

# Towards a Quintessential Approach to Crisis and Disease: The Crossroads-Crossfire-Turning Point-Conflict Theory (CCPC)

*Salvador Harguindey*

Clinica USP—La Esperanza  
Vitoria, Spain

An attempt is made to integrate reality, exterior and interior, from its highest to its lowest forms of expression. From peak experiences to chaotic “pit experiences,” linear to cyclical to timeless time is perceived in a nondual, spiraling model and unified field. Deep crisis and conflict help to create an integral, perhaps quintessential, general theory of human creativity and human destructiveness, in order to integrate destiny, fate, free will, and vocation. Outstanding historical and literary examples become psychological guinea pigs of a spiritual laboratory. Destructive dynamics and behaviors allow reaching a better understanding of evil in order to both prevent it and heal it. Since peak experiences may have enough in common to make them “all one,” the opposite, chaotic-pit experiences, can also make the deepest crises and conflicts, from psychospiritual to political, all one.

*Now, of all diseases the fashion is the same but the seat varies. So, while diseases are thought to be entirely unlike the other, owing to differences in their seat, in reality all have one essence and cause.*

—Hippocrates

## ✦ An Etiological-Universal Approach to Disease and Conflict ✦

**A**BRAMHAM MASLOW in psychology, and Otto Warburg (1956) in cancer research, have both said that we can only cure what we can understand. Others, from Albert Einstein (1954) to John White (1988), expressed a similar view, that a problem is never solved at the same level at which it was created. In an attempt to integrate the effects of environmental versus genetic tendencies in the mass-effect pathogenesis of “disease”—both physical and psychological—a mathematical formulation was proposed earlier relating time and location, while progressive thoughtful integration as opposed to reductionistic specialization was stressed (Harguindey, Katin, Edgerton, & Takita, 1981). Although initially these efforts were focused on the field of cancer research, now it is appropriate to try

wider generalizations of this unitarian approach. The main shortcoming of modern science is not the lack of scientific knowledge, of “data,” but a lack of insight to integrate many areas of research into larger fields of understanding. A brand new perspective seems necessary to embrace many different levels and branches of knowledge into higher, deeper, and more encompassing and comprehensive syntheses. The final aim would be to reach a metasynthesis of all knowledge—a new “theory of everything” (Hawking, 1988, pp. 155-169). This new line of thought considers “analysis” as a reductionistic descent into matter and “synthesis” as a new ascent towards spirit (Aivanhov, 1988).

The overwhelming materialism of the modern world has become extremely cunning in disguising novelty as true progress. Such a shortsighted attitude towards human life and the search for meaning demonstrates a total lack of understanding of higher learning experiences, such as the existence of episodes of sudden insight and/or peak experiences as the main background for true scientific creativity (Einstein, 1954). So far, the modern and postmodern tendency to disintegrate the whole into smaller and smaller parts (analysis)

has clearly won the battle over efforts directed towards reaching new integrations and generalizations in any field of science or medicine (synthesis). Thus, any trend towards integral approaches appears to be in evolutionary conflict with the trend towards increasing specialization. The specialist is bound to know each time more and more about less and less. Relentlessly following a pattern of reductionistic thought leads to progressively narrower views, eventually allowing the specialist to know absolutely everything about absolutely nothing.

Contrariwise, a more holonomic and transpersonal approach to the life sciences needs to delve into con-text before text, con-science before science, placing spirit over mind and mind over matter (Dossey, 1986). Such efforts represent an attempt to recover the soul of the soulless scientific community that prevails nowadays (Dossey, 1989; Sheldrake 1990a, 1990b; Tada, 1996; Tart, 1999; White, 1988; Wilber, 1998). The present contribution will also focus upon “an integral approach to crisis and conflict.” It represents a preliminary attempt to describe in an all-embracing manner some generalities of “the etiopathogenic and healing process,” descent and ascent, as an effort towards an all-encompassing interpretation and understanding of physical and psychological and/or spiritual disease.

From the point of view of treatment, a radical approach to any psychological and/or physical disease (*the root approach*), is sought after. To reach the core of a neofomed or neofoming process, from cancer degeneration to psychological disease, it is necessary to descend to the most intimate depth and essence of a process. The ideal situation arises when we can act at the quintessential level, leaving outside, in a second plane, the external, more superficial and partial manifestations of the tree of a disease, its trunk (*the stalk approach*) or even its branches (*the branch approach*), the text of the disease.

The ideal situation arises when we can focus upon the energetic con-text of any disease process, its quintessential conditioning and etiological source. In different fields of science, from biology to physiology to physics to psychology, this context was called *terrain* by Pasteur, *internal media* by Cannon, *propitiatory field* by Popper, *morphogenetic fields* by Sheldrake, *quantum-energetic and unified field* by Einstein, and *collective unconscious* by Jung; different words for an integral field-seed-root-terrain approach. However, such an “underground perspective” can never be seen from the surface, that is, with the eye of the flesh and eye of the mind (the Cartesian-dualistic,

rational method). Beyond (and below) this point, a powerful burst of insight mediated by the inner eye is the only means to provide the necessary vision in the dark to penetrate a process to its very depths and grasp at once its intimate nature, an amethodic-method ready to unmask the core of the problem. Such an approach has been called “the intuitive intellect” by Aldous Huxley and “the third kind of knowledge” or “intuitive and transcendental knowledge” by Spinoza. This is the same kind of knowledge that can penetrate to the Divine base of all beings (Huxley, 1992), while it proceeds from an adequate idea of the absolute essence of certain attributes of God and the adequate knowledge of the essence of things (Spinoza, 1976, pp. 197-198).

However, the proposed in-depth research places a high demand on the investigator, who has to prepare himself or herself to go to “the very bottom of things” in a highly committed, nondual (taoistic) way. The aim is to contemplate the whole situation with one’s own inner eyes from the core and furnace of the process—even becoming one with the very same disease—until the researcher and the subject cannot be considered two anymore. This psychospiritual descent can lead the researcher to join Dante on the way down to Hades. The only hope now rests in the thought that *healing and salvation springs from the center of evil*, an “initiatic” teaching that can be found in many sources, from the *I Ching* to Heraclitus, Hölderlin, Aurobindo, Goethe, Dostoyevski, Herman Hesse, and so forth. This becoming nondual with any serious and life-threatening disease process—from physical to psychological to spiritual—can only be coped with by approaching it through a metamotivated spirit accompanied by a high degree of transpersonal empathy and generosity. The entire cycle of descent-ascent then becomes a deep-fishing expedition that probably not many would be willing to choose to embark upon on their own accord. Going back to the very beginnings of modern medical thought we realize that they were not dualistic at all. Hippocrates said that one can only cure the diseases one has gone through oneself, a thesis that runs parallel with the shamanic dictum that only the injured can heal. Thus, a *descending trip* seems absolutely necessary. This is also the challenge demanded by living nature itself in order to get a good grip on a disease and bring it back to the surface, sometimes just before our getting choked and swallowed by its destructive dynamics (S. Pániker, 1982, 1987).

The major difficulty is still to unmask the process well before the first external symptoms and signs of abnormality and manifested pathology, before its “exteriors” arise to the surface and a terrible crisis explodes. In the cancer context, for example, this was called “the sleeping time” of a disease process by Nobel prize winner Otto Warburg (1956). The underground approach, however, teaches that no large crisis ever comes “out of the blue,” spontaneously, without a reason or cause. On the contrary, a living and active silent pathogenesis always dwells behind the curtains, sometimes for a long time, without being noticed. Thus, although a severe disease or problem may appear to be causeless and spontaneous to an outside observer, this is never so to an inside observer. The secret is that the rational, too rational at times, empirical and positivistic mind—the fashion of the times—is rarely if ever able to be aware of the existence or recognize the hidden patterns and destructive energetic forces operating behind the screen of external reality. Either the outside observer is not prepared for it, or worse, does not want to and/or is afraid of it. Denial, dogmatism, and pride are always easier; they make life much more comfortable. You can make more money too. But true creativity is killed and lost. And the search for truth too.

Any serious disease process usually ends up as the external manifestation of some kind of crisis. The onset of a deep crisis indicates that a deep-seated conflict is in need of resolution. In order to achieve a *restitution ad integrum*, or true cure, the ascending, healing branch of the evolution of an abnormal process always follows the opposed trend leading to the etiopathogenesis and onset of the disease. Since it is always impossible to analyze and embrace, not to say control, the multiplicity of factors at many different levels of organization involved in a degenerative process—this limiting the reductionistic-scientist approach—a more comprehensive and holistic attitude appears to be essential in order to discover the common final pathways leading to any disease process. This demands a transcendence of levels, a jump towards a more synthetic and higher encompassing whole, and such an endeavor can only be achieved by a previously ascended and expanded consciousness. This attitude also represents a leap into the unknown, a necessary one that will open previously unthinkable and untrodden ways, new hopes and an “opening of the future.” This going over the top of the problem itself, a complete breach of planes, is

the type of approach that was described at the beginning of the field of relativity physics (Dossey, 1986, p. 243; Wilber, 1987). Now we need a similar kind of new perspective in psychology, medicine, oncology, politics, and so on.

Truly transformational events have been associated with the onset of different new paradigms in the epistemology of science (Kuhn, 1975, p. 146). These large changes are usually preceded by a period of time in which the previous paradigm and model of thought has exhausted its possibilities and the new one has not arrived yet. The nature of this interlude can be most conflictive, unstable, and even dangerous—the interparadigmatic period. A high degree of confusion, even violence, may ensue when the expected new world has not been born yet and the old one is agonizing (Wilber, 1999). Unfortunately, this appears to be the present situation in nature, ecology, human development, medicine, sociopolitics, the global situation, spirituality, and so on. It is a time of crisis and conflict, when a so badly needed ascent of the whole of reality is not yet possible, perhaps because the new idea has not yet materialized in a mature form on the surface of the given, using the terminology of Hegel. This can be secondary either to the fact that the foundation stones of the new life are not yet planted deep enough into the (right kind of) ground, or because the seed is of the wrong kind. In any case, the new reality somehow keeps hiding from us.

✧ **The First Interparadigmatic-Interface Period: The Descending Path.**  
**The Cancer Example** ✧

THE EVOLUTIONARY changes to come are usually announced by the most sensitive and developed minds and consciousness of the times, the so-called “cutting-edge in evolution” (Capra, 1985, p. 309; Ferguson, 1985, pp. 221-222; Kuhn, 1975, pp. 150-151, 153-154). At the present interparadigmatic moment, what appears to be lacking is “to come across” a deep foundation stone for the new building of the so-called new paradigm. Until then, any attempt of construction of a world-centric vision based upon a vision-logic approach (Wilber, 1999, pp. 102, 116) to human life will be like building castles in the air. In the meantime, the urgently needed metanoic jump towards a new megasynthesis of knowledge (S. Hawking’s, 1993, new “theory of everything”?) becomes impossible (Figure 1, area K to B).

Modernity seems to have provided humankind with most of its successes and failures, some enlightenment at first, later increasing darkness. It is time for a change, not in the sense of translation but of true transformation (see Wilber, 1999). From a quantum-relativistic stage and/or dimension in mental evolution, what is needed is some kind of a *quintessential approach* to the essence and dynamics of crises and conflicts. Also, a much better understanding about the phenomena of sudden insight and “naked” creativity is needed (Harguindey, 1998, ch. 14).

Like Hippocrates’ dictum at the beginning of this article, the pathogenesis of any conflict leading to the outburst of the lowest point of any crisis seems to follow very similar or even the same general pattern. This may apply to the most serious scientific, social, and political problems, as well as personal ones, the latter in their different aspects of physical, psychological, and/or spiritual disease. Thus, if its hidden descending and regressive dynamics (Figure 1, points K, B, and M) (Washburn, 1995, ch. 7; 1999, p. 34) are not interfered with in a “preventive medicine” manner, sooner or later this blind unawareness will allow the explosion of the nuclear core. This is exteriorized in the form of pain, suffering, disgrace, tragedy, and many other destructive realities, even death. The sudden manifestation of a fragmenting and destructive crisis—from a psychotic episode to a heart attack and the onset of revolutionary political violence—can be compared to the beginning of an earthquake. It is a devastating revelation that we are unable to predict when and how an eruption is going to take place, since it appears seemingly without any previous notice. We must yet learn how to become sensitive to the basic warping chains and essential predetermining contexts that eventually lead to the final outburst of the crisis (Figure 1, point C).

The underlying dynamics of specific preprocesses have to be placed in other deeper subjective and intersubjective contexts. These can be from propitiatory and energetic backgrounds to complex morphogenetic or neomorphogenetic (from neoplasia) fields (Harguindey & Gillis, 1981; Harguindey, Anton Aparicio, & Martin Algarra, 1989; Harguindey, Pedraz, Garcia Cañero, Perez de Diego, & Cragoe, 1995; Harguindey, Pedraz, Garcia Cañero, & Katin, 2000). This attempt at understanding the whole demands—even in the field of research of any area of medicine, and most of all, of malignant diseases—an *integrated and*

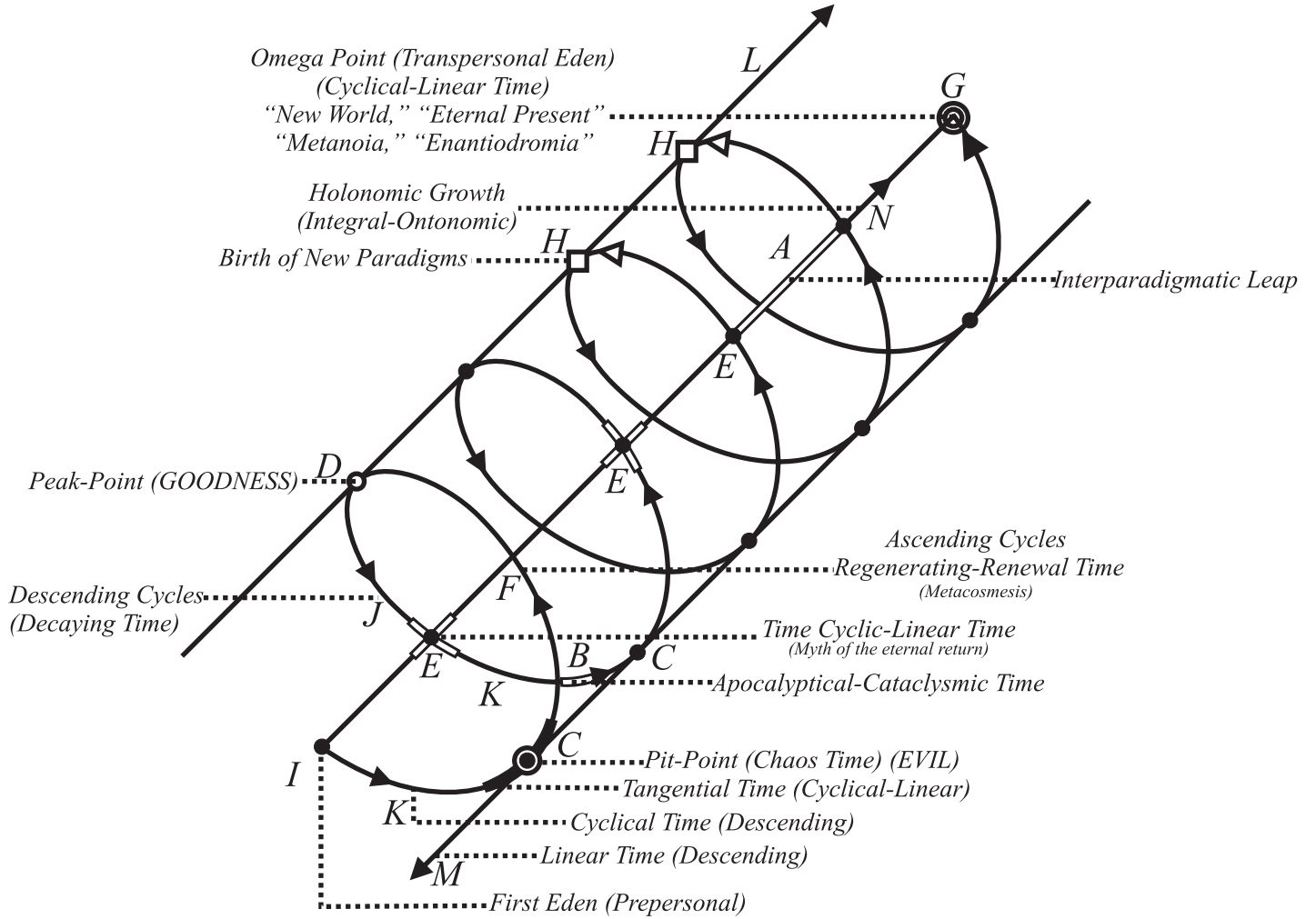
*hermeneutical* approach to cancer pathogenesis and even treatment. This “neomorphogenetic seed and root-approach” strongly indicates the active presence of hidden and implicated contexts always preceding and rather rigidly predetermining the manifestation of one or another kind of abnormal process (Harguindey, 1998, p. 595). This perspective, buried to the rational, reductionistic, and empiric eye, allows us to scratch deeply into the underground etiological roots and seeds of disease. Sooner or later, a certain neoenergetic level will automatically activate a mass effect that will transform quality (energy) into quantity (mass), so conditioning one or another manifestation of unhealthy external reality. Thus, a general “underground approach,” similar to the one that belongs to the level of study and interpretation of the conformational patterns of quantum fields in theoretical physics, can be applied to diverse areas of understanding.

From ancient Asian philosophies as portrayed in the *I Ching*—a kind of “I Change”—to Heraclitus and to outstanding modern thinkers, it is accepted that the spinning and spiraling wheel of life has its ascendant and descendent branches. These branches are bound to complete entire cycles (Eliade, 1994; Panikkar, 1993, 1998) (see Figure 1). The *cosmic cycles*, if exclusively measured in linear time, can last from instants to entire eras and eons. At the beginning, the stagnation and instability within the descending arm of an interparadigmatic-interface period (Figure 1, J to K zone), either in the personal, social, scientific, or spiritual aspects of growth, follows the pattern of a degenerating trend. This decaying time, if left to its own, will eventually lead to a situation of chaos (point C). The “B zone” (see Figure 1) stimulates the increasing formation of unstable “free radicals,” from the psychological to the political arena, revolting almost randomly and being in transit all the time between different orbital and energy status (the physics of psychology?).

The “B to C area” represents the margin, the limit. When the descending dynamics approach the point of chaos (Figure 1), an “apocalyptic or cataclysmic time” progressively ensues. Point C now becomes a “pit experience” (versus Maslow’s “peak experiences” lived at the D and H points), the lowest turning point. Here, the power of negative attachments and dependence on the old ways tries to prevent the final necessary fall to be activated in order to rebound at the bottom of the crisis. This paradoxical defense mechanism can only prolong

Figure 1

Evolutionary Time, Linear and Cyclical



the agony. From a spiritual perspective, the soul (at least Dante's) somehow needs to touch the bottom of the sea of darkness, its own hell and chaos, before swimming across the descending-ascending branch through the ocean of the night. Otherwise, it will have no chance to ascend towards the surface before drowning within the bottomless experience. Thus, before any new order has a true chance to acquire a reorganized form of stability (reconstruction), the end of a descending branch (deconstruction) and the bottom of the (ultimately healing?) cosmic cycle creates a great deal of pain and suffering, disassociation, fragmentation, and regression. This type of integral pattern can also be applied to understand what Eliade (1994) has called "the terror of history" (ch. 4). Eventually, unchecked progression of the descending trend will reflect a total blockade (see *I Ching*, "The Stagnation," 1967, p. 129) sometimes carrying both destructive (sadistic) and/or self-destructive (masochistic) components, from person to society.

The descending stage means that the necessary links to bring the fragmented chain together have not yet been found, making integration, health and growth impossible. Now the borders of the deep abyss underneath are still too far apart to be "jumped across." The excessive separation of the edges of the wound (from physical to psychological and spiritual) implies that the beginning of the healing and seaming process (the ascending branch) cannot yet take place. "Down there," total darkness and chaos signals a state of maximal disintegration, *inferior disassociation* and involution between different "lives," perspectives and attitudes (Washburn, 1990). Finally, the descending precritical situation (K and B zone) is imbued with a connotation of a certain "predeterministic necessity" prior to any possibility of transformation, enlightenment, and rebound towards higher realms of existence, both subjective and objective (Grof & Grof, 1992). Perhaps this represents some of the fundamental meanings of teleological evolution.

Within the descending path, the negative, destructive and involution forces (*thanatos*) show strength enough to easily overpower any vital and positive ones (*eros*). At the B-C *Raskolnikovian* interval (Figure 1) even indiscriminate violence can take place, manifesting itself as an incurable disease. Under such distressing circumstances, the role of self-contraction, destructiveness, and death can display themselves as superior to the value of growth, peace, creativity, and life (Buber, 1952, pp.

130-131). Indeed, this situation may last after the C-point of chaos has been fully overcome (second interparadigmatic-interface period), and linger on at the beginning of the ascending path, the time of renovation, the regeneration-renewal time (*metacosmesis*) (branch F, Figure 1). Some of the most negative aspects may linger on until full resolution of the problem ensues or at least until a clear opening—a "window of opportunity" in the terminology of Trias (1994), is perceived at the end of the tunnel.

The managing of the bottom of the crisis will successively need to deal and cope with: (1) the paralyzing intensity of the descending and conflictive interparadigmatic situation (branch B); and (2) the final acute worsening of the growth crisis (point C). The latter can also manifest itself as a mind and/or "soulstorm," a spiritual (and/or physical) emergency (Grof & Grof, 1992) which dwells in the same quicksand territory of an acute psychotic episode and/or panic attack. The evolutionary and growth meaning of such living in dire straits can only be fully recognized a posteriori, either by the individual fighting the crisis or by his or her supportive team. Sometimes the chain reaction and vicious circle (a fast revolution of the wheel beyond and/or under the C-point) will be impossible to stop. This can be applied from the personal and psychological to the sociopolitical disciplines (Rothberg, 1999, p. 42). At this crossroads-crossfire turning point and crisis (CCPC) salvation can only be found through the acquisition of the necessary degree of detachment to accept the active presence of chaos as part of the living system (the "witnessing capacity").

The concept of a "mass-effect" may be thought of as the necessary "quantity" of energy accumulated to reach the minimal level required to induce an instantaneous "qualitative leap" leading to transformation. At the time that maximal involution, disassociation, and hyperpolarization of any system (the hyperdualistic state) is approaching, if the patient (or society) cannot detach enough, the situation enters into the vortex and engulfing windstorm of his/her (its) mind and spirit. This can lead into a black hole of infinite density and gravity turned into a deep abyss, the bottomless pit of a dark night of the senses and the soul. The *blessed are the meek in spirit* now has turned into its opposite, appearing as a *damned are the rich in spirit*. At this point, an emergency call to the disfigured and fragmented, breaking ego, asking for deep-felt awe and humility is urgently needed, since life is at

stake and life and death are at a crossroads. In this preterminal situation, which appears as beyond any hope of recovery, all kinds of help are welcome. Now continuous panic attacks and an endless feeling of impending doom dominate the entire picture. If at the D-peak experiences the highest conceivable human intensity, and even greatness, coalesce, the overcoming of a full-fledged pit experience may also reveal that humans, even under the worst circumstances, may be allowed to feel and touch their very divine nature (Frankl, 1979).

### ✧ **At a Crossroads: Within the Chaos of the Hamlet Crisis. The C-Point** ✧

**A**T THE C-point (Figure 1), the storm has now turned into a tornado and awareness into a nightmare. Now the spirit dwells within the eye of a hurricane and the infinite gravity of its own black hole attracts it to a center from which nothing appears to be able to escape. Premonitory feelings previous to the worst phase of the crisis are sometimes brought about by a number of *announcing presages* (Tolstoi, 1990). Until now, however, these presages have been largely disregarded, more or less willingly, consciously or subconsciously. The pit experience at this point creates a terrible pressure and contraction of linear time. The B to C part of the spiral may show itself through a myriad of “irrational” symptoms and signs while inducing a high degree of acute confusion (“a Hamlet-like crisis”). Here, linear-rational time ceases to exist and/or finds its limits at the crossing of the lowest area of the spiral (C-zone, “tangential time”). This is a double edged-sword that, on one hand, creates a wall between the individual and the outside world—perhaps thus protecting both of them—but, on the other hand, will finally help to disinter that power of intuition and superior insight that up (and down) to that moment had been kept buried in the unconscious.

This “evil-good paradox” eventually allows that what are mysteries to rational intelligence can from now on be explored from other perspectives and in different ways (transrationality). In this cruciform and most painful stage—the crossroads-crossfire-turning point—the Hamlet-like subject under the experience may even find it impossible to distinguish external reality from inner subjectivity and the real from the unreal and imagined while he or she needs to look for help in the “far beyond.” Under these circumstances the individual cannot stop his or her mind from all kinds of automatic processes that are

far beyond its will and voluntary control. Not being able to find a moment of peace and solace, the individual feels tortured, as if all the powers of nature seem to have allied against him or her. The “Hamletian” person can, for example, think that he or she is damned by life, feel “possessed,” or regret having been born.

Communication with the outside world becomes severely impaired, or even fully abolished. The spiritual isolation and solitude of the mind and the constrictive pain of the soul can become unbearable and absolute. This psychospiritual emergency situation can be accompanied by a most variegated syndrome, including severe physical and multiorganic symptoms that have been described elsewhere (Grof, 1985). Strangely enough, the deepest form of insight seems to be calling from the bottom of the sea of the experience. From that utter darkness, something, somehow, is pushing the entire situation to rebound upwards towards the surface. The deepest conflict and crisis holds promise of a healing potential for growth and overcoming, a new ascent towards reintegration that will eventually allow recovery of a *preestablished harmony* (Grof & Grof, 1992). This “two-way” street, descending-ascending, or retroprogressive (Pániker, 1987) seems to hide the revolutionary potential to turn around (and upside-down, or vice versa) the wheel of fate and destiny. Thus, conflict and crisis finally pave the way and lead towards a new unifying synthesis of life and nature. The upward change may lead to new theories of human motivation, placing us at a vantage point to approach a fuller understanding of human nature, from destructiveness to creativity. This overcoming may lead to the birth, unfolding, and actualization of new paradigms (points D and H). This might also allow us to both differentiate and synthesize time’s two components, linear and cyclical, transforming and raising human nature to a full-fledged transpersonal situation, and life to a brand new conception (metanoia, transpersonal Eden, eternal present, enantiodromia [*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989]) (see Figure 1).

### ✧ **The Black-Hole of the Soul** ✧

**A**T THE C-point everything is mixed and boiled up in the same pot of a witches’ kitchen: what *is* real and what *is not* real? time and timelessness; what the subject should do and should not do; what the mind thinks is good can be the worst evil. The sense of linear time can be totally lost; even an instant may seem to last forever. On the contrary, hours and days

can fly by almost unnoticed within the trance of this unchanging time, a hell-like pseudoeternity opposite to “the timeless moments” of Maslow’s peak-experiences. Words, either spoken or written, are useless to express the depth and intensity of the core of this nuclear-splitting experience. The fragmenting and cracking impact of such an experience is well beyond any possible control—the epicenter of an earthquake, also called by others “the intersection of the timeless moment” (Waldron, 1998, p. 103; Washburn, 1999, p. 259). Dante tried to explain it with the following words: “How useless are the words to express the concept, and how pale the concept to express what I saw.” “To be or not to be” is no longer the question here, since it becomes impossible to differentiate the meaning of “being” or “not being” as different and separate ideas.

The under-earth psychic quake has taken the self by surprise to a big bang-like involutory phase. These episodes could even be considered or renamed as “bottomless-pit experiences,” whatever the religious connotations such terminology may carry. There, the soul finds it impossible to escape from that mental and spiritual blackhole within which the spirit has been suctioned and gobbled up. The ego, now shattered into a thousand splinters, becomes absent and defenseless, even detached from the last remnants of itself. The person going through this experience feels that a climax has been reached that announces final destruction (Washburn, 1999, p. 249). Within this stage, all kinds of hallucinations may show the false presence of an oasis occasionally appearing in front of the eyes of the spirit. Total stillness and paralysis may herald an autistic-catatonic stage only occasionally broken by the sudden onset of panic attacks that insist upon the inescapable feeling of being tortured; any sign of hope is no longer existent. This state of mind is transmitted by Dostoyevski’s well-known dictum: “If in hell there would be physical punishment, it would be a relief,” and by Teresa of Avila’s “I die because I don’t die;” however these words may now carry a more hopeless meaning than the one intended by the Spanish mystic.

✧ **Good and Evil at a Crossword Puzzle: Some Literary Exemplars. The Abraxas Time and Timelessness. Towards a General Theory of Human Destructiveness?** ✧

“GOOD” and “evil” seem to lose their separation and confrontation at the C point of maximal chaos. Even now some components of its opposite

D “peak” points can “interfere.” So a smile may accompany despair, and utter darkness and a shy ray of light can melt together. The whole reality shows itself as a single primal flux of energy that alternates its outer aspects according to propitiatory contexts and predetermining energy status (taoistic adualism, advaitaism). The mind then finds itself defenseless to resist the burden and evil thoughts which can run rampant “over the top of the head” (Washburn, 1999, pp. 236-239; John of the Cross, 1996, p. 135). It is the timeless time of the *coincidentia oppositorum* or *mysterium tremendus*. Here *the night of the spirit* overlaps with *the night of the senses* without any clear separation between them. However, if the intense pain and negative temptations are resisted and the self can detach itself enough to the point of “becoming its own outside witness,” the old man finally *dies* and the new man is *born* (Grof & Grof, 1995, p. 152). Until full transformation takes place, the rationality of the outside world appears as irrational to anyone moving at the end of the descending period. Also, rationalism considers irrational any playing around, or even trying to overcome, these quicksand areas of the evolutionary spiraling process, since no salvation is yet possible. The soul still is in danger of drowning in the *I Ching*-like great waters of the storm.

Linear time has disappeared into atemporality, symbolically uniting the divine and the demonic in the same psychic universe (*Abraxas time*). Abraxas was the name that Herman Hesse conceived as a godhead whose symbolic task is the uniting of godly and devilish elements (Hesse, 1978, p. 78; Harguindey, 1998, p. 652). In that unfortunate eternal present of *Divine Damnation*, Heaven and Hell are not experienced as two quantitative or qualitative opposites but as two complementary forces, both belonging to an incommensurable and primordial adualistic context of living energy (God as *coincidentia oppositorum* in Jung?). Most interestingly, these timeless moments of total disassociation and hell-like confusion can be recognized in many of the world’s classic literary characters, such as in Goethe’s Faust (“two souls dwell in my chest”), in Tolstoi’s Anna Karenina (“within me there is another one, and I am afraid of her”), in the split thoughts and deeds of Dostoyevski’s Dimitri Karamazov and Raskolnikov, in the doubts of Odysseus, in Herman Hesse’s Demian, in Hamlet, and so on. From the unitarian CCPC-approach, an extraordinary similarity can be perceived among the conflicts and double bonds of each of these literary examples and many others

(Harguindey, 1998, chs. 7, 14). This psycho(il)logical situation may also teach that, at least up to a certain point, “all big conflicts are one,” perhaps indicating a final common pathway for each and all psychospiritual diseases. This generalization could eventually pave the way towards the existence of “a general theory of human destructiveness,” at least on a preliminary basis. Finally, the in-depth interpretation of Shakespeare’s tragedies and Dostoyevski’s late novels (*Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *Demons*, *The Karamazov Brothers*) become first-line examples of this kind of in-depth teaching and learning. Their main characters are prime examples of acute psychic and/or spiritual crises, living C and D turning points, as well as expressions of all the descending and ascending components and stages.

Within the bottom of the crisis will forever stay buried the concept of the absolutism of linear time as a valid means to approach the understanding of the wholeness of the “real world,” from objective to subjective. Causality and rationality cannot be considered as absolutes anymore and the only valid concepts to try to understand everything that the whole spectrum of life can embrace (Harguindey, 1998, pp. 605, 617). Nor does the concept of chance seem to be able to stand the test. Finally, the in-depth study of the core of the crisis can open new possibilities to both discriminate and understand the relationships between predestination, fatalism, personal responsibility, destiny, free choice, and self-transcendence.

### ✧ The End of the Dark Stage ✧

SINCE “*healing springs from the center of evil*” (Holderlin) and “*the only way to go to Heaven is through hell*” (Dante), overcoming the deepest darkness of the “crisis” soon begins to show its other numinous face and meaning, the opportunity of a new reintegration and life. Now the person begins to feel the necessary inner strength to progressively detach from chaos and make increasing distance from the bottom of the pit. The amount of distance should be enough to allow the person to realize that he or she is something more than all that personal “stuff.” This is the beginning of becoming a trans-person.

The new wave of an ascending time of regeneration and renewal (metacosmesis) begins to materialize (Figure 1, ascending branch F). Beyond

the limits of linear rationality and twisted irrationality of the past, life gives birth to a new transrational universe, carrying a new human being and a new order with it. Hermann Hesse (1978) summarized these considerations in the following words: “Chaos has to be recognized and lived through before it can be reintegrated into a new order” (ch. 5). In a previous publication (Harguindey, 1987), I tried to express the entire meaning and consequences of the turning-over from the B to the F zones—the personal/transpersonal breakthrough across the C point—as follows:

When the rational appears senseless and the absurd tries to become logical, the essential conflict, born in well-nigh virgin reaches of human nature, is sparked off. If at that transcendental moment which verges on the transtemporal, a violent flare of creative instinct, seemingly originating outside man, comes to halt the destruction and overcome death, the miracle happens. At this point, conversion, psychological or religious, takes place. It is at that perilous juncture that the Marvelous—the Good, the True and the Beautiful—bursts forth. All of a sudden we find ourselves believing that we understand, even if only during an infinitesimal time, the radiant Reason that sustains life and the intimate Beauty that throbs quietly behind the nature of the Universe. The birth of the new vision has arrived.

Following that intense experience, nothing is the same as before and everything seems brand new. Myths and symbols are now clarified, the postulates of different philosophies merge, and good and evil join together, transcending their fusion. Guilt has now died, original sin ceases to exist. The eternal comedies of humankind turn into tragedies and the apparent tragedy of life begins to take on hues of a divine comedy. And when reality thus changes, all limits disappear. Finally, the meaning of time acquires a different and new dimension, filling life with meaning to its smallest details. From this point on existence begins to make sense, what previously separated human beings now brings them together, and a natural form of human brotherhood arises. (Harguindey, 1987, inside covers)

A sense of meaning and purpose is concomitantly born, imbuing the soul with the light of new hope. This purpose is of a quality superior and exterior to human beings (transpersonal and transtemporal), a purpose that to the mystical person appears as superior, purifying and/or intelligent (Wilber, 1993, p. 130).

☪ **From the Ascending Path to the  
Interlude of the Second  
Interparadigmatic-Interface Period** ☪

THE BOTTOM of the crisis also ends up with the overpowering, reigning ego, and the absolutism of the personal stage of evolution is swallowed up within it (Harguindey, 1998, chs. 7; 14, p. 621). It is only well after the overcoming of the apocalyptic C-point that the true differences between the psychotic-regressive (fragmenting) and the mystic-unitive (creative) stages appear as more and more evident. Progressively, ascent towards healing follows a series of mathematical-like automatisms that could be described as following an *amethodic method*. Decisions seem to “take place by themselves,” taking over the role of free choice and free will, at least until the self can take full command of the whole personal-transpersonal process.

During this rerationalizing or transrationalizing stage, decisions are made based on the new faith and insight more than on logic and reason. Reason itself is not of a blind nature anymore, but of an enlightened kind. Faith becomes illuminated as a consequence of the fulgency of the past C-experience—as evil in the final service of goodness or the Devil in the final service of God, a Jobean and Faustian situation. The worst pit experience has now become an inside constituent belonging to the very same process of healing and redemption. Nothing in the spiraling process of life and time, linear or cyclical, does ever surpass, either from above or below, the outside boundaries of linear time, which act as containers of the limits and dimensions of life (Figure 1, ascending and descending lines L and M). Finally, any area above or below lines L and M belongs to true timelessness, the void and the unknown, perhaps implying other more encompassing and subtle dimensions.

The inner activity of the ascending path keeps moving up towards a time of regeneration and renewal (metacosmesis) (line F) that, after “locking up reality” at the cross-over point E, will eventually reach the highest climactic points D and H (“Goodness,” birth of new insights, infused science, etc.). It is at these points—peak experiences—that the birth of new paradigms, even metanoic changes leading from an entire eon and era into a new one, may materialize. It is a time for peace and stability. A sense of being “born again” takes over the new self. Synchronicities appear as normal happenings. The new (trans)ego has acquired the necessary self-confidence to be able to synthesize and rerationalize

the irrational. The detachment obtained allows new basic interpretative approaches to the hidden worlds and depths experienced and left behind. A “capacity to witness” one’s own life confers upon one an increasing degree of freedom. This peaceful interlude is passively active (the Taoist *wu wei*) in preparing the whole being to explore new and unknown frontiers waiting ahead.

**From Crisis to Creativity and Scientific  
Insight: A Positive Side Effect**

AT THIS time stage (zone E to H), the first practical and beneficial effects can be observed. Scientific insights and discoveries can be passively “received” or integrated as if coming from a dream, even disguised as ecstatic and archetypal “forms.” Deep insight and intuition are stimulated by the extreme degree of hypersensitivity learned from the whole experiential process of breaking through the C zone. Some new truths appear to flash into the mind both from the inside and the outside of the self. The not-too-well-understood and always extraordinary phenomenon of the birth of the creative genius also arises from these postcritical stages. Some flashing experiences of insight can still induce severe psychosomatic symptoms in the intuitive and adualistic investigator. Researchers can even see themselves as psychological and/or spiritual guinea pigs upon whom some strange forces are working. At first the individual may feel like a passive witness of his or her own creative process, not even understanding its nature and purpose, a feature well known by the first physicists of the quantum-relativity fields (Dossey, 1986; Wilber, 1987).

The initial and brutal onslaught of the nonegoic realms has receded from its previous fury and the body-mind-soul has progressively acquired the necessary autonomy and discipline to provide an ordered expression to a multiplicity of images, voices, and intuitions (Washburn, 1999, p. 320). Strong feelings of wonder, surprise, and awe at the discoveries that are “infused into them” may take over “initiated” researchers, who may feel that they are observing life from both inside and outside. Near-death and out-of-the-body experiences can remain at these ascending stages as marks left from the lashing of the abysmal C-point experience along the personal/transpersonal change of the evolutionary spiral.

The hypersensitivity acquired also allows for the possibility that an entire world of myths and symbols can jump to the surface from the unconscious. This feature may represent a

subconscious defense mechanism providing the means to achieve an integrated hermeneutic interpretation, a kind of understanding which is badly needed. Serendipity and peripheral vision are also introduced as an aftermath of the bottom of the crisis. Further automatism of the true creative and learning processes keep pushing and digging for a radical and outreaching degree of understanding, aiming at a "complete explanation of conflict." This stage also encourages perception of global interconnectedness of the many scattered fragments left behind by the previous descending analytic branch (areas J and B). At a later stage, the pieces of the puzzle of both branches, descent and ascent, will "hierarchically" glue together into an integrated and healing process of synthesis.

### Time for Overcoming Pathology

THE QUESTION that the self asks itself after the crisis should not be the kind of superficial, personal, and self-defeating question that previously overcame it: "Why is all this happening (to me)?" Instead, the person is tested by a symbolic cosmic screaming that shouts to him or her from within: "What is the meaning of all this?" (Ortiz Osés, 1982; Ortiz Osés & Mayr, 1988). This outcry is a desperate attempt to find sense and meaning in all the appearance of absurdity and senselessness experienced through the previous descending and abysmal periods. The now unchained Prometheus-like self, naked and powerless in front of the gods, begs, craves, and demands a complete answer from them. States of high contemplative ecstasy and revelation may flash upon the individual spirit. This utter immersion in the nondualistic intimacy of inner transcendental experience, ecstasies and revelations, even considering its "scientific" aspects, has been depicted masterfully by John of the Cross in his poem, "I entered not knowing where" (1996, pp. 135-138). The words draw a perfect description of the entire cycle of the spiral of the time/timelessness experience, from its lowest to its highest aspects, both at once.

Even now the self feels misunderstood by its surroundings, thinking of others as complete strangers to its personal and transpersonal worlds. These "bilateral" feelings of alienation may have to endure an almost total lack of communication, great hardships in what were previously healthy relationships with family and friends. Well into the ascending branch, diagnoses such as manic-depressive psychosis, temporal lobe epilepsy, and schizophrenia can persist in the minds of some professionals, although they had probably been

diagnosed before, at the onset of the B-C spells. The remaining difficulties in finding a sharp separation between the potentially positive aspects of the initial postcritical ascent (branch C to E) and its dissociating aspects (cataclysm of B-period and chaos of the C-point), are secondary to the existence of a high degree of overlapping among different phases, sometimes making it impossible to know at which stage the "impatient patient" is at in a given moment.

Sometimes, the intensity of the ascending branch of the spiral accompanying psychospiritual rebirth presents a dynamic too steep to climb and too fast and unexpected to be integrated in an orderly way (*superior dissociation*). Other associated pathologies, both physical and psychosomatic, may reveal different aspects of the underlying process of intimate contact with the undifferentiated and primordial deepest source (Grof, 1985, ch. 2). Finally, the urgent need now felt to learn, to know, and to understand and integrate can be present as severe episodes of anxiety, which, if left to themselves, can conform this "too creative" dissociation induced by a "higher than tolerated" speed of growth.

In summary, the instability of this second interparadigmatic period (F zone) does not make the ascending branch a "rose garden" for the self. It still has serious problems coping with a changing situation that tilts between the ultimate possibility of final transformation and ascent and the fear of falling backwards into the regression and fragmentation of a new C-situation. The final success will be only after bringing back to the surface a still half-sunk spiritual Titanic and rebuilding it into a solar Titan of the spirit. This "day after" situation has to pay all its (karmic?) dues for overcoming the previous mindstorm experience depicted as a transcritical crisis of smaller intensity. Further description of the symptoms and signs of these pathologies have been described elsewhere (Grof, 1985; Grof & Grof, 1992, 1995; Washburn, 1999; Wilber, 1993). While our experimental Dante-like guinea pig keeps climbing along the path, from Hell through Purgatory towards Paradise (the necessary trip), high feelings of altruism, utopia, delight, and beatitude may appear. The possibility of a deep sense of meaning and increasing interconnectedness keeps dawning. Short spells of deep-felt peace and silence at the E-crossroads take place and can be interpreted as a relief sent by some angelic or celestial blessings. It is in the middle of this "silence" that the unknown and the unknowable become manifest (Krishnamurti, 1994).

After the new E-passing over, any previous feelings of self-despising and despair, not to mention narcissism or egocentrism, are now turning into growing feelings of healthy self-esteem. A new kind of beyond-personal, transcendent love (*agape*) begins to emerge along with increasingly integrated growth and ascent (F to D or E to H zone). All self-importance is lost; the self begins to be able to recognize its ultimate union with the divine, an unavoidable vocational trend that, paradoxically, will eventually become the initiate's highest freedom of choice. Now, a new form of universal and suprarational reason, or re-rationalized transrationality, embraces all the previous partialities and blindnesses of both rationalism and irrationality. This shows the way to a new form of thought (metarational, vision-logic?) climbing to a new dimension of freedom, a higher step in the ladder of evolution towards the divine in humankind, which is only limited by cosmic necessity, as portrayed by Spinoza's "three ways of knowing" (Spinoza, 1951, 1976, pp. 195-200). In summary, it is not the old, confusing and challenging, "to be or not to be" that matters anymore, but that now the self IS through Not Being and IS NOT by trying to be (only) itself (cosmic adualism). Hints of a higher transpersonal destiny appear to insinuate a deep sense of meaning and purpose into the whole spiraling process, both ascending and descending, from personal to global.

### ✧ The End of a Spiraling Cycle and the Outburst of the Peak-Turning Point ✧

FURTHER ASCENT along the E to H branch of the spiral accumulates a great deal of "psychospiritual immunity," preventing further regressions and relapses. At this point in the chain, the healing process has practically won the battle, since now the abyss is so far behind that it is hardly recognizable anymore. One is "one" again. The time is favorable to do what the *I Ching* characterizes as "to cross the great waters," the moment to try to do great deeds and to overcome big problems. It is also the time for Ulysses to be back home and peacefully resting on the sand of the beaches surrounding Ithaca. The many pains and wounds inflicted during the long sea travel and the many difficulties overcome, now sunk in the deep waters of the sea of the darkest night/s, have healed. The new dawn is here. All the devilish tricks and multiple-choice tests presented to the self by the undifferentiated spirits, always ready to challenge our higher destinies, have been overcome. Now we can recognize that even the worst and most irrational difficulties were no more

than that: a test, an exam to pass or fail, where no trick questions were ever asked and no cheating was possible.

Finally, in our experimental laboratory and nonorthodox university of human consciousness, evolution, and transformation, the big family of self-actualizers and spiritual guinea pigs, from Prometheus to Faust to Ulysses to Dante, are welcomed back and given honors. At the same time, we ask our heroes, those who had the daring "to jump to the next stage of consciousness" (Wilber, 1995), for their forgiveness and compassion.

Once again, linear and cyclical time run into each other and disappear into timelessness at the D and H contact-points, both melting into a living—now divine, previously hellish—feeling of an eternal present. It is a new timeless time for the highest expressions of creativity, of "the wise and holy" (see *I Ching*, 1967, "The Creative," p. 79). Perennially, people of all times and ages, both Eastern and Western, have reached the conclusion that all this spiraling growth indicates that at the end of all endings and cycles, no matter how great the loss, a final G point comes alive. It is at this point that Ulysses recovers his motherland of the spirit. Now Dante reaches the highest circles of The Empyrean, where *eternity* "becomes that moment for which all times are the present," and Faust finds that "Woman Eternal" who "draws us on high" (Goethe, 1976, p. 308). Now, all and everything are no more than One, and the Good, the True, and the Beautiful merge into One Single Essence. It is the end of all things and at the same time the beginning of all things: all is light, harmony, peace, synchronicity, elective affinity, here and now. However, since we humans cannot express ourselves without "talking about time," we can only dream of the placeless place and the timeless time where the minds and spirits of Plato, Christ, Buddha, and Lao-Tzu abide.

### ✧ A Note ✧

THE OVERWHELMING amount of literature about peak, mystical and/or nucleo-transcendental experiences, as well as about the high-plateau experience (transpersonal maturity) and Maslow's post-mortem life (Cleary & Shapiro, 1995), is too great to include in the scope of this paper. After the D-peak turning point, perhaps a new cycle is beginning and a new descending branch (line D to E) is already working around us; however, any new spiral will always move at a higher and more developed level than the previous one. In any case, metanoia has occurred; a New Life too. And the

Omega point is always waiting—always-present, always-there, always-here, always-transpersonal, always-timeless, always-eternal; who knows if, somehow, personal too.

### ✧ The CCPC Theory ✧

THE APPROACH outlined here aims at being integral in trying to investigate and define the hidden and subtle whats, whys, and hows of any “underlying” process in order to suggest a general and integral theory of crisis, conflict, and evolution. In previous publications, I tentatively named it: “The Crossroads-Crossfire-Turning Point-Theory of Conflict” (CCPC) or “Crisis Irruption Theory” (Harguindey, 1998, ch. 14). The goal is to try to understand, to the maximum possible depth, the entire living process—from the personal to the universal—paying attention to the cosmic cycles and the parallelisms existing between microcosm and macrocosm, following the dictum “as above, so below.” The bulk of our attention is directed to the two opposite and main turning points, the lowest and the highest (C and D points). It is too early to predict if these all-encompassing attempts and considerations will help us to better understand and to prepare future strategies to heal human evil (Harguindey 1998, ch. 7; Peck, 1983). Nor is it possible at this time to claim that new preventive measures can be activated in order to avoid the most negative effects of the onset of deep psychospiritual crisis, personal and sociopolitical. Finally, the “A interval” (E to N zone) will separate consecutive transitional stages, indicating different eras, paradigms, or even personal “lives.”

An integral approach of this kind would have to be able to achieve an early identification of the dynamics leading to both the deepest crises and the highest ecstasies. This is of paramount importance in order to be useful to afford help through the descending path, to bypass the lowest points of the conflict, and to speed up the healing resolution. Hopefully, this in-depth cyclical approach can also provide an opportunity to reach out towards a better understanding of the “presence” of the past, making sense of chaos, tragedy, and senselessness; and lending meaning to what was previously considered either to be simple “chance,” undeserved happiness, or absurdity and tragedy. Another learning aftermath would be to open new ways to the understanding of the implicated potential of the destiny-inducing multifactorial contexts involved in the whole CCPC process (the presence of the future). This implies the

integration of the whole path of disintegration-death-reintegration and its effects in predetermining the different futures opened up by the highest and lowest turning points. This global attempt may help to lead consciousness higher and higher into new and unpredictable contexts and openings at many different levels: personal, transpersonal, spiritual, evolutionary, world-centric, and so on.

The pit and/or peak turning points separate different transitional stages in the life of the individual. The new learning should be able to help during all these stages, from the overcoming of the Oedipal complex to the first adult crisis, and from the ego-pathologies of adulthood, like the adult-narcissistic crisis, to the feelings of worthlessness and meaninglessness in old age, to preterminal physical situations during the final transition stage in linear time (Washburn, 1999).

To be ahead of time is necessary in order to warn others about the dangers lying ahead, from personal to spiritual to sociopolitical. This kind of wisdom can only be learned through previous deep experiential processes, which have always allowed a few cases of “cutting edge consciousness” to achieve an intimate and nondual learning of the general dynamics of “big crisis and conflict” (psychospiritual preventive medicine) (Weil, 1997).

### ✧ A Good Perspective Needs Distance ✧

THE MOST important aspects appear after personal consciousness is able to set itself at a certain distance from the entire, sometimes *Dantesque*, expedition to the predynamics leading to an “oncoming earthquake.” However, there is no chance to succeed in such an attempt to achieve perspective before (1) breaking through the core of the crisis, and (2) overcoming the aftereffects of climbing the ascending path. In the aftermath of this learning experience, the new sensitivity acquired may make it possible to predict some of the presence and direction of the future. If this could be proven scientifically, human beings would find themselves at a vantage point enabling them to prevent some of the destructive consequences of the shaking created by the epicenter of a psychic quake: a process that until the last moment hides its secrets within the entrails of the earth while getting ready to destroy the entire building of life, both in the individual and in society. This is exactly what happened in the etiopathogenesis of that almost incurable disease that was the Nazi movement presided over (since the Devil knows when) by Hitler’s *pre/trans fallacy and*

*pseudologia phantastica* (Harguindey, 1998, p. 199; Jung, 1989, p. 59; Wilber, 1999, p. 10).

At this point it is difficult to know if such prophetic foretelling of oncoming crisis and conflict will eventually prove to be reproducible enough to obtain scientific credibility. The main difficulty arises from the multiple factors and conditions intermingled in the predynamics of severe conflicts, as well as the underground subtlety, subconsciousness, and complexity of the living precontexts leading to the onset of deep crisis and/or dark night of the soul. Right now, any attempt to foresee and integrate all the multifactorial conditioning that is about to reach a “critical mass effect” appears to be an impossible task. The main issue is how to therapeutically intercept, through an “implosion,” the sparkling fire that can prevent the sudden explosion of an uncontrollable psychic quake, such as what happens in a spiritual emergency. Examples of unexpected backgrounds leading to the irruption of crisis can be found in the effects induced by the sudden death of a beloved person, a strong emotional upheaval, the irruption of a psychotic episode, and the diagnosis of a deadly disease.

An integral approach also requires broadening the concept of how much empiricism can embrace. If it can be extended from its present-day straitjacketing conditions, an outreaching high jump leap of global consciousness could radically transform the present interparadigmatic state of human affairs and evolution. What is already beyond doubt is that any attribute of absolutism and the validity of the rationalistic-modern-scientific-reductionistic-“Popperian” approach (lines L and M) is well over. Its accompanying concept of the unilateral aspect of the arrow of linear time, past to present to future (*chronos*), has already been buried by the end of the descending path of the spiral by the overcoming of the bottom of the crisis and also by the reproducible features and consequences of nucleo-transcendental experiences. At both the C and H points, the absolutism of linear time and rationalistic thinking (and modernism together with its rational madness) has disappeared as the only valid means of understanding. Furthermore, the ascending spiral (teleological? a metaphoric DNA helicoid of the spirit?) overcomes the final closing up of a cyclic-mythic time whose other absolutism of “the power of the will” (versus the always open Taoist *wu-wei*) is the main characteristic of any prepersonal to Freudian-Marxist to fascist-totalitarian philosophy. In either case, all-linear or all-cyclical, such old and obsolete conceptions of life only leave fear, personal and/or group narcissism, egocentrism, and a will to power as the

ultimate possible “meaning” for human life and evolution—a very poor bet indeed.

Finally, it should be realized that myths and symbols are not good or bad in themselves, since they have been essential in both backing up the highest spiritual and scientific achievements of humankind, and the lowest, as in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. We make them “good” if we take them as mediators for growth, meaning, and learning experience (the hermeneutic approach). We make them “bad” if we give them an absolute deterministic value of what the external world should be and how it should be conformed. So, the “touch and go” D and H turning points, as well as the more objective E points, may reflect intersections (the Christian cross? Buddhist illumination?) of both kinds of time, cyclical and linear, at certain points. This suggests (and proves?) an ascending openness of the myth of the eternal return (Eliade, 1994) (points I to G, or line N, holonomic growth). Another beneficial “side-effect” of this “both-ways-now” model could be the possibility of aiming at an integration of the ladder structural model of Wilber (1990, 1999) and the spiral model proposed by Washburn (1990, 1999), and, perhaps, too, Eastern and Western approaches to both temporal and transcendental affairs. At the same time, the place and respective roles of the psychoanalytic method and transpersonal-integral psychology could be further elucidated (Washburn, 1999; Wilber, 1993). The aim here is to arrive at a fully integrated mystic-unitive psychology and psychospirituality that can serve as the basis for a necessary integral, personal, and global transformation.

### ♣ Predestinies, Fate, Destiny, Free Choice, Vocation, and Superior Destiny. Is it About Time to Understand Time? ♣

A FEW QUESTIONS arise. Will humans ever be able to create their own synchronicity situations? Can humans become forgers of their own highest possible destiny beyond the limits of personal karma? Can a superior kind of understanding help both individuals and humankind as a whole to climb through more healthy ways the always-steep ladder of life and evolution? Will the transpersonal work involved ever have any impact in improving solidarity and compassion at a global level, and so “change the world,” or will the transpersonal movement end up being just a gang of utopian and idealistic “crazies” uselessly screaming in the wilderness of a “madding crowd,” like twentieth-century reborn imitators of

John the Baptist? A new ascending and quantum leap has become a must, from individual to sociopolitical realms. Such a leap may be a most difficult task, but is possible and necessary, requiring us to look at life and the world using Spinoza's *sub specie aeternitatis* concept (Spinoza, 1976, p. 157). This position represents a humble and timeless ivory watchtower that lives in the future no less than in the present and the past, the three tenses now melting into one and so becoming that *relativistic illusion* that Einstein (1954) applied to linear time. No wonder the religious fervor that the well-known physicist felt towards the *pan-en-theistic* (not pantheistic) and nondual concepts of the advaita vedantist-like Spinoza (1976, introduction). In the same vein, the words of Lao Tzu, "The past and the future follow each other," suggests a living presence of the past in the present as well as in the future. This kind of thinking is also conveyed by Goethe's two declarations: "What I possess I see it as from the distance, and what has passed, to me becomes existence" (Goethe, 1976, dedication of "Faust"), and "My love is with the ones who work for eternity" (Goethe, 1982). This involved, and always evolving, nondualism, both a transcendental and at the same time immanent form of religiosity and spirituality, has also been explored in great depth by Panikkar (1993, 1998).

A true all-embracing perspective should improve our learning about the relationships between good and evil and all their unfolding dynamics, as well as the relationships among fate, destiny, and free will (Harguindey, 1998, ch. 7; Peck, 1983). In this vein, the dynamics of the descending path (branch J to B) reduce the number of predestinations, which are constricted to a maximum degree at the pit of the crisis (fate). On the other hand, the dynamics of the ascending pathway allow once again for the concept of a progressive and higher degree of freedom to emerge (free will). Finally, the highest peak experience, which will complete an entire cycle, will bring into the soul the sense of a transpersonal role (higher mission, vocation or transpersonal destiny).

According to Carl Jung, vocation is a call from which no one can escape and which at the same time indicates the way to achieve our highest degree of freedom, meaning, and goodness. This confirms that the most intimate essence of human beings is of a spiritual nature (Panikkar, 1993). A superior destiny so becomes what Gandhi referred to as "the only freedom that is worth fighting for." Abraham Maslow believed that at the level of the highest metamotivations a kind of Spinozistic transcendence of the dichotomy between free will and fate ensues.

At that spiritual crossroads, one embraces, happily and freely, all one's circumstances and limitations, one's own destiny—not with a sense of renunciation, but with love and enthusiasm (*eupsychia*). Maslow (1982) also stressed that the deeper the degree of discernment, the higher the tuning between free will and determinism (p. 400). Further applications of the crossroads-crossfire-turning point-conflict theory (CCPC) could be found by using both the C and H (or D) transition zones as "the starting areas of deep consciousness" to study the relationships between evolution and involution. Here is when and where things really turn around at all levels of understanding, from the personal to the historical and sociopolitical areas (Harguindey, 1998, p. 648; Wilber, 1995). Great efforts have to be made to dig into the complex contexts which may finally sink and choke the spirit in an unredeemable fate or determine the opening of a new way towards true realization, a higher creative destiny and, hopefully, final deliverance and salvation. In the same vein, a great deal of experiential evidence seems to indicate that mystical experiences (D point) have enough in common so that it can be said that *all are one*. The other end (C point) may also allow us to think that all conflicts are one. If this were so, the possibility arises of preliminarily conceiving the development of *a general theory of destructiveness* and *a general theory of human creativity*. Finally, the insight provided by a high contemplative status can have direct access to the necessary energy level for a qualitative change to become fully activated, thus making metanoic transformation possible (John of the Cross, 1996; Panikkar, 1999, p. 140; Wilber, 1986).

Personal and global evolution and, in many cases, final destiny, seem to be strongly conditioned but not fully and/or rigidly predetermined (predestinies) by very few "specific events." Many daily small turning points continuously penetrate within the temporal space and existence of the individual in apparently chance-like and subtle ways. Rarely, if ever, do these events manifest their strength as forgers of personal evolution. Nor at the time of their initial onset are they fully conscious and freely chosen. However, most simple and innocent decisions or behaviors frequently hide within themselves a strong predeterministic potential for the future (Lao Tzu, 1994, pp. 156-157, 159). Subtle and unnoticed acts can, even suddenly, become points of no-return and in so doing forge posterior junctions, bifurcations, and new and unexpected conformations of the tree of life. When interpreted from within the CCPC time/timelessness context,

such “destiny-locking” features carry an enormous potential—enough to strictly predetermine all future fate, personal or sociohistorical, once their fire has been ignited.

Thus, any previous and underlying process that ends up in the activation of a CCPC dynamic can vary from being fully unconscious to subconscious to fully conscious (but denied). A myriad of small conditioning factors may create integral propitiatory fields that conform the range, mobility, level of consciousness, freedom of choice, and final destiny of a particular situation. Here it is apropos to recall the words of Lao Tzu when he specifically addresses the obscure problem of the intricate relationships between fate, free will, and destiny: “The beginnings of fortune are subtle, the origins of disgrace confusing. The factors determining fortune and disgrace are subtle to the point that they can not be foretold. Wise men see their beginnings and their ends” (Lao Tzu, 1994). Finally, from a highly developed psychological and spiritual perspective, the tragic destinies of many universal characters in world classical literature (e.g., Werther, Karamazov, Prince Myshkin, Anna Karenina, most of the main characters in Shakespeare’s tragedies) teach us something not otherwise quite evident: that human fate is a direct or indirect consequence of human beings’ own, conscious or unconscious, “frames of mind” and deeds (Harguindey, 1998, ch. 14).

Both universal and psychospiritual laws have to be the same for all human beings, whether through one or a thousand lifetimes. Then, personal responsibility becomes the main and ultimate factor in human personal/transpersonal destiny. This philosophy cannot be thought of as only rational, of course. However, even the most enlightened being still falls short of finding a complete explanation of facts such as childhood suffering and death in historical time (Frankl, 1979), for example, from Auschwitz to infants dramatically rescued (or not rescued) after being buried alive for many days under the 1999 Turkish earthquake. The “terror of history” of Mircea Eliade (1994) is still awaiting a final answer that can justify everything to the rational eye. In any case, those subtle destiny-locking decisions may indicate the existence of some kind of “mathematics of the spirit” working behind the world of senses and the empirical world. The questions are always around, always playing “hide and seek,” always asking us to interpret all exteriors from all interiors, and vice versa, stimulating us to make a leap ahead as in a Zen koan. Perhaps they are attempting to help us to transcend all outer appearances, pushing us towards an integral hermeneutic approach to

everything, that moment to moment is asking us not “*What is this?*” not even, “*How did it happen?*” but “*What is the meaning of it all?*”

### ♣ The Death-Life Miracle and the “Cosmic Necessity” Concept in Evolution ♣

IT WAS deemed worthwhile to pay close attention to those critical turning points in the destiny of some of the most universal, as well as unhealthy, tragic and/or conflictive characters of classical world literature. An intuitive and empathic understanding of the descending dynamics of their fates allows us to foresee at one synthetic glance many of the characteristics of subtle and subconscious (pre)determining processes (the *meaning* of the past). The insight provided by the CCPC approach enables us to even re-rationalize, and so get to understand, what initially appeared as absolutely sick and irrational.

Many times, a predeterministic situation that carries a high degree of enfolded and subliminal destructive energy can turn, almost instantaneously, into a highly creative and constructive situation, perhaps mimicking episodes of manic-depressive psychosis, such as in *The Karamazov Brothers* or *Anna Karenina*. This apparent mixing of C and D points, pit and peak, may implicate the concept of the “natural miracle” of Taoism, undermining linear causality as the only valid morphogenetic or neomorphogenetic principle (Jung, 1967, 1976 [ch. 14], 1987; Peat, 1988). The manifested energy of the new transformed and transforming momentum (metanoia) may even suggest a complete breach of the continuity of linear time between a “before” and an “after” the crisis. This “Abraxas time/timelessness” is a death-life situation, however supralogical and transpersonal; a qualitative and nonlinear transition in between different levels of consciousness. This situation implies both a “presence of the past” and a “presence of the future” within the predeterministic possibilities opened by the different emergent situations (Harguindey, 1998, p. 613; Sheldrake, 1990b). Thus, the final breakthrough of a new conformation of reality brings about the external materialization of a subliminal propitiatory pattern that until a certain point in time had been kept hidden in its own archetypal matrix. This is what orthodox and academic medicine knows as “idiopathic,” that is, unknown.

Everything looks completely new and virginal when seen from a transformed, higher and more integral perspective, the stage of re-rational and/

or transrational understanding (synthetic, vision-logic, quintessential?). This allows us to think about the past as “it all had to be that way” because of some inner necessity of the entire process (predestiny, fate, personal destiny, free will, superior/transpersonal destiny, even ignorance). However, approaching the conformation of the whole range of reality from the CCPC theory and the Abraxas time/timelessness moments allows us to “stop” time in order to observe and live past, present, and future melting into one single and timeless thing, like a premortem panoramic experience. This situation reopens the new relativistic and transpersonal *sub specie aeternitatis* perspective and places the spiritual mind in a position to predict the propitiatory probabilities of the three tenses. This is similar to the Taoist approach to the relative and cycling aspects of time as summarized in Lao-Tzu’s (1994) words: “The past and the future follow each other.” This thought appears to express a similar lesson to Einstein’s dictum: “For us, physics theorists, past, present and future are no more than an illusion, however a stubborn one” (Einstein, 1954).

The entire CCPC approach may lead to further penetrative insight into what we have tentatively called, as a “parataoist” and “parakarmic” concept, *the mathematics of the spirit*. This concept implies the necessity of subliminal mass-effect induced sudden changes, for better or for worse, as they are widely and deeply considered in the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*. This concept is similar, or perhaps even identical, to the Spinozist proposal that things take place out of their own inner and cosmic necessity (Spinoza, 1976, pp. 163, 168, 198). In this, I join Wilber in the historical rehabilitation of the panentheistic (not pantheistic or atheistic), persecuted by prepersonal fundamentalism, holy and misunderstood, transpersonal Spinoza (Wilber, 1995, pp. 611-612).

✦ **Some Conclusions About Human Life and the Limits of Consciousness: Life in an Experimental Test Tube and Under the Microscope of a Spiritual Laboratory. Closedness and Openness of the Myth of the Eternal Return** ✦

ONCE THE wheel of the Myth of Eternal Return has turned, further insight and hindsight are stimulated. This may allow us to know well in advance where, when, and how a new physical, psychological,

psychosomatic, or spiritual earthquake is bound to take place, creating despair and leading into chaos (Grof & Grof, 1995). Some authors and philosophers think that historical features depend upon cosmic cycles in nature and thus can become potentially intelligible and predictable (Eliade, 1994, p. 134; *I Ching*, 1967). The critical turning points are often preceded by “deep foretelling presages” (Tolstoi, 1990). They finally become outwardly manifest when the accumulation of multifactorial *quantitative* changes in protoenergy bring a brisk *qualitative* change in external (objective) and/or internal (subjective) realities, bringing about disassociation and chaos. This could be compared to a change in nuclear structure, inducing ascending or descending energetic changes in psychospiritual “orbitals.” Such changes, even prestructural, finally induce a “consciousness mass effect.” Those turning points can also be observed, experienced, and approached as phenomena of synchronicity, instantly (transtemporally?) modifying everything up to the point that, generally only a posteriori, we are able to sharply pinpoint and identify as a “before” and an “after” those singularities (metanoia). The D and C points appear to an outside and not too sensitive observer as two separated and opposite kinds of reality, each one of a very different nature which can somehow, even miraculously, melt into one. On the other side, the inside and dualistic observer realizes that both sides are part of one and the same coin of a single and incommensurable reality, the “Here and Now miracle.” Finally, an all-encompassing and integral perspective may even foretell the new possibilities of the oncoming future and/or alternative futures, and even alternative pasts, since neither one is written. It can help to forecast the potentials of a predetermined context by the “energetic momentum” of the stage where a certain dynamic situation is moving or becoming activated (the “presence” of the future). In this way, the CCPC approach might lead to deepening insight and knowledge of the meaning of linear and cyclic time, their dynamic relationships and beneficial and/or deleterious potentials, as well as to the “prescientific” and “parareligious” knowledge of the deterministic capacities of their intersections. In any case, when the crisis touches the bottom (pit experience) the only hope is that “worsening of the pain and evil precipitates final rescue and deliverance” (Eliade, 1994, p. 137).

The overlapping and crossing of both kinds of time builds up a psychospiritual cross sparkling a

new light at a crossroads at either the D, E, or C points. The intersection of linear and cyclical time in any of those limits ignites a timeless condition variously denoted as Christ-consciousness, true enlightenment, or Buddha-nature, manifesting the liveliness of Tao and emerging into a new reality and ascension (line F, *metacosmesis*, also called *paradoxical regeneration* by Eliade [1994]). The areas surrounding the blindness of the C points (*kali yuga*) are marked by violence, destruction, historical suffering, cataclysms, and so on. However, they do not represent a meaningless death-end but are forerunner signs and announcing presages of deeper and further transitions, intrapersonal to global, even from one cosmic “age or eon” to another (Eliade, 1994; Panikkar, 1996, 1998). The direct access to a D or H point reveals and actualizes peak experiences, conveying the potential of giving birth to entire new worlds and to the emergence of new paradigms, from scientific to social to psychospiritual. Cyclic time is not of a self-contained, closed nature, but finally opens, allowing interparadigmatic ascent (double line A) and integral, holonomic growth (line N). The final energetic jump between two consecutive E points settles the openness of a cycle and allows ascending-holonomic evolution, as well as “meaning” (interparadigmatic ascent). The entire process restructures itself as a metaphoric *DNA helicoid of the spirit*, like a directing mandala of spiritual evolution and historical development.

It is even possible that a dynamic and fully integrated approach to wholeness and self-healing is the main, or perhaps the only, mechanism that humanity has at its disposal to overcome the “terror of history.” This perspective also suggests the possibility that human life is somehow opened at both ends of the spectrum to a somehow living void both below and above the limits marked by the L and N lines and along the line I to G. Thus, this model allows us to conceive that the whole of life, even personal life, should be interpreted from a transhistorical and transpersonal perspective (Eliade, 1994, ch. 3). This demands, however, that we witness the whole process of life from a detached and *sub specie aeternitatis* outlook, while it helps us to better understand Spinoza’s dictum: *The more we understand particular things, the more we understand God* (Spinoza, 1976, p. 152)—a sentence of hope, perhaps, even for empirical scientism.

The different philosophies about the final openness or closedness of the Myth of the Eternal Return also determine not only our concept of

ourselves, and what reality is, but also define the opposite political agendas, stage of consciousness, even the ultimate meaning of human life. It also places in very different positions the role of humankind in cosmic ontology, evolution, and history, as well as sending in one or another direction the ultimate essence of human nature, free will, and destiny. Philosophical approaches defending the closedness of the Myth only leave us with an archaic, senseless, and meaningless repetition of the same situations over and over again. They condemn humankind to be the helpless subject of the incurable vicious circle of the terror of history, forever sunk in mythic-racial, collective-prepersonal, and malignant narcissism, as well as a Nietzschean will to power. These would become the only remaining crutches left to help humankind in a sad and meaningless pilgrimage through life and history. This closed conception of Myth can only lead into the archetypal context and cosmogony behind any totalitarianism, either the “all profane” or the diverse fundamentalisms of the “all sacred,” sharp descendents or exclusive ascenders in Wilber’s terminology (Wilber, 1995, ch. 9), Marxism to Fascism. However, a more holistic and better understanding and acceptance of the Myth as a “self-transcending phenomenon” contributes to the alleviation, if not to the total elimination, of the terror of history. Finally, through this latter conception of the Myth it is also possible to overcome the limitations of “personal-linear” time—in other words, to have a chance to achieve final liberation, deliverance, and salvation for all.

In summary, the present state of affairs in the world makes it likely that we are approaching a new metasynthesis and megasynthesis in the form of an integral new theory of everything, a further digging into universal interrelationships and connections. The CCPC approach is likely to contain the potential to help human beings realize that all kinds of different conflicts may have one and only one *final common pathway* and dynamism, however expressed through a multiplicity of external manifestations (an *all is one*). This nondual and parataoist concept leads us to consider a very few but very broad, general and nonspecific universal laws archetypically behind any morphogenetic or propitiatory field. These laws predetermine all possible outer manifestations, good and evil, in the different disciplines of science and knowledge, as well as their innermost nature and relationships (Buber, 1952; Harguindey, 1998; Peck, 1983; Tada, 1996; Wilber, 1998). Next, the

CCPC approach may contribute to reaching a better understanding and interpretation of the degrees of dualistic and/or nondual relationships between the immanent and transcendental aspects of human nature and life (Panikkar, 1993, 1998). Finally, it may contribute penetrating further into understanding the origins and nature of naked, that is, without any antecedents, outbursts of insight, true creativity, and serendipity, as well as the phenomena of synchronicity.

☞ **The Spiraling Cycles Are Always Open, So New Questions and Answers Arise. Some Questions Die While New Ones Are Always Born. Time and Eternity** ☞

THE FIRST question arising from the CCPC theory would be: Can this utterly synthetic approach pave the way towards a general and quintessential approach to crisis and conflict and help us to improve our understanding of the ultimate nature and range of reality? The second query would be: Can the CCPC “both sides now” theory help to broaden our concept of “empiricism” and deeper epistemology? And thirdly, can this concept help to focus change and crisis resolution in fields ranging from the personal to the scientific and to the social and political realms?

Another possibility that dwells within the CCPC context comes from a serendipity-mediated widening of Maslow’s idea of using as “psychological human guinea pigs” the highest achievers and self-actualizers in order to study the most highly creative beings of humankind (“the creators”) (Maslow, 1968). Turning this idea “upside down” now, I wonder if it would be of practical importance to try exactly the opposite approach. This would require taking as “guinea pigs” (or, simply, research pigs from Orwell’s animal farm) the most deprived and sickest characters of both the real world and literary fiction, from Hitler and the Nazis to Lady Macbeth and the Karamazov brothers. Evil minds would so acquire a constructive, however involuntary mission, in an attempt to understand in a systematic manner the general characteristics, patterns of consciousness (de)formation, and dynamics of “the destroyers,” the opposite end of the spectrum of the self-actualizers. The main goal of this enterprise would be to cure human evil and malignant narcissism (Peck, 1983) and replace them with empathy and compassion. In any case, an integral and multidisciplinary hermeneutic field of study should be created.

☞ **A Light at the End of the Tunnel? The G Point** ☞

SINCE CYCLICAL time is not a system that closes up on itself, but jumps to the next stage at the completion of its critical turning points, the entire pattern, with all its ups and downs, seems to move in an anti-entropy ascending pattern (see Figure 1). This is likely to lead (teleological?) evolution from a prepersonal-cyclical phase (point I), through a personal-linear phase towards a transpersonal Eden (point G), a broad “pointless” point, infinitesimal to infinite, where linear and cyclical time finally become one, an instant/eternal present. This philosophy, mainly defended by Teilhard de Chardin (1965, 1989) and Mircea Eliade (1994), also alluded to in religious texts (Cor. 15: 28), eventually advances humankind towards an Omega point, a new world, an enantiodromia, a transhuman condition, and so forth. At the unchanging G-stage, the historical and linear concept of time, and history itself, as we know it, may come to an end. Suffering, and death itself, loses all significance at this point. It is simply not “necessary” anymore since it becomes meaningless. In a way, it becomes nonexistent.

The sensitivity acquired through the entire experiential process brings about a clarification of faith which is not dualistic or blind anymore. Senseless, interparadigmatic stagnation is left well behind. The time spent in the darkness of the cave now seems unreal, even nonexistent, a dream, a dreamless nightmare, at most. The deep waters of the sea of the unconscious come up to the surface and become conscious. The nondual researcher, however, will still have to face many problems of communication with the outside world—still dwelling in the haughty ego of modernity, immersed in a submarine full of pride and ignorant materialism. Such a world, each day less content with itself, is now adrift at its own interparadigmatic stage of evolution and superficial, unconscious consciousness. So a “breach of planes” will persist until “cosmic necessity” arises. Perhaps one of the missions of the transpersonal movement is first to wake it up, then to bring it back and actualize it from both the past and the future.

Now decisions can be made according to the new learned faith, enlightenment, and understanding. The *Great Crisis* has been definitely overcome. Now we fully realize—what a “eureka!” feeling—why “crisis” also means “opportunity to grow.” A high-level approach, as the recently named *sacred hermeneutics*

(Panikkar, 1999) is finally welcome. Perhaps it is to each of these new pioneers and nondual researchers, that Goethe, the lyrist, dedicated these words of encouragement, praise, and hope:

*Spacious world, capacious life,  
Years with honest effort rife,  
Tireless searching, firmly founded,  
Never ended, often rounded.  
Old traditions well respected,  
Innovations not rejected,  
Noble aim, with cheer professed:  
Well, we're sure that we've progressed.*  
(Zeydel, 1955, p. 170)

Now some humans live again in linear time, also in cyclical time, and in its eternal spirit in the intersection of both. There, here, forming a cross, its transtemporal and transpersonal time now allows such humans to perceive from their very center, endlessly, a subtle fragrance that whispers to them day and night, night and day, that at last there is nothing to worry about because there is something within and/or about and/or beyond the human condition that is timeless and eternal.

### Notes

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**Salvador Harguindey**, M.D., Ph.D., graduated at age 22 from the University of Navarre, Spain, with his medical degree, and later received his Ph.D. in cancer research (etiopathogenesis, clinical and chemical) from the University of the Basque Country. He trained in endocrinology and clinical oncology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and at Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo, New York, for a total of twelve years. Harguindey has authored more than 100 scientific publications, many on a new and integral approach to the understanding of cancer diseases based upon hydrogen ion dynamics, from etiopathogenesis to treatment. He is a member of the European Society for Medical Oncology and the Association of Transpersonal Psychology, and he has given presentations at a variety of international conferences. Harguindey has published two philosophical-psychospiritual novels, *The Lives of Daniel and George* and *The Cradle of Don Quixote*, and a recent 715-page transpersonal treatise, *A New Vision on Life and Politics*—all in Spanish. His next transpersonal novel, *The Flight from Peter Pan to Christ: The Great Movie of Life*, will be published early next year. His main interests are problem-solving of interethnic and nationalistic conflicts, the numinous aspects of scientific creativity, the relationship between science and spirituality, literary theory, and “final common pathways” approaches to treatment of malignant diseases. Harguindey is a licensed private pilot in both the USA and Spain.

*Author's address:* c/. Postas 13-3° izq., 01004  
Vitoria, Spain.

E-mail: sharguindey@jet.es