FOLLOWING THE MOVEMENT:
FROM TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY TO
A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TRANSPERSONAL
ORIENTATION

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Perhaps it was bound to happen sooner or later. A psychology that takes into account the whole human experience begins to transcend the discipline itself. When all levels, states, and structures of consciousness are embraced, when the hallmark of maturation is no longer restricted solely to autonomous individual development, but tends equally to the homonomous human developmental trajectory (i.e., becoming a part of greater wholes), the antennae of other disciplines pick up on the signal and are called to attention, sensing their role in this realm. The present article briefly reviews the trajectory of the transpersonal movement, my own evolving inquiry with it, and extends an invitation to dialogue about what may be one of the most significant advances of the 1990s and one of the most promising movements for the field: the expansion of the transpersonal orientation to other fields and disciplines, especially those which focus beyond the individual to groups, society, and the cosmos. How transpersonal psychology will address and embrace this movement is a challenge for the new millennium.

WHERE ARE WE COMING FROM?

While use of the term "transpersonal" can be found in authors such as William James at the turn of the century, birth of the modern transpersonal movement is just over thirty years old. Essentially, the study and practice of "transpersonal" embraces two dimensions:

1. Transpersonal experiences (levels and states) available to humankind, but which often represent temporary shifts in consciousness.

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2. *Transpersonal development* (mostly of the "structures" of consciousness) which represent more lasting shifts, or transformations of consciousness, such that one's world view and "being" on the planet restructure in a relatively irreversible way.

Transpersonal experiences can appear at any level of development or pathology, but are most significant when integrated into one's developmental trajectory in a meaningful manner.

The context in which this occurs, however, is pivotal. Relationships, groups, organizations, communities, and society-at-large (cultural, economic, political, etc.) can in varying degrees and in a myriad of ways facilitate or inhibit transpersonal experience, expression, and development. Consequently, the advent of other disciplines into the transpersonal arena, especially those which focus upon the context as a central project, forms such a very significant movement for our challenging times.

**WHERE HAVE I BEEN?**

I started seriously studying transpersonal psychology in the mid to late 1970s. I was in a Barnes & Noble bookstore and John White's book, *The Frontiers of Consciousness*, "fell" off the bookshelf into my lap. The appendix contained resources for further inquiry and listed the Association for Transpersonal Psychology (ATP). Given that both my life experiences and scholarly interests converged in this territory, I read voraciously over the next several years the then-extant literature base on the transpersonal, visited the Journal and Association offices in California, met with Miles Vich, and subsequently developed a five-page overview and conceptualization of the field to aid my understanding. I then sent the document out for modification/verification to a review panel of the major authors whose works I had read, to officers of ATP, and to other leaders in the movement.

The results were published in the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* (Boucouvalas, 1980). In 1981 I expanded my narrative with an article in the then Australian Journal of Transpersonal Psychology on "Transpersonal Psychology: Scope and Challenge."

In 1995 I was asked to update that article for an anniversary celebration of the Australian movement which resulted in publication of "Transpersonal psychology: Scope and challenge revisited" (Boucouvalas, 1995). In my search, research, and preparation for that article I witnessed a major trend. What had started as a transpersonal orientation in psychology was now unfolding into a transpersonal orientation, recognized, acknowledged, and being developed by other disciplines. The preparation and writing of a more recent piece (Boucouvalas, in press) prompted me to review and analyze my earlier conceptualization/outline of 1980 which had suggested that the transpersonal domain, as an arena of both study and practice, could be articulated in four spheres: a) individual, b) group (including relationships of two or more), c) societal, and d) planetary/cosmic. My more recent analysis confirms the currency and value of this scheme per se, but equally recognizes how much better the various spheres can now be informed and fleshed out with the emerging multi-
disciplinary lens. This article is only a first step in that direction, and represents an invitation to dialogue.

WHERE MIGHT WE GO COLLECTIVELY?

The 1990s seemed pivotal. The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology (.rTP) and the Association were stable without a hard sell, due to their influence other journals and Associations addressing the transpersonal had already emerged in different parts of the world. As the momentum grew during the 1970s national as well as international conferences took place. During the 1980s the Australian Journal of Transpersonal Psychology was launched in 1981 and a German journal Zeitschrift fur Transpersonale Psychologie in 1982. During the 1990s, a Polish journal and association were founded, a Japanese association, another German journal (Transpersonale Psychologic), and an African association. In Russia, formerly underground activities and musings on the transpersonal had emerged (although the books by Nalimov, a Russian transpersonally oriented mathematician, had been published in English by an American publisher since the early 1970s). Headquartered in Europe, a federation of national transpersonal psychology associations formed EUROTAS (European Transpersonal Association), consisting of thirteen nations (AT? Newsletter, Spring, 1997): Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. By 1999 ALUBRAT (the Portuguese-Brazilian Transpersonal Association) joined EUROTAS (AT? Newsletter, Winter/Spring, 1999). One of the more significant events of the 1990s was the name change in Australia from the Australian Journal of Transpersonal Psychology to the International Journal of Transpersonal Studies. This action recognized both the global nature of the movement and its influence beyond the discipline of psychology.

So, what is the movement all about? Almost from the inception, contributions from other fields were recognized to help understand and articulate the transpersonal, for example: Eastern philosophies and religions, theoretical physics, mythology, futures research, geopsychics (study of the relationship between human, planetary, and cosmic energies). The transpersonal psychology movement drew upon and leaned on some of these other disciplines and arenas to help build an understanding of the transpersonal.

The situation seems somewhat reversed now. Transpersonal psychology is now reasonably well established and other fields of practice and study are drawing from it. Movement into other disciplines and fields of professional practice is one of the most promising advances to watch. Perhaps the biggest advance is the actual movement toward development of other transpersonal disciplines.

We might be able to eventually differentiate between applications of the transpersonal orientation to other fields of professional practice and study and new transpersonal disciplinary births. The latter is a bit rarer. Potential examples include transpersonal anthropology, transpersonal social work, transpersonal sociology, transpersonal ecology which seem to be moving in that direction. This observation, however, warrants more analysis. Although outside the scope of the present effort, it would seem
appropriate to eventually articulate differentiating criteria. While possibly premature to categorize and differentiate field applications from disciplinary births, it is a trend which bears watching. For the present it would be meaningful for us to begin to explore this emerging terrain. It is noteworthy that transpersonal anthropology, sociology, and ecology have indeed been identified as emerging transpersonal disciplines by Walsh and Vaughan (1993). Wilber’s (1995) overview of the wide-ranging meaning of transpersonal studies additionally recognized transpersonal art, ethics, and philosophy.

**AN INVITATION TO DIALOGUE**

Following Glassner and Corzine (1982), I am currently attempting to map the literature according to the emerging categories, paying particular attention to my discovery of "key informants." Although selective more than comprehensive at this point, enough of a trend seems to be emerging to warrant discussion.

Discussion, however, involves analyzing to examine and explain. Rather than the point/counterpoints and "arguments" entailed in a discussion, I offer this essay as a think piece and invite you into dialogue.

I have selected the following areas: transpersonal anthropology, transpersonal social work, transpersonal sociology, transpersonal ecology, transpersonal art, transpersonal literature, transpersonal acting, transpersonal law, transpersonal business and entrepreneurship, (omitted are areas such as transpersonal psychotherapy, counseling, and education, which have a long, rich history and which have always been more central to the unfolding of transpersonal psychology itself as a field).

*Transpersonal Anthropology*

Transpersonal anthropology is the most evolved and best articulated in the multidisciplinary transpersonal movement, thanks to the work of Charles Laughlin and his colleagues who have emerged as chief "key informants" in this area. They consider transpersonal anthropology as an "organized field of study," the origins of which date to the mid-1970s. The history of its unfolding and key players involved can be found in Laughlin (n.d.). I believe that it clearly qualifies as a disciplinary birth catalyzed (at least in conceptual/theoretical terms) by the transpersonal psychology movement. Then, too, anthropology itself is probably the "oldest transpersonal discipline to be found among the sciences," according to Laughlin and his colleagues (1993, p. 191). Transpersonal experiences abound in cultures around the world (and what we might consider "out of the ordinary" might be very ordinary in some cultures). Consequently, anthropologists have always been faced with the challenge of understanding and reporting on different worlds. The transpersonal orientation and body of knowledge offer a solid framework to further develop transpersonal anthropology in theoretical/conceptual as well as practical terms.

Laughlin and his colleagues have made it clear in their publications (see reference list) that the transpersonal orientation can help anthropologists develop a better theory of
consciousness and culture. Toward that end, a concomitant development of professionally trained transpersonal anthropologists is a must, those who can actually enter the consciousness of the people they are studying and help society understand culture from "inside the consciousness of the people" not just observe from a participant-observer stance. Consequently, one of the main current aims of transpersonal anthropology is to develop "polyphasic" researchers, capable of entering/exiting different worlds in order to apprehend, comprehend, and more authentically report on multiple realities. Laughlin and his colleagues are quick to point out that not everyone is qualified to become a disciplined transpersonal anthropological investigator. Being a capable scientist, who is flexible, able to live in many worlds, and communicate across and span boundaries is a start. One's transpersonal developmental trajectory is equally important, going beyond mere exposure to transpersonal experiences per se as a temporary shift in consciousness.

**Transpersonal Social Work and Sociology**

Cauda (1991, building upon his earlier work (1988a, b; 1989), appears to have been one of the first to challenge the field of social work and re-visit how human development is understood and taught in social work education. He implored educators, philosophers, and practitioners of social work to explore what he referred to as transpersonal theory, its Eastern and Western philosophical roots, as a guiding image to birth transpersonally framed social work theory and practice.

Cowley (1993, 1994, 1996) has more recently become a "key informant" for the social work field, that is, a strong voice for and advocate of developing transpersonal social work as a theoretical guide for good practice. Her argument is based on the role that the field of social work must play in "simultaneously effecting individual and social good" (1993, p. 533), that is, dealing not only with individuals but with social ills and societal challenges of the 1990s and beyond: "violence, addiction, and spiritual malaise."

While social work is primarily (although not exclusively) a field of professional practice, sociology, in a complementary manner, is primarily (although not exclusively) a field of study. The potential development and emergence of transpersonal sociology has been incubating for decades, yet still remains a beckoning project for some pioneering spirit to embrace.

The concept itself of a transpersonal sociology seems to have been pioneered by John Glass who, as early as 1971, specifically heralded the emergence of transpersonal psychology as a potential catalyst in developing a new sociology with transcultural dimensions (Glass, 1971, 1979). In his words: "the [then] new 'fourth force' in psychology, Transpersonal, might be matched by a Transcultural Sociology dealing with values, social structures, and social behavior that seems to be universal, culture free, and transcendental from a sociological perspective" (Glass, 1971, p. 4; Glass & Staude, 1972, p.8). Staude (1976), borrowing from Jung, further articulated a depth sociology to complement depth psychology, drawing a parallel between Jung's "collective unconscious" and Durkheim's concept of a "collective conscience," or "collective consciousness," to use the term as translated by Greenwood who more
recently (1989; 1990; 1993) is emerging as a potential “key informant” in laying the groundwork for structuring a transpersonal sociology of religion. Acknowledging the work of Staude, as well as others (Guala, 1970; Mestrovic, 1984; Progoff, 1953), on the Durkheim/Jung complementarity, Greenwood’s work focuses on a more systematic analysis and synthesis of Jung’s psychology and Durkheim’s sociology, emphasizing that a transpersonal approach provides a framework for external as well as internal identity of Self vis-a-vis religion. This sampling of examples provides a start; however, the call of Wilber (1983) that transpersonal sociology is potentially ready for and awaiting birth still echoes.

Transpersonal Ecology

Ecology likewise deals with an arena greater than the individual, the ecos, or environment (deriving from the Greek word *olkos* meaning "house" or more broadly "habitat"). At heart is the question of how living organisms (humans, animals, and plants) can co-exist and live harmoniously with their surroundings. The voice of transpersonal social work appears in this terrain also, as authors such as Park (1996) have issued a plea for social workers to recognize their responsibility in environmentalism and ecology. For direction, the author specifically recommends that social workers turn to transpersonal ecology, as well as transpersonal psychology. Warwick Fox (1990, 1995), who has emerged as a "key informant" of transpersonal ecology, stresses the role that transpersonal identification plays. As one's awareness of a broader, deeper sense of "Self" identity emerges, concern and caring for the environment emerges naturally and is motivated from within, rather than from externally imposed or assimilated values or "shoulds" and "oughts." A more scattered stream of literature which may be equally germane focuses on what collectively may be called "sacred places" (Swan, 1983, 1988; Devereaux, 1990; 1992, 1995 as examples), potentially capable of drawing one into transpersonal experiences much the same way in which transpersonal art, discussed below, might offer.

Transpersonal Art

Breccia (1984) and the International Transpersonal Association (1983) seem to have begun dialogue on the meaning of transpersonal art as one in which the artist creates from a transpersonal consciousness which at the same time has the potential to awaken the receiver. Reviewing and building upon these prior works, Holdstock (1986), writing from an African perspective, recognized the East/West integration in such endeavors but called likewise for a North/South integration of African "soul" into our understanding of transpersonal art. Toward this end, he explored the work of German born, African-bred Monica von Moltke, By offering a visual treatise of her artwork to accompany the text, the reader is given an opportunity to experience (not just read about) the transpersonal themes of "unity underlying diversity" and "metamorphosis," which Holdstock feels characterizes her work. Writing also within this genre are Klein (1989), who has drawn implications of a transpersonal aesthetic for adult art education, and Edlin (1989) who investigated art therapy from a transpersonal perspective. More recently, Lewis (1997) continues this trend in speaking to the
therapeutic benefits of transpersonal art, particularly as framed by an "ecumenical world view."

Transpersonal art has the potential to affect an arena greater than the individual. The hope of Holdstock (1986, p. 84), for example, is that von Moltke's works "will serve as a catalyst for bringing about the attitudinal change so sorely needed in our society ... enabling the vast depth of the human soul and soaring heights of the human spirit to be realized."

Recently, Wilber (1996, 1997) has now begun focused discussion on this territory called "transpersonal art." Addressed are both the creators as well as the consumers of the art. The artist, who is "alive" to the transpersonal realm, often creates a work which in turn is able to pull the "consumer" into a vivid and often very vibrant transpersonal state. Such art can serve as a medium or catalyst to transpersonal awareness.

In a more practical vein, Gold (1998) actually describes to her readers what the experience is like when one paints from the "Source," so to speak, and offers guidelines to help artists. Fetchko (1991) combines exploration with inquiry in her scientific study of her own experience and emergence of what she terms a "transformational artist."

In the theoretical realm, Greenman (1990) has become concerned with what he considers an overemphasis that current art criticism strategies place on a rational orientation. He consequently developed a transactional, transpersonal model whereby viewers (i.e., art critics) engage physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of themselves with those aspects in the work of art. According to Greenman, the model is designed to "transform the viewer," encouraging conscious/unconscious, "lower/higher" aspects of self, thus catalyzing the fuller potential meaning of art.

These are examples of how the transpersonal orientation and the growth of the movement have been applied to the arts, but also represent the potential for birthing a new genre in both the practical as well as the scholarly arena. Could this lead to a new transpersonal disciplinary birth?

Transpersonal Literature

Most selections in this arena illuminate ways in which "transpersonal" manifests in the characters written about, or in the poets and writers themselves as creators (Abel, 1988; Flinn, 1997; Wiethaus, 1996). Smith (1991) and Simon (1998), however, probably come closest to what transpersonalists would identify as a meaningful rendition of the transpersonal concept by articulating a deeper, more fundamental Self than ego boundaries suggest. To authors like Kalaidjian (1991, p. 322), on the other hand, "transpersonal" means groups rather than individuals as "productive sources of literary expression." While his point may be sound in terms of collective identity, it also raises our awareness that, outside the discipline of psychology, "transpersonal" may be a term employed in a manner inconsistent with or in many ways different than
within the discipline of psychology. This situation is not surprising, however. The
term is attractive. Although an integral part of the transpersonal psychology move­
ment has always been to keep definitions and descriptions open and in process, an
equal challenge will be to continually keep dialogue open as to what "qualifies" as trans­
personal. What is it, we must ask, that is common to all transpersonal disci­
plines? This task seems essential to support and catalyze the growing multi-disciplin­
ary movement.

Transpersonal Acting

Acting is a domain which reaches out and has the potential to transform the actor as
well as the audience. So it was in ancient times when the theater was considered both
educational and therapeutic. Entertainment was not the only Or prime aim. For
example, the potential of theater as a maturational catalyst was considered so impor­
tant in ancient Greece that Pericles earmarked a fund called the "theorikon" which
provided theater tickets for the poor, a fund which was not to be touched for anything
else, even in times of war.

The quality of the relationship an actor establishes both with Self as well as with one's
audience seems central. A study by Kubler (1987) offered a transpersonal paradigm
for better understanding performer/audience interaction, which has helped illuminate
the experience of "spiritual" and "mystical" bonding reported by many professional
actors with whom the researcher dialogued.

Manderino (1976, 1985, 1989), though, appears as the "key informant" in this
arena, having successively revised his book and deepened his thinking on what he
specifically refers to as transpersonal acting. For decades he has worked on expand­
ing upon the theories of Stanislavski who, at the time of his death, was deeply
immersed in issuing a clarion call for developing actors who could be educated
beyond sensory technique, emotional memory, or physical actions to the develop­
ment of one's "superconscious." Accordingly, Manderino has developed and tested
his transpersonal approach, replete with systematic exercises, which "seeks to
create a new type of functioning in the actor based on higher levels of conscious­
ness" (1989, p. 52).

Like transpersonal art and literature, transpersonal acting has the potential to reach
and touch many, including the mass populace. The final two areas of discussion,
transpersonal law and transpersonal business and entrepreneurship, will move us even
further into macro arenas.

Transpersonal Law

Concerned with the public/private distinction in both political and legal philosophy,
Scoglio (1993, 1998) appears as the trailblazer in questioning the meaning of privacy.
He suggests that consideration of a transpersonal orientation might be meaningful in
what he terms today’s growing attack on privacy. Drawing from the work of Justices Brandeis and Douglas, who in turn had been purportedly influenced by Emerson and Thoreau, Scoglio suggests that privacy, as a fundamental right, takes on more meaning and relevance when seen in terms of ecological and spiritual individualism, which take into account the larger sense of Self which the transpersonal orientation affords. To my own reading and interpretation, this seminal piece is reminiscent of the literature from ancient philosophical to modern times on the "common good."

Balancing the rights of individuals with what is "good" for society has always been a challenge. A cornerstone of civilization is the ability of people to live and function together. Laws serve as safety insurance. Scoglio is addressing the undergirding legal philosophy or the very premises upon which laws are constructed. For the benefit of both society and the individual, he argues, the meaning of privacy can be reconstructed. He calls for a "transpersonal philosophy of rights." One can start to see how articulation of a legal philosophy can begin to not only provide a vision, but also suggest expectations for a transpersonally aware and responsible society. This feat might likewise add further support to the strides of transpersonal social work, sociology, anthropology, etc., already discussed. Moving vision into action on a society-wide basis takes on a special flavor with transpersonal entrepreneurship and business, the focus of our final section.

Transpersonal Business and Entrepreneurship

Perhaps a seminal source in this arena harkens to the 1970s and the work of Robert Schwartz of Tarrytown, New York who was considered by many as a "transpersonal entrepreneur." With the exception of Ferrier Franklin (1981) who focused on the transpersonal in successful female entrepreneurs and the work of Pyle (1989) who developed a model to introduce transpersonal goals into business, much of the current literature which purportedly deals with spirituality in business tends to be framed more from a bottom-line perspective where spirituality tends to be more of a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Rather than serving as a philosophical underpinning to more enlightened efforts, it often becomes another tool to improve profits (e.g. the consumer might want to invest in what is advertised as a spiritually oriented company). Consequently, an element of discernment may be called for in delving into this body of literature.

One exception may be the World Business Academy (an international network of entrepreneurs committed to creating a more sustainable future for the planet). The quarterly journal of the Academy, Perspectives, has consistently published articles which speak to a larger sense of Self, directly or indirectly. Topics range from expanding the meaning of stakeholder beyond stockholder to include society-at-large, to issues of building ethical economics through "mindful markets," to considering evolution and the human species in spiritual spaces. The publisher, Berrett-Koehler, has also hosted some seminal books such as those by David Korten (1995, 1999) and others which speak (albeit some more indirectly) to transpersonal entrepreneurship (Abdullah, 1999; Block, 1996; Estes, 1996; Greenleaf, 1998; Harman, 1988, 1997; Henderson, 1996; McLagan & Nel, 1995; Owen, 1999; and others).
TOWARD THE FUTURE

This invitation to dialogue is only a beginning, an encouragement to further pursue and follow the emerging multi-disciplinary transpersonal movement. Questions beckon, of course, as to how individually and collectively one might not just follow but contribute to understanding, as well as to catalyzing further development and whether that would be meaningful, for whom, and how. Many areas are missing from this starter-piece, such as the emerging literature on transpersonal group growth, relationships as a catalyst, the domain of music and transpersonal awakening/development, the transpersonally framed literature spawned by Russian mathematician Nalimov, the transpersonal musings of Russian geneticist Tonu Soidla, transpersonal physics, and others. Moreover, any of the transpersonal arenas which were explored herein need to be further fleshed out. In partnership with each other the different emerging disciplines and fields in the transpersonal movement have the potential to offer both a research and action agenda for effecting a globally transformative vision as a major task and central project of the new millennium.

Transpersonal experiences and related transpersonal developmental trajectories of individuals have been clearly articulated and honed over the past thirty years and that work continues. Almost from inception, however, the importance of the greater macro context was recognized, tended to, but just less well developed. The advent and potential flowering of transpersonal disciplines which focus on groups, society, and the cosmos provide a renewed vision. The benefits are obvious and multifold.

How will transpersonal psychologists embrace the challenge of understanding, welcoming, and perhaps even catalyzing other transpersonal disciplinary births? The choice seems pivotal.

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Introduction to Transpersonal Science. Discover transpersonal psychology. The Transpersonal. The term transpersonal means 'beyond the personal' and refers to those states, processes and events in which our ordinary limited sense of self is transcended and in which we obtain a higher, or deeper or greater understanding of ourselves and the world(s) we inhabit. For many people, the transpersonal is synonymous with spirituality, and many areas of interest to transpersonal researchers have traditionally been associated with religion (e.g., mystical experience, meditation). However the transperson... Transpersonal psychology, if known to mainstream psychologists at all, is most often associated with New Age crystal gazers, astrologers, believers in witchcraft, drug users, meditators, occultists, spiritual healers, martial artists, and other purveyors of pop psychology, in short; everything that a truly legitimate scientific and academic psychology is not. Definitions of transpersonal psychology over the past 35 years. One way to gain an understanding of transpersonal psychology is to examine definitions of transpersonal psychology. Transpersonal psychology is less a subdiscipline of psychology than it is a multidisciplinary inquiry aimed at a holistic understanding of human nature. Transpersonal psychology represents the newest movement within the psychological field. It was born at the end of the sixties as a natural evolution of humanistic psychology, in the wake of trends that favored the development of human potential, with the aim to expand the area of interest and jurisdiction of psychology in order to include spiritual inner experiences, the whole spectrum of states of consciousness and the full realization of the Self. Here below is Charles Tart's definition of transpersonal psychology: "Transpersonal psychology operates in favor of the realization of the Self an Following the movement: from transpersonal psychology to a multidisciplinary transpersonal orientation. Journal of Transpersonal Psychology 31 (1) 27-39. Cooper, R. & Sauraf, A. (1998). Transpersonal psychology is a school of psychology that studies the transpersonal, self transcendent or spiritual aspects of the human experience. The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology describes transpersonal psychology as the study of humanity's highest potential, and Wikipedia. Transpersonal disciplines The question of whether transpersonal psychology should be considered one of a number of transpersonal disciplines appears to be answered affirmatively by Boucovolas. Boucovolas discusses how sociology, anthropology, business studies, law, art