THE NEED FOR CONFLICT

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TOWARDS AN INTEGRAL APPROACH TO

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

By

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is an important dimension of global change, whether causing it, or being caused by it. A new way to explore the role of conflict, and what future consequences it might bring, is through the discourse of Integral Studies. This paper is an initial application of Integral theory in a creative manner at the level of orientating generalisations. Applying an Integral methodological pluralism to understanding conflict, relevant insights from conflict theory, needs theory, values theory, and political theory are drawn together to form the basis for a proposed Integral theory of conflict. Included is a driver-based method for determining the origin of any conflict and to aid the description of the nature of a conflict. It has significant implications for a more refined and effective determination of how to approach a conflict in order to achieve positive outcomes. The proposed Integral approach to conflict also provides an avenue of analysis that could lead to new and perhaps somewhat startling questions and conclusions about the consequences of current conflicts and approaches to them for the future. The overall intention of the paper is to act as an introductory letter of invitation to those concerned with conflict theory to investigate the usefulness of Integral theory, and to Integrally orientated futures thinkers, to investigate the merit of conflict theory, and particularly an Integral conflict theory.

Content

INTRODUCTION

"The perennial gale of creative destruction." Joseph Schumpeter …[1]

The dimensions of global change are as vast and varied as the diversity of humanity activities. One dimension that has played a prominent role throughout human history, and still begs attention today, is conflict. Whether it is change that leads to conflict, or conflict that leads to change, conflict is an activity that humanity has perennially specialised in – even if it is not commonly well understood. If one were to watch only 'western' news sources, one would be forgiven for thinking conflict was 'the' site of global change. Whether it is a global habit for localised conflict, or a localised habit for involvement with global conflict, conflict is a major dimension of change within humanity. Despite all the horrors conflict can bring, from personal angst to worldwide despair, humanity seems to act like it needs conflict.

This paper is concerned with initiating a new approach to understanding conflict, and our apparent need for it. It is written from within the discourse of Integral Studies, a meta-theory perspective on the evolution of humanity.[2] Accordingly, it is assumed that the reader is familiar with the basic concepts of Integral Studies, and further that they also have an interest for investigating the topic of conflict and change. Drawing inspiration from several novel elements of Integral Studies, the subject matter is dealt with from a position of 'orientating generalisations' and several creative propositions are made that are aimed at expounding a logic for an 'Integral methodological pluralist' approach to correlating various theories related to conflict.[3]

Initially the core elements of the field of conflict theory are identified, and related to Integral Theory. The resulting features are then used to investigate the fields of psychology, sociology and political theory in order to generate an overview of the origin of conflict within humanity. This paper is intended to be a brief summary of insights from each of these fields, a meta-perspective per se, and a creative linking of these insights in an effort to stimulate new approaches to conflict, so that humanity's specialisation in conflict can perhaps become a slightly more positive endeavour. It is hoped the reader will appreciate that this paper is not intended as a definitive word by any means, nor is it in any way representing an authoritative voice concerning any of the fields of study covered. Rather this paper represents a novice appreciation of, and suggestions for, the investigation of conflict from within an Integral meta-theory perspective.

Creative Theory?

An academic paper concerning it self with creative theory? Are you saying it's about ideas rather than facts? In a sense, yes. To quote Albert Einstein, 'imagination is more important than knowledge.' While this may seem an uncommon approach, there are two important points to be made. An age-old aphorism reminds us that 'in theory there is no difference between theory and practice, in practice there is.' In this vein the approach to the topic is acknowledged as presenting theory that may well be far from the reality it purports to describe, or the very theories it draws upon. That said however, Samual Karlin's statement that 'the purpose of models is not to fit the data but to sharpen the questions,' addresses the underlying intent of this paper's approach.[4] The creative exploration of theory taken herein is hoped to generate more meaningful, or at the very least different, questions about the topic of conflict rather than present firm conclusions. It is the author's opinion that given humanity's continued struggle with understanding and managing conflict new, even risky approaches are warranted for investigation. You never know what insights they might yield.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

There are several reasons for the possibly provocative nature of the title of this paper that warrant explanation. Firstly it is hoped that the title is provocative in some sense, in order that it may prompt an investigation into the reader's assumptions about the origin and nature of conflict, surfacing their beliefs about its role in our lives and the multifarious course of human history. In a more straight forward manner it

is a statement of fact, in that conflict can, despite humanity's common exegesis, be seen to significantly drive healthy evolution within individuals, their culture and humanity at large – more on this latter.

Furthermore, research shows that one is more likely to engage in such evolutionary developmentally healthy conflict if they are educated about conflict.[5] This education about conflict is seen, in this the United Nations declared 'International Decade of Peace,' as the first step in peace education.[6] It is with this noble intent in mind that the more complex reasoning behind the title is best understood. Building on psychological theory it is hoped the title will act as an attractor to those also currently involved in conflict, through either their desire to resolve, win or otherwise better manage their situations of conflict. This attraction is hoped to provide the initial motivation for reading through this investigation of conflict and hopefully will result in a degree of self-reflection that will lead to a more healthy engagement with future conflicts and the change they entail.

DEFINING CONFLICT

A key aspect of this creative Integral overview of conflict theory is a revision of fundamentals. The most prominent of which is a definition of conflict. Common dictionary definitions of conflict include statements like the following:

- To come into collision; a striking together;
- To clash, be in opposition, or at variance; disagree;
- To contend, do battle or struggle, especially a prolonged struggle; and,
- Discord of action, feeling, or effect; antagonism as of interests or principles.[7]

It is likely that definitions of conflict will vary considerably from dictionary to dictionary, culture to culture, person to person, and possibly even between one conversation and another. In order to facilitate a generalised meta-theoretical approach to conflict the following, seemingly all-inclusive definition, has been adopted:

> "Any affect of negativity in being, thinking and action: from mild discomfort to fatal violence."

A definition this broad acts like a pair of glasses where the focus of the lenses are such that the application of the concept of conflict can be applied to almost any situation. In this way the obvious limitations of what conflict is, and what is useful to consider as conflict, can be rediscovered, usurping possible previous assumptions in meaning, and further, it opens up an enquiry space to allow new insights concerning conflict to arise.

THE NEED FOR CONFLICT

"Ah, this is obviously some strange usage of the word 'safe' that I wasn't previously aware of." Douglas Adams[8]

With a broad definition of conflict in mind then, a consideration of the validity of the title is more approachable. Using the Integral Studies AQAL meta-theory's 'quadrants' we can take a tour through four of the main dimensions of human existence and see if there is any support of 'the need for conflict.'

AQAL stands for 'All Quadrants, All Levels, All Lines, All States, and All Types.'[9] These five components of a particular Integral Studies meta-theory, known as 'AQAL,' act as organising concepts in endeavours that investigate, analyse and practice from an Integral perspective. The first of these concepts, 'quadrants' will be dealt with here, with both 'levels' and 'lines' covered later in detail and 'types' addressed briefly.

In Figure 1 below, a characteristic field of enquiry into human realities, or a quadrant exemplar, is presented for each quadrant. In addition, a common theory and/or the concept included that is encompassed in the above definition of conflict, is also indicated.

UL Internal-Individual Subjective: Psychology - Dissonance	*UR Exterior-Individual Objective:* Darwinian Evolution - Behavioural Adaptability
LL Internal-Collective Inter-Subjective: Sociology – Creative Conflict	*LR Exterior-Collective Inter-Objective:* Prigogine's Open Systems Theory - Bifurcation Point

Figure 1: Conflict Exemplar's in AQAL's Quadrants[10]

Two things become obvious if these four exemplars in favour of conflict are held as true. Firstly, it would seem that, using such a broad definition it is so easy to find support for conflict, that perhaps there are many other forms of enquiry and their theories that would also account for the evidence of conflict. Secondly, there is an implicit positioning of the respective conflict concepts within these exemplars. Conflict, it seems, is a site from which healthy evolution can occur. It isn't to say that it will or always does occur, but that the conflict related concept is presented within a logic of development, healthy within the respective frames of reference, and is a significant occurrence. Affirming this developmental aspect, and the potential value of conflict in the left-hand (LH) quadrants, psychologists Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey state that:

"[We need to]…surface and sustain a relationship to the different (contradictory, disagreeing) meanings we ourselves create internally. Internal contradictions, we suggested, though at times an uncomfortable road to walk, help build the royal road to transformational learning. Interpersonal contradictions…can further build that road. We do not see conflict, even ongoing conflict, as necessarily debilitating or dysfunctional."[11]

Another perspective, this time grounded in the practice of conflict management concerned chiefly with the LH quadrants, comes from Diamond Consulting:

"Even if we could avoid conflict, we would not want to, for it is in the midst of experiencing a conflict positive culture that individuals create their future together."[12]

Given this positive regard for conflict it is warranted that the more frequent experience of negative associations with conflict be addressed. Inherent in these statements, and the exemplars in Figure 1 is that conflict can also be ultimately destructive, unhealthy and devolutionary. In this regard it is important to point out that this paper is in no way suggesting that unnecessary, unhealthy, and devolutionary conflict is desirable or even required within human experience. The majority of violent conflict in human history has simply been abhorrent and a tragic waste of human efforts, resources and life.

CONFLICT THEORY

"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence." Dorothy Thompson[13]

In the briefest review of conflict theory three main elements of the field's endeavours stand out within an Integral perspective. There are three main types of conflict, a selection of escalation scales and an extensive range of different approaches to conflict.

The three broad types of conflict that are commonly identified within the field, and that a theorist or practitioner generally specialises on in their work, are:

- Need/interest driven;
- Value based; and,
- Structural/power forms and activities.[14]

Each type, or different conflict nature, entails unique dynamics in their expressed engagement by those in the conflict, and correspondingly different means of assessment, analysis and approaches to resolution or management.

The next most common feature of conflict theory and management is the selection of a particular conflict intensity, or escalation process analysis, framework, model or scale. These various escalation process analyses serve to identify the related degrees of a conflict's development, and the characteristic forms of involvement by those experiencing the conflict, and thus import for any effort to understand and then manage or resolve the conflict. To example but one of many, Friedrich Glasl's nine stage model is summarised in Figure 2 below.

Stage	Conflict issues	Behavioural norms	In-group/out-group cognitions and attitudes	Threshold to next level
1. "Hardening"	Objective issues Hardening standpoints	Straight argumentation	Awareness of mutual dependence Nascent role expectations Nascent in-/out-group formation, "skins" form around groups Suspicions about hidden motives	Tactical tricks used in the argumentation
2. "Debates and polemics"	Objective issues and relative position, superiority Ability to influence	Verbal confrontations Tactical feints in argumentation Debates	Affinity inwards Fixation at standpoints Ambivalence cooperation/ competition Suspiciousness Counterpart has "typical behaviour"	Action without consultation
3. "Actions, not words"	Objective issues and self-image Freedom of action Prove one's own mastery Blocking the counterpart	Action without consultation Symbolic behaviour (jargon) Decreased verbal communication - increased non-verbal communication Extended social arena	Blocked empathy "Counterpart not capable of development" In-group conformity pressure	"Deniable punishment behaviour" Covert attacks directly aimed at identity of counterpart
4. "Images and coalitions"	Counterpart is the problem Win or lose Save reputation	"Deniable punishment behaviour" Exploitation of gaps in norms Formation of coalitions Attacks on core identity	Dual cognition (black/white) Coherent enemy image Attribution of collective characteristics to counterpart Self-image as only reacting to counterpart	Loss of face
5. "Loss of face"	Fundamental values Expose counterpart Rehabilitate dignity	Attacks on the public face of the counterpart Restore prestige	Enemy "unmasked": perceived as morally corrupt Guilt symbiosis in-group	Ultimatum Strategic threats
6. "Strategies of threats"	Control of counterpart	Presentation of ultimata Panic-ruled actions Self-binding statements Extension of conflict	Own actions are only reactions Perceived impotence –> rage Need for control	Execution of ultimata Attacks on counterparts sanction potential
7. "Limited destructive	Hurt counterpart more than	Attacks at sanction potential Threats + interrupted	Counterpart prepared to do anything Counterpart not human	Attacks at core of enemy Effort to shatter enemy

blows"	one's own group Nothing to gain Survival	communi- cation	Power-thinking dominates Malice important motive	
8. "Fragmentation of the enemy"	Annihilate counterpart Survival	Attacks at vital functions Actions to shatter counterpart Attacks on cohesive function	Annihilation fantasies Fascination with mechanical annihilation mechanisms	Giving up self-preservation Total war
9. "Together into the abyss"	Annihilation at any cost	Total war with all means Limitless violence	Accept one's own destruction if counterpart is destroyed	–

Figure 2.: Friedrich Glasl's Conflict Escalation Model.[15]

Contingent within the three broad types of conflict analysis, and the various escalation process models, is the relevance of different approaches to them. The different approaches take into account the various factors implied by the types and escalation analyses, and also involve different conceptions of outcome objectives for approaching conflicts, occasionally radically divergent methods of practice, and embody often mutually exclusive values and cultural norms. These seemingly immense differences in understanding the topic of conflict have given rise to an equally differentiated range of approach methods, including but not limited to, arbitration, ombudsman, conciliation, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, consensus, diplomacy, democratisation, mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping, reconstruction, and restorative justice.[16]

A Comprehensive Theory Of Conflict

Considering these main features of conflict theory and practice from an Integral Studies perspective, the key question that arises is, is there a comprehensive theory of conflict that encompasses all of these features and their numerous elements? In considering just this issue within the field of conflict studies, Dennis Sandole summarises the positions of key theorists to date:

> "Generic theory in conflict and conflict resolution has been a contentious issue, with no clear resolution in sight. On the one hand, Kenneth Boulding thought such a theory possible, differences between levels notwithstanding, and went some way toward developing one. On the other hand, Anatol Rapoport -- despite (or precisely because of) his own efforts in this regard -- had his doubts about a general theory of war as well as a general theory of conflict. Somewhere in between is John Vasquez who, while he believes that a unified theory of conflict and violence is possible, does not feel the same about a generic theory of war."[17]

Sandole presents an in-depth consideration of the difficulties and opportunities of a comprehensive theory in the context of proposing a new 'three pillar' approach, which groups the field's various efforts as:

- Conflict causes/conditions (individual, societal, global);
- Latent conflict sites (issues, objectives, means, parties); and,
- 3rd party intervention objectives and approaches (prevention, management, settlement, resolution, transformation).[18]

These three very broad groupings, developed from a deep knowledge of the field, represent in the context of this paper, efforts to understand the 'nature,' 'origin' and 'approaches' to conflict respectively. Why this is important will be explored below.

Integral Mapping of Conflict Theory

Given the contested efforts towards a comprehensive theory of conflict, perhaps Integral Studies' AQAL meta-theory can provide a framework for relating and correlating, what to date, appear as only loosely organised approaches. One way AQAL can help is through 'Integral mapping.' Integral mapping applies the core organising concepts of AQAL to what is already known of a situation or field of study, identifying likely relationships in terms of being causal, correlative, and/or hierarchical. This can serve to confirm or challenge

existing theories regarding these relationships, and more importantly point to areas where current thinking does not seem to cover what might be important aspect of the reality of the situation under investigation.

It is likely that an Integral mapping of existing knowledge about the nature, origin and approaches to conflict would yield many insights. This involved exercise however, is regrettably outside the scope of this paper. A cursory alignment of the elements of conflict already covered, however, could result in a similar picture to the one presented below in Figure 3.
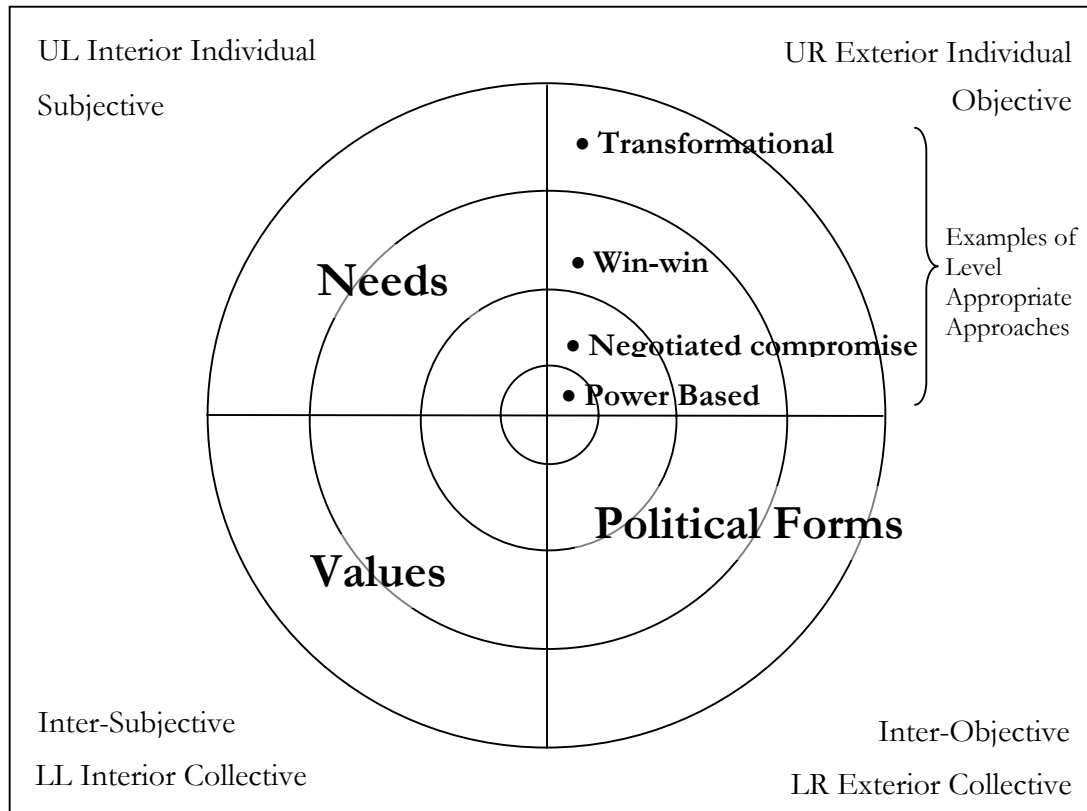

Figure 3.: Towards An Integral Conflict Typology

The three types of conflict identified above as 'needs,' 'values' and 'form,' find resonance with the AQAL concept of 'lines,' as in lines of development and activity, each situated within different quadrants. Further, the various approaches might yield important relational insights if subjected to a 'levels' analysis. A rough approximation of these possible 'Integral mapping' outcomes are depicted in Figure 3, in the UR quadrant for graphical simplicity. What is not included are the escalation scales that were identified as a core feature of conflict theory. These, it seems at a cursory glance, would most likely be applied within any given 'line' at a particular 'level.' As such, they categorise detailed horizontal developments of degrees of intensity, and would require a much more detailed depiction than the one in Figure 3. It is at this detail that the integral concept of 'types' would also most likely be fruitfully applied. Types here would refer to differences, for example, between masculine and feminie embodiments of a 'lines' activity within a 'quadrant' and at a certain degree of 'intensity escalation.' This initial mapping suggests that a high degree of complexity in accommodating existing conflict theory, and in also spotting its possible areas of further development, becomes readily available with an Integral approach.

The initial mapping in Figure 3 contains elements from two of Sandole's pillars of conflict theory, what were labelled the 'nature' and 'approach' pillars. These could well deserve to be investigated as two different Integral maps, and related together afterwards. The noticeable absence is that of an Integral mapping of the 'origins' of conflict. Creatively formulating the beginnings of such an integral mapping of the origin of conflict is the main concern of this paper. It addresses, in the author's opinion, the perceived and theorised need for conflict, and as such might provide a novel way into understanding conflict and the change it prompts or is prompted by. Before continuing on that path however, the three maps themselves deserve an observation regarding their creative potential.

1-2-3 Conflict Theory

Taken together, the three integral maps of the origin, nature and approaches to conflict could easily be used as a 1-2-3 process of approaching any conflict. Starting with the nature identification, the conflict can be traced in an analysis through to its origins and then onto the appropriate approaches that the approach map would indicate through the correlative synchronisation of the three different maps.

The theoretical and methodological developments the maps could represent, if found to be viable upon investigation with sensitivity, rigour, and understanding in practical terms, could offer a coherent comprehensive multi-dimensional picture of conflict theory, and of conflicts of almost any nature and origin. On the flip side, they would also allow for an immense simplification, while retaining the generative sophistication, in how to approach specific conflicts in a manner more targeted to a desirable outcome. It is up to more than a novice in the field of both conflict theory and Integral Studies such as this author however, to evaluate the merit of this suggestion. It is, currently, simply a creative proposition.

CONFLICT DRIVER ANALYSIS

"If certain human needs are not satisfied, there will be conflict. The conflict will be of such a character that no suppressive means will contain it. Attempts to suppress it will lead, on the contrary, to exponential increases in conflict." John Burton[19]

Clues as to the origins of conflicts, to return to the main focus of this paper, can be found within the three broad types of conflict already identified: needs, values, and power form. The next creative proposition in this paper is that these three types of conflict reflect the origins of each and every conflict, and as such, can be investigated in their own right as the three main 'drivers' of conflict. 'Drivers' is a term from the discourse of Futures and Foresight Studies that commonly refers, as it suggests, to the main sources of change or determinacy within a given analysis. Thus it would be logical to conclude, for example, that the author has assessed conflict to be a key driver of global change, as constitutes the starting point for this paper.

Stating that the three drivers are the origins of conflict may seem to add little to the three types of conflict already identified in conflict theory. The difference however, is in the proposition that each of the drivers are equally involved in originating any conflict. In turn, this proposition implies that the nature of any conflict may reflect sites of conflict in any of these drivers, and further, that an adequate approach would need to account for each of these sites and each of their tripartite origins.

A Touch Of AQAL Theory

It is important to remember what the quadrants, that each of the drivers are situated within, are actually referring to. They are pointing out four of the fundamental dimensions of reality as human's experience them – or any 'holon' for those more familiar with AQAL.[20] We can place a single human at the centre and investigate the quadrants relative to their situation and a particular topic of focus, or we can put a collective of humans, a group or community and so on, and then conduct our analysis. The conflict drivers would apply equally to individual or collective analyses as different 'lines' of activity and development within the different quadrants or dimensions of the situation as they are depicted in Figure 3, above. This results in a developmental line of needs, values and political forms. This is not saying that these are the only lines of activity within each quadrant – there may well be others that also warrant attention – rather it indicates that they are the lines of most interest in our analysis to date.[21]

The conception of drivers as lines of development leads to the second main organising concept of AQAL, that of 'levels.' A 'line of development' implies that there are spectrums of activity within each driver, which develop in discernable stages, or with an obvious order. If each of these drivers of conflict can be seen to develop in the range of activities they represent for an individual or collective, then different stages of this

unfolding can be identified, and mapped – more on this later. It is these arbitrary divisions in the spectrum of activities in each driver, or line, that are depicted as concentric circles in Figure 3 above.

These AQAL observations of lines of development, and their levels of unfoldment, lead to many insights for the mapping of the origin, nature and approaches to conflict. In the first instance it suggests that a conflict may occur at any stage in any line, or even a combination thereof, yielding a rich typology of conflict. Further, an AQAL perspective supports the proposition that each of these drivers is equally involved in the origin of any conflict. This is because within AQAL theory, the different quadrants and the levels of development in their lines of activity, are inherent aspects of any holon, human, or collective of humans.

1-2-3 Conflict Origins

To apply these insights, it could be said that any conflict will involve a 1-2-3 of origin. That is, each driver will impact the site and nature of a given conflict. Abstractly, it means that any instance of conflict (in any line, in any quadrant at any level of development – in short, of any 'nature') will involve a motivated and appropriately healthy action that is meeting resistance. This in turn is likely to lead to another motivated and appropriately healthy action to accommodate the resistance on the way to satisfying the original need.

Where did this cycle of conflict origin come from? In Figure 4 below, the three drivers, and their corresponding quadrants in AQAL theory are depicted, with a sequential abstraction of their application to the origin of a conflict indicated by the arrow. The motivation is comprised of the needs and wants represented by the needs line in the UL. The political form is represented by the action/participation forms available in order to exercise one's power (a holon, individual or collective) to satisfy the need. The appropriately healthy selection of the political form summarises the influence of the values, or value frame/worldview, and the culturally specific normalisation of conflict intensity and form, in choosing the action that matches the need and degree of frustration met in realising that need.
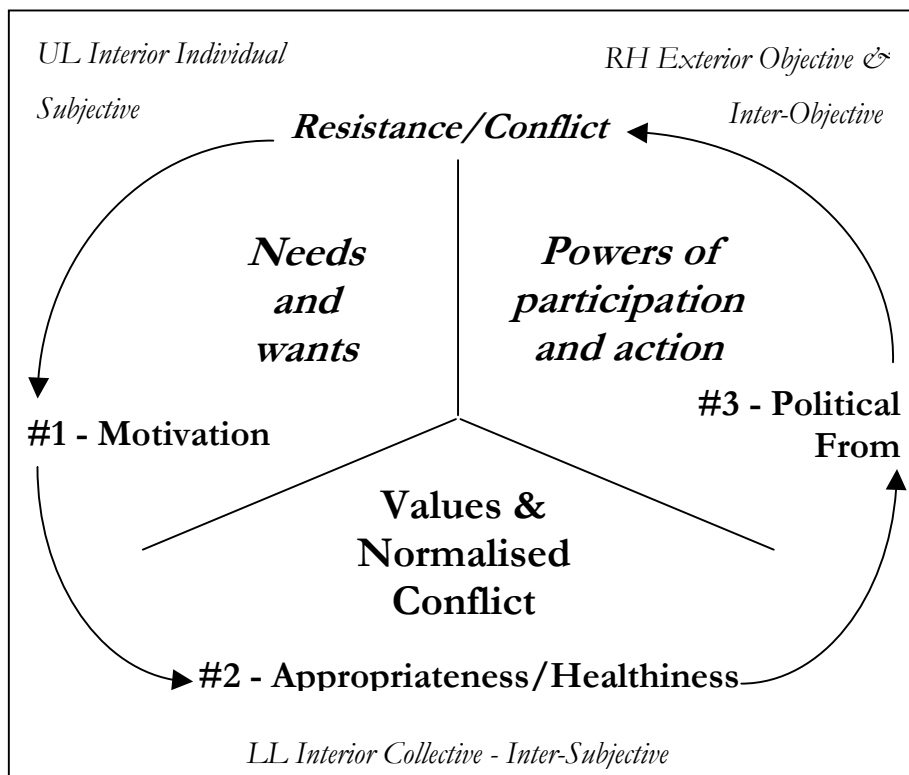

Figure 4.: A 1-2-3 Origin Of Any Conflict

There is one important difference in Figure 4, from Figure 3: the right-hand (RH) quadrants have been summarised as one dimension for convenience within this presentation. They deserve, in a more detailed analysis to be investigated individually. Taken together in identifying the line of political form, the analysis

here includes the action or behaviour (UR quadrant) and the structure/system that it occurs in functional relationship with (LR quadrant).

On a different note, especially for Integral theorists, AQAL may prompt one to identify needs, values and political form, not as separate lines, but as the centre of analysis within the quadrants. This would result in an Integral mapping of needs, for example, such that UL or individual internal needs, and cultural needs (LL) and behavioural needs (UR) and structural-system needs (LR) are all identified for their important differences. Of course, this would extend into different lines and their relative levels, and appropriate types and states to boot. For the sake of simplicity, this AQAL 'needs map' is to be remembered, but summarised within the UL line of needs. This applies equally to the nature of the values and political form lines as presented here.

Driver Spectrums

The developing drivers, or lines, identified above, can be approached in many ways. It seems prudent to include another level of detail within the 1-2-3 driver origin of conflict, in order to better appreciate the differences, and complexities of combinations, within and between the different stages of activity of each driver. Numerous theories that deal with these particular lines of needs, values and political form can be found within the fields of psychology, sociology and political theory respectively. They also receive significant attention within the field of conflict theory. For consistency in the level of analysis of this paper, and for relevance to existing AQAL expositions and applications, a summary overview of salient points from each of these fields, and a representative theory will be explored. With a firmer grasp of the complexities involved in the origins of conflicts, and hopefully a simpler handle on them, some of the more interesting dynamics between the elements, when investigated towards practical ends, can be investigated.

NEEDS THEORY

"Energy in action varies in proportion to the strength of its motive." Clausewitz[22]

Modern needs theories are predominately descendants of Abraham Maslows' 1954 'hierarchy of needs' model.[23] Further developments by Maslow and others have resulted in a common depiction of the hierarchy of needs that contains, in crude summary, the eight levels outlined in Table 1 below.

Level	Need	Examples
1	Biological and Physiological	Air, food, drink, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
2	Safety	Protection from elements, security, stability, etc.
3	Belongingness and Love	Family, affection, relationships, etc.
4	Esteem	Self-esteem, confidence, competence, achievement, status, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, etc.
5	Cognitive	Knowledge, meaning, understanding etc.
6	Aesthetic	Appreciation for things of beauty and balance etc.
7	Self-Actualisation	The growth motivation, realising personal potential, self-fulfilment, independence from culture and environment, creativity and spontaneity, and so much more.
8	Transcendence	Integration of opposites though transcendence, seeking balance between the good, true and beautiful, harmony with environment, and so many other motivations.

Table 1.: A Hierarchy Of Needs[24]

Needs & Conflict Theories

Within the field of conflict theory, Paul Sites and Australian John Burton, have most prominently developed a sophisticated application of needs theory to understanding and managing conflict.[25] It has become a major force in how to approach conflicts to date. More broadly, Maslow's needs theory has been a significant influence on other theories relevant to conflict theory, including Choice Theory, Self Determination Theory, ERG Theory, CIN Needs Model, Motivation Theory and so on.[26] Alternatives to Maslow's theory also exist, such as Max Neef's axiological and existential needs, which upon closer inspection may more fruitfully fill out an AQAL needs theory than Maslow's one dimensional, one line, theory.[27]

Whichever needs theory one determines is most relevant to an analysis of a particular conflict, it would be well advised to be contrasted with the extensive work done in the area already by Burton and others. Burton's 'four worlds' thesis, for example, has remarkable similarities with AQAL theory's four quadrants, the inter-relationships between which have been substantially investigated.[28] That said however, AQAL still appears to offer integrative insights through its core organising concepts that could well advance a comprehensive theory of conflict.

Needs & Wants

There are several issues that arise in consideration of needs theory in relationship with conflict theory. The central concern in this regard within the field of conflict theory, beyond determining which need is most prominent, is determining the relative priority of different needs to an individual or collective. A priority spectrum, comprised of an analysis of the needs spectrum, is required to practically apply a spectrum of needs.

In determining the relative priority of a need, several points of analysis surface as crucial in relationship to devising an appropriate approach to the conflict. These include:

- Understanding the difference between relatively objectively determined universal human needs and the culturally determined preferences for the form and means of satisfying these needs;
- Determining the differences between a relatively objective need and a more subjective want or interest; and,
- Comprehending the degree to which a subjective want, or 'surface feature' preference, for the fulfilment of a deeper 'structurally' objective need, is conditioned by culture and experience to appear as a need, rather than being understood as a want, by the party in question.

The last point is of most importance in a needs priority analysis. It is the perceived priority of the need by the party in the conflict that most determines the influence of the need on values and political form in an analysis of the origin of a conflict. The importance of perceived priority of a need is of even more importance once the details of an escalation model are included in the analysis.

In order to depict this relationship between needs, wants, and perceived priority, Figure 5 below depicts two axes, one plotting the relative degree of objective need to subjective want, combined with a relative plotting of perceived importance, from high to low. Examples plotted at extremes of each combination are labelled to indicate the openness of the prioritised needs to change, negotiation, and sacrifice. This openness is a significant point of action in approaching conflict in search of resolution or desirable management.
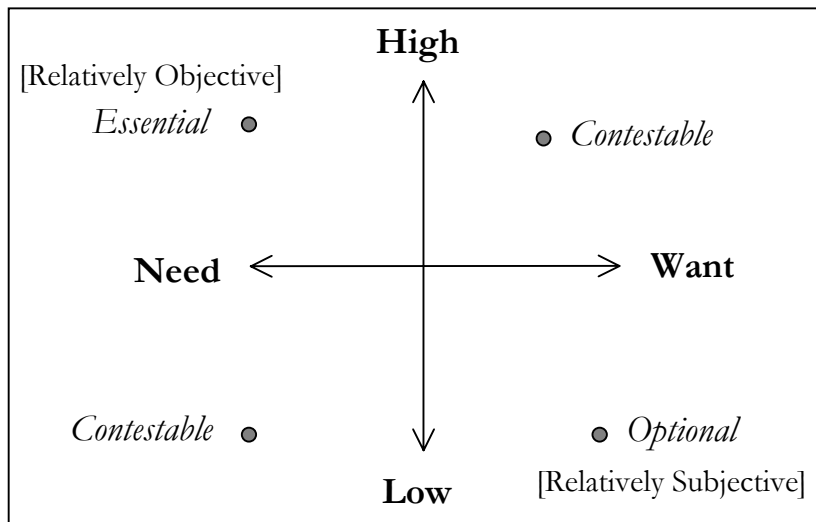
Figure 5.: Plotting A 'Priority Spectrum'

This plotting analysis occurs in two ways, firstly horizontally at a particular level within the needs line, and secondly, the combined results from relevant levels need to be plotted in relationship to each other. For this however, several other insights concerning the prioritisation of needs from AQAL and needs theory are required:

- Fundamental needs equal higher priority – a lower level need is more fundamental, than both a higher level need or want, and thus will be a higher priority in actuality, if not perceived this way;

- Higher needs equal higher degrees of choice – the need from a higher level, developmentally speaking, is subject to a greater degree of choice in fulfilment, and in a sense, this reflects the opposite nature of the previous point; and,

- Needs priorities are dynamic not linear – the concept of a priority spectrum is so abstract as to be misleading. In reality the prioritisation of needs is a wildly dynamic affair with multiple needs being considered at any one time, while they are all shifting in priority on a moment-to-moment basis, and in relationship to one another. More of a constellation of needs, than a spectrum.

Analysis of need priorities are addressed in various ways within the field of conflict theory and the above suggestions are simply a rudimentary summary of the key points necessary to be included in a generalised meta-theory approach such as presented in this paper.

POLITICAL POWER FORMS

"War is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means." Clausewitz[29]

The driver of political power forms can be understood in relatively simpler terms than the needs driver. Firstly it is important to understand the breadth of the definition used for political form within this presentation. Power form, as it has been used so far in context, indicates the functional means or form, of securing, maintaining, using and transferring power, for the realising of needs.

The evolution of political forms within the field of political theory is extensively covered. It should be noted however, that an evolutionary view of political forms is not necessarily the same as 'political development' within the political science literature. For relevance to existing AQAL expositions, the spectrum of political forms described by Don Beck are outlined in Figure 6 below. Any other similar developmental spectrum of political forms may also be relevant, or more so, to the analysis of a particular conflict situation or context.

The nature of political forms at any level covers a wide range of activities. The breadth of these are not indicated in Figure 6, however, it should be reasonably easy to track through the eras of political evolution to correlate a particular technology being used, behavioural form exhibited, and the underlying, or summary, political system it occurs within. A more detailed analysis, highlighting not only differences between levels, but also horizontal degrees of complexity and competence within a level, would greatly assist a more comprehensive understanding. This level of detail is not within the scope of this paper unfortunately.

Complicating a clear delineation between political forms is the impact of culturally specific characteristics. These too need to be addressed, however, as with relatively subjective needs, or surface features, there are relatively objective deep structures to political forms that can be identified.

VALUES & NORMALISED CONFLICT

"The direct use of force is such a poor solution to any problem, it is generally employed only by small children and large nations." David Friedman

There are at least three main features of cultural, or sociological theory, that are significantly relevant to a consideration of values and conflict. Firstly the influence of cultural ideals, then the related determination of healthiness or appropriateness, and also norms concerning the nature and intensity of conflicts

Cultural ideals, and the values and preferences they represent, have a significant influence on the prioritisation of needs, both individually and collectively, and the configurations of political forms. These are also a fluid and dynamic affair in actuality, with a multitude of sub-cultural participations earning various degrees of importance, and each with variations in what is open to change given the stage of escalation of intensity in a particular situation's conflict.

Following on from these culturally shared values and ideals, is the alignment of what is healthy and unhealthy, or appropriate and inappropriate, given an ideals priority relative to the escalation stage of a conflict. It is generally the case that any political form that serves the realisation, or striving for, a valued ideal is healthy if it is in relative harmony with the overall constellation of prioritised ideals, values and correlated needs. For high priority issues, anything that is perceived within one's value frame to support its realisation may be deemed healthy – even if it isn't at other times within that value frame.

Different cultures and their sub-cultures often hold significantly different cultural norms on what form is healthy or appropriate in conflict at any given stage of escalation. Further, related norms also determine to what degree they can, and indeed within the worldview represented, that they should, be escalated in terms of relative timing.

The importance of these cultural variations in determining what political form should be engaged in a given conflict can be set within a broader spectrum of evolving value based worldviews. One popular theory that addresses the values line within an AQAL perspective is Spiral Dynamics. The relationship between value frames and their form preferences are addressed below, in Figure 6.

VALORISED POLITICAL FORMS

"The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do." Samuel P. Huntington[30]

The political power forms, as they relate to conflict, may more realistically represent a combination of the bottom two categories as presented in Figure 6 below. This depiction is also focused mainly on a collective analysis, rather than an individual one, although the place and participation forms of an individual can easily

be deduced. The 'resource distribution formulas' are more akin to a statement of valued nature of collective behaviour, while the 'political systems' refer to the overarching framework within which the different value based worldviews tend to envisage the functional containment of their application.
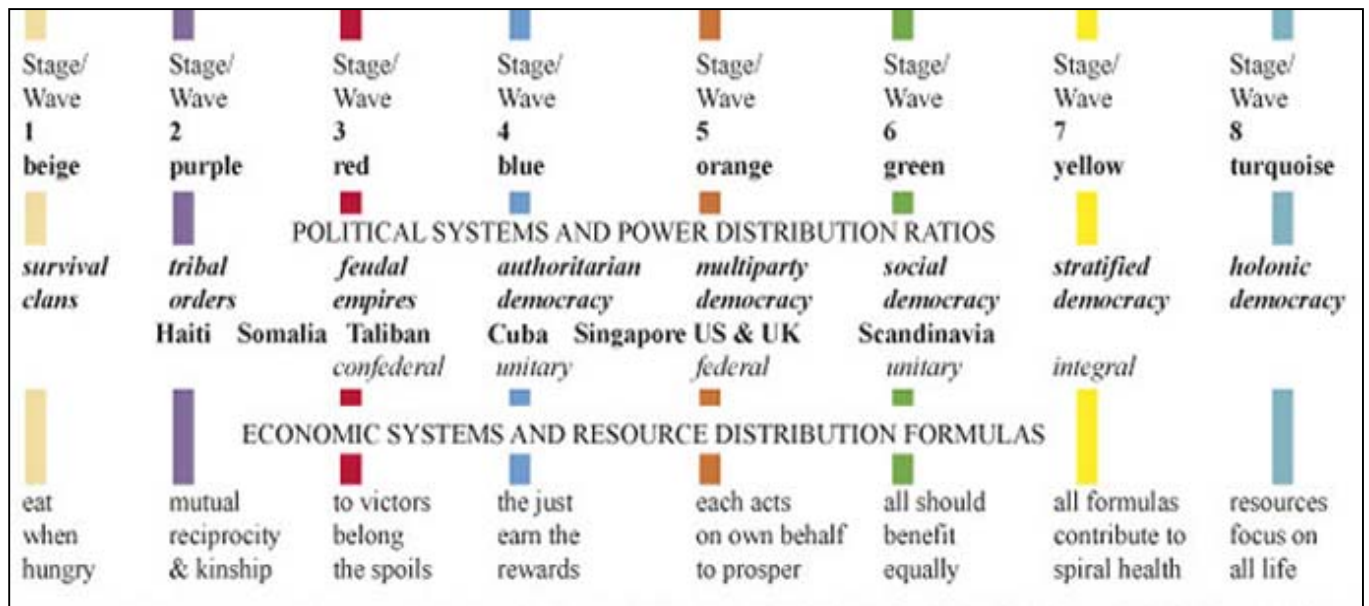
Stage/ Wave 1 beige	Stage/ Wave 2 purple	Stage/ Wave 3 red	Stage/ Wave 4 blue	Stage/ Wave 5 orange	Stage/ Wave 6 green	Stage/ Wave 7 yellow	Stage/ Wave 8 turquoise
		POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND POWER DISTRIBUTION RATIOS					
survival clans	tribal orders	feudal empires	authoritarian democracy	multiparty democracy	social democracy	stratified democracy	holonic democracy
	Haiti Somalia	Taliban	Cuba Singapore	US & UK	Scandinavia		
		confederal	unitary	federal	unitary	integral	
		ECONOMIC SYSTEMS AND RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION FORMULAS					
eat when hungry	mutual reciprocity & kinship	to victors belong the spoils	the just earn the rewards	each acts on own behalf to prosper	all should benefit equally	all formulas contribute to spiral health	resources focus on all life

Figure 6.: Stratified Democracy – Values and Political Form[31]

INTEGRAL CONFLICT THEORY

"All that is human must retrograde if it does not advance." Edward Gibbon

While the summary features for need, values and political form theories as presented above are skeletal, open to detailed interpretation and somewhat like a shopping list of important observations, they come into their own through application. In guiding the Integral mapping of the nature, origin and approaches to a conflict, they provide for an incredibly detailed analysis, even at only this highly abstracted meta-level perspective.

For each map, if the three driver positions are multiplied by the number of levels chosen for the analysis (say eight as represented consistently above) then the number of possible variations represents an unmanageable number (6561 sites) for a single, practical consideration. Further, other lines of activity and development may be deemed of significant influence in each maps composition, numerous degrees of horizontal complexity within any given level can also be outlined, and 'states' and 'types' may also be of import.[32] With these added sites of variation, the total number of sites of possible analysis is, in a single application, patently excessive.

The value of this meta-theoretical level approach to conflict, as presented within an Integral studies discourse, is that it is open to recognising this huge range of variation and complexity within a given conflict. All this before any real detail, in any of the main theoretical areas addressed, is included. In practical terms however, the value of this approach is that it informs the analysis of the range of possibilities, and yet doesn't necessarily need to be fully applied. That is, in drawing on the 1-2-3 approach to conflicts, and then a 1-2-3 approach to analysing the origin of the conflict, the main features for each theory may not come into play, or they may become a dominate aspect, depending on the nature of the conflict, its situational variables, and the particular characteristics of the parties involved. Taken together and applied in a situationally relevant manner, the 1-2-3 approach to conflict seems to this author, to provide the basis for an Integral theory of conflict that is both comprehensive and exacting, and yet flexibly simple.

The flexibly simple side comes into view if the 1-2-3 approach is taken, with the Integral breadth kept in mind. It means, for a simple, quick and easy approach, ascertaining the major levels at play in each of the

three drivers, for each party in the conflict. Then identifying the key points of conflict by driver line, level and intensity. Armed with the resulting understanding, and an as yet to be written analysis of how different approaches map to various levels of conflict, it should be relatively straight forward to select an appropriate approach to managing the conflict.

Besides the greater depth required to be fleshed out within each area covered so far – nature, origin, approach, needs, values and political form – there is one major area not yet addressed. This entails the crucial dynamics of inter-relationship between the three drivers of conflict.

MULTI-LEVEL DYNAMICS

While there are many possible dynamics that will serve to valuably inform an Integral analysis and approach to a conflict, several standout from the Integral Studies literature.[33] While some of these have been noted in the summary of key points of needs and value theories, others include, in no particular order:

- Developmental re-alignment – each new level of activity within a given driver, re-aligns the configuration of previously established levels. Each configuration generally remains available, however, each new level of development can place demands for change on previous levels in order to effect a healthy integration.
- Universal priorities – fundamental needs, those of lower level developmentally speaking, will escalate into intense conflict quicker. This applies not only to those of lower levels over higher levels, but also to relatively objective, or deep structural needs, at each level, over more subjectively based, surface feature needs.
- Access to forms – in the political form driver, once a higher level form, or a horizontally more complex form, becomes available, it may be used in service of any need, by any party – lower level needs and values within holon, collective or individual may automatically be able to use it, so to other parties. There are some competency barriers which may halt this coopting however;
- Higher level power – more levels of manifest development across the three driver lines means, generally speaking, increased:
  - Options and ability to manage, instigate and/or intensify conflict;
  - Ability to mask and/or justify conflict;
  - Sites of potential conflict internally and relationally;
  - Importance of choice in determining needs, values and forms; and,
  - Choice of more sophisticated (healthy or unhealthy) action to maintain lower level needs.

In applying the 1-2-3 origin of conflict analysis method, these dynamics of driver inter- and intra-relationships will play a significant role in determining the relative impact of various characteristics of a conflict, and in particular of assessing the likely outcomes of continued conflict, or potential conflicting actions.

AN INTEGRAL AGENDA

"It is close to a historical universal that our terrorism against them is right and just (whoever we happen to be), while their terrorism against us is an outrage. As long as that practice is adopted, discussion of terrorism is not serious. It is no more than a form of propaganda and apologetics." Noam Chomsky[34]

The approach to understanding conflict presented in this paper represents a political form of the 'Integral' level as outlined in Figure 6, and correlates to the hierarchy of needs level of 'self-actualisation.' Of relevance then is what this level of value and political form might indicate as healthy, appropriate means of approaching and understanding conflict. In practical terms, what does an Integral approach to conflict indicate as its ideal? What is the Integral agenda here?

Drawing on articulations within Integral Studies and Spiral Dynamics literature, the integral agenda is to encourage the healthy securing of needs for all potential conflicting parties at each level they are open to, and to foster continued development to higher levels: the relatively healthy survival and further development of humanity as a whole. It acknowledges that conflict is inevitable, yet seeks to maximise the healthiness of conflicts, therefore minimising the overall destructive devolutionary outcomes, in allowing each party to realise their needs through a means they value. In determining healthiness, the Integral level value statement of ideal, or moral guide, can be summarised as aiming to achieve 'the greatest depth for the greatest span.'[35] There are many implications of this Integral ideal as an agenda for approaching conflict, unfortunately a more detailed exposition is outside the scope of this introductory paper.

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

"Terrorism is the worst kind of violence, so we have to check it, we have to take countermeasures." The Dalai Lama[36]

Given the abstract and highly generalised nature of the presentation, what remains is to demonstrate the merit of this approach in practical terms. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to adequately address an example within this paper. There are a few things that can be said however, about the value of an Integral approach to conflict for understanding the future. Each of the drivers outlined represent relative certainties that will be carried forward into any human future. They appear as deep structural, relatively objective and universal, expressions of human being-in-the-world that will continue to drive human efforts and interactions. In concert, the board dynamics of the inter- and intra-relations of the drivers outlined will also retain their generic characters.

There appear two main sources of change within the elements presented as any future unfolds. First the surface features, cultural preferences, or relatively subjective wants and forms will likely be subject to rapid shifts, although their basic connection to the expression of deep structural needs will likely remain. The second site of change is perhaps the more obvious, and is at once easier to anticipate, and also increasingly hard to describe. It entails the unfolding of an individual, collective or any holon's development in any of the streams. This is easier to anticipate because of the general course and dynamics of movement along the spectrums are already well known. It becomes harder to describe because further reaches within each spectrum, and to a lesser degree further horizontal degrees of complexity within each level, are yet to emerge. By definition then, the characteristics of these levels and degrees of activity yet to be created, are inherently unknowable. Those pushing into the edges of these areas of emergence, are the one's to watch for insights into humanity's continued development into the future.

Despite the paucity of examples, it is hoped that the new avenue into understanding conflict offered herein will provide new insights into the future consequences of current conflicts and possible approaches to them, to both futures thinkers and conflict theorists.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ideally, this initial exploration into the development of an Integral conflict theory will serve to raise new and informative questions for conflict theorists, integrally orientated futures thinkers, and anyone interested in these topics. While a detailed application of the propositions presented herein is outside the scope of this paper, the author is available for further elaboration in other contexts, and is actively seeking feedback in order to refine this presentation, and encourage its possible application in order to assess its merits.

NOTES

[1] Schumpeter, J (1942) Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, quoted from the 1975 edtion, p84, by Harper, New York, quoted online, accssed October 2003, Hhttp://transcriptions.english.ucsb.edu/archive/courses/liu/english25/materials/schumpeter.htmlH . While quoted somewhat out of context of Schumpeter's revered discussion on the nature of capitalism, the quote speaks in original intent to the broader observation of human evolution, and represents an apt turn of phrase relevant to this papers investigation.

[2] For a brief introduction to Integral Theory, see Wilber (2000). For a brief exposition of the application of Integral Theory within the field of psychology, see Wilber (1999B).

[3] For a detailed background on Integral Methodological Pluralism, see Wilber (2003A).

[4] Karlin, S. (1983).

[5] Lawrence Aber, J. et.al. (1999).

[6] Toh, S.H. (2000).

[7] Macquarie University (1986).

[8] Arthur Dent in "The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy," from Hhttp://www.wisdomquotes.com/H

[9] For a brief introduction to AQAL see Wilber (2000). For further exploration see Wilber (1999A & B).

[10] This figure references commonly known ideas, and so explicit references are not provided. For examples of application see the following:

> UL – The work of Kegan, online at Hhttp://hugse9.harvard.edu/gsedata/resource_pkg.profile?vperson_id=318H

> LL – For an example of creative conflict management see the Institute on Creative Conflict Resolution online at Hhttp://www.maxwell.syr.edu/parc/summinst.htmH

> LR – Prigogine, I. & Stengers, I. (1984). Order out of chaos: Man's new dialogue with nature. New York: Bantam.

[11] Kegan, R & Lahey, L.L. (2001).

[12] McGuigan, R. et.al. (2003).

[13] Online at Hhttp://www.wisdomquotes.com/H

[14] Bretherton, D. (2002).

[15] Glasl, F. (1982).

[16] CRInfo (2003).

[17] Sandole, D.J.D. (1998). Bibliographic references in the original text have been omitted here for consistency of style.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] For those not deeply versed in AQAL theory, a holon refers to anything that is both a part and a whole a the same time. A holarchy is a naturally aligning of holons into integrated hierarchies based, logically, on wholes their being a part of larger wholes.

[21] Wilber (1999B) p460.

[22] Von Clausewitz, C. (1832) p90-123.

[23] For more information on Maslow and his theory, see Hhttp://www.maslow.org/H

[24] Boeree, C.G. (1998).

[25] Sandole, D.J.D. (2001).

[26] For further information regarding the theories mentioned, the following links can provide a starting point:

> – Choice Theory Hhttp://www.sctboces.org/choicetheory/theory.htmH

> – Self Determination Theory Hhttp://www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/theory.htmlH

> – ERG Theory Hhttp://www.netmba.com/mgmt/ob/motivation/erg/H

> – CIN Needs Model Hhttp://changingminds.org/explanations/needs/CIN.htmH

> – Motivation Theory Hhttp://www.ciadvertising.org/studies/student/99_fall/theory/marlow/johnswebpage/origins_of_motivation_theory.htmH

[27] Neef, M. (1991).

[28] Sandole, D.J.D. (2001).

[29] Von Clausewitz, C. (1832) p75-89.

[30] Huntington, S.P. (1996).

[31] Beck, D.E. (2002).

[32] States and types are not addressed within this brief exploration into the topic. For more information on states and types, see Wilber (1999B & 2000)

[33] The dynamics are a non-systematically selected range of relational impacts from the writings of Wilber (1999A & B)and Kegan (2001) that appear, to this author, to be highly relevant to conflict theory. There are doubtlessly others, and possibly even a more structured presentation of their relative importance in understanding the origin, nature and approach to conflict from an Integral perspective can be determined.

[34] See the Noam Chomsky archive at Hhttp://www.zmag.org/chomsky/index.cfmH

[35] Wilber (1999A & 2000)

[36] Goodstein, L. (2003).

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