

GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Unique Self, A New Chapter in Integral Spirituality

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It is very exciting to be able to share with you this special issue on the Unique Self. Before discussing the concept of Unique Self and the history and content of this issue, I would like to place this issue in a larger context. In conversations with Ken Wilber, Sean Esbjörn-Hargens, Diane Hamilton, Sally Kempton, and Robb Smith, we all felt it important to have a series of special issues devoted to specific topics in the emergent field of Integral Spirituality. Our next volume in this series will focus on the “Three Faces of God.” Future issues will address topics like reading sacred texts, shadow, sexuality, evolutionary spirituality, and world spirituality based on integral principles. The specific focus of this series of issues will be translineage Integral Spirituality in all of its expressions. I am delighted to collaborate with Ken, Sean, and Lyn as guest editor of this series.

I am specifically excited to have our first issue focus on the topic of Unique Self. The goal of this issue is to present, for the first time within an academic context, the core teachings of Unique Self, and some of the implications of the Unique Self paradigm. I will begin by sharing some of the background on the evolution of the term and teaching of Unique Self, which I hope will also impart the flavor and excitement of the early Unique Self conversations.¹ I will then turn to the intention behind the Unique Self offering in general, and, in conclusion, outline the specific trajectory of this journal.

The history of the emergence of the Unique Self teaching within the integral context is particularly significant because it makes transparent the important interplay of a number of leading institutions in the evolution of Integral Theory. The term *Unique Self*, and the first iteration of the Unique Self teachings, originated in my book *Soul Prints* (2001), which was based on a series of teachings that I began developing in the late 1980s. In *Soul Prints*, I explicitly sourced the teaching of Unique Self through my own first-person understanding as well as through the work of my lineage teacher, the mid 19th-century radical Kabbalist Mordechai Lainer of Izbica. In that work I used the terms *Soul Prints* and *Unique Self* interchangeably. As time went on, my understanding of Unique Self evolved through my own teaching and while working on my doctoral dissertation at Oxford University. I went through an evolutionary process in first-, second-, and third-person, which significantly developed the teaching from its Soul Prints stage to its current Unique Self expression.

My understanding of Lainer's work evolved in a crucible of rigorous third-person academic thesis writing. In re-reading and cataloguing every published passage of Lainer's work, new strains in his thought became apparent that neither myself nor anyone else I knew in the community of the Izbica readers and teachers had noticed. Indeed, it became apparent that the scholarship on Izbica was based on some highly significant misreadings taken from a very narrow selection of texts. It was from a closer reading of Lainer that I drew the teaching of Unique Self not as an egoic expression of separate self, or as a subtle soul expression, but as a natural expression of enlightenment.

At the same time, my own first-person understanding and experience of Unique Self was deepening, as was the important distinction between Unique Self and separate self. I began to recognize Unique Self as the deeper realization of True Self, as the personal face of essence and emptiness, as the unique perspective of every individual's enlightenment. The realization that enlightenment always has perspective was a key pivot point in my development of the Unique Self teaching.

I then came into contact with a community whose primary discourse was enlightenment as seen through the lenses of Buddhism (Diane Musho Hamilton), Kashmir Shavisim (Sally Kempton), and Integral Theory.²

Most significant in this community was Ken Wilber. Ken and I engaged in a series of conversations, public and private, in preparation for my first presentation on Unique Self at the Integral Spiritual Center (ISC). ISC was convened by Ken in 2004 and functioned until 2008. In its early years, ISC was highly energized with the promise of a genuine community of peers in the spiritual teaching community. It was a place for genuine translineage conversation based on integral principles. In its first year, Genpo Roshi presented and launched his Big Mind process in the integral context. In 2005, I presented and launched the Unique Self teaching in the integral context. Notably, Ken's first draft of *Integral Spirituality* (2006) was prepared as a document for the teachers at ISC 2, and the section on the Three Faces of God was influenced by some of the important dialogues that took place around that time in the context of ISC. These conversations included Ken, Brother David Steindl-Rast, Father Thomas Keating, myself, and many others.

After ISC 2, many participants shared moving responses in written communications regarding the shift in their own orientation that resulted from the Unique Self teaching. Many felt that Unique Self articulated a missing piece of the puzzle, which they sensed to be critical but had a hard time formulating because, at least at first glance, it seemed to contradict the core enlightenment teachings on which they had been raised. To share with the reader a sense of the translineage cross-fertilization that happened in the context of ISC, which comes to partial fruition in this volume, Genpo Roshi (2007), for example, adopted some of the core teachings of Unique Self into his Buddhist framework, resulting in a section in his book entitled "Unique Self" (pp. 122-124). Terry Patten, another participant in ISC, added a "Unique Self" chapter (pp. 373-381) to *Integral Life Practice* (2008), which he co-authored with Ken Wilber, Marco Morelli, and Adam Leonard. Both of these cross-fertilizations were due in no small part to a series of conversations taking place at the time between Zen teacher Diane Musho Hamilton and myself. This resulted in Diane being the first to speak to the voice of Unique Self in first-person through the Big Mind process. The Unique Self teaching further evolved in preparation for the first Integral Spiritual Experience (ISE), which I was privileged to co-found and co-direct in deep collaboration with Ken Wilber, Robb Smith, Diane Musho Hamilton, and Sally Kempton. We made Unique Self the topic of the first ISE (2009). Preceding ISE, we had exchanges with other teachers, including Jean Houston, Lama Surya Das, and Brother David Steindl-Rast, which enriched the conversation particularly in furthering our understanding of what Unique Self is *not*.

At this point in the narrative, we come to the place of this journal in the unfolding of the Unique Self teaching and the role of this series in the evolution of Integral Spirituality. While my colleagues and myself were initiating a new dharma, practice, and teaching context for Integral Spirituality through ISE, Sean Esbjörn-Hargens, Mark Forman, and their colleagues were launching the Integral Theory Conference (ITC), the first academic conference devoted to Integral Theory. These two conferences, ISE and ITC, each represented a different line of development: the formal academic line was represented by ITC and the spiritual practice and teaching line was represented by ISE. At the same time, some of the academics have significant spiritual teacher inclinations and some of the spiritual teachers, myself included, have some significant academic inclinations. Thus, the cross-fertilization between ITC and ISE now finds concrete expression in this series under the rubric of JITP on Integral Spirituality.

It is perhaps not accidental that I first met Sean at the inaugural gathering of the Integral Spiritual Center in 2005. The seeds that Wilber planted with great care and intention at that gathering are just beginning to bear fruit.

Unique Self: Why It Matters

In his keynote at the Integral Spiritual Experience, Wilber described Unique Self as "something that is extraordinary, and historic, and not to be denied." I want to share some of what I see as historic about the Unique Self teaching, and why its birthing has been one of my primary commitments over the last two decades.

Unique Self is vitally important because it reclaims the centrality of the personal as a primary category in discourse about the realization of enlightened consciousness. Enlightened consciousness itself is a fundamental category in the integral spiritual discourse because it is the implicit or explicit goal of virtually all of the great spiritual traditions that inform Integral Spirituality. Even if one assumes that most of the adherents of the great traditions, and most integral practitioners, have not and will not fully realize the goal of enlightenment, setting enlightenment as the goal shapes and defines the path of every adherent. The myth of a community shapes the norms of a community, even if only partially realized.

Particularly since the infusion of Eastern influence on the mind of the Western seeker, there has been a root assumption that enlightenment is an impersonal realization, which is achieved when the sense of the personal, and the particularity of personal uniqueness, is in some sense overcome.³ The entire goal of the Unique Self teaching has been to challenge this assumption, and thereby clarify the nature of enlightenment. By recognizing the important role of the personal in the enlightenment process, the Unique Self teaching shifts the nature and the goal of all spiritual practice, as well as shifting the core myth and method of the enlightenment community.

Before the Unique Self paradigm began to change the conversation, the reigning assumption of the enlightenment discussion was that the personal is the realm of the separate egoic personality. The goal of enlightenment was widely assumed to be one of evolving beyond ego. When this process took place, and one achieved a stable realization of impersonal unqualified awareness and identity with the emptiness of all that is, enlightenment was said to be achieved. The Unique Self teaching points out that this partial understanding of enlightenment is a false conflation of separateness and uniqueness and results from confusion between the personal and the personality. This partial understanding is also a result of the fact that the traditions were formed in a pre-modern context before a complexity of perspective had been fully realized. As a result, a pre-modern lack of awareness on perspective naturally dominates the enlightenment discourse today.

The core confusion between separateness and uniqueness is this: Eastern traditions have historically believed that we need to move beyond separate self in order to be liberated from suffering and realize enlightenment. The East, however—speaking of course in orienting generalizations that will always be partially unfair—tends to conflate separateness and uniqueness, and in rejecting uniqueness implies that authentic spiritual experience is essentially the same in every person. As one teacher influenced by the East put it, “There is no such thing as a Unique Spiritual experience.”⁴ Many Eastern teachings therefore insist on transcending separate self for True Self and assume that uniqueness must be left behind as the province of ego. Diametrically opposed to this is the conventional Western spiritual viewpoint, which assumes separate self to be the source of all dignity and human rights. Thus, the West rejects the Eastern demand to transcend separate self for True Self, but, similar to the East, conflates separateness and uniqueness. That is, the West assumes that in order to affirm human rights and dignity it is necessary to reify the separate self. It is my belief that the Unique Self teaching offers a higher integration of these Eastern and Western perspectives. The East’s demand that we transcend separate self in order to be liberated from suffering can be honored and heeded—separate self can be left behind, and yet Unique Self will be fully affirmed, once we discern between separateness and uniqueness. The Western affirmation of human rights and dignity, rooted in the irreducible nobility of the individual, can also be honored and heeded. One can realize that one is part of the all, leave separate self behind, but still be a fully distinct individual with full human dignity and rights. The difference is that this dignity will be based on Unique Self, not the separate self.

Core to Unique Self theory is the mapping of the three distinct stations of self: separate self, True Self, and Unique Self. Through this journey we realize that the personal is not left behind but rather is evolved. At station one—that of the separate self—the egoic personality may well incarnate all the vices of Christianity and all the poisons of Buddhism. It may well be essential, as the great traditions teach, to transcend the narrow personal nature of the separate self-personality for the impersonal True Self of classical enlightenment

to emerge. But the goal of enlightenment is personal *plus*, not personal *minus*. The deeper realization of True Self is Unique Self. This third station of Unique Self realization brings the personal back online as the very expression of enlightenment through the personal face of essence and emptiness. The station of True Self finds the total number of True Selves to be One. This, however, is only true in the realm of un-manifest Oneness, as there is no True Self anywhere in the manifest world. Why? Because every individual's awakening to this Oneness arises through his or her own unique perspective. In this way, True Self + Perspective = Unique Self.⁵

Any experience of formless True Self, when it manifests through an individual, manifests as the Unique Self. So to repeat, there is no True Self anywhere in the manifest world; there is always a perspective. That is to say, True Self always manifests as Unique Self—only pure formless un-manifest awareness is pure perception without a perspective. In this un-manifest state there are no objects, only consciousness without an object, so there is nothing to take a perspective on. This can be said to be the unqualifiable True Self. But we always live in the world of manifestation. Once the awareness of True Self-manifests, it does so through a particular perspective, which is Unique Self.

This means that Unique Self is always the source of awareness. In fact, Unique Self is always present as the witness of consciousness at all stations of awareness because awareness or consciousness is always embodied in form and therefore always has a perspective. Unique Self is the actual origin of awareness at all stations of development, even though it only comes online naturally as conscious awareness at a particular stage of development (what Integral Theory has referred to as second- or third-tier levels). However, Unique Self is always present as the deeper realization of any True Self state at every level of consciousness.

In the pre-modern world, with rare exceptions, there was little awareness of perspective. The assumption was that the observer saw reality as it was. Modern and postmodern thinking evolved our essential epistemological lens as we began to understand that all of reality was mediated through the perspective of the observer. The pre-modern teachers of enlightenment were subject to precisely the same error as pre-modern philosophers and scientists. Therefore, when spiritual teachers taught the realization of true nature as True Self, they also taught that all True Selves are the same. This implied that any sense of uniqueness was connected to the level of separate self or personality, and therefore was in contradistinction to enlightenment. As we've seen, that teaching is true but partial. With the emergence of second tier, and particularly third-tier structure stages of consciousness, the multi-faceted nature of perspective becomes noticed. So at these higher stages, the conscious realization of Unique Self fully emerges. Unique Self was, of course, present all along but tended to be confused with True Self because perspectives were not yet fully conscious or differentiated. When the full awareness of perspectives emerges, the awareness of Unique Self also emerges. Then, any experience of formless True Self, when it manifests as any object at all, manifests as the Unique Self.

In other words, the recognition of Unique Self is a process: You first realize that you are part of the seamless coat of the universe, then you go on to realize that the universe is seamless but not featureless and that you are actually one of its essential features. You realize that your personal existence, your personal being, is utterly distinct, worthy, and needed. To be unique means to be irreplaceably singular, a constitutive exception to the universal, an un-objectifiable secret that resists full articulation or appropriation in any system of meaning-making. In this sense, the Unique Self is not subject to any totalizing tendency and infinitely exceeds all such systemizing approaches. Unique Self is an expression of irreducible singularity.

But that is only part of the story. It is precisely the singularity that merges and integrates the one into the Single One, which is the ultimate universal, the whole in which every part participates. This paradoxical insight is the essence of the nondual realization of the self as Self. Paradoxically, the source of one's Oneness with all that is, is one's Unique Self. Unique Self might be described as the puzzle-piece nature of one's essence and emptiness. Like a puzzle piece, Unique Self is both utterly unique and distinct, yet paradoxically it is that very uniqueness and distinction that merges one with the larger context of all that is. While separate-

ness separates one from the larger context, uniqueness integrates one in the larger context.⁶ As Unique Self, you are free from the contractions of your personality, even as you experience yourself as personally engaged and uniquely incarnate in the great evolutionary unfolding of consciousness.

In Unique Self enlightenment, you recognize and realize your nature as indivisible from the larger field of consciousness, even as you know yourself to be an absolutely unique expression of True Self, unlike any other. True Self always looks out through a unique set of eyes, which reveal a radically unique and special perspective through which the evolution of consciousness unfolds. And it is only through Unique Self that we can embrace the individual uniqueness of the self while at the same time realizing the true nature of the individual as both an indivisible part of True Self, the seamless coat of the universe, and as the whole itself in which all consciousness arises. This realization is the source of the irreducible dignity of every human being. It is for this reason that we affirm the inalienable right of human beings to live their unique story and to have that story told and received. In short, this nondual realization of Unique Self can serve as the basis of all intersubjective ethics.

It is worth pointing out at this juncture, as we have already alluded to above, that Unique Self does not refer merely to the uniqueness of soul described in the great traditions. A common assumption is that uniqueness is a soul quality but once we ascend beyond soul to spirit, uniqueness disappears.⁷ This assumption is undermined in the Unique Self teaching, which realizes that unique perspective is the deeper quality of True Self. At the same time, we must constantly distinguish between Unique Self and the soul *station* of uniqueness, at least in the limited understanding of the word soul, which still expresses a subtle body level of separate-self ego.

The word *soul* is used in so many ways in the great traditions that in every context one must identify what is being described. Sometimes soul is used in a way which is identical to True Self. Often, however, soul is used to describe what is actually the first station of post-egoic clarification, the subtle realm that is only then deepened into causal or formless True Self and then nondual realization of Unique Self. When Soul is used in this latter sense, we need to distinguish the unique of soul from the unique perspective of True Self, which is Unique Self.

At this point it is worth pointing out that in integral terms, it would be accurate to describe Unique Self both as a structure-stage of consciousness and as a state of consciousness. Unique Self is a state of consciousness, which, like the experience of classical mystical enlightenment, is available to anyone at any structure-stage of consciousness (e.g., a flow state). However, in second-tier stages of consciousness, when perspectives are revealed as an essential structure of higher consciousness, the Unique Self naturally reveals itself more and more. In developmental psychology terms, the fullest flowering of Unique Self might best be articulated as a living glimpse into indigo altitude (see Wilber, 2006, p. 68). This is the stage of evolution of human consciousness at which my felt sense of the ever-present unity of reality—a state of ongoing “flow presence,” if you will—and the unique characteristics of my own life and perspective intersect and find a cohesive and stabilized integration.⁸ Perspective is an inherent part of realizing indigo altitude (i.e., personal perspective is acknowledged even as one recognizes other perspectives).

In these highest stations of consciousness, paradoxes begin to resolve only to, of course, produce new and higher paradoxes. At these higher tiers of consciousness, it might be said that states and stages merge in a higher integral embrace, and a great evolutionary milestone is achieved. It is worth adding to this description that higher states of consciousness yield more advanced recognitions of uniqueness. Paradoxically, the more evolved the expression of uniqueness becomes, the more precisely the unique puzzle piece is able to fit seamlessly into the larger whole, even as one realizes their identity with the larger whole. It is at this paradoxical pivoting point that complexity surrenders to a higher simplicity. Indeed we might identify this evolved state-stage and structure-stage of Unique Self as the level of second simplicity, which is a simplicity that transcends and includes all of the previous complexity.

It is at this paradoxical pivoting point of Unique Self that the Western and Eastern enlightenment visions might meet together in a higher dance of integration. Enlightenment, as understood in conventional Western discourse, affirms the dignity of the personal. It views enlightenment as the achievement of a structure-stage of consciousness in which the affirmation of the dignity of the personal is fully internalized. Eastern enlightenment (and Western mystical enlightenment) is understood as a state of consciousness in which identity is achieved with the impersonal nature of all that is. West and East, personal and impersonal, structure-stage and structure-state, meet in the embrace of the evolutionary emergent of Unique Self.

In This Issue

We now turn to an overview of the material in this issue. We begin with my article, “The Evolutionary Emergent of Unique Self: A New Chapter in Integral Theory,” which lays out, for the first time, the key contours of the Unique Self. This article is written as a model of world spirituality and translineage teaching. It draws on the great traditions, East and West, as well as more contemporary integral insights regarding the centrality of perspectives. All these strands are woven into the teaching of Unique Self, which is translineage in both form and content, meaning that it both transcends and includes the lineages. It is worth noting that the endnotes in this article are particularly important to the reader who is concerned with the finer issues at stake regarding Integral Theory and enlightenment.

The next article, “Rejuvenating Religion for an Integral Age: The Emergence of the Unique Self and the Unique We,” by Dustin Diperna, is the first in a series of important monographs by Diperna that point toward a more integral vision of religion. Diperna describes the many versions of religion as they appear when refracted through the prism of the AQAL model. He then points to the unique contribution that Integral Theory can make to religion in the form of the evolutionary offerings of Unique Self and Unique We. In Diperna’s view, bringing the Integral approach to the great traditions, together with these unique integral offerings, holds great promise for the future of religion. Diperna also touches briefly on the contrasting implications of the Unique Self model advanced by my work and the Authentic Self model advanced by spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen.

In “On Spiritual Teachers and Teaching,” Zachary Stein offers an insightful essay exploring the historical antecedents and role of the contemporary spiritual teacher and particularly the nature of the teacher’s authority. Stein specifically addresses the spiritual teacher who lives and teaches outside the four walls of organized religion. Stein traces and analyzes the emergence of this new model of teacher and teacherly authority. Then, in what is perhaps the most provocative part of the article, Stein turns his attention to two different teachers, Andrew Cohen and myself, and analyzes the potential implications of their respective enlightenment models of Authentic Self and Unique Self.

The next article, “The Unique Self as *Imago Dei*, Approaching an Integral Christian Anthropology,” by Neville Ann Kelly, engages Unique Self in the context of Judeo-Christian theology. Kelly points out that uniqueness is a constitutive element of the most essential description of the divine elements that animates human consciousness in the Christian tradition. Kelly demonstrates why the Integral model might be essential for exploring the evolving relationship of Christian theology to the classic concept of *imago Dei*. Kelly reviews the contemporary Christian literature on *imago Dei* and shows why it cannot be approached discerningly without deploying a nuanced Integral lens. Kelly offers a clear and compelling model for how the Integral model can and must be deployed in theological conversation and scholarship.

In “Quantum Theory, the Unique Self, and Evolution,” Katrin Trautwein points out structural analogies between Unique Self enlightenment and the more classical True Self enlightenment teachings on the one hand, as well as quantum theory in relation to classical theories of physics on the other. In both realms of inquiry, context-sensitivity is superimposed on prior metaphysical assumptions of Oneness and objectivity. The unique individual perspective and the unique experimental context are seen to be the actual cornerstones of

reality, not an Authentic Self or a measurable object. Based on this revealing insight, Trautwein's article puts forth some normative, ethical implications that arise when the perspectives-based concepts are interpreted in an evolutionary context. It is worth noting that Trautwein is not extrapolating truth in the Upper-Left quadrant from the Lower-Right structures of physics; rather, she is pointing to the centrality of perspective in both Unique Self and quantum physics, and the normative implications that arise from that.

The final article, "The Unique Self and Nondual Humanism: A Study in the Enlightened Teaching of Mordechai Lainer of Izbica," is where I trace one of the important sources from the great traditions that inspired the Unique Self teaching. I look at the Unique Self model as sketched by a Hassidic master, Mordechai Lainer of Izbica, living in Eastern Europe in the mid 19th century. The article unpacks the core structure of the Unique Self teaching and shows how it plays a central role in the "nondual humanism" of Izbica. The article demonstrates that Lainer is not merely a maverick teacher, but is rooted in a larger mainstream lineage of Kabbalistic mysticism out of which he writes and practices, even as he extends the teachings one critical step beyond his earlier successors. The endnotes in this article add a crucial second layer of nuance, depth, and integral precision to the Unique Self discussion.

After these six articles, we offer transcripts of two dialogues. In the first dialogue, spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen and I engage in a spirited conversation on the implications of our respective teachings of Authentic Self and Unique Self. From the dialogue, it is clear that we agree on some key points; namely, that both Authentic Self and Unique Self teachings see the classical enlightenment model of True Self realization as being true but partial. Unique Self and Authentic Self are each realizations that take us beyond the classical enlightenment goal of True Self. The difference between Andrew and I has to do with whether uniqueness should be seen as the property of the relative (Cohen) or of the Absolute (Gafni), and consequently how much emphasis should be placed on uniqueness in the overall enlightenment story and teaching. The second dialogue is a conversation between developmental psychologist Susanne Cook-Greuter and I about the nature of Unique Self as it shows up through the development of consciousness. This dialogue was preceded by an earlier conversation between Cook-Greuter and I in which a somewhat skeptical Cook-Greuter was first exposed to the Unique Self teaching. By the end of this first dialogue, Cook-Greuter was more open to the idea of Unique Self, but still suspicious. I then invited Susanne to a second dialogue on the topic, but this time explored the Unique Self concept using Cook-Greuter's own writings as a foundation. What emerged, to the surprise of both of us, was that Cook-Greuter had clearly articulated the progressive emergence of Unique Self at the higher stages of consciousness in her own writing. Thereby, her developmental model, based on empirical research, clearly supports the insights of the Unique Self teaching.

The issue concludes with a special treat for those engaged in Integral Christianity: a highly sophisticated book review of Cameron Freeman's *Post-Metaphysics and the Paradoxical Teachings of Jesus: The Structure of the Real* (2010) is offered by priest and integral scholar-practitioner Christopher Dierkes. The primary contribution of Dierkes' review is to place Freeman's brilliant text within the framework of the AQAL model. This interplay allows him to make the argument that there are theologies (or reflections upon spiritual experience and insight) in Christianity that correspond to structure-stages and state-stages. Writings in Integral Christianity have tended to emphasize one or the other of that dyad, and Dierkes believes we need a discourse that includes both.

Acknowledgments

Integral scholarship need not only be objective and third-person—it can also be loving, passionate, and even sweet. In that vein, I wish to offer some thank-yous. First, to Vanessa Fisher, whose skilled pen and integral understanding were very helpful in the editing process. Second, to Dr. David Seidenberg for his invaluable work in editing my doctoral dissertation and articles in this issue. David is a significant Kabbalah scholar in his own right and his challenges and inquiries invariably deepened my own readings of the text. Thanks also

to Sean Esbjörn-Hargens and Lynwood Lord, who have guided JITP through thick and thin and consistently produced a great academic journal, one that is an essential and elegant part of the evolving Integral mandala. Thanks to Robb Smith, the CEO of Integral Life and Integral Institute, whose steady leadership has insured the continuity of many core integral teachings that otherwise might have disappeared. Finally, the last is the most precious: a deep bow to my dear friend, brother, and integral mentor, Ken Wilber. It has been seven years since my first conversation with Ken about Unique Self. Every conversation has challenged, evolved, and deepened my thinking. Ken's authentic delight at the emergence of a new chapter in Integral Theory, one that adds to his initial corpus, is a testament to his greatness. I know that his deep wish is for many new chapters to be written in the pages of this journal and elsewhere because all of reality, including Integral Theory, is evolving. For this and much more, I am deeply grateful.

NOTES

¹ For more detail, see endnotes 13 and 14 (pp. 25-29 in this issue) of "The Evolutionary Emergent of Unique Self."

² It was in this context that I realized that the use of the term *soul* might be misunderstood as a subtle level egoic expression of separate self of the kind common in theistic traditions. Using the term *Unique Self* avoided this problem.

³ For example, see the work of popular teachers such as Adyashanti (2004) or Stephen Bodian (2008). For earlier work, see Jean Klein's *I Am* (1989), which is rooted in the seminal texts of Vedanta such as 8th-century philosopher Shankaracharya's texts, *Viveka Chudamani* ("The Crest Jewel of Discrimination") and *Atma Bodhi* ("Self-Realization").

⁴ From Andrew Cohen's public teaching in Tel Aviv, Israel (2005). Andrew and I have engaged in a series of respectful public dialogues on these issues (one of which appears on pp. 151-161 in this issue), which we both hope models the kind of authentic "combat" that serves Buddha, sangha, and dharma.

⁵ My own perspective is never absent even as it is progressively clarified through the evolution of self to Self.

⁶ A first-tier pluralistic stance recognizes only particulars. It cannot see patterns that connect and create what Wilber has called "good enough universals" (personal communication, January 30, 2011). As Wilber has pointed out elsewhere, we recognize universals all the time in the physical world (e.g., 208 bones, two kidneys, two lungs, one heart, etc., in the human body). This is not an imperialistic colonial statement; it is simply the truth.

⁷ For example, see Huston Smith (1992, pp. 74-87).

⁸ At second and third tier, perspectives are embedded in awareness. This is an inherent aspect of what emerges at turquoise and indigo altitudes. So, although Unique Self was present from the earlier stages of consciousness, it can seem to emerge at second and third tier.

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The Big Three

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