today and in KW's own work. One would think critical theory, as tradition, would have been given more status because of Habermas's obvious linkage to that line of theorizing (see later in this chapter).

(Wilber, 1995, p. 804) has this author found “critical theory (Habermas),” with one page (p. 124) given to guide the reader to critical theory *per se*.²⁸ This has no doubt contributed, in small part, to critical theory and critical theorists, who are his contemporaries, leaving KW out of their publications as well.

CIT is a term KW rarely uses himself (for reasons unknown to this author). Early-Wilber (1983) wrote of attempts to build a “comprehensive critical theory in sociology” (p. 41), “critical sociological theory” (p. 43) in an attempt “... to reconstruct the essentials of such [critical] theorists as Marx and Freud without their reductionistic tendencies” (p. 40). Wilber (1983) summarized his work on sociology:

It is a truly *critical* and *normative* sociological theory, by virtue of the two emancipatory interests [see diagram p. 137 in Visser, 2003] that rear their heads wherever structural unfreedom and nontransparency arise. This critical (what went wrong) and normative (what should go right) dimension, especially in its vertical form, is not based *on* ideological preference, dogmatic inclination, or theoretical conjecture, but *in* the observable, verifiable, inherently preferred direction of structural development and evolution, a direction that discloses itself in successive hierarchic emancipations that *themselves* pass judgements on their less transcendental predecessors” (Wilber, 1983, pp. 118-119) (cited in Visser, 2003, p. 138)

KW’s later writing (post-1995) generally prefers simply “integral theory” although in an interview on-line from *Mindmaps.net*,²⁹ KW went on at length about his view of “critical science” (and critical theory) as proposed by Habermas³⁰:

A ‘critical theory’ can be established in any major discipline—whether in art, morals, or science. It simply depends on whether one has an approach that one claims to be more authentic, or more comprehensive, or more accurate, or more valuable, or ‘more something.’ The Frankfurt School, for example, developed a critical social theory that they claimed offered more political and personal freedom.... but all critical theories are internally bound to a series of normative claims that they then must justify as compelling and in some sense binding on others. That’s the tricky

²⁸ In speaking about philosophical and theoretical traditions of the Left Hand (more interpretive, subjectivist) quadrants, in contrast to the Right Hand positivist, objectivist, empiricist approaches in the social sciences, KW attributes “critical theory (Habermas)” as one of the four new and inspiring counter-movements from the (more or less) Left Hand quadrants in recent decades.

²⁹ Retrieved from <http://www.mindmaps.net/journal/modules/news/article.php?storyid=6>

³⁰ This can also be found in “Part 1: Habermas and Post-Metaphysical Spirituality” (Wilber, c. 2002, pp. 11-12) from Shambhala publisher’s website.

part, of course.

Ingram (1987), in KW's first interview for a magazine, remarked that KW in the 1960s-70s at university was "... never interested in radical politics..." (p. 40), albeit, he was always an astute observer (and later documented critic) of it. He is not an "activist" by any usual sense of that term (Fisher, 2003) (see also Chapter Six).

KW (c. 2002) continued in the *Mindmaps* interview:

[my own system, and model, theory is] "... more integral than the [critical theory] alternatives... I have often criticized the alternative views as being partial and 'less integral' or 'less comprehensive' (and therefore presumably 'less true'). So yes, I have offered a 'critical integral theory.' (See Jack Crittenden's "Foreword"³¹). [Note: he first applied this notion of CIT to assessing spirituality³²] But I should say that I hold this integral critical theory very lightly. Part of the difficulty, is that, at this early stage, all of our attempts at a more integral theory are very preliminary and sketchy. It will take decades of work among hundreds of scholars to truly flesh out an integral theory with any sort of compelling veracity. Until that time, what I try to offer are suggestions for making our existing [critical] theories and practices just a little more integral than they are. [underline added for emphasis]

KW's CIT, arguably was implicit as a framework when he began his first serious book *Spectrum of Consciousness* in the early 1970s, however, it wasn't until the early 1980s he was using "critical theory" overtly as part of his critiques, and by 1997 he was implying his methodology was a form of critical theory but not until c. 2002 that he used the descriptors "critical integral theory" or "integral critical theory" *per se*. Crittenden (1997) had put these descriptors together first in order to academically locate KW's generic theorizing and method (see in more detail below).

³¹ Crittenden (1997, and very similar in 1997a) offers the most "intense" (nutshell version and comprehensive explanation of KW's CIT as "method" by anyone other than KW himself.

³² In the *Mindmaps* interview: [Interviewer asked:] "Many people feel spirituality should be approached through image and metaphor, not through rational and academic discourse." [KW responded:] "Well, again, it depends on what you mean by 'spirituality.' Some levels of consciousness have spiritual aspects that are best approached through image and metaphor; some through rational and academic discourse; and some through direct practice and realization. My approach attempts to include and honor all of those. At the same time, a critical integral theory does indeed make suggestions about which of those approaches are more authentic than others, and the conclusion is that different types of spirituality are appropriate at different stages of consciousness development. There are different types of spirituality found at virtually every level of the spectrum of consciousness..." (p. 12)

His CIT is yet incomplete and always evolving—a collaborative process for sure. The tone of KW’s comments above shows he is very reluctant to “go radical” (or “boomeritis”) and start converting or pushing an ideology or theory. Such radicality (or anarchy) goes against his social conditions, personality, and political philosophy to do so (see Chapter Six). It also is apparent, he has never really had to “fight” for survival and freedom for himself or his nation or “group” as he leads a typically comfortable American middle-upper (owning) class life of luxury, for the most part.³³ Not a bad accomplishment for a writer of philosophy outside of any formal university or college setting.

In the early-Wilber the best summary of his emergent CIT (for sociology) was offered in his 1983 book (reprinted 2005) on a new sociology of religion (using some of Habermas’s concepts):

My point is that a comprehensive, unified, critical sociological theory might best be constructed around a detailed, multidisciplinary analysis of the developmental logic and hierarchical levels of relational (psychosocial) exchanges that constitute the human compound individual. The theory would be *critical* in two important ways: (1) adjudicative of each *higher* level of structural organization and critical of the comparative partiality of each lower level [criticize reductionism], and (2) critical of the *distortions* in exchange when and if they occur on any particular level. The latter is a criticism *within* a level and demands as its [p. 43] corrective a self-reflection on the historical formations that led to the distortion in the particular realm, economic, emotional, communicative, or spiritual. The former is a criticism *between* levels and demands as its corrective a *growth* to higher levels. The one is a horizontal emancipation, the other, a vertical emancipation. Neither can be dispensed with—growth to a higher level does not insure the healthy normalization of a lower level, and healing a lower level does not in and of itself produce a higher level. (p. 44)

Complex at first, readers will need to be patient. Many of the technical aspects of his early CIT will shine forth in the latter part of this chapter, as KW critiques various critical theories. KW’s later CIT is more complex, layered with findings from developmental psychology in particular, but for this book’s purpose there is enough coherence in the early to later-Wilber to build the tools for deep-level contextual critical analysis of cosmologies

³³ In personal correspondence with him, and from those who know KW personally, this author acknowledges that KW has been “attacked” and “threatened” by all kinds of people from all kinds of stripes of beliefs. These attacks have been symbolic for the most part, and they are not merely from academics (as documented in Fisher, 1997b, 1997e).

and worldviews, of theories of anything, especially as they influence CIAD.

Despite the later-Wilber's reluctance to put the word "critical" in front of integral theory, this author and Crittenden (1997) argue that "... Wilber's overall approach is the development of a new type of *critical theory*" (p. x)³⁴ or "integral paradigm."³⁵ "Integral" was defined by KW in the last chapter and it is part of what KW calls a "powerful *critical theory*"[from his book *Eye of Spirit*, 1997]:

The heart of integral philosophy, as I conceive it, is primarily a mental activity of coordinating, elucidating and conceptually integrating all the various modes of knowing also, by virtue of its comprehensiveness, a powerful *critical theory*, critical of all less encompassing approaches..." (cited in Reynolds (2004, p. 381)

Basically, it is a "new" *critical theory* (KW also called a "*theory of everything*")³⁶ because of its unique characteristic of a macro-embrace of

³⁴ "... Wilber's overall approach is the development of what might be called a critical theory of theories [meta-theory in the critical theory tradition]" (Crittenden, 1997a, p. 101). KW often acknowledges the critical theorists' contributions and in particular is a great fan of Habermas (who is recognized as a "... leading exponent... of radical social theorizing originating with the Frankfurt School of critical theory" (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 273)), as this chapter explicates. That said, Brookfield's (2005) points are well taken: "Habermas is the contemporary figure who most probably comes quickest to adult educators' minds when the term *critical theory* is mentioned, and there is no doubt that his ideas have been strongly influenced by that tradition. However, Habermas himself mentions many times that he was not formally schooled in the tradition... and that knowledge of it came through his own self-education [ditto for KW]. In Habermas's view, the Frankfurt School never really existed as a cohesive group of scholars pursuing a distinctive intellectual project when it was located in Frankfurt. It was only during the 1930s [Nazism initiated] exile of the school's members in New York that it really came to life (Habermas, 1985b, p. 68). Undeniably, though, Habermas' own intellectual journey and his autobiography are inextricably intertwined with critical theory. He was hired as Adorno's research assistant, came to occupy the Max Horkheimer Chair in Philosophy and Sociology at the Frankfurt Institute, and could speak about his personal conversations with Marcuse just before Marcuse's death (Habermas, 1992a) (p. 222).

³⁵ Wilber (c. 2003) provided an excellent overview on-line "Overview: An Integral Paradigm Is a Set of Practices, not Theories" <http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/kosmos/excerptB/intro>.

³⁶ KW has lingered within a camp of unified systems theorizing going on for a few decades to develop a "theory of everything." Even up to Wilber (2000a), in his book *A Theory of Everything*, as he preferred to call it, so easily he could have added the term "critical" in front of the title of his book. If he had-- then critical theorists and critical educators would see his location as a critical theorist. But because he hasn't he tends to float over to the systems theorist camp (sciences). Once again, this is evidence the later-Wilber deemphasized his critical theory connections (over-emphasized his functionalist theory) and thus won't likely be taken seriously by most scholars in academia who are critical philosophers or conflict/critical theorists of one kind or another. He seems ambivalent as to which emphasis is most appropriate overall. Yet, his introductory comment in Wilber (2000a) is indicative of his attraction. He wrote, "... if we succeed in developing a truly holistic or integral view of reality, then we will also develop a new type of critical theory—that is, a theory that is critical of the present state of affairs in light of a more encompassing and desirable state, both in the individual and the culture at large. The integral

other forms of knowledge, and in that embrace it “includes and transcends” so the best of the past and other forms of knowledge are included and the worst aspects of them discarded. Synthesis and evolution of the theory is most important to KW rather than setting up distinct oppositions (rigid categories) and hegemonies, as most “old” critical theory tends to do (but no need to overly dichotomize “old” and “new”). There will be plenty of evidence in the following study in this chapter of how CIT is applied to various critical theorists taken up in this survey.

In this author’s opinion, there is no simple clear delineation of what exactly KW means by CIT, it is more part of everything he writes. This book will slowly unwind various elements to his theory. As well, it will be worthy to engage some of KW’s more central concepts and thinking as they contribute to, and/or contradict the overall critical theory tradition (which is part of the larger Conflict Tradition or conflict theory as delineated in sociology, see Collins, 1994).

Crittenden’s³⁷ (1997) attempt to summarize CIT as an actual method (at least one version) is worth quoting at length (albeit, only partially):

Without endorsing or rejecting Wilber’s system, if we can call it that, I want to focus on what is actually involved in this debate. [Wilber’s critics are many] Because, make no mistake, if Wilber’s system is more or less accurate, it does nothing less than offer a

paradigm will inherently be critical of those approaches that are, by comparison, partial, narrow, shallow, less encompassing, less integrative” (p. 2)[underline added for emphasis]. Implicitly, this is the basic critique of this entire book *Spilling blood...* as the “fearless shallowness” critique of KW, and this author, is a critique from an “integral paradigm” (or truly “fearless standpoint theory,” as we’ll see in Chapter Nine). Surely, KW’s “new type of critical theory” (CIT) is going to be critical of itself—its own theory. You could apply that equally to individuals or collectives. And critical, from an integral paradigm (perspective, *a la* KW), means compassionate at the same time; but it does not mean “idiot compassion” (as pluralism can become). KW’s compassion for an integral embrace of all modes of knowing does not downplay the conflict and criticality (at least ideally). And certainly, doesn’t avoid critical distinctions (adjudications of quality, of verticality in development) due to fear—a fear that often is masked in pluralism and “idiot compassion” because the notion of “caring” is highlighted, or “inclusivity,” “diversity,” and so on. The latter is often found with the green v-meme value system, whereas the integral paradigm is strongly yellow v-meme in value system and the latter much more critical (not pc today). KW is particularly adept in applying his CIT (integral attitude, yellow v-meme) to the loose *spiritualism* that has currently obsessed the West with the ‘new agers’ and others (see Wilber, 2005)—he wrote, “... with the reductionists, I do not think that all, or even most, of those states that claim to be transpersonal, post-rational, or spiritual [mystical] are actually that. The human capacity for self-delusion is too enormous to take all such claims at face value. A highly critical, occasionally skeptical, and sometimes even polemical attitude must be our constant companion on the road to any sort of truth. The commodity most lacking in spiritual circles seems to be, indeed, a healthy skepticism, possibly because skepticism is confused with lack of faith... [a] deeply mis-guided [association]” (p. 16). Critical (secular) theorists ought to find the integral attitude more palatable because of KW’s approach to religion and spirituality.

³⁷ Jack Crittenden is a professor in the Department of Political Science, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

coherent integration of virtually every field of knowledge[a “Theory of Everything,” see Wilber, 1996, 2000]. Wilber’s approach is the opposite of eclecticism.... to the critics the stakes are enormous, and I suggest that the critics who have focused on their pet points in Wilber’s method are attacking a particular tree in the forest of his presentation. Wilber himself has always made only one claim for his approach: If it is fairly accurate, it honors and incorporates more truth than any other system in history. For a method that ‘negates but preserves,’ even though showing how the Kosmos negates but preserves, how could it do otherwise? Yet because of the level of abstraction at which he has chosen to work, Wilber’s claim is really not that grandiose. In working with any field [discipline], Wilber simply backs up to a level of abstraction at which the various conflicting approaches actually agree with one another. Take, for example, the world’s great religious traditions: Do they all agree that Jesus is God? No. So we must jettison that. Do they all agree that there is a God? That depends on the meaning of God. Do they all agree on God, if by God we mean a Spirit that is in many ways unqualifiable, from the Buddhist’s Emptiness to the Jewish mystery of the Divine? Yes, that works as a generalization. This is precisely Wilber’s method—to offer *orienting generalizations* (OGs).... The system presented in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* is, Wilber claims, the system that incorporates the greatest number of OGs from the greatest number of fields of human inquiry. Thus, if it holds up, Wilber’s method incorporates and honors more truth than any other system [critical theory] in history. Wilber (1995) says that a computer could almost do this part. ‘Take every type of truth claim made by various human endeavors, from physics to poetry, from judicial law to moral standards [and so on]... and assign each of those truth claims one point. Then taking any theorist—Freud, Marx, Buddha, Hegel—give them one point for each of the truths they include [in their own theory]. Add up the points. I believe the system I outline would have the most points. If it doesn’t, then of course we try to fix it. (p. 101)

KW’s CIT is based on a premise that no theory or truth claim from anyone, anywhere, can be 100% wrong. “... we want to take all of those essentials with us [from each theorist], but without their reductionisms” (Wilber, 1983, p. 43). The “critical” part in the synthesis of CIT is to use the criteria above (as Crittenden summarized) and criticize the partiality of narrower approaches and theories. KW, according to Crittenden (1997), “... criticizes not their truths but their partial nature” (p. 102). The rest of this chapter will indicate just how KW actually performs this using the various critical theorists and their work. The “integral” part of CIT involves honoring the various fields and theories in order to show how

they fit together in a unifying vision or “genuine world philosophy”³⁸ (to use KW’s own term).

In KW’s first book, a theoretical classic, *Spectrum of Consciousness* (1977/82), written when he was 23 years old, we get a good sense of his near exclusive interest regarding the psychospiritual wisdom traditions (E. and W.) and psychotherapeutic theories of the West, in order to help humankind (*a la* “Kosmological Therapist”³⁹) with oppression-repression (suffering) and liberation from that. This work is highly epistemological (if not at times metaphysical⁴⁰), written from the meta-context of a *non-*

³⁸ KW said, “You can’t honor various methods and fields, without showing how they fit together. That is how to make a genuine world philosophy” (cited in Crittenden, 1997, p. xi). According to Visser (2003), “Wilber’s work as a whole is motivated by the effort to arrive at a world philosophy. Inclusivity is the dominant hallmark of his vision” (p. 1).

³⁹ Simpkinson (1995, p. 7).

⁴⁰ “The ultimate metaphysical secret, if we dare state it so simply, is that there are no boundaries in the universe. Boundaries are illusions [mis-interpretations based on dualism]... (Wilber, 1979/81, p. 31). “... Wilber stands out from the majority of his colleagues in the transpersonal world because he has no reservation in espousing the doctrine of involution (though he now prefers to speak of ‘involuntary givens’). Probably more than anything else, it is this that stands in the way of his [integral] vision being accepted by the scientific community, but in my opinion the doctrine of involution [i.e., evolution-involution as one dynamic] is an essential aspect of any complete metaphysical worldview. Like Aurobindo, Wilber uses the term *involution* to refer to the general movement from Spirit to matter [and *evolution* as the movement from matter to Spirit]...” (Visser, 2003, p. 281). Although the early-Wilber would have been likely more comfortable having his work labeled “metaphysical,” he would not see that as an approach against his admiration and incorporation of a “physical” (scientific, empirical, material) aspect as well. Wilber (1983) wrote, “This book is not ‘merely metaphysical’ or ‘hopelessly idealistic’... for it contains concrete methodologies and strategies for hypothesis formation and testing” (p. 1). Many years later Wilber (c. 2002), he described the evolutionary basis of his integral theory writing that “This is NOT a metaphysical speculation, but an empirical conclusion based on a reconstructive science.... [p. 2] we can say what form leading-edge evolution will take [at a deep structural level].... it is entirely empirical, phenomenological, and experiential Metaphysics is an approach I specifically and strongly disavow” (p. 3) (in “Part I: Habermas and Post-Metaphysical Spirituality” from Shambhala publisher’s website). By 1995 he clarified his position: “I suppose many readers will insist on calling what I am doing ‘metaphysics,’ but if ‘metaphysics’ means thought without evidence, there is not a metaphysical sentence in this entire book” (Wilber, 1995, p. x). Wilber (1996), in part distances himself from Idealists [*via* Kant’s critique of Hegel], he also laments “... the great Idealist systems were thus mistaken for metaphysics [p. 306].... [KW critiques the great, mostly German, Idealist thinkers for not doing contemplative or meditative practices to substantiate and clarify as research data for their abstract ideas and theories]; “... their insights, not easily reproducible, and thus not fallibilistic, were therefore dismissed as ‘mere metaphysics,’ and gone was a priceless opportunity that the West, no doubt, will have to attempt again if it is ever to be hospitable to the future descent of the World Soul [level]” (p. 307). KW’s position re: “mystical” is exactly the same (see Fisher, 1997b, p. 56). By the early 21st century KW was moving beyond an association with metaphysics (or any “new age” sorts of philosophies, which he had always stood back from with great skepticism and many published critiques), and posited his work as the development of a “post-metaphysical approach” (to be developed in the next book or Vol. 2 of his *Kosmic Trilogy*, to be published in early 2006). For those interested see Wilber’s (c. 2002) response on-line entitled “On the Nature of a Post-Metaphysical Spirituality: Response to Habermas and Weis” found at <http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/misc/habermas/index.cfm/xid,1655268/yid,13272833>.

dual perspective⁴¹ in which he posits the need for a holistic (integral) “spectrum psychology” that does not reduce consciousness (reality, or “man”) to explanations derived from scientific materialism or biologism (e.g., Freud) but includes, in an evolutionary developmental spectrum, the discoveries and explanations from the domains of knowing and knowledge all the way “up” to spiritualist thought (e.g., Buddha). Wilber (1996) espouses his memorable integral dictum (in his sometimes generalizing flippant metaphoric way):

... in broad terms, we want to integrate Freud and Buddha, we want to integrate lower ‘depth psychology’ with ‘height psychology.... we are at an extremely auspicious moment in human evolution, because, for the first time in history, we have access to both Freud and Buddha.... for a more ‘full spectrum’ approach. The point of uniting Freud and Buddha is that if you’ve got 40 units of your consciousness [out of 100] trapped in the basement, you’re not going to make it to the higher levels, as a general rule.... If you don’t befriend Freud, it will be harder to get to Buddha. (p. 155)

He wants a model, in his words, that includes “dust to divinity” but more specifically he is calling for a serious global commitment from leaders (and everyone capable) to nurture a “worldcentric vision” that is collective and political. Wilber (2002a) wrote,

... we need to help consciousness evolve from egocentric to ethnocentric to worldcentric.... only people at the worldcentric level even care about worldcentric problems, about global problems and how to fix them. Egocentric and ethnocentric couldn’t give a rat’s ass about global anything! But less than 20% of the world’s population is at worldcentric! (p. 53)

Wilber (1983a) wrote of his “overall paradigm” and politics which,

... would demand a social evolutionary stance [not simplistic Social Darwinism], a social policy geared to help human beings evolve

⁴¹ *Non-dual* is a complex notion found in most all KW’s work. Wilber (1985) wrote: “... the perennial philosophy—the term was made famous by [Aldous] Huxley but coined by Leibniz—the transcendental essence of the great religions—has as its core the notion of advaita or advaya—‘nonduality,’ which means that reality is neither one nor many, neither permanent nor dynamic, neither separate nor unified, neither pluralistic nor holistic. It is entirely and radically above and prior to *any* form of conceptual elaboration. It is strictly unqualifiable. If it is to be discussed at all, then, as Stace so carefully pointed out, it must involve paradoxical statements. So, it is true that reality is one, but equally true that it is many; it is transcendent, but also immanent; it is prior to this world, but it is not other to this world—and so on. Sri Ramana Maharshi had a perfect summary of the paradox of the ultimate: ‘The world is illusory; Brahman alone is real; Brahman is the world’” (pp. 249-250).

through the stage-levels of existence.... This paradigm of transcendence cannot be forced.... You cannot force a person to be free. (p. 196)

“Wilber’s central point,” according to Zimmerman (1996), a highly regarded ecophilosopher, is that,

... which ever species happen to possess the powers of awareness with which humans have been gifted, possessing such awareness means that a species ‘includes’ the biosphere, in the sense of containing and going beyond the levels of complexity involved in constituting the biosphere. Far from justifying derelict treatment either of the biosphere or of the life forms belonging to it, this capacity for transcending the biospheric imposes the responsibility of respecting and appropriately caring for all life, human and otherwise. That so many people, modern and otherwise, fail to live up to this responsibility indicates to what extent humankind lacks genuinely integrated [integral] awareness, but is instead dis-integrated and thus governed by greed, aversion, and delusion. (p. 41)

KW is not a promoter of a psychospiritualism that refuses to include the fundamental (spiritual) reality and preciousness of the world of matter—that is his non-dual stance in a pragmatic nutshell. Simply, KW is convinced that transformations and healthy integral growth only come as we integrate the healthy (and heal the unhealthy) parts of *all* of our being and connections with *all* reality, and in *all* four areas or quadrants (AQAL): individual, collective, subjective, objective (see Figures 3 and 4 in the last chapter).

This integrating and transformative learning zeal, not ecelectic naivety nor colonizing appropriation, is thematic throughout KW’s writing and project initiatives. Moving beyond his typical psychospiritual focus (he is a transpersonal psychology expert afterall), KW has been known (rarely) to even call for a “mystical Marxism” (Wilber, 1993, p. 263) as part of a “future unified system for transformation” (Fisher, 1997b, p. 65).

Elsewhere (Fisher, 1997b), this author argued it is these kinds of extreme integrative (if not contradictory combinations of) statements by KW that both “confuse and arouse distrust/fear in status quo traditional theoretical and predominant political minds” (p. 65). No doubt contemporary critical theorists are (or would be) included in finding him hard to label or take seriously as a critical philosopher (leader) today. Because “Hegel, Freud, and Marx’s grand unified [revolutionary] systems have mostly fallen in

North America [at least] in the last 75+ years... [Wilber's] unifying (Idealist⁴²) synthesis will not be easily accepted..." (p. 65).

Wilber's Writing On Critical Theorists

Fromm & Wilber

Let's start with his first book. The only critical theorist that Wilber (1977/82) cites is **Erich Fromm**,⁴³ the eminent humanistic psychologist-philosopher of the 20th century. Without attempting a complex description of this book's *spectrum* model/theory, Fromm is important to KW as an exemplar of a critical theorist whose research and thinking dealt with (and dwelled within) the repression-oppression of what KW called "a complex matrix of distinctions," which are implicitly part of socialization processes,⁴⁴ and explicitly at times dictated to individuals and groups by society (culture) as a "patterned reality" (consensus) or "social filter" (p. 149). Wilber (1977/82) noted, "Those aspects of experience [or reality or Mind or Spirit] which cannot penetrate this social filter (of language, law, ethics, taboos, logic, rules and meta-rules, etc.) simply remain unconscious" (p. 149)—as the repressed—"a vast expanse of reality is laid waste, rendered unconscious" (p. 149)⁴⁵—kept occluded from the next level of development or existential awareness, in KW's schema.

Fromm had an existential perspective, seeing beyond the Biosocial "socially conditioned filter" (using Fromm's terms) or "social

⁴² This author has also noted KW is hardly a standard "Idealist" at all. In Wilber (1989) he referred to himself as a self-proclaimed "realist mystical transpersonalist" (p. 236). Some of his critics, like the existential theorist Schneider (1989), argued "He can't be both a pragmatist [realist] and a metaphysician [idealist]" (p. 472) (cited in Fisher, 1997b, p. 37). KW has written extensively on his admiration and rejection of philosophical Idealism (as well as Romanticism) as a solution to the postmodern problems of today (e.g., see Wilber, 1998).

⁴³ Erich Fromm (1900-1980) born in Frankfurt, Germany, and received his graduate education there as well. Later settled in the U.S. as an American citizen (late 1930's). He was a professor of psychiatry and member of the International Psychoanalytic Society (from inside cover of Fromm (1941/69).

⁴⁴ This was called "Biosocial" (band, or level of awareness, or consciousness) by KW. In this early schema (map) of KW's, it is one general category (six in all) of a type of duality/awareness found along the spectrum (*a la* KW): Mind (Spirit), Transpersonal (Soul), Existential, Biosocial, Ego (mind), Body. Keep in mind KW is not creating anything "new" here in this spectrum schema but he is synthesizing hundreds of scholars E. and W. to arrive at his views and theory. One could call this a "spectrum theory" as a precursor to his (decades) later critical integral theory (CIT). His overall project is to make parts fit into a Whole/part (holonic) evolutionary system or genuine "world philosophy."

⁴⁵ KW mentioned the "mutinies" Sigmund Freud had to endure from his progressive students, all whom were not totally convinced of the problem of human alienation (dissociation and pathology) being reducible to biology. From Adler, to Jung, to Rank, Sullivan, to Horney and Fromm—all the latter saw much more attention needed to be given to analysis and correction of "sociological factors" that seemed to shape human personality (Wilber, 1977/82, p. 225). The critical theorists, generally, from a more sociopolitical orientation than most psychologists, would concur with this more sociological emphasis.

fictions”(using Wilber’s term, p. 230). Fromm, according to KW also saw “individual elaborations” of the social filter and taboos, which resided in the family system and its pathologies (p. 150). He argued that Fromm had well identified and documented the Biosocial contents (“social fictions”) laying in the “unconscious,” of which constitute “the whole man,”⁴⁶ to use Fromm’s words (Wilber, 1977/82, p. 232).

Wilber (1977/82) was interested in the problem of human needs (mostly unconscious) which can lead to various pathologies when they are not understood or integrated with consciousness. He cited various psychologists and psychotherapists who had their own ideas of what those “real needs” were, and Fromm is included in the list as forefronting the more existential perspective of “the need for meaning”—especially, under conditions of suffering (p. 198). Fromm thus, in KW’s view, was part of a critical thinking from the psychological world “that man is unaware of, or alienated from, or unconscious of, or tangling communication with some aspects of his ‘self’” (p. 198)⁴⁷—often called the Shadow. The intention of KW, Fromm, and all the rest of these psychological (if not “spiritual”) thinkers, was to figure out how best to assess the Shadow-side of humans (and its nasty “projections” against ‘Other’) and heal (re-integrate) it, for the purpose of ending the *self-alienation* (psychic dissociation) of the inner subjective (Left-Hand) quadrants of reality (50%); which if left on their own unconscious path lead to the eventual dissociation from the (Right-Hand) objective quadrants of reality (50%). The latter objective pathology has been seen by many critical theorists as everything from an alienation from matter, nature, body, feminine, woman to anything ‘Other’ (i.e., “bad”) than one’s “good” self-identity and/or group-identity (the latter, which was usually male or masculine valued in pathological patriarchies).

Alienation, in whatever form, or from whatever perspective, is a central concept in the critical theory tradition, and Fromm, relying heavily on Marx, “...believed that capitalism caused people to think of the world around them and each other as composed of standardized, abstract qualities” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 164), which, according to Fromm, led to

⁴⁶ The “whole man” as Fromm wrote, “... with all his potentialities for darkness and light...” (cited in Wilber, 1977/82, p. 232). Fromm’s and KW’s notion of “whole man” (whole person) is not obviously a notion of “whole” as only good, healthy, light, divine by some automaticity as is often found in the uses of “whole” in holism theory, holistic circles, and their “new paradigms” of human wholeness. We’ll return to this critique of “new age” and “new paradigm” thought in Chapter Seven. This author is in obvious agreement here with Fromm and KW (4-quadrant view of “man”)—of which most of critical theory would assume in a general view of “man.”

⁴⁷ Wilber (1981) included Fromm along with other critical researchers like Parsons, Leslie White, Whorf and G. H. Mead (also Castaneda) as having identified the “... largely unconscious ‘repository’ of membership cognition where ‘membership’ is defined...” (p. 103). Note, this membership cognition is defined and regulated by external (objective) and internal (subjective) forms, collectively and individually—using KW’s integral AQAL developmental (and epistemological) model.

Nazism's horrors and the undercurrent dynamic of all fascist and totalitarian authoritarian regimes, which rely on fear among people and an overly-conforming passive anonymity to "herd mentality" (p. 161). Wilber (1981) referred to this as "membership culture" (p. 103)-- as a unique level of development in cultural evolution paralleling individual evolution. His point, like Fromm's is not to say all of "membership culture" is pathological and inhibiting in a way that is only oppressive, but KW, like Fromm, is claiming that the evidence supports the proposition that much of "membership culture" is oppressive (pathology in the objective domain) and leads to repressive elements in the psyche (pathology in the subjective domain). Progress, or evolution, to these writers, like most critical theorists, is a "dialectic of progress"—that is, you get some good things and some bad things with change and growth (evolution)—a theme we'll return to later in this book as CIT and CIAD challenge extreme postmodern anti-progress (anti-Modernism) theory, activism and education.

Wilber (1981) places Fromm politically in the "Democrat" camp, of humanistic psychology and philosophy—in regards to the response to "why men and women are not free." Wilber (2002) wrote⁴⁸,

Why do human beings suffer?—you will get two different, basic answers. The conservatives will say, you suffer because of your self; the liberals will say, you suffer because of someone else.

With some Romantic overtones, this Democrat political camp, opposed to "Republican" is "... a political approach that runs the spectrum from pure Marxists to socialists to liberals to Democrats" (pp. 331-332). Most all theorists of the humanistic liberal camp tend to blame the objective (structures) of society for the worst problems of people. Although, Fromm clearly noted the major cause of alienation to "... be found in the minds of all men"⁴⁹ and their fear of (and escape) from freedom (Fromm, 1941/69). Their solutions usually entail some form of lifting the oppression of wealth distribution, domination, and so on (p. 331). KW takes a third alternative way to politics (incorporating the best from Democrats and Republican political philosophy), as we will see later in Chapter Six.

Fromm's Support of Egoic Growth & Unity Search Distinctions

In Wilber's (1981) book, *Up From Eden*, he cited Fromm (the only critical theorist *per se* among the following), with G. H. Mead, Karen Horney, Castaneda, and Whorf, as researchers (from humanistic psychology, social psychology, psychoanalysis, anthropology, linguistics, respectively),

⁴⁸ Excerpt from *Boomeritis*, Retrieved from <http://formlessmountain.com/KW-WTC/part2-integral.html>

⁴⁹ From back cover of publisher's note in (Fromm, 1941/69).

whose work supports KW's universal thesis that "egoic level" consciousness evolved from the eventual failings (and/or pathology) of "mythic-membership level" of development (i.e., Biosocial) throughout human history (p. 105). The egoic level being a stage or wave in development being a more modern individual (or culture), in which KW summarized as "integration of all lower levels" (Sullivan, Grant, and Grant), "integrated" (Loevinger), "self-actualized" (Maslow), "autonomous"⁵⁰ (Fromm, Riesman)" (Wilber, 1980/82, p. 45; Wilber, 1983, p. 91).

In Wilber's (1980/82) book, *The Atman Project*, he cited Fromm as being aware of regression or "return to the womb" metaphoric (and real psychic) processes, like schizophrenia, as "in search of unity" (p. 154). He noted that Fromm was aware of a rather dangerous "regressive unity" (Fromm's words) drive with distinctive levels of regress developmentally, with "several levels of pathology and irrationality" but "... he does not state the specific stages in detail..." (Wilber, 1980/82, p. 154). Then KW utilized Fromm's critical theory and its consonant stage-developmental sensitivity (to KW's own view), to point to Fromm's "whole spectrum" model⁵¹ (p. 154). Thus, according to KW, Fromm does not make the mistake of so many thinkers (like Freud) that the "satori-mystical state" of unity is "not the regressive unity found by going back to pre-individual, preconscious harmony of paradise, but unity on a new [integrated] level..." (p. 155).⁵² Relying, in part, on Fromm's conclusion here, Wilber (1980/82) wrote,

That fact is now so clear that I do not see how it can be ignored any longer, and the facile equation of the mystic with the psychotic can be done only by demonstrating one's ignorance of the subtleties involved. (p. 155)

Closing Remarks On Fromm & Wilber

From this survey of much of KW's major writing, it is evident that he pretty much stopped citing Fromm after 1983. Although in an obscure

⁵⁰ Wilber (1983a), in a chapter on determining legitimacy, authenticity, and authority in new religions, he notes that "bad" authority has several qualities of which one is "power-over" (Fromm)" (p. 256).

⁵¹ Fromm's developmental model (with Riesman) is summarized in a comparative chart on p. 181 of Wilber (1980/82), indicating Fromm's model goes from pre-egoic "Pleromatic" self-sense mode all the way to "Centauric/Existential," but it fails in not taking into account the transpersonal levels, the latter which KW (and others) believe are essential to a real "full spectrum" approach.

⁵² Fromm (cited in Wilber, 1980/82) continued describing and distinguishing the "new level" of unity: "... that unity which can be arrived at only after man has experienced his separateness, after he has gone through the stage of alienation from himself and his world, and has been fully born ["born again" as William James would say]. This new unity has a premise the full development of man's reason [where reason is 'included and transcended'-- not anti-reason as the "mystical" can often be interpreted, leading to a stage in which reason no longer separates man from his immediate, intuitive grasp of reality" (p. 155).

European publication in 1996 (cited in Visser, 2003, p. 35), KW wrote about the way he sees the future of “integral psychology” (albeit, this could have included his own integral theory and philosophy), as having a broad range of impact on future global society. KW mentions in that publication that integral psychology will likely be as impactful as psychoanalysis has been. He wrote,

Psychoanalysis had much of its greatest impact in fields that were also outside of psychology. It had a major and profound influence in literature, in literary theory, in political theory and discourse (the enormously influential Frankfurt School of Critical Theory—Horkheimer, Adorno, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas—was a direct attempt to integrate the concerns of Marx and Freud), in art and in the theories of art, even in artistic practice (the Surrealists, for example), and in education and educational theories and practices.... And I think we are now on the verge of something quite very similar happening with integral studies, perhaps not as widespread, but at least quite similar. (p. 35).

While acknowledging the “enormous” influence of the Frankfurt School, KW rarely mentioned the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory *per se* in his early work. Albeit, he does write about several of the Frankfurt Schools’ theorists independently. Yet he has acknowledged Fromm as a critical theorist, and the early-Wilber appears to have found Fromm’s research important to support some of his own major claims and propositions as to human and social development overall.

Fromm’s background in psychoanalysis is undeniably connected to KW’s project to construct a CIT of human development based soundly on the best findings of psychoanalysis and its general critical theorizing on the human condition and the nature of psychic repression (less so oppression). As well, KW was very mild in his critique of Fromm, unlike we shall see with all of the other critical theorists (perhaps, Habermas an exception) to follow in this chapter.

Marx, Marxism & Wilber

By 1981 (*Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution*) KW ventured forth with his theory of cultural evolution⁵³ as paralleling

⁵³ Marx can be accused of having a theory of evolutionary determinism (“historical materialism”) which marks out the necessary unfolding of history, of cultural development, and the potential of humankind. All this is seen as a “master narrative” by postmodern poststructuralist critics and much of Marx’s thought is thus refuted or denied studied in post-secondary education, at least in North America. KW’s CIT has some elements of a “grand” unifying or “master narrative” [neo-

individual evolution. His focus unit of study, as usual, was “consciousness” (levels or stages, later called waves). He wanted to summarize a lot of philosophers, theorists and empirical data, to arrive at a full spectrum synthesis—a “... story of mankind’s growth and evolution from a tragic angle” (p. x). In this darker view, he wrote,

Most of the accounts of [hu]man’s evolution err to one side or the other of that equation. They [Idealists] either overemphasize the growth aspect, seeing man’s evolution as nothing but a series of great advances and great leaps forward, thereby ignoring the fact that evolution is not a happy-go-lucky series of sweetness-and-light promotions, but a painful process of growth. Or they [Romanticists] tend to the opposite direction and, seeing the agony and despair of mankind, look back nostalgically to that lost Eden of innocence, prior to self-consciousness, wherein man slumbered with the beasts in blissful ignorance. This view tends to see every evolutionary step out of Eden as being a crime [or sin]. With very persuasive evidence, they show that war, hunger, exploitation, slavery, oppression, guilt [fear], and poverty *all* came into existence with the rise of civilization and culture and man’s increasing ‘evolution.’ Primal [hu]man, on the whole, suffered none of those problems—thus, if modern, civilized man is a product of evolution, then please give us less of it.... both views are correct... [more or less correct, but also incomplete, and both views, according to KW need to be integrated]. (p. x)

It is not surprising in Wilber (1981),⁵⁴ this author’s particular favorite of all of KW’s work, that the “painful growth” and tragic-side of human

Hegelian in terms of history as the unfolding of Spirit]. KW, likely the lesser dogmatic of the two, none the less was not about to throw out all of the knowledge that had been gained about cultural and historical evolution/development from the past. KW’s theory of cultural evolution, is however, not as one would expect and critiques Traditionalists, and retro-Romantic notions (see Chpt. 12 in Wilber, 2000). He does acknowledge the problematics of the whole area of summarizing cultural evolution or even invoking it as a worthy scholarly topic. “This massive hostility to cultural evolution [i.e., in postmodernity] was also shared by liberal social theorists, and for some very understandable and even noble reasons. Social Darwinism in its most common forms was so crude and so cruel—not to mention based on the most dubious aspects of Darwinian theory—that it came to mean not much more than a colossal lack of compassion for one’s fellow men and women. And thus liberal social theorists, of virtually every variety, collectively decided that instead of trying to tease apart the valid from the grotesque aspects of cultural evolution, it was better to avoid and even deny the topic altogether. The thesis of *Eden* [Wilber, 1981] was thus, at the time, rather daring, certainly controversial” (Wilber, 1997, p. 69).

⁵⁴ Wilber (1997a) admitted “The thesis of *Eden* was... at the time, rather daring and certainly controversial” (p. 76). “... *Up from Eden* is perhaps Wilber’s most controversial book to date, since it may, at times, seem to overgeneralize certain aspects of human history, but, as a sound defense, it was only intended to be a brief outline. Nonetheless, to this day, many people consider it one of thier favorite, and the most intriguing, of Wilber’s books” (Reynolds, 2004, p. 33). Too bad Reynolds does not hypothesize as to why there is such intrigue with this book’s findings. Visser (2003) noted “... it is one of his most controversial works...” (p. 97). I think Visser

cultural evolution would introduce KW's views on Marx for the first time in print.

Karl Marx,⁵⁵ a German philosopher, economist and revolutionary, of Jewish descent, was always politically critical of the State—a State which was classist and unfriendly to the best of socialist-humanitarian doctrine. A radical he was, by any standards. With his many projects, ideas, and critics, his work is still very important to social theory and critical theory⁵⁶ *per se*. He was early in life deeply critical of destructive “alienation” (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 390) and the loss of humanity within what he saw as a burgeoning capitalist economy and State that supported (and was run by) it. The Marxian darkside of the human condition and future (history) was bloody and painful indeed—nothing less than a working class full-revolution and overthrow of the bourgeois ‘middle class’ (and elite owners) was inevitable and necessary for a just society. Marx was not merely thinking of revolution from the outside-in either, as his interpreters and critics tend to over-emphasize. Jary & Jary (1995) remarked,

The importance of ‘human consciousness’ needs to be

implicitly recognized why this book is intriguing and most controversial, in that it documents a dark history (a “Fall” – and actually two “Falls;” like a genesis or theodicy story, it is an explanation of human evil and human good in battle, with no answer clear that one will victor over the other). In Visser’s words: “In *Up from Eden* Wilber again emphasized the precarious nature of the development of the human ego, both within the individual and within a culture. Having fully disengaged itself from the preceding stages of development (the environment, the body, the group), the ego can now forcibly *suppress* these stages. Having heroically wrested its existence from the slumber of the unconscious, the ego begins to feel omnipotent, forgetting that it is nothing in comparison with the spiritual reality of the Self. Caught between the vast realm of unconscious nature and the vast realm of the spiritual Self, the ego imagines itself to be the only reality [U.L. quadrant]. Nevertheless Wilber is still keen to defend the ego. In his opinion this relative newcomer in human evolution has managed to free itself from the oppressive world of magic and myth, and in doing so had stimulated our mental development to a tremendous extent” (pp. 100-101).

⁵⁵ Karl Marx (1818-1883), born in Trier in the Rhineland and educated at the universities of Bonn and Berlin. His career is one of being an independent scholar, journalist, and political activist (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 389).

⁵⁶ According to the renowned historical sociologist Collins (1994), “We could start our account of the Conflict Tradition [which embraces the later critical theory tradition] with many different thinkers. But for our purposes, it is useful to begin with Karl Marx. What is referred to as the thought of ‘Marx’ is actually more of a symbol than the work of one individual. Marx is the center of a tradition that dramatized conflict more than any other [*a la* Hegel]. It also became the doctrine of a political movement... Marxism has gone through many splits and variations.... For all this, our concern here is with the *intellectual* contribution of Marxism to a realistic understanding of the world as a situation of domination and conflict. This means ignoring whatever is the orthodox or unorthodox socialist or Communist line and concentrating on whatever ideas prove to be most valuable in the lineage marked by the name of ‘Marx’ (pp. 49-50). This author, and this book, like KW too, take the intellectual side of Marx’s best thinking and of Marxism in general, and leave, as we consider appropriate, some of the other political machinations and movements that go with ‘Marx.’ The importance of Friedrich Engels cannot be overlooked without mention, and readers are recommended to see Engels role in the development of Marxian analysis and thought (e.g., Collins, 1994, pp. 56-81).

emphasized.... Revolutions did not happen automatically, and classes must become conscious of their interests before they could play their historic roles in the process of moving society forward, Marx held that consciousness developed as a reflection of the material conditions of existence to which classes were subject, though he recognized that ruling classes were capable of obstructing the development of [such a critical] consciousness in subordinate classes. (pp. 391-392)

Revolutionary inevitability; meaning change and transformation (subjective and objective, individual and communal) is embedded in Marx's thought and critical theory. Like KW, transformation of consciousness is critical to the progress, evolution, and development of history and a new level of society/culture. Universality is intended in these claims, as KW and Marx would align easily in that regard. For critical educators, and for the development of CIAD in this book, Marx's critical theory (which heavily informed the critical theory of Paulo Freire in emancipatory educational circles, for example) is pivotal in coming to terms with how best to educate ourselves. And suffice it to say, in this brief introduction to Marx through KW's eyes and theory, perhaps Fromm's (1961) book⁵⁷ offers an assisting potent guide. Brookfield (2005) summarized Fromm, writing,

Fromm argues that the young Marx was convinced that the chief benefit of socialist revolution would be the transformation of personality, the creation of a new kind of humanitarian citizen. (p. 14)

As mentioned in an earlier footnote, there are many problems approaching 'Marx' (even as a symbol of critical theory). Brookfield (2005) summarized some of this "marxophobia" (after McLaren, 1997, p. 172) (p. 19). Brookfield, writing from within a particular American context, wrote,

Marxophobia holds that even to mention Marx is to engage in un-American behavior and by implication to support the genocide and repression exhibited by totalitarian communist regimes [e.g., Stalin] throughout history. Despite repeated attempts by all the Frankfurt School [critical] theorists to disassociate Marxist analysis from the rigidity of state totalitarianism, popular opinion equates Marx with repression, standardization, bureaucratization, and denial of [individual] creativity or liberty.... Yet, though critical theory can be conceived as a constant conversation with Marx, it is not a simple replication of Marxism. As McLaren points out, 'Many if not most critical educators work outside the orthodox Marxian tradition and do

⁵⁷ Fromm wrote, *Marx's Concept of Man*, 1961/75, NY:Ungar.

not consider capitalism an irrevocable evil' (McLaren, 1997, p. 172). Erich Fromm, amongst other critical theorists, pointed out that it is also possible to find crack and crevices in a capitalist system.... In the critical theory tradition, it is perfectly possible to find a Marxist analysis useful without by implication endorsing the Gulag or Chinese cultural revolution.⁵⁸ Indeed, Marcuse, West, Davis, and others draw attention to the democratic impulse in Marx, while Fromm sees Marx as concerned chiefly with spiritual liberation.⁵⁹ (p. 19)

It seems worthy to go on at length somewhat regarding Marx and Marxism, and equally the rather disturbing, albeit understandable, fear that accompanies the name and the symbol in social history and education. This author, like KW, would delightfully forge ahead, to re-learn and re-interpret Marx's work and influence with fresh perspectives, and never yield to the fear alone as the motivator to predict the way Marx is seen as a critical theorist. Fromm's reading of Marx and "spiritual liberation" is right up KW's alley.

Brookfield (2005), speaking to critical adult educators (particularly) said it well,

⁵⁸ KW seems more generous than some critics, like Ernest Becker who "... says that Marxism is Soviet religion... death-denial. This can occur, as we have seen, on any level, and simply reflects that level's inherent taboo avoidance [Atman project]" (Wilber, 1983, p. 57). KW, nor this author equate Marxism with its extremist versions as in "Soviet Marxism/Leninism" – see KW's critique of Maoism (Wilber, 1983, p. 62). KW is also cautious of religion, whether spiritual or secular. When examining the "ideological nexus" that protects and reproduces a "religion" and its "immortality prospects" the notion of critical questioning is difficult, if not impossible. He wrote, "If mythic-religious, he [a devout follower] crusades against sinners, burns witches, hangs heretics; if Marxist, helives for the revolution that will crush disbelievers (and in the meantime jails 'witches,' psychiatrizes 'heretics')..." (Wilber, 1983, p. 66).

⁵⁹ Marx is best known to have given religion a negative valence, seeing it as "... the paradigm of powerlessness, the palimpsest of the alienated life..." (Wexler, 2000, p. 5). Wexler, a unique post-postmodern social scientist at the University of Israel, is currently utilizing Marx's theory of alienation, along with Weber and Durkheim, Hasidism, Tantrism, and American nature religion (and others) to suggest these forms of theory and practices, modern and premodern, have an essential 'spirit' core to bring to "societal resacralization" and a post-postmodern "mystical society" on a global scale (pp. 9-11). The less obvious point of this note, is that although critical social theorists (the likes of Weber, Durkheim, Marx) are devout modern rationalists, they have been interested in the human aspects of the "irrational" (and arational), which can enspirit and move societies deeply, albeit Marx was the less focused on that than the other two. Wilber (1983) also believes rational and arational domains are not incongruent (see also Bickel (2005) on the arational in Jean Gebser's aperspectival-integral consciousness structure). KW wrote, "I also believe rational adaptation is perfectly religious... capable of providing a legitimate, cogent, integrative, and meaningful worldview..." (p. 76). Some might argue, KW is an advocate for "rational religion." True to a point, but then he is interested in trans-rational religion as well. The point is, none of KW's writing, nor this author's, is intended to demean or negate the function of religion, in general. Of course, that also does not exclude healthy informed critique of religion(s) and their role in future society and education.

If critical theory can be understood as a critical engagement with Marx, then a critical theory of adult learning must begin by acknowledging the centrality of Marxist concepts.” (p. 19)

The rest of this chapter, and this book in general, attempts such a course, starting with KW’s interest in Marx’s critical theory.

Let’s return to Wilber (1981). KW cited Marx’s critique of Hegel, as “correct as far as it goes,” in that “*actual historical contingencies*” have to be taken into account on the material existence plane, and “not merely abstract ... deep structures” (*a la* Hegel) to explain change and evolution of society and history itself. KW was referring to the evolutionary dynamic of “... successively higher-level deep structures” which emerge can have their “surface structures” “... be repressed, oppressed, and distorted by coercive social forces” (as Marx understood) (p. 32). Wilber (1981) continued,

If the polis-praxis is expressive of a higher evolutionary achievement—and it is—it is also the executor of a potential crippling, not only of its own level but of *all other levels as well*. The state—as Marx, Freud, Socrates, and Christ discovered in their own spheres—can be brutally oppressive of everything from religion to ideas to sex to labor.⁶⁰

KW, continuing to develop his critical “complete social theory,” saw Marx, among others (e.g., Freud, Socrates, Christ), as “The archetypal [emancipatory] champions of unrepressed relationship” in each of his

⁶⁰ Outlining his spectrum model of cultural and historical development, Wilber (1981) noted where Marx’s explanatory analysis focused primarily, and that was on level one (material consciousness): religion (levels 5-8), ideas (levels 3-4), sex (level 2), labor (level 1). One can see that Freud’s explanatory analysis focused primarily on level two and so on (p. 168). “Level 1. The technological production and economic exchange of material entities, whose paradigm is food, and whose [value] sphere is physical [and social] labor” (Wilber, 1981, p. 167). “At a minimum, then, our levels of analysis would include (1) the physical level of material exchange, whose paradigm is food consumption and food extraction from the natural environment, whose sphere is that of manual (technic) labor, and whose archetypal analyst is Marx; (2) the emotional level of pranic (vital) exchange, whose paradigm is breath and sex, whose sphere is that of emotional discourse, from feeling to sex to power, and whose archetypal analyst is Freud; (3) the mental level of symbolic exchange, whose paradigm is discourse (language), whose sphere is that of communication, and whose archetypal analyst is Socrates [now KW would likely include Habermas here]; (4) the psychic level of intuitive exchange, whose paradigm is siddhi (or psychic insight and vision-logic [integral] in general), whose sphere is yogic kundalini, and whose archetypal analyst is Patanjali...” (Wilber, 1983, p. 44). KW offered still two more broad encompassing levels, and we, who are not so familiar with levels 4-6 can read KW directly to better understand how levels of exchange go from the physical to the spiritual in a “full-spectrum” integral theory of human and evolutionary development. Note: at times 8-10 levels are used in KW’s writing but they all follow the same basic logic of relations (worldviews) and characteristics of increasing complexity of consciousness from the more external and visible to the more internal and invisible (the latter, Marx was less interested in for sure, at least relative to Wilber).

levels or spheres of “exchange” (p. 167). This juxtaposition and admiration of Marx with historical elites like Socrates and Christ is not without significance in KW’s critical social and spiritual schema. He seemed to see, at least theoretically, that Marx’s notion of revolution is potentially powerful (if not necessary in some cases), yet inadequate to the ‘call’ of ‘true freedom. Wilber (1981) wrote,

As [Norman] Brown put it, people have historically been politically enslaved, but on the deepest psychological level [*a la* Fromm, and spiritual level *a la* Hegel], the slave is somehow in love with his chains [unfreedom]. And if this is true—or partially true—then no amount of social reform, let alone Marxist revolution, will truly alleviate the problem. (p. 174)

Wilber (1981) layed out his six “generalizations” of his theory of evolution or development at the human and cultural level.⁶¹ He argued these can help to “... reconstruct [re-interpret] the essentials of such theorists as Marx and Freud without their reductionist tendencies [e.g., Marx = it’s all about physical matter; Freud = it’s all about sex (biology)] (p. 266). Note: KW’s project of his own CIT or critical social theory here is not unlike what many of the Frankfurt School critical theorists were doing as well—re-interpreting Marx’s and Freud’s narrow findings and dubious (or incomplete) paradigms that were attempting to explain “everything” about human development and historical progress (and/or regress).

Later in Wilber (1995, 1996) using his quadrant analysis (map), he placed Marx as a theorist in the Lower Right quadrant aspects (system structure, sociological) of reality (Figure 5). Other materialist theorists and critical theorists would also be located here for example, “The *Marxist feminists* and the *social feminists* have contributed much to our understanding of the importance of this Lower Right quadrant for an overall view” (Wilber, 1997, p. 195). Further, Wilber (2000) concluded,

Marxists and neo-Marxists, [many critical theorists locate their theories here] despite the obvious failings of a system that attempts to reduce all quadrants to the Lower Right, have nonetheless outlined the many ways in which the techno-economic base profoundly influences the consciousness of men and women, and not integral theory can afford to overlook these important findings. (p. 147)

⁶¹ KW acknowledged a general ‘truth’ about evolutionary stages [levels]: “... there is now almost overwhelming evidence that, as I would put it, *worldviews follow the base*, not in any strong Marxist or deterministic fashion, but in the general sense that the techno-economic base sets certain broad limits within which worldviews tend to unfold” (Wilber, 1997, p. 194).

According to Wilber (1981), Marx concluded that (in Marx's own words) "the mode of production of material life conditions [were] the general process of social, political and mental life"—and in particular,

... Marx felt that economic *exploitation*, in one form or another, meant an *alienation* of natural labor, and that the alienation of labor produced an alienation of thought and feeling—produced what Marx called "false consciousness."⁶² (p. 266)

This oppression was linked to differential privilege of landowners and notions of private property for the wealthier classes. Both Hegel and Marx were to link this "historical fact of alienation"⁶³ to "the institution of private property."⁶⁴ In general, for Marx, the inner subjective (repression) was due directly to the outer objective (oppression). Oppression and exploitation as the causal source of "man's unfreedom" is the theme also found in humanists like Rousseau [18th century], "... one of the first 'Marxists'..." (Wilber, 1981, p. 266). KW summarized Marx's position on the unfair material relations re: consciousness, whereby,

Now humans as 'automaton objects,' *adjusted* to a social reality that is oppressive and false [illusory], is approximately what Marx meant by "false consciousness" and "alienated individuals." The point is that *if physical exchange is distorted* (through massive and undeserved private property for the few, through the concentration of vast amounts of money, capital, goods, etc., in the hands of a rich elite, and so on), *it forms a distressed* [anxiety-ridden] *base upon feeling and thinking are built* (in both rich and poor alike, although, of course, in drastically different directions: the poor toward impoverishment, the rich toward decadence). [KW adds his own view] And as feeling and thinking *adjust* to that false base, as levels 2 and 3 and 4 equilibrate to the distortions [if not pathologies] of level 1, they tend to reproduce that [material base] falseness in their own [more complex, or higher] spheres [of social life].⁶⁵ (p. 267)

⁶² "Marx... compellingly demonstrated that when the material-economic exchange process is oppressed and distorted, then... 'false consciousness,' and that the higher cultural productions of art, philosophy, and religion are thereby pressed as ideology into mere servants of oppression, each becoming, in its own way, an 'opiate for the masses'" (Wilber, 1983, p. 42).

⁶³ It ought to be kept in mind, following Hegel, and some extent in Marx (also in Paulo Freire), that both rich and poor alike are alienated in such a distortion of the material level one, or any other level on the developmental spectrum KW has laid out. The alienation may look different from how it manifests among the poor and the rich, so to speak, but for the rich "... in resting their material affluence on the necessary deprivations of others, sever themselves from the moral totality of mankind and set in motion that 'causality of fate,' described by Hegel, where the alienation from others results inexorably in the alienation of self" (Wilber, 1981, p. 267).

⁶⁴ Wilber (1981, p. 266) citing Robinson (1969).

⁶⁵ Wilber (1981) gives an example of how the foundational levels of exchange (spheres), like level 1, can twist the higher more significant levels of exchange: "... as a simple example, the

Upon alienated [p. 267] labor tends to emerge alienated feelings and thoughts (in both rich and poor alike). And that, I think, is one of Marx's enduring insights. (p. 268)

Wilber's Basic Critique Of Marx & Marxism

KW's basic critique of Marx's (critical theory) structural reductionism can best be understood in the context of Hegel's reading of history and Marx's need to try to 'balance' (over-correct) it. Wilber (1983) summarized this:

... as we look at the levels of structural organization and relational exchange [*a la* Habermas, for e.g.] of the compound individual,⁶⁶ it becomes obvious that many theorists have taken *one* level and tried to make it paradigmatic. If they take a higher level, as idealists do, they tend to elevate the lower levels to an exalted status they simply do not possess, or they tend to ignore the lower levels altogether. Reading history according to Hegel, for instance, one always gets the impression that the material world might at any moment evaporate. This apparently annoyed Marx so much that he took the opposite position but perfectly standard reductionistic approach: take a lower level, call it "the only really real" level, then reduce all higher levels to it, or at least explain all higher levels in terms of the lower. I need not tell you that Marx made the material level and its exchanges paradigmatic for *all* of existence.... But you can see where such theorists *have* made absolutely crucial—if absolutely partial—contributions. (p. 42)

Wilber (1981) begins his specific critique of Marxian critical theory: First, *The "Nothing But" Problem (Reductionism)*:

mentality [levels 3 and 4] of the savagely poor tends toward depression; the rich, toward elitism. In general, philosophy caught in this trap produces what Marx called 'ideology'—philosophy which springs from, and reinforces, oppression and exploitation and non-emancipation. This led Marx to the famous statement that whereas most philosophers merely think about the world [abstractly], the real need is to change it" (p. 267). For further explication of KW's distinction between "foundational" and "significance" across the developmental spectrum, see Wilber (1995).⁶⁶ "For convenience' sake, I will reduce the number of levels of structural organization to five and use the names most familiar to Westerners: matter (1), body (2-3), mind (4-6), soul (7-8), and spirit (9-10). Now, since each of these levels of structural organization *transcends but includes* its predecessors, each structure of development enfolds, envelops, comprehends, or *compounds* the previous structures, much as the neocortex [of the human brain] envelops the mammalian limbic system, which in turn envelops the reptilian stem [see Paul McLean's "triune brain concept"]. For this reason, and in an explicit attempt to connect developmental psychology and evolutionary theory with the philosophical groundwork of Whitehead and Harshorne, we say tha the human being is a *compound individual*—compounded of all the past levels of development and capped by the present level itself. Potentially, then, the human being is *compounded* of matter, prana, mind, sould, and spirit. The material body is exercised in labor with the physical-natural environment.... [and so on]" (Wilber, 1983, pp. 35-36).

There are, however, four central inadequacies to general Marxist theory. First, there is an over-commitment to materialism⁶⁷ (taken from Feuerbach), which leads Marx to see history [development and evolution] as almost nothing but the unfolding of material forces (“dialectical materialism”).... While that is probably (and hopefully) true enough for level 1, it has only a slight direct bearing on the motivations of level 2, less so on level 3, even less on level 4, etc. (It is important on these levels, but only insofar as they are contaminated by distortions from the lower.) But to reduce history to dialectical materialism is to reduce the Great Chain of Being⁶⁸ to level 1 [recall KW’s 8-10 levels are identified as the whole “spectrum” in his early work]. (p. 268)

According to Walsh (1983), summarizing KW’s view, “Marx interpreted all behavior in terms of economics.... Art, philosophy, religion, all ‘higher’ activities thus became expressions of economic oppression...” (p. xi). Walsh called this a “category error” which leads philosophically into the rest of the Wilberian critique of Marx’s work.

The second critique of Marx is very intimately connected to the error of the first, according to Wilber (1981),

Marx made food paradigmatic [level 1]⁶⁹.... Sex for Freud, was

⁶⁷ In KW’s later terminology this would be “it-ism” (third person) using the four quadrants distinctions of kinds of languages used to explain and represent reality (Wilber, 1996, p. 267). “Also interpreted as an over-committed worldview which Marx and Engels fell for fully, as typified in ‘apart from nature and human beings,’ Engels would write, ‘nothing exists; and the higher beings which our religions fantasy created [p. 308] are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence. The enthusiasm was general; we were all for the moment followers of Feuerbach.’ And the entire modern and premodern world is, in effect, the followers of Feurbach” (Wilber, 1996, p. 309). KW lamented on this “staggering scenario” (Wilber, 2000, p. 55) where scientism virtually erased spirituality. “The bleakness of the modern scientific proclamation is chilling. In that extraordinary journey from matter to body to mind to soul to spirit, scientific materialism halted the journey at the very first stage [as did Marx somewhat], and proclaimed all subsequent developments to be nothing but arrangements of frisky dirt. Why this dirt would get right up and eventually start writing poetry was not explained” (Wilber, 2000, p. 55).

⁶⁸ For critics, KW’s view and use of the Great Chain of Being (hierarchical) metaphor from the perennial philosophy (*a la* Huxley, etc.) is dubious. But be assured that KW has used this and criticized it extensively to what Visser (2003) has labeled KW’s later form of a “neo-perennial philosophy” (pp. 228, 308) and what Zimmerman () has called KW’s “neo-Hegelian philosophy.” For sure, KW would not negate the fact that he has strong leanings to Neoplatonism as well, but he is never one to fully embrace a Tradition without modifying it with newly emergent facts and ideas. KW is very difficult to place (box-in) precisely, philosophically speaking. No wonder he has chosen (critical) “integral philosophy” as his own favorite label.

⁶⁹ Also called “instrumental productivity” paradigm with a “premium on the it-domain” (Wilber, 1996, p. 266). Agreeing partially with Marx, Wilber (1996) wrote, the “Techno-economic base of a society (the Lower Right quadrant) [its-domain] sets the *concrete forms* within which the cultural superstructure in any sort of strong Marxist sense, but it does set various limits and possibilities (it’s virtually impossible, for example, to outlaw slavery with an agrarian base, and equally impossible to vindicate women’s rights)...” (p. 266).

paradigmatic [level 2]. (p. 269)

... this materialistic over-commitment [reductionism] often predisposes Marx to the notion that the lowest level of being—food, matter, economic labor, and production—doesn't just influence the higher [developmental] levels (of mind, philosophy, and religion), but causes and creates them. Hence his oft-quoted statement to the effect that it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their material and economic existence that determines their consciousness [i.e., objective quadrants are more powerful than subjective quadrants in determining reality, and “man”]. He doesn't see that the higher comes *through* the lower and is thus often affected by it: he thinks [theorizes] that the higher comes *from* the lower and is causally produced by it.⁷⁰ (p. 268)

This second critique could be called the *Causal-Misplacement*. KW is critiquing Marx's understanding of development and evolutionary theory, and the very nature and processes of change and transformation from level to level or stage to stage. Marx has not taken seriously, as does KW, the principle (and reality) of development (*a la* Hegel to Piaget), that evolution of consciousness works by “include and transcend,” in which the lower levels reach a point where they cannot solve the problems at that level, and they are also laden with potential of the next higher (senior) level which is capable of solving problems the junior cannot. This analysis is based on “deep structure” theory, which is essential to KW's spectrum theory and schema (metaphysics)—meaning that the invisible deep structure of the higher next level is *apriori* to development of the lower level (this is explicated in KW's view of involution, to complement evolution).

All levels are “already already” in KW's non-dualist view—a view that Marx wouldn't have accepted because he was a basic materialist. Is KW then a spiritualist? Not exactly; and that story will unfold as we travel through this book. KW is an integralist, not favoring either one or the

⁷⁰ Marx is “... theoretically squeezing and twisting the lower in hopes of extracting the higher” (Wilber, 1981, pp. 269-270). “... the exchanges of the higher levels, although they are not produced by the lower, can be partially deformed or distorted by the lower. That is, in the compound human individual [or organization/system], the distortion of the lower levels can partially deform the exchanges of the higher—and this deformation is what so concerned Marx, Freud, etc. This occurs *not* because the higher is produced by the lower or comes from it, but simply because it comes through it [and ultimately the deeper/higher structure is interpreted in a reduced way, distorting and repressing the Self to a specific narrow self-system (identity) on the overall spectrum] and then rests upon it. It's like a chick and its egg: the chick emerges by breaking *through* the eggshell, and the chick can be deformed in the process (if the shell is brittle, hard, etc.). But to say the higher comes *from* the lower, or ego comes from id, or consciousness is produced by matter [Marx], is like saying the chick is made of eggshells” (Wilber, 1981, p. 302).

other materialist or spiritualist cosmology alone as *the* only explanation for a motivating source of change and development for humanity and all beings. The latter favorite positioning, oppositioning, or dissociating is exactly the dualism that KW's CIT overcomes (at least theoretically).

The third critique, we could call *Solution-Displacement* revolves around the second, whereby,

... Marx often fails to understand that the effects of material distortions [injustice via dominant-subordinate relations, etc.] can, although with some difficulty, be largely overcome at and by a higher level.⁷¹ (p. 268)

As pointed out above, in regard to the second Wilberian critique of Marx's thought, the senior level evolves through the first because it is "its better" in terms of solving the problems that the first level cannot solve (and that the first level often created itself). Einstein's dictum, more or less, was: "We cannot resolve the problems we created at one level at that level, but only at the next level are viable solutions to be found." KW challenged the "return" (or "regress" or "Descender"⁷²) default in the reductionism of Marx and so many other thinkers throughout history.

We have to evolve our complexity of level (of exchange, of thinking, consciousness itself, etc.) to solve prior problems we've created, says KW, and not merely think we have to "return" to the source level 1 as the only way to "fix" our problems. At best, that is 50% the solution ("back to basics"), but reductionists (or materialists) like Marx make it (virtually)

⁷¹ "As a crude example, think of the number of individuals under severe material oppression that have risen above these distortions to provide enduring and even brilliant philosophical/mental insights (not to mention spiritual breakthroughs): Homer, for one (some say he was a slave, and blind as well); Marx, for another (he lived in bitter poverty most of his life) [this author can totally relate]. This is in no way to condone exploitation [validate poverty as normal or even potentially valuable to resilient genius]; it only goes to show that material production does not absolutely, not even pre-eminently, determine consciousness [or its evolutionary advance]" (Wilber, 1981, p. 268). The crux of KW's critique of Marxian thought (and much of humanist-liberalism-progressivism) is one we will come back to in this book more than once, as it is a critique against the over-determining ideology of what social critics have called "victim culture" (or "culture of fear")—and the growing "therapy culture" (and "security culture") that accompanies it (e.g., Furedi, 1997, 2004). KW's overall thought and critiques do not easily (alone) fall into the codes of a nice caring "green" and/or "humanist-liberal-progressivism"—a criticism of which this author particularly likes (but obviously hundreds of thousands of KW fans exist on the planet, who also are attracted to his unique standpoint on ecology, humanity, and liberty. More to come later. KW's integralist thought (CIT) is put forward as a more complete (and less distorted; less fear-based) progressivist theory than most.

⁷² Later, in Wilber (1995), expanding his model and critique, KW would point to the Romanticism (retribalism and paganism), and Eco Camp thinking, systems-spirituality and so on, that fall into this "return" mythopoetic ideology of the "best" way to go—all, in its worst pathology, driven by 'fear' in the name of *Thanatos* (1/2 of the 'Fear' Matrix, see Fisher, 2003).

100% the solution—not unlike so many “conservative”⁷³ thinkers today who believe we have to return to Tradition and “back to the basics” to correct the problems of x, y, z today. This is reform, not transform. Wilber and this author (among others) are promoting transformation and within that framework some reform is needed, and at the extreme, perhaps revolution is required as part of transformation.

Transformative development, and education, ought to be such an evolving process, where we pursue and nurture the next higher level of thinking (and feeling, and so on)—in order to solve the complex problems that have previously been unsolvable. To so evolve involves systematic critique of the earlier levels ways and re-interpreting its problems and solutions, and in some cases re-doing the way we do level 1 (for e.g.). CIT and CIAD are set upon this basic Wilberian integral (forward and back and forward again) type of developmental evolutionary premise, which Marx only partially could see and ended up materialistically distorting (reducing) developmental distinctions and realities, according to KW.

Wilber’s (1981) fourth critique, existential and transpersonal (nondual), and possibly the hardest to swallow, revolves around KW’s (and others) notion of the developmental relationship of “self” to “Spirit” (or “Ground of Being”)—a notion that Marx (and staunch Marxists or materialists today) would never likely listen to, never mind possibly accept as valid. While that is said, it ought to be remembered that KW is able to embrace materialist (Marxist) thought and position, but the reverse case is not so. Who’s view is most non-oppressive then? Who is intolerant in their theories? Who’s theory is most oppressive itself, in the name of attempting to undermine oppression? These are the questions CIT must ask. KW’s theory is the more integrative, more integral and “better” for exactly that reason of its factual and theoretical tolerance of other theories and ways of knowing (see KW’s critical integral method, described at the beginning of this chapter, and its criteria for “better”).

Here KW acknowledged the “brutality of outward oppression,” where Marx had the dynamics exposed for all to see. However, Marx “... gives scant heed to the more profound mechanics and brutality of the internal demand for oppression” (p. 268). This critique could be called the

⁷³ Wilber’s (c. 2002) model and thinking can have an odd, if not surprising, “conservative” aspect to it at times—he is not interested in a politics of only liberal thought, and believes there is good in each, so some conservative thought is integrated in his version of CIT. He wrote, “... it has often been noted that ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ have in some important ways switched their positions since the Enlightenment.... [as used in this book] conservative [i.e., secular camp], or conserving the past [tradition]—it tends to champion only those practices that have historically demonstrated that they work. They are not progressive or revolutionary [not ‘lovers’ of change and the new]—looking to the future for some sort of change and salvation—they are traditional, even reactionary: looking to the past for stable, proven anchors” (p. 4, “Part II: Integral Politics” excerpt from <http://formlessmountain.com/KW-WTC/part2-integral.html>)

Responsibility Error in Marx's thought. Who's responsible for our unfreedom and suffering?⁷⁴ That was KW's pivotal political question, as we saw earlier in this book.

At one level, KW agreed that nobody likes to be oppressed, and we all want freedom. Yet, the evidence shows, on another level that most people do not want total freedom but are motivated by an "internal demand for oppression"—such an internal demand is repression in action; what some have called "internalized oppression," albeit, most of those that name this dynamic in the critical tradition of theorizing, are not thinking at the non-dual level (context) of explanatory developmental theory that KW is.

KW faulted Marx to some degree for not acknowledging the motivational drive (if not pathology) 'inherent' in the human psyche that leads them to be "in love with their chains" and masters (p. 268). Well, maybe "love" is not quite the right word, but it makes the point. KW substantiated his argument within insights from the post-Marxian critical theorists,

The Frankfurt school—aided by psychoanalytic insight—spent its early years redressing just that [objectivist, communalist, external, material, reductionistic] imbalance [in Marxian thought], and showing that, in many aspects of oppression, the oppressed secure their own chains [as co-participants] and hand the key to their future oppressors—'the hidden unconscious tie,' said Marcuse, 'which binds the oppressed to their oppressors'.... [cf. Fromm's theory, earlier in this chapter] The point, simply, is that the self is *already* anxious to repress itself, and since [p. 268] the internalization of oppression helps produce extra repression, the self is *partially* a willing victim from the start. (p. 269)

Without going into all the finer technical aspects of KW's theory of oppression-repression, he sees three kinds of oppression-repression forms, patterns or dynamics that are going on simultaneously in the experiencing of human beings-- all which influence the quality of "exchange distortions" along the spectrum of development/evolution:

- (1) self-repression [Wilber], -- non-dualist
- (2) external oppression [Marx] -- dualist
- (3) internalized surplus repression [Freud] -- dualist

Wilber (1983) briefly summarized the relationship of the three forms:

The separate self, as it endures in (and attempts to adapt and

⁷⁴ "It is ridiculous to suggest that, in such extreme cases of exploitation as literal slavery, the victim is secretly responsible. But in so many lesser and more subtle forms of exploitation, the oppressed are indeed 'in love with their chains'" (Wilber, 1981, p. 268).

adjust to) the atmosphere of such oppression, can and will *internalize* the originally external oppression... [leading] to *surplus repression*, repression over and above that which the self would induce on its own. (pp. 40-41)

We will focus momentarily in this text on KW's unique non-dual contribution of (1) "self-repression" (ontological repression) to the more common theory of oppression-repression (2-3), and ultimately how one could define "evil" (exchange distortions, pathology). Wilber (1981) wrote,

For as long as there are separate selves, repression and oppression are necessary and inevitable, but surplus repression and surplus oppression are not. The line between repression and surplus repression is, of course, an extremely fine one, and no one will ever strike upon the right formula for drawing that line. [Albeit, this book is attempting that] But we do have an extra bit of understanding that can make the decision easier, for we know that men and women are not inherently or instinctually evil, but merely substitutively evil⁷⁵.... (p. 335)

At this point in early-KW's critique of Marx, he cites Herbert Marcuse's work (a critical theorist) and begins a very complex sub-narrative in the critique of Marx (which KW does not elaborate specifically at this point). The sub-narrative is the full-narrative, if not grand narrative, of KW's entire work to this point, and it revolves around the notion of "*Atman*" and the "*Atman Project*" (*Atman* is a Hindu term for Absolute Reality, *Atman Project* is that which is a "symbolic substitute" for that Reality—cf. Lacan]; the latter, being part of an illusory self-substitution complex—and indeed is too complex (excuse the pun) to attempt to fully clarify at this point, and readers are referred to the earlier chapter summarizing KW's work and main ideas.

⁷⁵ Not meaning to overly locate a notion of "evil" in theological terms, KW and this author prefer a more generic sense of that term and its traditional meanings, but we wish to include other disciplines and their notions of "evil" (e.g., psychology, psychotherapy, and Scott Peck, for example). The point of real interest to CIT, and political theory, is that "evil" as a notion has political consequences. KW pointed out that the "Humanist-Marxist" view, in counterpoint to a "Freudian-Conservative" view, is that "If men and women were instinctively evil, then there would be no hope [trust in human potential and evolution or liberation], whereas if they are substitutively evil, we have two choices, offer actual transcendence [via nurturing spiritual transformative learning and development], or offer benign substitutes... (Wilber, 1981, p. 335). Of course, Conservatives politically have chosen Right Wing religious fundamentalist (a 'Big Daddy in the sky will save me) approaches to try to "liberate" the human being from their destined fallen/evil/sinful state on Earth. Neither KW's theory nor CIT would promote the latter without a thorough critique and revision so as to throw away the propaganda ('fear'-based) teaching and re-integrate Conservative values and deeper religious values with a global ethic and/or worldcentric perspective.

The point here, is to note that KW critiqued Marx as unable to see the “deeper,” more invisible dynamics and structures of the “self” and its journey to “Spirit” (non-dual) via *involution-evolution*.⁷⁶ Or simply, KW believed Marx’s developmental theory and understanding of the “self” is truncated and overly-committed to a materialist explanation of self-development; as a secularist, Marx is destined to miss at least the other half of why a “self” oppresses (1. “self-repression”) itself and shys away from true freedom or liberation. KW acknowledged that at least half of the oppression of the human condition is objective and half is subjective—Fromm would agree, and Marx would likely go more to a 75:25 split, respectively (as a rough estimate); but Fromm and more so KW, had insights that show the subjective half is not all determined by the objective dynamics of oppression.⁷⁷

KW’s theory sees a great deal of *repression*⁷⁸ and its pathological effects and affects as internally motivated by the deep structural dynamics of the “self” itself, regardless of the exterior conditions within which that self is evolving. The self of which KW is speaking, is not only predispositioned evolutionarily to be “anxious to repress itself” it is terrified of losing itself.⁷⁹ And that whole story is for another book, although this author will take up this theme of the ‘fear’-based self in evolution and in culture in the chapter using CIT applied to fear management education.

⁷⁶ The ontological basis behind KW’s use of these terms takes on a neo-Platonic feel at first sight, and this is a reasonable quick assessment. However, KW’s version is not based on mere neo-Platonic metaphysics (although, he highly respects Plotinus’s reading of Plato’s worldview and ontology). KW tracked through the traditional philosophy of West (e.g., Greek) and East, and scientific studies of development (especially psychoanalysis and the existential work of Ernest Becker, e.g., 1973, 1975), and KW arrived at a synthesis of these, or an orienting generalization of the involution-evolution dynamic. He wrote, “And the sum of these higher [deeper] but unconscious [latent] structures is simply the *ground unconscious*.... Involution, then, is the *enfolding* or in-turning of the higher structures into successively lower ones, and evolution is the subsequent *unfolding* into actuality of this enfolded potential” (Wilber, 1981, p. 302).

⁷⁷ Note: Fromm and KW don’t see exactly eye to eye on all of what constitutes repression dynamics either. See earlier in this chapter. Recall, KW is critical of Fromm on a few minor accounts, but they would part on a lot more if KW was asked to expound because ultimately Fromm’s worldview (paradigm) was existential not transpersonal or not even truly integral as KW’s worldview. No point in blaming Fromm on this, KW and he were not living contemporaries and so Fromm was not able to see the spectrum system of thought KW had created.

⁷⁸ “[self-]Repression [ontological fear/terror], as I use the term, is fundamentally an *internal* affair; it is instigated by the separate [dual] self in order to defend its own precarious sense of existence in the face of prior and always apprehended morality. [self-]Repression is not caused by others or instigated by others, and it will occur, to various degrees, in even the most idyllic surroundings.... [such is the fate of the “self-system” developing]” (Wilber, 1983, p. 40). “Although one cannot directly repress another, one individual can *oppress* another. This oppression has several consequences, two of which are (1) the oppression can disrupt and distort the exchange processes and capacities of any and all levels of the compound individual (as Marx found out for *material* exchange....” (Wilber, 1983, p. 40).

⁷⁹ The separate self, more accurately self-system, which KW is writing about, “... already lives a lie... that none of this is going on.... it is well defened to deny and dissociate [via ‘fear’/terror]... a *false self* [results and recreates itself]...” (Wilber, 1996, p. 171).

Wilber (1981) is succinct and potent in his critique of Marx's critical theory but he also acknowledges it is a "simplistic reconstruction of Marx" (p. 269) he has performed in print. Basically, KW would like Marxism to concede, not unlike many of the Frankfurt School critical theorists, "material oppression... is not the sole means of manipulation and exploitation" be it "internally or externally imposed." KW would want the Marxist line to come to see its place in the Great Chain of Being—in the full spectrum of evolutionary development. Yes, KW can say to Marxism, the material (level 1) is the most fundamental to the rest of development, but "... it is merely the most ontologically primitive and therefore the most visible" and that is no way to try to explain, analyze and figure out the motivation and complexity of the individual or society as it moves to the "next level up" where a more complex analysis and intervention re: countering oppression-repression is required. And that next level up is none other than to see and embrace a consciousness that is characterized within the compound system of "emotional-sexuality" (level 2). And the archetypal level two theorist of the 20th century, and still is in many ways, is Sigmund Freud, ready to march out a vast theoretical field of generalizations about the nature of the human condition and its rather pessimistic Freudian future. And at level two, we can be assured, as KW suggested, that

... there, too, distortions and scars can be inflicted, by oneself and by others, with equally profound repercussions. This, of course, was Freud's great province: the distortions of sexuality. However, he tended to the same type of reductionism as Marx.... Freud saw level 2: only the id (prana) is *fundamental*, and *from* it come all higher and mental structures. Sex, for Freud was paradigmatic.⁸⁰ From the id, via repression, sublimation, etc., come ego, psyche, and civilization. The same error we saw in Marx.... (p. 269)

⁸⁰ Wilber (1981) also noted "Freud was indeed interested in levels 3 and 4, but he tended to make level 2 paradigmatic (he collapsed levels 1 and 2 as one level, the id; he was however, aware of their separate existence, because his first two instincts were hunger and love... self-preservation instincts—food—and—species preservation instincts—sex)" (p. 269). KW's point here is that Freud neglected giving Marx's views (level 1) enough value in theorizing the motivations of "man" and the emergence of civilization and the dynamic functioning of oppression-repression in the human psyche. If Marx could be accused of neglecting the "higher" for the "lower" (as reductionism) in evolution, then Freud showed the other tendency of neglecting the "lower" for the "higher" (as inflationism)—and this pattern, in its two basic erroneous forms, of neglecting, is common throughout KW's critique no matter who the theorist and what level of development. Freud's "higher," in this comparison is relative to Marx's emphasis on labor and material (level 1). "The early Marxists even accused the Freudian ideology, believe it or not, because the Freudians reduced everything only to level 2 and didn't go all the way to level 1. But when Marx and Engels thought their position through more carefully, they necessarily began to waver and say that higher levels (mind, philosophy, religion) were only strongly influenced by material exchange" (Wilber, 1981, p. 269).

What theorists, like Marx or Freud make the most fundamental, is not denied by KW's critique, it is only put into a full-spectrum perspective of evolution of consciousness. And what is fundamental is then placed as least significant, using KW's distinctions. But KW is always cognizant that fundamental is important and if it is totally "damaged" or "erased" then it will bring down the whole spectrum, the whole house, so to speak. The physiosphere of matter (non-living cosmos) for example is most fundamental to evolution, but it is not the most significant.⁸¹ If there is no earth, for example, there is no human. And equally true, the earth (as matter = physiosphere) cannot create the Human Declaration of Independence, or show one minutest sign of compassion for the starving children in Africa,⁸² or figure out how to construct and co-ordinate a global U.N. intervention of tsunamia relief in Pakistan. We have to leave Freud behind for the rest of this chapter. Although this author would like Freud to be respected as a critical theorist, in the tradition, he simply is not and will not likely ever be-- because the critical theorist tradition is a location of social theory, and Freud will always been seen as a biomedical psychoanalyst,⁸³ even though his work has been touted by many social thinkers (like N.O. Brown, H. Marcuse, KW and so on) as profound in its social impact.

Damning and Jamming Culture: A "Freedom" Generation

Coming into the 60s-70s and counterculture movements ["new age" and "new paradigmgers" with a lot of Retro-Romanticism] KW went after the archetypal "Dharma Bum" (60s):

... when an influential number of otherwise highly intellectual people, incapable of supporting rational and egoic responsibility in a [normative, beginning postmodern] culture clearly stressful and drifting, began championing [i.e., fearless shallowness] typhonic, narcissistic, regressive freedom from the ego level,

⁸¹ KW's schema from fundamental to significant can be characterized as from *physiosphere* (matter), to *biosphere* (life), to *noosphere* (mind), to *theosphere* (spirit).

⁸² Indeed some critics may want to argue that 'Gaia' (*a la* Lovelock, and others) is a compassionate feeling being—called "Earth" and its multi-system network (web)—however, KW (and this author) would not agree that such an anthropomorphic claim is sound or evolutionary, and it rather performs a mythic violent eco-reductionism (glossed in 'new' paradigm or 'new age' garb). This latter critique, is brought forth in Chapter Seven on CITapplied to alternative paradigm thought. That said, 'Gaia' in principle, and intention, is a wonderful and important conception worthy to keep and integrate into solving the global problematique.

⁸³ "Before Freud, psychiatry fruitlessly pursued the search for physiological [level 1 type] determinants of psychological disorders. Like Wundt, Marx, Adam Smith, and several other major theorists, Freud was a role-hybrid. Trained in medical research, academic failures and anti-Semitism forced him out of the high-status academic world into the role of practicing physician. Practical roles of this sort held little esteem in the Germanic world of the time..." (Collins, 1994, p. 33).

through pre-egoic licence [free sex, drugs, etc.], while intellectually claiming to be actually pursuing the trans-egoic Zen of spontaneous freedom [p. 323]. As general cultural malaise spread, many other people began to share the “Dharma Bum” attitude, turning narcissistically upon themselves, damning culture per se, championing Marxist dogma (religion is not always the “opiate of the masses,” as Marx thought, but it is true that “Marxism” became the opiate of the intellectuals,” as a French critic put it), and in general withdrawing to the pre-egoic abode.” (Wilber, 1981, p. 324) [pre/trans problem in social movements⁸⁴]

Global Social Movement

In discussing the potential transformations of an ethnocentric context (worldview) to a worldcentric or global context, KW is realistic as to how difficult this will be and has been in history at the level of global social movement— it generally hasn’t happened. He wrote,

With one major exception. The only serious *global* social movement, in all of history to date, has been the international labor movement (Marxism), which had one great, enduring, and legitimate strength—and one altogether fatal weakness. The strength was that it discovered a common trait that all humans possess, regardless of race, creed, nationality, mythology, or gender: we all have to secure our bodily survival through social labor of one sort or another. We all have to eat. And thus social labor puts us all in the same boat, makes us all world citizens. This movement was genuine enough, and serious enough, and *made such immediate good sense to so many people* that it set off the first modern *globally intent* revolutions from Russia to China to South America. Such for its genuinely noble strengths. Its fatal weakness was that it did not just *ground* higher cultural endeavors in the economic and material [p. 194] realm (the physiosphere), it did not just *ground* them in social labor and material exchange—it *reduced* them to that exchange, reduced them to their lowest common denominator, reduced them to material productions and material values and material means, with all higher productions, especially spirituality, serving only as the opiate of the masses. In a nutshell, that movement did not just ground the noosphere in the physiosphere (which *is* vitally important because of compound individuality); it reduced the noosphere to the physiosphere, such an egregious reduction that it took evolution less than a mere century to begin to erase that mistake in earnest. This reduction-istic thrust of Marxism, because it could find no support in the real

⁸⁴ Many times KW has referred to regressive behaviors and thought processes in those who are trying to liberate themselves and others. See discussion of pre/trans fallacy in the previous chapter.

Kosmos, had to be converted into a religious mythology, and thus had to press its vision [cum ideology] in an imperialistic fashion. (Wilber, 1995, p. 195) [he also cites the “Greens” as similar with their “Earth First!” agenda] “Like Marxists, they wander in the biomaterial dimension, cleaning up the distortions they find there, which is admirable and noble, but end up merely stuck there, with no integrative possibilities of deeper awareness, higher embrace, wider vision, or genuine release (merely a type of theoretical, regressive, biospheric indissociation). And, like Marxists, they call all truly deeper or higher endeavors ‘escapist,’ ‘opiate,’ ‘illusory,’ ‘false consciousness’—the stock-in-trade epithets of social reductionists. What is needed, rather, is a much more integrative approach that works with our present historical actualities. A planetary culture will in effect have to deal with equitable material-economic distribution in the physiosphere (the enduring concern of Marx, even if we reject his particular solutions), and it will have to deal with sustainable ecological distribution in the biosphere (the enduring contribution of the Greens). But it will have to go much, much further.... Social labor could unite world citizens to the extent, but only to the extent, that we all share matter in common. The Greens can unite world citizens to the extent, but only to the extent, that we all share bodies in common. But it will take a vision-logic movement of tremendous integrative power [full-spectrum] ... in order to unite world citizens... [at the higher and deeper levels]. (Wilber, 1995, p. 196) The revolution, as always will come from the within and be embedded in the without” (p. 197).

Marxist Critical Tradition: Problem of “Hidden Context” Or How Can We Trust What Anybody Says Or Writes Anymore?

In discussing various forms of criticism with modernity and especially postmodernity, Wilber (1995) wrote,

The Marxist variation was that the critics themselves existed in the context of capitalist-industrial social practices of covert domination, and the hidden contexts (and therefore meanings) could be found in (and therefore pulled out of) any text written by any person in *that* context. Similarly, texts would be read in the context of racism, sexism, elitism, speciesism.... (p. 535)

And various deep truths have in fact been offered: underneath the surface and everyday consciousness lies Freudian libido, Marxist class struggle.... (Wilber, 1995, p. 549)

Deep hermeneutics is obviously a tricky venture: many of the ‘deep truths’ offered to humanity have actually been deep ideologies and profound prejudices designed primarily to contort others’ awareness to conform to one’s own power drives. We have seen what the ‘deep truths’ of Marxism have done to the human spirit, and what Freud’s deeply reductionistic ‘truths’ managed to destroy. Both Marx and Freud, we may grant, were onto some sort of deeper and *very important truths*: but are these truths the whole truth, so to speak? And how does one know when a deeper truth is indeed *true* but *partial*? And when does shoving a partial truth down someone’s throat—under the guise of helping them to ‘de-repress’—when does that step over the line and become itself a new form of repression? When does the *partialness* of the *cure* begin to *repress* the *rest* of reality? (Wilber, 1995, p. 550)

KW discussed the problem of “some sort of unconsciousness” amongst all the theorists who wrote of hidden contexts, and ideologies, and repression barriers of some sort—preventing the exposing of truth—“What if it [the deeper truth] involves Marx’s social unconscious, and the society itself is rather sick and maladjusted?” (Wilber, 1995, p. 551). KW’s point in all of this is that there will always be unconscious oppression-repression dynamics, all the way up and down the spectrum of development. However, unlike the extreme postmodern critic, he is not willing to distrust every production, at higher levels, as only pathological, because lower levels are distorted and or the context of the social political setting is oppressive. KW sees something else, call it “spirit” (intelligence), whatever—that is moving to create (manifest) and it is only partially, if at all, polluted by the evolutionary path. Critical theorists, in general, tend to think and write, operate, from a distrustful orientation within society, and Marxists, as KW acknowledged, are particularly distrustful of all productions from material up.

Political Options: Who And What Is To Blame For Unfreedom?

Marxism (humanist version) is used intimately in KW’s attempt to analyze the current bipartisan politics of the Western world (especially in the U.S.). Although, he uses Marxist in a rather loose way. He presents his own ‘third way’ politics in 1981 as “non-dual.” In the following chapter we’ll see more of his politics (updated versions) and the critics who write about his politics.

To begin with Wilber (1981, p. 335) offers three basic categories of political orientations (options) that can be epistemologically arranged around:

- (1) non-dual = a mystic politics

- (2) objective = Democrat (Liberal) politics
- (3) subjective = Republican (Conservative) politics

His overall political proposal of how do we best manage social order and unfreedom revolves around three questions related to the above three categories (options):

- (1) “What paths to real transcendence are available?”
- (2) “What price these substitutes on one’s fellow men & women?”
- (3) “Failing true transcendence, what substitute gratifications are offered?” (p. 336)

The first is a politics of Atman⁸⁵ and the other two are the “two sides of the Atman project” (p. 335) and “immortality seeking.”⁸⁶ KW noted,

... the objective cost of the Atman project can be appalling, because when people become objects of the negative [shadow] Atman project, those people become [real] victims: exploited, oppressed, coerced, enslaved, butchered [in some regimes]. The study of types of exploitation is the lessening or altering of the Atman projects themselves. This is at least theoretically possible because the Atman project is not instinctual or innate merely substitutive. (p. 336)

Now we’ll focus on KW’s reading of Marxism’s role in shaping (and being shaped by) the Atman project. Again, following the three basic categories (options) above, politics can be delineated around,

- (1) mystical non-dual
- (2) Humanist-Marxists
- (3) Freudian-Conservatives

Simplifying greatly, the first argues that the “cause of unfreedom” is self-repression dynamic (KW, etc.); the next argues that the cause of unfreedom is primarily oppression “objective factors” (Marx, etc.); while the third argues that the cause of unfreedom is primarily repression “subjective forces” [Freud, etc.]” (Wilber, 1981, pp. 330-331).

⁸⁵ “Does a person have access [in society] to Atman, to transcendence [to transformational learning], to [ultimate liberation and] release from space, time, self, and mortality? If not, then the whole nightmare [history] of repression and oppression swings necessarily into hellish action. That Atman project raises up its [violent] head... [*a la* Becker, Rank, Brown]” (Wilber, 1981, p. 337).

⁸⁶ In outlining his “comprehensive sociology” (integral sociology), KW noted, in non-dual fashion, that its aim is to “... study... the ways to tip the scale in favor of humanity.... Men and women want the world because they are in truth the world, and they want immortality because they are in fact immortality” (Wilber, 1981, p. 338).

The Humanist-Marxist political position, according to KW, “... first began largely with Rousseau, continued through Marx [humanist tradition]...” and forms what is loosely “liberal” [Left, critical social philosophy and theory]—and is found in humanistic psychology and philosophy (e.g., Fromm). According to Wilber (1981),

That view is: men and women are born essentially free, essentially good and loving, but are initiated [coerced] into a social and political world—an ‘objective’ world—that itself not only teaches but perpetuates social inequality, oppression, and ill will.⁸⁷ (pp. 330-331)

For the Humanist-Marxist⁸⁸ position blame is clear (look to the oppressors ‘out-there’):

Since the objective world [System, structures, others] is to blame for unfreedom, then if the situation is to be improved, the objective world must be significantly [if not radically] altered. This group’s solution to unfreedom [victimization] is therefore fairly obvious: lift the oppression by redistributing the wealth, and lift the repression by distributing mental health [to victims]. Abolish the exploitive political and economic structures, so that all may share freely in nature’s bounty—and this political approach runs the spectrum from pure Marxists to socialists to liberals to Democrats. On the psychological side, abolish the repressive family, have done with toilet training, punishments, traumatic experiences, repressive child-rearing practices; teach love and kindness and charity, so as to draw out [and celebrate] the innate subjective goodness in all people—and that psychological approach, which is now quite the vogue... (Wilber, 1981, p. 331)

The strongest counter-movement to the above, is the Freudian-Conservatives (p. 333) who are generally anti-Modernist,⁸⁹ pointing out that the blame for men and women’s unfreedom is an uncontrolled, undisciplined person (subject) that wants all this freedom but has no sense of responsibility to Tradition, order (hierachy), communal rules, laws,

⁸⁷ [re: Humanist-Marxist view] “... [the people = victims] are simply taught and tutored by a repressive society to hate, to manufacture ill will, and to choke off all loving and cooperative impulses [thus, developing competition unnaturally]. From this angle, then, people are unfree because they are repressively engineered personalities [see *The Matrix* film analogy]. Thus, *economically unfree because oppressed, psychologically unfree because repressed* [via internalized oppression]—and there is the first side of the Western answer” (Wilber, 1981, p. 331).

⁸⁸ For those of you who follow Spiral Dynamics theory of v-memes, this is Green Meme talkin’ under a base of Orange Meme.

⁸⁹ For those of you who follow Spiral Dynamics v-meme theory this is Blue Meme talkin’ under a base of Orange Meme.

consensus,⁹⁰ and so on. The classic argument is that human nature is to blame and that means “you” (subjective emphasis). So if there is unfreedom, it is your fault, so fix it yourself.⁹¹ This is a rather gross generalization of this political option, one based on a mistrust and fear of “being human”—meaning, if left to our own freedom we’ll just damage other people’s freedom and the structures (because we’re just selfish critters) that have supported one to choose “freedom.” Wilber (1981) noted, that this rather sober position tends to use the French Revolution as the “cataclysmic evidence” that letting people be free turns them to becoming a group of rebellious “irrational killers” (p. 333) (echoes of Hobbes).

Wilber (1981) provided a critique (see below) of both these views and showed their limitations, while offering his third way political alternative (mystical, non-dual); which is not really an alternative as much as it is a (transcendence) growth of maturation. The non-dual worldview or level is inevitable as a deep (organizing) integral structure *if* we can get passed all the barriers to reaching that approach and utilizing it appropriately. Well, KW has in *Up From Eden* clearly indicated he’s not holding his breath that that will happen any time soon (despite what many ‘new agers’ may be predicting regarding an immanent quantum leap in human and cultural evolution to another ‘Paradise’ or ‘Golden Age’). However, he at least envisions the third way critique as a means of reducing the tension and much of the acidic and destructive social conflict that the bipartisan way of politics plays out in the West. It offers a model for what he called a “Wisdom Culture” (p. 326), which we can start building now, slowly, step by step, as CIT and CIAD are intended to promote in this book.

From Wilber’s (1981) mystical non-dual position, both the two political views so far can be seen as overly relying on a “true self” (now called an “essential self” by postmodernist critics) that is pre-given, substantial, fixed and makes us “human” or a “person.” KW is not saying there is no person or self, at least on the relative plane of existence, as in we would ordinarily place one’s self as an interior sense of knowing and as an

⁹⁰ Later, in another chapter, this view will be linked with “consensus theory” or “functionalist” or “order” theory in sociology, with its specific W. history and discourse hegemony that needs to be deconstructed by a critical theory analysis. Unfortunately, much of KW’s latest integral theorizing and philosophy (Wilber, 2005a) is heading down this road of functionalism to the neglect of conflict (critical) theory. This current book is attempting to address the imbalance in the integral movement (*a la* KW) through a post-postmodern reconstructivist (integral) lens.

⁹¹ In later writing Wilber (e.g., 2002a) says the worst side of this view can take the form of “blame the victim” (p. 181) for everything. That is not something KW, nor this author, would promote, but we also don’t promote the other extreme (liberalist) view and “victimism” (pp. 186, 236), in which there are so many who are just seen as “victims” and need to be “rescued” and “rewarded” chronically—need to be “manufactured,” and so on—all which can lead to one nasty aspect of our current (almost global) “victim culture” ethos (see for e.g., Furedi, 1997, 2004, 2005). What makes an illegitimate victim and a legitimate victim is part of the CIT and CIAD agenda; not an easy thing to resolve but we ought to try.

agentic person (separate self). But once we move from the view of the material (and relative) plane only, then the “self” is in a system of levels and transitions, a compound individual (self/system), and eventually, one can take a perspective of non-dual, at the highest levels of maturation. At least, someone, a theorist (for e.g.,) can take such a position of analysis if others cannot. Wilber’s (1981) critique ensues around this very problem:

... Humanist-Marxists—[say] men and women are unfree because the subject, the ‘true [or essential] self,’ is repressed and oppressed by objective factors.... the Freudian-Conservatives—men and women are unfree because the ‘true self’ *must* be repressed and oppressed: the *subject* is to blame. Enter, then, our third group, represented by the mystics, and we find that men and women are unfree because there exists a [false, or illusory] belief in the existence of a ‘true self’ in the first place. Unfreedom, anguish, and inequality do not arise because of something the object does to the subject, or because of something the subject does to the object, but because of the prior duality [dualism] between the subject and the object itself. We are not [ultimately] to repress or un-repress the self, but rather undermine it; transcend it; see through it. (p. 333)

KW here challenged any notion of a pre-existing “free self.” He argued,

A ‘free self’ and a ‘square circle’ exist only in words, not in reality. Wherever there is other, there is fear; wherever there is self, there is anxiety—that is a Buddhist and Upanishadic absolute. In politics, the Marxist argument will eventually run itself out: revolution after revolution will leave the self in anxiety, in pain, in chains—because it will leave the self, period. And while it is true that much good can (and already has) come from a fairer distribution of nature’s bounty, the fundamental problems and fears remain untouched, because the structure of awareness itself remains unchanged. And likewise for humanistic psychology and psychotherapy: the momentum, too, will eventually die. After all the encountering, the primal-screaming, the gut-spilling and catharsis, the self is still self, and angst still returns. (p. 333)

This is probably the most succinct statement of early-Wilber’s politics in a nutshell. He ends up, in a slight drift of direction toward a more appealing politics in the Freudian-Conservative camp,⁹² albeit, he is still highly

⁹² Many critical theorists (liberal thinkers) are going to be unhappy and uncomfortable at this point about KW’s drift to the semi-conservative positioning (in part). He wrote with his mystic non-dual corrective that, “It appears, then, that the Freudian-Conservatives have the final say, that unfreedom and inequality lie in humans themselves, not in human institutions. And they would be *half* right. For freedom, aggression, and anxiety are not characteristic of the *nature* of humanity,

critical of its limitations and offers the mystic non-dual corrective,⁹³ and ultimately an integral solution, as we shall see in the next chapter. KW's phrase "revolution after revolution" gives the reader a tone of his lament and critique about the Marxist ideal revolution of the working class 'bloody revolution' but also KW's general impression about any revolution (in any social movement). All of this raises questions about what is "liberation and how much blood or not needs to be spilled, on whose hands and head?" Can transformation take place without this? And what is legitimate liberation work and liberational or transformational learning (the latter point, most crucial to developing CIAD)? This theme is taken up as crucially important in the next chapter as we attempt to unfold KW's politics, CIT, and leadership of the Integral Movement itself.

Marxist Resistance To Integral Art (Criticism)

A small, but interesting, link has been made in later-KW's thinking around a developing theory of integral art (and art criticism) and Marxism. Wilber

but characteristic of the *separate self* of humanity. It is not man's instincts that undo him, but his psychological appetites, and those appetites are a product of *boundary*, not of biology [see Wilber, 1979]. The boundary [barrier] between self and other causes fear, the boundary between past and future causes anxiety, the boundary between subject and object causes desires. And whereas biology [*a la* Freud] cannot be destroyed, boundaries can be transcended. It is the exclusive boundaries in and to awareness [of the full spectrum, of Spirit as Absolute, as Atman] that constitute the primal unfreedom, and not any specific actions taken within or across those boundaries. As long as the soul separates itself from the All, it will feel both fear and desire... terror and thirst. The boundary between self and other is the terror of dying.... wherever there is a boundary there is a potential war (i.e., samsara). And the aim of the mystics is to deliver men and women from their battles by delivering them from their boundaries. Not manipulate the subject, and not manipulate the object, but transcend both in non-dual consciousness. The discovery of the ultimate Whole [holonic world] is the only cure for unfreedom, and it is the only prescription offered by the mystics [Buddha, Eckhart, Ramana Maharshi, Padmasambhava, Rumi or Christ]" (Wilber, 1981, pp. 333-334).

⁹³ "The ultimate solution to unfreedom, then, is neither Humanistic-Marxist nor Freudian-Conservative, but Buddhistic: satori, moksha, wu, release, awakening, metanoia" (p. 334). Certainly this is his orientation to liberation, but his message is much more complex today and one ought not to overly imbue KW's political [Buddhist] position with a reading of early-Wilber alone. It is also important to note that KW's mystic non-dual corrective or third way political option is not just pie-in-the-sky idealism or transcendental abstraction. He wrote of a full spectrum sensibility which has always underlayed his entire work and thesis: "At the same time, the mystic does not ignore the reforms that can be made in the lower levels. The mystic transcends but *includes* the lower levels, and no true mystic would ever seek enlightenment for him[her]self while neglecting the reforms that can and must be made on the lower levels of exchange. In fact, this is the difference between the Arhat, who neglects others in his pursuit of self-enlightenment, and the Bodhisattva, who refuses enlightenment until *all* others can be charitably ministered to and then uplifted to enlightenment. The point is rather that the Bodhisattva is not lured into the illusion [and fear/terror] that the separate self can be made ultimately comfortable through any isolated activities or reforms in the subjective *or* objective realms. The mystic solution is an ultimate one, not an intermediate one. Nonetheless, while rightly claiming absolute liberation, it would never shun the relative liberations to be effected in the interim. That, again, is the beauty of the Bodhisattva ideal [non-dual attainment]. While transcending the subject and object, it neglects neither, includes both, and finds therein a consummate unity" (Wilber, 1981, p. 334).

(1997) draws out four or five different kinds of art criticism, or ways of interpreting art as artifacts. His point is that all of them have a role to play in interpreting and critiquing (if not in making) art. His goal is integral analysis and action.

He begins with “symptomatic theories” with “hidden intent,” which “focus on the Lower Right quadrant” (p. 314) whereby,

The artist exists in a setting of techno-economic structures, the Marxists pointed out, and a particular artwork will inexorably reflect the ‘base’ of economic [oppressive] realities, and thus the correct interpretation of a text or work of art involves highlighting the class structures in which the art is produced” (p. 107)

He also brought forward postmodern “viewer-response theories” and wrote,

These viewer-response theories, as I said, were particularly coupled with symptomatic theories—the most influential being Marxist, feminist, racist, and imperialist (postcolonial studies). The idea being, recall, that the meaning of art is found in the background social and economic contexts, contexts that are often masquerades for power and ideology, and contexts that therefore confer a specific meaning on art produced in those contexts, meanings that the knowing critic can pull out by highlighting and elucidating the particular background [discourse] structures. All true enough; and all terribly partial, lopsided, and distorted when taken in and by themselves. (p. 130)

Closing Remarks On Marx & Wilber

... Marx’s system was also a political system, and a radical one at that; hence, it was scarcely noticed by the respectable intellectual world during his lifetime⁹⁴... (Collins, 1994, p. 28)

⁹⁴ Marx’s intellectual career, although it had underground forms in communist politics, never took off with any real power and impact until “... after the German Social Democratic (i.e., socialist) party became a parliamentary force in the 1880s and 1890s. Marxism was the Social Democrats’ official doctrine, and their party newspapers, journals, and schools made it possible for Marxist intellectuals to hold positions as editors and teachers [in the mainstream]. Out of this material base came the upsurge of Marxian economics that caught the attention of the official intellectual world at the turn of the century” (Collins, 1994, p. 28). It was Adolf Hitler’s twist on the socialist party in Germany in the early 1920s, that led to “Nationalist” exclusivity and racism-- painting anything “socialist” from Germany (or virtually anywhere) with the same deadly brush as Hitlerian fascism -- Marxism included. Unfortunately, there’s a lot of fear ruling the understanding and growth of the best of Marxian thought for human development. All along early-Wilber had written of his own intention to take a reconstructionist approach to Marx (Wilber, 1981, p. 269) and attempt to reconstruct the essential best of Marx, Freud, etc. (Wilber, 1983, p. 40) not dissimilar from what the Frankfurt School theorists also were up to.

To summarize on Wilber-Marx is not nearly as easy as it was on Wilber-Fromm previously in this chapter. This will be brief and mostly inadequate and readers are recommended to read through the prior sections several times—indeed, this author learns more and more each time KW talks about Marx and his thought.

The amount of material in early-Wilber is significant and shows at the very least KW sincerely cared about the Marxist positioning. The other main difference is that Marx is explicitly radical and political compared to Fromm and KW doesn't miss it on that level of its importance to collectivize a mass social movement—especially with the associations of Marxism to dictatorships, for example, Hitler and Stalin and/or communism in general. Marxophobia is a factor as limiting people's (especially North Americans) understanding of the value of Marxist thought and politics. KW is certainly not coming from a fear-based position in his writing on Marx.⁹⁵ However, it is ironic, perhaps, that KW too, like Marx, generally is excluded from “the respectable intellectual world” so-called. Both Marx and KW have chosen to stay out of traditional university systems and research, write, publish and organize their “movements” with great independence and yet with respect for knowledge from academic circles as well. It is this author's opinion, from many years of trying to promote KW's work in academia, that there exists a real Wilberophobia as well.⁹⁶

One basic similarity between Marx (critical theory) and KW is that they are interested in liberation and believe (more or less) it is possible to some extent in the future. KW applauded Marx for his work and worldview—a worldview Marx knew was “... merely a small component of massive networks and contexts of social practices” (Wilber, 1995, p. 73). KW's work, particularly in the last few years, is all about “practice, practice, practice”—or practices⁹⁷ (praxis). Like Marx, KW's CIT is highly practical and applied, or it is mere intellectualization and that latter form is a good start, according to KW, but not adequate to the task of full liberation. Marx, according to KW, takes us further along the path of liberation (toward a “new therapia”⁹⁸) and “... tells us something important

⁹⁵ This is a loose use of the term fear (not ‘fear’)—as this author is not saying KW is coming from a completely fearless perspective on Marx and Marxism (see further discussion in Chapter Six).

⁹⁶ It is interesting that the two viewpoints held by Marx and KW are at the extreme ends of the spectrum of consciousness (levels): Marx (level 1 materialist) and KW (level 10 spiritualist). It is a common principle of discourses and power-knowledge systems that extremes get excluded (marginalized) from the norms of our world.

⁹⁷ Of late, Wilber (2005a) calls this ITP for Integral Transformative Practice.

⁹⁸ Albeit, limited, Marxian therapia involves a discovery of a context that had been repressed, and gives new meaning, and potential for liberation from that context. KW defined the best of *therapia* as “... each discovery of a new and deeper context and meaning is a discovery of a new *therapia*, a new therapy, namely: we must *shift our perspectives, deepen our perception*, often against a great

about the *meaning* of our existence by situating our existence in a larger *context*—since meaning and context are in important ways synonymous...” (p. 73). Wilber (1995) has appreciated that Marx was a historical developmentalist who “... kept alive the *developmental* scheme” (p. 579) with evolutionary theory always in the background of his theorizing of social change and transformation (if not revolution).⁹⁹ Later, poststructural and postmodern critical theory despised the grand narrative of evolution to a large degree, tending to deny it as useful at all. Not so with Marx. KW wants to reinforce that side of Marx’s work for sure because KW’s CIT is inherently developmental and evolutionary.

According to Wilber (1983), using Habermas’s terms, Marx is an “exemplar of the horizontal emancipatory interest” (p. 116). A “horizontal emancipation” [level 1- 2] which “...endeavors to free people from the [contextual] entrapment of social structures... [whereas, in KW’s model] ‘vertical emancipation’ ... aims to restore the individual’s relationship with Spirit by means of the process of transpersonal development” (Visser, 2003, p. 137).

KW’s context is definitely larger, more embracing, more compassionate than Marx’s. It is the nature of CIT to be a full spectrum worldview of all worldviews available. And all the great (archetypal) theorists of human and social development would argue for an “omega point,” one where an “end of history” (end of oppression) would be found “... when reached, would answer all the really difficult questions and user in some sort of relatively paradisaical condition.... For Marx, a classless society in which alienation of labor and produce would be healed in shared mutual care [ideal socialist state]” (Wilber, 1995, p. 77).

KW, has no one “omega point” *per se*, but offers us a ‘map’ of them all, with the realization that different people and different places will support and suppress the highest “omega point” given by, for example, Marx, Freud, Habermas, or Teilhard de Chardin (p. 77)—we all (and every new child born) will have to go through the paces and levels, freedoms and chains of each aspect of a spectrum of development, and most of us will not reach the “omega point” of any one of these theories. That’s KW’s larger integral view, with its realistic-idealistic tenor, as he also knows that reaching the “omega point” of *only one* level will not be necessarily freedom for all, it will be partial at best, although it is still a worthy goal.

deal of *resistance*, to embrace the deeper and wider context” (Wilber, 1995, p. 73). This definition will be shown in Chapter Seven as it links to transformation theory.

⁹⁹ This evolutionary sensibility in Marx’s thought is a good reason “... why so many serious (and nonreductionistic) theorists, from Lenski to Habermas, have returned to it time and again for useful insights...” (Wilber, 1995, p. 579).

Early-Wilber is through and through critical of Marx's reductionism tendency. However, KW noted that most of that reductionism, in its worst forms, is actually sourced from the way Marxists interpret his work (often rather narrowly, presumably). Wilber (1995) wrote, "... Marx's own writings are not quite as reductionistic as they are often made out to be, nor as reductionistic as they often became in practice" (p. 579). It has to be said that early-Wilber linked Marx's reductionism within a larger context, and certainly wasn't making a personal criticism of Marx. For KW, Marx was a product of a hegemonic scientific Modern worldview, and Marx wanted to be, in part, Modern, and scientific in his analysis (not all a bad thing). Unfortunately, that had philosophical implications that led Marxism to overly-commit itself in "a staggering Modern scenario" of which early-Wilber hammered at many times. This is part of what KW cannot forgive about critical theory and the Marxist turn (of Hegel "on his head"). A few examples ought to make the point of KW's critique of Marx and scientism¹⁰⁰ (reductionism):

It's a staggering scenario, fully comparable, in its own way, to the extinction of the dinosaurs. The most pervasive notion in human history and prehistory (namely, the existence of some sort of spiritual dimension) was simply pronounced, with the thundering authority of science... to be a collective hallucination. The spiritual dimension, it was solemnly announced, was nothing but a wish-fulfillment of infantile needs (Freud), an opaque ideology for oppressing the masses (Marx)¹⁰¹, or a projection of human potentials (Feuerbach). Spirituality is thus a deep confusion that apparently plagued humanity for approximately a million years, until just recently, a mere few centuries ago.... (Wilber, 2000, p. 55)

¹⁰⁰ Regarding scientism, reductionism *via* positivism, Wilber (1983a) wrote that, "Whenever higher dimensions [levels] are represented on lower ones, they necessarily lose something in the translation. As a simple example, whenever a three-dimensional sphere is reduced on a two-dimensional surface, it becomes a circle.... It is the same with reason and spirit. The positivists [lovers of reason] think that this means the [higher] sphere doesn't exist—and all it means is that spheres can't be grasped by circles. Kant firmly believed in the Transcendent, although he knew it couldn't be grasped by sense or pure reason. But his half-followers—Comte, Mach, and down to today, Ayer, Flew, Quine, and all—had not even that good sense. Upset by the role of proper speculative philosophy, and totally blind to the eye of contemplation, the scientists gave all knowledge over to the lowly eye of flesh, and *no* knowledge other than that was henceforth deemed respectable. There was the new empirical scientism—it simply said, as it says today, that only the eye of the flesh [visible world] and its number quantities [measurable] are real.... Because scientism could not get a ruler on God [for e.g.], it proclaimed Spirit is nonsensical and meaningless, Christ was therefore deluded, Buddha was schizophrenic, Krishna was hallucinating, Lao-Tzu was psychotic" (pp. 24-25).

¹⁰¹ KW located Marx as an advocate, with many other theorists, of the "... religion is a hangover from the childhood of humanity" and not defensible by science (positivism, empiricism) (Wilber, 1998, p. 16). All of this reductionism, "instrumental reason," "materialism" etc. is what Wilber called the "Flatland" legacy of Feuerbach through Marx and so on (Wilber, 1995, 1996).

Wilber (1995) cited Marx, “on modernity” and what can be seen as nothing other than the “fearless shallowness” problematic. He wrote,

All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind. (p. 370)

And one more example, Wilber (1995) remarked further:

‘Modernity’: ALL THAT is solid melts into air. We are still living in its shadow, still under the sway of powerful currents unleashed three centuries ago, still trying to situate ourselves in a Kosmos profoundly shaken by the events of the Enlightenment, still wondering exactly what it all meant.... Ascenders were out, the Descenders were in.” (p. 370)

Another major difference between Marx and KW is that the definition of liberation is contextual, based on one’s worldview (level) or “emancipatory interest” (*a la* Habermas)-- and depending on what the critical theorist or critical educator focuses on. All KW is asking for (as is this author and CIAD) in his version of a CIT, is that we allow for a truly radical pluralism+¹⁰² of approaches based on worldviews that can be located along a spectrum of possibilities (or “deep structures” as KW referred to them). Applying a developmental logic to the entire construction and evolution of development (history)—KW, chose not to focus on any *one* emancipatory interest or paradigm, as did Marx and his material-economic paradigm for all the basic analysis and interventions dedicated to making people more and more free.

Marx, if not all Marxist, neo-Marxist or post-Marxist thinkers would be very uncomfortable with KW’s integral politics (goals) (see next chapter for more details). He would be labeled and scourged as “elitist.” This

¹⁰² KW critiqued PC thinking (and its critique, if not ideology) in which “... all of modern civilization is now dominated by thinking that is Eurocentric, logocentric, and sexist, and that the only politically adequate or correct view is therefore one that is, by contrast, radically egalitarian and pluralistic, and denies that any worldview can be ‘better’ than another. The problem with this view is that, while it claims to be admirably liberal—... it ends up absolutely reactionary: It utterly lacks a coherent and integrative vision of human possibilities. Moreover, radical pluralism [postmodernism] is itself a Eurocentric, logocentric notion” (Wilber and Wilber, 1991/93, p. 88). Radical pluralism+ is a designation this author has used to show we need something beyond PC pluralism and Wilber is guiding us toward integralism as the next more embracing (albeit, critical and hierarchic) radical pluralism+. Chapter Four on who is KW? dealt specifically with his distinctions and theory of the value of hierarchy in developmental and evolutionary theories of human growth.

author has also had that problem with KW at times. When pushed, and not the least embarrassed, KW declared throughout, he is, more or less, working in his own way to have a significant handful or two of world economic-political and spiritual leaders with a lot of power, to achieve an integral view (or above) and possibly they, working together, could make some major changes on the planet—if it is not already too late to “save us.” When looking at “parts” of the spectrum and their articulated “omega points” it is easier to be optimistic of major level transformation, but when looking at the whole of the spectrum of levels and all the “omega points” it is much more difficult to be so optimistic, at least not in the same way as the “part-view” of the other theorists KW is writing about and analyzing.

This omega point of rationality can therefore be seen permeating the theories of virtually all developmentalists in the wake of modernity. We see it in Freud... [p. 311] We see it in Marx: rationality, as a worldcentric mode of cognition, will, with its economic developments, overcome egocentric and ethnocentric class divisions and usher in a true communion of equally free subjects. (Wilber, 1995, p. 312)

In conclusion, it is the *interpretation* problem of reality, of unfreedom and of what ought to be done to free humanity that KW cannot fully agree with in Marxist thought. KW is not against Marx or Marxism *per se*, as long as it isn't trying to dominate (*via* Blue Meme¹⁰³) *every* other worldview or level of exchange and interpretation of reality. This author senses a great respect for Marx by KW, and after all Ken's dad¹⁰⁴ “... used to quote Karl Marx all the time: ‘A capitalist will sell you the rope you are going to hang him with.’ (Wilber, 2002a, p. 99).

As stated earlier in this book, KW's general critique of “fearless shallowness” is central to the design of critique emerging and revolving around a CIT and CIAD. We've seen in this section KW's embrace and distancing simultaneously from Marxism's critique and offerings for freedom. The distortion of importance of Marx (level 1) and Freud (level 2) is central to what could be seen as KW's most devastating intellectual critique. That said, there is a hint in Wilber (1981) of his challenge that both Marx and Freud, and Marxists and Freudians, in their heyday were somewhat arrogant to add to their critiques (see below). It is this arrogant aspect this author believes is a significant part of the early formation of KW's charge of “fearlessness shallowness” toward all kinds of

¹⁰³ “Although often of a religious flavor, the Blue meme can be the carrier of any missionary zeal from Marxism to Earth First! All that is required is that the ideas be embraced [*via* ideology and propaganda] with an authoritarian fervor, short on [dialogue and] evidence and long on belief” (Wilber, 2002a, p. 86). KW just doesn't plain like any movement or ideology that is involved with the slogan, or general direction of “We can save the world—follow us!”

¹⁰⁴ Although this comes from a “fiction” text, real or metaphoric, the point of KW's claim is still valid, and if you read that book *Boomeritis*, it will make more sense of KW's journey too.

contemporary theorists, philosophers, and leaders, who want us to follow them “to dive into the shallow end of the pool head first.” Level 1 and Level 2 are shallow, by KW’s integral standards. OK. Next, to the bit of evidence for this.

Early-Wilber often treated Marx and Freud with the same critical brush. So, we’ll deal with them together here. Despite all the criticism labeled at Marx and Freud from so many theoretical directions over the past century or so, they were ‘big’ in their popular times, no doubt about it. Their work, and variations with different students continues to this day and is not likely to disappear from the spectrum of interpretations of reality, the human condition, of politics and so on. For KW their fearless shallowness however is unappealing and unwarranted. In Wilber (1981) he wrote a telling footnote of his (more emotional) criticism of their “fun” days and ways:

Although level 2 was paradigmatic for Freud, he eventually lessened this reductionistic ‘libido psychology’ with the tentative introduction of ‘ego psychology’ (in *The Ego and the Id*), although it was really Anna Freud’s *Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* and then Hartmann’s *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation* that began to turn the reductionistic tide—and, incidentally, to simultaneously rob psychoanalysis of its perverse shock value. Early psychoanalysis was so much ‘fun’—‘Wait ‘til they hear what we have to tell them!’ exclaimed Freud on his first visit to America¹⁰⁵—simply because, like a naughty little boy, it tried to see something ‘dirty’ under every mental and cultural production, and succeeded nicely until the reductionism itself became flagrantly self-contradictory, and the higher levels were slowly, but begrudgingly, readmitted—a concession Freud was almost bitter about. No more fun.... Incidentally, the same thing happened to Marxist theory. Marxist theory was shocking and novel [radical].... They consequently lost their shocking and novel edge—rightly so, but it did take the fun out of it. (p. 269)

The point to be made here is that KW loathed (perhaps that’s too strong) any theorists that believe they have the leading “novel edge” and are

¹⁰⁵ One cannot help to highlight KW’s language here as there is a rivalry between Continental philosophers and American philosophers, and each wants to be on the leading “novel” edge—of course—boys will be boys! Although it is worthy to make a little fun of this, it likely is a lot more significant in the way critical theorists treat each other. Remember critical theory was born in Europe not America. KW is a critical integral theorist trying to make his international ‘mark’ just like everyone else. One gets a sense he rather loved ‘crashing down’ on Marx and Freud (and their adherents), and having a little ‘fun’ (himself) showing their rise and fall under the critical knife of history, time, and a lot of critiques by other theorists (including Ken). It’s really too bad they aren’t alive to defend themselves and have all the knowledge accumulated that KW does in the late 20th and into the 21st centuries.

uncovering what all the rest of humanity is blind to, denying or, simply that we are easily supposed to be “shocked” by. ‘Shock and awe’ tactics of persuasion and rhetoric, of arrogance even, is the kind of “fearless” trait he cannot stand. KW seemed then, and still now, to have no tolerance for scaring people about the demons in the lower levels that are supposedly the root of all ‘evil,’ or some such foolish notion. It urks KW to no end, that the theories put forth as so “deep” and “dark” are actually not that at all; and rather turn out, upon an integral analysis, to be rather “shallow.” So who is afraid? Who gets to scare who? Who is really and truly fearless? These questions lie between every word and line in this book, from beginning to end. They are what KW (implicitly), and this author (explicitly), are interested in. But all that will have to wait for another chapter. However, it is worthy to note, as this author did previously (in Fisher, 1997b),¹⁰⁶ that KW is a self-appointed “intellectual samurai” and no theorist that attracts KW will be left the same after the ‘blade’ has been drawn.

This author’s favorite quote from Marx, a theme to be addressed in Chapter Nine, comes when he critiqued the contradiction in capitalism (as ideology) deriving a foundational principle upon a culture of fear/terror; Marx wrote,

The nation must be taught to be *terrified* of itself, in order to give it *courage*. (Marx, c. 1844 in 1964, p. 47)

As with KW, Foucault (coming next), and this author’s research on the culture of fear/terror phenomena, the thread of *Spilling Blood...* slips across one’s finger tips, momentarily, exposing, what a “fearless shallowness” can do to a nation without a CIT and CIAD corrective.

Lots to ponder in this summary of Marx and Marxism. There are other topics of overlapping interest too-- as KW talked about the profound conceptualization of “boundaries” (or barriers) and their fundamental role in development and evolution of consciousness, and the relationship to “alienation,” as foundational in Marx and many other critical theories. How boundaries then are connected to the “lie” (denial, ‘fear,’ Atman project) of the self/system, and thus to a “false self” in KW’s theorizing could lead to fruitful dialogue with Marx’s conceptualization of “false consciousness.” At this point, it is better to wait until all the critical theorists KW engaged with have been reviewed. Later in the book the

¹⁰⁶ “A ‘critic of teachers and systems’ (Schwartz, 1995, p. 38), I believe KW and his brilliant intellectual work is not far removed from the archetypal expressions of the ‘Samurai warrior’ (Guy, 1995, p. 78) or ‘pandit,’ which KW admitted has ‘called’ him to become ‘an articulator and defender of the dharma, an intellectual samurai’ (Wilber, 1995a, p. 21), who has been first and foremost influenced by Buddhist-inspired Nagarjuna and Madhyamika philosophy (Kornman, 1996, p. 36)” (Fisher, 1997b, p. 31). Nagarjuna, according to Wilber (1977/82) is the “greatest philosopher who ever lived” (p. 65).

overlapping interests will appear, and more critical theorists's work can be incorporated in those discussions. Therefore, let's move on to other critical theorists that have caught KW's interest over the years.

Adorno, Althusser, Gramsci, Horkheimer, Marcuse & Wilber

KW has only once ever cited **Max Horkheimer** (1895-1973), a "leading member of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory" (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 294), and **Theodor Adorno** (1903-1969), the other "leading member of the Frankfurt School..." (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 6).¹⁰⁷ These two critical theorists are virtual "founders" of the Frankfurt School.

Defending developmental theories of history [beyond Hegel], Wilber (2000a) cited, "Other well-known developmental-historical models (which may involve both growth and decay) include ... Antonio Gramsci... (p. 110). **Antonio Gramsci** (1891-1937), an "Italian revolutionary Marxist" (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 270), was mentioned only a couple of times, by name alone. The other one being in Wilber (2002a), where he cited Lentricchia in a critique of postmodern poststructuralism [KW's "big fat Boomer ego"] and its theorists, mainly in literary and cultural studies, but the humanities in general; Lentricchia being paraphrased wrote, "The tools of this heroic self-inflation are provided by (mostly) French intellectuals ... a rogue gallery... Althusser ... Gramsci..." (p. 213) KW concluded, "The interesting and sometimes profound insights of these writers were taken up and worked into a green-meme mishmash that denied big pictures and meta-narratives of any sort—which unfortunately and rather completely locked it out of second-tier integral ideas" (p. 213).

Louis Althusser (1918-1990), a "French Marxist social philosopher" (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 16) was mentioned a few times (see above) in regard to KW's critique of postmodern poststructuralism theory in general, for example: Wilber (1998) citing an anonymous postmodern poststructuralist text, showed that "... grounding in facts and evidence is no longer required, slogans are treated as facts..." (p. 32)—and, 'After Althusser, we all understand that the most ideological stance is the one that tries to fix limits beyond which ideology does not apply' (p. 32). And another example: "Ferry and Renaut are not alone in this assessment. Raymond Aron's important book, *The Elusive Revolution: Anatomy of a Student Revolt*, comes to a similar conclusion along different routes, and Ferry and Renaut discuss it as well. 'The god of the intellectuals of the sixties,' Aron wrote, 'was no longer the Sartre who had dominated the

¹⁰⁷ In Wilber (1995, f.n. 46) he wrote, "This is Habermas's summary of Horkheimer and Adorno. Habermas agrees [with Horkheimer's and Adorno's critique of reason] only with regard to monological, not dialogical reason, which is also my view" (p. 661). This point is taken up in the following review section on Habermas and KW.

postwar period, but a mixture of Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, Althusser, and Lacan’—the structuralists who themselves would soon give way to the poststructuralists...” (p. 286).

To support his critique of “flatland,” as the over-bearing epistemological framework of modernity and postmodernity, he cited **Herbert Marcuse** (1898-1979), an important member of the Frankfurt School, with a special interest in “art and revolution” (Jary & Jary, 1995, p. 386). For example: Wilber (1998), reiterating his major critique of scientism and the “disaster of modernity,” he cited similar scholars who have identified this social pathology and critiqued it with their own solutions: -- one of them he lists is “the birth of ‘one-dimensional man’ (Marcuse) (p. 76); and similarly in Wilber (2000) “the nightmare of one-dimensional man” (Marcuse) (p. 70).

[Note: in reading Brookfield (2005) on Marcuse (and Angela Davis, a student of Marcuse)-- there are quite a few “integrative” notions and ideas of “multiple” ways of knowing (including not reducing everything to material-economism, somewhat similar to Althusser’s critique of Marx, and “altered consciousness” related to art/aesthetic experience and transformation, revolution, etc.)]

KW hardly seems enthused about these particular critical theorists. Yet, with such little attention to these theorists by KW, it is best to leave these few citations as is, and perhaps, later (in another section or chapter) speculate on their role or lack of a role in KW’s CIT. This author, in particular, is more interested in these critical theorist for a CIAD (more on that later). Despite KW’s lite engagement with these critical theorists, Fisher (2003) utilized their work, off and on, as back-up for the challenge all critical theorists, activists, educators have to face—dealing with the “nightmare” of history (*a la* James Joyce) and the “nightmare” of “one-dimensional man” (*a la* Marcuse)—who seems more like a robotic “fearless one” carving out a violent place in the Kosmos without any consideration of the AQAL of KW’s model and CIT. The Wachowski Brothers’ film *The Matrix* comes to mind as a meta-narrative of the “fearless” machines/Agents vs. the “fearless” humans (cyborgs: e.g., Morpheus, Trinity, Neo):

Morpheus: [to Neo] You’re the One, Neo.

Trinity: [to Neo] I’m not afraid anymore. The oracle told me that I would fall in love and that that man, the man that I loved, would be the One.... I love you. (cited in Fisher, 2003, p. 6)

There are many “liberators” and some are “fearless-looking” and others just are fearless. More on all that later. Next is the “fearless Foucault.”