

## The holy war on modernity: An integral analysis of the Paris attacks

Jeff: Hello, everybody, and welcome to The Daily Evolver Live. It's Tuesday, November 17th, 2015, and I am Jeff Salzman, coming to you from the heart of Integral Valley: Boulder, Colorado. I'm here as always with the producer of The Daily Evolver, Brett Walker. Hey, Brett. Say hi to the people.

Brett: Hi, people!

Jeff: Tonight, despite our frivolity, we're going to look at this distressing and depressing story that continues to develop in Paris and around the world set off by the attacks in that city last Friday. I have to say, when things like this happen I'm really grateful to have an integral lens to see things more deeply, and see the bigger patterns and broader forces that are at work in the situation. That's what we'll attempt to do tonight.

I want to extend a special welcome to those of you who are listening live on Integral Radio, and give a tip of the hat to Corey deVos who is handing the feed over there. And also to put in a good word for Integral Life, which is the leading web portal for the integral world. It's the home of Ken Wilber and his work. It's a membership model, \$100 a year. It's well worth it. They're putting out really great stuff, including a new thing that Ken is doing where he's actually taking the role of an integral teacher in a more indigenous integral kind of spiritual path, and it's the ... what's the product, Brett?

Brett: Full Spectrum Mindfulness.

Jeff: Full Spectrum Mindfulness.

Brett: Yeah. Go to [fullspectrummindfulness.com](http://fullspectrummindfulness.com). You do the course at your own pace online. There's all these different modules. They're all videos of Ken. It's really cool.

Jeff: Thanks, Brett.

All right. Now let's look at this story out of Paris that has really galvanized the world. In case you've been in a cave, last Friday, three teams of terrorists, Islamic Jihadists, attacked a nightclub, a soccer game, and a series of cafes in Paris, leaving somewhere around 200 dead. There are still people who are critically injured and so forth. If we look at this from an integral view, we're always trying to find the bigger context, the bigger patterns in an event like this in, so that we could just see it more clearly and completely. I have always said, integral theory is like the Google Map. You can actually turn the resolution up and see more of what's happening.

We often hear of what's going on between the Muslim world and the West, or at least the radical Muslim world and the West, is the clash of civilizations. And that's true as long as we stipulate that, if I may mangle Mark Twain a bit, history is just one goddamn clash of civilizations after the other. It's one of the things that humans do. We've been warring for as long as we've been mammals. Fighting and making love: the two "Fs" if you know what I mean. But this is not because we did something wrong as a human species, or that we have some flaw. We're actually crawling up out of the swamps. Apparently, this chaotic, conflicted system is how the creator of the universe intended it, because there are no exceptions. So thanks, God.

Using integral theory, we can think of the western vs jihadi war as a *clash of development*, a clash of developmental altitudes or stages. This is really a key concept in integral, and I would encourage those of you who are new or need a little help in following that you would go to my site, [dailyevolver.com](http://dailyevolver.com), and there's a section ... what is it called again, Brett?

Brett: "About Integral Theory".

Jeff: "About Integral Theory." You have to scroll down just a bit, and click it, and you'll see two charts, one is the "Levels of Development", and the other is the "Quadrants of Reality", and these are two key charts that I refer to. If you want to pull those up, you can. They're PDFs. You can print them out or whatever.

At any rate, when we talk about this clash of development that's going on, it's basically between, in the simplest terms, the *modern* and the *pre-modern world* ... the pre-modern world of traditionalism, the warrior cultures and the tribal cultures ... versus the modern and post-modern cultures.

Now, the distinguishing characteristics between these 2 worlds is that pre-modern people tend to be religious, ethnocentric, patriarchal, and violent. Modern people tend to be secular, nation or world-centric, pluralistic, and less violent.

Now, the problem is, is that 70% of the population of the world is pre-modern. For the most part, pre-modern people are distributed throughout the world, and in modern cultures, we have ... in American probably, 30%, 40% of the people are pre-modern. But when you have a majority or center of gravity that's pre-modern, then you'll have a culture that is organized around magic and myth, great mythic religious stories.

These are the psychological and spiritual structures of the consciousness of the people in the culture and of the culture collectively (respectively, the upper left and lower left quadrants). They live in a world that is lit up by the glory of God. It is their foremost identity. All authority flows from the holy scriptures, the holy book, and when the book disagrees with science or other means of knowing like the age of the earth, for instance, or God forbid evolution, then in those situations, faith trumps facts.

In fact, they see the world of science as part of the great cosmic battle that they're in. Another characteristic of pre-modern thinking is that they are, as individuals and as cultures, in a great spiritual struggle against the forces of darkness ... and depending on how fundamentalist they are, they think that an apocalypse is necessary to bring forth the new world and kingdom of God. It's not to be avoided.

Again, we see this in the West. There's an energy that animates a pre-modern political force in America, and I would say that there is a very significant percentage of Americans, 20% maybe, who are actually juicing for a fight with Islam, and at least in a certain abstract way who think we would win, and that the world would be better off for it.

This is not a bug in the system of the pre-modern mind. This is the essence of a structure itself, and you can't change this any more than you can change an 8-year-old into a 12-year-old. People at all ages and stages get to be who they are, but what we want is for them to be healthy. just like a child. An 8-year-old is not a defective 12-year-old. But an 8-year-old, and a 12-year-old, and an 18-year-old ... each can be more or less healthy.

Unfortunately, in the Middle East at the moment, the patient is very unhealthy ... due to a ton of reasons, including the clashes of colonialism and just the clashes with the West dating back to the Crusades and probably before, and then exacerbated with the Iraq war in 2003 that took the

lid off in Iraq, and our mismanagement of that process since. Because of these things, and many more, a lot of the Muslim world is in arrested development and is indeed in a functional regression.

We can see this from an integral perspective as ... I hate to say this, but it's a right-on-schedule conflict of a world that is developing, and in which some cultures are ahead of others. And again, these clashes of civilizations and cultures have been part of the fabric, part of the engine, the friction, as brutal as it is, that causes humanity to move forward. I don't agree with the system. I think God got it wrong, but here we are.

The good news is that we modern people have created pluralistic societies that are safe and prosperous where individuals are seen as sovereign over their own lives. This is a hard-fought achievement of humanity. We went through our holy wars too in Western Europe. They were brutal, and they were long, and they were not that different than the war being waged by ISIS, certainly in mentality and often in practice.

When you get down to the beheadings, and the burning alive, and all of that stuff, that's just plain vanilla red warrior activity. It's a particularly virulent strain of pre-modernism. This awakened warrior in the Middle East wakes a lot of people up, particularly young people, particularly men who want to make their mark. They see that there's no place for them or their God in the modern world, and that's an accurate assessment. And part of our contribution as integralists is to help the modern world accommodate pre-modern religion in a healthy way.

At any rate, this is not some inexplicable barbarity that arose out of Paris, and no, the world is not on fire. Though, in certain neighborhoods in Paris last week, it certainly was, and that's something that we have to make sure we remember as we look at these big abstract principles: that 200 people are dead and their families are suffering, and that that is as bad as it gets. And Syria ... never in the history of the world has it been worse than being in a warzone. War zones are war zones, so it's still happening, and that's the discouraging part and depressing part for sure.

We can see that as we continue to look at this and particularly look at the specifics of the politics of this moment in time that Paris is a prime ... it's a sour point in the world. I heard one security expert say that he was shocked, but not surprised by the attacks in Paris, and there are couple characteristics of Paris that make it particularly vulnerable. One is that previous waves of Muslim immigrants have created pre-modern amber enclaves in the middle of modern culture, surrounded by modern culture, and not permeable, certainly, not permeable enough.

Then, secondly, France is assertively and some might even say aggressively modern and secular. It may be pre-eminant the country in the world that carries the flag of the enlightenment project, where the world becomes rational, and secular. As Voltaire said, "Remember the cruelties" of these pre-modern cultures." You have that as the flavor and personality of the modern surrounding areas, and then the pre-modern Muslim core.

where apostasy is a huge sin. You can't leave Islam, particularly in the pre-modern Islam milieu. It's a capital sin.

Part of what drives them crazy is seeing these Muslims become western. My understanding is that the clubs and cafes that the terrorists targeted were the ones that were often frequented by Muslims who were losing their culture, so that's another factor.

Then, of course, there is a real red war just down the street in Syria, and that's just 2,000 miles away through Turkey, and it is, as I said a minute ago, as brutal and chaotic as a war zone can be. It also activates people who are drawn to brutality and chaos.

It's an unhealthy mixture of karmic cultural forces that we can see arising in Paris, and we can see the same forces at work in many other places, including America, so I'm afraid we do want to fasten our seatbelts at this point.

## **THE MEDIA RESPONSE TO PARIS**

"The Paris massacre is the worst attack on Europe since World War II." ... That statement has become a mantra on MSNBC, and CNN, and Fox News for sure, and even on the left. Even from John Oliver, who I had hoped would know better. Here's the problem: that statement, while technically true perhaps, actually obscures more than it reveals. We had sixty million people die in World War II, and we have fewer than 200 who have died here. What is actually revealed in those statistics is the astonishingly pacifying effect of modernity on modern populations. I think it's a good sign that, considering humanity's brutal history, that 200 deaths can truly shock us. And it should. Yet, I have to say, I wonder how CNN would've covered D-Day. You can only get so hysterical about these things.

At any rate, welcome to modernity wherever smaller dangers trigger ever greater responses. This is an intelligence of modernity. We can roll our eyes from a historical perspective, but hey, this is a good thing.

Another factor in the attention the Paris story is generating is that there is something truly new here to be concerned about. This is, as far as I can tell, the first really coordinated terrorist attack on soft targets. We talked about asymmetric warfare where modern cultures can fight with modern weaponry, but pre-modern cultures, they don't have organized armies. They don't have satellites in the air. They don't have logistics. They don't have headquarters. They're making it up as they go along, and so they have to fight with earlier stages of weaponry.

Now, of course, they're using rifles and they're using suicide vests. They're using gunpowder and bomb-making materials, but that they can wander into our public spaces. One of the great things about modernity is that we have this social compact where we can be in public spaces and not worry, but this shows us that we can. I always ... even 9/11, I wondered at the intelligence or the strategy of knocking down the World Trade Center.

Of course, that made a big impact, and it changed the world in many ways not for the best, but how much more powerful it would've been if you wanted to kill 3,000 people to just spread out to 300 malls or soft targets throughout the country and do something coordinated. And that's what we see here. And it's extra scary because I can't say that that's not going to happen at the café or the sporting event that I want to go to next. Of course, that's the point of terrorism, and that makes people afraid.

Even though we could say that these are small potatoes in terms of the actual casualties and fatalities, it does point to something else that I always want to bring out, particularly when people say that I'm too optimistic about the future. The one wildcard that I think is out there is when terrorists get their hands on nuclear materials, of which there are many unaccounted for. There is no doubt in my mind that there are suicide terrorists that would be delighted to set off a dirty bomb or worse, an actual nuclear bomb, in one of the western capitals..So this is something to be very, very careful of, and it's one of the reasons that I think an integral or a future-friendly view has to accommodate a very robust surveillance state.

It's astonishing actually that, considering the number of people who would like to do damage to modernity, that there there hasn't been a significant attack in the US since 9/11, 2001, fourteen years ago. So I pray that we don't have to have that nuclear experience, but as they say in Buddhism, "Hope and fear are very related." I hope that that doesn't happen, and yet I fear that

it will. It's hard to overestimate the damage that a mass destruction event would do, and it's hard to gauge what kind of effort needs to be put into preventing it.

## THE STRATEGY FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

Okay. I want to look at the actual political and military strategy that we're embracing here in the United States, and in the West, in NATO, and basically the modern western world in general.

We've learned a lot, really, in the last 12 - 15 years since 9/11. Of course, we had the 2003 invasion of Iraq under George W. Bush. There were a lot of people at the time who thought that once Saddam Hussein was deposed that the Iraqis would ... as Dick Cheney said, "They would greet us as liberators."

A lot of people thought that, and what we realized is that there's a certain faux-modernity that is laid on a lot of pre-modern cultures with faux modern dictators. That is dictators like Saddam Hussein, or Khadaffy, or the Shah of Iran who can operate in the modern world and do business with the west. Their women are modern, and they fly around on jets, and they drink when they're out of the country, and all of that good stuff, but when it comes right down to it, they're operating from a red interior, so they have basically a mafia view of brutally subjugating their own people.

When you remove the lid of the dictator, it's not like people pop up to modernity. These people still are at the tribal and traditional fundamentalist stage of development, and so you basically have taken the lid off of a Pandora's Box. As Colin Powell warned before the Iraq invasion, with what he called the *Pottery Barn Principle*: "If you break it, you bought it." In a sense, we did both in Iraq, and there was progress. With the "surge" and the Sunni Awakening there was a certain stability and pacification happening in Iraq. And then Obama came along, and he probably over-corrected. He abided by the Status of Forces Agreement that was negotiated by Bush and we left Iraq before it was cooked, you might say, into modernity.

Now, how long that would've taken? Who knows? But at any rate, I think in retrospect that the withdraw from Iraq was premature. I actually supported it at the time. I was on Obama's side. I thought, "Let these people fight it out," but boy, it's hard to underestimate the the violence and the pugilistic nature of pre-modern people, especially those who have be subjugated by a dictator then brutalized by a war. And so we had Maliki come in at Prime Minister and it just basically turned into a sectarian fight. This is why Obama has changed his tune when it comes to Afghanistan, and it turns out that we're not going to leave Afghanistan as planned; we're going to leave at least 10,000 troops there indefinitely, which is probably the right way to go.

Let's say that what we've learned is that if we're going to take the lid off of a dictator-governed countries that we have to stay in there long enough to let the forces of modernity set in ... women being free, no honor killings, no Sharia, a more modern legal system. And getting that installed takes a long, long time and a long commitment. It's what we refer to in America as *nation-building*, and that has become a dirty word in our culture.

There's an argument, and we hear it, particularly from the left and libertarian right, that says, "Why don't we just withdraw now, and let them fight their own battles?" One of the main proponents of this is Bill Maher in his show *Real Time*. He points out, and I think this is a really good point, that there are over five million soldiers in uniform in the Arab world. There are approximately 30,000 members of Isis. Why don't we let the Arabs take care of it? Both the Shia and the Sunnis are anti-American, and yet they're the enemies of each other. As Bill Maher said, "All all we need is popcorn." That means all we need is to sit back and watch the show.

I think what we're realizing is that this would be a show that we don't want to have to watch because it's so brutal and because we have cameras in there. It was different when it was the boat people after Vietnam ... and the two or three years after World War 2 were arguably ... maybe not as brutal as World War II, but Jesus, there was a lot of mayhem and killing that continued, but we weren't aware of it unless we were right there. But we would be "right there" now. It's an interesting dilemma of modernity because to see is to care. This creates a modern morality that wants to help if we can, and demands that we determine what that even means or how that's even possible.

It's not just a movie that we'd be watching. What we're seeing with Syria is that warzones create desperate people, refugees, people who want to get out of there. Like desperate people everywhere in all times, in all wars. People will do anything they can to get to a safer situation for themselves and their families. Thus we have the refugee invasion that we're seeing in Europe right now and that we're debating in the United States as well.

So it turns out that it's not just the moral dilemma of letting pre-modern people fight it out. It's actually a real problem because when things go bad they want to escape. So the thinking now among the military and state department, and people who think about these things such as Obama and his team is, "How do we help people develop in place?" We have a lot of pre-modern people with pre-modern problems, of which war is just one. We have all of Africa with center of gravity that is pre-modern, even tribal, and we have to figure out a way so that people can develop in place. I mentioned before that 70% of the world's people are pre-modern, but 80% or 90% of the world's power is in the hands of modern people because modern is more powerful (in all 4 quadrants), so we have a responsibility to help pre-modern people develop right where they are.

Now, we know from an integral perspective that you can be at the red warrior stage of development and still be healthy. That's where you fight your battles in sports, and there are initiations and different non-lethal ways of expressing that red, juicy, power and domination dynamic that happens at that stage. And we know that there are ways to be more or less healthy in the amber traditional stage, the fundamentalist stage.

## **MODERNITY IS WAR WEARY**

The next point I want to make regards something that we hear from, particularly, the people on the right. In America there's a presidential campaign going on, so of course, Republicans are very invested in creating an image of the world being on fire, and everything going to hell, and so forth. That's, of course, also the message of the right wing in Europe. They experience the Paris killings as a call to arms.

"Why can't we deal with this ISIS menace?" they ask. "We beat the Nazis. Why can't we defeat 30,000 holy warriors in the desert?"

The truth is that we could. We could have ISIS wiped off the face of the earth by the end of next week. The way we would do it is the same way we did it when we were fighting the Nazis and the Japanese. We'd fire bomb. We'd strafe. We could even nuke if necessary. It was only 70 years ago in August that we dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But you notice that in our modern world, *there's not one credible voice arguing for this*. That represents astonishing moral progress.

Ok, Ann Coulter talks about bombing people back to the Stone Age, but she's the exception that proves the rule. There are others, but in terms of presidential candidates, nobody is arguing for that, and that's because we're at a modern stage of moral development where we can't

tolerate doing that. It's an interesting and really ... from an evolutionary point of view, it's a very encouraging thing.

We hear that the reason that no candidates are arguing that we should have troops on the ground in the Middle East is that America is so war-weary after our eleven-year war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we've lost 4,000 people, and it's cost us two trillion dollars. And that's a lot, but in the Civil War, we lost 2% of the population or the equivalent of over six million people today. Can you imagine that?

In World War 2, we lost 400,000 soldiers. In Vietnam, we lost 58,000. Iraq and Afghanistan together has cost fewer than 4,000. Plus, in those earlier wars, there was a draft, so no young man was safe from service. And they were far bigger strains on far smaller economies. The Iraq war started in 2003 and since then it has cost us upwards of two trillion dollars. In that same amount of time, the cumulative gross domestic product of United States is somewhere around 120 trillion, so we've spent somewhere between 1% and 2% of our GDP on wars. That's not insignificant, but it's not a deal-killer. It's affordable.

But yet it's still true: we are war-weary, and what I think integral helps us see is that when people become modern, they're war-weary on behalf of humanity. We're finally over this 15,000-plus years of human warfare, and we've had enough. That realization is an emergent quality that comes from the development of consciousness.

And so we have the kinds of wars -- modern wars -- that we're fighting with drones where possible. And of course, I hear people talk about the horrors of our drone warfare. I agree. We hear about when it's a wedding party or one hits innocent civilians ... but unless you're a pacifist -- and that's a legitimate point of view -- then you have to accept that there is going to be collateral damage with any military campaign, and the drones offer the least of civilian casualties, and the most pointed lethal action where we can target one side of a building instead of knocking the whole thing down. Remember, in WWII we'd knocked the whole city down.

For those of you who might remember, I did a really fascinating interview with an integrally-informed Navy SEAL, Jake Bullock, about a year or so ago. I was amazed at the amount of training and emphasis our special forces receive on not killing civilians, of not having collateral damage. And if you do, it's a big black mark against you. That's an astonishing evolution in the art of warfare if you will. We're not really willing to do what it takes to obliterate ISIS, so we're in some middle ground of nation building, taking out the centers of gravity of the enemy, and of tolerating some success on their part.

I think there's a really interesting model of what this kind of asymmetrical modern war looks like, and that's Israel. Now, of course, there are many pre-modern Israelis, but the center of the gravity of culture, Israel is a modern country sitting in a pre-modern sea of people who hate them. And they have tolerated incursions and suicide bombings. They have a cultural model of, "Clean them up, don't put any memorials there, and just move on the next day." People can do that, and Israel has thrived as a culture by doing that. Now, of course, they've also been brutal in ways that make us question their morality. They have built a wall that we think is maybe too much, but Israel is a model of how modern countries can tolerate this kind of asymmetric warfare.

## **THE CONSCIOUSNESS DEVELOPMENT OF ISIS**

Now let's look at the people that we're actually fighting, the perpetrators of this terrorist violence. One of the things I want to say is that from an integral perspective, from a historical perspective, most of the members of Isis are just garden-variety, plain-vanilla, holy warriors. These are men and women too, but mostly men who are willing to kill and die for their God, for

their people, and for doing the right thing. We hear them described as being brutal and nihilistic. They're brutal to be sure, but they're the opposite of nihilistic. They're actually seeking meaning.

Their recruiting is directed to young Muslims who are actually living nihilistic lives as second class citizens in their host countries. Isis comes along and says, "What are you willing to do for your people? Are you willing to be a man? Are you willing to fight for your god, for your women and children?" They talk about spirit force. "How strong is your spirit force? Are you willing to be a martyr, or are you going to sit around, and shop, and watch television, and be a second class lackey in an infidel world?" That is a powerful message, and it's the opposite of nihilism.

In a sense, that's good news because what modern cultures really have to do with these subcultures of pre-modern people, particularly young people who are in their midst, is figure out a way to offer them a path forward that's meaningful to them. And it's not secular. There has to be room for their religion. There has to be room for their god.

Europe is about to embark on a huge experiment, particularly Germany, which is taking in 100,000 of these refugees. A grand experiment in how to modernize people, so that we don't get these islands of nihilism and psychopathy. Now we're probably always going to have some of that. There are people who are just arrested at a destructive red altitude. These are the "Dylan Klebolds" of the world. These are ... in America, we see them raise their profile every now and then with these school shootings so forth. They are often loners, and they just want destruction, of course. The great example of that is The Joker in The Batman series. They just want to watch the world burn.

There are people like that, and of course they're drawn to mayhem. Isis is replete with this psycho-dynamic as well, which is why ... I was listening to one of the generals this morning talk about how Isis is good at being terrorists, but they're not good at being soldiers. Psychopaths are unmanageable and they are in the mix, But for the most part these are young people who are looking for meaning, and we have to see to it that there are other options for these people. Okay.

Brett: Corey pointed out in chat about how we see major geopolitical decisions being made that are influenced by magical thinking around the concept of apocalypse. And it's as true for these Muslim terrorists as it is for our American evangelists.

Jeff: Yes, that's right, and it's so scary to have people who are in power who have the idea that there is an inevitable apocalypse coming ... that good and evil are going to come to some great battle and that our job is to fight and die. I worry about the people who are truly pre-modern in that belief, and we see them. They're living in caves. They're on the battlefield. They are actually thinking that "today is a good day to die." For them, creating the caliphate or becoming a martyr, both of those two things are good, and those are the only two options.

But then, we have other people who are ... well, they live in palaces, they travel, they actually are part of the modern world. And they might still have the rhetoric and ideology of apocalypse, but when it comes right down to it they want to live. Those are the people I'm a little more comfortable with. But they're both in the field here, and we have to make distinctions about who we're dealing with.

For instance, the Mullahs of Iran talk about the apocalypse. They talk about eliminating Israel. Do they really want to die in the process? Do they really want their Switzerland-educated children to die in the process? I don't think so, but that's different than people who are in on the battlefield with that "today is a good day to die" mindset.



## **DEALING WITH THE SYRIAN REFUGEES**

Okay, so I wanted to also take a look at something that has really become a big story in Europe as well as the States, and that's dealing with all the refugees from Syria. It's almost an embarrassing problem here in United States where we have Obama wanting to bring in 10,000 of them, and now we have all of the Republican governors saying, "Not in my state."

We can really see a polarization of the liberal and conservative mindset here. My liberal friends say that conservatives, when they think about this, ought to put themselves in the position of a refugee, and we should realize that these refugees are people just like us who are themselves running from ISIS. A lot of these people are modern, they're educated, the women are free, they're productive, they're sympathetic good people, they have children. And to put ourselves in their position is actually an amazing achievement of human consciousness.

To put yourself in the position of the other, particularly the other who is suffering is a spiritual practice in many traditions, and it's a worthy one. So I think that is a good challenge from liberals to conservatives to put yourself in these people's position.

I would also say, however, that there is another challenge that can come back from the conservatives to the liberals. So let's offer this thought experiment for liberals: let's just say that we do what the you suggest, which is to allow 10,000 Syrians into the U.S., 100,000 into Germany and so forth. And we do our very best to check them out and to vet them. But if the system isn't perfect, and one or a few holy warriors get through and they cause some kind of mayhem ... then you, Mr or Ms Liberal, agree that the mayhem that they inflict is inflicted on you and your family. As long as we can get that sorted out, then we're go to go.

Again, we're asking you to exchange yourself for others. You become the person who is the victim of the wildcard jihadi that gets through the system. At that point, with that thought experiment, we realize that this is not so easy. And yet we have to sort it out, and this is what our leaders do, and it's a thankless job. I'm very sympathetic to the pickle that Obama is in, and Angela Merkel, and Hollande in France, and all of these people. I thank goodness that this is a thought experiment for me, and that I actually don't have to experience the consequences of my decision.

## **MAKING ROOM FOR ALLAH**

As I said earlier, one of the things that modern cultures have to do, and we see it even within our own culture without any jihadis added, is that modern people have to accommodate the mythic and magic worlds of pre-modern people. They have to make room for pre-modern people's God.

One way we do it in modern cultures is with the idea of a public and private space. A mature modernity realizes that every person is sovereign. Every person can think what he wants to think, and believe what he wants to believe, and worship however he wants to worship in private or in some affiliation with like-minded others. But they can't foist that on other people. That is an achievement of modernity that we have to help pre-modern people move into. The best way to do that is to appreciate what pre-modern people have. And what they have is something that, in some ways, modern people don't, and that is a sense that life is juicy, and meaningful, and that there is a world beyond our own individual life, that there is a God in heaven, that there is a sacred calling.

You can feel, even as I talk about that, that there is something that arises out of the belly, and solar plexus, and heart that secular people normally have little access to. The secular world asks us to collapse all of that meaning, and interiority, and beauty, and the love of God itself ... to

collapse it to exterior meat and molecules. For a scientific materialist these higher values are basically just artifacts of synaptic activity in the brain that have been useful for the genome to further itself via the selfish gene. That's not very inspiring.

One of the things that I would recommend is that people take a look at a paper was written by Steve McIntosh through the Institute for Cultural Evolution called "Fostering Evolution in Islamic Culture." The thesis of the paper is that as modernists, post-modernists and integralists we want to appreciate the particular flavor of Islam, which is above all else an experience of the love of God. They pray five times a day. The sense of devotion, the sense of the suffering and pain of being separated from God, the gift of being obedient ... these are very, juicy and real for Muslims. It's actually something that from an evolutionary perspective, we want to knit that into a new sacred world.

We want to knit in the gifts of all the great religions, the gifts of the understanding of emptiness, of the love of God ... every religion has its own particular flavor and karmic stream that will be part of the fabric of the sacred world to come. We'll get all of it, but in the meantime we have to be friendly to each strand as it arises here.

Alright, so let's see. What are we doing? It's 7:51. Maybe we should close up with the ... we have a listener question, right Brett?

Brett: Yup, from Connie.

Jeff: Yeah. I love hearing from you. You can get with me at [jeff@dailyevolver.com](mailto:jeff@dailyevolver.com) by email, or you can go to the website [dailyevolver.com](http://dailyevolver.com), and there is a button a little way down the homepage where you can leave a voicemail. I get lots of voicemails, and I like to respond to them, some of them on the show.

On last week's podcast, I talked a lot about an integral conception of soul. We had just conducted the Integral Living Room, where we spent a lot of time and attention on that topic. I got a response from one of the listeners, Connie, and so let's play that. I think it's like a minute and a half. Here we go.

*Connie: Hi, Jeff. My name is Connie. I live in Los Angeles. I am an author, and spiritual teacher, and a liberal. My question to you after listening to your discussion about soul is, if your tradition or if your belief system does indeed believe in wholeness, does indeed believe that we are all one, does indeed believe in the unity of everything since the Big Bang, why do you still speak of soul as if it were a separate entity?*

*I hear you saying, "my soul," and, "your soul," and, "his soul." In my experience, soul is the unifying field, a united field of information from which we all draw, and it pulls us all. Not one at a time, but all toward a new way of being, eternally pulling us all. Why does it still sound like a one-man-one-soul world when I listen to integral discussions about soul?*

Jeff: Thank you, Connie. That's a terrific question, and it brings up a couple really important issues that confuse people. A lot of it really just depends on how you want to slice and dice unity, if you will. Connie and I are both using the same word, "soul," to mean some different things, so let's sort that out for a second, and then see where we are.

When you talk about the unity of everything, and wholeness, and a unified field ... both the West and the Eastern religions would consider that the realm of the absolute. Saints and sages of all times and place agree that there is a dimension of reality that is both infinite and eternal. It's not infinite in the sense that it's bazillions and bazillions of miles big. It's infinite in the sense that it is a dimension within which space arises, so it's outside of space. It's also eternal, not that it's

bazillions of years old, but in that it is beyond time, a dimension of reality within which time and space arise.

This absolute reality, within which time and space are arising, this reality is unborn. It's undying. It wasn't created. It doesn't evolve, which is interesting to integralists. There's no evolving in the absolute space. God doesn't evolve. Emptiness doesn't evolve. And according to the teachings of many religions you're not even allowed to say anything about it. There's the famous line from the Tao Te Ching that says, "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name."

Of course in the West there are traditions, such as Orthodox Judaism, where you are forbidden to say the name of God. In Islam, you can say the name of God but you can't represent Him in art, or statues or paintings. The human form is also prohibited in Islam because there's no way to represent the absolute dimension of reality within which everything arises. Our minds can't really go there. But our hearts can, and our guts, and our loins. We can get there in those ways, and we can feel our calling to that realization of Oneness or the absolute love of God.

And then there's the world of form, the world of manifest reality, multiplicity, everything that's happening: my life, me, you, it, the world, the weather, my dog. And it's not just material "things" that are part of the world of form, but it's also my consciousness, consciousness itself, the quadrants. In integral theory, they're part of form. So my thoughts, my individual Jeff-ness, my feelings, my body sensations, my subtle energies, these are all part of the world of form, and they're all liberated to the degree that I can realize that their source is in the Absolute.

I'll say that again: all my feelings, body sensations, subtle energies, all of those things are liberated to the degree that I realize their source in the absolute. Now that's a wonderful thing, to be able to feel that I'm in the lap of God, and no matter what happens to me I'm safe and all is well. Or, from the Eastern perspective, that I can turn my attention inward and examine my own experience, and tease apart the strands of my own suffering and to see that there's no inherent existence to any of it. That softens the whole experience.

Why do we have an individual soul versus the collective soul? (And from an integral perspective, we have both.) We are certainly part of the collective soul of humanity, which is not reducible to individual souls. It's its own juicy thing, that sort of liquid space between us where we're all swimming in that same sea of consciousness. And we can see from an integral perspective that the world of our collective consciousness is indeed magnetized to grow, that there is a world soul that is evolving.

The world of form does evolve, and we do that collectively, but we also do that individually. I think this is really interesting in terms of what's coming up in the integral world now, with the work of Ken Wilber when he talks about Spirit in first, second, and third person. And Steve McIntosh, when he talks about the enduring polarity between the absolute non-dual realization and the absolute love of God.

So do I have an individual Jeff-ness that precedes this life and maybe survives this life? I don't know the answer for a fact, because this stuff is unknowable in terms of the ways that we think that we need to know facts, but it still offers me a path of practice. So I want to do soul practice both collectively and individually ... to see that I'm part of the biggest community of humanity itself, and life itself ... and that within that, I am also this particular Jeff thing that has never existed before and never will again. Both of those perspectives are very exciting and very juicy.

Alright, so gosh, it's 8:00. I guess we'll wrap it up. We'll close with a little montage of some of the comments that we've been getting. Brett, play...what is it? Three or four minutes of comments?

Brett: Two and a half minutes.

John: *Hi, Jeff. John here from Springfield, Missouri. I need to say how much I enjoy and admire your show. I particularly enjoyed your recent look at the soul of conservatism. For someone who's been around the track more times than seems possible, but always with a deep felt genetic conservative disposition, I so much appreciate your take on my small corner of the integral world.*

*As a personal aside, how I chuckled and resonated with your observation of an Enneagram 5 desperate for his cozy fire-side chair where he can sit alone and think. You're right on about your observation that the "good" component of the Big 3 is the best and probably only effective way out of the 5's, sometimes painful isolation. Thanks again for your good work. Your outreach is so very welcome.*

Peter: *Hey, Jeff. This is Peter from Toronto, Canada. I just finished listening to Trans-Rational Theory of the Soul. Great show as usual. I'm a big fan obviously. I did have one challenge with the show, and that had to do with the topic of conservatism and how it relates to integral theory. I did not find the arguments that were presented by the guest compelling in any way.*

*In fact, I found that the case was confused and also undermined any argument that conservatism should be placed on the same developmental stage as liberalism. Quite quickly, there was a conflation between political theory, and the psychologies and values that come with each of the...how we might define conservative and liberal, and was conflated with political partisanship.*

*I think it's quite clear that there is a disconnect of sorts that is so messy on the right that one cannot take it seriously at all as any kind of political theory anymore. There is massive blind spots there and huge psychological issues, to be honest with you, that I see and emotional issues that are wreaking havoc in the world from climate change to the injustices that's out there too.*

Noelle: *Hi, Jeff. This is Noelle here. Just wanted to say thank you for this beautiful talk with Amma. It really touched my heart. As you say, I think she has a power of transmission, and I'm very happy to see how she's doing so well in the US. Thank you, Jeff, for all the connections you allow us through your radio show.*

Jeff: All right, thank you all so much for your feedback. It's really such a privilege to be engaging these issues from an integral perspective, and to know that I'm not alone, and that you're noodling this out with me. Again, thank you for listening to The Daily Evolver. This is Jeff Salzman signing off. See you next week!