

Turquoise

Value systems are an interaction between the psyche and life conditions, and as noted before, at this point in history **yellow** is emerging in several places on the planet, although there are no parts of our society that we can truly describe as **yellow**.

Turquoise, which is the subsequent system, is not at all present in our society yet, and in fact we have just a very limited idea of what this will look like. Imagine trying, 200 years ago when **orange** had yet to develop, to describe how **green** would manifest itself in our society. People would have had no idea of the politics of tolerance, the hippy scene in Amsterdam and elsewhere, or the social welfare system. Despite this limitation, we shall nonetheless attempt to sketch how **turquoise** might manifest itself in people and in the life conditions.

Graves's description

In the later part of his research, after defining value systems until **yellow**, Graves discovered that 6 people who initially carried out assignments with a **yellow** mindset, at a certain point starting thinking and acting from a different value system which he began to consider an eighth level, and which we now term **turquoise**.

The participants examined their inner world in a manner that he found odd and paradoxical. He writes that they started using it as if it were a new toy, with the full awareness that they could never fully comprehend their own inner world. They saw the notion of 'knowing yourself' as absurd; how could a human being ever understand the permutation of eleven billion cells, each connected in tens of thousands of ways? Graves describes this as an existential bifurcation: the group realizes the importance of life, better than others, but at the same time realizes that our existence as an independent individual is totally insignificant.

Graves further describes **turquoise** as an *intuitive* existence with 'experientialistic' values. He sees how **turquoise** is interested in the vast areas of our consciousness of which we have no inkling, as yet. **Turquoise** values the sense of wonder, of astonishment, humility, unification, holism, simplicity, the poetic perception of reality, expansion of consciousness, and experiencing without wishing to take control. People wish to escape the entanglement of their own thoughts and ideas and the technological assets of the modern era. People appreciate the hugely rich world of interconnection and pure fluid beauty and the naked reality of now self-aware life.

Graves refers to **turquoise** as "the infinite level of human ethics". In **turquoise**, people believe that it is good to have faith in the innate goodness of people and their different values, and there is appreciation for those values. For example, the appreciation for the autonomy and self-agency in the **red** system or for the value of knowledge in the **orange** system.

In **turquoise**, people realize that there is so much that we will never be able to comprehend. They realize that how people have sought to solve problems so far is inadequate, and that we must actually rediscover all knowledge at a new level, by adding the intuitive dimension.

Now that **yellow** has ensured the survival of the world, it is up to **turquoise** to restore all parts to unity and to reintroduce stability. Human beings will need to start relating to each other and to nature in a new way, so that the balance in nature will not again be disrupted. Since **yellow** has solved the survival issues, **turquoise** moreover has the room to discover and experience the more profound aspects of life.

Just like **yellow**, **turquoise** is not much interested in gaining the esteem and praise of others, is not out to impress others, and will not laud himself. Still, he will assume leadership if he feels it incumbent on him to do so, but he attaches no value to the associated power or fame. **Turquoise** will not adapt to the system or the authorities; not out of rebellion, but simply because he does not see the need.

Contemporary interpretation

Graves qualified his description of **turquoise** as speculative, and he was keenly aware of the fact that he could only describe the first contours of this system. Now, decades later, we know a bit more about **turquoise**, although we will only really get to know the system once it begins to manifest itself in our society.

What we write here is based on the work of many others that came after Graves, with a special emphasis on the interpretation of **turquoise** in relation to the life conditions to which it is a response. Spiritual experiences are feeding a lot of speculation about turquoise and the value systems beyond that, but we shall leave this work largely undiscussed.

Holism

In **yellow**, the cognitive awareness arose of how everything in existence is connected to each other, and life is recognized as a complex organic system. This sense of unity enables **yellow** to find much more effective solutions for contemporary problems.

In **turquoise**, people not only realize that everything is interconnected, but it transforms into a personal experience. One's own thoughts, feelings and sensations are seen as subjective and as just an interpretation of reality. People experience that, beyond these personal experiences, at a more profound level everything is One.

Experiences of oneness have been described since the beginning of time and occur in all value systems. However, in **turquoise** it is not a momentary awareness but a constant deep knowledge that leads one's thoughts and actions, and that therefore becomes manifest in society.

Difference between green and turquoise

For people centered in **green**, Graves's description of how **turquoise** perceives the world and the sense of unity is attractive, as there is in **green** a renewed interest in the inner experience. Thus, there is much interest in meditation and spirituality in **green**.

However, it is important to realize that, in **green**, how we think and act is driven by the search for personal harmony, in which our own experience and perception are leading. Being occupied with one's inner world is often a goal in itself, which creates a sense of harmony but also and especially shuts us off from obstinate reality and all the suffering in the world. In its pursuit of the euphoric experience of unity, **green** would rather shut out people and experiences that disrupt the harmony.

Where **green** in fact searches for the experience of oneness outside itself, namely by experiencing harmony within a group of like-minded others, in **turquoise** this experience is fully internalized and the focus is no longer on euphoria or on 'feeling good'. Feelings are now like clouds that drift by.

Turquoise is aware of its own experience but is acutely aware of the fact that this is just a minute part of a much vaster whole. It is a profound knowledge that goes beyond any cognitive understanding, and it no longer requires meditation or seclusion to experience it. **Turquoise** retains this sense of unity, even when confronted with the painful reality of earthly existence, and perceives how all the commotion, violence and suffering in the world is part of the One reality.

Since one's own sense and experience of personal harmony has become a secondary matter, actions by **turquoise** will be geared to the interests of the world and the universe as a whole. This may mean that **turquoise** does things that are unpleasant for the person individually, but that do serve the interest of the larger whole, yet without seeing this as self-sacrifice: a human being should do what a human being must do.

Into the cosmos

The moment that human beings entered outer space and visited the moon was an important turning point that gave **turquoise** a strong boost. For the first time we could see the earth as a whole: a tiny vulnerable globe spinning in infinite space, and shared by all life. The earth was no longer the center of our universe, but our home within an infinite cosmos.

Many astronauts have described the profound effect that their space travel had on themselves and how it changed their perception of reality. As Edgar Mitchell said: *"That's a powerful experience, to see Earth rise over the surface of the Moon. And I suddenly realized that the molecules in my body, and the molecules in the spacecraft and my partners had been prototyped, maybe even manufactured, in some ancient generation of stars. But instead of being an intellectual experience, it was a personal feeling... And that was accompanied by a sense of joy and ecstasy, which caused me to say 'What is this?' It was only after I came back that I did the research and found that the term in ancient Sanskrit was Samadhi."*

Mitchell clearly describes the transformation from cognitive knowledge to inner knowing. The intense experience of his trip into space apparently served as a catalyst, and in his case it gave his life an entirely new direction. Such an experience is perceived as timeless: what actually occurs in just a fraction of a second can be perceived as an eternity; it could also be described as stepping out of time. It is also referred to as a non-dual experience: an experience of oneness that transcends our familiar context of duality in which we perceive everything as being distinct and separate. It may well be that the near-death experiences as reported by some people are a comparable brief escape from our duality.

It is important to realize that having such an experience of oneness does not mean that we have suddenly taken on a new value system. It should instead be compared to a brief glimpse over the rim, after which we 'fall back' into our familiar (dualistic) consciousness. The experience fades away and our old systems reassert themselves, but

for some, the profundity of the experience never fades away and is therefore 'life-changing'.

Our life conditions appeals to other value systems. However, as the world evolves further, in time the combination of changed life conditions and the development of our psyches will ensure that steadily more people become centered in **turquoise**. This will likely see an integration of the mystical and cognitive experiences, so that the borderline between religion and science will also be transcended.

Although some spiritual teachers encourage people to work on their own spiritual development in order to bring humanity to **turquoise**, it seems improbable that this path will prove effective, certainly seeing the limited success of these teachers and their communities in this respect. Meditation and comparable forms such as contemplation are excellent ways of cultivating calm within our daily hustle and bustle and to remind us of the unity within which we exist. But there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that this will cause a successive value system to take root within us.

Moral awareness

Graves writes about the profound moral awareness of **turquoise**, and we can see how this value system aims to restore unity in the world. We can therefore expect that **turquoise** will put an end to much of the unnecessary suffering in the world and will be compassionate with other people's fate. Yet it is important to note that **turquoise** will not do so, as **green** does, to experience personal harmony, but is simply motivated by the awareness that the suffering inflicted on a single individual inescapably afflicts mankind as a whole. **Turquoise** perceives in a very direct manner that all matter and all forms of life are immediately connected and that an imbalance in any part of the system affects all components.

The emergence of turquoise

Quite likely, the mystics that founded the world religions were inspired by the same awareness of unity that lies at the heart of turquoise. Sacred texts such as the Vedas (1500-1000 BC) that formed the basis of Hinduism, the Tao Te Ching (300 BC) that spawned Taoism, and the Bible with notions such as the Holy Trinity – 'the father, son and holy ghost' – testify to this. However, since the life conditions were very different at the time and society was much less complex, we cannot speak of **turquoise** here. Nevertheless, throughout the age there have been mystics in for example India who managed to maintain their awareness of oneness, albeit in the seclusion from society offered by ashrams.

It is only in the early 20th century that we start to see a growing number of people develop contact with **turquoise**. In India, the spiritual teachers Jiddu Krishnamurti and Sri Aurobindo begin to place spirituality and consciousness in an evolutionary perspective, describing the development of a higher consciousness and its effects on society. This signals a first step towards **turquoise**.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1926), in his quest to reconcile religion with the theory of evolution, described how things are interconnected in what he termed the 'noosphere', which very much fits the **turquoise** worldview. And at around the same time, in the technological domain, Nikola Tesla saw the potential to provide everyone with 'free energy': a concept for which he only managed to develop a prototype, which

mysteriously disappeared after his death. Vigorous efforts are currently underway to revive his ideas.

We see this as a **turquoise** technology, not just because it draws on scientific insights that incorporate non-visible reality (such as the ether), but also because of its potential effect on society. At present we inhabit a highly power-driven world in which the limited availability of energy resources results in a concentration of power. If energy becomes freely available, this power structure will break down, creating more room for a true 'global village'. Incidentally, this goal can also be accomplished with **yellow** technologies, for example by using solar energy to meet energy demands at the local level.

Despite the fact that most of science is actually trapped in the **orange** paradigm of a material world, in recent decades we are increasingly seeing research that transcends this paradigm. For example, Rupert Sheldrake researches and publishes on 'morphogenetic fields' that cause individual discoveries and experiences to as it were be inscribed in a collective field of consciousness, accessible to all. This not only applies for humans but also for animals and even plants.

Repetition in the second bandwidth ('2nd tier')

Graves raised the idea that in the second bandwidth, from **yellow** on, the first six value systems are repeated but at a more complex level. **Yellow** repeats **beige**, except that the focus is not on the survival of the individual human body (as in **beige**) but of mankind as a whole. **Turquoise** would then be the continuation of **purple**. Whereas in **purple**, the human being unconditionally becomes part of his family, **turquoise** recognizes that everything is part of a single ecological system, and acts accordingly. **Turquoise** draws wisdom from all preceding value systems, and the technological knowledge of **orange** will be valued just as much as the intuition of **purple**.

Comparison with models of ego development

A further insight into the qualities of the **turquoise** individual is offered by e.g. Loevinger and Cook-Greuter's work on the development of the ego. Their description of the 'Unitive Stage' enhances our understanding of **turquoise**: "People in this stage have a cosmic and universal perspective and see themselves as part of an ongoing, steadily evolving mankind. They feel a part of nature and realize that, no matter how great their deeds may be, they are but a drop in the ocean of human existence. They respect other people's essence, also if they are in different stages of development, and for that reason feel no need to change people. Because they accept themselves as they are, they feel no need to exercise control over anything at all. As a result they can easily interact with all sorts of people, irrespective of their stage of development, age, background, etc.". They perceive the distinction between self and others as illusory. They operate in an expansive era that encompasses the entire history and future of the planet earth. They see rationality and intuition as equivalent, and would heartily endorse the Buddhist saying that "comprehension is the ultimate illusion".

Turquoise and organizations

We do not examine **turquoise** in relation to organizations here, as this would be highly speculative. Most of the complex organizations today are struggling to integrate **green** in a wholesome manner, and a small number of them are aware of **yellow**, but that's as far as it goes.

Finally

Although it might seem ideal if all mankind were to start acting on the basis of ***turquoise***, according to Graves's philosophy this will inevitably create new problems that will need to be solved by a subsequent and yet more complex level. Graves referred to this as 'The never ending quest'.

Auke van Nimwegen and Paul Zuiker