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**PERSONALITY AND ITS IDEAL IN K. DĄBROWSKI'S  
THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION:  
A PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION**

This essay will sketch, principally in expository rather than in critical manner, the notions of personality and personality ideal as delineated in the Theory of Positive Disintegration, henceforth simply called the Theory. These notions will be compared, largely on a supportive basis, to those held by a number of philosophers and psychologists.

At the outset it should be noted that the Theory claims to provide a general purview of personality evolution and involution. The Theory forms a distinct and cohesive conceptual system embracing measureable developmental parameters and identifiable paradigms<sup>1</sup>. The view of personality presented by the Theory rests upon a descriptive-normative investigation: a correlation of mental dynamisms allied to axiological psychology or, more precisely, to anthropological psychology<sup>2</sup>.

Let us now consider the notion of personality. Kazimierz Dąbrowski, the founder and leading exponent of the Theory, frequently uses the terms ego, person, and self interchangeably. He maintains that the "concept of self (ego) is of a metaphysical nature."<sup>3</sup> Metaphysics can be described as that branch of philosophy which considers the nature of being, its origin, and ultimate principles and structures. Two pivotal considerations of metaphysics are essence and existence and it is by means of these entities that I will begin the analysis of personality.

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<sup>1</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Piechowski, Michael M: *Theory of Levels of Emotional Development: Multilevelness and Positive Disintegration*. Oceanside, New York. Dabor Science Publications, 1977. Vol. I, pp. 4—5.

<sup>2</sup> Von Kaam, Adrian: *Existential Foundations of Psychology*. Garden City, New York. Image Books, 1969, p. 374. Van Kaam defines anthropological psychology as a "scientific-theoretical movement within psychology that integrates empirical, clinical, and theoretical psychologies with an open theory of personality that serves as a comprehensive frame of reference for all the significant theories and data in the field." The Theory also is partially what Van Kaam calls an existential humanistic psychology, since it operates in light of the existential image of man. It is partially such because, as noted, the Theory has an existentio-essentialistic view of man. Finally the Theory also can be classified as an existential anthropological psychology. In Van Kaam's terms this is a psychology that roots its "comprehensive frame of reference in the existential image of man." Again the Theory only partially qualifies for this psychology because of its essentialism.

<sup>3</sup>Dąbrowski, Kazimierz: *Personality-shaping Through Positive Disintegration*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1967. p. 4.

For many philosophers essence signifies *what* a thing, or specific entity is. Existence on the other hand denotes not what a thing is but that it *is*. As French philosopher Etienne Gilson has remarked, the essence of existence is not to be an essence. Consequently essence and existence comprise two absolutely fundamental elements of being or reality. Now the Theory states that a person has two essences: one is termed "individual" essence; the other, "common" (universal or social) essence. Individual essence bespeaks the central and immutable traits of the person whereas common essence refers to those characteristics relative to our existence with others, which existence is, according to the Theory, an interaction of essences. The deployment of this terminology is not unqualifiedly felicitous because it can generate unwarranted and misleading conceptions.

It might be more clear and accurate to maintain that the person has but one essence which can be considered in two ways. First, essence can be viewed as the self with respect to itself and its constitutives; and second, it can be viewed as the self with respect to others. In so describing essence one avoids the linguistic and conceptual problem of predicating a universal nature or essence of all persons regarding qualities which actually specify a particular individual essence. For example, in the Theory empathy is said to pertain to universal essence but in fact it modifies only a given individual essence although empathy is a quality whose actualization is an attitude towards others rather than towards oneself. Moreover employing the words individual and common in the manner in which the Theory does can create another perhaps more serious confusion the substance of which is this: persons have individual essences which signify their unique and ontic assemblage of traits. Persons also have common and ontological essences which they share as members of the same human species. This common essence should not be used to indicate an entity separate from the individual persons who comprise this species as if individual persons shared one and the same common essence.

Occasionally philosophers understand common essence to refer to monism which in this case would be a metaphysical monism of persons. As such, individual persons would form, it is argued, part of an underlying and more real universal or common self or person. However, it is precisely this obliteration of the reality of individual persons which the Theory emphatically repudiates, although the terminology employed might suggest otherwise. The differentiation and individualization of persons according to the Theory is not an illusion or metaphysical aberration. Whatever commonality is predicable of individuated persons remains predicable of their functions not their structures. Individual persons, as opposed to corporate persons, are separate and not universal entities.

What is referred to as the principle of individuation by philosophers incorporates the notion of the metaphysical division of a plurality of persons such that the unity of an individual person is a unity of intrinsic indivision. Moreover this indivision founds the basis for the position that all qualities and processes of the person are predicated of the person as a totality. When it is said, for example, this individual thinks or

walks, it is not the mind which thinks or the body which walks but the person who thinks and walks as a unit. This intrinsic indivision (and indivisibility) is the correlative of the individual person's division, or separateness, from all other individuals.<sup>4</sup> However, it is precisely this metaphysical division and separation as well as the peculiar kind of indivision found only in persons which are the bases for the communication among persons and their ability to establish communities. There can be no such communication or communion unless persons were indivisions with respect to themselves and divisions apropos others. There is no unity, strictly speaking, among persons but only unions. The reality of intersubjectivity presupposes this external division of persons and their individuation (this individuation should not be confused with the Jungian process of the same name which presupposes this metaphysical inner indivision and extrinsic division). By the term "common essence" the Theory does not intend to deny or even minimize the individuation of persons but for reasons stated above the terminology might be construed as implying such.

The Theory would agree with Gabriel Marcel's statement that personal existence implies co-existence or existence with others, but co-existence, as the word suggests, is not the termination of individual existence. In the Theory's nomenclature it would be alleged that one cannot realize his individual essence except by mediation of his common essence. Thus to quote Antoine de Saint-Exupery, a person is a network of interrelationships, but the Theory would add that the person to exist, and to exist in a plenum of such intersubjective relationships, must also have an individualizing essence by which he/she is distinctly oneself.

The Theory utilizes the distinction between essence and existence in yet another decisive fashion. Dąbrowski calls his Theory a kind of existentio-essentialism. Personal existence without essence, he maintains, is an empty concept (of course existence as such is not strictly amenable to conceptualization), which is to say, that without being delineated and demarcated by essence, existence is devoid of content.<sup>5</sup> The Theory fails to distinguish explicitly, however, essence as possible (not intrinsically contradictory) and as actuated; without the latter essences as mere possibilities are devoid of *real-ized* existence except in a purely mental manner.

Time does not permit a full scale venture into the Theory's understanding of a person as a blend of essence and existence. Some distinctions are crucial, however, to grasping these entities as they pertain to the Theory's notion of personality and its ideal. The couplet "existentio-essentialism" is preferred to "essentio-existentialism" for the following reasons: first,

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<sup>4</sup> Thus Thomas Aquinas defines the individual as undivided in itself but divided from all else. This indivision (and indivisibility) is to be regarded as structural and not functional in nature. As for the Theory, functional division via the disintegrative process is, of course, of the very essence.

<sup>5</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz: "On the Philosophy of Development through Positive Disintegration and Secondary Integration." *Dialectics and Humanism*, Nos. 3-4 pp. 131- 144, 1976.

because, as noted just previously, existence the Theory holds, lacks constitutives without essence. Essence is the specifying determinant with respect to existence. Secondly, it is crucial to the objectives of the Theory that it emphasize its distinctiveness, a great part of which is its adherence to a multilevel view of individuality and personality. Now a multilevel view of personality bespeaks a multi-essentiality, since human beings at different levels have in effect different individual essences. The person, in the process of development from lower to higher levels, experiences qualitative and essentializing transformations. Essence rather than existence explicates this pivotal dimension of the Theory and this is one reason the Theory appropriately labels itself an essentialism. Thirdly, essence has a history of being regarded as that which is substantial, permanent and profound whereas existence can be regarded as accidental, temporary, peripheral and even superficial.<sup>6</sup> Given this interpretation of existence and given the Theory's view of personality as containing immutable and unrepeatable core traits, it again is understandable why this Theory espouses an essentialism of personhood.

In passing, it is to be noted that some existentialist philosophers regard personhood in relation to person or personality as the relationship of the abstract and essential to the concrete and existential. Fourthly, the Theory's position that values, which form the nucleus of human consciousness, are objective, hierarchical and absolute, supports an axiological essentialism rather than what is called axiological relativism and situational ethics. Since some existentialists argue that all moral acts are existential, that is, their validity and meaning are dependent solely upon the unique situation, it is fairly easy to ascertain why the Theory proposes an essentialistic interpretation of personality. More specifically, the Theory contends that existentialism, in general, provides no hierarchy of values; hence, existentialism putatively recognizes no normative distinction of personality levels. A criminal psychopath and a moral paragon would in principle be essentially morally equal at every instant since their essences would have to be reconstituted with a new choice at every instant, a position defended by Jean-Paul Sartre.

The Theory does recognize that some existentialists like Søren Kierkegaard (generally considered a proximate ancestor or even founder of existentialism rather than an existentialist himself) have advocated a kind of multilevel view of values and personality. However, it is the quintessence of the Theory that it construes personality levels precisely by the wedding of axiology to science, the normatively prescriptive to the empirically descriptive. Few if any existentialists have approached personality and valuation in this manner. Furthermore, some existentialists have aligned value theory and practice to an *ex professo* atheism or theism. There is no reason to maintain that the Theory has its value and personality views conditioned

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<sup>6</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Kawczak, Andrew and Sochańska, Janina: *The Dynamics of Concepts*. London, Gryf. 1973. p. 129.

by any commitment to either or any such stance. The question of God does not appear to be intrinsically germane to value or personality differentiation for the Theory.

Fifthly, the Theory contends that philosophical existentialism itself has not clearly demarcated the differences between essence and existence with respect to those entities in general and with respect to their relation to the notion of the person in particular. The accuracy of this remark would necessitate another paper. Suffice it to say, however, that many existentialists do dispute these matters among themselves. Nonetheless, there seems to be a consensus among them on the primacy of the persons and existentialists have brought new meaning to this primacy. Existentialists moreover reject the tendency of science, or at least scientism, to conceptualize and to categorize persons who rightly enough find it objectionable to be classified as mere objects. Existentialists would, I think, universally sustain Gabriel Madinier's dictum that persons are always subjects and not objects and as such escape observation; likewise persons elude abstraction because they are not mere natures or pure essences.<sup>7</sup> In treating persons as objects, natures and essences rather than as unique existents, one does disservice to their status as very special instances of singularity. Finally, it should be added that the whole question of abstraction is a complex problem involving the question of the nature of universals. Correlatively the relations of essence to existence and of abstract science to concrete persons are most complex issues which cannot be discussed in this paper as such.

To the above consideration regarding essence and existence as pertinent to personality can be added the following distinctions. Sometimes existence is considered as the given, as facticity, whereas essence is viewed as self-transcendence (although most existentialists would argue the reverse). If this be the understanding then the Theory focuses upon a view of personality which stresses essence and self-transcendence or self-overcoming (Friedrich Nietzsche). However, Jean-Paul Sartre construes essence as facticity and it is through the person's freedom that he transcends his given essence.

Thus for Sartre existence precedes essence, which is to say, freedom is prior to the essence which a person creates by his choices. The Theory concurs with Sartre that a person has freedom (although Sartre would stipulate man *is* his freedom). In addition, the Theory would postulate a given essence, a kind of inherited inchoate self-unity contained in the developmental potential, all of which Sartre would deny, largely because of the extreme position he upholds regarding freedom. These then are some of the polemics inherent in the Theory's views on existence and

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<sup>7</sup> Madinier, Gabriel: *Conscience et amour: Essai sur le 'nous'*. Paris. Alcan. 1938. p. 7 as cited in Cowburn, John: *The Person and Love: Philosophy and Theology of Love*. Norwich, G. B. Fletcher. 1967. p. 19.

essence as they influence the view propounded regarding personality and why Dąbrowski's view of personality is an existential-essentialism.<sup>8</sup>

There is another metaphysical duality which partakes of the Theory's perspective on personality and that is the distinction between being and becoming. A brief analysis of these notions will attempt to elucidate the previous deliberations on essence and existence. It can be said that at the level of primary or negative integration, the stature of being is one of deficiency and impoverishment in terms of structural and functional complexification.<sup>9</sup> At the level of secondary or positive integration, the domain of personality, properly speaking, there is also being but here it exists by way of plenitude and abundance.

In between the integrative levels of being, there is the process of disintegration, that is, of becoming or (to resolve language into metaphysics) of coming to be, that is, coming to being either by evolution (secondary, positive being) or by involution (primary, negative being). The process of disintegration posits a fission and rupture in being. Disintegration includes the possibility of the person altering his own being by self-transcendence through freedom. Positive disintegration thus represents a triumph of becoming over low-level being. Negative disintegration and involution signify a triumph of being over becoming. Finally, secondary integration entails a victory of higher level being over becoming. More exactly being (structure) and becoming (function) have fused into a synergic superordinate. Becoming (change) at the level of secondary integration occurs only within the realm of secondary personality traits or as quantitative extensions of immutable being (changelessness). Construed thus the Theory represents a victory of being and essence over becoming and existence. There is no question then that the Theory stresses an essentialistic view of personality but it incorporates existential dimensions. It should also be noted that the Theory assigns a greater role to heredity than many North-American theories of personality do. Heredity can be regarded as related to environment as essence to existence, and its stress on heredity is another reason why the Theory is more essentialist than existentialist. Let us now examine the notions of personality and its ideal in a less metaphysical ambience.

Emmanuel Mounier remarks that while the personal is the mode of existence proper to humans, it has nevertheless to be continuously attained,<sup>10</sup> or as another personalist, Nikolai Berdyaev, has written, man is a personality not by nature (facticity) but by spirit (transcendence).<sup>11</sup> The human being

<sup>8</sup> For contrasts and comparisons between the Theory and Sartre's views as well as these of other existentialists in these matters, see, for example, Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Kawczak, Andrew and Piechowski, Michael M., *Mental Growth Through Positive Disintegration*. London, Gryf. pp. 9—10.

<sup>9</sup> As noted in this paper, philosophical and psychological notions of structure and function do not always coincide.

<sup>10</sup> Mounier, Emmanuel: *Personalism*. Trans. by Philip Mairet. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame. Date not specified. p. xix.

<sup>11</sup> Berdyaev, Nikolai: *Slavery and Freedom*. Trans. by R. M. French. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. 1944. p. 21.

must be construed as a process of becoming human since a person is never a ready-made datum but an unfinished task or project (Sartre). The Theory would express essential agreement with these views regarding the person. As Dąbrowski states the case, individuality is a given (facticity) whereas personality must be earned or achieved.<sup>12</sup> For him all humans are individuals but not all are personalities. Personality requires inner self-differentiation and differentiation from others (positive maladjustment).

Part of this achievement involves transforming one's biological and psychological types which are part of the individual's inchoate and inherited essence. This transformation might include the acquisition of traits which are different from or even opposed to those qualities bequeathed by heredity endowment.<sup>13</sup> The Theory maintains that humans are, for example, prone by heredity to have a propensity for either extroversion or introversion and positive disintegration entails transforming this proclivity.

This view is reminiscent of Mounier's position that personal existence exacts both interiorization and exteriorization. Being overly exteriorized, persons become dissipated and to signify this excess he cites Paul Valery's thought about persons being "shut up outside of their selves." On the other hand Mounier admonishes the overly interiorized who have, he writes, become "encysted," the process by which organisms develop enclosing membranes so as to protect their interiorities. In rejection of this excess Mounier quotes Klages: every person is an inside in need of an outside.<sup>14</sup> It is often said that persons must go into themselves (solitude and reflection) to get outside of themselves or, as Irish philosopher Philip McShane claims, to get their selves outside. Such transformation of individuality and its givens is the process of positive disintegration. It is the only road to personality which is an entitative plateau in which inwardness and association are integrated and interiorization and exteriorization reconciled.

The Theory states that the higher the phylogenetic standing of the species the more pronounced and frequent are individual differences. This is pre-eminently true of individual humans. As others might say, individuals of the human species contain more inwardness and complexification (Teilhard de Chardin) or more inscape (Gerald Manley Hopkins).<sup>15</sup> Thus human general and individual complexification stems from its special type of consciousness of self and the awareness of individual distinctiveness.

While all humans are unique, those attaining the level of personality are the most intensively unique and comprehensively so. As will be detailed below, such secondarily-integrated personalities are also more cognizant of the uniqueness of others which cognizance generates moral dispositions. As Mounier says:

The significance of every person is such that he is irreplaceable in the world of persons. Such is the majestic status of the person, endowing it with the dignity of the universe;

<sup>12</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz: *op. cit.* p. vi.

<sup>13</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz *et alii*: *The Dynamics of Concepts*. p. 138.

<sup>14</sup> Mounier, Emmanuel: *op. cit.* pp. 43-44.

<sup>15</sup> Cowburn, John: *op. cit.* pp. 10-11.

and yet it is also its humility: for in this dignity each person is equivalent to each other.<sup>16</sup>

For Dąbrowski it would appear that this is an irreplacability predicable of all humans but not all humans are in every sense equivalent; they are unequal in the sense of ability in achieving personality. The fundamental equality and dignity of individuals versus personalities is not discussed explicitly in the Theory. It seems fair to say, however, that as one ascends the stages and types of personality development, the ethical attributes of dignity, humility, and equality ensuing from this distinctiveness to which Mounier refers, are more exquisitely envisaged and enacted.<sup>17</sup>

It should be remarked here that a science of personality is not a sufficient condition for knowledge of the distinctiveness of a given individual or personality. Indeed even the most extensive inventory and most penetrating analysis are insufficient to apprehend or grasp the person in his or her uniqueness.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, the Theory attempts to discover and elaborate the essential levels, structures, and functions of personality. Any theory of personality must acknowledge common features of the human essence (even Sartre does so in the sense that he universalizes the human condition, for instance, as when he writes man is a futile desire to be God or is condemned to be free).

Now if every human being were not only unique in his individuality but also in his total essence, one would have not only uniqueness but unicity. Each human being would thus be also a separate species. The fact that this is not the case makes a science of personality possible. The consideration, scientific and otherwise, that persons are unique, invokes the distinction French personalist philosopher Gabriel Marcel makes between problem and mystery. Persons can and never should be solved or dissolved like mere problems. They are irreducible and ultimately mysterious units. As American psychologist Jane Loevinger writes with respect to the knowledge about other persons, one should not count it a failure but an act of courage that the "heart of the matter is and always will be a mystery opaque to science."<sup>19</sup> It seems to me, the Theory would argue the view that science can know about, and know of, and even know specific persons but its knowledge will never be exhaustive. Even a concrete knowledge

<sup>16</sup> Mounier, Emmanuel: *op. cit.* p. 41. Compare Berdyaev, *op. cit.* p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> For levels of humility and dignity with respect to personality development, see Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Piechowski, Michael M: *op. cit.* pp. 181--182 and 186--187. Personality development is a moral odyssey from egotism and pride (not the positive pride which stems from self-esteem and self-worth) to altruism and humility.

<sup>18</sup> In an article, "Ontoanalysis: A New Trend in Psychiatry," (*Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 1968, pp. 77--88), Rudolph Allers discusses the relationship of general scientific knowledge to knowledge of the individual person both for theoretical and therapeutic purposes. He writes that authentic theories and therapies do not trespass upon the sanctuary and mystery of the person by imposing categorical and universal laws upon the individual in order to achieve scientific respectability.

<sup>19</sup> Loevinger, Jane with Blasi, Augusto: *Ego Development*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1976, p. 433.



of a given personality, as a subjectivity, will remain fallible and fragmented. Since persons are indissoluble wholes (Madinier) no analytic approach can unveil the structure which the person is as a totality. Not even a more synthetic approach, unless it be allied to empathetic intuition, will suffice to encounter the person as person according to the Theory.

The progression from individuality to personality must needs be shrouded in mystery yet certain facets of this evolution are ascertainable. Qualitative or inter-level leaps are traversed which entail "milestone sequences" rather than "polar variables".<sup>20</sup> The former are discontinuous, intensive, and vertical disconnections; the latter are continuous, extensive and horizontal. In conjunction with this assertion, the Theory maintains that not only do individuals progress by personality breaks and break-ups, but also that the ability and actualization of genuine knowledge of others require an implicit comprehension of the multilevelness of personality. Individuals of defective, diminished, and narrow growth will find this notion of multilevelness theoretically and practically unclear or even meaningless.<sup>21</sup> Correspondingly persons of a higher level can understand individuals of lower level but the reverse does not obtain. As will be discussed below such understanding is principally intuitive, empathetic and moral.

As to the specification of the moments of their evolution, individuality and personality can be considered from a four-tiered structure: primary, unilevel, multilevel, and secondary. There are five developmental levels since multilevel disintegration harbors both a spontaneous and a reflective or self-organized level.<sup>22</sup> At level one there is individuality but no personality. Although the Theory, as previously indicated, does not distinguish person and personality, I think it can be safely assumed that primitive individuals of level one, while not personalities, are persons in an ontological and legal sense. Psychopaths (sociopaths) who are members of this class, especially those of an extreme form, often appear to be moral idiots. To what extent, if any, such individuals can be regarded as moral persons and responsible for their lack both of moral sensitivities and sensibilities as well as their lack of a moral conscience and moral conception<sup>23</sup> of reality is undoubtedly problematic. Additionally, they are deficient in terms of any ideal of personality particularly in its moral realms. Their rigid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 55.

<sup>21</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz, *et alii*: *The Dynamics of Concepts*. p. x.

<sup>22</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Piechowski, Michael M: *op. cit.* pp. 18—19.

<sup>23</sup> Perhaps "conception" is not the correct term, since mere intellectual conception is not sufficient to make one morally responsive and responsible. Professors of ethics can be moral idiots, psychopaths and paranoids. Indeed a professional ethician can avail himself of such moral concepts to increase his powers of exploitation, ruthlessness, and vindictiveness. It does occur, perhaps infrequently, that a moral conversion and metanoia do transpire via intellectual concepts and conceptions of morality; the latter are accompanied, however, by other more significant factors, namely, those which are intuitive, emotive and volitive in nature.

identity bears no tension between what is and what ought to be, and morality always involves such tension.

Moreover, what passes for normality (what Maslow called the "psychopathology of the average") and what could be called the "psychopathy of the average" involves individuals who are borderline case psychopaths, habitually or periodically. It also might be hypothesized that psychopaths, because their rigidity is often confused with strength, may become part of the personality ideals of non-psychopathic individuals in that such psychopaths often become counter and negative models for individuals of weak developmental potential and/or in negative environments.

Given the influence or possibly the determinism (necessitarianism) the Theory attributes to heredity in personality development and involution, it might be concluded that extreme psychopaths have insufficient development potential to become candidates for any personality attainment. Perhaps the Theory prefers the term "psychopath" to "sociopath" to stress that the first (heredity) rather than the second factor (environment) is the principal cause of this condition. Moreover, since there is no freedom according to the Theory at the first level, it is dubious as to whether psychopaths can be called free and responsible individuals. Hence one might state that some individuals are condemned not to be free (Sartre would say that a psychopath chooses to be so).

There is one sense in which certain notorious psychopaths have reached personality and that is the sense that personality is often construed to signify one having celebrity status, power, prestige, fame, or popularity. In this sense some prominent psychopathic individuals are certainly personalities. It is also certainly true that this type of individual arises from an inner impoverishment with respect to the kind of personality potential the Theory describes. Psychopaths have little or no inner self-differentiation. Loevinger expresses similar observations:

That a person of low ego level will not differentiate his notion of self from his ego ideal, does not require a dynamic explanation; persons of low ego level simply do not have that degree of conceptual complexity. They did not repress the differentiation. They never had it.<sup>24</sup>

For the Theory, however, it appears doubtful that a psychopath has any ideal of personality at least one with ethical nuclei. Moreover, conceptual complexity is not a sufficient condition for personality development. In fact, conceptual sophistication detached from higher emotions is an impediment to the achieving of personality.

It is this differentiation which is the forerunner of unilevel disintegration in which primitive integration is loosened or even shattered. At this level, level two, there would seem to be no personality and no ideal of personality save in a most precursory or dispositive manner. Thus it would seem

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<sup>24</sup> Loevinger, Jane with Blasi, Augusto: *op. cit.* p. 100.

that only at multilevel disintegration<sup>25</sup> is it proper to speak of the actual appearance of personality and its ideal. Spontaneous multilevel disintegration, level three, suggests a kind of ontological midpoint between individuality and personality. Here as the popular phrase has it, one is beginning "to find oneself". The dynamism (which is a mental vector of force embodying a constellation of characteristics tied to a given level) of astonishment with oneself is logically enough predicated of this level.

One is attracted to and repelled (ambivalences and ambitemperances) by the emerging personality ideal. This is then the becoming, the coming to being, of personality. Much of the spontaneous becoming at level three is impulsive and lacks the more disciplined, refined, controlled and reflective spontaneity associated with the fourth level of development. In spontaneous multilevel disintegration there is self-differentiation, but one which can be construed as negligible due to the emergence of the personality ideal and the felt discrepancy between it and the personality. Such dynamisms as inferiority towards oneself and disquietude as well as dissatisfaction with oneself are characteristic of level three.

At the fourth level of organized multilevel disintegration, there appears a systemization and hierarchical ordering of much of the contents of the previous level but under a new form—the personality ideal as such. Since it is claimed that the characteristics of this level correspond exactly to the traits of the self-actualized person (Maslow)<sup>26</sup> one could speak of meta-needs or values here. Personality has organized its values into a cohesive pattern and the understanding of the self-pattern or self-system (H. S. Sullivan) is further impetus to its realization. There is an augmented consolidation of the personality ideal (to be explained below) as a moral nucleus and a commitment to its full actualization.

In level three the personality evolution can be portrayed as a gap between what is and what ought to be. At level four this gap is closed, or at least considerably narrowed, so that it can be expressed in the dictum that what ought to be will be.<sup>27</sup> This is similar to what Nietzsche called the will to power, namely, the power of self-acceptance and self-affirmation but above all self-transcendence: one must become what he is.

In the Theory there is a similar note of self-actualization or self-realization which entails what is and what one can be (developmental potential). Furthermore; this potential is at the fourth level perceived as an inner imperative and obligation: one must be what he can be. This struggle of passing from what one is to what or, better, to who one can be, and to who one must be, before reaching being (personality) is the process of positive disintegration, a process which in some major elements coincides with certain views of the Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing. For Laing,

<sup>25</sup> This disintegration is designated as "multilevel" because there are persistent and profound conflicts between lower and higher levels of instinctive and mental functions.

<sup>26</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Piechowski, Michael M: *op. cit.* p. 29.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 29.

the divided (for Dąbrowski, the disintegrated) self suffers an insecurity experienced as an ontological emptiness, a lack of being. This division of self for Laing may in fact be a device of the "mad" to protect themselves and a means to discover a higher and more sane unity than the unity of the pre-mad stage.

Disintegration and mental illness may for the respective psychiatrists be ways in which the individual loses himself in order to find himself. This involves intense and often prolonged periods of mental suffering. It is rightfully said that suffering introduces a person to himself. In the Theory one could say that suffering introduces one's personality to his individuality. There are qualitative leaps in suffering (and perhaps in joy) as the *is*, *ought*, and *must be* are revealed to and within the self. As personalist Nikolai Berdyaev states personality is suffering. Wherever you find the former you find the latter. The struggle to achieve personality and its consolidation (secondary integration) is a painful procedure. "The self-realization of a personality presupposes resistance (and for the Theory perhaps even more tellingly it presupposes self-resistance to its own personality and its ideal)... Pain in the human world is the birth of personality, its fight for its own nature."<sup>28</sup>

Personality, however, is reached only at the level of secondary integration wherein what must be now is. This is a kind of doctrine of "manifest destiny" only here the geography is psychological and moral. The destiny is personality and its manifestation is via the personality ideal. The person has "found" himself through the potentialities of his own essence (individual and common) as well as forged his personality through its ideal mandate to which the person has freely conformed (inner positive adjustment). It remains to disclose the more paramount ingredients of the personality ideal and its satellite dynamisms. Personality ideal is the background and barometer according to which the personality is formed and its performance evaluated. Personality ideal is the goal of personality and its awakening. The ideal is not innate but rather it is acquired, although it is embedded in heredity and nourished by environment. It arises out of one's own development and experience yet the ideal guides them much as life is concrete but a theory of life can help guide and channel one's concrete life. The ideal serves increasingly as a concrete model and eventually as a moral model (some would call this model moral conscience). Since this model is partially acquired from segments of external models whether real or imagined, the ideal cannot be entirely produced by the individual's own hereditary endowment or patterned solely after self-constructed ideal self-images or concepts. Thus it can be seen the Theory does not support a theory of innate ideas or ideals with respect to personality and its ideal.

As a mental structure the ideal is first broadly and vaguely conceived. The word "conceived" conveys the self or mind's own self-dynamics in bringing forth concepts. As stated above, the personality ideal is not

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<sup>28</sup> Nikolai Berdyaev: op. cit. p. 28.

conceived in this sense. But the personality is not merely passively perceived either. There is a dialectics here of developmental potential and external environment mediated by the increasing activity of the third force (freedom). The ideal is conceived from its own endowment in concert with the environment in general but, more proximately, from external models. Consequently, the self construed as a structure can be regarded as the source of active and receptive functions. The self actively considered is the fount and originator of its own ideal but this ideal is also the model by which the person can measure his development and his fidelity to it. Thus, one actively forms the ideal but also is a recipient of its urges and intimations. The model of course is subjective since it resides in the individual's subjectivity and is at first the intuitively-grasped center of this subjectivity.

The ideal serves as an inner yet empirical model for the "shaping and molding" of personality. It seems clear that by calling a subjective model not only empirical but also one which can be "subjected" to objective criteria amenable to scientific analysis and measurement, one is saying that subjective phenomena are fitting candidates for objective investigation. Furthermore, a proper scientific method can uncover essential components via intuition. This intuition of essences of personality and its ideal and its subsequent description are phenomenological in method (the content being the existential-essentialism discussed above). It is not claimed that through intuition one immediately and comprehensively has a vision of essences unaided by other forms of cognition or cognitive-emotive compounds. This consideration must await the discussion of intuition below, however. Suffice it to say for the present that intuition at its inception with respect to personality ideal is an approximation of one's ideal self in a vague and changing gestalt. Intuition accompanies or informs any knowledge of subjectivity as it does any knowledge of objectivity, *mutatis mutandis*.

The personality ideal centres upon the intrinsic worth and value of the personality in its own self-image or self-concept. It is not an ideal which pertains to one's profession or occupation although these might serve in an instrumental and subsidiary role in the focusing upon and crystalizing of the ideal. It is an ideal which involves the questions "Who am I?" and "Who ought I to be?" These are *being* questions answered through *becoming* (positive disintegration). They are at once both metaphysical and normative questions. The questions are only secondarily questions pertaining to the realm of doing and having. The ideal entails, finally, the question of one's meaning of life, that is, one's worth in the world. As such it entails pre-eminently one's emotions since it is chiefly through them that the pre-eminently one's emotions since it is chiefly through them that the significance and meaning of the world and one's place in it are disclosed. Consequently the ideal is not merely a self-image or the more abstract self-concept but an emotional-moral judgement about oneself.

The personality ideal emerges as the model for individual and common essence. Unless one's essence is discovered and pursued, the individual leads a second-hand and borrowed existence variously called the distracted

life (Blaise Pascal), the alienated life (Karl Marx), the aesthetic life (Søren Kierkegaard), the inauthentic life (Martin Heidegger), the hollow life (T.S. Eliot) or by a host of other names signifying pseudo existence all of which are comparable to negative adjustment in the Theory.

The personality ideal cannot be discovered except via reflection, meditation, and contemplation, or as Mounier asserts, personal life commences with the ability to sever oneself from the environment, "to recollect oneself, to reflect in order to reconstitute and reunite oneself in one's own center."<sup>29</sup> Of course this recollection increases the possibility of meeting anguish and anxiety in discovering the personality ideal. Individuals thus dread reflective states because in them they will discover themselves as alone and possibly lonely.

However, the discovery of ontological aloneness is the prelude to personal and intersubjective authenticity. As Paul Tillich states, only those are worthy of interpersonal communion who have lived in solitude. The personality ideal, the Theory contends, cannot be disclosed without meditative solitude. This disclosure is both terrifying and exhilarating: terrifying, because one acknowledges that he alone is entrusted with the stewardship of his being; exhilarating, because one suddenly realizes that all genuine happiness resides ultimately in dedication to the fulfillment of this ideal.

The personality ideal accrues to humans alone because of the kind of creative consciousness and liberty which they possess and by which they can envisage and choose to become other than they are (Sartre's being-for-itself in contrast to being-in-itself). Beings devoid of these attributes must everlastingly be confined to a self-same identity. By being able to self-differentiate, humans are susceptible to disintegrative processes which commence with the birth of the ideal which at first is but a distant pattern. This ideal pattern is both the goal of disintegration and the reservoir of the forces of personality organization. As the outline of this inner pattern becomes more exact (and exacting), there is a rejection of those external abstract norms and concrete models (whether real or fictional) which are deemed inappropriate for idealization.

Concrete models, as Max Scheler emphasized, are far more influential in forming personality ideals than are any kind of abstract norms, moral or otherwise. Individuals are stirred by living exemplars more deeply and easily than by ideas or ideals devised solely by intellectual reason (versus emotional reason discussed below). Models are "being-types"; norms are "doing types." According to Scheler an authentic person-model is the most powerful force for moral growth and for the development of what the Theory calls the personality ideal. Authentic models serve as precursors (what some psychologists call pacers) assisting one in discovering what Scheler calls one's singular vocation.<sup>30</sup> The authentic models themselves

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<sup>29</sup> Mounier, Emmanuel: *op. cit.* p. 34.

<sup>30</sup> Scheler, Max: *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, trans. by Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk. Evanston, Northwestern University Press. 1973. p. 572 and ff.

desire that others not blindly imitate them, but develop their own uniqueness. Genuine models attract and invite; they do not seduce or overpower.

If a man wants to be truly educated, he has to let himself be immersed into the wholeness, authenticity, freedom, and nobility of such a model person. However, one does not choose a model. One is invited, captivated by it, by one who has won our love and admiration.<sup>31</sup>

The Theory would, I think, be in substantial accord with the above citation from Scheler, and it is clear for both Dąbrowski and Scheler that the main purpose of education is authenticity and that which contributes to the unfolding and flourishing of the personality ideal or vocation. Also both acknowledge that educators themselves are extremely important as models or counter-models in the learning process.

The personality ideal is never totally realized even in secondary integration although it is fitting to speak of a type of self-perfection or self-completion at this level, since the central qualities remain unchanged and are altered solely by quantitative increase. Indeed, the personality ideal forms the background for the systemization and organization of a program for personality development designated as self-perfection.<sup>32</sup> Through the eyes of secondary integration, however, all individual uniqueness appears perfect, as fitting and complete in its own way. This forms the metaphysical basis for empathetic understanding of other individuals and their levels without necessarily condoning or condemning their actions or being.

The discovery of the ideal (it is singular because while the content is manifold the inner form of the ideal is one) as the goal of personality is called the dynamization or activization of the ideal. This actuation of the ideal is personality-cognizance as contrasted with mere ego-cognizance.<sup>33</sup> The former adds non-intellectual cognitive and affective dimensions to the latter's more formally intellectual components. Intellectual functions cannot by themselves recognize or activate the ideal. Moreover the contents of the ideal as such are never solely intellectual. The intellect, as numerous personalists and the Theory contend, can never grasp the person and its

<sup>31</sup> Deeken, Alfons: *Process and Permanence in Ethics: Max Scheler's Moral Philosophy*. New York, Paulist Press. 1974, p. 216.

<sup>32</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz with Piechowski, Michael M: op. cit. p. 52. The Theory's notion of self-perfection could profitably be compared with the neurotic quest for self-perfection as detailed by Karen Horney. According to her the conflict of the fictional, absolutistic and compulsive idolized and ideal self with the actual and potential selves is fought with respect to self-perfection. The Theory would regard this neurotic or, more precisely, psychoneurotic struggle as generally positive, a view which Horney only partially shares. What constitutes the core of self-perfection for the Theory resides *per se* in moral perfection, the epitome and barometer of which is a universal, altruistic, and contemplative-active love beyond but also including justice. On this consult *Ibid.* pp. 139—140, 176—178, and 183—185. Obviously Positive Disintegration is not the first philosophical, psychological or psychiatric theory to regard self-perfection as essentially constituted by love. Its distinctiveness, however, lies in the psychological-axiological based multilevel typology of love.

<sup>33</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz: op. cit. p. 15.

ideal or vocation without the postulation of emotions and even volitional elements. From a cognitive perspective, the actuation occurs by a synthetic-intuitive process which is fully operative only at the level of self-directed, multilevel disintegration. The intellect tends to apprehend and evaluate analytically but on the fourth level of development, emotions transform analytic and discursive acts into more holistic, or should one say, humanistic groupings of cognition and emotion.<sup>34</sup>

Ordinarily the dynamization of the ideal is a slow process but personal conversions and transformations of an accelerated nature do occur. Intuition of personality ideal is founded on greater sensitivity to inner meaning which in turn largely depends upon the presence of the higher emotions particularly empathy and love. These emotions, of course, have their own evaluation. At higher levels they are cognitized by meditative measures which prompt a readiness for radical personality conversion. This is due to a more affectively illuminated understanding of the ideal. The enhancement of the ideal is particularly relevant to what some philosophers call the vocation. The following citation is a deft description of this phenomenon and despite its length it merits inclusion here due to its insightfulness and similarity to the notion of personality ideal.

Concentrating in order to find oneself; then going forth to enrich and to find oneself again; concentrating oneself anew through dispossession; such is the systole and diastole of the personal life, an everlasting quest for a unity foretold and longed-for but never realized. I am a being, in the singular, I have a proper name—a unity that is not that dead identity of a stone which is neither borne, nor lives nor grows old. Nor is this the unity of a whole which one can embrace in a formula. Surprises innumerable arise out of the abysses of the unconscious, out of the super-conscious and out of the spontaneity of freedom, incessantly renewing the question of my identity. It is not presented to me as something given, like my inherited gifts or my aptitudes nor as a pure acquisition. It is not self-evident; but neither is the unity of a picture, of a symphony, of a nation or of a narrative self-evident at a first acquaintance. One has to search oneself to find, amongst the litter of distracting motives, so much as a desire to seek this living unity, then to listen patiently for what it may whisper to one, to test it in struggle and obscurity, and even then one can never be sure that one grasps its meaning. It resembles, more than anything, a secret voice, calling to us in a language that we would have to spend our lives in learning; which is why the word 'vocation' describes it better than any other.<sup>35</sup>

Why do not all individuals hear the call to their being? According to the Theory it would seem that some primitively integrated individuals do not hear the call because they do not have one—they do not have sufficient developmental potential to have a personality ideal and/or the ability to listen to its inner sounds. For individuals in levels two and three, but especially three, it would appear that they have a calling, hear it, and even listen to it, but they are in what Kierkegaard terms a state of sickness unto death, a despair about themselves. Such persons choose.

<sup>34</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz *et alii*: *The Dynamics of Concepts*, pp. 99--100.

<sup>35</sup> Mounier, Emmanuel: *op. cit.* p. 41.



consciously or otherwise, not to be themselves.<sup>36</sup> The despairing person according to Kierkegaard may have heard the call but he is mesmerized by dread or vertigo, a dizziness due to the vision of freedom to affirm his ideal self on the one hand or to deny it on the other. For Dąbrowski, the strategy operative here would entail the individual forsaking what ought to be for what is and then employing various tactics to tune out this inner voice and to erect a false self in its place.

The dread and despair described by Kierkegaard signal a qualitatively higher development, according to the Theory, than what passes frequently for normality and sanity. As R.D. Laing writes, what goes by the name of sanity, is often but the mask that madness wears in the dread of the emergence of the true and authentic self.<sup>37</sup> This seems to coincide with what Maslow has said about the fear humans have about becoming their true and best selves. Kierkegaard's despairing self and Laing's divided self are instances of disintegrated selves. They are instances of those who assume a mode of being which avoids becoming and in this they seem to concur with the Theory's metaphysics of personality described above, especially with respect to being and becoming. But in refusing to *become* who they are, they also refuse the possibility of *being* who they must be on the level of personality.

According to the Theory, many individuals cling to normality (what Nietzsche called the herd's penchant for seeking uniformity at the lowest common denominator). They fear the splitting up of their personality through neurosis, psychoneurosis and psychosis, as well as the inner conflicts and suffering potentially inherent therein. It would seem then that somewhere along the line, one can refuse to let the personality ideal emerge or endure.<sup>38</sup> As for Kierkegaard, Laing, and Dąbrowski, there is seeming agreement that in order to find oneself one must lose oneself; that to get to the promised land (personality) one has to go through purgatory (disintegration) or even risk the possibility of madness (chronic mental involution), or hell.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the ideal of personality must necessarily emanate from the personality core and its potential. The ideal is initially discovered as inhering in the underdeveloped essence of the personality which might be called the true-self. If the personality core were not *per se* ordered to its realization of ontic and ontological potentialities, that is, its individual and species-wide possibilities, development of personality

<sup>36</sup> Kierkegaard, Søren: *The Sickness unto Death*, Trans. by Walter Lowrie. Garden City, New York, 1954. p. 180.

<sup>37</sup> Sugeran, Shirley: "Sin and Madness: The Flight from Self." *Cross Currents*. pp. 129-153. Spring, 1971.

<sup>38</sup> The reluctance or refusal of the individual to allow the personality ideal to emerge or endure pertains to the realm of self-deception. In what sense the self (selves) can be both the deceiver and deceived is a source of contention among numerous philosophers and its analysis is not possible here. The fact that people do deceive and perhaps intend to deceive themselves is indisputable as to factuality.

would involve an infinite regress. Unless the self of and by itself can decide between what is its true self and false self, another self as referee would have to be invoked to decide between the true and false selves. Yet would not another self be required to judge whether his referee was true or false and so on infinitely?<sup>39</sup> This exemplifies the principle that beings are *per se* ordered by their essence to truth and development rather than to falsity and involution.

Thus the fundamental inclination of the person is toward the liberation and realization of the personality ideal. Although personality is therefore achieved, nonetheless, this acquisition follows the dictates of the ideal. Fidelity to this ideal is authenticity which presupposes autonomy or self-governance. The original and true self is given but it also must be freely formed. Insofar as external models influence the personality, all three factors partake of the birth and evolution of the ideal. Consequently, there could be no authentic self unless there were not a prior gap between two states of being. These two states are the being of primary and secondary integration. The process of becoming (disintegration) is the bridge between these two levels of being.

The person determines (self-determines) its own becoming by its choices in uncovering the personality ideal and subsequent commitment to it. Freedom (the factor) is not, however, so much a choice between alternative acts (freedom of exercise) or objects (freedom of specification) but rather the quintessence of the free act is, as personalist Louis Lavelle states,

one which I recognize as mine and in which I commit my responsibility and my very being... it is an attitude of a whole being by which it chooses itself.<sup>40</sup>

In this respect the personality chooses to become its whole being through the personality ideal. It is necessary choice (freedom) of value and of an *ought* and finally of a *must be* (necessity). Strictly speaking there is no freedom at level one—this is the realm of biological and psychological determinism. There is no freedom at level five either. Here there is a confluence of what must be with what is and ought to be. This can be called eminent necessity, a fusion of necessitarianism and freedom as medieval philosophers would say. This is the self's destiny (destiny being a type of necessitarianism). The three types of disintegration are progressive augmentations of normative self-determination which culminates in the kind of determinism in which personality need no longer struggle to choose its essence. "Personality is then the victory of freedom over necessity" (Berdyaeu),<sup>41</sup> a necessity found in lower levels of being which freedom overcomes. On the level of secondary integration necessity overcomes

<sup>39</sup> In practice this third self may be others or external norms and codes. However, the person still must ultimately choose to be influenced or conditioned by anyone or anything external. Hence nothing relieves the person from this awesome choice(s).

<sup>40</sup> Lavelle, Louis: *Les puissance du moi*. Paris, Flammarion. 1948, p. 157, as cited in Cowburn, John: *op. cit.* p. 20.

<sup>41</sup> Berdyaeu, Nikolai: *op. cit.* p. 24 and ff.

the freedom found in disintegration. This is self-possession in which one acts "true to his character" or with authority insofar as one is the author of his being (autonomy) and is consciously (authenticism) and necessarily yet spontaneously (authenticity) devoted to ideal of personality.

Authenticism, more specifically, includes four hallmarks: first, a confidence in attaining the personality ideal; secondly, the desire for the ideal to be global in scope; thirdly, an emotional grasp of one's ideal as unique (individual essence); and fourthly, a comprehension of one's common essence. The subjective conformity to one's ideal is a type of objective truth which involves both an inner consistency or authenticity and authenticism (an instance of the coherency theory of truth) as well as the correspondence of what ought to be with what is (an instance of the correspondence theory of truth). This is reminiscent of Kierkegaard's adage that truth is subjectivity but the spheres of subjectivity along with personality are objective and universal as well. This is also the basis for the Theory's objective evaluation of truth grasped via an emotional-intuitive process (one which can be conceptually described and elaborated, however). The personality ideal and its subsidiary dynamisms are normative-psychological compounds appreciably different at the various levels of development.<sup>42</sup> They are at once cross-cultural and subjective phenomena, universal and objective, that is, transsubjective.

Through higher levels of syntony (empathy) one gains insight into the individuality of others and their developmental potential.<sup>43</sup> Through empathy one discerns the unique and irreplaceable personality ideal of the other and his exceptional vocation which a loving empathy helps the other to discover and follow. Nothing helps the other to transform himself according to his own ideal as much as being genuinely loved. Spurious kinds of love project and impose their own personality ideals on others. The vision of the other's personality ideal and the active concern or care (Erich Fromm) in fostering a climate conducive to its actuation, and actualization, are central to one's own personality ideal and the realization of one's common essence.

It is questionable whether one can in any sense perceive the other and his ideal in their polarized tension except through empathy. As Augustine said, one cannot enter into the truth except through that kind of love he called charity (*non intratur in veritatem nisi per caritatem*) and Blaise Pascal repeated this verbatim (*On n'entre pas dans la vérité que par la charité*). More recently Victor Frankl wrote:

Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him. By the spiritual act of love he is enabled to see the essential traits and features in the beloved person; and even more, he sees that which is potential in him, that which is not yet actualized but yet ought to be actualized. Furthermore, by his love, the loving person enables the beloved person to actualize these potentialities.

<sup>42</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz *et alii*: *The Dynamics of Concepts*. pp. 105 and 107.

<sup>43</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz *et alii*: *Mental Growth through Positive Disintegration*. p. 95.

By making him aware of what he can be and of what he should become, he makes these potentialities come true.<sup>44</sup>

For this reason persons mutually loving one another are continuously concerned about each other's personality ideal which can include love itself as the content of the ideal. In this context it can be seen how loving empathy, while it is a quality of common essence, enhances individual essence. Nothing so contributes to one's individual essence as the love for the essence of others. Thus it is that if one wants to know the other objectively one must enter his mysterious subjectivity through his personality ideal by means of love and respect and the kind of reverence for persons vouchsafed in awe and humility.

It is just this comprehension of the inner system of meanings which constitutes the personality ideal that is at once so utterly unique and yet transsubjective (objective). Once one is convinced of the worth of his own subjectivity and personality ideal, the easier becomes the journey to encounter and embrace others' subjectivity. In this, one continues to engage in a struggle to gain his own ideal at no expense to others (contestation with self as contrasted with competition with others). The person, as Kierkegaard writes, is subjective (forgiving and understanding) towards others and objective towards oneself (critical) rather than objective and hard on others while subjective and easy on oneself. When one has attained his personality ideal, the humble grandeur of this victory is the defeat of that arrogance which pulls down others in resentment (Nietzsche) as a self-inflicted penalty for one's not becoming oneself. At this level one is too proud (noble) to be proud (arrogant, egotistical) because the person has attained that generous dignity which can only be purchased through great peril and suffering.

To sum up the evolution of the ideal, it can be stated that at level one there is no personality ideal but only rigid egotistical drives. At level two there occur fragmented glimpses of diverse ideals but such momentary insights are dependent on fickle moods, temperamental proclivities and mere imitation of external models. At level three, the models become more amenable to critical challenge and the inclinations of one's psychological and biological types are modified. The personality ideal can be said to arise here and the nuclei of the ideal begin to have a holistic-synthetic contour, but their appearance remains essentially haphazardly spontaneous. At level four there is a comprehensive and consolidated content of the ideal which now has fully emerged and according to which the person shapes his own becoming. At level five all the dynamisms are under the domination of the personality ideal as it tends to merge with personality itself. At this level, being (structure) and becoming (function) interact as a highly coordinated unity so that one's individual essence is omnipresent (existential) and true to character (personality ideal). One

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<sup>44</sup> Frankl, Victor: *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*. New York, Washington Square Press, 1968. pp. 176—177.

s all things to all men (common essence) out of courage and compassion which necessarily form an indissoluble whole. The real person is now the ideal in an integration of fact and value necessarily one and positive.

In this paper I have analyzed the notions of personality and its ideal with respect to their genesis, evolution, and typology. I would like to conclude by consolidating these reflections by means of some definitions and descriptions of personality provided by the Theory. It is not surprising that the Theory's characterizations of personality are non-or even anti-rationalistic and intellectualistic given the preeminence that higher emotions assume in it. Boethius' now-hallowed definition of the person as an individual substance of a rational nature would, I think, be regarded with disfavor, (or at least partially so), for its over-emphasis on reason (at least intellectual reason as contrasted with emotional reason) as the difference which specifies humans as such. Additionally, it omits the notion that a person is a partially self-chosen entity.

While intellectual reason participates in differentiating humans from non-humans, its role on the level of personality is not commanding. Correspondingly, the Theory does not posit such a radical separation between reason and emotion as the adherents of Boethius' definition advocate. Reason and emotion permeate one another according to the Theory. Empathy, for example, is a cognitive-emotional compound particularly as it ascends the scale in personality development, so that faculty psychology, long associated with supporters of the definition offered by Boethius, is rejected by the Theory. Moreover, the Theory would regard this definition as incorporating an overly static view of personality. Finally, the concept of personality as an individual substance, as stipulated in Boethius' definition, will be addressed below.

Plato's view of individual men as being but shadowy metaphysical representations of and epistemological stepping stones to an absolute, immobile, permanent, and universal idea-man is totally opposed to the notion of personality as found in the Theory. To a lesser extent Aristotle's more metaphysically realistic view of man as a concrete rational animal meets similar rejection because of its over insistence upon intellectual rationality as was the case with Boethius. It should be noted that one hesitates to use the word "person" with respect to Plato's and Aristotle's views because it has been contended that strictly speaking they had no genuine notion of what constitutes a person.<sup>45</sup>

Additionally, both Plato and Aristotle regarded emotions as formally non-cognitive, a position rejected by the Theory. As Solomon argues, emotions have a conceptual structure of their own, a logic of life. Intellectual reason and emotion jointly share in an enlarged rationality. Experience is made precise by intellectual reason and rendered committed and impassioned by emotional reason. As the philosopher observes, on

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<sup>45</sup> For instance, Mounier, *op. cit.* p. xx, claims that the decisive notion of the person was first detailed by Christianity and thus was unknown to these great Greek philosophers.

a variation of a Kantian formula,<sup>46</sup> life without emotions would be empty; without intellectual reason, life would be blind, a position the Theory supports vigorously. Higher emotions, however, are not exactly "blind", according to the Theory, since they contain light and insight, which is to say, they are formally endowed with cognitive capacities.

The personality ideal, moreover, is the cluster of emotional meanings and valuations which shapes the person's interiority and which allies this interiority to the external world. Emotions are intentional acts which move out (as the etymology of the word "emotion" suggests) from this interiority towards external alterity. Emotions then are metaphysical appraisals, estimates, or evaluations made in and by subjectivity with respect to the world of objectivity. As Solomon contends, joy, despair, hope and depression are "metaphysical moods" indicative of the meaningfulness of the experienced world.<sup>47</sup> To which the Theory would add that these metaphysical events are in principle measurable as values all of which signifies the fusion of subjectivity and objectivity. Emotions reveal not only what the world is but what it ought to be in hierarchized fashion according to the imperatives of personality ideal.

For similar "reasons" Descartes' definition of man as a thinking substance would be rejected as well as for its dualistic, mechanistic, and idealistic (ideistic) assumptions. Furthermore, the person construed as a thinking, intelligent being that has reason and reflection (John Locke) or as a transcendental ego which synthesizes perception, imagination, and conception (Immanuel Kant) or as a transcendental ego which functions as the ultimate source of intentional consciousness (Edmund Husserl) would not be in accord with the Theory's notion of personality for the aforesaid reasons. They are simply too weighted towards rationalism and epistemological idealism (ideism).

As to the Theory's stance on a noumenal and substantive versus a phenomenal view of personality, this is much less clear. It maintains persons have essences but whether or not such essences are to be interpreted as changeless entities underlying all phenomena needs clarification. At the level of secondary integration the person changes quantitatively but his essential structure remains intact and unalterable. This position would suggest a substantive interpretation, albeit a rather unusual one, in that, a phenomenal interpretation would be warranted up to but not including the level of secondary integration.

However, it is unclear that the Theory does propose a phenomenal view of human beings at any level if, by phenomenal, one means that such beings are but a series of successive events with no permanent metaphysical structure unifying them. One of the factors which causes or contributes to the lack of a coherent account of these matters is that the Theory lumps together the notions of person, ego, self and

<sup>46</sup> Without intuition concepts are empty; without concepts, intuitions are blind.

<sup>47</sup> Solomon, Robert, C: *The Passions*. Garden City, New York. 1977. pp. 238--254.

mind. A precision in these terms would have theoretical and perhaps even therapeutic benefits. Insofar as the Theory purports to be an anthropological (philosophical anthropology, as contrasted with social and cultural anthropology) psychology, this enterprise must be eventually forthcoming to add comprehensiveness, elegance, and power to the Theory.

The Theory does offer several descriptions and definitions of personality<sup>48</sup> which include the following:

Personality is a self-conscious, self-chosen, empirically elaborated, autonomous, authentic and self-confirmed, and self-educating unity of basic mental, individual and common qualities. Those qualities undergo quantitative and qualitative changes but the central elements endure.<sup>49</sup>

This definition in omitting the non-conscious might itself seem to be a rationalistic model of personality. However, this definition is merely stressing the fact that personality is mainly a conscious and chosen entity. More to the point, however, is the definition's apparent case for a substantive view of personality, in that it distinguishes both quantitative and qualitative changes from enduring central elements — an unchanging, substantive dimension of personality.

In stating that qualities undergo qualitative changes, the Theory is involved in either a contradiction or a tautology. Also this definition labels these changes as quantitative and qualitative and yet it designates them as pertaining to central elements, that is, to individual and common essences which are enduring and changeless. It is not clear then whether these essences are the source of such qualities or are themselves constituted by these qualities. Finally by referring to quantitative changes as qualitative, the Theory is embroiled in further confusions if not in outright contradictions.

The second definition is that personality is a secondarily-integrated set of basic mental qualities of an individual which undergoes quantitative and qualitative changes with the preservation of central lasting qualities.<sup>50</sup> The second definition underlines that personality is achieved at the level of secondary integration. However, it entails the same confusions which reign in the previous definition. Also it refers to the personality as an integrated set of mental qualities. If one emphasizes the notion of "integrated set" one can argue for a phenomenal view of personality; if one construes the words "basic mental qualities" as meaning a foundation underlying such a set of qualities, one has a substantial view. Is the personality a series of integrated qualities and, if so, what integrates them? What provides the unity and continuity of personality if not a substantive entity?

The answers to these questions are far from unclouded. As an aside it should be accented that both definitions exclude bodily qualities from personality. As Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jean-Paul Sartre have shown the lived and living body is part of subjectivity

<sup>48</sup> I believe the Theory would concur with Scheler when he writes that, strictly considered, persons cannot be defined but only phenomenologically described.

<sup>49</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz *et alii*: *The Dynamics of Concepts*. p. 111.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

and personality rather than objectivity as such. They would undoubtedly regard the Theory as defending a dualistic and perhaps rationalistic view of personality in this respect. These philosophers regard consciousness as embodied. The Theory rejects this position but it is not clear what precisely is its own view of consciousness.

The third definition states that personality is the unity of integrated mental qualities of man, that is to say, personality is the final and highest effect of the process of positive disintegration, empirically and intuitively elaborated.<sup>51</sup> What is instructive with respect to this definition is its teleological account of personality insofar as personality is the intended effect of positive disintegration. The teleology involves the functions of the personality ideal which reveals the unique vocation and destiny to the individual pursuing the realization of personality, which it would appear can be a conscious and non-conscious search at different states and stages of personality development. In passing, it is to be noted that this definition also depicts personality as a unity but declines to distinguish whether this unity is an entity ontologically distinct and separate from its mental qualities or, on the other hand, whether this unity is the sum of such qualities. This is not merely a textual or contextual problem; the entire corpus of the writings by Dąbrowski and his co-authors does not explicitly address these problems although the implications and ramifications of this lack of attention are extensive. This observation is not meant to be a negative criticism. It is acknowledged that in some philosophical areas, the Theory does not claim to have established a complete "system".

Elsewhere the Theory defines personality as a force which integrates functions at a high level. Whether such a force is itself a function or structure is not enunciated in metaphysical terms even though Dąbrowski has stated that personality as self or ego is a metaphysical entity. Moreover whether structure can be construed as substance and whether function can be construed as phenomenal in nature is not disclosed.

Likewise whether in the evolution of individuality from primary integration through positive disintegration to personality and secondary integration, one and the same person endures (as a metaphysical unity and a psychological structure despite any and all purely functional changes) is not by any means unqualifiedly luminous. It might be that structuralism and functionalism are ultimately the same, psychologically speaking. However, there is considerable difficulty in equating metaphysical with psychological types of structuralism and functionalism. If of course structuralism means that personality is the complex of meanings and the quest thereof, there is no question that the Theory is a kind of structuralism. Finally the Theory uses the word "structure" to indicate the evolution of personality itself and in this case structure signifies a four-tiered demarcation: primary, unilevel, multilevel, and secondary. But this usage does not sufficiently

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.



augment the precision required for the philosophical problems mentioned previously.

Since this presentation is primarily a philosophical interpretation of personality and its ideal, it is appropriate to conclude with a consideration of the levels of philosophy, as delineated in the Theory, in relation to personality development. At level one there is no genuine philosophical activity as such but at best only a vague, implicit "philosophy of life" without sustained and deep reflection or self-criticism. The individual's philosophy of life is one of manipulation and exploitation or conformist capitulation or an alternation of both. While there is no genuine philosophical activity as such, there can occur formal and professional philosophical activity at this level. Individuals with above average intellectual quotients (as contrasted with emotional, moral, and social intelligence) whose intelligence is severed from empathy and understanding are regrettably found in philosophy departments. It appears to be an occupational hazard for philosophers that intelligence can be trained to become a kind of sphinx-like intellectualism devoid of eros and nourished by a consuming egotism. Personally I believe most professional philosophers overcome this obstacle.

At level one there is no philosophical personality ideal. Philosophy is a business, a profession, a technique for dissecting ideas in life-negating analyticity. Scholarship at this level is to further one's career. Pedantic pettiness and resentment are not infrequently fertile sources for "scholarship"<sup>52</sup>, the kind diametrically opposed to the spirit of philosophizing traditionally regarded as the pursuit of wisdom which was customarily considered to be part of what the Theory calls the personality ideal. Whereas reflectiveness is an attitude characteristically philosophical, at this level it is in the service of crude or subtle forms of egotistical strategies to render the prereflective sphere more exploitable. At this level there is ignorance or the ignoring of the postreflective and postcritical dimensions of philosophy and philosophizing.

Little or no tolerance for philosophers or modes of philosophizing divergent from one's own is manifested at level one, except for unrefined pragmatic and expedient motives. There is no practice of professional ethics, except insofar as it contributes to one's overt success. Philosophy at this level is an occupation for gaining power, prestige and recognition. It is not a life devoted to truth and goodness however it might masquerade as such. As to philosophies dominant at level one, I could single out the reductivistic and depersonalistic types of positivism, scientism, mechanism, crude materialism, "quantitative" hedonism, and metaphysical behaviorism. The assignment of philosophies to any level is a most complex undertaking and categorization must be done with numerous qualifications which space does not allow here.

At level two philosophical wonder *à la* Plato and Aristotle and concern emerge but they are almost exclusively concerned with external objects.

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<sup>52</sup> Solomon, Robert, C: op. cit. p. 353.

The acceptance of philosophical pluralism arises here in contrast to the rigid conformism of level one (negative philosophical adjustment which assumes, for example, an uncritical or even fanatical allegiance to a certain philosophical school, individual philosopher, or philosophical movement). The failure to accept philosophical pluralism might, on the other hand, be indicative of rebelliously rejecting any philosopher, school, or movement (negative philosophical maladjustment).

At first level philosophizing, one oscillates between the intellectual masochism of philosophical conformity and the intellectual sadism of dogmatism and authoritarianism. Pluralism at level two is due in part to what the Theory calls ambistendences and ambivalences characteristic of unilevel disintegration. For instance, one is attracted to a philosophy which extols only the unconscious while simultaneously being attracted to a philosophy which exclusively lauds what is rational, logical and intellectual. The Theory consigns the philosophy of Sartre to this level.<sup>53</sup>

At level three there is the birth of philosophical personality. The sense of wonder and astonishment are directed toward subjectivity symbolized, for example, in Socrates' injunction to know oneself. There is a vigorous search for the meaning of one's life (personality ideal) which frequently involves the philosophical anguish and anxiety about which existentialists write and which consequently engenders a transformation of the inner psychic milieu. Philosophy at spontaneous multilevel disintegration is a way of life, a lived philosophy. While philosophy is an "impassionate dedication to dispassionate truth," truth here envelopes the entire personality ideal of the philosopher. Pluralism is not merely grudgingly tolerated but welcomed in a kind of positive and self-appropriated eclecticism emblematic of the maxim that truth should be accepted from any source (Thomas Aquinas).

Increasingly one develops his own unique philosophy, one of commitment and conviction but, as Nietzsche writes, one must not only have the courage of his philosophical convictions but the courage to alter his convictions. The truth of this maxim is perhaps the core of the process of positive disintegration with respect to philosophizing and remains the internal model of the philosophical personality ideal. As to the philosophies especially relevant to this level, I would mention, for example, some of the influential forms of idealism (ideism) such as those of Plato, Spinoza, Berkeley, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. At a higher stage of this level, one could add certain existential philosophies. The Theory explicitly names those of Kierkegaard, Albert Camus, Karl Jaspers, Marcel, and Martin Heidegger.

At the fourth level, philosophy becomes a more consolidated, coherent, and self-directed way of life. Authenticity itself is the model of philosophizing and is the main component of the personality ideal. Philosophy is a "program for self-perfection"<sup>54</sup> and moral integrity is a prelude to personality

<sup>53</sup> Dąbrowski, Kazimierz and Piechowski, Michael M: op. cit. p. 214. For a discussion of the levels of philosophy see this work, pp. 212—215.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 214.

identity however identity might be disputed in philosophical terms. This integrity which is simply intellectualistic intransigence wherein one never is open to re-thinking his principles as Nietzsche exhorts philosophers to do.

Not only are emotions more prominent at this level in terms of personality formation but a philosophy of will is increasingly operative.<sup>55</sup> Moreover empiricism and mysticism rather than being seen as foes are recognized as complementing one another. It can be said at this level of organized and structural multilevel disintegration that one's philosophy of life is one's philosophical professional life and both of these are one's personal life and the center of his personality ideal.

The Theory selects the philosophies of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, and Buber as representative of this level as well as that of Paul Tillich. Besides these existentialists I would add some personalist philosophers I have cited in this paper: Scheler, Lavelle, Mounier, Berdyaev, and Marcel, all of whose philosophies could, in my judgment, be candidates also for level five to which we now turn.

Philosophy now is a "science and synthesis of intuitive wisdom."<sup>56</sup> If primary integration is the realm of the uncritical, and positive disintegration is that of the critical, then secondary integration is the realm of the postcritical. It could be compared to "being-cognition" described by Maslow.<sup>57</sup> Wisdom here is an all-encompassing love based on person-to-person relations of an "I-Thou" nature (Ludwig Feuerbach, Martin Buber, and Gabriel Marcel). Philosophy becomes person-centered. The best segments of various philosophies, be they empirical, rational, existential, or mystical, are interwoven into a wisdom at once empiric and transcendent. I think it only fair to say that the Theory itself contributes enormously to that very wisdom it so insightfully describes.<sup>58</sup>

John G. McGraw

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 215.

<sup>57</sup> Maslow, Abraham: *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*. New York, The Viking Press, 1971. pp. 260—266.

<sup>58</sup> That philosophers still pursue a love of wisdom would be to some philosophers unintelligible and meaningless. If wisdom is partially intuitive and synthetic, then those who regard philosophy as solely about analyticity repudiate the desirability and/or possibility of such wisdom. On the other hand, if philosophy is a kind of loving wisdom, this amplified version is denied by those for whom philosophy is devoid of all emotion. As Solomon writes, op. cit. p. 127, wisdom is "a concept that has been emptied of the passions, as if wisdom were reserved for old men, their lives all but finished... But wisdom is nothing of the sort; it is rather a matter of living both thoughtfully and passionately, bringing understanding to bear on every passion and forcing every passion into the light of reflection. Wisdom and rationality have too long been distinguished from passion and enthusiasm, as if the 'wise man' were one who refuses rather than invites involvement, as if the rational man has no passion... The function of reason — whose result is wisdom — is nothing other than the selection and encouragement of what Nietzsche called the 'life-enhancing passions' — the maximization of personal dignity and self-esteem."