



# Evolution of Consciousness & Paradigm Change


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*Le Nouveau Paradigme de la Co-evolution*  
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# Overview

1. What are Megatrends of the Mind?
2. Evolution of Consciousness: Cultural History & Adult Development
3. Transversal Approaches: Cohering Complexity
4. Our Challenge for Tomorrow



# 1. What are Megatrends of the Mind?

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

- ✧ Megatrends research in general has an *external focus*
- ✧ My “megatrends of the mind” research has an *internal focus*
- ✧ Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century we can observe:
  - ✧ Evolution within scholarly disciplines
  - ✧ Evolution beyond disciplinary boundaries
  - ✧ Approaches that theorise paradigm change
  - ✧ Approaches that meta-cohere new knowledge

Gidley, J. M. (2010) Globally Scanning for “Megatrends of the Mind”: Potential *Futures* of Futures-Thinking, *Futures: The journal of policy, planning and futures studies*, 42(10), pp. 1040-1048.



# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

## ✦ Evolution within Scholarly Disciplines

- ✧ Evolution beyond disciplinary boundaries
- ✧ Approaches that theorise paradigm change
- ✧ Approaches that meta-cohere new knowledge

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

## Evolution within Scholarly Disciplines

### **Science:**

- ❖ Newtonian building block physics > quantum possibilities & open systems, machine human to creative human

### **Philosophy:**

- ❖ Modern analytic philosophy > postmodern & poststructural, comparative & global, synthesising & integral

### **Education:**

- ❖ Formal factory model education > Steiner, Montessori, Dewey, Aurobindo, 1970s alternatives & 2000s postformal pedagogies

### **Psychology:**

- ❖ Mechanistic, behaviourist psychology > humanistic & person-centred, transpersonal & postformal psychology.

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

- ✧ Evolution within scholarly disciplines
- ✦ **Evolution beyond disciplinary boundaries**
- ✧ Approaches that theorise paradigm change
- ✧ Approaches that meta-cohere new knowledge

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

## Evolution beyond Disciplinary Boundaries

- ✧ Expanding Disciplinary Boundaries:
  - ✧ Interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary & transdisciplinary research
- ✧ Expanding Concepts of Time:
  - ✧ Big history, macrohistory & futures studies
- ✧ Expanding Concepts of Space:
  - ✧ From outer space to inner space & planetary consciousness

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

- ✧ Evolution within scholarly disciplines
- ✧ Evolution beyond disciplinary boundaries
- ✦ **Approaches that theorise paradigm change**
- ✧ Approaches that meta-cohere new knowledge

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

## Approaches that Theorise Paradigm Change

- ✧ Adult Developmental Psychology
- ✧ Cultural History and Evolution
- ✧ Evolution of Consciousness

To be discussed in more detail in Section 2 to come

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

- ✧ Evolution within scholarly disciplines
- ✧ Evolution beyond disciplinary boundaries
- ✧ Approaches that theorise paradigm change
- ✧ **Approaches that meta-cohere new knowledge**

# 1. Megatrends of the Mind

## Approaches that Meta-cohere new Knowledge

- ✧ Postformal Psychology
- ✧ Integral Studies
- ✧ Planetary Consciousness


To be discussed in more detail in Section 3 to come





# Summary 1. Megatrends of the Mind

- ✧ Knowledge is changing within scholarly disciplines
- ✧ Knowledge is leaking beyond disciplinary boundaries
- ✧ Paradigm change (or new consciousness) is being theorised in evolution of consciousness, cultural history and adult development
- ✧ New knowledge is being meta-cohered in several emerging fields: postformal, integral & planetary



## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

## 2. Evolution of Consciousness:

Mythic



Gustave Moreau's  
Prometheus 1868

Formal/Rational



Rodin's Thinker 1902

Integral/Postformal



Picasso's Portrait de  
Femme 1937

## Cultural History & Adult Development

## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

- ✧ 18<sup>th</sup> Century Europe:
  - ✧ German idealists Goethe and Schelling – conscious evolution
- ✧ 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe:
  - ✧ Darwin focused on biological evolution
- ✧ 20<sup>th</sup> Century Global:
  - ✧ Europe: Rudolf Steiner 1904 & Teilhard de Chardin mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Ervin Lazslo and others
  - ✧ India: Sri Aurobindo was also writing on it from around 1914.
  - ✧ USA: Integral theorists, adult developmental psychologists
  - ✧ Australia: Futures researchers

## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

### Cultural History

Jean Gebser (1905-1973) 20<sup>th</sup> Century cultural historian, wrote:  
*"The Ever-Present Origin"*



- ✧ Archaic: Pre-history
- ✧ Magical Consciousness: Ice Age
- ✧ Mythic Consciousness: Agrarian to 500BCE
- ✧ Mental/Rational Mode: 500BCE – 1,500CE
- ✧ Integral Consciousness: 1,500CE > the future



## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

### Adult Development – beyond Piaget

20<sup>th</sup> Century Swiss Psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980)



- ✧ Sensori-Motor (Infant)
- ✧ Pre-operational (2-6years)
- ✧ Concrete Operations (7-12years)
- ✧ Formal Operations (12-18 years)

Adult developmental psychologists in the USA since the 70s:

- ✧ Postformal Reasoning (Mature Adult)

## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

### Mapping Relationships

#### Cultural Evolution

Gebser & Integral Theorists



Archaic: Pre-history

Magical: Ice Age

Mythic: Agrarian to 500BCE

Mental/Rational: 500BCE – 1,500CE

**Present & Future >>>**

Integral: 1,500CE > the future

#### Individual Development

Piaget & Postformal Theorists



Sensor-Motor (Infant)

Pre-operational (2-6years)

Concrete Operations (7-12years)

Formal Operations (12-18 years)

**Adult Development Today >>>**

Postformal Reasoning (Mature Adult)

## 2. Evolution of Consciousness Cultural History & Adult Development

### What is Postformal Psychology?

*Postformal reasoning* is the most widely used psychological term to denote higher developmental stages beyond Piaget's *formal operations*.

Qualities of postformal reasoning include:

- ✧ complexity, creativity, dialogue,
- ✧ holism, imagination, intuition,
- ✧ paradox, pluralism, reflexivity,
- ✧ spirituality, values and wisdom





### 3. Transversal Approaches: Cohering Complexity

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#### ✦ **Postformal Psychology**

- ✧ Integral Studies
- ✧ Planetary Consciousness

✦ **Postformal Psychology** 40 years of empirical and theoretical research in the USA on higher stages of reasoning. It is focused on the evidence.

### 3. Transversal Approaches: Cohering Complexity

- ✧ Postformal Psychology
- ✦ **Integral Studies**
- ✧ Planetary Consciousness
  
- ✦ **The Integral Studies** literature tends to emphasise the crisis in worldview, the need for paradigm change, and to promote integral thinking both individually and culturally.

### 3. Transversal Approaches: Cohering Complexity

- ✧ Postformal Psychology
- ✧ Integral Studies
- ✧ **Planetary Consciousness**
- ✧ **The Planetary Consciousness** literature emphasises the urgency of transnational collaboration around our planetary crises: ecological, politico-economic and socio-cultural.

# SUMMARY 1, 2 & 3

- ✧ All scholarly disciplines are evolving
- ✧ Trans-disciplinarity is growing, concepts of time and space are expanding
- ✧ Paradigm change can be understood as part of evolution of consciousness, expressed through cultural history and adult development psychology (postformal psychology)
- ✧ New knowledge can be cohered through postformal, integral and planetary studies



## 4. Our Challenge for Tomorrow

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- ✧ We know science & philosophy are evolving
  - ✧ We know transdisciplinarity is growing
  - ✧ We know consciousness is evolving
  - ✧ We know about postformal, integral and planetary approaches
- ✧ **But what do we do to create paradigm change?**

## 4. Our Challenge for Tomorrow

### A role for the Club of Budapest?

A global research project to map activities informed by:

- ✧ postformal reasoning
- ✧ integral studies – broadly interpreted
- ✧ planetary consciousness &
- ✧ long-term futures perspectives

**Is anyone interested?**

**How might we fund this research?**



# Further Contact

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