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Debashish Banerji

California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA, USA

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Introduction to the Special Topic Section on Integral Yoga Psychology: The Challenge of Multiple Integrities

Debashish Banerji
California Institute of Integral Studies
San Francisco, CA, USA

As part of an ampler definition of the human psyche, its structure, functions, experiences, and potentia, transpersonal psychology has looked to integrate indigenous understandings, practices and experiences into psychology. The yoga traditions of South Asia have constituted a province of this integration, leading to its own field of study, yoga psychology. This field is complicated by the long braided history of traditions, its internal polemics, and the complexity of nomenclature related to a continuing unauthorized hybridity of traditions. Further complicating the terrain, the intersection with modernity has spawned new yoga traditions in translation to or trans-relation with modernity. The integral yoga is one such modern yoga tradition, with bases in Indian traditions and the (Western) discourse of modernity.

This situation is primarily due to the fact that the founder of integral yoga, Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950), lived from childhood to young adulthood in England. Schooled in London and at the University of Cambridge, he understood very well the constitution and boundaries of the modern knowledge academy originating in the European Enlightenment. Aurobindo's texts thus need to be viewed, both discursively and conceptually, as hybrid texts, sites for the politics of translation and/or the possibilities of global translatability. As an example of this discursive hybridity germane to the current discussion, the transpersonal extension to the yoga traditions has been anticipated by Aurobindo (1955/1999) in referring to yoga as “nothing but practical psychology” (p. 44) in his canonical text on yoga, *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Later, this discussion will consider how Aurobindo's integral yoga maps to the discursive boundaries of the academic discipline of psychology.

Epistemological Assumptions

In general, however, the epistemological assumptions of the modern knowledge academy sit uneasily with yoga traditions, both of whose discursive locations and formations need to be understood for an adequate translation into a discipline of yoga psychology. Such a consideration would render transparent the epistemological foundations of both cultural formations, and requires openness to selection, translation, and potential revision of both for alignment. Disciplines of the modern knowledge academy, originating in the European Enlightenment, are invested in an absolute epistemology. This forms a core logocentric assumption of the modern knowledge academy and all its “logies”—that is, total knowledge is possible and achievable by human reason acting in a distributed and additive manner through knowledge workers in specialized disciplines using a consistent method (the scientific method) and standards of archiving. Such a *nomos* is incompatible, for example, with religions, which have objectively unverifiable and mutually contested foundations of truth. Yoga traditions seem to suffer from a similar incompatibility and for similar reasons.

Subjective and Objective Validation

It is this apparent incompatibility which made Vivekananda (1863–1902), one of the Indian pioneers of the translation of yoga to Western academic terms, emphasize the subjectively verifiable goals of yoga traditions, claiming thus a scientific location for them within modernity (e.g., Vivekananda, 1992, pp. 127–129, 192–193). This, however, contradicts the requirements of modern science, which is a space for the archiving, analysis, and verification

of data using rational tools leading to knowledge production, not a space for the transformation of the knowledge worker. Strictly objective requirements are problematic, however, for the human sciences in general and psychology in particular. Unless one is to restrict psychology to behaviorism and cognitive science, models for the subjective life of humans have often been derived from subjective experience, even when they have sought universal applicability through practical objective verification. Much of the theoretical work of Freud and Jung must be seen in this light, their clinical efficacy being their tentative objective badge of universal verification. These thinkers, particularly Jung, can be seen as predecessors of transpersonal psychology. The same can be said of other predecessors such as William James, Robert Assagioli, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow, who were less concerned with treating pathologies as the central goal of psychology, than on an adequate description of human subjective realities, operations, and possibilities, what could be called the domain of the psyche or soul. Here clinical verification is no longer the issue and one is left to constitute evidence and taxonomy from qualitative research based on observations and the subjective statements of human experience.

Of course, this does not render such methods arbitrary, as a good amount of analytical rigor has been developed in the study of qualitative data. Empirical measurements of physical realities are also used in transpersonal psychology, and may be of use in *integral yoga psychology* (IYP), but neither of these methods can bring one to absolute psychological knowledge. For one, there is the obvious limit of any descriptology in approaching the subject, who forms the foundation for all experience, especially in the case of nondual experience. Foucault (1970) referred to this as the irony of the subject-object of modernity's knowledge enterprise:

Man . . . is a strange empirico-transcendental doublet, since he is a being such that knowledge will be attained in him of what renders all knowledge possible. (p. 318)

Role of Yoga Psychology

Moreover, as the inconclusive debate between perennialism and constructivism highlights,

mystical experience is ultimately ineffable and its descriptions belong to the domain of linguistic categories, themselves constrained by the epistemic laws of mind and of physical experience. The variety of claimants to nondualism (advaita) in India is a case in point that stares one in the face, something contemporary perennialists such as Forman (1990) have tried to explain in term of an indescribable *pure consciousness event* (PCE) core, though from an outsider point of view appropriate to science, it may seem impossible to know or to adjudicate among these truth claims. Yet the *nomos* of absolute epistemology implies the *doxa* of such knowledge and adjudication, leading on the one hand to a dismissal of unverifiable truth claims and on the other, an uncritical acceptance of the absolute or superior truth claims of preferred traditions. In seeking a way out of this impasse, a significant shift would be a principled relinquishment of the hubris of absolute epistemology or the hegemony of knowledge for science. What this implies for yoga psychology is a less ambitious role, the archiving of transpersonal processes, practices, and experiences coupled with their related metaphysics and truth claims, and the development of methodological, experimental, and analytical tools for studying and relating these systems in themselves and in comparison.

The Politics of Truth and Pragmatic Epistemologies

This means that a simplistic search for a single grammar of unified deep structures should cede to a field of poststructuralist specific and comparative studies, in which the relative social and cultural assumptions and consequences of metaphysics play as important a role for consideration as experiences and practices. The histories of yoga systems come with their own propaganda machinery in service to the politics of truth, which should also not be lost sight of in their translation to the field of psychology. Indigenous politics of truth have become exacerbated in translation to the field of science due to the latter's absolutist *doxa*. At the same time, a large number of these indigenous yoga systems, particularly the ones holding the Veda and Upanishads as authoritative—that is, Vedantic in the broad sense—carry an implicit understanding

of the plurality of approaches and experiences of nonduality, based on attestations to the same in the Veda and Upanishads. *Brahman* or absolute reality of the Upanishads is characterized as one and infinite, a mental paradox; hence infinite paths and experiences through which the One may be realized is part of the justification for the plurality of gods, teachers, yogas, and advaitic (nondual) philosophies (*darshan*) in Vedanta based schools of yoga.

By this understanding, the metaphysics of each system is a pragmatic epistemology, whose metaphysical categories, terminology, and relations exist only to aid its practices (yoga) and lead to the realizations (stabilized experience) it affirms. Here it must be realized that the term metaphysics is an ill-fitting translation for the philosophical frameworks (*darshanas*) of yoga traditions. *Darshanas* are not speculative systems, as one understands the term metaphysics in the Western tradition. Yoga metaphysics are heuristic frameworks, derived partly from experience, partly from intuition, tested, nuanced, and course-corrected with practice and validation in individual and collective experience. The important thing to take away from this is that what appears to be *doxa* or dogma at the base of yoga *darshanas* (and among them, integral yoga *darshana*) have no value within those traditions of practice, unless verified and generally verifiable in experience.

This highlights again a key difference between the epistemologies of science and yoga. The first privileges the validation of truth as knowledge, the second is concerned with achieving the goals set by power. Metaphysics, in the case of yoga, presents a philosophical ideal to be achieved in consciousness. Intrinsic to this orientation is the latent infinity (divinity) of the creative will to invent realities, not merely subjective or private realities, but subjective-objective realities. Science, on the other hand, is suspicious of metaphysics, because it is invested with discovery of empirical truth. Implicit in this is “an” objective Truth that can be recognized generally as true in fixity. Science thus occupies a spatial metaphorical space and its ontological dominance in an age such as this (modernity) makes it also “the age of the world picture” as announced by Heidegger (1977; see pp. 115–154). Doubting

becomes a key instrument of this *nomos* since its essence is the single truth of the picture. Enlightenment philosophy is built on this *doxa*, which is why Nietzsche’s (1968) critique of the search for truth was to show its subordination in primordially to the will to power (pp. 261–456). Pure will to power exists to invent its ideals as realities. To it, doubt and the verification of truth is meaningless because the question is not “is it true?” or “does it exist?” but “how can we get there?” This fundamental difference in orientation between science and yoga needs to be accounted for in the translation of integral yoga to integral yoga psychology. As a science studying integral yoga, integral yoga psychology aims at establishing recognizable qualitative and quantitative markers to the ongoing processes, experiments, and experiences of integral yoga.

The view of yoga described above is somewhat idealized and exists more in potential than in reality, particularly in the premodern history of yoga systems. Though realization by experience was the object of all yogas, the metaphysics of specific schools, at least since the time of Shankara (8th c.), took on a separate reality as a statement of truth or self-evidence (*sabda pramana*), which claimed hegemonic ontological singularity (Halbfass, 1988; see p. 302, pp. 356–358). It has been argued that it is only in modern times, in relation to science, that the pre-eminence of experience as evidence has become its *nomos* (Halbfass, 1988; pp. 378–402). But along with this, the trend towards absolutism, meeting with its corresponding counterpart in science, has spawned the inclusivistic perennialism of neo-Vedanta (Halbfass, 1988, pp. 217–241).

Problem of the Integral

This discussion demonstrates the necessity for eschewing absolutist *doxa* or assumptions in both science and yoga. It also foregrounds the problem with the idea of the integral, in integral yoga psychology, if it is understood as a totalizing inclusivism that is describable within a mental ontology. Integral yoga psychology may be thought of as a whole person psychology, a seeking for the structure and experience of human wholeness.

For yoga traditions, the idea of the wholeness of psyche extends beyond the individual to cosmic and transcendental dimensions of experience. This makes integral yoga psychology endemically susceptible to totalistic claims. As mentioned in the last paragraph, the real problem with this idea is that unity and infinity are mentally incompatible categories and the attempt to posit a unity/integrality in a radically plural world has practical consequences that may be thought of as totalitarian or fascist.

Sri Aurobindo (1999) conceived of integral consciousness as a supramental ontology representing an aporetic perspectival vanishing point in mental experience and a possibility for future evolution (pp. 355–359). One could prepare towards this by expanding one's capacity for experience and integrating different approaches and kinds of nonduality, but it represents a paradoxical modality not available to mind, and held as an ideal to be achieved experimentally in an unspecified variety of ways, including though not limited to an aspiration/invitation to messianic intervention, theistic or otherwise (pp. 494–497). Sri Aurobindo (1940/2005) recognized discontinuities of consciousness in the human personality and sought for psychological handles of integration and transformation towards this supramental goal, which he did not see as possible except through an exceeding of the given cosmic conditions and the realization of a new mode of individual and cosmic being (pp. 922–952). He provided his own approaches to this end and practiced and taught some of them through what he called integral yoga. Thus integrality in Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga must not be thought of as a Theory of Everything that explains the cosmos and claims to hegemonize the field of yoga, but rather a process psychology leading to an aporetic experience of integral consciousness and future *supramental* possibility, for which mind has no language. As such, an integral yoga psychology would thus be another province of yoga psychology with its own metaphysics, terminology, methods, practices, and experiences for scientific study in itself and in comparison with other systems of yoga and psychology.

Yoga in a Psychological Frame

However, granted a more relativized role for yoga and integral yoga psychology, the translation of yoga traditions to a psychological frame offers a new orientation with new advantages and challenges. Psychology provides a space, method, and tools for the analysis and comparative study of transpersonal experiences and hermeneutic frameworks free from the *emic doxa* of traditions. The discussion has touched earlier on the qualitative methods of transpersonal psychology. Quantitative empirical methods may also have a part to play in validation procedures, and have the advantage of a datum of more universal agreement. The problem, as discussed earlier, is one of determining which subjective experiences lend themselves to empirical correlation and which empirical procedures could be adequate to such correlation. Hartelius' (2007, 2015) somatic phenomenology, which looks for regularities between felt sense experience and neural measurement, is a case in point that has shown some promise. There may well be other ways to engage empirically with somatic and felt sense experience that is both not disruptive of experience in the ways that objectifying approaches can be, and yet able to measure phenomena that are closer to the experienced truth of spiritually-related processes and experiences.

As part of the modern knowledge academy, psychology is framed as a humanist discipline, in that it affords a universality and openness and belongs to humanity as a whole, even while it studies cultural specifics. As an aspect of the translation of yoga traditions to a psychological frame, it may be more appropriate and practical to conceptualize the processes and terminology proper to yoga traditions in psychological terms—for example, the metaphysical framework (*darshana*) of a yoga tradition, which includes its truth claims and assumptions would be viewed as a hermeneutical framework in a transpersonal psychology context. Similarly, practices of mind, breath and body (yoga) which may have soteriological value in a yoga tradition, would be seen as having humanistic value in a psychology

frame. Similarly, yoga's subjective validation might be understood as contemplative self-inquiry in a psychology context.

Scholarly Communities of Shared Experience

Methods such as contemplative self-inquiry using introspection as a form of observation have been considered questionable in a psychological frame, as it radicalizes relativism beyond any universal verification. Such methods may have served yoga traditions well, as relatively closed systems of spiritual realization, but transpersonal and/or yoga psychology is a field open to all kinds, traditions, and claims of transpersonal experience, and cannot base itself on a foundation of subjective validation. However, qualitative and quantitative research methods can be supplemented by subjective inquiry and experience. In this, transpersonal psychology occupies a liminal place of serving as a site of dialogue between the epistemological frames of science and of yoga. The so-called purity of science, invested in the "possession" of knowledge for-itself, is at odds with the human drive for becoming, and has thus been in reality an instrument for the colonization of the life-world. Yoga traditions, on the other hand, as discussed above, have pragmatic epistemological or metaphysical frameworks at the service of transformation and becoming. It is in this regard that the crossover represented by transpersonal psychology may be considered a site for alternate practices of science, open to possible posthuman becoming.

This points back to Vivekananda's (1992) claim of scientific veracity for yoga through the accumulation of individual subjective verification. The aim of science does not mandate subjective yoga practice by its knowledge workers; yet, many such workers in the field of transpersonal psychology can be seen to be practitioners of transpersonal processes, whether drawn from traditional sources such as yogas or not. This is not unexpected, given the fact that an interest in uncommon subjective possibilities and/or human potential has drawn most of these scholars to this field. Thus a more than surface relation with the ideas and terminology of yoga traditions is often the case with scholars

in the field, and informal exchanges among them often bear evidence of experiential knowledge. This implies that a level of subjective objectivity is not absent in the formulation of shared knowledge, at least in parlance, which may become clothed in textual reference at the discursive level. The formation of adequate language tools to sift through and among uncommon experiences evolves in sophistication as a community of scholars work together, sharing not only scholarship but intimacy in experience with the material studied. Thus Vivekananda's implied co-option of science into yoga and inversion of the same to claim a scientific status for yoga may presage an enhanced scope of science in the field of transpersonal psychology. As emphasized earlier, this is not to suggest making transpersonal psychology into a modern yoga tradition, however integral or universal, but to allow for transpersonal practice within its formal archive of means. I believe this would give the field access and utility beyond its present capacity, while maintaining whatever standards of rigor that can be applied in non-ordinary state-specific contexts. As a hybrid discourse of the coming together of two living textual-practical traditions, transpersonal/whole-personal psychology and integral yoga, a psychological exploration of integral yoga would also open up and advance a field of language conducive to practice and experience for practitioners of the integral yoga. An approach of this kind, inspired partly by Buddhism, was discussed and pioneered by Francisco Varela (1996) in what he called *neurophenomenology*. The phenomenological aspect of this approach would develop its own control criteria based on the intrinsic constraints of the subject being researched and the community of researchers. In Varela's words:

This field of phenomena requires a proper, rigorous method and pragmatics for its exploration and analysis. The orientation for such method is inspired from the style of inquiry of phenomenology in order to constitute a widening research community and a research programme. This research programme seeks articulations by mutual constraints between the field of phenomena revealed by experience and

the correlative field of phenomena established by the cognitive sciences. I have called this point of view neurophenomenology. (p. 41)

Positioning Integral Yoga Psychology

While Sri Aurobindo was alive, Dr. Indra Sen, a disciple who was also a prominent philosopher and psychologist, proposed the term *integral psychology* as the name for a translation of Sri Aurobindo's yoga system into psychological terms, perhaps in the mid-1930s. Sen may thus have been the first person to initiate a theoretical psychology of Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga. In 1986, Sen's papers on the subject, presented in conferences or journals were published under the title *Integral Psychology: The Psychological System of Sri Aurobindo*. Sen's usage led to the loose recognition of the field and his nomenclature among a small number of interested academics, including Haridas Chaudhuri (1977), founding president of the California Institute of Integral Studies, who was a colleague and friend of Sen's; and by descent, among some of the latter's students.

The term *integral* also gained some currency in this period (1950–1970) in other academic fields, such as in philosophy (Gebser, 1986) and sociology (*integral culture*; Sorokin, 1961). In more recent times, the term *integral* and the names *integral theory* and *integral psychology* have gained hegemonic status in the popular mind and by association, in the academy, as vocabulary tagged to Ken Wilber (2000, 2007). Wilber has acknowledged the influence of Sri Aurobindo, but his theory is marked by the problems indicated earlier in this essay—it is a cosmic structural scheme and an inclusivistic developmental epistemology. Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga, on the other hand, as described above, recognizes the cosmic field as one of radical plurality (*avidya*) and seeks to realize a specific kind of nondualism (*supermind*, *vijnana* of *vidya*) which conserves a life experience of evolving multiplicity in a panentheism of simultaneous transcendence-immanence, experienced subjectively through a progressive integration and the experimental formation of a new supramental faculty. This is not a summit of mental development but a posthuman ideal open to a variety of approaches. Sri Aurobindo himself

experimented with several such approaches, which have some structural features in common in terms of the metaphysical schema (*darshana*) he related to his practices; but left the specifics to be developed individually through interpretation, experiment, and experience. Haridas Chaudhuri's use of the term *integral psychology*, for example, with its roots in Aurobindo's thought, is an example of an interpreted extension of Aurobindo's approaches, and incorporates traditions not addressed by Aurobindo, such as phenomenology, Jungian psychology and Western mystical traditions. Wilber's appropriation of *integral psychology* is misleading, giving the impression of a totalistic structure, which includes and renders irrelevant all other metaphysical formulations (*darshana*) and methodical systems of practice (yoga). For these reasons of specificity and plurality, this discussion uses the term *integral yoga psychology* as the appropriate nomenclature for the psychological study of Sri Aurobindo's systems of teaching and practice.

In This Issue

The present journal issue is an attempt to establish a subfield of yoga psychology based on Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga. This would mean the creation of a number of loci for psychological consideration. I see these as:

1. A theoretical psychology, which concerns itself with positioning integral yoga psychology within the broader fields of yoga psychology and transpersonal psychology;
2. A conceptual psychology or psychology of structure, which discusses the hermeneutical frameworks constituting the ground of meaning for the field and includes considerations of roots and variations;
3. A process psychology, which may itself be divided into:
 - a. A psychology of practice, the relationship between processes and experiences; and
 - b. A developmental psychology, the consideration of stages, if any, of growth or transformation seen in themselves or towards a telos;

4. A psychology of experience, which considers the descriptions of experiences, their qualitative and empirical investigation, and their relationship with conceptual structure and terminology on the one hand and of practices and development (process) on the other;
5. A parapsychology, to some extent an aspect of the psychology of experience, but more focused on paranormal capacities (*siddhis*) and phenomena, such as intuition, extra-sensory perception, out of body travel, reincarnation, levitation, psychokinesis, possession, apparitional experiences and near-death experiences, as they relate to the scope and practice of the integral yoga;
6. A comparative psychology, which juxtaposes the theory, practice, terminology, experience and other aspects of the field with other areas of psychology;
7. A therapeutic psychology, whether counseling or clinical; and
8. A social and cultural psychology, dealing with communities of shared understanding, experience and spiritual and social practice. This includes the domain of participatory spirituality and collective yoga.

Introducing the Articles

In this issue I have tried to bring together materials representing most of these areas. The issue begins with theoretical explications attempting to ground the locus of integral yoga psychology. It begins with my essay titled, "Sri Aurobindo's Formulations of the Integral Yoga." This essay is an example in both theoretical and process psychologies, since it attempts to define the integral yoga in terms of alternative formulations of processes. It provides a history of practice and pluralizes the attempt of arriving at the integral consciousness, as articulated by Sri Aurobindo himself. I have placed this article at the start of the volume, since crystallized understandings of the integral yoga have come to exist among some communities of practice and this essay attempts, among other things, to expand and render fluid such understandings, pointing to creative and interpretive dimensions

in understanding and practice. This essay also discusses *integrality* as Sri Aurobindo understood it, pointing to it as a philosophical aporia to which Sri Aurobindo provided some approaches and an experimental field of trans-mental experience.

Continuing in the theoretical vein, the next essay, by Bahman Shirazi, shows how the integrality of Sri Aurobindo was given yet another articulation by Haridas Chaudhuri, which takes into account more contemporary psychological models and presents integral yoga in the form of the seeking for a whole person psychology. Taking a phenomenological approach, Chaudhuri made a triadic division of human identity or center of experience, as unique, related, and transcendent. He made this a methodological framework for integration. Shirazi relates this triad to Sri Aurobindo's three poises of existence in which the Divine Consciousness co-exists—individual, universal and transcendental. It is questionable whether Sri Aurobindo equated relational and universal in his formulation, but his partner, the Mother, certainly saw the social and cultural sphere as an aspect and approach to the universal. One may take account of more recent trends in transpersonal theory, such as Jorge Ferrer's *participatory turn* in grounding the universal in an embodied relational space and a pluralistic outcome. The Auroville community, which the Mother founded in 1968, could well be seen to exemplify this dimension shifting the center of the yoga from the individual towards the collective. Also included is a reprint article titled, "Integral Psychology," by Paul Herman, one of the early pioneers of East-West psychology at the California Institute of Asian Studies and its later incarnation, the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS), which discusses Chaudhuri's integral or whole person psychology. We have placed this in the back section of the issue for its archival value. Integral yoga psychology is interested in conceptual frames of inclusion and transcendence, but also in a phenomenology and a process psychology of integral transformation and a cultural psychology of integral yoga practice.

After Shirazi's paper is Matthijs Cornelissen's "Self and the Structure of the Personality: An Overview of Sri Aurobindo's Topography of Consciousness." In this article, Cornelissen sketches

the psychological topography of Sri Aurobindo in its mature phase. He reiterates for Sri Aurobindo what I have said about the yoga tradition in general—its terminology and epistemology serve the purposes of its practice. The article also fleshes out the triadic principle spoken of by Shirazi, using the specialized vocabulary of Sri Aurobindo. Cornelissen divides his topographical description into a *concentric dimension*, a *vertical dimension* and what may be called a *subject dimension*, related to the individuation of transcendental Being. He also provides very helpful charts, which summarize his descriptions in visual form and provide clarity on the relation between Sri Aurobindo's later transpersonal vocabulary and his earlier categories taken from the traditional discourse of yoga. It therefore represents a comprehensive structural psychology that provides a framework for viewing relationships between different stages and formulations of the integral yoga by Sri Aurobindo. Positioned at this point in the volume, it consolidates ideas inherent to the earlier papers and provides the conceptual tools needed to grasp the following papers.

In the next essay, Elizabeth M. Teklinski deals with integral yoga in terms of developmental psychology. Teklinski points to the need, oft repeated in this issue, to ground psychological theory in a metaphysical framework. As discussed earlier in this introduction, this need to relativize metaphysical frameworks follows a discursive norm of yoga in India, and arises in this case from the broader issue of positioning psychology as a science. It may sound strange to demand an explicit metaphysical context for psychological theories, but a moment's consideration will show that metaphysical assumptions are hidden in psychological theories when not made explicit. Borrowed from the *nomos* of science, these are usually materialist or physicalist. Teklinski uses the triadic model of integral yoga as developed by Bahman Shirazi (this issue) to demonstrate how present theories of developmental psychology, as by or derived from Freud and Piaget, belong to the surface/physicalist egocentric dimension of Shirazi's model. She also draws on Cortright to show how several transpersonal theories, such as Buddhist psychologies, are limited to the cosmocentric dimension in their metaphysical assumptions. In both

cases, the psychocentric dimension is absent, such that the question of personhood, of an ontological center to development, is elided. An integral yoga metaphysics (*darshan*) considers soul or psyche (*psychic being*) as *true person*, which develops, not merely in a single life but over several lifetimes. Reincarnation is thus also part of its metaphysical framework, not merely an incidental *doxa* but having central philosophical significance. Teklinski hints at this element but is more concerned in making the theoretical case for a psychocentric understanding for developmental psychology.

Teklinski's paper is followed by two essays that try to position integral yoga psychology in a comparative context. The first of these is a piece by Indra Sen, who, as discussed earlier, is arguably the founder of integral psychology. Again, an archival reprint, it is being carried in this issue for its value in contextualizing the idea of the unconscious in integral yoga psychology. Sen, himself both a philosopher and psychologist, begins by drawing attention to the intimate relation between these two fields. Psychological philosophy constitutes the beginnings of the academic field of psychology, and Sen's consideration of the unconscious pays homage to this tradition, by looking at the theories of Plotinus, Leibniz, and Hegel, before entering a longer discussion featuring the two primary modern psychological thinkers on the unconscious, Freud and Jung. Sen traces the historiography of the unconscious in Freud's thought before moving to the larger cultural and historical connotations and impersonal contributions of the unconscious in individual and collective psychology, as theorized by Jung. With these ideas as backdrop, Sen moves to a consideration of the unconscious in integral yoga psychology. Here, the unconscious goes further in impersonality than Jung, with the origins of the psychological shown to be the ontological. The unconscious becomes the foundation of an evolutionary drive that develops greater forms of consciousness, leading from non-living matter to the human and beyond. This implies a gradation of consciousness from a deep unconsciousness that Sri Aurobindo called the *inconscient*, moving through an unconsciousness to a subconsciousness, which is an intermediate stage between the unconscious and

the conscious. Sen touches on the differentiations of these levels or layers of consciousness in Sri Aurobindo, laying out the kinds of consciousness one encounters in some of the other essays in this volume, particularly in Cornellsen's paper on psychological topography—physical, vital, mental, psychic, and subliminal forms of consciousness. He then points to the unmanifest ranges of universal consciousness beyond human mentality and beyond the Mind.

Sen indicates that these ranges of consciousness do not exist for Freud, and that Jung clubs all these ranges in his unconscious. But to be cognizant of the ontological and psychological will to higher forms of consciousness, it is better to acknowledge, as Sri Aurobindo has, a difference between the unconscious and the superconscience. A key point to note here is the grounding of the grades of consciousness in an immanent ontogenetic will within the unconscious. This challenges the privileging of the mind and the epistemological project of the post-Enlightenment knowledge academy, in favor of an understanding of mind as an emergent form of consciousness whose operations are a function of a more primordial will-to-consciousness. Such a view has profound implications for the philosophy and practice of science, particularly that of psychology. Here, transpersonal psychology, in claiming an extension of ego and mental consciousness in extraordinary experiences and realizations, could offer a revisionary alternative for the human sciences, arguing for a move from epistemology-for-itself to epistemology as an aspect of praxeology. Sen also challenges the uni-directional ascension of a hierarchical range of consciousness, pointing to a simultaneous reverse impulse towards integration and transformation, a return towards the unconscious from higher levels, equally primordial as the will towards greater consciousness. In laying out this dynamic, Sen discusses the psychoanalytic process of ego integration in Freud through an acceptance of the contents of the unconscious. In contrast, he points to the more thoroughgoing notion of transformation in integral yoga psychology, where the separative ego is sought to be exceeded in states of universal consciousness, and the power of these forms of consciousness is brought into contact with

less conscious ranges, integrating their operations and thus transforming them progressively into higher forms. Sen's treatment, thus, is theoretical, practical and also has therapeutic implications.

Sen's essay is followed by Stephen Julich's comparative consideration of integral yoga and Jungian psychology, particularly as it pertains to the latter's thinking on alchemy as psychological transformation. By dint of its source material, this consideration goes back in time to engage with the roots of the Western esoteric and magical traditions, in engagement with which Jung developed his alchemical-psychological theories. A wide ranging discussion, Julich's essay shows the similarities and differences between Jung's understanding of alchemy as transformation and the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, seen as a system of alchemical transformation, even if not explicitly named so. He also makes the argument for the extension of this mythic-psychological structure to the persons of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, as together exemplifying the paradoxical union of opposites, or *syzygy*, the symbolic and literal goal of alchemical transformation.

Integral yoga was not formulated for psychotherapeutic practice, and this would apply as well to integral yoga psychology, if considered as a whole person psychology. Nevertheless, Michael Miovic makes a case for the use of the models and processes of integral yoga psychology in psychotherapy in the next article. A clinical psychoncologist by profession, Miovic brings his personal experience to bear on ways in which integral yoga psychology can be helpful in treating patients. Therapist-patient relations are mediated by theoretical frames that may be inadequate or erroneous in dealing with the specific problems. For example, Freudian psychotherapy tries to reduce a large number of pathologies as deriving from an Oedipal complex, Buddhist psychological frames deny the existence of the soul, Christian and materialist psychological systems refuse to acknowledge reincarnation, some frameworks deny the presence of evil as an ontological truth, while some assume it. Without making an ontological or comparative judgment, Miovic finds that different psychological frames address different conditions with greater respect and

understanding, and hence more adequately. Miovic gives examples of the usefulness of the structure and processes of consciousness pertaining to the wide inclusiveness of the integral yoga in several specific cases. Some of his examples have to do with past life influences, possession or other occult influences, interference of non-physical levels of consciousness, and so forth. Not that these phenomena, as such, are unique to the frame of integral yoga, but integral yoga relates these phenomena to a developmental model that can result in self-healing and/or invocation of higher consciousness-forces for healing. In this regard, Miovic presents similarities between therapies using integral yoga psychology and those using the Alcoholic's Anonymous (AA) procedures. He also discusses differences in clinical environment more or less open to therapeutic practices based on the understandings and framework of an integral yoga psychology.

The final essay in the issue, Larry Seidlitz's study of integral yoga in professional work situations, though focused on individual subjectivity, relates this to social choices and action, and can thus be considered an aspect of social psychology. It is also an example of qualitative research. Part of the intention of the integral yoga is the transformation of social life through the practice of yoga. For this it depends on a form of the *karma yoga* (yoga of works) as described and recommended by Sri Aurobindo. Seidlitz's goal in his research was to investigate this premise in the case of professional fields of the modern world. However, this research does not address the transformation of society as such, but the subjectivity of the professional workers in society. What does working in the professions mean for these practitioners? What is their attitude to professional work in the world? What is their experience of such work? What is the relation between their yoga practice and their work? These are some of the broad questions sought to be answered in this research. Seidlitz selected twelve long-term individual practitioners of the integral yoga from the four professional fields of business management, education, health care, and the arts, and interviewed them based on a pre-formulated questionnaire. He conducted an analysis of the responses to isolate lead themes and attitudes, so as to arrive at common denominators of individual subjectivity with respect

to the practice of integral yoga in the professions. In this essay, Seidlitz discusses his method of qualitative research and the choices going into his research design, such as his questionnaire. He points out that these choices are not meant to be strictly objective, but that he brings to them his own experience as a long term practitioner of the integral yoga, not as an authoritative source but as a hermeneutic frame.

This volume is meant to be an early example and an introduction to the field of integral yoga psychology. As such, it introduces the goals, structures, processes, and expected experiences of the integral yoga, and provides some comparative, clinical, and social directions of consideration. Undoubtedly there are many areas inadequately addressed, or not addressed. An important such direction is the study of experiences, both qualitative and empirical, among practitioners of the yoga. A rich archive of source materials, along with some qualitative indicators may be found in the letters of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to their disciples. Another such source of experiences, as well as a methodological approach to self-study, may be found in Sri Aurobindo's (2001) own diaries, compiled as a two volume set, under the title, "Record of Yoga." The area of comparative psychology is a fruitful site of further study. There is also the area of collective and/or participatory yoga psychology, as practiced in environments such as the Sri Aurobindo ashram or Auroville, which needs more attention. It is hoped that the essays introduced in this volume will be an impetus towards further studies of this kind and new directions for the understanding of and research in integral yoga psychology.

**Debashish Banerji, Special Topic Editor
California Institute of Integral Studies**

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About the Author

Debashish Banerji, PhD, is the Haridas Chaudhuri Professor of Indian Philosophy and Culture and Doshi Professor of Asian Art at the California Institute of Integral Studies. He is also the program chair in the East-West Psychology department. He obtained his PhD in Art History from the University of California, Los Angeles. Later, he served as Professor of Indian Studies and Dean of Academics at the University of Philosophical Research, Los Angeles. He has taught as adjunct faculty in Art History at the Pasadena City College, University of California, Los Angeles and University of California, Irvine. Banerji has curated a number of exhibitions of Indian and Japanese art. He has edited a number of books, including one on *Critical Posthumanism and Planetary Futures* (Springer, 2016). He is the author of two books: *The Alternate Nation of Abanindranath Tagore* (Sage, 2010) and *Seven Quartets of Becoming: A Transformational Yoga Psychology Based on the Diaries of Sri Aurobindo* (DK Printworld and Nalanda International, 2012).

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