

Wham! Gigantic graphic right off the bat. However intimidating this may seem, I have chosen the simplest way to demonstrate some information within each quadrant and how it is co-affecting the others to create one greater picture of events. I'm not gonna sugar coat this one, there is a lot here. The good news however, is that we have already looked at one quarter of this; the complicated one in the upper left, the "1" quadrant.

As a brief summary, we saw that all developmental lines, like the three above as well as ones like Kinesthetic or Musical, in addition to the dozen others, progress through three basic stages Pre-Conventional → Conventional → Post-Conventional as indicated by the circles. The innermost being Pre-Conventional growing holarchically outward towards greater inclusion. They are building blocks or skills that build upon each other towards greater information and depth of understanding unlocking previously unknown perspectives.

Let's dive into the deep history and the historical trends of the past remembering to look at the relationships between what one piece of information looks like through each lens of the four quadrants and how it resonates in all four.

Last disclaimer, it goes beyond my ability to mention every researcher or even dive into the depths of each one's work myself, and as such have taken those sourced by Wilber. We will be referencing information from some of the following people, Jurgen Habermas, Janet Chavits, Joyce Nielson, Clare Graves, Gerhard Lenski, and Jean Gebser.

Step 1 of 5 - Foraging (starting from around 1 million - 400,000 years ago / Pre-homo-sapien)

(Magenta - This colour code is by Ken Wilber's convention though other systems exist. It is a colour convention to help more easily talk about the developmental levels of growth and a person's individual center of gravity which we will touch on later)

If we start in pre-history when our ancestors were more animalistic and look at their society, what do we see?

In the bottom right, we can see their system of production was Foraging otherwise called hunter gatherer societies. In 97% of these societies, men hunted while women gathered and took care of the children. The reason it is almost universal that men hunted while women gathered was evolutionarily advantageous where hunting could be lethal and women are better suited in this environment to raise children. These were nomadic pre-people with simple lives.

Their tools, upper right, to help within the production system were primitive stone tools used by hand.

Moving to the lower left quadrant to see the how this environment above looked culturally. Here we see the cultural worldview of Archaic meaning that these early humans were basic animals with a worldview reflecting that. These were pre-egoic creatures that did not place great value on anything other than existence. The world would have been a place of struggle for survival and ensurance of food. These nomads were matrifocal, although not mother dominant, matriarchal, they did have roughly similar levels of equality between men and women and would often trace ancestry through women. However, the equality here means that both value spheres of men and women were equally not valued at all. These pre-egoic animals do not yet have the hubris to project value to areas of their life.

This worldview is described in similar language in the upper left by Maslow. The first stage of his hierarchy is physiological needs. Really focusing on the most important aspects of base existence. Clare Graves answers "what do they value?" and shows the values of individuals in this environment as valuing safety.

As we move around the quadrants we can start to see similarities and relationships between different independently done research from within differing fields. The trends continue, as will we.

Step 2 of 5 - Horticultural (starting around 10,000 BCE generally after the last ice age) (Red)

As life goes on and develops, as we stated in our assumptions from the beginning, development is going to be holarchical. That is to say that the existing skills will be used in novel ways to bring about more than what came before it, while simultaneously including those skills going forward. As such, the simple nomads blossom into a new dawning of a previously unknown world with much greater horizons and in some ways very different perspectives.

This emergent property of holarchical growth allowed the Foraging societies to move into Horticultural ones. The novelty in this quadrant, bottom right, has been a shift of production from simply hunting and gathering for basics to reliably growing basic foods. Someone at the time had learned that planting seeds made food production more predictable. No longer were these people going to struggle for the basics and nomadically go where the food was. They had now moved beyond the previous epoch's limitations of gathering and been plunged into the depths of greater opportunity. Their production increased as did their quality of life and as such, this practice caught on over time. Men however, still mainly went off to hunt rather unsuccessfully and remained the main line of defense.

Their tools in the upper right changed also. There was novelty in the creation and use of a hoe or a simple digging stick to help plant seeds. This simple device and the creativity that necessitated it, was sufficient for increasing food production.

This food production was such a boon to society that it really affected the rest of life. At the same time, culture in the bottom left started to see the world differently. This was also the time of the development of the ego. These early people now had a sense of self and in turn started putting their belief and value into areas of their lives. The status of men and women was more or less equal, represented in the gods they believed in. Of these horticultural societies, about one third had female only deities, a third male only, and a third male and female. About 80% of food was produced by women in these societies that had a cultural belief of Gaia, or Mother Earth, or the Great Mother and anywhere horticultural societies are found, they all have the Great Mother tradition expressed in their beliefs. This worldview of "magic" was a big step forward in our history. This worldview is called magic, because these early, now egoic, people believed in their own ability to manipulate the world around them. The sun rose and set for them so to speak. These were small tribes of tightly knit familial groups who had to compete now for safety and power instead of simply competing for food.

As we look to the top left at the internal values of individuals in these societies, we see, Graves' value for this level of development is "power" which seeks control. Maslow's research again agreeing and being labeled "safety needs". These people sought safety and security while trying to control the world around them with egocentric power.

Step 3 of 5 - Agrarian (starting around 4000 BCE - 2000 BCE)
(Blue)

For this next wave of progression, in the bottom right, we see that Horticultural societies gave way to Agrarian ones. These two modes of production are both farming, however there is an important difference. Someone along the way essentially decided to take the simple hoe from horticultural use and attach it to an animal. The newly invented plough was part of the next set of game changers. So, now that people had this new invention, top right, for this new society, bottom right, they were able to overcome the limits of horticultural production by hand and put it in terms of animal power. This came with some big changes.

See, up until this time, previous societies had really depended on women for food production, and so women were the ones to take off into the fields with the animals to plough. The problem at this point in time, however, was that women had significantly higher rates of miscarriage working this way as opposed to with a simple hoe. As a result, the situation required men to work for food production and move away from hunting. This started to change the value spheres. The male value sphere was now pulled away from hunting, towards a productive sphere. The female value sphere was now focused solely on a reproductive sphere. And thus came to be the male public production and female private reproduction.

How did this big step change look in the cultural lower left and the individual values in the upper left? Well, the egocentric power of “magic” horticulture gave way to ethnocentric prayer of “mythic” agriculture. This mythic level of worldview is one where the people expanded their horizons once more. The selfish tribes fighting one another were now able to go trans-tribal. An expansion of inclusion could now be spread based upon a shared mythical belief. The updated values for the time valued conformity. Being able to follow orders from authority, obey tradition, and follow belief were amongst top values in the Values line. In the needs line, Maslow calls them belongingness and love needs.

It is also important to mention that because of the big change from women producing most of the food to now men being the sole producers, beliefs changed too. From the very balanced gender of gods and goddesses in a pantheon of gods, they changed towards almost entirely (>90%) male gods. This was the start towards monotheistic religions which were all coming into their own in agrarian societies.

Additionally, as a result of this agrarian mode of production, massive surpluses in food stores were, for the first time in history, able to free up people from the task of labour. Men who worked in the public sphere of production, religion, and politics now had the opportunity to start into other areas of inquiry. Only at this point in time do we have the birth of philosophy; the inventions of mathematics, writing, metallurgy, and specialized warfare.

Step 4 of 5 - Industrial (starting in the 18th century)
(Orange)

This next level of depth, within the lines of human development that we have seen, now presents us with the Industrial mode of production in the lower right. The big leap from simple horses to horsepower. The big leap in tools, top right, was the shift to machine power and with it massive gains in production, in turn leading to new ways to see the world and ideas of how to interact.

In the lower left, the culture transcended and included the past and brought us the “Rational” worldview. This worldview is one focused on data and numbers to show rationally a course of action. The idea of merit for performance and being results focused took this socio-centric worldview further than the limits of the previous ethnocentric worldview. Again, one more increasing step of inclusion, this time towards society and production over ethnicity; all in the name of getting shit done.

Prosperity is Graves' term for the value system at this level of development. Maslow's needs calls this Esteem needs, feeling accomplished.

It is important to note in this developmental level that machine work was part of the transcending and including of manual labour to greatly deemphasize the need for physical strength to create production. Only at this time, never before, was the introduction of the idea of equal rights for women as evidenced by Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* published in 1792. With this new worldview, new, greater opportunity gets explored.

Step 5 of 5 - Informational (starting around the 1960's)
(Green)

Then came the start of the informational mode of production, lower right, with the tool, upper right, of the computer. We had once again broadened our horizons from the sociocentric worldview of the Industrial age and now moved towards a more world-centric view.

This world-centric viewpoint is “Pluralistic”. It makes room for all perspectives without judgement or ranking. The value is communitarian; focused on relationships, accepting difference and diversity. Maslow had self-actualization needs for one's full creative potential.

The first time this “Pluralistic” culture was seen on the world stage was the hippy revolution of the sixties. Really exploring the opportunity for equality for all, love and peace without discrimination or judgement.

Quick Summary

So we came from foraging societies not valuing more than existence who saw an archaic world seeking protection, to egocentric tribes selfishly surviving for power, to ethnocentric mythic memberships seeking conformity like all major modern religions, to sociocentric rational industry as well as the rise of feminism both seeking to achieve, to world-centric pluralistic relativistic hippy love seeking acceptance for diversity and difference.

Our development, however, hasn't stopped. We are quickly heading towards our next great epoch. One with a worldview, bottom left, of “Integral” (Yellow), an interior value, upper left, that is systemic or holistic. Thus far, a mode of production has yet to emerge as well as a definitive tool for the job.

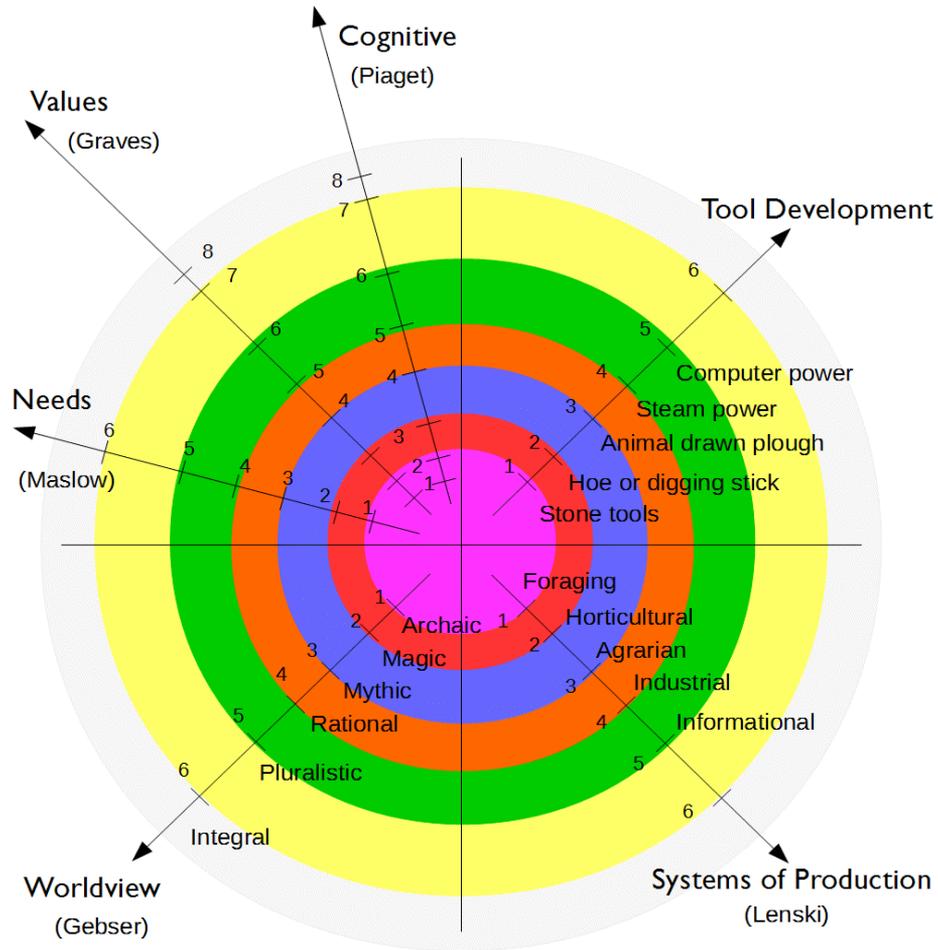
States and Types

Now, when we look at the story of humans we should be trying to do it as clearly and as concisely as possible. Ken Wilber calls it AQAL (pronounced /awk wul/) standing for all quadrant, all level, all line, all state and all type. Together, these are the five aspects to keep in mind to deeply understand the multiple facets of one thing, be it a person, event, or otherwise. Which is to say, keep in mind the four quadrants, and the lines within each, as well as the level which each line could be at, which is impacted also by your state of consciousness, and typology framework.

A mouthful no doubt, though the last two were the only ones not mentioned yet. The states of consciousness are waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. Because these are possible by anyone even children, they shouldn't be ignored. However, we won't get into this further.

The last, typology, can be any types one divides life into. For example, male and female types or zodiac sign typology. The world experienced through these different types will vary depending upon type. Simply look at how history would have been for you as one type or another. In this way, Wilber uses an AQAL, all quadrant, all level, all line, all state, and all type approach to most effectively paint the most clear pictures yet of ourselves, others and the world around us.

What is very important to note, and I will leave you with, is the fact that not only has this been our developmental path as a species, though it is also our individual developmental unfolding in life; from (Magenta) archaic newborns, to (Red) egocentric toddlers surviving for power, to (Blue) ethnocentric mythic conformity, to (Orange) individualistic rational achievement, to (Green) pluralistic acceptance, and onward to (Yellow) integral also known as holistic. Integral is not the end as we continue to transcend and include. However, these colours can help us to quickly recall the levels and help us relate to and remember the developmental stages better. In other words, it provides more info; more colour to our world.



If you have been able to follow to now, awesome! Understanding AQAL, even a little bit, will help to improve your standard of living. AQAL is simply a map to remind you what to “look for” out there in reality, how to organize the information of life to pick out the important truths and overcome limitations.