

Wilber's AQAL Map and Beyond

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Prologue

I begin this book with an exposition of Wilber's innovative AQAL Map of the Kosmos (Like Wilber, I write Kosmos with a capital K to indicate that it refers not only to the physical cosmos but to all domains of existence from matter to spirit). It seems to me that Wilber's map is an excellent point of departure for a further exploration of new ways of thinking because it is very comprehensive and easily accessible, has been worked out in considerable detail, and has the potential to fundamentally affect in a very beneficial way all aspects of our lives and society (see, for example, his *Integral Operating System* [2005d] and *The Life Practice Starter Kit* by his Integral Institute [2006]). His map has, however, limitations. Many of these limitations have been pointed out by Frank Visser, Jeff Meyerhoff, M. Alan Kazlev, Hugh & Amalia Kaye Martin and others in Frank Visser's comprehensive website <http://www.integralworld.net> and elsewhere. In the first part of this book I focus on some of the most fundamental limitations and show how they can be overcome by new and old, even ancient, ways of thinking that have been ignored or neglected in Wilber's map.

In the second part of this book I present a new map in the form of a dynamic mandala that can be interpreted and transformed in many ways. Since each transformation is another mandala, this map is a mandala of mandalas, or a map of maps, or a set of maps, each of which can be interpreted in different ways. Since one of these transformations and interpretations is Wilber's map, his map is a special case of the more inclusive map of maps that integrates all the ways of thinking I present in the first part of this book.

Why are maps important? The function of a map is to guide us. If a territory is not represented on a map, it fails to guide us to this territory. For example, if Kingston in Ontario is not represented on a map, this map cannot help us to find Kingston. Similarly, if certain ways of thinking and being are not represented on a map, this map cannot lead us towards these ways. For example, if a map is based solely on either/or thinking, it cannot help us to discover Yin-Yang, continuum, and network thinking, and thus vast areas of thinking are excluded. Or if transpersonal states and stages are excluded in a map, this map fails to draw our attention to these important realms of being.

Now, since each single map is limited one way or another, a multitude of maps obviously is much more encompassing than any single map. One of the novelties this book offers is such a multitude of maps that are integrated in a dynamic map of maps or mandala of mandalas.

Conceiving and accepting a multitude of maps is important in many ways. It develops and cultivates in us a flexibility of thinking and being that brings us in tune with the fluidity of the Kosmos. It teaches us the art of letting go, that is, not clinging to only one view and experience, while resisting or rejecting other complementary views and experiences that can be enormously enriching and thus can create deeper understanding, tolerance, and peace in our world that is dangerously torn apart by antagonistic modes of thinking and being. In general, contemplation of the plurality of maps (that are mandalas) can lead to profound insights into ourselves, the world, the Kosmos, reality. And thus it can contribute to liberation from many misconceptions, misunderstandings, suffering, sickness, and can lead to a more profound happiness (see, e.g., H.H. The Dalai Lama and Cutler 1998).

Both Wilber's AQAL map and the mandala of this book acknowledge transpersonal states and stages in which the thinking mind has been transcended to reveal no-mind or Big Mind (that is beyond the thinking mind). At times we reach such states spontaneously, but more often through prolonged and regular contemplation and meditation. Contemplation of the mandala can lead us to its center, which represents the unnamable, the mystery of our personal existence and the Kosmos, or emptiness in the Buddhist sense (see, e.g., Tenzin Gyatso, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama 2005). Meditation can liberate us from the limitations of the fragmenting thinking mind—meditation in its various forms ranging from sitting to standing meditation, and from walking to dancing to laughing meditation.

In Western culture that has been so deeply entrenched in the mental, rational structure of consciousness, any attempt to go beyond the thinking mind is often met with suspicion, if not total condemnation. However, sages and seers, and even some philosophers and scientists, have always been aware of realms beyond the thinking mind. For example, Albert Einstein, the great physicist and philosopher, wrote: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science... To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religiousness" (Einstein, quoted by Ravindra 2000).

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Introduction

Wilber's AQAL Map

Ken Wilber is “the world’s most widely published philosopher,” whose “books have been translated into 30 languages” (Meyerhoff 2005). Since he offers a synthesis of science, philosophy, and spirituality, he has been called a spiritual and integral philosopher. His AQAL map of the Kosmos (to which I also refer simply as his map or his AQAL map) is among the most encompassing maps ever devised in the course of human history. It is highly significant and important because it is relevant to all aspects of life and can help to improve the post/modern predicament.

Physicists have also developed increasingly comprehensive maps and theories. Nowadays they seem to be at the verge of unifying the four forces known in physics; in this connection some of them have referred to a Theory of Everything. We must, however, keep in mind that even if they succeed in developing such a theory, it is only a scientific theory of physics. Being objective, it leaves out the subjective realm, personal and transpersonal human experience. Furthermore, it leaves out art and morals as well as biology, psychology, and the social sciences.

Some thinkers have integrated more than matter into their theories. For example, Laszlo's (2004) “integral theory of everything” comprises matter, life, and consciousness; but it is still primarily a scientific vision, although he supplemented it with a poetic rendition that appeals to our hearts and guts.

Wilber's map comprises the self, culture, and nature; the I, you/we, and it; art, morals, and science; interior and exterior, individual and collective views of reality; objectivity and subjectivity, and with regard to the latter, personal and transpersonal experiences, including religious and mystical experience, Eastern and Western. This synthesis of all of these realms is applied to many fields of society and human endeavor such as science, including medicine and environmentalism, business, law, politics, education, philosophy, religion, art, spirituality, psychoanalysis, and personal existence. Because of this extraordinary comprehensiveness, Wilber himself referred to his map as a “Theory of Everything” (Wilber 2001). This theory obviously is far beyond the Theory of Everything scientists are talking about. Maybe it would be more appropriate to refer to it as an integral vision of everything as Wilber (2007) himself has done.

But is it indeed an integral theory or vision of *everything*? Although Wilber (2006: 2) considers his map “the most complete and accurate map we have at this time,” he

emphasizes that a map is always simplified to some extent—it is impossible to accommodate *everything* in a single map. Therefore, “*everything*” has a special meaning in Wilber’s books such as *A Brief History of Everything* (Wilber 1996, 2000) and *A Theory of Everything* (Wilber 2001). Clearly, “*everything*” can only mean major aspects or realms of reality (Wilber 2000a: 197; 2003, Tape 1). A synthesis of these major aspects or realms is indeed an enormous achievement and deserves to be called an integral vision. However, as Meyerhoff (2005-7) and others have pointed out, Wilber often exaggerates the level of agreement in the scientific community regarding the claims he makes, selects only some sources of information that support his views, disregards other conflicting sources, and sometimes misrepresents sources. This limits the scope of his integration considerably.

Now let us look at Wilber’s AQAL map of the Kosmos. It originated from the Great Chain of Being, which by many, though not everybody, is considered the core of the world’s wisdom traditions. Over the years Wilber has become increasingly critical of the Great Chain but retained its hierarchical structure (see, e.g., Wilber 2007: 213-229). Instead of the Great Chain, he prefers to refer to the Great Nest of Being because this indicates more clearly that it is a hierarchy in the sense of a holarchy (see Chapter 1). In its simplest form this hierarchy has only two or three levels, namely, matter and spirit, or matter, mind and spirit; but up to over twenty levels may be differentiated. Traditionally, often five levels are distinguished: matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit (see Fig. 1–2 in Chapter 1). Fig. 1–1 represents four levels: matter, body, mind, and spirit. Regardless of how many levels are distinguished, each successive level includes and transcends its predecessor(s). Thus, in the simple hierarchy of Figure 1–1, body includes and transcends matter, mind includes and transcends body and matter, and spirit includes and transcends mind, body, and matter as the concentric circles graphically indicate it. Each circle can be compared to a nest and thus the most inclusive circle, which is spirit, is the Great Nest of Being that includes all other levels.

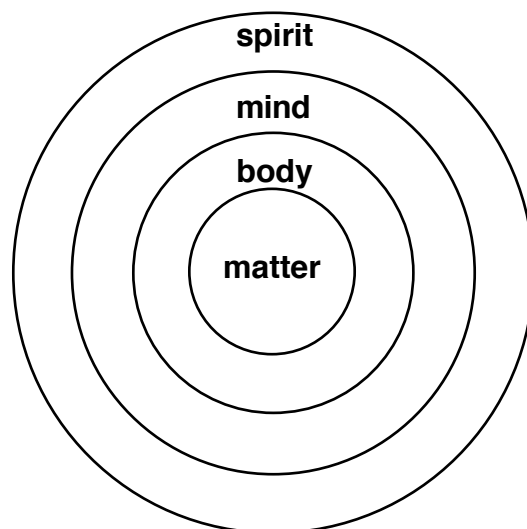


Figure I-1. A simple representation of the Great Nest of Being (for a more complete representation that also includes the level of the soul see Fig. 1-2).

Instead of levels, Wilber often refers to stages or waves. Since the publication of the first edition of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (1995), Wilber distinguishes four aspects of the waves, stages, or levels: an interior and exterior aspect, both of which have an individual and collective aspect. With regard to the circular map of Figure I-1, this means that it has to be divided into the following four quadrants: the upper left interior-individual quadrant, the lower left interior-collective quadrant, the upper right exterior-individual quadrant, and the lower right exterior-collective quadrant (see, for example, The AQAL Holon in http://www.kheper.net/Wilber/Wilber_IV.html, or recent books by Wilber such as *Integral Spirituality* (Wilber 2006: 20) or *The Integral Vision* (2007: 70) or Fig. 5-5 (in Chapter 5 of this book). In excerpts from the forthcoming second volume of his Kosmos trilogy (2005a,b) and in *Integral Spirituality* (2006), Wilber pointed out that in each quadrant an inside and outside view has to be distinguished. “The outside view is how it **looks**, the inside view is how it **feels**” (Wilber 2006: 154). Altogether the outside and inside views of the four quadrants constitute eight views disclosing eight zones. Since each view and zone has its own distinctive methodology, this leads to an “Integral Methodological Pluralism” (Wilber 2006). Each methodology, with the insights it provides, presents a different perspective of reality. According to Wilber’s (2006) “Integral Post-Metaphysics,” there are no perceptions of a given manifest reality because there is no given manifest reality. Manifest reality is a construction based on evidence: it is “the realm of perspectives, not things nor events nor structures nor processes nor systems nor *vasanas* nor archetypes nor *dharmas*, because all of those are perspectives before they are anything else, and cannot be adopted or even stated without first assuming a perspective” (Wilber 2006: 42).

In contrast to the traditional Great Chain or Nest of Being, in the four quadrant model matter is no longer at the basis of all levels, but instead is the exterior (that is, the right quadrants) of all levels (Wilber 2005b, Figure 4). This means that each level of consciousness in the interior left quadrants has a corresponding level of matter in the right quadrants (Wilber 2005c). Since modern science has shown that matter is related to and can be transformed into energy, matter (in the right quadrants) has to be understood as matter/energy. Furthermore, matter spans the whole range from gross to subtle to very subtle. The gross level, that we are normally accustomed to, is the exterior view of the body; the subtle level is the exterior view of the mind; and the causal level, which represents the subtlest energy, is the exterior view of spirit. There are further correspondences between the upper individual quadrants and the lower collective quadrants (see The AQAL Holon in http://www.kheper.net/Wilber/Wilber_IV.html).

Since both right quadrants represent science (that deals objectively with the exterior view), they can be combined. Then only three cosmic dimensions are distinguished, which Wilber calls "The Big Three": the interior of the individual, the self; the interior of the collective, culture; and the exterior of the individual and collective, nature; or, from another perspective, art, morals, and science; or the Beautiful, the Good, and the True.

Within the four quadrants or the Big Three, Wilber distinguishes a varying number of levels, stages, or waves. He notes that the number of levels is somewhat arbitrary, referring to the analogy of a building where we can distinguish as many levels as there are floors or steps in the stairs that connect the floors. In the simplest version of his map only three levels are indicated: body, mind, spirit in the upper left quadrant and corresponding levels in the other quadrants. In the most complete version of his map seventeen levels are implied of which thirteen are listed. The central point from which everything radiates represents the Big Bang and the numbered stages indicate evolutionary and developmental levels in time. Without going into the detail of all the stages, let me only highlight some of the stages that I shall refer to in the following chapters. In the upper left quadrant evolution led from atoms to molecules to (prokaryotic and eukaryotic) cells to neuronal organism with increasingly complex brains. The lower right quadrant represents corresponding stages of the collective in which the individuals of the upper right quadrant evolved. Thus, atoms evolved in galaxies, molecules on planets, and so on. The upper left quadrant represents the individual interior aspect of evolution, that is consciousness. It ranges from prehension, the proto-consciousness of atoms and molecules, to irritability of prokaryotic cells such as bacteria, to sensation, perception, impulse, and emotion in organisms with increasingly evolved brains. Finally,

with the evolution of the human species, consciousness proceeds to the use of symbols, concepts, rules, formal reasoning, vision-logic (see below), and four transpersonal stages that are not explicitly indicated in the usual representation of the most complete version of his map (see, e.g., The AQAL Holon in http://www.kheper.net/topics/Wilber/Wilber_IV.html, or Integral Spirituality [Wilber 2006: 250]). The highest of these transpersonal stages is the Nondual. Although Wilber refers to it often as a stage, he also points out that it "is not a stage set apart from other stages, but is rather the Suchness or Thatness or empty Ground that is *equally present* in and as all stages and all phenomena. The metaphor I have repeatedly used is that Suchness is not the highest rung in a ladder but the wood out of which the whole ladder is made (Wilber 2001b: 336). The lower left quadrant represents the environmental or, in humans, the cultural context for the evolution of individual consciousness. For example, the archaic stage is the context for the evolution of the use of symbols, the magic stage for concepts, the mythic stage for rules, the rational stage for formal reasoning, and the centauric stage for vision-logic.

Considering all four quadrants at once, we can see, for example, that the formal (scientific) mind (stage 12) functions in a rational culture in an industrial nation/state, and has a still insufficiently known brain structure-function called SF2. The reader can look for other correspondences across the four quadrants of in the most elaborate version of his map. I do not have to go into all that detail since the focus of this book is on the basic structure of Wilber's map and not the detail of the stages.

Wilber (2001) also produced a version of his map that is specifically focused on human evolution, which means that the stages below the archaic consciousness are omitted and an additional pluralistic stage is distinguished between the stages of formal reasoning and vision-logic. Since individual development repeats to some extent the broad outlines of human evolution, the stages in this map are both evolutionary and developmental stages of an individual human being. (Hugh & Amalia Kaye Martin's ADAPT model [or map] complements and transcends this version of Wilber's AQAL map [see Martin, H. & A.K. 2007]).

For the purpose of this book, a version of levels of consciousness that is intermediate between the most elaborate and the simplest version of his map and that includes the transpersonal stages is useful in many instances. In this version, in which he also referred mainly to human evolution and development, he distinguished the following 10 levels or stages of consciousness (Wilber 2000 b: 108-109): 1. the body or body sensations; 2. emotion; 3. the magical mind; 4. the mythic mind; 5. the rational mind, which is characteristic of the modern scientific mind; 6. vision-logic, which is

integral, that is, it allows for “universal pluralism and unity-in-diversity” (Wilber 2000c: 109); and then the four transpersonal stages: 7. the psychic, which is the home of nature mysticism; 8. the subtle, characteristic of deity mysticism; 9. the causal or formless representing formless mysticism; and 10. the nondual, which is nondual mysticism, and, as pointed out above, should not be considered a stage, but the all encompassing Ground. In his recent book on *Integral Spirituality* (2006), Wilber uses the names of the transpersonal levels and the Nondual for states (see below), not stages or levels. In this book I shall follow Wilber's original usage, that is, I shall use these names for stages, unless otherwise noted. However, I shall be careful not to confuse stages and states. When I refer to stages, I mean structure-stages, unless otherwise noted. Structure-stages are enduring structures, where higher structures incorporate the lower structures. In contrast, temporary transitional stages “come into existence but subsequently are phased out or replaced” (Wilber in Rothberg and Kelly, 1998: 307). Examples of the latter are moral stages such as preconventional, conventional, and postconventional, where one stage replaces the next one, or worldviews such as archaic, magical, mythic, mental, and so on.

Another important component in Wilber's AQAL map is lines or streams that unfold through the stages in the quadrants. With regard to human development in the upper left quadrant, there are over a dozen lines including the following: the cognitive line, the moral line, the emotional or affective line, the interpersonal line, the needs line, the self-identity line of ego development, the aesthetic line, the psycho-sexual line, the values line, and the spiritual line in which spirit is “viewed not just as Ground, and not just as the highest stage, but as its own line of unfolding” (Wilber 2006: 24). A person can be at a high level in one line and at a low level in another line. “Overall development, in other words, can be quite uneven” (Wilber 2001: 44). For example, a person can be a mathematical genius and morally or spiritually very low. Or “some individuals—including spiritual teachers—may be highly evolved in certain capacities (such as meditative awareness or cognitive brilliance), and yet demonstrate poor (or even pathological) development in other streams, such as the psychosexual or interpersonal” (Wilber 2001: 45).

Finally, Wilber distinguishes states and types at the various levels of his map. There are deep sleep, dream, and waking states. In addition, “there are all sorts of different states of consciousness, including *meditative states* (induced by Yoga, contemplation, meditation, and so on); *altered states* (such as drug-induced); and a variety of *peak experiences*, many of which can be triggered by intense experiences like making love,

walking in nature, or listening to exquisite music" (Wilber 2005d: 5). Such states can be reached at virtually any stage, but individuals cannot remain in these states because states are temporary, whereas stages are permanent according to Wilber.

Types may run through all the levels, except the formless, which is unqualifiable. Examples of types are masculine and feminine, personality types such as extrovert and introvert, or the nine types of the enneagram.

In conclusion, Wilber's map is hierarchical, evolutionary/developmental, and progressive. Compared to the Great Nest of Being, from which it originated, it comprises more levels, is subdivided into the four quadrants or the Big Three, and includes further refinements such as lines, states, and types. It can accommodate an extraordinary wealth of information. As I pointed out already, it can be applied to all areas and aspects of society and it is the basis for an Integral Life Practice that is the "conscious exercise of **body, mind, and spirit in self, culture, and nature**" (Wilber 2005d: 48). This practice comprises dozens of modules. The four core modules are: 1. the cognitive module which is the AQAL map that trains the mind to take perspectives, especially the perspectives of the eight zones; 2. the spiritual or meditative module that emphasizes meditative states training, which in turn leads to higher stages; 3. the shadow work module that helps to release the repressed unconscious; and 4. the 3-body workout module that exercises the gross, subtle and very subtle (causal) body.

Limitations of Wilber's AQAL Map

Despite its enormous comprehensiveness, Wilber's map has some limitations. The first part of this book (Chapters 1-3) deals with some of the most fundamental of these limitations and shows how they can be overcome.

Chapter 1 demonstrates the limitations of hierarchical (holarchical) thinking. It shows that hierarchies (holarchies) represent only one limited aspect of reality. Therefore, it is desirable to complement them by nonhierarchical modes of representation that are based on other ways of thinking. The significance of nonhierarchical modes of thinking for our health and our relation to the sacred is pointed out.

Chapter 2 shows that hierarchical (holarchical) thinking entails either/or logic: something belongs either to one level of the hierarchy or to another level; or something belongs to this category or to another category, is either black or white. It is obvious, however, that in the real world we find all shades ranging from black to white; and even black may contain traces of white and vice versa as it is so aptly illustrated in the Yin-

Yang symbol. For this reason, Chapter 2 focuses on alternatives to either/or logic such as both/and logic, fuzzy logic, Yin-Yang and network thinking. The fundamental consequences of these other ways of thinking for the betterment of the human condition and the world are pointed out.

Chapter 3 deals with the evolutionary limitation of Wilber's map. Evolution is, of course, a major aspect of reality. However, it is only one side of the coin, so to speak. The other side is involution. While evolution in Wilber's map leads from the Many to the One (the One that becomes apparent at transpersonal levels and that mystics have referred to), involution leads from the One to the Many. Both movements occur in time. However, they may also happen beyond time in the eternal present. Since Wilber's map represents explicitly only evolution in time, a more comprehensive map will have to include also involution in time and both evolution and involution beyond time in the eternal present. These inclusions point to the important territory of peace and fulfillment.

In general it is very important to keep in mind that the limitations of Wilber's map are not necessarily limitations of his thinking and experience. For example involution, although not indicated in his map, is well known to Wilber.

Mandala Maps

Whereas the first part of this book deals with fundamental limitations of Wilber's map and shows how they can be overcome, the second part presents an alternative map that does not suffer from these limitations. This alternative map is a dynamic mandala, or, more precisely, a self-referential dynamic mandala. Self-referential means that the mandala does not only refer to the Kosmos, but also to itself. Therefore, the dynamic concept of the mandala does not only refer to the dynamic of the Kosmos, but also to the mandala itself, which means that the mandala is also dynamic. In other words, transformation is built into the mandala: the mandala entails countless transformations of itself, each of which is a different mandala or map of the Kosmos. Thus, the mandala actually is a mandala of mandalas, a plurality of maps. It turns out that Wilber's map is one of the transformations that the mandala can undergo. This means that Wilber's map is a special case of the mandala. The mandala, however, is not a special case of Wilber's map since it cannot be generated from Wilber's map. Therefore, the mandala is more comprehensive than Wilber's map.

Chapter 4 presents the mandala in a very simple version and demonstrates that:

1. it can be interpreted in a hierarchical (holarchical) way and also in nonhierarchical ways;
2. it can be interpreted in terms of either/or logic or in terms of other types of logic that transcend the constraints of either/or logic;
3. it can be interpreted in terms of evolution and involution;
4. it can be interpreted beyond time in the eternal present.

This chapter also shows how through its contemplation the mandala can provide insights, how it can alleviate suffering, and how it can be an aid to liberation and healing.

Chapter 5 presents several transformations of the mandala, one of which is a simple version of the Wilber map. The version of Figure I-3 also could be generated.

Chapter 6 emphasizes that all of the transformations of the mandala, including the Wilber map, complement each other. In general, the importance of complementarity is underlined and some of its many consequences—ranging from greater comprehensiveness to world peace and tolerance—are pointed out.

Chapter 7 emphasizes how the transformation of the mandala involves the transformer who has to move from one standpoint to another as he or she transforms the mandala and thus can see different perspectives of reality. When this movement is spontaneous and free, it becomes a dance. Since the dance involves mandalas that represent the fluid Kosmos, the dance is a cosmic dance. In its spontaneity and playfulness it can also elicit a song and laughter that can be transformative, healing, and liberating.

Chapter 1: Hierarchy and Beyond

For most people the world consists of a multitude of things, objects, or entities, such as rocks, animals, and humans. All of these are then ordered in terms of higher and lower: animals are higher than rocks, humans are higher than animals, and those who believe in angels would say that angels are higher than humans. This kind of thinking and perception of reality is hierarchical because in a hierarchy there are entities at increasingly higher levels. In this chapter I demonstrate that in addition to hierarchical thinking and perception, there are still other ways of viewing and experiencing the Kosmos including ourselves, and that these other ways are fundamentally important for the beneficial transformation of ourselves and society.

Holons and Holarchy (Hierarchy)

Hierarchy is fundamental to Wilber's thinking and his AQAL map of the Kosmos. He emphasizes that by hierarchy he does not mean a dominator hierarchy in which an upper level entity such as the head of an organization dominates lower level entities such as his staff. By hierarchy he means a natural or normal hierarchy, which is a fundamental ordering principle. To distinguish this ordering principle from a dominator hierarchy, he prefers to call it holarchy, a term used by Arthur Koestler (see Wilber 2000a: 29). However, he also uses the terms holarchy and hierarchy interchangeably, since a holarchy is a natural or normal hierarchy. When I refer to hierarchy, I always understand it in the sense of holarchy, unless I specify otherwise.

What is a holarchy or hierarchy? A holarchy or hierarchy is a system of holons at different levels. In this system lower level holons compose a higher level holon, and a higher level holon comprises lower level holons. Any holon is a part with regard to the higher level holon it composes, and at the same time a whole with regard to the lower level holon(s) it comprises. Therefore, a holon is a part/whole. For example, an organ is a part of an organism, but a whole with regard to the cells of which it is comprised. Or a word is a part of a sentence, but a whole with regard to the letters that compose it.

According to Wilber, manifest reality is made of holons, part/wholes, at different levels that form a holarchy or hierarchy. In simple terms this means that reality is like Chinese boxes in which bigger boxes comprise smaller boxes and smaller boxes are contained in bigger boxes. Or, instead of referring to boxes, one could compare holons to circles or spheres so that the whole hierarchy consists of concentric circles or spheres, bigger ones enclosing smaller ones and smaller ones being enclosed by

bigger ones (see Figure 1–1). Accordingly, “the Kosmos is a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely” (Wilber 2001: 40).

Although this view of reality is rather limiting as I shall point out below, it does give us various insights (see Wilber 2000a). For example, each higher level holon includes and transcends its lower level holons. Because of the transcendence, the higher level holon has emergent properties that are not found in its lower level holons. Thus, a bird can fly, but its cells cannot. This shows that reductionism is not generally tenable. According to reductionism, which nowadays is very popular in biology, medicine and other fields, it is often naively assumed that a mere knowledge of molecules such as DNA or cellular function will allow us to understand the whole organism. But such knowledge of lower level holons does not necessarily give us an insight into the emergent properties of the higher level holon. Hence, a knowledge of all genes of an organism will not lead to an understanding of that organism, although it may be helpful.

Wilber (1998: 53) recognizes that Spirit or ultimate reality is not hierarchical. It is not hierarchical because it is not qualifiable in mental terms, that is, it cannot be captured through words and concepts. Hence, if nothing can be said about ultimate reality, it cannot be said that it is hierarchical. However, Wilber (1998: 53) insists that ultimate reality manifests itself as a hierarchy. Below I will show that we can interpret or think about manifest reality in a hierarchical or nonhierarchical way. Maybe one could even say that depending on our mode of thinking we create a hierarchical or nonhierarchical manifestation of the unnamable unmanifest. In any case, our perception of reality is to some extent dependent on our mode of thinking.

Beyond Hierarchy

Now let me demonstrate by means of three examples of hierarchies from simple versions of Wilber's map how hierarchies and hierarchical thinking can be transcended, or, in other words, how we can see the manifest world (that to most people including Wilber appears hierarchical) in a nonhierarchical way.

Science:

Figure 1–1 represents a scientific hierarchical view of the organism. According to this common view that can be found in almost any standard biology text and that is also accepted by Wilber, atoms form molecules which form cells which form organisms.

organism
 cell
 molecule
 atom

Figure 1–1. Hierarchy of entities (holons) of successive levels of organization in an organism

Another way of representing the hierarchy of Figure 1–1 would have been in terms of concentric circles as shown for the hierarchy of Figure 1–2 below (see also Wilber 2007: 31). Additional levels could have been added such as tissues and organs between the cell and organism levels, and two types of cells could have been distinguished (procaryotes and eucaryotes as indicated by Wilber in Figure I -3) Also, an environmental hierarchy, representing the correlates of the fourth quadrant, could have been placed alongside this hierarchy (see Figure I–3 and Wilber 2000a: 87-93). However, for the following discussion it will be sufficient to consider the simple hierarchy of Figure 1–1. It is considered very basic and is usually taken for granted as self-evident. Wilber (2001: 39) wrote: “organisms actually contain cells, which actually contain molecules, which actually contain atoms. You can even see this directly with a microscope. That hierarchy is one of actual embrace.” Can we indeed see this? If we look at sections of plant organs at low magnification, cells do indeed appear to be rather evident. So holons appear to be directly visible and since holons are the basis of the hierarchy, at least the basis seems justified. However, if we study sections of the same plant organs under the electron microscope (or at very high magnification under light microscopes), the situation changes profoundly. Now we can actually see that the discrete cells of the low magnification view are interconnected by many strands, called plasmodesmata. Therefore, a minute traveler of macromolecular size could traverse the whole plant organism through thousands of so-called cells without encountering a barrier. That traveler could only conclude that there is undivided wholeness, not an assemblage of separate cells or holons. However, since the nucleus of the cells is too large to pass through the interconnecting bridges (plasmodesmata), for the nucleus as a structure there is a discontinuity between cells. But this discontinuity does not exist for the molecular products of the nucleus. Hence, it is a matter of perspective whether we see cells as separate entities or not. In any case, we cannot ignore that there is an underlying wholeness. Thus, the concept of the symplast “describes the entire living mass of the plant as a continuous unit, contrary to the idea that cells are separate individuals” (Moore et al., 1995: 69). Therefore, in contrast to cell theory, an organismal theory has been proposed, at least for plants (Kaplan and Hagemann 1991). According

to this theory, the partial walls between so-called cells are seen as providing a form of endoskeleton for the plant, not cellularity as it is commonly understood: cells are no longer the basic units (holons) of plants.

Animal cells differ in several ways from plant cells, but they are also interconnected. These interconnections, called gap junctions, are much finer than the plasmodesmata in plants. Nonetheless, they provide a continuum between the so-called cells and therefore the organismal theory could also be applied to animal cells. But it seems that the vast majority of biologists is not inclined to accept the organismal theory either for plants or animals. They are not willing to give up cell theory, which is considered a cornerstone of biology and the fundamental unit of cell biology, a major branch of modern biology.

However, it is not necessary to give up cell theory in favor of the organismal theory. These two theories can exist side by side as different perspectives of the same reality: one emphasizing the underlying continuity and the other a partial compartmentalization into cells. Thus, the two theories that appear contradictory actually complement each other and together they provide a broader and richer view of reality than each one alone.

How does this relate to hierarchical thinking? If we consider the organismal theory, cells can no longer function as fundamental units (holons) at one level of the hierarchy. As a consequence the hierarchy collapses at that level. What appeared hierarchical is no longer hierarchical. Thus a nonhierarchical view emerges. This does not mean, however, that therefore the hierarchical view at this level is totally wrong. It can still be maintained as another perspective based on the limited validity of cell theory. As cell theory and the organismal theory can coexist as complementary theories, so the hierarchical and the nonhierarchical views can also coexist and complement each other. I would say that the nonhierarchical view is perhaps more encompassing since it is based on the underlying continuity within the organism, but that does not totally invalidate the hierarchical perspective.

The major conclusion we can draw from this insight is that reality is not just nests within nests within nests, as Wilber (2001: 40) put it. Reality is also a continuum. Where almost everybody, including Wilber, thought that we have a clear-cut example of holons and a hierarchy, both of them vanished, at least from one perspective. So it seems that we cannot make universal blanket statements such as that manifest reality is fundamentally hierarchical, but we have to appreciate that different perspectives

illuminate different aspects of reality. This will have major consequences when we devise general maps of reality, as I shall demonstrate in the second part of this book.

Now one could argue that the breakdown of exclusive hierarchical thinking at one level such as the cellular level does not automatically apply to all other levels of the hierarchy of Figure 1–1. This is, of course, correct. But the hierarchy can also be collapsed at other levels. Molecules such as water molecules as well as other molecules may at least under certain circumstances unite into a larger continuum that transcends individual molecules, which then cease to be holons.

At the atomic and subatomic levels, David Bohm distinguished two kinds of order: an explicate and an implicate order. In the explicate order there are holons such as subatomic particles, but in the implicate order, which is like a sea of physical energy from which the explicate order arises, there is only “undivided wholeness” (Bohm 1995, 1996). Thus, as at the cellular level, there are two complementary views: reality composed of holons that provide a basis for a holarchy and undivided wholeness, a continuum, unity, that does not fragment reality into holons and thus does not provide a basis for a hierarchical view. (Wilber criticized David Bohm, but Falk (2006) showed that his critique is based on misrepresentation of Bohm’s ideas)

The same conclusion can also be reached at the level of the whole organism because it can also be seen as a nonentity (non-holon). If we think of the human organism, it is evident that it is not separate from the environment. Air with oxygen enters deeply into the lungs and from there into the bloodstream that circulates through the whole body. In addition, there are many other ways in which the human body is continuous with the environment. For example, the human body can be seen as an electromagnetic field that is continuous with the electromagnetic field of the environment and the whole universe. According to Laszlo (2004), the human organism—like everything else—is completely integrated into the A-field, which is the cosmic quantum vacuum, a superdense and superfluid sea of energy and information that integrates all other fields. Thus, the A-field “connects organisms and minds in the biosphere, and particles, stars, and galaxies throughout the cosmos” (Laszlo 2004: 112). Where then is the boundary between organism and environment? There is none in an absolute sense as Wilber (1979) himself has pointed out in his book *No Boundary*. Consequently, the organism is not a separate entity (holon). Organism and environment form a continuum. In general, if there are no boundaries between holons, holons cease to exist as holons. And if there are no holons, there cannot be a holarchy or hierarchy.

We can now conclude that where Wilber and others could only see a holarchy of holons, we can also see a continuum: a continuum between the so-called holons and a continuum between the levels of the so-called holarchy. The recognition of this continuum is of profound importance because it removes barriers that create separation, isolation, and alienation in many ways. Nonetheless, there is also a limited usefulness for thinking in terms of a holarchy. As pointed out above, it represents one aspect of reality and it is useful and convenient for communication. For practical orientation in this world, we need reference points and hierarchies provide that. The danger is that the habitual use of language referring to entities (holons) and hierarchies may mislead us into believing that holons and hierarchies are the only ordering principle of the manifest world as Wilber and our dominant culture take it for granted.

The spectrum of consciousness:

Figure 1–2 shows the spectrum of consciousness according to a common version of the Great Nest of Being with five levels: matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit. Since each level is demarcated by a circle, this presentation indicates well the nested relationship between the levels. Note that according to this hierarchical view, spirit includes and transcends all other levels, that is, matter, body, mind and soul. It is not the opposite of matter as in many dualistic systems. In this respect the hierarchical view is inclusive. It has, however, a negative consequence: since a hierarchy is asymmetrical, spirit completely includes the lower levels, but the lower levels do not completely include spirit. Hence, matter, body, mind and soul are not completely spiritual, not completely sacred. Especially, body and matter are the most inferior holons in the hierarchy. This conclusion has had disastrous consequences in many ways. It has often led to a devaluation of the body from a spiritual and religious perspective, and it has contributed to the view that, since nature is spiritually inferior, it can be exploited—the result: the environmental crisis. This shows that hierarchical thinking is not only an academic matter, but can have profound and disastrous consequences for the planet, society, and the individual.

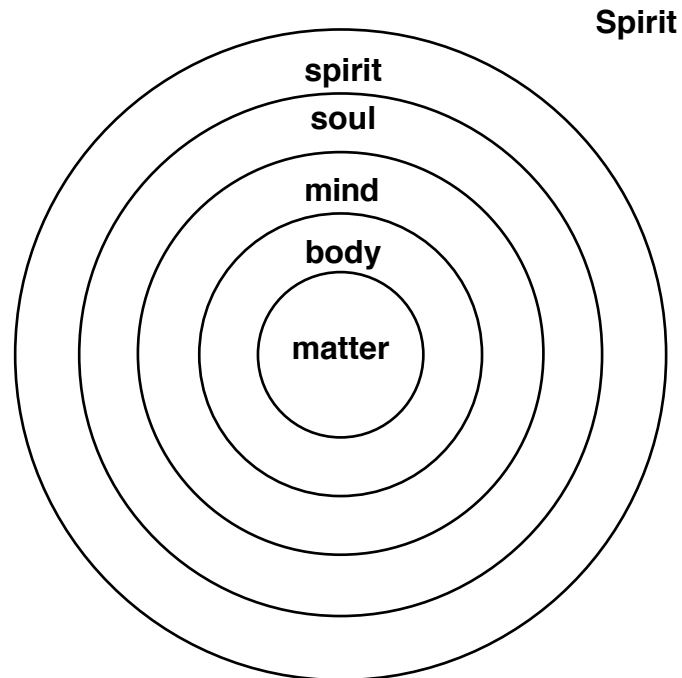


Figure 1–2. “The Great Nest of Being” or “The Great Holarchy” (see also Figure 12–1 in Wilber 2000a: 444).

Wilber is aware of this problem and for that reason he makes a distinction between spirit (with a small s), which is the most inclusive level of the Great Holarchy, and Spirit (with a capital S), which is the nondual ground of all Being. “Spirit is thus both the highest wave (purely transcendental) and the ever-present ground of all the waves (purely immanent), going beyond All, embracing All...The patriarchal religions tend to emphasize the transcendental “otherworldly” aspect of spirit; and the matriarchal, neopagan religions tend to emphasize the fully immanent or “this worldly” aspect of Spirit” (Wilber 2000d: 8). As indicated in Figure 1–2, Wilber places Spirit outside the concentric circles of the Great Nest which means that it is the ground from which the whole hierarchy with all its levels emerges (one could imagine it as being represented by the paper on which all the levels of the hierarchy are present). According to this view, Spirit resides in everything, even a grain of sand—everything is sacred. Unfortunately, Spirit (with a capital S) is not included in Wilber’s map of the Kosmos (Figure I–1), but is included in some of his other figures that are similar to Fig. 1–2.

As the Great Nest of Being, Wilber’s map of the Kosmos is strictly hierarchical; it does not represent the nonhierarchical perspective of manifest reality. What is this nonhierarchical perspective in consciousness in the interior-individual dimension of his map? It is, for example, a simple experience: when I look into your eyes, I do not only see a part of your body; I also look into your mind and soul and we can be spirit. It is an

experience of oneness and wholeness, an undivided wholeness. There is no fragmentation into holons and holarchical levels. We experience a sense of unboundedness that extends beyond the reaches of the corporeal reality visible to the human eye. (As I shall explain below, I refer to this as nonhierarchical holism in terms of undivided wholeness).

Culture:

Culture is the third dimension in the Big Three besides science and consciousness of the self. In Wilber's four quadrant map (Fig. I-1) we find culture in the lower left quadrant that represents the interior-collective dimension of the Kosmos. Figure 1-3 shows a portion of the cultural hierarchy from Figure I-1.

centauric
rational
mythic
magic
archaic

Figure 1-3. Part of the cultural hierarchy of the lower left quadrant of the version of Wilber's map that is shown in Figure I-3. The centauric level of the hierarchy is correlated with the level of vision-logic in the upper left quadrant. This hierarchy could have also been represented in terms of concentric circles as Fig. 1-2 above.

According to this hierarchy (that could also be presented in terms of concentric circles like Fig. 1-2), the uppermost level of the centauric, which is a cultural expression of vision-logic, comprises the rational level, which includes the mythic level, which contains the magic level, which envelops the archaic level. Since a hierarchy is asymmetrical, the reverse is not the case: the archaic level does not include any of the others; the magical level does not comprise the three levels above it; the mythic level does not contain the rational and centauric; and the rational level fails to envelop the centauric. This means that according to this hierarchical view, cultures at the lower levels are deprived of the upper levels. Is this a realistic picture? I think that even at the lower levels there might have been at least traces of the higher levels. Wilber (1998: 93), referring to Habermas, points out that in the earlier foraging tribes "formal operations were available to a significant number of men and women", and he adds that "it is quite likely that a chieftain would have to take multiple perspectives in order to coordinate them: vision-logic" (Wilber 1998: 93). He also admits that shamans could access at least the psychic transpersonal level and contrasts this to the low level of the

average person. However, Shinzen Young (1997, Session 23) thinks that a significant number of people in tribal cultures were enlightened.

Regardless of what percentage of the tribal population reached transpersonal levels of awareness, the above average and the average modes of consciousness interacted and thus created some sort of continuum between the two. And even for the average people that were relatively untouched by the above average mode of consciousness it is hard to imagine that they were 100% divorced from the higher transpersonal levels of consciousness. Therefore, it makes sense to conclude that even at the archaic and magic stages also higher levels of consciousness were present in the culture.

Wilber does not completely exclude the possibility that levels may overlap. For example, referring to Kohlberg's stages of moral development (Wilber 2005d, Disc 2, 10), he pointed out that in someone's morality 50% came from stage 4, 25% from stage 3, and 25% from stage 5. He adds, however, that it is impossible that someone whose morality is at stage 1 may have peak experiences of stage 5. I do not want to be so categorical: I can envisage that even at stage 1, the lowest stage of moral development, there can be at least a germ, if not more, of the higher stages including stage 5 and above. Consequently, there is the possibility that all levels are united and as a result the hierarchy, which requires distinct levels, dissolves (see also the section on Yin-Yang in Chapter 2). This does not mean that therefore the hierarchy is useless. On the contrary, levels can conveniently be used as markers and the hierarchy as a whole sheds important light on cultural evolution. But for a more comprehensive understanding the hierarchical view needs to be complemented by the nonhierarchical view.

In other words, the hierarchical view shows us one aspect of cultural evolution and the nonhierarchical view another. The latter does not entail the fragmentation inherent in hierarchies and holons that is reinforced by the use of language and therefore tends to become habitual. The power of habits should not be underestimated. Habits form deep roots. Profound transformation may be required to uproot them. Even in science revolutionary views often meet enormous resistance.

Holism

"Holism" can have different meanings depending on what one means by a "whole". A whole can be a summation of things, entities, parts. Such a whole has little or no integration and therefore barely merits to be called a whole; it is more a heap than a whole.

The whole, or, more correctly, the part/whole or holon in hierarchies and Wilber's AQAL map, is more integral: holons of the lower level in the hierarchy form a holon at a higher level and this higher level holon is not only a summation of the lower level holons, but an integration that leads to emergent properties, which are not present in the lower level holons. For example, when hydrogen and oxygen unite to form water, properties emerge that are not present in hydrogen and oxygen. As everybody knows, water is very different from its constituent parts, that is, the lower level holons hydrogen and oxygen. Thus, as we go up in the hierarchy, emergence occurs at each level, that is, each level includes and transcends the lower levels. For example, the mind has properties that are not found in the body and the soul goes beyond the mind.

Although holism in terms of hierarchy shows integration, this integration is limited for two reasons: 1. Holons as the basic units of a hierarchy are separate entities at any level of the hierarchy: for example, cells are usually perceived as separate entities at the cellular level of the hierarchy; 2. Any one level in the hierarchy is separate or distinct from other levels. Thus, fragmentation occurs in a hierarchy in two ways: through holons and levels (such as the horizontal fragmentation into cells and the vertical fragmentation into the levels of cell and organism). I have already pointed out how the fragmentation into cells occurs: the continuum of the living body of an organism such as a plant is fragmented into cells through boundaries that do not really exist. It is only because of these imposed boundaries that we can distinguish the levels of the cells and the organism. Otherwise the two are one, and the basis for a hierarchy vanishes. To refer to cells as holons, although it sounds holistic, obviously is not very holistic because it disregards the integration of the so-called cells. The same applies to other holons. And the fragmentation of reality into levels also is not very holistic, although the emergence of novel properties at each level points to integration and in this sense is holistic. Thus, holism based on hierarchy is only a very limited holism, only a little holistic. But as Wilber himself noted, "a little bit of wholeness is better than none at all" (Wilber 2001: XII). I agree.

Wilber (2000a,b) pointed out that holons have the capacity of communion, that is, they can be more or less integrated. If the integration is complete, the boundaries between holons are absent, which means that there are no holons and therefore no basis for the construction of a holarchy as I indicated above. An example of this is the implicate order at the atomic and subatomic levels. In the implicate order there is only "undivided wholeness" (Bohm 1996, 1996), not separate particles as in the explicate

order. It is interesting that Wilber actually acknowledges this “coherence, unity and wholeness of the physical plane” (Wilber 1999: 275).

Wilber also pointed out some integration between different levels of hierarchies. For this reason he called the levels also waves to indicate that they “interpenetrate and overlap (like colors in a rainbow) and are not rigid rungs in a ladder” (Wilber 2000a: 215). This sounds as if he recognized a continuum: waves, and especially overlapping waves, are continuous. But if continuity is admitted, then we lose distinct levels and the latter are a necessity for hierarchical thinking. So does this mean that Wilber himself is questioning and moving away from strictly hierarchical thinking? I shall return to this question in Chapter 2 in the section on “Hierarchy as a Fuzzy Set”.

In any case, there is a kind of holism that is still more holistic than the holism in terms of hierarchy (holarchy): it integrates holons at any level to such an extent that they vanish as entities, and it abolishes levels which means that it goes beyond hierarchies, emphasizing instead continuity, oneness, or “undivided wholeness” (to use David Bohm’s expression in a more general sense). In other words, nonhierarchical holism in terms of undivided wholeness does not fragment reality into holons and levels of a holarchy. Whether this nonholarchical holism is workable for all of reality or only some areas such as an organism (as I have shown above) remains to be seen. In any case, the well-documented organismal view that complements cell theory may serve as a model to see ever larger domains of reality in terms of undivided wholeness and to remind us that holarchical thinking, although useful, obscures the undivided wholeness. But even if nonholarchical holism should remain restricted in scope, it provides an important alternative to the hierarchical view, for example, as far as an organism is concerned.

Wilber (2000c: 118) also wrote that he sees the manifest world as “an interwoven network of interpenetrating processes or holons, which is indeed a type of holistic model”. I think it is a holistic model that goes beyond a model that dissects the manifest world into holons and levels. If it is admitted that holons are interpenetrating, then they may cease to exist as separate holons that are required for a hierarchy and we can no longer say that “reality is made of holons” (Wilber 1998: 61). If we see manifest reality as a network of interpenetrating processes, then it is even more obvious that it is a whole, a continuum, a unity, because processes by their very nature are interconnecting, and a network of processes is an undivided whole, not a set of Chinese boxes or nests within nests within nests.

Wilber (1999: 469) also wrote: "A radically separate and isolated and bounded entity does not exist anywhere." In his early neo-romantic phase (of which he is now very critical), he even wrote a book entitled *No Boundary*. However, this does not mean that reality is totally homogenous. It shows differentiation and because of this differentiation we can abstract entities or holons. For example, the waves of the ocean are all one with each other and the ocean, but we can nonetheless distinguish them. As long as we keep in mind the oneness, the distinction of waves is acceptable and may be useful. Furthermore, it represents the differentiation of reality. Thus, the waves are the many, and the ocean is the oneness. What complicates the matter is that the many are not given—they are the result of abstraction. And usually there is more than one way of abstracting the many. For example, in our culture, we usually divide the spectrum of the rainbow into red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. But this is not the only way to abstract colors. There are African tribes that do it differently and the boundaries they draw do not necessarily coincide with boundaries between the colors we distinguish (see, e.g., Sattler 1986: 74). Another example is the abstraction of organs in a flowering plant such as a tulip. In textbooks it is usually stated that flowering plants *consist of* three kinds of organs: roots, stems, and leaves. This gives the impression that these organs are given in nature and obscures that fact that they are the result of abstraction. In the plant there is no line that separates roots, stems, and leaves from each other. The plant is a continuous whole. We divide it into roots, stems, and leaves by drawing boundaries that do not exist. Nonetheless, these boundaries are not totally arbitrary. To some extent they reflect the differentiation of plants. But distinguishing roots, stems, and leaves is not the only way of indicating the differentiation. There are other abstractions; other ways of dividing the plant that are unknown to most people including most botanists and textbook authors (see, e.g., Cusset 1982). As one says: there are many ways to cut up the cake—which means that there are many ways to cut up the oneness of reality. Usually we have been conditioned to see just one way of abstraction and then we often forget that the entities or holons are abstractions. Thus, we often forget—or never re-membered—that the "I" or self is an abstraction. In reality there is no boundary between the "I" and its environment that stretches to the infinity of the Kosmos. Consequently, "I" and the Kosmos are one. If, however, we want to indicate the differentiation, then there are many ways to draw boundaries such as the intestinal lining (the inner skin), the outer skin, the various layers of the aura, and so on (see, e.g., Brennan 1988). Canny (1981: 2) asked: "Where is the boundary of a dog? Where you pat it? Or the territory it defends against other dogs? Or how far away your neighbors can hear it barking? Or how far off it can follow your scent? To bacteria its boundaries

are mostly internal: the lining of its gut; to viruses they are cell membranes. So do not stand on your dignity about the real existence of any boundary; it is in your mind. Others may see important divisions of quite other kinds.” Consequently, there are many ways to divide the Kosmos into holons, and thus there are many ways to construct holarchies. Each of them reflects an aspect of reality. But none of them reflects the underlying undivided wholeness. And for this reason we also need a holism in the sense of undivided wholeness. However, ultimately, language is a barrier to the most inclusive holism in terms of undivided wholeness because language inevitable involves fragmentation. But even if a holism in terms of undivided wholeness cannot grasp the whole of the Kosmos all at once, even it represents only the organismal view of the organism, it already goes beyond the confines of a holarchical view of the organism. If in addition it embraces the unity of the organism and its environment, the unity of the observer and the observed, it is still more inclusive. And thus it is an important complement to holarchical holism.

Holism, Holiness, and Health

In ecology and environmentalism we refer to the 3 R's: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Implementing these 3 R's has become extremely important for the health of our society and the whole planet.

In science/philosophy and spirituality we should draw more attention to the 3 H's: holism (referring to wholeness), holiness (referring to the sacred), and health. These 3 H's are deeply interconnected, and according to common dictionaries such as Webster's, the words 'whole', 'holy' and 'healthy' even have the same etymological root. Thus, a discussion of wholeness and issues concerning holism are directly relevant to our deepest experience of existence and our health.

Being whole in the widest and deepest sense, so that we feel one with the Kosmos, even in its relative manifestation, evokes a feeling of awe and reverence that can be seen as an expression of the holy or sacred. Being one with the Kosmos means being in tune with the Kosmos, flowing naturally with the fluid Kosmos. According to Chinese medicine, health is the harmonious flow of energy, whereas sickness is due to blockage in this flow. Consequently, health like holiness is an expression of the harmonious cosmic oneness in which the microkosm of the individual mirrors the macrokosm so that they are one.

Since holarchical holism integrates holons and levels in the holarchy, it is a first step toward the expression of wholeness. However, since holons and levels are still separate to at least some extent, this kind of holism is still a rather limited holism and therefore can bring forth only partial holiness and limited health. On the other hand, in as much as the nonholarchical holism I discussed above can overcome the fragmentation into holons and levels, it can lead us towards better health and a more profound experience of the sacred. A still more complete experience of the sacred, which might be better called a sacred beingness, happens in the nondual awareness of the Ultimate or One Taste (Wilber 2000c, 2005d) that is beyond relative reality I discussed in this chapter.

Conclusions

Although I did not examine all hierarchies and all levels of hierarchies, I hope that I have demonstrated in general and through specific examples that hierarchical thinking can have shortcomings and limitations. Nonhierarchical thinking can overcome at least some of these shortcomings and limitations, specifically the fragmentation into holons and levels. In this sense nonhierarchical thinking is beyond hierarchies. Now, Wilber might argue that “beyond” entails ranking and that ranking is falling back into hierarchical thinking. But the “beyond hierarchy” does not include hierarchy and therefore is not hierarchical according to Wilber’s definition of hierarchy.

“Beyond”, in the context of this chapter and this book, also means that we are beyond being *caught* in one way of thinking such as hierarchical thinking, assuming, as Wilber does, that “the only way you get a holism is via a holarchy” (Wilber 2000b: 25). As I pointed out repeatedly—because this is a very important point—I am not against hierarchies. I recognize their value as an ordering principle and a means to hierarchical holism that reveals emergence, an important phenomenon that often is not recognized in modern reductionist science and flatland views. However, **hierarchical thinking is not the only way. We can also think in a nonhierarchical way and this kind of thinking reveals another important aspect of manifest reality that cannot be grasped through hierarchical thinking.** Therefore, “beyond” means that we embrace different kinds of thinking and do not get caught just in one way. Then hierarchical and nonhierarchical thinking can complement each other and together these two ways of thinking can provide a richer and deeper understanding of manifest reality than one alone. I shall return to the importance of complementarity in Chapter 6

In conclusion, I would not say that “the Kosmos *is* a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely” (Wilber 2001a: 40, italics mine). Wilber himself, in terms of his

Integral Post-Metaphysics, may no longer claim that the manifest Kosmos actually *is* holonic because according to Integral Post-Metaphysics, “in the manifest world, there are no perceptions, only perspectives” (Wilber 2006: 255), which makes the holonic Kosmos also a perspective. Unfortunately, Wilber does not seem to allow any other perspective in this regard. In contrast, in this chapter and the next I tried to show that there are indeed other important perspectives. With regard to this chapter, I would say that from a hierarchical perspective the Kosmos appears as a series of nests within nests within nests; and from a nonhierarchical perspective the Kosmos appears as a continuum, a unity, and other ways that will be examined in the following chapters. Continuum does not necessarily mean that therefore manifest reality is like a homogenized soup. It is differentiated and therefore it is possible to draw boundaries that are not totally arbitrary, but reflect to some extent the differentiation that can be used to construct hierarchies. But continuity and oneness are nonetheless fundamental.

Holism and wholeness are related to health and holiness, the sacred, and therefore different notions of holism may affect our health and our experience of the sacred. In as much as the nonholarchical holism I discussed above can overcome the fragmentation into holons and levels, it can lead us towards better health and a more profound experience of the sacred. A still more complete experience of the sacred (if we can call it an experience), happens in the nondual awareness of the Ultimate or One Taste (Wilber 2000c, 2005d) that is beyond relative reality I discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Either/Or Logic and Beyond

Most people perceive and interpret reality in terms of either/or: someone is either good or bad, friendly or unfriendly, intelligent or stupid, loving or unloving—and the list could be continued indefinitely, not only for qualities of people but also for anything else. Thus, reality is perceived in terms of mutually exclusive opposites. But is reality really like that? Or is this opposition our creation due to our conscious or unconscious use of either/or logic? And what are the consequences of using either/or logic for our relationships, society, the world, and ourselves?

Either/Or Logic

Either/or logic is the most commonly used logic, which has been passed on to us from ancient Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle. According to this kind of logic or way of thinking, A is either B or not B. For example, a flower is either red or not red, a person is either honest or not honest, a statement is either true or not true, a map is either universal or not universal, you either love me or don't love me, you are either for me or not for me, which means you are either for me or against me. The list of examples could be continued endlessly because our culture and our lives are permeated by this kind of logic. Even the questions we ask are usually formulated in terms of either/or logic: Is it this or that? Such questions condition us to give answers also in terms of either this or that. And thus it is usually taken for granted that it must be either this or that. Few people realize that other kinds of logic may lead to other types of questions and answers. However, sometimes there is an opening into other ways of thinking which may take a very simple form. For example, someone may say that a statement is not completely false, but contains a grain of truth.

Although Wilber is well aware that there are other kinds of logic besides either/or logic and admits these kinds of logic in his map of the Kosmos, in one fundamental sense his map is based on either/or logic: any particular holon belongs either to one level of the hierarchy or to another level and something is either this holon or that holon. Both/and logic, fuzzy logic, and network logic or thinking can help us to go beyond these limitations.

Both/And Logic

One alternative to either/or logic is both/and logic. According to this kind of logic, A is both B and not B. If "not B" is C, then A is both B and C. This kind of logic seems absurd to many people. However, there is much evidence that it is an appropriate logic. As I mentioned above, in the popular culture there is sometimes inkling that something may be both true and false. Quantum physics revolutionized our thinking through the discovery that light may be both a particle and not a particle phenomenon, both a particle and wave phenomenon.

Whereas either/or logic is antagonistic, both/and logic is reconciliatory. If you propose a theory that is opposed to mine, according to both/and logic, I need not refute your theory and possibly fight with you as it so often happens between adherents of contradictory theories; I can embrace your theory and you because your theory complements mine. Having two theories is therefore better than just one; it is enrichment, whereas according to either/or logic, it may be a thread. It is possible, of course, that one of the two opposing theories can explain more phenomena than the other. But this need not mean that therefore the other theory is useless. It may offer something that is lacking in the theory with greater explanatory power (see Chapter 6).

In Chapter 1 I have already pointed out that plants (and animals) may be understood in terms of both cell theory and the organismal theory, which means that they can be seen as consisting of cells and not of cells. As a consequence we can see both a hierarchy at this particular level and not a hierarchy, that is, unity. Thus, both a hierarchical and nonhierarchical view can be accepted. This is contrary to Wilber's contention that only the hierarchical view makes sense. Since I can embrace both/and logic, I can conclude that both Wilber's map and my mandala maps that I shall present in the second part of this book, are maps of reality. However, one difference between these two maps is that the mandala maps include the Wilber map, whereas the Wilber map does not comprise the mandala maps (see Chapter 5).

Wilber (2000a) applies both/and logic in many instances. For example, he acknowledges that spirit is both transcendent and immanent. As I mentioned already in Chapter 1, unfortunately the immanent aspect of spirit, which is Spirit (with a capital S) is not explicitly included in his AQAL map. However, he indicated it in other contexts (e.g., Wilber 2001: 69).

Wilber applies both/and logic also to movement in time, which is both evolutionary and involutory; also, the manifestation of spirit is in time and beyond time (see Chapter 3). As the Heart Sutra states: "Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form", whereby form can be seen in time and emptiness is beyond time.

All this shows that Wilber has gone far beyond the limits of either/or logic, but with regard to the basic holonic structure of his AQAL map he adheres to hierarchical thinking, that is either/or logic.

Fuzzy Logic and Fuzziness

Besides either/or logic and both/and logic still other types of logic have been developed, especially during the last century. One of them is three-valued logic in which statements may be true, false, or indeterminate. This logic is useful when we deal with situations that may be indeterminate such as in quantum physics. In multi-valued logic there are many values between true and false. Almost two thousand years ago, Jaina logicians in India developed a seven-valued logic. According to this logic, there are three primary truth values: "true", "false", and "indefinite". The other four values are "true and false," "true and indefinite," "false and indefinite," and "true, false, and indefinite." "Every statement is regarded as having these seven values, considered from different standpoints" (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Macropedia 21 [1994]: 210).

Finally, instead of having discrete values, in fuzzy logic there is a continuum between the extremes of true and false ranging from 0% true (=false) to 100% true. But it is not only logical truth or falsehood that are fuzzy. Many phenomena are fuzzy so that Kosko (1993) in his book on "Fuzzy Thinking. The New Science of Fuzzy Logic" referred to a "fuzzy world view." This worldview is indeed revolutionary. Its importance and far-reaching consequences cannot be emphasized enough. It allows us to perceive the world differently: on this view, the world is not just black and white, but has a rich and varied gradation of grays; it is not just discrete colors, but has also a fascinating mingling of colors. Most of all, it is not only categorical, this or that, but a continuum spanning the categories.

In our culture, especially among so-called educated people, it is almost preposterous and irritating, if not ridiculous, to refer in all seriousness to fuzziness. The ideal very often has been and still is to do away with fuzziness as much as possible, that is, to reduce everything to clear-cut, unambiguous categories. However, the real world is not always so clear-cut and unambiguous. Therefore, if we want to better understand the

real world, we have to learn to speak a language that comes as close as possible to the real world. Ultimately, there is, of course, no language that will reveal absolute reality as it is. But with regard to relative reality, we have the choice between different languages based on different kinds of logic. Either/or logic will allow us to understand some simple aspects of reality. For example, if in the continuum from black to white we just want to focus on the extremes, black and white, either/or logic will be sufficient to do that. However, if we want to deal with the whole range from black to white with all the gray tones in between, fuzzy logic will be required. Thus, fuzzy logic will make it possible to greatly increase the scope of our understanding because there is so much fuzziness in the real world.

Our everyday life is permeated by fuzziness. Kosko (1993: 126) illustrated this by the response of an audience. When we ask an audience who is married, a clear-cut answer may be obtained because marriage is an institution regulated by law. However, when we ask who is happy, or honest, or moral, or jealous, or intelligent, or tall, or overweight, many people find it difficult to give a clear-cut answer because any of these issues and many others are fuzzy: one can be more or less intelligent, more or less happy, etc. Where does one draw the line between happy and unhappy or tall and short? Any line is arbitrary. For the extremes, the answer is easy. But between the extremes—and many people are between the extremes—only a more or less arbitrary answer is possible. A very close look may even reveal that the extremes are not totally free of fuzziness because even a happy man may still harbor very small pockets of unhappiness (see below under Yin-Yang). Thus, the recognition of fuzziness may create awareness that we are much “more or less” than we normally think we are according to the labels we carry. Kosko (1993: 127) wrote: “We are all left, right, center, straight, gay, bi, cool, square, plain, for, against, and indifferent.” We may be any of these only to an extremely small degree, or only potentially. But knowing that we are all that—and much more—can help us to connect to others who appear to be very different because they occupy a different place in the continuum.

It is astounding how much resistance against fuzziness we find in our culture. Because we have been deeply conditioned against fuzziness, many people feel more secure and more comfortable if, consciously or subconsciously, they can hide behind clear-cut labels and categories. There are, however, also people who accept the idea of fuzziness and fuzzy logic, but object to the wording only: they just do not like the words ‘fuzziness’ and ‘fuzzy’. Without changing any of the meaning, they could replace ‘fuzziness’ by ‘continuum’ and ‘fuzzy’ by ‘continuous’ and thus refer to ‘continuous logic’

instead of 'fuzzy logic'. Other alternatives are 'gray logic' or 'cloudy logic' (Kosko 1993: 292). I prefer the words 'fuzzy logic' and 'fuzziness' because they are commonly accepted in the literature on logic and have been used by Lofti Zadeh, the inventor of fuzzy set theory (see Kosko, 1993).

Fuzzy set theory deals with sets. How are sets defined? In traditional either/or logic the definition of a set applies to all members of the set. Therefore, one either is a member of a set or one is not, one is a man or one is not, one is a woman or one is not. According to fuzzy logic, which is also called fuzzy set theory, this changes radically: according to fuzzy set theory, membership in a set ranges from 0% to 100%. Thus one can be a partial member of a set; for example, a 50% member of the set of men and at the same time a 50% member of the set of women. We know that such partial members do indeed exist. There are people who are physically intermediate between a typical man and woman. These people often have to undergo painful operations to conform to our categories of either/or logic. They are violently forced into our man-made categories. In contrast, fuzzy set theory allows for the whole range of intermediates.

Fuzzy set theory does not only deal with relatively rare cases of intermediates such as the physical intermediates between men and women. More importantly, it reveals and emphasizes fuzziness where we did not expect it or do not notice it sufficiently. As a result, it changes our view of the world. Kosko (1993) describes many examples of fuzzy sets in science, religion, ethics, law, politics, and other aspects of life. I consider Kosko's book one of the most important books of the 20th century because of its fundamental relevance to all aspects of life and its potential to beneficially transform our individual lives, society, and the whole world.

Logic and Wilber's AQAL Map

Fuzzy logic is relevant to most, if not all, aspects of Wilber's map, that is, to the three or four major dimensions (The Big Three or four quadrants), levels, lines, states, and types. Here I want to focus on levels, which means hierarchy. How do fuzzy logic and fuzziness affect hierarchies? I think they dissolve them. Let me explain.

To obtain and retain a hierarchy, the following two conditions must be fulfilled:

1. The levels that function as levels of the hierarchy must be distinct and mutually exclusive (Figure 2–1a). Thus, for example, according to cell theory, in multicellular organisms the levels of the cell and the whole organism are distinct and mutually exclusive: the organism is not a cell and vice versa.

2. The upper level holon must completely include the lower level holons. Such complete inclusion requires that the set of lower level holons contains all members all or none (Figure 2–2a). In a multicellular organism, according to cell theory, this means that the organism contains only cells as lower level holons on the cellular level.

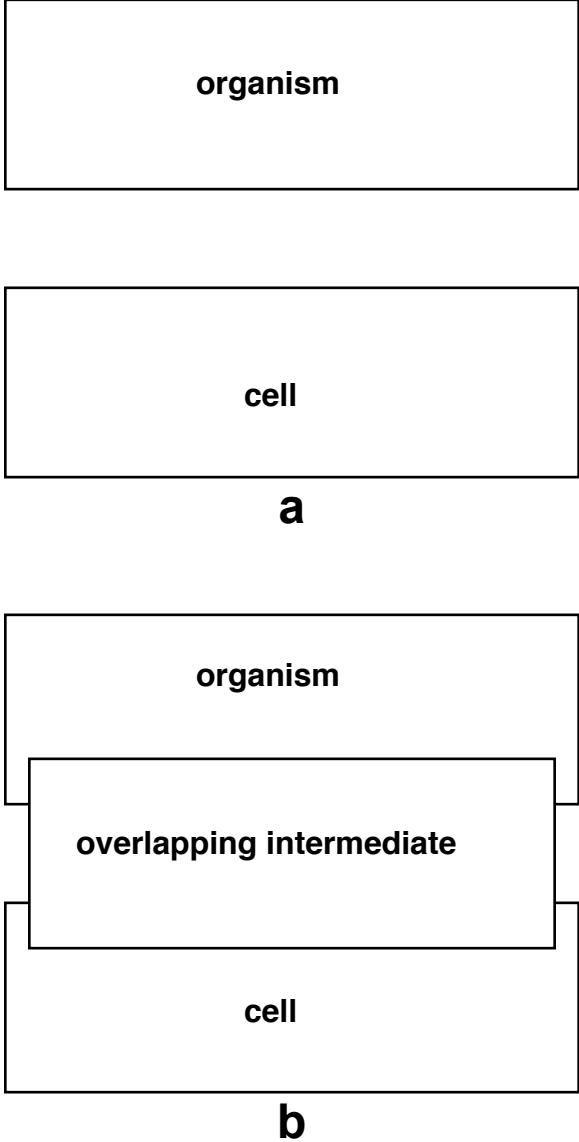


Figure 2–1. a. Two distinct and mutually exclusive levels of a hierarchy representing the levels of organism and cell. b. Overlapping levels that violate the condition of distinctness and mutual exclusivity.

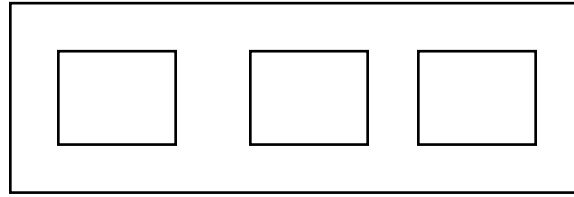
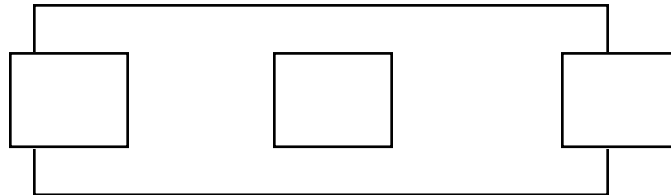
**a****b**

Figure 2–2. a. All holons such as cells (represented by the small boxes) contained within the set of cells, that is, the set of holons; b. Two of the holons not contained within the whole set, hence the set of cells is a fuzzy set.

Now let us examine whether these two conditions are always fulfilled at the two levels of cell and organism. It appears that they are indeed fulfilled in many cases, provided we accept cell theory. But there are also cases where the two conditions are not fulfilled even if we accept cell theory. For example, in some algae such as *Derbesia* the whole organism contains many nuclei (Figure 2–3a); these nuclei are not surrounded by incomplete cell walls as it is usually the case in algae and plants. Is this organism the equivalent of a multicellular alga that lacks cellular partitioning, or is it equivalent to only one huge cell that has become multinuclear? It is neither one, nor the other. This organism is intermediate between unicellular and multicellular algae because it shares properties of both. With the unicellular algae it shares the lack of internal partitioning by incomplete cell walls, whereas with the multicellular algae it shares the possession of many nuclei. This means that it is at an intermediate level between a single cell and a multicellular organism: it overlaps the two levels (Figure 3–1b) and as a result the two levels are no longer distinct and mutually exclusive, that is, the first condition for a hierarchy is no longer fulfilled.

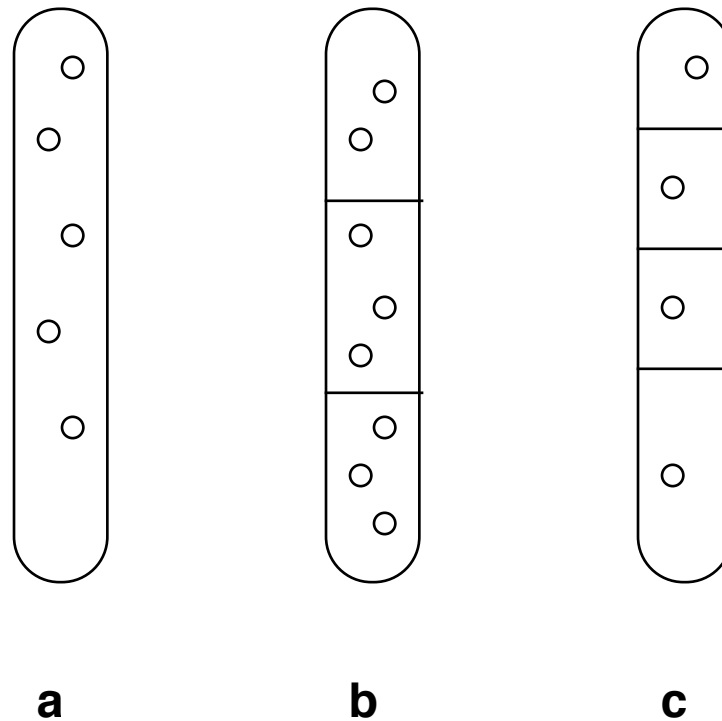


Figure 2–3. Diagrams of the algae *Derbesia* (a), *Cladophora* (b), and *Spongomorpha* (c). The little circles represent nuclei. Explanation in text. For more realistic drawings of these algae that also show the branching of the filaments see Moore et al. (1995: 70).

There are other algae whose organization is more or less intermediate between that of *Derbesia* and the common cellular organization shown in Figure 2–3c. For example, *Cladophora* has incomplete partitioning by walls as it is typical for the so-called cellular organization, but each unit contains more than one nucleus (a typical cell has only one nucleus). As a result there is “a complete range of intermediates between unicellular, multinucleate and multicellular, uninucleate [algae]” (Kaplan and Hagemann 1991: 698). This continuum spans and unites the levels of the cell and the multicellular organism and thus shows that these two levels can dissolve even within the framework of cell theory, at least in certain situations. It should be noted that such situations are not restricted to certain algae, but occur also in plants and animals.

The reason why the two levels dissolve is because they are no longer distinct and mutually exclusive: they are fuzzy, a fuzzy set.

Considering the same algae of Figure 2–3, do they fulfill the second of the above conditions that is required for a hierarchy, namely, the condition that all lower level holons must be contained in one set? No, this condition is not fulfilled either, because some of the lower level holons are only partially contained within the set of cells (Figure

2–2b). These holons stick out, so to say, because they have a combination of properties of a single cell and a multicellular organism. They belong partially to the set of cells and partially to the set of (multicellular) organisms. This means that these holons of the lower level form a fuzzy set.

In conclusion, we can see that the fuzziness with regard to both conditions dissolves the hierarchy. A hierarchy is based on distinctness, mutual exclusivity, categories. It cannot be maintained in the face of fuzziness. Since there is so much fuzziness in this world, this does not lend great support to hierarchies. However, we can maintain hierarchies as long as we exclude all those cases that introduce fuzziness. How much of the whole Kosmos does that leave for hierarchies? I don't know. One can also try to press the recalcitrant cases into the hierarchies and then end up with somewhat limping hierarchies. Or one can "simply" ignore everything that does not fit into hierarchies, which really prevents us from a deeper understanding. (In a review of Wilber's [2006] *Integral Spirituality*, Frank Visser [<http://www.wilberwatch.blogspot.com/>] noted that in this book Wilber used the word 'simply' 268 times, and he added that this is "simply too much" "forced simplification"). In any case, fuzziness creates problems for hierarchies and hierarchical thinking. Maybe just a little fuzziness can be patched up, but more fuzziness leads to the demise of hierarchies.

So far I have illustrated fuzziness only at two levels in the scientific dimension (the right half) of Wilber's map. Note that I accepted cell theory as the basis for the whole argumentation. This means that even from the point of view of cell theory, the hierarchy at the levels of the cell and the (multicellular) organism can be maintained only to a limited extent, not in general. If in addition we take into consideration the limited validity of cell theory as I pointed it out in Chapter 1, then the limited hierarchy turns out to be only one aspect of reality, one perspective that needs to be complemented by a continuum view, the view that is offered by the organismal theory (see Chapter 1). In other words, with regard to the levels of the cell and (multicellular) organism, hierarchical organization can be validated only to a limited extent and this limited hierarchy is only one aspect of manifest reality.

Now let us look at the other two dimensions of Wilber's map, the dimensions of individual and collective consciousness. First, individual consciousness, the upper left quadrant of his map. Wilber has referred to it as the spectrum of consciousness, a spectrum that comprises different levels. He distinguished varying numbers of levels, ranging from three to sixteen or seventeen. The question is: How distinct are all these levels? Are they sufficiently distinct to provide the basis for a hierarchy? Wilber has

often referred to them as waves, even as “overlapping waves” (Wilber 2001: 43). If they are indeed overlapping, that may dissolve the hierarchical structure.

Finally, what about the cultural dimension of Wilber's map, the lower left quadrant? As I pointed out already in Chapter 1, there is also overlap between levels: features of upper levels are already present at lower levels such as the archaic and magical levels. In a hierarchy this should not happen.

It seems to me then that in the left quadrants the situation is not very different from that in the right quadrants that refer to science: a hierarchy may be salvaged to a limited extent as one aspect of manifest reality, but if we consider the whole picture, so much fuzziness is introduced that the hierarchy becomes questionable.

Hierarchy as a Fuzzy Set

So far I have looked at the concept of hierarchy only in terms of either/or logic, assuming that, at least from one perspective, there either is a hierarchy or not. I specified conditions for a hierarchy and then I demonstrated that there are cases in which these conditions are fulfilled and other cases in which they are not fulfilled, which means that there are cases that can be seen as a hierarchy and others that are not: either a hierarchy or not.

As I already pointed out, there is a place for either/or logic, but its application is limited. The above discussion illustrates the limitations of either/or logic. When the conditions for a hierarchy are completely fulfilled, either/or logic works well: we can see that these cases are hierarchical. But what if there is only a little deviation from the conditions? Do we conclude then that these cases are not hierarchical? In a strict sense, they are not. But since they deviate only a little, we feel that, although not strictly hierarchical, they are still close to being hierarchical. But the more the cases deviate from the conditions, the less hierarchical they are. Looking at it this way means that cases may be more or less hierarchical, not just either hierarchical or not. In other words, hierarchy is a fuzzy set in which any particular case can have a membership that may range from 100% to 0%. A 100% membership means that the case represents a typical hierarchy or a hierarchy in the strict sense. A 0% membership means that the case is definitely not hierarchical. Cases between the two extremes are more or less hierarchical.

As far as I know, Wilber does not explicitly acknowledge the fuzziness of hierarchy and hierarchical thinking. In many instances he makes it very clear that “the Kosmos is

a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely" (Wilber 2001: 40). "You can't escape these nested orders" (Wilber 200: 26). This means that there are holons at different levels so that the upper level holon includes and transcends the lower level holon.

But now comes the puzzle. Although Wilber keeps insisting that manifest reality is hierarchical, he prefers to refer to waves instead of levels because the so-called levels are not "radically separate, discrete, and isolated from each other" (Wilber 1999: 267). Waves "interpenetrate and overlap (like colors in a rainbow)" (Wilber 2000a: 215). To me this does not sound hierarchical in the strict sense. It seems to loosen considerably the way Wilber himself defined a hierarchy (holarchy) as an inevitable *ranking* system that is all-encompassing: "trying to get rid of ranking is itself ranking" (Wilber 2000b: 26) and "denying hierarchy is itself a hierarchy" (Wilber 2000b: 26). To me his emphasis of waves and continuity instead of distinct levels seems to indicate that he recognizes the fuzziness of hierarchy, although to my knowledge he does not explicitly acknowledge that reality can be more or less hierarchical. But if he does indeed accept the fuzziness of hierarchy, much of my above criticism that was based on his strict definition of hierarchy as a ranking system applies only partially. I do, however, maintain that even fuzzy hierarchical thinking can represent only one aspect of manifest reality and needs to be complemented by other ways of thinking to obtain a more complete picture of manifest reality (see Chapter 4).

Yin-Yang

Yin-Yang is highly relevant to our discussion. According to Daoism, Yin and Yang are the two major forces in the Kosmos that, in the widest sense, represent all polar opposites such as female and male, earth and heaven, matter and spirit. They are not distinct and not mutually exclusive: Yin contains Yang and vice versa. This is represented in the Yin-Yang symbol by a white dot (Yang) in the black Yin and a black dot (Yin) in the white Yang (Figure 2–4), which means that either/or logic does not apply: nothing is only either Yin or Yang; therefore, nothing is clear-cut; everything is fuzzy. In a sense Yin-Yang is even more radical than fuzzy logic. In fuzzy logic, the two extremes of 0% and 100% membership exist at least as a possibility. Yin-Yang denies even this possibility because nothing can be 0% Yin or Yang, and nothing can be 100% Yin or Yang. Therefore, either/or logic can apply only as an approximation when Yin or Yang comes very close to 0% or 100%. Since a hierarchy in the strict sense is based on either/or logic, hierarchy too, if it is at all admitted, can at best exist only as an

approximation to reality. Thus Yin-Yang curtails hierarchies and hierarchical thinking even more severely than all the other critical considerations I have presented so far because it eliminates the 100% fulfillment of the two fundamental conditions of hierarchies in the strict sense according to which the Kosmos is seen as nests within nests.

Yin-Yang is fundamentally different from our usual thinking in terms of mutually exclusive categories, in terms of either black or white. Strictly speaking, there is no real black and white according to Yin-Yang. What appear as black and white are only extremes of gray. Black and white exist only as approximations. Basically everything is gray. This is the opposite to either/or logic according to which everything must be either black or white and what appears to be gray is essentially either black or white. In a literal sense, few people may go so far to deny the existence of gray completely, but if black and white are taken as metaphors for mutually exclusive categories such as love and hate, or good and evil, many people, consciously or subconsciously, follow either/or logic. And hierarchical thinking in the strict sense, not as a fuzzy set, is also based on this black or white thinking.

If we think in terms of black or white in a metaphorical sense, then the world is fundamentally divided into all the mutually exclusive opposites that black and white represent symbolically. And division is the basis for conflict, aggression and war. If, however, everything is gray in a metaphorical sense according to Yin-Yang, then everything is basically undivided, although there are the two major forces of Yin and Yang. This has far-reaching consequences. It means, for example, that nobody can be only good or only evil. Even if we are good, we also have evil in us, if only in traces, and thus we are connected to the man who is predominantly evil. Hermann Hesse in "Siddhartha" put it this way: "The world itself, being in and around us, is never one-sided. Never is a man or a deed wholly Samsara or wholly Nirvana; never is a man wholly saint or sinner" (Hesse 1957: 115).

Can we apply Yin-Yang thinking to the opposites of hierarchy and continuum? If we do so, we come to the surprising conclusion that there is no 100% hierarchy and no 100% continuum. In other words, there is no hierarchy in the strict sense and no complete continuum. There is always at least a trace of the continuum in a hierarchy and vice versa. Consequently, those who think in terms of hierarchies and those who prefer a continuum view are linked, although they operate at opposite ends of the same hierarchy-continuum spectrum.

Another consequence of Yin-Yang is that there is no 100% right and 100% wrong. This is an important warning for all those—and there are many—who think that they are completely right and others, who contradict them, are completely wrong. It is a warning to all those who have the urge to possess the absolute. And it is a warning to those who think that they actually possess the absolute and thus have often done much harm to themselves, to others and the world.

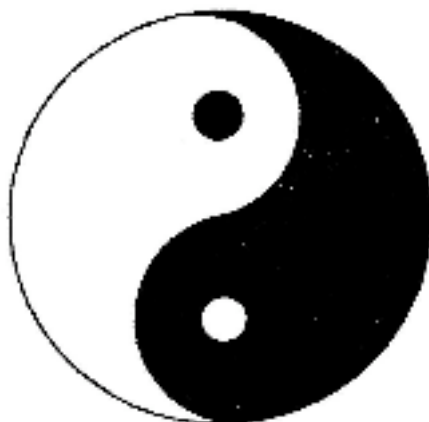


Figure 2–4. Yin-Yang symbol.

Dialectics

To some extent dialectics can provide yet another perspective. The relationship of at least some levels can be understood as the dialectical movement from thesis to antithesis to synthesis. For example, if the mythic level is seen as the thesis, then the rational level is the antithesis, and the level of centauric vision-logic the synthesis. This means that, contrary to the holarchical view, the rational level does not include and transcend the preceding mythic level, but is the negation of that level. To some extent human history as well as personal development is such a movement from one extreme to its opposite extreme. For example, the era of romanticism was a reaction to the so-called enlightenment that emphasized reason. Since in terms of Yin-Yang at least traces of the thesis are retained in the antithesis, romanticism was not totally devoid of reason, although it placed the major emphasis on feeling and emotion. Consequently, there remained at least some connection between the enlightenment and romanticism, reason and feeling/emotion.

Network Thinking

Network thinking (or network logic) also surpasses simple either/or logic since in a network everything is interconnected and therefore either this or that do not exist in isolation. An "evil" deed considered in isolation may indeed appear totally evil, but if it is seen in its netted context, it may appear far less evil and even turn out to be good to some extent. For example, if killing one person prevents the killing of hundreds or thousands of people, then killing that person is not totally evil.

Network thinking applies to all areas of existence. It has become very important in science, especially in disciplines such as ecology (see, e.g., Capra 1996). And the recognition of networks can have far-reaching consequences. For example, recognizing networks in medicine can be of crucial importance for the prevention and treatment of many kinds of diseases. It can be a matter of life or death.

Wilber recognizes the importance of networks in many domains such as, for example, in natural science, that is, the right hand quadrants of his map. However, he excludes them from the most basic structure of his map because that structure is linear and hierarchical. What I want to propose here is to consider the network view of reality or the Kosmos, including ourselves, as another perspective besides the hierarchical view, nonhierarchical holism (undivided wholeness), the continuum view in terms of fuzzy logic, and the Yin-Yang view. Networks need not necessarily entail a flatland view (although they may, as Wilber has emphasized). It has even been pointed out that in the ancient world, the work of the holy spirit was known as the net, indicating that everything is interwoven.

How then can the network view be applied to the basic structure of Wilber's map? 1. We have to question Wilber's categorical insistence that levels cannot be skipped. If, for example, as already mentioned in Chapter 1, a shaman can connect from the magical level to transpersonal levels and if other connections are also possible, then the linearity of the stages (basic structures) gives way to a network. 2. It appears evident that there are also cross-connections between the lines. For example, in the upper left hand quadrant, the cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, psychosexual, moral, spiritual and yet other lines may be interconnected in a netted fashion. (According to Wilber [e.g., 2006: 25], they are separate, yet he also emphasized cross-training between lines which implies interconnections). 3. Similarly, the four quadrants may be interconnected. For example, the two left hand quadrants that represent the individual and collective are bridged through intimate relations between people, and the right and left hand

quadrants that represent the interior and exterior are connected because the interior and exterior are also related.

The network view of reality reminds us that everything is interconnected and thus it provides many bridges that have become obscured or forgotten due to the fragmenting nature of thought and language. Especially in our modern world that is torn apart by many conflicting ideas, ideologies, religions, and beliefs, network thinking can be highly beneficial and healing.

Either/Or in Wilber's Map and Philosophy

Although Wilber appreciates and employs all of the above ways of thinking, he often tends to think in terms of mutually exclusive categories, in terms of either/or. This is a reflection of a general and widespread tendency in our culture due to a profound conditioning to think this way. Even if we are aware of it, we easily fall prey to either/or (and I do not want to claim that I am totally immune to it).

Wilber claims that he operates at the level of vision-logic, which is beyond either/or logic because it involves "bringing together multiple perspectives while unduly privileging none" (Wilber 2000d: 26). Yet in some fundamental ways he privileges either/or logic in his AQAL map and in his general philosophy. To illustrate how this can become limiting, if not dogmatic, I give just a few examples; many more could be added.

1. According to Integral Post-Metaphysics, "in the manifest world, there are no perceptions, only perspectives. Put bluntly, perception, prehension, awareness, consciousness are all 3rd-person, monological abstractions with no reality whatsoever" (Wilber 2006: 255).

I would like to suggest that we need not debate whether in the manifest world there are only either perceptions or perspectives because we can see the manifest world both in terms of perceptions *and* perspectives, so that "perceptions" and "perspectives" can be seen as two different perspectives of the manifest world, although I think that the "perspectives" perspective is of enormous importance and usefulness and has far-reaching advantages.

2. According to Wilber's AQAL map, the basic structure of manifest reality is a holarchy that comprises holons at increasingly inclusive levels. Although a holarchy offers an integration, it also creates fragmentation because reality is fragmented into holons and levels so that something must be either this holon or that holon and belong to either this level or that level. Nonetheless, as I pointed

out already, a holarchy is useful, but if it is the only perspective, it is too limiting. Other perspectives that I proposed are enriching because they add other dimensions.

3. Wilber attaches great importance to what he called the pre/trans fallacy. In this fallacy, "pre" and "trans" are confused. For example, prepersonal and transpersonal, prerational and transrational, are confused because both are nonrational. They are, however, nonrational "in their own ways" (Wilber 1998: 88) and therefore awareness is either "pre" or "trans". I recognize differences between "pre" and "trans," but I would like to suggest that (in any developmental/evolutionary line)—like Yin and Yang—there may also be some "trans" in "pre" and vice versa, if not always, at least in some instances.
4. Wilber insists on a categorical distinction between stages and states: either stage or state. Stages (as basic structures) are attained in a linear sequence and, once attained, are permanent, whereas states are temporary. Since in the manifest world permanence and temporariness may be a matter of degree, I would like to suggest that we consider that stages and states may be fuzzy sets. This makes Wilber's map less clear-cut, but might render it more realistic.
5. Wilber also takes either/or logic for granted with regard to the sequence of stages. Considering whether stages follow each other either in a linear sequence or not, he concludes that they follow each other linearly. This means that stages cannot be skipped. I would like to suggest, however, that there may be jumps from lower levels, such as the magic level, to higher levels, such as transpersonal levels, which means that, for example, a shaman does not have to pass through the rational level in order to reach transpersonal levels.

Whether levels can be skipped or not, depends on how they are defined. If they are defined in very general and rudimentary terms, they may not be skipped. But if they are defined more specifically, they may be skipped, at least at times. For example, if rationality and vision-logic are defined in very general and rudimentary terms (see, e.g., Wilber in Rothberg and Kelly 1998: 335/6), a shaman may have rationality and vision-logic and therefore the fact that he has reached transpersonal stages does not mean that he has skipped the stages of rationality and vision-logic. If, however, rationality and vision-logic are defined more specifically in terms of logic and formal reasoning, then the shaman may have skipped these stages. Therefore, the question of whether stages can be

skipped or not appears to be largely a matter of semantics. Wilber, who insists that stages cannot be skipped, uses the definitions that support his view (see Wilber in Rothberg and Kelly 1998: 335/6). In this way, he protects his view from criticism, which is fine, but not helpful to gain further insight. One also has to consider that stages may be skipped partially, which makes "skipping stages" a fuzzy set. And finally one may have to consider that stages may be accessed simultaneously, if not totally, at least partially (see, e.g., McDonald-Smith in Rothberg and Kelly 1998). In the interesting volume edited by Rothberg and Kelly (1998), several authors (especially Washburn, Kelly, Rothberg, McDonald-Smith, Kremer, and Puhakka) drew attention to these and related problems of Wilber's holarchical stage model (see also Smith 2002).

6. Wilber also makes a categorical distinction between individuals and collectives. Following Whitehead, he insists that individuals have a dominant monad, whereas collectives don't. A dominant monad "has an organizing or governing capacity that all of its subcomponents follow. For example, when Isaac [his dog] gets up and walks across the room, *all* of his cells, molecules, and atoms get up and go with him... *And there is not a single society or group or collective anywhere in the world that does that.* A social holon simply does not have a dominant monad" (Wilber 2006: 145). However, it is not always clear whether something is an individual or a collective, an organism or a society, because there are intermediates between the two and therefore individuals and collectives are fuzzy sets. For example, there are colonial animals such as corals that form a continuous body from which parts may break off and form a new colony. A tree is usually considered to be an individual plant, but it has also been understood as a metapopulation of individuals (individuals which in that case are the branches of the tree) (see, e.g., Sattler 1986: 65).
7. Wilber makes a categorical distinction between the four quadrants of his map. However, since individuals and collectives are fuzzy sets, the limits between the individual and collective (the upper and the lower) quadrants become also fuzzy. And even the boundaries of the interior and exterior (left and right) quadrants become fuzzy when a tree can be considered an individual with its own interiority or a collective of individuals, each of which has its own interiority yet facing all the other individuals of the tree as exterior to its own interiority.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that I am not completely against either/or thinking. It can be useful to some extent. However, if we take either/or thinking for

granted and use only either/or thinking in situations such as the above, we rob ourselves of alternatives that enrich and balance our views of the Kosmos and ourselves.

Ways of Thinking Healing the Human Condition and the World

As I have indicated already, ways of thinking are not only of intellectual and academic interest, but have also profound consequences for our personal existence, our relationships, society, and the whole planet. Either/or thinking and hierarchical thinking, although useful to some extent, divide and can easily become antagonistic and belligerent. Both/and logic, fuzzy logic, Yin-Yang and network thinking connect and therefore aid in reconciliation and healing. Hence, the recognition of these alternative kinds of logic and thinking is extremely important for a betterment of the human condition and the environmental situation—it can be healing in many ways.

Conclusions

Hierarchy in the strict sense and typical hierarchical thinking are based on either/or logic. Since either/or logic is only of limited applicability, Wilber's map and the hierarchy on which it is based also apply to reality only to a limited extent. **If we want to obtain a richer and more comprehensive map of the Kosmos, we have to go beyond either/or logic and embrace also alternative ways of thinking such as both/and logic, continuum logic (that is, fuzzy logic), Yin-Yang and network thinking. The latter connects everything and thus provides many bridges that have been obscured or forgotten due to the fragmenting nature of thought and language in terms of ideas, ideologies, religions, and beliefs.**

Either/or logic divides and its practitioners can easily become antagonistic and even belligerent. Both/and logic, fuzzy logic, Yin-Yang and network thinking connect and therefore aid in reconciliation and healing at a personal, social, and global level. Hence, the recognition of these alternative kinds of logic and thinking is extremely important for a betterment of the human condition and the environmental situation. (I am presently working on a new book tentatively entitled *Healing Thinking and Being* that will elaborate on this topic.)

Chapter 3: Evolution and Beyond

As I pointed out in the two preceding chapters, I am not against hierarchy and either/or logic; I only think that there are still other ways of viewing the Kosmos. Likewise, I am not against evolution—how could I, as a biologist, be against evolution! But I think that, in addition to evolution, there are still other ways of viewing and experiencing existence. And these other ways are highly important for attaining a more deeply fulfilled life.

Evolution

Wilber's AQAL map is evolutionary: it describes three or four major dimensions of evolution, beginning with the Big Bang in the center of the map (see Figure I-3). The scientific dimension, in the upper right quadrant, represents the evolution from atoms to molecules to cells to organisms with increasingly complex brains. In the lower left quadrant, the corresponding environments for this evolution are enumerated; they begin with galaxies, then planets, then Gaia systems and eventually, after many stages, more and more integrated states culminating in a planetary state. It should be noted that galaxies, including stars, are the environment for the evolution of atoms, planets for molecules, Gaia systems for prokaryotic cells such as bacterial cells, heterotrophic ecosystems for more highly evolved organisms, and so on. The numbers in the map of Figure I-3 indicate which levels correspond with one another in different quadrants. The upper left quadrant describes the evolution of individual consciousness. Thirteen stages are enumerated in Figure I-3, but Wilber emphasizes that there are four additional transpersonal levels: the psychic, subtle, causal (formless) and nondual levels. The nondual level is the level of pure Being, absolute Oneness that transcends the One and the Many, One Taste (Wilber 2000c). It is not a level comparable to the other levels but rather the Ground of all levels (see Introduction). The lower left quadrant illustrates cultural evolution in thirteen stages. The 13th stage corresponds with vision-logic, which is the last stage of personal consciousness before it enters the transpersonal levels.

Beyond Evolution

In Wilber's evolutionary map personal consciousness evolves from the experience of the Many in the first thirteen stages to mystical stages and absolute Oneness; in short, from the Many to the One. The reverse is called involution. Wilber emphasized the importance of involution in his books, but does not indicate it explicitly in his map. In his

map all the arrows go from the Big Bang to the most highly evolved stages including the causal (formless) level and absolute Oneness.

It is important to distinguish two kinds of involution: 1. involution that, like evolution, occurs in time; and 2. involution beyond time. Thomas J. McFarlane (unpublished manuscript) pointed out that in the Great Chain of Being of the perennial philosophy—which is of central importance to Wilber—evolution is also seen within or beyond time. Thus, McFarlane presented evolution and involution by the following scheme:

	atemporal	temporal
Involution	process of manifestation in the eternal present: One to Many	process of manifestation in time: One to Many
Evolution	process of dissolution in the eternal present: Many to One	process of complexification* in time: Many to One

* It should be noted that evolution can also be a process of simplification.

Wilber's writings are in agreement with McFarlane's scheme, but Wilber's map is not because it is only evolutionary in time. Let us now examine the other three aspects in the above scheme: involution in time, and involution and evolution in the eternal present.

Involution in Time

Involution in time is the movement from the One to the Many. Let me illustrate it by two examples. According to Wilber's map, evolution begins with atoms at the lowest level in the upper right quadrant. McFarlane (unpublished manuscript) points out, however, that atoms are formed only after a cosmic process of involution from a primordial One. He claims that according to our current understanding based on general relativity and the standard model of elementary particles and forces, "the cosmos manifested from a unity and an explicit symmetry of forces, and progressed through stages of symmetry breaking that veiled the unity of the forces to leave a universe of apparent multiplicity of forces and types of particles, and only then began an evolutionary process of complexification that produced galaxies, solar systems, life, and so on" (see also McFarlane 1998).

Another example of involution in time is given by Wilber (1998: 156-161) with regard to the waking state, dreams, and dreamless deep sleep. Evolution from the Many to the

One occurs as we fall asleep. First the body goes to sleep, but the mind and soul remain active in dreams. Then the mind and soul fall asleep resulting in dreamless sleep and that leaves only the formless which is also called the witness that is beyond form, beyond the Many. Now, as we return from the oneness of dreamless sleep to the waking state, involution occurs: the soul and mind awaken from their sleep in the formless, and dreaming can begin again; finally the body wakes up. Thus, involution has occurred from the formless in dreamless sleep to the many manifestations of the soul, the mind, and finally the body. Note that this is exactly the reverse of the sequence of stages of body, mind, soul, and spirit (the formless) in one of the many versions of Wilber's map.

Wilber (1998: 157) also pointed out that according to the "Tibetan Book of the Dead" death and rebirth involve the same sequences of evolution and involution that occur when we go into deep dreamless sleep and wake up again: during the process of death, the body dissolves into mind/soul which dissolves into the formless, and, if karma is present, it leads to rebirth in which the formless gives rise to soul/mind and that to the body. As one passes through these sequences one usually forgets the preceding states. Thus, mind/soul does not remember the formless and the body forgets the formless and perhaps even mind/soul. This forgetting happens not only in rebirth, but also when we wake up from deep sleep. As we return to the soul and mind in dreams, we may have already forgotten the formless, and thus identify with the soul and mind because we think that is all there is. And as we wake up, we may not even remember our dreams or only fragments of them and thus identify with our body, falsely assuming that the body and the material world are the ultimate reality. However, Wilber points out that as we advance in meditation we will be able to retain awareness of the formless, the witness, while awake and even in dreams which he calls pellucid dreaming ("in lucid dreaming, there is usually a tendency to play out egoic impulses in the dream: you imagine orgies, fame, food, flying, whatever turns your ego on" [Wilber 1998: 158]).

Because of the parallels between the waking-dreaming-deep sleep cycle and death-rebirth, it has been said that if we can remain conscious during dreaming and deep sleep, we can also remain conscious during death and rebirth and therefore be able to choose our rebirth. But mastering death and rebirth "is, at best, an aid to the ultimate goal: the recognition of One Taste. For only in One Taste does one step off that brutal cycle altogether, there to rest as the All" (Wilber 1998: 158).

According to Wilber, the stages that lead to One Taste are as follows: At first, through meditation, one develops the ability to be mindful, that is, to remain a witness in

large portions of the waking state. Then one can carry this mindfulness into the dream state, which will lead to pellucid dreaming. Eventually awareness will even be possible in deep dreamless sleep. This constant awareness is called Turiya, the fourth state. In it there is still a subtle dualism between the witness and that which is witnessed, or awareness and its contents, emptiness and form. This dualism is only overcome in One Taste, appropriately also called the Nondual or the Turiyatita. In One Taste emptiness of the witness, the formless, is one with the manifold world of form. "Arhats have the Formless, the ordinary have form, Buddhas have both in One Taste" (Wilber 1998: 159). The difference between having the formless, which is witnessing, and One Taste is that in witnessing one is aware of whatever arises, whereas in One Taste one simply *is* all that arises.

To some readers it might have seemed inconsistent that after my criticism of levels and hierarchies in the preceding chapters I described involution in terms of Wilber's stages or levels in his hierarchy. However, I want to emphasize once more that I am not totally against hierarchy. Hierarchy is one way to describe one aspect of manifest reality. But there are also nonhierarchical ways and in the following section on involution and evolution in the eternal present the focus will be on these ways.

Involution and Evolution in the Eternal Present

What is the eternal present? How can the present be eternal? First of all, it has to be understood that eternity does not mean infinity in time or everlasting time. Eternity in this context means beyond time. Thus, when we are totally in the present, instead of thinking of the past or future, we are in eternity, which is beyond thought because thought is in time; and it is beyond ego because ego is in thought and time. Deep meditation can open the door to eternity and even daily experiences like watching a sunset and being totally with it, losing oneself in someone's eyes, or being totally absorbed with a flower can give us glimpses of eternity.

How are involution and evolution possible in the eternal present? In time, involution moves from the One to the Many and evolution from the Many to the One. Beyond time, that is, in the eternal present, such movement stops because movement can only occur in time. In the eternal present the One *is* the Many and the Many *is* the One. What is meant here by the One is the formless, the witness, emptiness, not the absolute One, One Taste. And the Many is form. Thus, instead of the One and the Many, we could refer to emptiness and form, which leads us to the wisdom of the Heart Sutra:

Form is emptiness
And emptiness is form

When form *is* emptiness and emptiness *is* form, any dualism of emptiness and form, the One and the Many has been transcended. Now there is just One Taste.

Wilber is very much aware of involution and evolution in the eternal present and writes beautifully about it. Chapter 9 in his “Sex, Ecology, Spirituality” (Wilber 2000a) is entitled “The way up is the way down”, a statement by Heraclitus meaning that evolution is involution. This equation is possible beyond time, in the eternal present.

Wilber (2000a: 337) also points out that the oneness of emptiness and form, the One and the Many, entails the oneness of wisdom and compassion because “wisdom sees that the Many is One, compassion knows that the One is the Many; that the One is expressed *equally* in each and every being, and so each is to be treated with compassion and care” (Wilber 2000a: 337).

Wilber sees the One and the Many in the context of hierarchy, the One being higher than the Many. However, they can also be seen in a nonhierarchical way as polar opposites such as positive and negative. The positive need not have a higher ranking than the negative just as Yang is not considered higher than Yin: they are different and in their difference they complement each other. Yin and Yang are transcended in Dao. This transcendence could be seen as a rudimentary two-level hierarchy. But since it leads into Dao, that which cannot be talked about, we should not call it anything, which means that it neither is nor is it not a hierarchy: it is beyond the namable.

Fulfillment and Peace

Being aware of involution is important because the lower levels find their higher meaning only in reference to the higher levels, especially the highest level which is the One. However, since the lower levels are stepped-down or diluted versions of the higher levels, they tend to forget their origin from the One and this leads to the world of forgetfulness, fragmentation, misery, conflict, and war. Peace and fulfillment can only be attained through the evolution toward the One. “Then that which was dis-membered, fragmented, and forgotten during involution is re-membered, reunited, made whole, and realized during evolution” (Wilber 2006: 218).

Wilber (2005d, Disc 2, 12/13) pointed out that in the world of the Many the finite self is driven by hope and fear—hope to become more complete, and fear to lose even more. In that world there is no lasting peace and no total fulfillment. However, being

aware of and resting in the One creates peace and fulfillment even in the world of the Many because in the vast spaciousness of the infinite One nothing is lacking and thus there is no place and no need for hope and fear. In other words, if we rest in infinity, finite things including the finite self are fine, provided we do not identify with them but simply see them as arising from the infinity. This is the embrace of the One and the Many in the eternal present. It endows us with the "power of now" (Tolle 1997).

Conclusions

Evolution, if it includes evolution toward transpersonal experience of Oneness, is the movement from the Many to the One, the formless, emptiness in the Buddhist sense. This movement occurs in time. Involution is the opposite of evolution: the movement from the One to the Many as it happens, for example, when we wake up into a world of the Many from deep dreamless sleep in which we reached the One. Although we usually think of evolution and involution (if we consider involution at all) as events in time, both evolution and involution occur also beyond time in the eternal present. When this happens, the way up from the Many to the One *is* the way down from the One to the Many, The One *is* the Many, emptiness *is* form, and all dualism is transcended in One Taste.

Although Wilber recognizes that evolution and involution may occur in time and beyond time in the eternal present, his AQAL map represents only evolution in time. All stages in the four quadrants evolve in time after the Big Bang. All arrows in the four quadrants are arrows of time. Obviously **a more comprehensive map of the Kosmos has to go beyond evolution in time. It has to include both evolution and involution, in time and in the eternal present.**

Lasting peace and fulfillment can only be attained through a total embrace of the One and the Many in the eternal present. In such an embrace both hope and fear vanish because in the infinite One nothing is lacking.

Chapter 4: The Dynamic Mandala

What is a Mandala?

'Mandala' is a Sanskrit word meaning circle and completion. Thus, most mandalas are plans, charts, geometric patterns, or all sorts of artistic designs that are circular, although squares and other figures may be incorporated. As far as its meaning is concerned, a mandala is often a symbolic representation of the Kosmos including our self. It has a center that is often meant to be the source of all being, and from this source radiates manifest reality in all its manifoldness. The central source draws our attention towards it, and therefore the mandala can be a tool for centering, focusing and contemplation. It can have a magical force and can provide a sacred space because of its transcendent source. It can remind the viewer of the immanence of sanctity in the Kosmos and in himself or herself. Thus, it can be a tool on the spiritual path: it can aid to end human suffering, can heal, liberate, and even help to attain enlightenment.

Mandalas have played an important role in Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism. And in a general sense, they have been known worldwide in indigenous traditions and many cultures. They are often two-dimensional, painted on paper or cloth, or made of sand, or other materials. But they may also be three-dimensional. Thus, for example, the Buddhist temple of Borobudur in Java represents one huge architectural mandala with a central stupa that encloses a Buddha statue that is surrounded by many other stupas, which surmount square platforms with bas-reliefs depicting the world and the life of the Buddha.

Mandalas often depict the Buddha, or deities, or other figures, but they may also be more or less abstract. The dynamic mandala of this book deviates from the norm of mandalas because, in its initial presentation, it is conceptual in its outer portion. But like other mandalas, it has a center that represents the source of all existence, and from this source radiates the manifoldness of the manifest world, which is represented by concepts. Since, in contrast to the names of the concepts, the source is the unnamable, it is represented by an empty space without any name in it. I also refer to the source as the mystery, again because it is beyond anything that can be talked about. Or I often refer to it as emptiness (in the Buddhist sense) in contrast to the form(s) of the rest of the mandala. "Emptiness does not imply nonexistence; emptiness implies the emptiness of *intrinsic* [independent] existence, which necessarily implies dependent origination [that is, the interconnectedness of everything]" (Tenzin Gyatso, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama 2005: 117). Thus, emptiness is form, but form that lacks independent existence,

which is “the true nature of things and events” (Tenzin Gyatso, The Fourteenth Dalai Lama 2005: 115). This contrasts with our ordinary understanding of form as separate things and events that are defined and named. For a fuller understanding of reality, it is of utmost importance to transcend this restricted view, and therefore, in the mandala of this book, we proceed from the concepts at its periphery to its empty center, from the namable to the unnamable, the mystery, the source of all that can be fragmented into things and events, sensations, emotions, thoughts, and consciousness.

A general characteristic of any mandala is that it serves as a tool for contemplation and meditation. It allows the meditator to approach it in a temporal evolutionary way, thus proceeding from the periphery toward its center, or through involution in time from the center toward the periphery, or through evolution and involution beyond time in the eternal present, which can lead to a recognition of the oneness of the source and its radiance, the unmanifest and the manifest, the One and the Many (see Chapter 3 and below).

Regardless of how mandalas are viewed and used, they facilitate integration in many ways: integration of the conscious and subconscious (as in Jung's psychology), microkosm and makrokosm, the individual and the Kosmos. The mandala of this book also serves this function. Since integration is healing, mandalas have played an important role in healing, healing of the self, relationships, and the world (Cornell, 1994). They have played this role for thousands of years to the present time in many spiritual traditions around the globe.

Wilber's AQAL map of the Kosmos deviates from a typical mandala because the source or spirit is located not in the center but at the periphery of the square four-quadrant map. Since it serves the same purpose as a typical mandala, it could also be considered a mandala in the widest sense of the term. Reynolds (2004: 68) referred to it as a “transcendent Kosmic Mandala.” In his *Integral Psychology* (2000d: 103, Figure 10), Wilber presented the Great Nest of Spirit (from which his map originated) with spirit in the center as in a typical mandala.

Finally, in a rather fuzzy sense, any somewhat centric structure has been considered a mandala by some authors. Thus, a flower, for example, could be seen as a mandala. Although I am not opposed to a wider and looser definition of “mandala”, in this book I generally use the term ‘mandala’ in a strict sense, which means a circular or centric structure (that may incorporate other structures) with a center representing the source,

the unnamable, the mysterious, the formless or emptiness (in the Buddhist sense) from which radiate the manifold manifestations of the Kosmos.

The Structure of the Dynamic Mandala

The dynamic mandala is not just one mandala such as the one presented in Figure 4–1, but includes many interpretations and transformations. Thus, the dynamic mandala is a multitude of mandalas or even the set of all mandalas (see below). Nonetheless, I refer to it simply as the mandala, or the dynamic mandala, or the self-referential dynamic mandala, or the mandala of this book, recognizing that it has many interpretations and transformations or versions. I introduce it with the version of Figure 4–1. To distinguish the mandala of Figure 4–1 from any of its transformations, I either refer to it as the “basic mandala” or the mandala of Figure 4–1. “Basic mandala “ could be misleading because it is only basic in the sense that I arbitrarily take it as the starting point for the transformations. I could have chosen any one of the transformations as the starting point and then this would have been the “basic mandala”. There is no transformation that is privileged, except maybe for practical reasons. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to simply refer to a dynamic relationship between the so-called transformations, each of which is a different mandala.

The mandala of Figure 4–1 consists of an empty center and two circles of concepts, an outer and inner circle. Each concept of the outer circle is paired with a concept of the inner circle. For example, fragmentation is paired with wholeness.

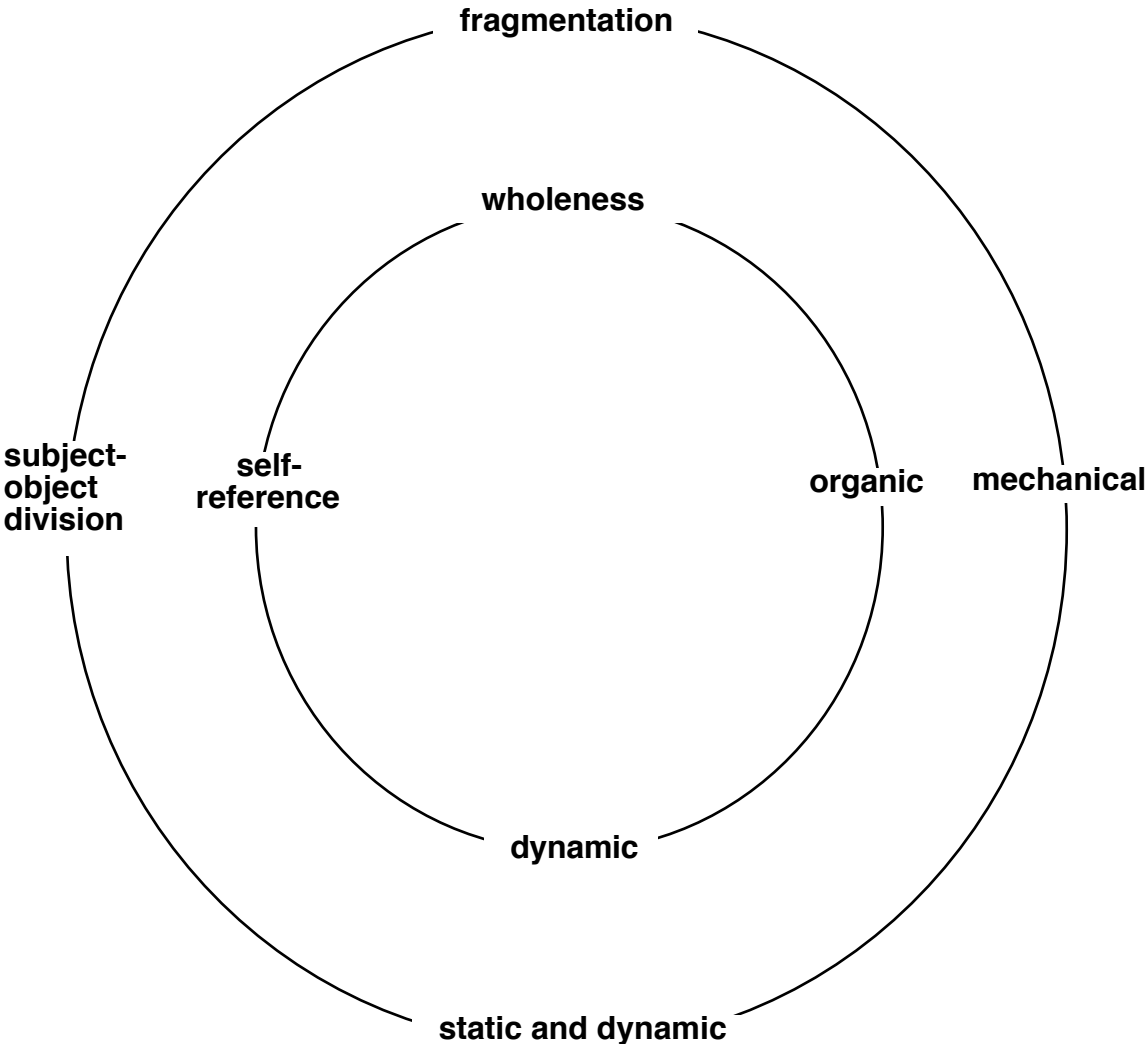


Figure 4–1. A simple version of the dynamic mandala.

What do the circles of concepts and the empty center represent? To begin with the empty center, since it is empty, it is best referred to as emptiness (in the Buddhist sense) or the names I referred to above. The relation between the empty center and the two circles deserves special attention. It is the relation between the unnamable and the namable, emptiness and form (forms having names), the One and the Many, the unmanifest and the manifest, the source and the efflux of the source. As the source and what flows out of it are one, so the center and the circles of concepts are one. Thus, the mandala as a whole represents the nondual ultimate reality, the great Mystery which in the Heart Sutra has been pointed at by the well-known expression: Form is emptiness, and emptiness if form. Note that I distinguish Mystery (with a capital M) of the Nondual, the mandala as a whole, from mystery (with a small m), the formless of the empty center of the mandala.

Form (that which can be named) is represented by the two circles with its names of concepts. The outer circle of concepts indicates the mechanistic worldview that implies also materialism and is still the dominant worldview of Western mainstream society and science, especially the life sciences. In contrast, the inner circle refers to holistic science and the counter culture or alternative society.

According to the mechanistic worldview, the universe and everything in it is a material mechanism. Thus, an organism, for example, is like a machine, although a highly complex machine: it consists of components, each separate from the other. Separateness implies fragmentation. The fragments may change and interact; in that sense there is dynamics. But a fragment remains a fragment; in that sense they are static. The observer himself or herself is a fragment that is separate from whatever (s)he observes. Thus, the division of the observer and the observed is fundamental.

In contrast, according to a holistic worldview, the world is an integrated whole and thus an organism is also integrated. This integration makes it organic and dynamic. It also means the observer and the observed are integrated, and as a result there is self-reference: since the observer is an integral part of the Kosmos, whatever (s)he says about the Kosmos also applies to herself or himself, at least to some extent. It is as if the Kosmos is mirrored in the observer. Whichever way we want to put it, the observer is not just a separate component.

It is very important to note that the concepts of the outer and inner circles and their relationship to each other and the center of the mandala have been defined differently by various authors and thus they can have different meanings. Depending on which meanings are implied, the meaning of the mandala changes. Therefore, the mandala has different interpretations.

Different Interpretations of the Dynamic Mandala

There are three aspects of the mandala that can be interpreted differently: First, the relation between the outer and inner circle; second, the concepts of each circle; and third, the relation between the circles and the empty center.

The relation between the two circles

Several different relations between the circles can be envisaged:

1. Often the two circles are perceived as being antagonistic to each other. Either mechanism is upheld and holism is condemned or vice versa. Less extreme

positions are to acknowledge that there is at least some limited merit to the circle that one does not favor. Therefore, condemnation is not total.

2. Both circles are recognized and they are seen as complementary to each other. This does not necessarily mean that they are equal. One of them such as the holistic circle could be considered more comprehensive or more adequate than the mechanistic circle.
3. The circles could be seen in terms of Yin-Yang. In general, this means that the outer circle contains a little of the inner circle and vice versa (see Figure 2–4). More specifically, it could mean that the outer circle is more Yang, more masculine, and the inner more Yin, more feminine.
4. The relation between the two circles can be seen as a ranking in a hierarchical fashion. If we look at it in this way, then the inner circle includes and transcends the outer circle just as each level in Wilber's map includes and transcends its predecessor. This hierarchical relation is reflected in each concept pair. For example, wholeness includes and transcends fragmentation; an organism includes cells but transcends them through the emergence of novel properties at the organismal level such as the emergence of a mind that in that form is not present at the cellular level.
5. The two circles are continuous. For example, as there is less fragmentation and increasing integration, one moves from fragmentation in the outer circle to holodynamics in the inner circle. There are, however, several different ways of conceiving this continuum: 1. As in the spectrum of colors, the continuum does not imply any inclusion. For example, as we move from yellow to green, we just move to a color that is different: green does not include yellow. In the same way, holodynamics would not include fragmentation: it is just different from fragmentation according to this conception of the continuum. 2. There is a continuum in which change from one part of the continuum to another implies inclusion and transcendence, which could be total or partial. In that case holodynamics would not only differ from fragmentation, but would also totally or partially include and transcend fragmentation. A simple example of this kind of continuum is the continuum from either/or logic (a two-valued logic) to three-valued logic to many-valued logic to fuzzy logic. In this continuum, logic becomes increasingly comprehensive; and the more comprehensive logic transcends and

includes the preceding logic. This kind of continuum shares the phenomenon of emergence with the hierarchical.

In both the inclusive and non-inclusive continuum one can distinguish a heterogeneous and homogeneous continuum. In the heterogeneous or patterned continuum certain areas of the continuum are more prominent than others (see, e.g., Sattler 1986). An example of such a continuum are water waves: they are continuous, but in the continuity there is a pattern in contrast to the continuum of a flat water surface that has no pattern and therefore is an example of a homogeneous continuum.

Finally, we may see a continuum between all of the above continua. For example, a flat water surface may develop ripples that may become waves, which means that there is a continuum from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous continuum.

Wilber may have a patterned inclusive continuum in mind when he underlines the continuity between the waves or levels of the holarchy. As long as the waves are rather pronounced, one may still refer to holons and a holarchy. However, as the waves become less pronounced, that is, as the continuum becomes more homogeneous, holons and the holarchy gradually vanish.

In any case, waves are not an appropriate analogy for an inclusive continuum because one wave does not include the preceding wave(s): it is only connected to other waves through the underlying water of the ocean as all levels in Wilber's holarchy are connected in Spirit (with a capital S as pointed out in Chapter 1, Fig. 1–2). A more appropriate analogy for an inclusive continuum might be a spiral shell. As it grows from incipient stages, the spirality gradually emerges and any stage in its development includes all the preceding stages.

Wilber recognizes a patterned non-inclusive continuum with regard to transitory moral stages. In these stages, the higher stage replaces the lower one(s), which means that the lower one(s) are not included in the higher one.

6. The concepts of the two circles form a network with each other. The question then is not only how the two circles are interrelated but also how all the concepts of both circles are related to each other and this in turn may affect the relation between the two circles.

Considering all of the principal and subordinate kinds of relations between the two circles, we can list the following possible relations: 1. Total antagonism, 2. Partial antagonism, 3. Equal complementarity, 4. Unequal complementarity, 5. Yin-Yang relation, 6. Hierarchy, 7. Homogeneous continuum without inclusion and transcendence, 8. Homogeneous continuum with total inclusion and transcendence, 9. Homogeneous continuum with partial inclusion and transcendence, 10. Heterogeneous continuum without inclusion and transcendence, 11. Heterogeneous continuum with total inclusion and transcendence, 12. Heterogeneous continuum with partial inclusion and transcendence, 13. Network.

Note that this list of 13 possible relations between the two circles is based on either/or logic. For example, the antagonism is either total or partial. If we look at the relations in terms of fuzzy logic, the number of possibilities is reduced because fuzzy logic is more comprehensive. For example, instead of the two relations of total and partial antagonism, we simply obtain the fuzzy set of antagonism ranging from 100% to 0% membership. If we apply fuzzy logic to all of the above 13 possible relations, we obtain the following fuzzy sets: 1. Antagonism, 2. Complementarity, 3. Yin-Yang relation, 4. Hierarchy, 5. Homogeneous continuum, 6. Heterogeneous continuum, 7. Network. The relation between the homogeneous and heterogeneous continuum may also be seen as fuzzy. Furthermore, at least some of the fuzzy sets could be combined. For example, 0% antagonism may be equivalent to 100% complementarity and vice versa. Therefore, antagonism and complementarity could be seen as one fuzzy set instead of two. Similarly, hierarchy and continuum might be combined: 100% hierarchy, that is, typical hierarchy in the strict sense, could be seen as 0% continuum and 100% continuum as 0% hierarchy, provided that the continuum is without inclusion and transcendence.

The above list may not be complete. There may be still other ways that the two circles can be related to each other. Furthermore, the above relations can be listed and conceptualized differently. But note that in any case hierarchy is only one kind of relation besides several others. Therefore, envisaging the relation between the two circles as only hierarchical deprives us of other ways of understanding their relation. And this applies not only to the two circles but also to the so-called levels in Wilber's map.

The most important general conclusion is that the way we view the relation between the two circles and the concepts affects the meaning of the mandala. Thus, already at

this stage, the mandala reveals itself as a proteus that can accommodate very different interpretations.

The concepts of the mandala.

As I mentioned already, the concepts of the mandala can also have different meanings and this again affects the meaning of the mandala as a whole. It is impossible for me to list all the different meanings of the concepts. There is an enormous literature on this subject. As an example, let us consider different meanings of wholeness. I have already distinguished two or three meanings in the section on holism in Chapter 1. One of these meanings is wholeness in terms of the hierarchical view. According to this view, a whole is always also a part; hence there are only part/wholes (holons). Each part/whole includes but transcends the holons of the lower level. If, however, the whole is seen as a unity, a continuum, then the lower level holons are not included as holons because they no longer exist as holons. If this sounds too abstract, think again of the organismal theory that I explained in Chapter 1. According to this theory, the organism does not consist of cells because there are no cells. Thus fragmentation into cells is transcended and as a result the organism can be seen as a more integral whole than it is possible according to the hierarchical view. Nonetheless, it is important to realize that this more integral wholeness is still relative wholeness. Relative because it shows only one part and only one aspect of absolute wholeness. It shows only one part because an organism is only one part of the Kosmos. Since the organism also forms a continuum with its environment, the part could become much more inclusive. However, this more integral wholeness is also relative because it represents only one *aspect* of absolute wholeness. For example, the organismal theory refers only to the physical aspect of reality. It does not represent its interiority, that is, Wilber's left quadrants. In these quadrants we find other important aspects of absolute wholeness. I shall describe in the next chapter how all of these aspects can be included in the mandala.

Returning to the diversity of different meanings of the concepts in the two circles, let me just emphasize that there is room in the mandala for all of these meanings. As a result the mandala can be interpreted in many different ways.

The relation between the circles and the center.

The relation between the circles and the empty center can be seen temporally in terms of evolution or involution or beyond time in the eternal present as I explained it in Chapter 3. If we take the evolutionary view in time, we can see the evolution from the mechanistic to the holistic worldview and from there to the transpersonal experience of

emptiness, the formless, the One, or whatever we like to call it, that which is unnamable. If we look at the mandala in terms of involution in time, we can see how the unmanifest in the center manifests itself in the holistic and mechanistic worldviews; in other words, how the concepts of the circles arise from the source, from emptiness. Finally, if we experience the relation between the emptiness in the center and form in the circles beyond time in the eternal present, we can see that emptiness is form and form is emptiness.

The Dynamic Mandala in Relation to Wilber's Map

If the mandala of Figure 4–1 is interpreted as a hierarchy of stages in a temporal evolutionary way, it is related to Wilber's map and could even be seen as a version of his map for the following reasons:

1. It comprises four levels: the mechanistic worldview, the holistic world view, the formless and the nondual represented by the whole mandala. These levels correspond to the following levels in Wilber's map: the rational level, vision-logic, the transpersonal causal (formless) level ("overmind" according to Wilber 2006, Fig. 2–4), and the nondual ("supermind" according to Wilber 2006, Fig. 2–4). Evidently, several of Wilber's levels are missing in the mandala of Figure 4–1, especially the psychic and subtle transpersonal levels (both of which are renamed in Wilber 2006) and all of the levels below the rational level. As we shall see in the next chapter, all of these levels can be added in transformations of the mandala of Figure 4–1.
2. The concept pairs correspond to the lines in Wilber's map. Again, more lines can be added and the lines can be extended to comprise more than two concepts. As in Wilber's map, the concept pairs or lines traverse the levels, if the mandala is interpreted in a hierarchical way.
3. The mandala can also be interpreted in terms of states and types. States are temporary changes such as a temporary advance to a more holistic view or experience. Types can occur at any stage or state. For example, the dynamic at the holistic level can be masculine or feminine.
4. Finally, the mandala can also be interpreted in terms of Wilber's four quadrants and this can be done in three different ways: 1. Each concept pair or concept line can be visualized as having four quadrants. 2. The mandala can be divided into four quadrants and each concept pair or line can be put into the appropriate

quadrant(s). Thus, in Fig. 4–1 self-reference/ subject-object division is placed into the upper left quadrant, organic/mechanistic in to the lower left quadrant, and wholeness/fragmentation and dynamic/static and dynamic into the right hand quadrants. 3. The mandala can be drawn only with the circles representing the levels without the concept pairs, and then it can be divided into the four quadrants. This corresponds to the way Wilber constructs the four quadrants, whereas the visualization of four quadrants around each concept pair or line deviates from Wilber's view.

As I mentioned already, one representational difference between the mandala and Wilber's map is that the mandala has the formless in the center, whereas Wilber's map has it at the periphery. As I shall show in the next chapter even this difference can be eliminated through an inversion of center and periphery.

Obviously, the basic mandala of Figure 4–1 is not as comprehensive as Wilber's map. However, as I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, transformations of the mandala of figure 4–1 will make up for this deficiency. On the other hand, in some ways even the mandala of Figure 4–1 surpasses Wilber's map since it can also be interpreted non-hierarchically in several different ways, in terms of temporal involution, and in terms of evolution and involution beyond time in the eternal present.

I introduced the mandala in a very simple and simplified version for at least two reasons: 1. to focus on fundamental features of the mandala without overwhelming the reader, and 2. to address levels and lines that are especially relevant to developed Western and westernized countries. In these countries such as Great Britain, France, and Germany, the majority of the population appears to be more or less at the mechanistic or rational level and the leading edge at the holistic or integral level. If, however, we consider the whole world, the picture changes drastically. According to Wilber (2006: 179) worldwide 50%-70% of the population is still at the mythic (ethnocentric) level or below. "To put it in bluntest terms possible, this means around 70% of the world's population is Nazis" (Wilber 2006: 179). Thus, to represent the worldwide situation, we would have to include in the mandala of Fig. 4–1 at least the mythic level which could be done in two ways: 1. We simply add the mythic level as a third circle outside the mechanistic, rational circle without any concepts in the three circles. If we divide this mandala into four quadrants, we obtain a simplified and inverted version of Wilber's map. 2. We add to each concept pair a third concept outside the outer circle. For example, outside "fragmentation" we add "identification", which implies that at the mythic level people identify with fragments such as beliefs and doctrines. Of

course, they don't perceive their beliefs or doctrines as fragments, but rather as a totality, as absolute truth. It is this presupposition of possessing totality and absolute truth that leads to conflicts and clashes, in the extreme even to war, between groups with contradictory beliefs and doctrines as we can witness in so many parts of the world today. In this respect the mandala is of utmost importance: awareness of the mandala can help to resolve these conflicts because it allows us to re-member the center, the source, the mystery, where we are all united.

A Mandala of Mandalas

As I pointed out already, the dynamic mandala is not just one single mandala. Since it has many interpretations and transformations, it is a whole set of mandalas, or, in other words, a mandala of mandalas. In the widest sense, it is the set of all mandalas, since all mandalas of the past, present, and future can be seen as different interpretations and transformations of the dynamic mandala. However, since already existing mandalas have not been created by an actual transformation of the dynamic mandala, it may be more appropriate to refer to a dynamic relationship between all mandalas, or simply say that as mandalas they are all related to each other—because they may be seen as transformations of each other even when they have been created separately.

A Transformative Mandala

The dynamic mandala is a transformative mandala in a double sense: 1. Since it is dynamic and self-referential, it has transformation built into it and thus can be transformed in many ways. 2. Each transformation can have a transformative effect on the viewer and transformer of the mandala. These transformative effects can be manifold depending on whether the viewer studies the mandalas intellectually, enjoys them as works of design and art, appreciates them as tools for contemplation or meditation, or uses them in still other ways. Fontana (2005) highlights the importance of mandalas for meditation and contemplation.

Contemplation of the Mandala

Contemplating the mandala provides insight—insight into the varied meanings of the concepts and circles of concepts, the many different relations between the outer and inner circles, and between both circles and the empty center. Since the two circles represent materialistic, mechanistic mainstream society and holistic alternative society,

we gain insight into the relation between two major forces that shape our society and existence. And we also gain insight into the relation between materialistic, mechanistic mainstream science and holistic science that is still a fringe phenomenon. Above all, contemplating the mandala helps us to re-member that both materialistic, mechanistic and holistic thinking are different manifestations of the source, the empty center. I intentionally write re-member with a hyphen to indicate that being aware of the relation between the source and its manifestations provides an integration, a re-membering of emptiness, the source, into its manifestations. Such re-membering leads to wholeness (holos), holiness, and health. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, it is no coincidence that these three words have the same etymological root, which indicates that they are intimately related. And it is no coincidence that holiness, the sacred, is implied because total integration with the source bestows holiness on everything there is.

In other words, contemplating the mandala reveals that beyond everything that can be expressed in words is the unnamable mystery. Thus, every word points beyond itself to the unnamable; and, vice versa, the unnamable is the source of all that can be named. It is like the sky in which the clouds (of manifestation) arise (Mathers, 2006). Recognizing the clouds in relation to the sky, the namable in relation to the unnamable, instills mystery into the namable because ultimately the namable and the unnamable, form and emptiness, are one, not two. McFarlane (2003), referring to Franklin Merrell-Wolff, points out how concepts that are designated by words are delimitation from the infinite. For example, a circle draws a limit between what is inside and outside itself. Being aware of the infinity outside the circle means relating the circle to the source.

Contemplating the mandala does not only provide insight into reality, the Kosmos, but also communion with it. As we become aware of the source in the empty center of the mandala, we can realize that this center is the center of the Kosmos and ourselves. Thus, the centers of the mandala, the Kosmos, and we coincide—they are one center, not in a spatial or temporal sense, but in the sense of the unnamable mystery. Awareness of this unity dissolves separation and alienation so widespread in our society that to a great extent is caught in the materialistic, mechanistic circle without recognition of the source.

How do we discover the center of the Kosmos in ourselves? Through meditation we can penetrate into the deepest core of our being and then we realize that we and the Kosmos are one, not two. Furthermore, in nondual awareness we find that the center and the periphery, the source and its manifestations are also one, not two.

The Mandala as an Aid to Liberation

Contemplating the mandala can be liberating in several ways:

1. As we realize that concepts have a variety of meanings, we are no longer caught in only one meaning. We can move from one meaning to another and thus enrich our experience. As this movement becomes free and spontaneous, it becomes a dance (see Chapter 7). Having this freedom is very different from the common state of consciousness in which people are “glued” to only one meaning and believe that this meaning captures reality. Other people may be equally “glued” to different or even opposite meanings and then the stage is set for conflict, violence, and war.
2. As with concepts, so with the circles of concepts. We do not have to be caught in just one way of relating the two circles. We can move freely from one way to another: from hierarchy to Yin-Yang, continuum, and network. Again, such movement is freeing and provides a richer experience.
3. Since the mandala contains the empty center, the source, we can see all manifestation, conceptual and otherwise, in relation to its source: we are no longer stuck solely in manifestation cut off from its source. And since awareness of the source bestows sacredness on everything, we recover sacredness in the Kosmos including ourselves.

Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment

“Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment” is the title of a chapter by Thurman in a book of the same title by Leidy and Thurman (1998). Focusing mainly on Buddhist mandalas, Thurman describes how a mandala can be the expression of an enlightened state and how it can be used to approach or even attain this enlightened state. “A mandala is a magical and sacred realm, created by the artistry of enlightened compassion in order to nurture beings’ development toward enlightenment. Mandalas are the perfected environments of the buddhas, built upon the foundation of their perfect wisdom, just as the ordinary universe is built upon the foundation of ignorance” (Leidy and Thurman 1998: 168) Since mandalas present an architecture of form around the center of the formless, they lead us from the world of form to the formless. And since the formless, emptiness, is form, as I pointed out above, mandalas also lead us to the nonduality of emptiness and form. If the mandala is a three-dimensional temple such as Borobudur in Java, one can even physically walk from its square terraces that represent

form to its central stupa that encloses a buddha representing the formless, emptiness. From my visit to Borobudur, I vividly remember my ascent from the terraces to the stupas and eventually the central stupa: it was like transcendence and yet immanence at the same time since the terraces and the stupas are connected. I was deeply touched by the sacred, feeling free and blissful. This stayed with me to the present day.

Not all mandalas are equal with regard to their architecture of enlightenment. For example, compared to Tibetan Buddhist mandalas, the conceptual mandalas presented in this and the following chapter, appear rather deficient. Nonetheless, they comprise form and emptiness and therefore can, at least potentially, open the door to the path toward enlightenment. Since they are conceptual and framed in language easily accessible to the post/modern Western mind, they may be even more helpful to Westerners, especially at the initial stages of their spiritual path.

Obviously, any one single mandala, especially if designed by an enlightened master, can be a guide to reaching the formless in the form. However, the form in any single mandala is always limited, even in the most elaborate Tibetan mandalas. The form in the conceptual mandalas of this and the following chapter is even more limited compared to the richness of Tibetan mandalas. Nonetheless, these conceptual mandalas present an aspect of form that is not contained in the Tibetan mandalas. And other mandalas contain yet other aspects of the inexhaustible richness of manifest reality. Therefore, a diversity of mandalas represents form more comprehensively than any single mandala. Since the dynamic mandala allows endless transformations as shall be demonstrated in the next chapter, it mirrors more fully than any single mandala the fluidity and diversity of the manifest Kosmos through its own fluidity and diversity.

The Fluid Mandala and the Fluid Kosmos

The mandala is fluid in at least three ways:

1. Besides the concept of static, it contains the concept of dynamic in both circles, the inner circle being completely dynamic.
2. Since the mandala is self-referential—referring to the Kosmos and itself as a part of the Kosmos—it is itself dynamic, which means that it can be transformed in many ways that will be illustrated in the next chapter.
3. Since the version of the mandala presented in this chapter and all the other transformations of the mandala can be interpreted in many different ways, each version of the mandala is also fluid.

The fluidity of the mandala mirrors the fluidity of the Kosmos: the macrokosm that includes all the galaxies, stars, and planets; and the microkosm of our individual lives. Since microkosm and macrokosm are ultimately one, our “personal” experience can reach macrocosmic dimensions, dimensions that mystics have alluded to, although they all agree that words and language are insufficient to convey the depth and scope of their experience and insight.

Healing through the Mandala

According to Chinese medicine, illness is the result of energy blockage. Healing then means restoring fluidity, removing the blockage so that the energy can move freely. There are many ways to remove blockages and to restore fluidity. It can be done through acupuncture, massage, exercise, and also through mental and emotional transformation. The mandala with its different interpretations and many transformations (that will be introduced in the following chapter) can help to remove mental and emotional blockages because it infuses fluidity—fluidity in the movement from one interpretation to another and from one transformation to another. Whereas the conceptual transformations of the mandala are best suited for the removal of mental blockages, the organic/artistic transformations (that I shall introduce in the next chapter) can help to alleviate emotional blockages. Since mind and body are one, the removal of mental and emotional blockages can also help to alleviate physical blockages. Thus, contemplating the mandala can help to heal mental, emotional, and physical illness.

Creating new mandalas can also be of great importance in the healing process (see, e.g., Cornell 1994). Jung saw the mandala as a representation of the unconscious self and found that the creation of mandalas can heal emotional disorders and help reunify the self.

Alleviating Suffering through the Mandala

According to Buddhism, the cause of suffering is attachment, attachment to desires, aversions, ideas, doctrines, etc. Attachment is fixation and thus it implies static that is so characteristic of the outer circle of the mandala. There are many ways to free ourselves from attachments to ideas and doctrines. One way is through contemplation of the mandala. Such contemplation can lead to the realization that attachment to any one interpretation and transformation of the mandala is limiting us and that this limitation is unnecessary. We can open ourselves to all interpretations and transformations and thus transcend our self-imposed limitation. Such transcendence will be liberating.

Even the contemplation of one single mandala can be liberating because it connects us to the source, the empty center, the mysterious. However, adding the many interpretations and transformations of the mandala of this book can greatly help in creating more fluidity and thus can contribute to loosening our attachments, especially attachments to ideas and doctrines.

Transforming and Healing Society through the Mandala

As we transform and heal ourselves, we also affect the transformation and healing of society since we are inseparably linked with our environment and society. This healing happens by itself in a very subtle way without any activism. There are, however, in addition also active ways to transform and heal society. Active and inactive ways of transformation and healing are not mutually exclusive—they rather reinforce each other.

Activism can work through the transformation of our institutions such as educational institutions from kindergarten to university and adult education. Instilling fluidity and freedom into the educational process (instead of the common indoctrination of fixed concepts and doctrines that are often presented as the truth) can help to overcome much antagonism, conflict, stress, and even war (see also Chapter 6). Furthermore, contemplation of mandalas creates awareness of the source, emptiness, the mystery, where we are all united with one another and the Kosmos.

Conclusions

In this chapter, a simple version of the dynamic mandala has been presented. It consists of two circles of concepts and an empty center. The outer circle represents the materialistic, mechanistic worldview of Western and westernized mainstream society and science, the inner circle the holistic worldview of alternative society and science. The empty center represents the unnamable source of everything that can be named, the mystery of existence. **Depending on the meaning of the concepts, the relation between the two circles, and between the circles and the center, the dynamic mandala can be interpreted in many different ways—the mandala has room for all of these interpretations.** These different interpretations complement each other because each interpretation illuminates a different aspect of reality. Thus, together all these interpretations give us a much richer and more comprehensive view of the Kosmos than any interpretation alone.

Contemplating the mandala does not only provide insight into reality, the Kosmos, but also communion with it. As we become aware of the source in the empty center of the mandala, we can realize that this center is the center of the Kosmos and ourselves. Thus, the centers of the mandala, the Kosmos, and ourselves coincide—they are one center, not in a spatial or temporal sense, but in the sense of the unnamable mystery that pervades all existence.

Contemplating the mandala can also be liberating in several ways: instead of being caught in only one meaning of the concepts, we can move freely to other complementary meanings; instead of being caught in only one way of relating the circles of concepts, we can entertain other complementary relations; and instead of being caught only in the manifest world cut off from its source, the empty center, we can see everything in relations to the source that bestows sacredness on existence.

Since the mandala is dynamic, transformational, fluid, it is well suited to mirror the fluidity of the Kosmos: the macrocosm that includes all the galaxies, stars, and planets; and the microcosm of our individual lives. Since microcosm and macrocosm are ultimately one, our “personal” experience can reach macrocosmic dimensions, dimensions that mystics have alluded to, although they all agree that words and language are insufficient to convey the depth and scope of their experience and insight.

Finally, **contemplation of the mandala can be healing and alleviate suffering individually as well as in society. Practicing contemplation of the mandala in educational institutions could help overcome much antagonism, conflict, stress, and even war.**

Chapter 5: Transformations of the Dynamic Mandala

With regard to maps in general, there is a difference between maps that have transformation built into them and maps that don't. Both kinds of maps can be transformed, but in the map with built-in dynamics the transformation is part of the map, whereas in the map that lacks built-in dynamics the transformation is imposed from the outside. The mandala of Figure 4–1 that I described in the preceding chapter has transformation built into it and therefore it demands transformation. Why? The mandala is self-referential: it refers to the whole Kosmos and also to itself. Thus, the dynamic in the mandala refers to the dynamic of the Kosmos and the mandala itself.

How can the mandala be transformed? In general, it can be transformed by the following changes:

1. Decrease or increase of the number of circles.
2. Decrease or increase of the number of concept pairs and lines.
3. Change of the structure of the mandala. This includes a replacement of concepts by symbols, mathematical transformations (see McFarlane's mathematical mandala in the next chapter), and the change from a two-dimensional to a three-dimensional structure. It may also involve a reversal of center and periphery which leads to the destruction of the typical mandalic form.
4. Organic/artistic transformations through the creative genius of the artist. Since each organic/artistic mandala is a new, original creation, it is not an actual transformation of another mandala, but it can be seen as such.

The above kinds of transformations lead to conceptual, symbolic, mathematical, and organic/artistic mandalas. Let us first look at conceptual transformations.

Changing the Number of Circles

First let us decrease the number of circles from two to one. In this case the single circle that is left represents simply form, manifestation, the Many (Figure 5–1). Thus, this reduction to one circle also reduced the number of concepts to just one and we obtain the simplest mandala there is (Figure 5–1).

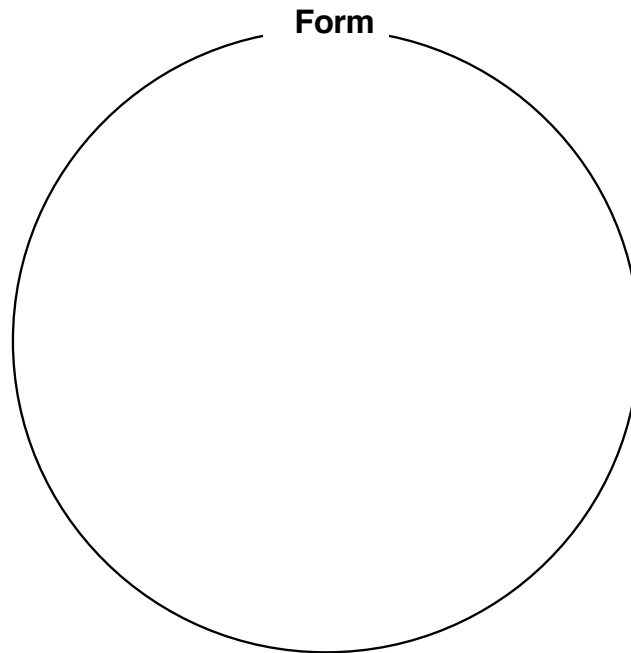


Figure 5–1. Mandala transformation with only one circle and one concept, which is form.

Now let us increase the number of circles. For example, let us add four circles outside the outer circle and two circles inside the inner circle of the basic mandala of Figure 4–1. This gives a total of eight circles (Figure 5–2).

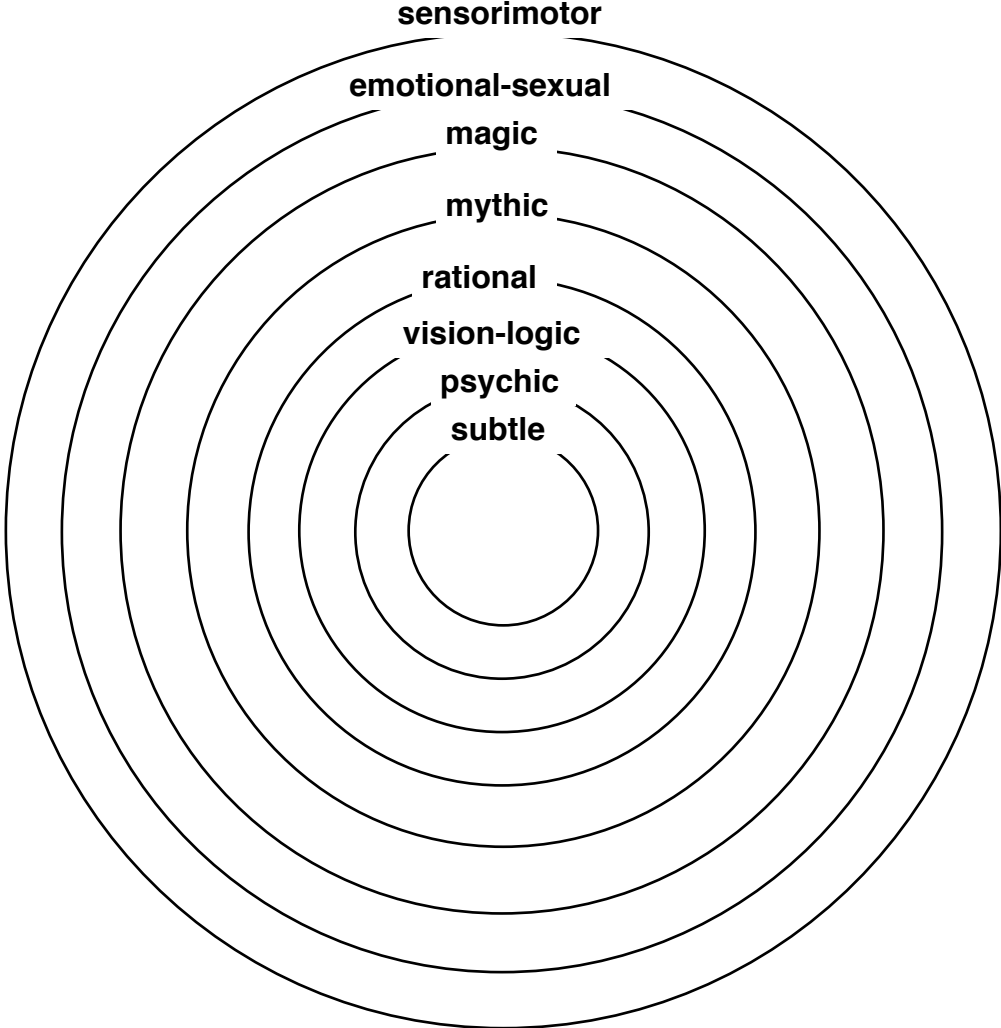


Figure 5–2. A mandala transformation that represents ten levels of Wilber’s hierarchy of levels of consciousness.

These eight circles of Figure 5–2 correspond to eight of the ten levels Wilber (1998: 109) distinguished in one simplified version of his hierarchy of levels of consciousness in the upper left quadrant of his map. The ten levels are as follows: 1. sensorimotor, that is, the physical body; 2. emotional-sexual, that is, emotions, biological drives, bioenergy, etc.; 3. magic, the early form of mind with little differentiation of subject and object; 4. mythic, “where magical power is shifted from the ego to a host of mythic gods and goddesses” (Wilber 1998: 109); 5. rational, that is, the more highly developed mind that makes possible science as we know it; 6. vision-logic, “the highest function of the gross-realm mind” (Wilber 1998: 110) which is capable of recognizing different perspectives and therefore is also called integral: universal pluralism; 7. psychic, which is the beginning of the transpersonal or spiritual realms and is often characterized by mystical union with nature (nature mysticism), 8. subtle, characterized by deity mysticism, 9.

causal, also called formless because it is emptiness (formless mysticism), 10. nondual, where form is emptiness and emptiness is form (nondual mysticism). All of these 10 levels are represented in the mandala transformation shown in Figure 5–2. The rational level comprises the fifth circle, which corresponds to the outer circle in the basic mandala of Figure 4–1. The level of vision-logic is the sixth circle which is the inner circle in the basic mandala. Then the psychic and subtle levels are inside the inner circle of the basic mandala. The causal (formless) is represented by the empty center of the mandala. And the nondual corresponds to the mandala as a whole because it is the union, the oneness, of form and emptiness. Thus, the mandala transformation of Figure 5–2 represents all ten levels of Wilber's simplified version of his hierarchy of levels of consciousness in the upper left quadrant of his map.

It would be easy to devise a mandala transformation that represents all 17 levels of Wilber's complete hierarchy (Figure 1–3). All one would have to do is to add another five circles to the mandala transformation of Figure 5–2, which means that there would be eleven circles outside the outer circle of the basic mandala and two circles inside the inner circle of the basic mandala as in Figure 5–2.

We can conclude then that simply by increasing the number of circles in the mandala we can represent all levels of consciousness in Wilber's map. To also represent the four quadrants of his map, we would have to divide the manifest part of the mandala into four quadrants (see below at the end of this chapter).

Changing the Number of Concept Pairs

The number of concept pairs in the mandala can be increased or decreased. As a result we obtain mandala transformations with varying numbers of concept pairs. I shall present three such transformations with one, two and twelve concept pairs instead of the four in the basic mandala of Figure 4–1.

Let us first look at a mandala transformation whose number of concept pairs has been increased to twelve (Figure 5–3). In this mandala we still find the four concept pairs of the mandala of Figure 4–1. But in addition the following eight concept pairs have been included: Continuum/discontinuum; fuzziness/exactness, where exactness refers to sharpness in the sense of either/or logic; openness/closure; cooperation/competition; flexibility/rigidity; variability/invariance; context-dependence/context isolation; complexity/simplicity. Adding all of these concepts gives us a more detailed characterization of the holistic and mechanistic worldviews. (I am in

the process of writing another book that is based on this version of the mandala.) Of course, not everybody would agree that all of the twelve concepts are either necessary or sufficient. Some might insist that some of the concepts should be excluded, whereas others would find it necessary or desirable to add still other concepts or to replace some of the twelve concept pairs by other pairs. All of this could be easily accommodated by creating other mandala transformations with the desired concepts and concept pairs. And all of these transformations could be seen as complementary with each other, representing different perspectives of the holistic and mechanistic worldviews.

Each of the concept pairs could be seen in three or four dimensions representing Wilber's four quadrants or the Big Three.

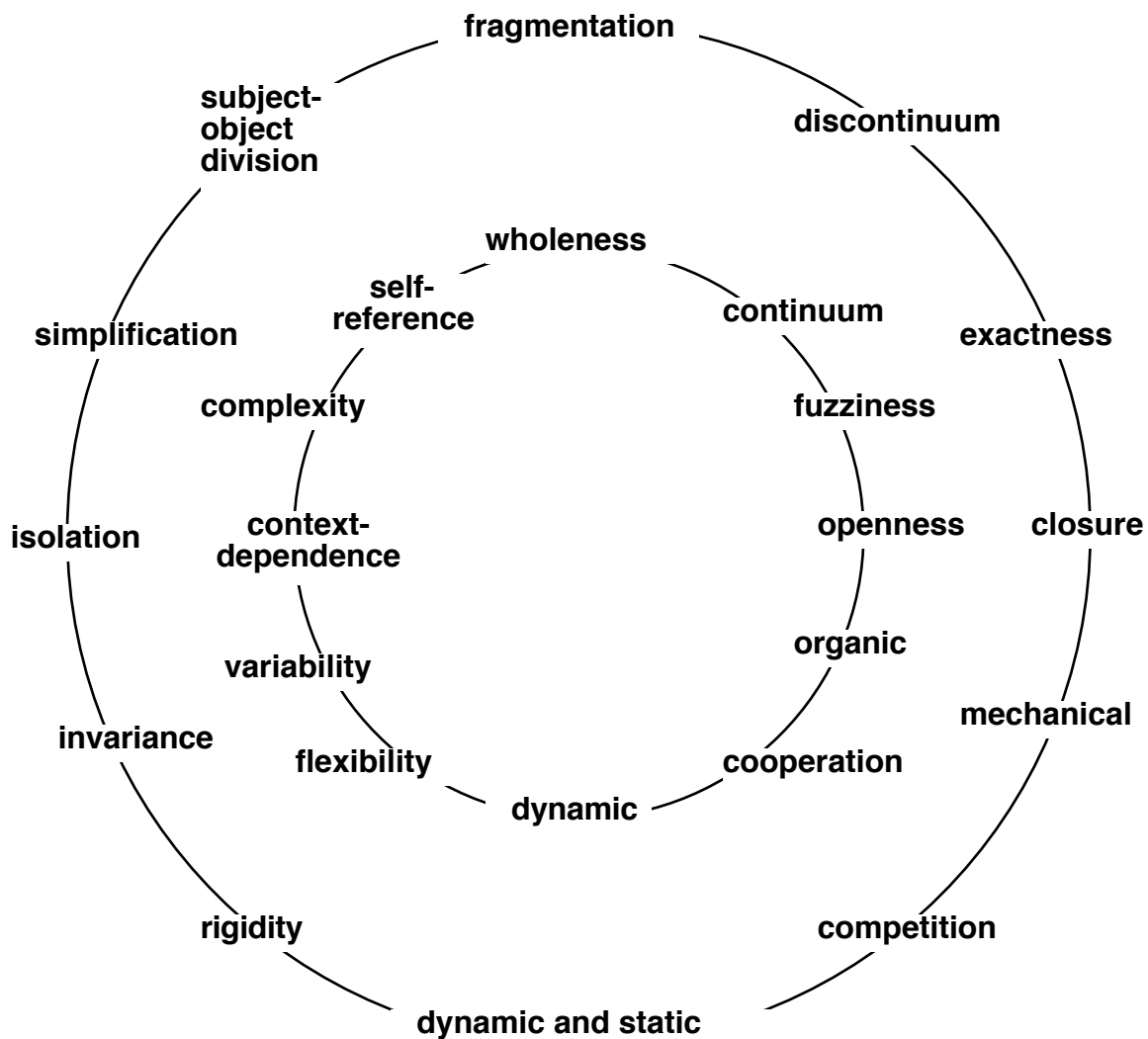


Figure 5–3. Mandala transformation with 12 concept pairs.

Now we can decrease the number of concept pairs either by simply omitting concept pairs or by redefining concepts in such a broad way that they subsume other concepts.

Let us take the latter strategy. We define wholeness in such a wide sense that it includes continuum, fuzziness, openness, self-reference, complexity and context-dependence. Similarly, we subsume the corresponding concepts of the outer circle under a very broad concept of fragmentation. Then we include the remaining concepts of the inner circle, that is, the organic, cooperation, flexibility and variability in a broad concept of dynamic, and the corresponding concepts of the outer circle under a wide concept of “static and dynamic”. Thus we end up with only two concept pairs: wholeness/fragmentation and dynamic/static and dynamic. On the basis of these two concept pairs, we obtain the mandala transformation shown in Figure 5–4.

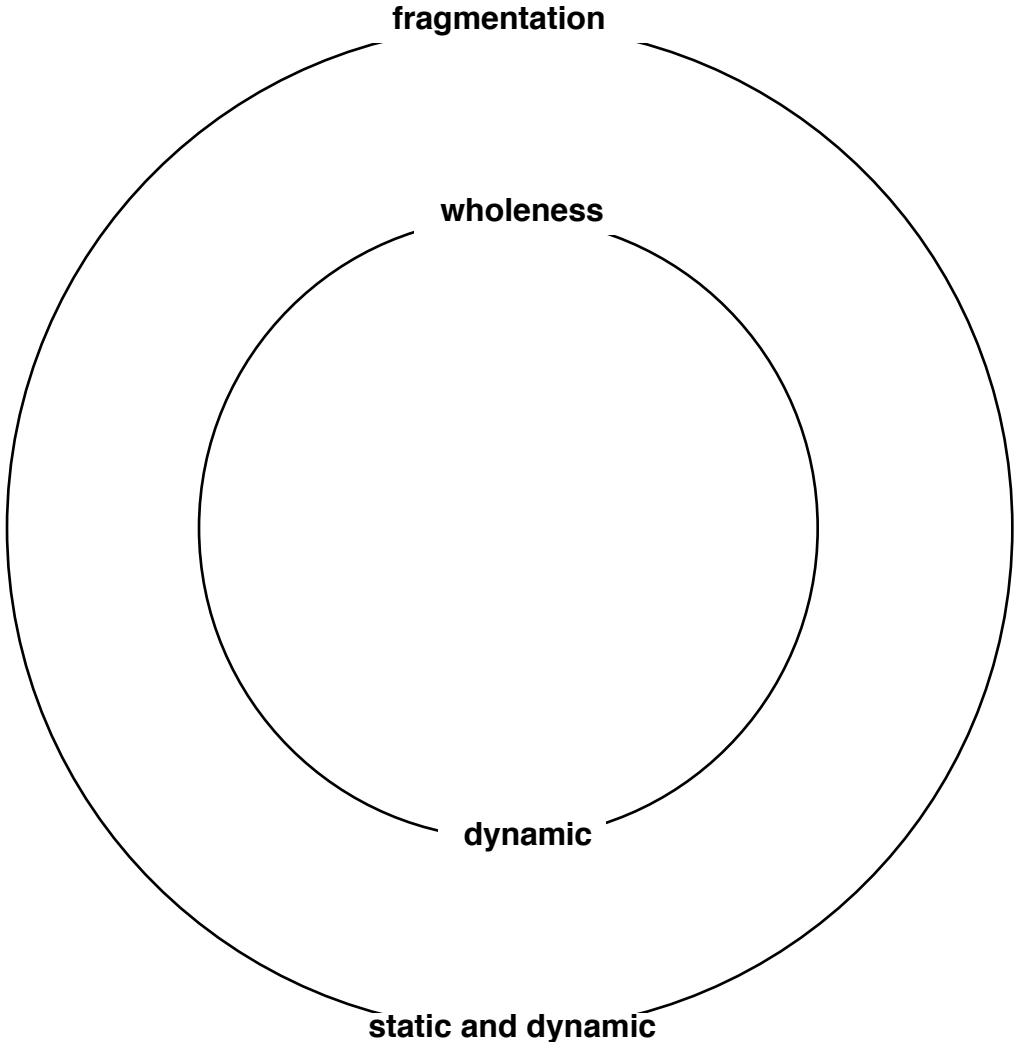


Figure 5–4. Mandala transformation with two concept pairs.

Now we can take the final step in the reduction of concept pairs: we can combine wholeness and dynamic into the concept of holodynamics, which is the dynamic within the whole; and we can subsume “static and dynamic” under a still wider concept of

fragmentation. Thus we end up with only one concept pair and obtain the mandala transformation of Figure 5–5.

Holodynamics and fragmentation in a way characterize the levels of vision logic and rationality in Wilber's hierarchy, especially the version of Figure 5–2. Vision logic is integral, holistic, and encompasses different perspectives. Wilber (1998: 110) described it as "a synthesizing, unifying mode of cognition" and as "unity-in-diversity". Since the diversity can be seen dynamically, the unity is a dynamic unity, that is, holodynamics.

Rationality, that is, the rational level in Wilber's hierarchy, can be seen as fragmenting. Being based on words that refer to concepts, rationality fragments the wholeness of experience into fragments that are designated by words. For example, the spectrum of colors is fragmented into bands, each of which is said to represent one color. Thought in general is fragmenting because it dissects reality into this and that. Vision-logic is also based on thought and therefore Wilber (1998: 110) considers it the highest level of the gross-realm mind, which means that it has not yet transcended the limitations of the dissecting mind. However, since vision-logic embraces many perspectives in the sense of a both/and logic, it is far less confined than rationality at the preceding level. Furthermore, holodynamics views reality in terms of processes that interconnect and thus form a whole.

Having said this, it must also be recognized that there is a continuum between the rational level and that of vision-logic and therefore any strict distinction is doomed to fail. Anybody who upholds a broader definition of rationality, can object for good reasons that the above characterization of rationality is too narrow. Nonetheless, one can say that vision-logic is less fragmenting, more inclusive and more holistic than rationality at the rational level.

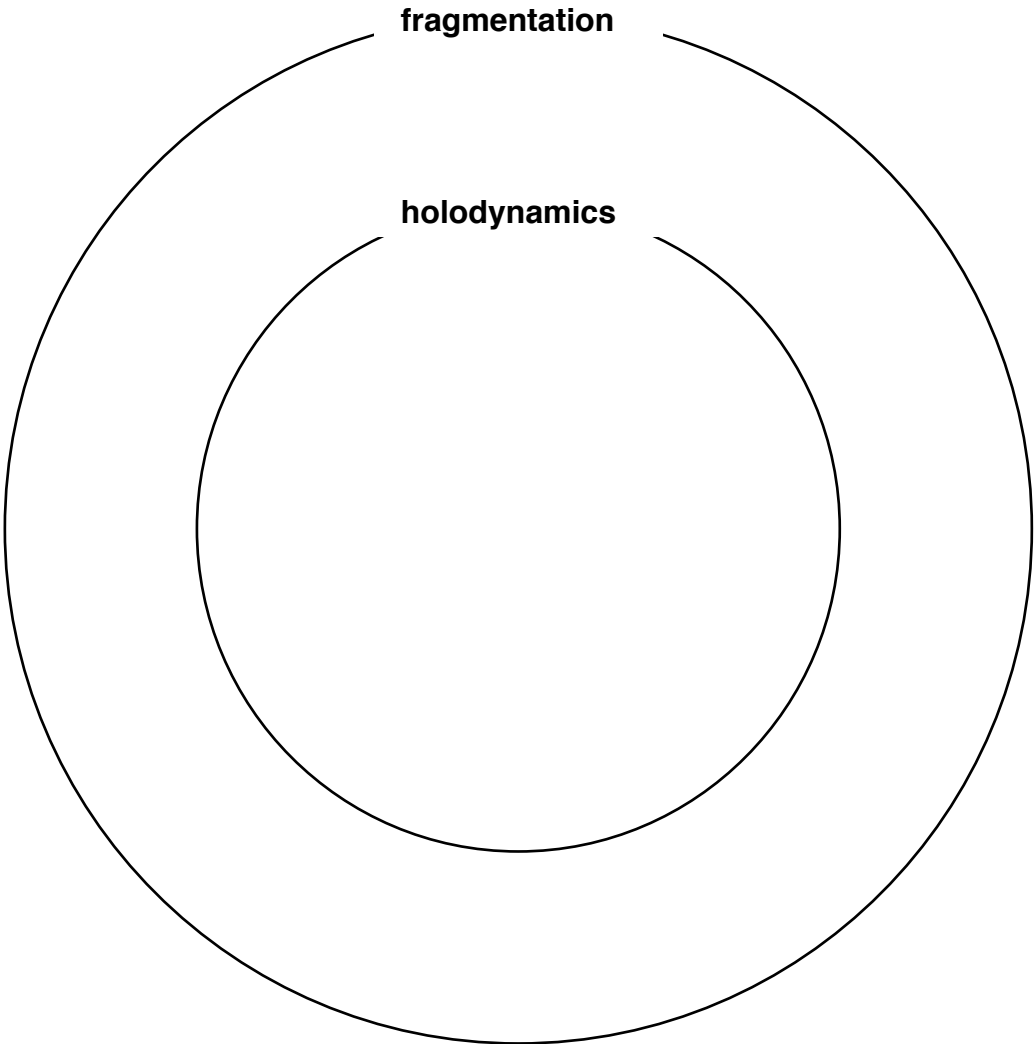


Figure 5–5. Mandala transformation based on only one concept pair.

Changing the Structure of the Mandala

There are many ways to change the structure of the mandala. One way is to depart from the arrangement of two concentric circles by forming clusters of subsidiary concept pairs around major concept pairs. For example, in Figure 5–3 the three concept pairs of continuum/discontinuum, fuzziness/exactness, and openness/closure are very closely related to wholeness/fragmentation or even part of that major pair. Therefore, these three concept pairs, instead of being equal members of the two circles, could be grouped around wholeness/fragmentation, and the same could be done in other parts of the mandala. In addition, yet other concept pairs that were not included in the mandala of Figure 5–3 could be added to the clusters. As a result the mandala would be transformed into a compound structure.

Another way to change the structure of the mandala is to transform it from its two dimensions into a three-dimensional structure. Even as it is now in its two dimensions, it can be visualized as three-dimensional. We imagine that the paper represents emptiness. Then emptiness is not only in the empty center of the mandala, but at the base of the whole mandala because emptiness is the paper and the whole mandala is on the paper. Now, in a microscopic perspective, the ink of the words that is added to the paper creates microscopic elevations from the plane of the paper and thus the words are in a third dimension which, however, is continuous with the paper and even part of it. Since the words represent form and the paper emptiness and since the two are one, form is indeed emptiness and emptiness is form.

If this description is not clear, let me use an analogy. Imagine a landscape mandala with a plane in the center and mountains surrounding the center. We could say that the center represents emptiness and the mountains form. Now recognize that the mountains do not only surround the plane in the center, but arise also from this plane. Thus, the plane is at the base of the whole landscape mandala. The mountains that arise from this plane are not distinct from it, but one with it as the ink of the words is one with the paper. Therefore form, represented by the mountains, is one with emptiness, represented by the underlying plane from which the mountains arise.

The conclusion of this analogy is that the mandala and its transformations can be seen as two-dimensional in a macroscopic perspective and as three-dimensional from a microscopic perspective. As two-dimensional structures they show emptiness visibly only in the center, whereas as three-dimensional structures they arise from emptiness, that is, the emptiness in the center extends across the base of the whole three-dimensional mandala. And there is no separation between emptiness and form. In a sense the three-dimensional mandala presents the oneness of form and emptiness more clearly than the two-dimensional mandala because in the former the continuum is so obvious, whereas in the latter the empty center may appear distinct from the surrounding circles.

Another structural transformation of the mandala is to reverse center and periphery so that the circles will occupy the center and emptiness the periphery as shown in Figure 5–6. This transformation is of special interest for two reasons:

1. It is so radical that it leads to the dissolution of the mandalic structure in the strict sense, which has the source or emptiness in the center and the manifest arising outward from the center in a two-dimensional mandala or upward in a three-

dimensional mandala. Thus, the mandala as a self-referential dynamic mandala has not only its transformation but even its dissolution built into it: it carries within it the potential of its own destruction as we carry the germ of our death within us. Let it be clear, though, that death and destruction are also a transformation, a transformation in which the oneness of emptiness and form does not perish. Only form manifests itself differently.

- 2. The reversal of center and periphery of the mandala is also of special interest because it leads to Wilber’s AQAL map that has form in the center and the formless or spirit at the periphery. We arrive at Wilber’s map if we divide the new structure into four quadrants and interpret it in a temporal evolutionary way so that the central point becomes the Big Bang. From this point the stages of the hierarchy unfold in time, eventually leading to the transpersonal stages that include the formless (which has been renamed in Wilber 2006, Fig. 2–4).

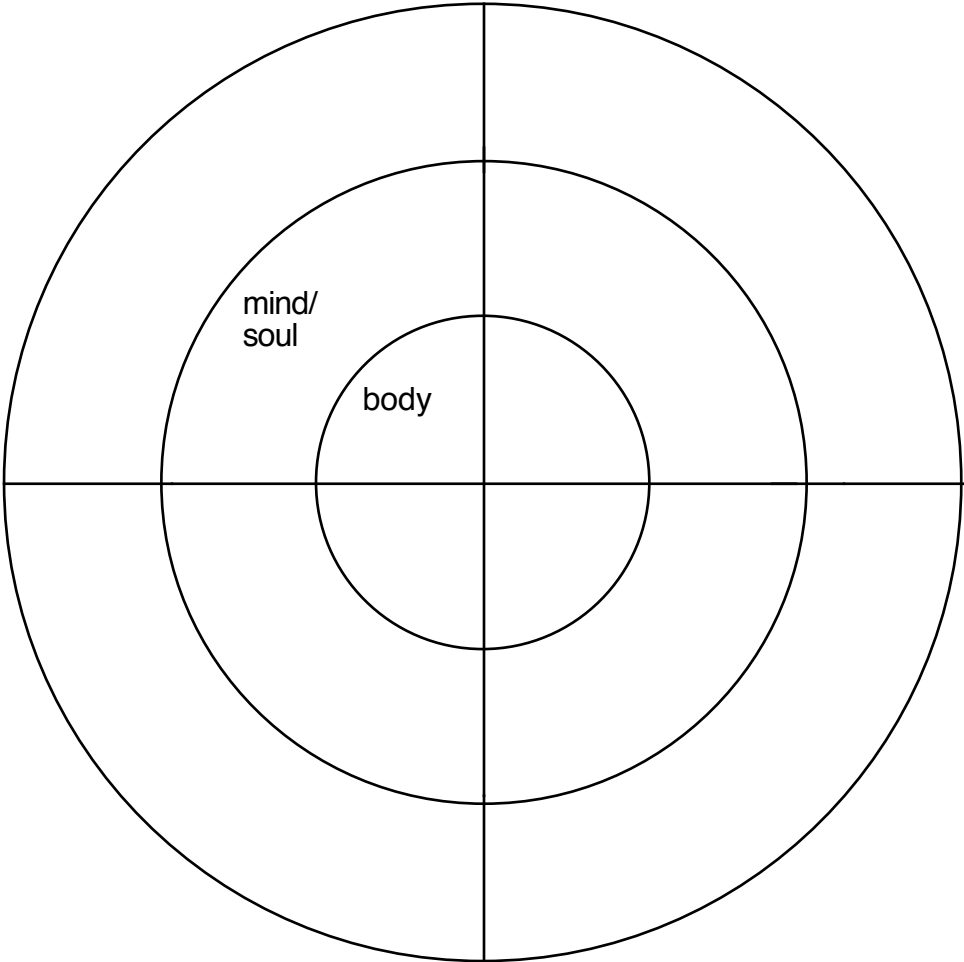


Figure 5–6. Radical mandala transformation that leads to the dissolution of the mandalic structure in the strict sense and to a simple version of Wilber’s map where only three levels are distinguished, which in the upper left quadrant are body, mind/soul, and spirit (not labeled).

In Figure 5–6 I have presented Wilber's map in a simple form with only three levels: body, mind/soul, and spirit. I could have drawn separate concentric levels for mind and soul as Wilber does. And I could have included all seventeen levels of Wilber's complete map (Figure 1–3). However, even the simple form of Figure 5–6 conveys the basic structure of Wilber's AQAL map. I did not label the outmost concentric level that represents spirit, the formless, emptiness, because I consider it more appropriate to indicate emptiness by an empty space. I even would have preferred to omit in this empty space the lines that separate the four quadrants because I think that the formless is beyond the four quadrants.

In any case, the fact that one of the mandala transformations produces Wilber's AQAL map is highly significant. It means that Wilber's map is a special case of the mandala: it is one of the many transformations the mandala can undergo. More specifically, it is that transformation that reverses the structure of the mandala, includes the four quadrants, interprets the mandala as a hierarchy and in terms of temporal evolution.

Note that other transformations of the mandala can also be subdivided into four quadrants and thus represent four-quadrant maps that can be interpreted hierarchically or nonhierarchically: one would have to begin with a version of the mandala in which the circles are not differentiated into different concepts (for example, Fig. 5–2 or 5–5), or one would have to place concept pairs or lines into the appropriate quadrants (see Chapter 4).

Organic/Artistic Mandala Transformations

How do we get from conceptual to organic/artistic mandala transformations? Since the mandala is self-referential and the organic is one of its key concepts, the mandala itself can be made organic and this opens up the way for endless organic/artistic transformations.

A first step in this direction is to replace the concepts of the conceptual mandalas by symbols. For example, the concept of the organic could be replaced by an organic symbol such as a human body, and the concept of the mechanical could be replaced by an image of a machine or robot. The next step is to give the creative genius of the artist free reign to devise artistic mandalas (see, e.g., Cornell 1994 and Fontana 2005). Frank Sattler painted the mandalas of Figures 5–7 and 8. In Fig. 5–7 the empty center appears distinct from the periphery as is the case in many mandalas. In such mandalas

is important to recognize that through the paper (on which the mandala has been painted) emptiness of the center and form of the periphery are nonetheless one as I pointed out above. In the mandala of Fig. 5–8 no empty center has been drawn explicitly; however, it is present implicitly because the whole mandala conveys so vividly that everything radiates from an invisible source in the center, which is the source of emptiness.



Fig. 5–7. Mandala with an explicit empty center. Courtesy of Frank Sattler.

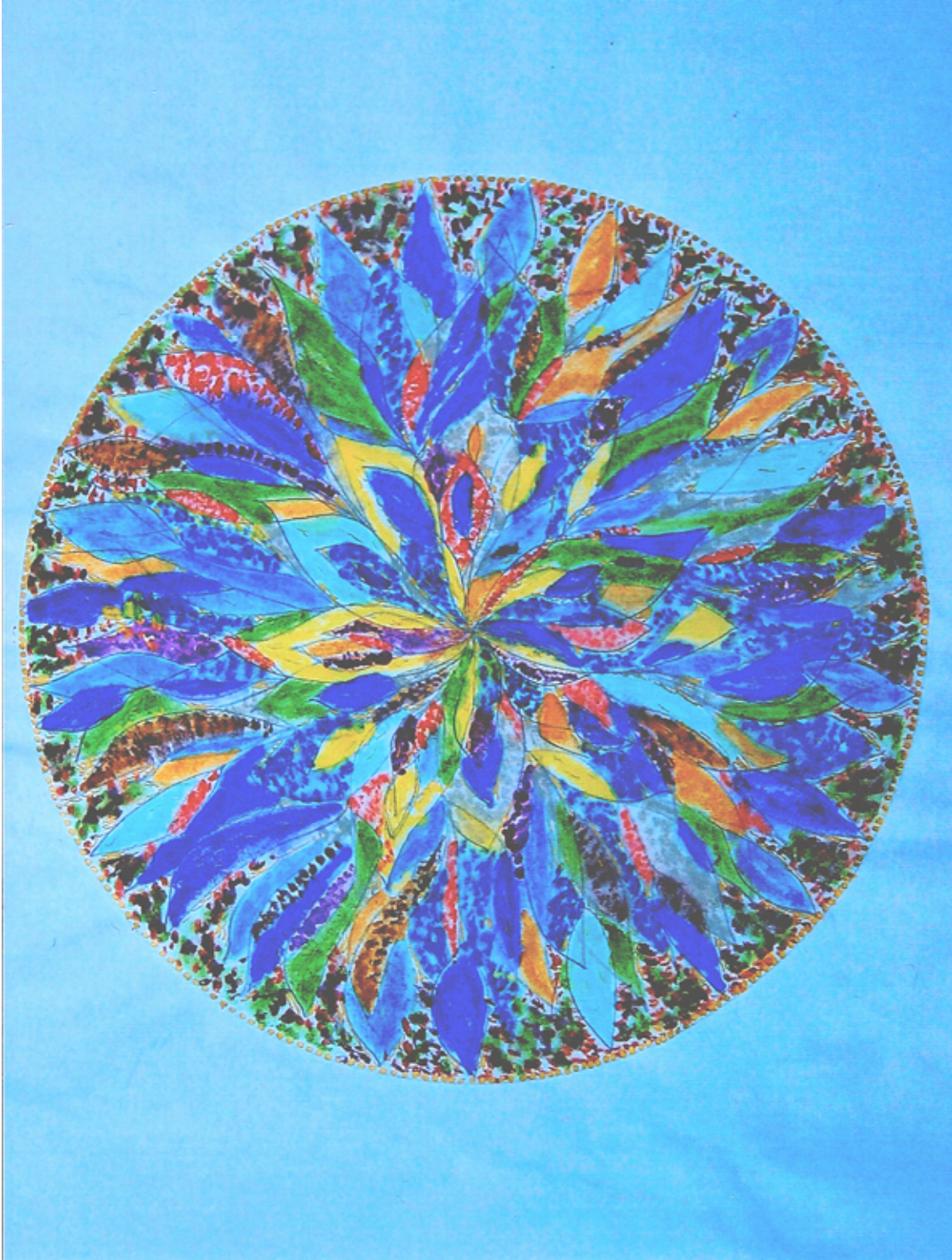


Fig. 5–8. Mandala in which the empty center, the source, is implied. Courtesy of Frank Sattler.

Besides drawing and painting, many other artistic media and means can be used. For example, colored sand mandalas, sculptures, and architectural monuments can be created. Possibilities are endless.

Since, in the widest sense, the mandala of this book can be seen as a mandala of mandalas, or, more precisely, the set of all mandalas, it comprises all mandalas of the past, present, and future. This means it also comprises the mandalas of the wisdom traditions such as Hinduism and Buddhism. These mandalas are, of course, not actual transformations of the mandala of this book, but they can be seen as transformations because we can envisage a dynamic relationship between all mandalas.

Since mandalas have been created in practically all cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions, a mandala of mandalas that relates all mandalas also relates the cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions in which they originated. Therefore, the mandala of mandalas has an enormous potential to unify and connect diverse cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions. The unification occurs through the center that all mandalas share; the connection through the different peripheries of the mandalas that can be seen in a dynamic relationship.

Since the mandala of this book also allows transformations that are no longer mandalic, art in general can be considered to be an extension of it. In that case, the mystery is not represented as the center, but as an integral aspect of the artistic creation. In other words, the mystery is implicit. We are touched by it and possibly transformed and elevated through the contemplation of the artistic creation.

Extending the mandala of this book so much poses the question of constraints that I shall discuss in the next chapter with regard to McFarlane's mathematical mandala. Here we may ask: Can any work of art be considered a version or extension of the mandala? The answer is no: only art that in one way or another expresses the mystery of the unnamable in the manifoldness of the Kosmos is part of the mandala. The distinction between art that is and that is not part of the mandala probably is not clear-cut but rather fuzzy, and consequently the extension of the mandala is also fuzzy.

Stillness in the Center of the Cyclone

In spite of the all-pervasive fluidity of manifest reality, which is expressed through the fluidity of the mandala, we should not forget the stillness in the center of the cyclone—we should not forget the emptiness in the center of the mandala. This emptiness is retained even in radical transformations of the mandala, transformations that dissolve the typical mandalic structure such as the transformation into Wilber's map where emptiness is represented at the periphery instead of in the center. Even in

transformations where emptiness seems to be totally obscured, it is still there, but we are no longer aware of it—what actually happens quite often in our ordinary lives.

We have to be careful, though, when we try to equate emptiness with stillness. In a strict sense, emptiness, the center of the mandala, is the unnamable: it cannot be qualified by any word(s). Calling it stillness, which is a word, is contradictory. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to refer to it negatively as 'no fluidity'. And we would have to go even one step further and add 'no stillness' because the unnamable mystery is beyond both fluidity and stillness. It is tempting, though, to say that it is a stillness beyond fluidity and stillness, or to add that it is definitely beyond fluidity because this center, this emptiness, remains the same in all the transformations of the mandala.

Conclusions

The mandala of Figure 4–1, since it is dynamic and self-referential, has transformation built into it and thus demands to be transformed. It can be transformed in many ways by changing the number of circles, the number of concept pairs, its basic structure, and by rendering it organic and artistic. In all of these transformations, the empty center remains the same, because, as the unnamable, it is even beyond fluidity.

One transformation of its structure, namely, the reversal of center and periphery, even leads to its dissolution because if the source or emptiness is situated at the periphery instead of in the center, it is no longer a mandala in the strict sense. If we divide the reversed structure into four quadrants, we obtain Wilber's AQAL map. Thus, Wilber's map turns out to be one of the many transformations of the mandala, which means that it is a special case of the dynamic mandala. The reverse is, however, not the case: the mandala is not a special case of Wilber's map because the mandala cannot be generated from Wilber's map, since his map is not dynamic and self-referential as the mandala. Being only hierarchical and evolutionary in time, Wilber's map is more limited than the mandala that accounts also for nonhierarchical aspects of manifest reality, involution in time and evolution/involution beyond time in the eternal present.

Chapter 6: Complementarity

In Chapter 4, I described different interpretations of the mandala of Figure 4–1, and in Chapter 5, I presented different transformations of that mandala. These interpretations and transformations could be considered as competing with each other and then one might ask which of them is the best one. “The best one” could mean “the closest to reality”, or if one applies either/or logic, it could even mean that the best is correct and the other incorrect.

Although I cannot exclude the possibility that one or more of the interpretations and transformations may be incorrect, I want to propose that they can be looked upon as being complementary to each other. This means: they offer different perspectives of reality and therefore complement each other. Thus, together they offer a richer and more comprehensive understanding of reality than any one alone.

Invoking complementarity does not mean that all interpretations and transformations are necessarily equally realistic. It is possible that one interpretation or one transformation offers a more comprehensive or more adequate perspective than another one. But this does not necessarily mean that therefore the more limited perspective is useless. Although more limited, it could still present an aspect of reality that is not contained in the more comprehensive perspective. For example, the conceptual mandalas present perspectives that appear rather limited compared to immensely rich Tibetan mandalas (see, e.g., Leidy and Thurman 1998). Nonetheless, the conceptual mandalas highlight aspects of the post/modern world that are not contained in the Tibetan mandalas, and therefore the conceptual mandalas are useful in our culture. Furthermore, they are particularly useful for people whose comprehension is predominantly at an intellectual level.

Complementary interpretations and transformations can be just different or even contradictory. For many people in our culture that emphasizes so much either/or logic, it is difficult to imagine how contradictory interpretations or transformations can complement each other. But this has been demonstrated in physics and other sciences (see, for example, Sattler 1986, Fischer 1987, Rutishauser and Isler 2001). It is well known that according to quantum physics, light can be seen as both a particle and wave phenomenon depending on the experimental set up that is used for its observation. Thus, the old question of whether light is either a particle or wave phenomenon has been superseded by complementarity. Note that the old question was not answered. It cannot be answered because in this case it is an inappropriate question that is based

on either/or logic. The logic had to be changed to a both/and logic, a logic of complementarity. This logic superseded the logic of the old question and gave rise to other questions that could be answered, questions such as under which experimental set up light appears as a particle phenomenon and under which set up it appears as a wave phenomenon.

In this book I do not use the notion of complementarity in the specific sense that is ascribed to it in quantum physics. I use "complementarity" in a much broader sense in terms of both/and logic. Complementarity in quantum physics is only a special case of this much broader concept of complementarity that allows us to see even contradictory statements as complementing each other.

An Analogy

The following analogy may help to envisage how contrasting and even contradictory theories, views, or ideas can complement each other. Imagine a mountain that is steep on one side and gently sloping on its opposite side. Now look at the steep side of the mountain and you will conclude that this is a steep mountain. Then look at the opposite side of the same mountain and you will conclude that this is not a steep mountain. Thus you have come to contradictory conclusions and both of them are correct to some extent because depending on your perspective, the mountain is steep or not. The two perspectives complement each other. Together they give us a more complete picture of the mountain than only one alone. Yet in science, in society, and everyday life, we often want to exclude the opposite view and thus we deprive ourselves of a more complete picture.

Complementarity is so distasteful to many people that they try everything to eliminate it. For example, with regard to the mountain analogy, they would argue that if we take an aerial view of the mountain, we can see both sides at the same time and thus there is no need for complementarity. Similarly in science, we can come up with a more comprehensive theory that comprises more limited contrasting or contradictory theories. The goal then is to devise a theory of everything that encompasses all perspectives. But the question is whether such a goal can ever be reached. Even if physicists will produce a well corroborated unification of the four major forces, this will not be a theory of everything as I already pointed out because such a theory will not include the subtle force or fifth force(s) (see, for example, Tiller 1997). Furthermore, such a unified theory is only a theory of physics; it does not include emergent properties of living systems. And as a scientific theory it excludes the interior perspectives that

Wilber so cogently emphasized. Therefore, even in the case of a compelling unification of the four major forces of physics, there are still many other perspectives that complement what is often called a "theory of everything". Wilber's (2001) "Theory of Everything" is much more encompassing, but as I am trying to point out in this book, even this theory does not include all perspectives.

Let us return to the mountain analogy. Even an aerial view that seems very encompassing like a theory of everything misses many perspectives. For example, it does not give us much information, if any, on a hidden gorge; it does not tell us anything about caves, and so on. Therefore, many other perspectives are needed to give us a more encompassing picture of the mountain.

The Complementarity of Maps

It is well known, or let us say it should be well known, that a map is not the territory it represents. The territory is always much more than the map. Therefore, a map is a simplification of the territory. Wilber is keenly aware that in this sense his map of the Kosmos is also a simplification. The question is whether we can get a map that simplifies less than other maps and is more encompassing than other maps, perhaps so comprehensive that it becomes all encompassing?

Obviously there are maps that are more accurate than other maps and there are also maps that are more encompassing than other maps. But I doubt that we can have a map that can function as a theory of everything. It seems that even the most encompassing maps do not, and probably cannot, include all perspectives. Therefore, we need a diversity of maps that present the diversity of perspectives. Let me illustrate this by maps of North America. We can have many different kinds of maps such as geographical, geological, mineralogical, meteorological, ethnographic, and political maps. Each of these and still other maps presents a different perspective of North America. And these perspectives complement each other. Together they give us a more complete picture of this continent than any one map alone.

Wilber's Map and the Mandala

Wilber's AQAL map is one map that he interpreted in one way. He first presented it in "Sex, Ecology, Spirituality" (1995) and then subsequently introduced more or less simplified versions of this map: he changed the number of levels, emphasized waves instead of levels, elaborated on states and types. But basically the map did not change.

It remained an evolutionary, hierarchical four-quadrant map with stages, states, lines, and types. Sometimes he combined the two exterior quadrants into one that represents science and then referred to the Big Three. This again is no fundamental departure from the basic idea of his map. Since there is such a basic idea underlying all the versions of his map, one could say that his map is static, at least with regard to this basic idea.

In contrast, the mandala of this book is highly dynamic. It is not just one map, but many maps, each of which presents a different perspective of reality. First, even the simple mandala of Figure 4–1 has many different interpretations, and each of these interpretations can be seen as a different map, that is, a different perspective. Second, the mandala comprises all of its transformations and each transformation is a different map, a different perspective. Consequently, the mandala comprises a multitude of maps and these maps complement each other in many ways. The following sections highlight some of the complementarities of the mandala.

Antagonism and Complementarity

In our culture the outer and inner circles of the mandala, that is, mechanism and holism, are often antagonistic to each other. Mechanists often reject holism as fantasy and holists often feel so superior to mechanists that mechanism is altogether condemned as the enemy. However, mechanism offers a limited perspective of reality. I think that holism presents a much more encompassing perspective, but nonetheless it is only a perspective, not absolute truth. Absolute truth cannot be captured in concepts because concepts always fragment the wholeness of reality. Even wholeness is a concept.

Since both mechanism and holism are different perspectives of reality, they complement each other. Together they provide a more complete picture of reality than only one alone. Let me illustrate this through medicine. Mainstream medicine tends to be mechanistic, whereas alternative medicine is more or less holistic. Mechanistic medicine is a failure in many ways: often it cannot cure diseases such as cancer; many treatments have negative side effects; and patients often feel that they are treated as a mechanism, a machine, and not as a human being. Nonetheless, mechanistic medicine is successful in the treatment of certain diseases such as bacterial infections, bone fractures, and serious injuries in accidents. Holistic medicine can cure a wide variety of diseases, often without negative side effects, but, as mechanistic medicine, it is not always successful. Sometimes diseases that cannot be healed by holistic medicine can be cured by mechanistic medicine and vice versa. Thus, mechanistic and holistic

medicine complement each other. Often holistic medicine is referred to as complementary medicine because it complements mechanistic medicine. However, mechanistic medicine is also complementary because it complements holistic medicine. The problem in modern medicine is that mainstream medicine and governments suppress to a great extent holistic medicine. Consequently, there is an enormous imbalance between mechanistic and holistic medicine. The problem of modern health care could be solved to a great extent if holistic medicine would be fully recognized and accepted in medicare so that every individual could decide for himself or herself whether (s)he prefers to be treated by a holistic or mechanistic practitioner. Since holistic treatments are generally much less expensive than mechanistic ones, enormous amounts of money could be saved through a full recognition of holistic medicine. Furthermore, since holistic medicine places much more emphasis on prevention than mechanistic medicine, far fewer people would get sick and this again would enormously reduce the cost of health care.

What we need then is a full recognition of the complementarity of mechanism and holism, the outer and inner circles of the mandala. And, in the spirit of complementarity we have to go even one step further: we have to recognize the complementarity of antagonism and complementarity. In one sense we can indeed see that mechanism and holism are antagonistic to each other. But we also have to see that they can profoundly complement each other. The problem is that antagonism receives so much attention and complementarity is widely ignored. Thus, the problem is again one of imbalance. For greater balance much more recognition and emphasis of complementarity is needed. In Chinese medicine sickness is understood as imbalance. From this perspective our society and many individuals are sick because of the severe imbalance between antagonism and complementarity. More recognition of complementarity leading to a better balance between antagonism and complementarity would indeed be very healing for society and its citizens.

Complementarity of Concept Pairs

Since the outer and inner circles—and indeed all circles—can be perceived as antagonistic or as complementary to each other, the same applies to the concept pairs. For example, competition and cooperation are often seen as antagonistic, but they can also complement each other. Similarly, rigidity and flexibility are often considered irreconcilable opposites. But if one considers, for example, rigid bones and flexible muscles, one can see clearly how the two complement each other and how the two

together allow an organism to function harmoniously, whereas rigidity alone would lead to brittleness and flexibility alone to collapse.

Other concept pairs that can be seen as antagonistic or complementary are included in the mandala transformation of Figure 5—3.

Hierarchy and Continuum

The relation between the outer and inner circles of the mandala—and indeed all circles—can be seen as strictly hierarchical or as a continuum. If it is strictly hierarchical, then the circles present different levels of the hierarchy and these levels are mutually exclusive. For example, the body is not the mind; and the mind is not just the body; the mind includes and transcends the body in a hierarchical perspective. On the other hand, from a continuum perspective, there is a continuum between the circles. Thus, body and mind are not mutually exclusive; they form a continuum so that the body can gradually include mind. For example, during evolution, mind as we know it in humans evolved gradually. There may have been periods in which this evolution toward mind was very much accelerated, but it seems unlikely that it happened overnight. Therefore, what may appear as a discontinuum in terms of longer time periods, may be a continuum in a more minute and detailed perspective.

Similarly, mechanism and holism may be seen as rather distinct from a larger perspective, but a closer look reveals that the two form a continuum. As I pointed out already with regard to medicine, mainstream medicine, although largely mechanistic, can incorporate holistic methods. Some medical doctors even practice both mechanistic and holistic medicine. On the other hand, some holistic practitioners may also employ more or less mechanistic methods. As a result we find a continuum between holistic and mechanistic medicine. Depending on how we define continuum in a more specific sense as explained in chapter 4, different complementarities can be envisaged.

Hierarchy and Network

Not only do we find that the strictly hierarchical and continuum views may complement each other, we can also see that the hierarchical perspective can be complemented by a network perspective. Instead of interpreting the mandala in a hierarchical fashion, we can see it as a network in which most or all of the concepts of the mandala relate to each other. This relation cuts across the levels of the hierarchy and interconnects them. The resulting network may be quite unlike a hierarchy. But one

can also order networks in a hierarchical fashion so that networks are nested within networks (Capra 1996: 35). For example, in an organism the organs form a network, then within each organ the tissues form a network, within each tissue the cells form a network, and so on. If one considers, however, that organs, tissues and cells are continuous, then the nested order disappears and we are left only with a network of structures and/or processes. Thus networks may or may not be compatible with hierarchical order. In any case, hierarchical and nonhierarchical networks complement each other.

Evolution and Involution

As I pointed out already in Chapter 3, according to Wilber and others evolution is the movement from the Many to the One and involution is the reverse. In terms of the mandala, this means that evolution is the movement from the periphery of the mandala toward its center and involution is the reverse. I gave examples of these processes in Chapter 3. Here I just want to stress that these two movements complement each other. Furthermore, temporal evolution and involution on the one hand and evolution/involution beyond time in the eternal present also complement each other.

Art and Science

Art and science also complement each other. This complementarity is related to that of subjectivity and objectivity as well as interiority and exteriority. Wilber emphasizes these complementary dimensions in his AQAL map. Other related complements are intuition and thought as well as feeling/emotion and thought.

Unfortunately, in our society it is often assumed that science leads us to the truth and art is for amusement. As a result, enormous amounts of money are spent for science and relatively little for art. This creates an enormous imbalance. As I have mentioned already, according to Chinese thinking, imbalance means sickness. Wilber's four-quadrant map and the Big Three have great merit in emphasizing that art, culture, and science are equally important dimensions.

Yin and Yang

Yin and Yang are characteristically complementary to each other. Originally Yang referred to the sunny side of a mountain and Yin to the shady side. Obviously, these two sides cannot be separated; they belong together like the two sides of a coin. In Chinese thought many other complementary polar opposites are seen as manifestations of Yin and Yang. Besides light and darkness, other examples are hot and cold, dry and wet, hard and soft, outside and inside, full and empty, fast and slow, male and female, heaven and earth, fire and water. In addition to these complements, Yin and Yang can be seen as a general symbol of all complementary polar opposites, including positive and negative, love and hate, good and evil, the One and the Many.

According to Daoism, ultimate reality, the unnamable, manifests itself in polar opposites. Like the positive and negative pole of an electrical current, these two poles cannot be separated; they can only exist together, and thus they complement each other.

Holonic Kosmos and Holistic Kosmos

Wilber's view of the Kosmos is holonic, that is, it is composed of holons. Although the holons are integrated into a holarchy, in a sense it is still a fragmented Kosmos, fragmented into holons and levels of the holarchy. This view of the Kosmos needs to be complemented with a still more integral view.

Wilber uses "holonic" as a synonym to "holistic" because he thinks that "the only way you get a holism is via a holarchy" (Wilber 2000b: 25). However, as I pointed out in Chapter 1, there is a holism that is not hierarchical, a holism that emphasizes continuity, unity, undivided wholeness. In this sense, we can refer to a holistic Kosmos that is not hierarchical, but a continuum, a unity, undivided wholeness. Such a view and experience of the Kosmos complements the holonic view.

The self-referential dynamic mandala of this book that represents the fluid Kosmos allows us—even invites us—to shift our perspectives of Kosmos. Among the many perspectives two major perspectives are those of the holonic Kosmos and the holistic Kosmos, holistic in terms of undivided wholeness.

Although Wilber insists that the Kosmos is holonic, he emphasizes perspectivism: "the world of manifestation is the world of perspectives" (Wilber 2006: 288). Even more strongly: "there are no perceptions, only perspectives" (Wilber 2006: 255). However, as

far as the basic holonic structure of AQAL is concerned, Wilber does not tolerate other complementary perspectives. The manifest Kosmos simply is holonic according to Wilber. In contrast to this tenet, I have tried to show throughout this book that there are indeed other perspectives.

McFarlane's Mathematical Mandala and the Mandala of this Book

McFarlane (2004: <http://www.integralscience.org/sphere.html>) devised a mathematical mandala of extraordinary elegance, comprehensiveness and integration. He developed it in three stages. In the first stage, manifest reality (form) is represented by a line and the unmanifest or formless by a point outside the line. Since this point represents the formless or infinity, he calls it the point at infinity. In the second stage, the duality of the line and the point at infinity, that is, the duality of the manifest and unmanifest, or form and emptiness, is overcome by a circular version of the mandala. Now the point at infinity, although retaining its uniqueness, is integrated into a circle. In the third stage, the circle is transformed into a sphere. The halves and quadrants of the sphere represent different dimensions of reality, namely, interior/exterior, gross/subtle, and individual/collective. Additional dimensions can be added, which transcends the four quadrants. Furthermore, the mandala can be interpreted in terms of a hierarchy, interpenetrating levels (Yin-Yang), and a continuum, which provides a richness that is beyond Wilber's AQAL model. Being a sphere, McFarlane's mandala "is the archetype for an infinite number of possible planar mandalas. These correspond to other possible models of the cosmos, different ways to draw distinctions among the manifest phenomena of reality. The sphere, like reality itself, does not dictate to us how it must be viewed or interpreted. It allows any number of modes of symmetry breaking to produce distinctions within itself and corresponding models when projected onto the plane" (McFarlane 2004). As a result, McFarlane's spherical mandala is enormously comprehensive.

Since the mandala of this book is the set of all mandalas, it also includes McFarlane's mandala. Thus, McFarlane's mathematical mandala can be seen as a mathematical transformation of the mandala of this book. To generate McFarlane's mandala, we could start, for example, with the mandala of Fig. 5-1, in which form is represented by only one circle and emptiness by the empty center. Then we transform the circle into a straight line and shrink the empty center to a point, the point at infinity. This provides the first stage in McFarlane's mathematical mandala construction. Then

we follow McFarlane to his second and third stage to arrive at his fully developed mandala, the integral sphere.

Although McFarlane's mandala can be seen as a transformation of the mandala of this book, it can also be seen as complementary to the mandala of this book because the two mandalas achieve comprehensiveness in different ways. McFarlane's mandala - as the work of a genius—has a unifying structure that constrains its openness and yet in several ways renders it more comprehensive than Wilber's map. If, in spite of its comprehensiveness, it turns out that it cannot accommodate all future observations and experiences, then it would have to be modified. In contrast, the mandala of this book lacks a unifying structure comparable to that of McFarlane's mandala. Consequently, it is not constrained: endless transformations are possible. How do we know whether all of these transformations make sense and correspond at least to one aspect of the Kosmos? We cannot know it *a priori* through a unifying structure as in McFarlane's mandala; but we can find out *a posteriori* by examining each interpretation and transformation whether it corresponds at least to some extent with reality. If it does not, then the interpretation or transformation is invalid. For example, if we would generate a mandala with fifty circles, we would have to discard it as invalid, unless we could show that there is some basis in reality for fifty circles. I am not aware of any such basis. However, the fact that I am not aware of it at this point in time does not rule out that perhaps in the future some basis for fifty circles could be found. Therefore, the rejection of an interpretation or transformation cannot be definitive and absolute. Furthermore, an interpretation or transformation that appears invalid at the present time, may inspire us to look for supporting evidence; if we can find it, the so-called invalid interpretation or transformation has helped us to broaden our scope. Among its many functions, this is one function of mandalas—to help us discover aspects of the Kosmos and ourselves of which have been unknown; in other words, to deepen and increase our awareness.

Other Complementary Maps

There are still other maps that complement and in some ways transcend Wilber's AQAL map such as M. Alan Kazlev's integral mandala (see www.kheper.net/topics/Wilber/AQAL_critique.html). Kazlev also discusses different versions of his mandala that complement each other.

Hugh & Amalia Kaye Martin's ADAPT model (or map), posted on Frank Visser's website <http://www.integralworld.net>, also complements Wilber's AQAL map. In some

ways it transcends the AQAL map, but it applies only to human development, not to the whole Kosmos as Wilber's AQAL map.

Complementarity Leading to more Tolerance and Peace

If we just could look at and experience the world more in terms of complementarity, we could alleviate beyond imagination the human predicament and human suffering. Much of our suffering arises from conflict, conflict between opposites that are only perceived as antagonistic. As a result the conflict cannot be resolved and often it degenerates into aggression and war. If instead we could see the opposites as complementary, the conflict would disappear or at least be diminished. People, organizations and nations with different or opposite views would no longer be perceived as enemies but as complements. Diversity and even contradiction could be enriching instead of threatening. And the result would be more tolerance and cooperation.

Unfortunately the vast majority of people are still imprisoned in an either/or mode of thinking and being: either your philosophy or mine, either your religion or mine, either your ideology or mine, and so on. The resulting attitude is that if you are not on my side, then you are against me. With this attitude mutual understanding, well being and peace are difficult or impossible to attain.

Therefore, an awareness and recognition of complementarity are of utmost importance for achieving a more tolerant, more understanding, and more peaceful society and world. We have to be aware of complementarity to avoid or reduce conflict within ourselves, in our personal relationships, in society within and between nations. How do we achieve this? There are many ways. One important way is through education. Complementarity should be taught in kindergarten, elementary school, high school, and university.

Suchness

What can be talked about are only perspectives of reality. Reality itself—what is—is beyond the grasp of words. Hence, it is in silence—without any interference by symbolism, metaphor, judgment, prejudice, philosophy, ideology, and religious dogma. It is beyond thought, the thinking mind that dissects and thus can grasp only fragments of reality.

Therefore, suchness can be characterized only negatively: one can only say what it is not. Any attempt to say what it is must fail. Thus, this section on suchness is short—but it is important because it is an invitation to go beyond perspectives.

How can we transcend perspectives? Not by striving or doing something; not through the ego. Rather by letting go, letting go of questions, answers, doubts, should, must, expectations, effort, will, projects. This implies trust and acceptance of that which is. It can happen spontaneously and naturally when we are totally in the here and now: totally absorbed by a sunset, a flower, a person; or dissolved in music, laughter, dance (see Chapter 7). It can also happen in daily activities, but that requires profound insight and awareness, which we may foster through the practice of meditation.

Nonetheless, perspectives are important in the manifest world, the world of form. They are transcended in emptiness. The great challenge is to see and experience the nonduality the Heart Sutra refers to: Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form (see, e.g., the Dalai Lama's book on the Heart Sutra [Gyatso 2005]).

Conclusions

Mandalas are maps of reality. In our common mode of thinking, which is based on either/or logic, we ask which of two different or contradictory maps is correct or incorrect. We often take it for granted that if they contradict each other, at least one of them must be wrong. If the maps are only different, we still tend to think that one must be better than the other. Thus antagonism between maps is assumed.

In terms of complementarity, which is based on both/and logic, the situation can be perceived very differently. Even contradictory maps can be seen as complementary to each other. For example, a hierarchical map can be complementary to a nonhierarchical map. Maps that are not contradictory but only different need not be judged in terms of better or worse. It is, of course, possible that one map is more comprehensive or more accurate than another. If the more comprehensive map contains all of the information of the less comprehensive one, then one would normally opt for the more comprehensive map. However, a less comprehensive map may include features that are lacking in the more comprehensive map and then the less comprehensive map can still complement the more comprehensive one. Similarly, a less accurate map might have a feature that the more accurate one lacks and thus it may complement the more accurate map. Or the less accurate map may be more practical and therefore preferable in situations where accuracy is not crucial. It is most unlikely that any one map is completely wrong,

although one cannot dogmatically rule out this possibility. Therefore, any map can be at least of some limited usefulness and therefore at least potentially complementary to other maps.

With regard to the different interpretations and transformations of the mandala I tried to show that they can also complement each other. Together they give us a richer and more comprehensive view and understanding of ourselves, society, the world, and the Kosmos than any one interpretation or transformation alone.

What applies to mandalas is also the case for ideas, theories, viewpoints, philosophies, ideologies, religions, etc. Art and science complement each other. Yin and Yang are complementary and since Yin and Yang in the broadest sense symbolize all polar opposites, all of these opposites complement each other. Even antagonism and complementarity, either/or logic and both/and logic complement one another.

Since complementarity is of such wide-ranging applicability, it is of utmost importance to be aware of it. **Since much human suffering is due to either/or thinking that can lead to conflict, aggression, and war, awareness of complementarity that is based on both/and logic can bring us more mutual understanding, more tolerance, and more peace within ourselves, in our relationships, in society within and between nations. To foster more awareness of complementarity it should be taught in kindergarten, elementary school, high school and university.**

Perspectives can only be transcended in suchness, which is beyond words, concepts, thought, and ego.

Chapter 7: The Kosmic Dance

Moving and Dancing with the Dynamic Mandala

People who follow predominantly either/or logic are rather static in their thinking because they are locked into one mode. They are for this and against that: therefore they defend this and argue against that. As a result they may become more and more stuck in whatever they are defending.

In contrast, people who can also follow both/and logic can easily move from one perspective to another that complements it; and from there to yet another perspective, and so on. As a result these people are not as much stuck; they move around. These people are dynamic. When the movement is spontaneous and free, it becomes a dance. Thus one can see and experience a multitude of complementary perspectives. This makes life exciting because there is always novelty. It is like a big adventure. One never knows where it will lead. Consequently, there is insecurity, but these adventurers may feel secure in this insecurity, knowing that ultimately life is not secure and predictable. Therefore, they let it unfold as they dance along.

With regard to the mandala of this book this means moving easily from one interpretation to another, from one transformation to another, thus exploring more and more novel interpretations and transformations. Since the mandala with all its interpretations and transformations can be a representation of the Kosmos, and since we are part of the Kosmos, this movement allows us to become better acquainted with the Kosmos and ourselves. Moving and dancing with the fluid mandala we enjoy life and learn about life and the world, about ourselves and the fluid Kosmos.

Moving and dancing with conceptual mandalas might feel like moving and dancing with skeletons. But dancing with organic/artistic mandalas is almost like dancing with partners made of flesh and blood; and the partners keep changing as, for example, in a circle dance where the dancers inside the outer circle move along from one partner to the next. Each mandala, like each partner, is a different experience of life and the world, ourselves and the Kosmos, and yet they all enclose the same unnamable, mysterious source.

The Dance of Shiva

Dancing with the mandala recalls the dance of Shiva in his form of Nataraja, the cosmic dancer. Nataraja, like the mandala, has a multitude of interpretations. As Shiva he is “the lord of the universe and eternity” (Storl 2004: 136); universe as Kosmos, and eternity not as everlasting time but beyond time, hence the source, emptiness, mystery as it is represented in the empty center of the mandala of this book. Shiva's Shakti is energy that populates “the universe with countless ever changing forms and names [and mandalas]” (Storl 2004: 140).

Nataraja is the source of all movement in the Kosmos and therefore his dance is immensely dynamic and creative. But it is also destructive. Similarly, the dynamic mandala includes creation and destruction – creation of new mandalas and destruction of the mandalic form. However, even when the mandalic form has been destroyed, the mysterious source can be retained implicitly as in great art where the source usually is not indicated explicitly (Chapter 5).

Nataraja's dance can be seen as a release from illusion, the illusion of separation and permanence in the manifest world. Since it is words, referring to concepts, that create the illusion of separation and permanence, even the words/concepts *fluidity* and *dance* are transcended in what, paradoxically, we call the “Dance of Shiva”. “The paradox is that when the dancer is totally in the dance, there is rest—the impossible happens, the center of the cyclone [i.e. the center of the mandala]. But that rest is not possible in any other way. When the dance is total, only then does that rest happen” (Osho 2002: 97). In other words, the total dance rests in the formless, emptiness, or infinite source of everything; it arises out of it and remains contained in it.

The Kosmic Play

The dance of Nataraja is spontaneous. It has no script, no set steps to follow, no purpose or goal. It is pure joy, exuberance, celebration. There is no dancer who is doing the dancing. The dancer dissolves in the dance. In other words, the dancer is the dance: dancer and dance are one. This is the transcendence of the ego, the doer, the dancer. It happens through playfulness, which in India is referred to as *lila*, the cosmic play. To become *lila* we have to let go and relax into existence instead of trying to control it. Then we can partake in the cosmic play and in this play we can even transcend the mandalic structure because we can transcend any structure.

In its spontaneity, play has lightness and nonattachment. It overcomes resistance and fear. Referring to philosophical positions, Puhakka (1998: 397) wrote: "Playfulness manifests in the lightness with which the position is held." The opposite is the stubborn attachment to one's position, one's map, one's philosophy, ideology, or religion, which is so characteristic of the serious person who cannot dance and play. Puhakka (1998: 397) also noted that "emptiness [the center of the mandala] is neither playful nor purposeful. But it is also playful and purposeful. The Great Cosmic Play, the Dance of Shiva, is neither, and is both." In our Western culture we are conditioned to favor purpose over play. To overcome this conditioning that may create endless suffering and misery we have to become more playful.

Now one can say, of course, that it is relatively easy to be playful when everything is going well. But when our whole way of thinking and being is challenged, when we suffer, when we are sick, when we are in excruciating pain, how can we be playful in such situations? As long as we experience all this negativity in isolation and identify we it, there does not seem to be a way out of it. But if we can see beyond our separate existence, if we can take a larger, more inclusive stance, if we can see it in a kosmic perspective, then it might be possible to see even this negativity as an expression of lila, the kosmic play because the negative is not possible without the positive, neither in a kosmic nor an individual dimension: the individual is a microkosm that in some sense seems to be a mirror of the macrokosm.

Obviously it is not easy in our culture to deal with negativity in this way. And many people may simply break when they are identified and overwhelmed with negativity. However, some may be able to go beyond it spontaneously, and for many others the practice of meditation can be of great help because through meditation we can gain a wider perspective, we can go beyond identification with the ego or little self and eventually feel one with the kosmic Self.

There are many ways to meditate. Just sitting as in Soto Zen or Mindfulness Meditation are wonderful ways of meditation, but they are not always easy for the beginner. According to Osho (2000: 153), dancing and laughing are two natural, easily approachable doors to meditation, to the realm of no-mind and ultimate oneness. Of course, it has to be total dancing and laughing. Not just dancing that is directed by the mind, but dancing that is so total that the dancer becomes the dance. And not just a crippling laughing that still allows thinking at the same time. Other natural and easily approachable doors to meditation include toning, chanting, singing, and listening to or playing music in such a way that one flows with the sound or music and dissolves in it.

The Kosmic Joke

Jokes are also relevant to transcendence. Why? When we tell a joke, it begins and develops in a logical manner, but then, at the punch line, suddenly something totally unexpected happens that cuts through the logic and thus transcends it. This cutting through and transcendence liberates us from the strictures of logic and the thinking mind, and as a result we feel relaxed, free, and joyous: we burst out into laughter, which in itself is also liberating because since we cannot really laugh and think at the same time, laughter also transports us into the transcendent realm of no-mind, spirit, or whatever you want to call it.

Since life and reality ultimately are deeper than logic and the thinking mind, jokes may give us a momentary glimpse of the deeper, translogical, transmental dimensions of reality. Most people are not aware of this deeper significance of jokes. They think that they feel so good because the joke was so funny. And that is correct. But the joke also transported them into a higher or deeper realm, physiologically, emotionally, and spiritually.

When we are too serious for too long, we tend to become tense because, after all, we want to guard and protect our seriousness. This tension may lead to inner and outer conflict and ultimately to aggression and war. Jokes break through this facade of seriousness and as they elicit laughter, the physical, emotional and mental tensions are released, which creates a feeling of well-being, relaxation, and transcendence.

Although jokes can have this freeing effect, most of the time this effect is only temporary. But looking at life and the Kosmos as a kosmic joke can be liberating in a deeper way. In this sense, Maneesha asked Osho "is enlightenment something like getting the punchline to the ultimate joke?" And Osho said: "Right, Maneesha. It IS the punchline of the ultimate joke" (Osho 1999: 653).

Conclusions

Transforming the mandala and changing interpretations implies that we move from one transformation and interpretation to another. When this movement is spontaneous and free, it becomes a dance. Since the mandala can represent the Kosmos, this dance can be kosmic. It recalls the dance of Shiva in his form of Nataraja, which is immensely dynamic and creative. But it is also destructive. Similarly, the dynamic mandala includes creation and destruction: creation of many new mandalas and destruction of the mandalic form. However, even after the destruction of the mandalic form, the

mysterious source can be retained implicitly as in great art where the source usually is not indicated explicitly as in a mandala.

Nataraja, the kosmic dancer, releases the illusion of separation and permanence in the manifest world. His dance is lila, the kosmic play—pure spontaneity, lightness, freedom, and joy.

Freedom can also be glimpsed through jokes in as much as at the punch line they transcend the strictures of logic and the thinking mind and thus can help to relax into the lightness and laughter of no-mind and emptiness (in the Buddhist sense). Looking at life and the Kosmos as a kosmic joke may be liberating in a deeper sense.

Humor, laughter, and dance can become a form of meditation and, like other forms of meditation, can create awareness of the formless, the infinite, or emptiness, which is represented in the center of the mandala. They may even help to re-member One Taste, the Nondual (see Wilber 2001b, Chapter 13).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

General Summary

As I emphasized in the Prologue, I have great admiration for the genius and work of Ken Wilber. Nonetheless, I see limitations in his AQAL map of the Kosmos. In Part 1 of this book, I point out some of these limitations and show how they can be overcome.

One of the most basic limitations, not only in his map, but also his writings, is his insistence that manifest reality is hierarchical (holarchical) and that “the only way you get a holism is via a holarchy” (Wilber 1996: 28). (As Wilber, I use the terms ‘holarchy’ and ‘hierarchy’ as synonyms). For Wilber then “the Kosmos is a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely” (Wilber 2001: 40). I can agree that this is one way of *viewing* the Kosmos. But there are other ways such as nonhierarchical holism (undivided wholeness), Yin-Yang, dialectics, continuum and network views. Whereas according to the hierarchical view, reality consists of holons at different hierarchical levels, the nonhierarchical view in terms of undivided wholeness emphasizes oneness and the continuum view reveals a continuum within and between levels: as a result there are neither holons nor levels. According to the network view, there may or may not be holons and levels.

The matter is, however, more complicated than that for at least two reasons: 1. Wilber has also indicated that holons at any level can be more or less integrated and that the levels of the hierarchy should be seen as waves that “interpenetrate and overlap (like colors in a rainbow)” (Wilber 2000a: 215). This view, if it does not dissolve hierarchy altogether, softens it considerably. I therefore refer to hierarchy in this sense as soft or fuzzy hierarchy. 2. We have to distinguish different notions of the continuum: 1. a homogeneous and heterogeneous (or patterned) continuum. The homogeneous continuum is like the flat surface of a lake, whereas the heterogeneous continuum is like waves on the water surface that produce a pattern. 2. a continuum whose parts or extremes do not include each other such as colors of the rainbow where blue does not include red, and a continuum whose higher or more comprehensive part includes and transcends its lower part(s) such as the complex brain of humans that includes and transcends the brains of less highly evolved animals such as reptiles. Furthermore, we can also envisage a continuum between the above kinds of continua.

It is obvious that the heterogeneous continuum, in which the lower part(s) are included and transcended in the higher part, approaches a soft or fuzzy hierarchy. The

conclusion then is that some of Wilber's statements on hierarchies—to which I refer as a soft or fuzzy hierarchical view—and the continuum view need not be mutually exclusive and contradictory in all respects.

However, according to the Yin/Yang principle, Yin includes Yang and vice versa. If we apply this principle to levels, then the lower level includes the higher level to some extent and vice versa, which is contrary to hierarchical thinking.

The network view recognizes many interconnections that may or may not be interpreted in terms of a hierarchy.

According to complementarity, the so-called higher level in the hierarchy need not include the lower level, but the two levels can be seen as complementary to one another. Thus, if we see holism and mechanism as complementary to one another, holism need not include mechanism, but it may still transcend it and in that sense it can be considered to be higher. The notion of complementarity is, of course, not restricted to so-called levels, but has a much broader meaning as pointed out in Chapter 6. In this broader sense, Wilber's hierarchical view of the Kosmos and the above nonhierarchical views complement each other.

Consequently, with regard to the basic structure of the manifest Kosmos, I see a plurality of views, whereas Wilber insists that it can only be seen as a hierarchy in which—and this is crucial—the higher level *includes* and transcends its lower level(s). He goes even further, claiming that the basic structure of manifest reality *is* hierarchical in this sense. I do not profess to know what it *is*, I only try to show that it can be seen from different perspectives and I illustrated this through examples. It should be added, however, that according to Wilber's Integral Post-Metaphysics, everything is perspective. Nonetheless, with regard to the most basic structure of his AQAL map he does not seem to allow other perspectives besides the holarchy.

A second limitation in Wilber's writings and his map is either/or logic that is at the basis of strict hierarchical thinking. One alternative to either/or logic is both/and logic. Wilber is, of course, aware of both/and logic and he also applies it, but with regard to hierarchy he often uses either/or logic and he has to when he implies strict hierarchical thinking because it requires either/or logic: a holon belongs to either one level or another; it cannot belong to both levels; furthermore, something either is a particular holon or it is not. For example, something is a cell or it is not; and if it is a cell, it belongs to the cellular level and not to the level of the (multicellular) organism because in the latter it is both included and transcended and as a result the organismal level arises.

Besides both/and logic, fuzzy logic also contradicts Wilber's hierarchical view in a strict sense. Fuzzy logic implies that there are degrees of membership in a class ranging from 0% to 100%. Thus, for example, a structure can only partially belong to the class of cells, which means that it is a cell only to some extent. According to either/or logic, a structure either is a cell or it is not. In many cases this logic is appropriate for cells. But in other cases it is not, and then fuzzy logic is required for a more adequate description of the situation. A closer look at the world shows that there is much fuzziness so that Kosko (1993) concluded that we live in a fuzzy world, in a world that is not only black and white, but has many shades of gray and a world that has not only typical colors but all gradations of intermediates, and so on. I presented many other examples of fuzziness in Chapter 2.

Hierarchy can also be seen as a fuzzy set. From this perspective, a 100% hierarchy is the strict hierarchy as I characterized it above: holons and levels are mutually exclusive and the higher level includes and transcends the lower level(s). A hierarchy that fulfills these conditions I call a typical hierarchy or a hierarchy in the strict sense. I think that Wilber has this strict hierarchy in mind, explicitly or implicitly, when he says that "the Kosmos is a series of nests within nests within nests" (Wilber 2001: 40). In that case, we are dealing either with one of these nests or another and specific holons belong to either one nest or another. And when he says that "reality is made of holons", this means that something is either this holon or that holon. Thus, again either/or. But Wilber also emphasizes that levels should be seen as waves that are not "radically separate, discrete, and isolated from each other" (Wilber 1999: 267). This view departs from the strict hierarchy and is somewhat closer to the continuum view, especially if the continuum is understood as heterogeneous where the higher part includes and transcends the lower as I pointed out above and in chapter 4. According to fuzzy set theory, this view implies a less than 100% hierarchy. Thus, if I understand Wilber correctly, he implicitly also uses the notion of hierarchy as a fuzzy set, although, as far as I know, he does not state that explicitly.

The wisdom of Yin-Yang also implies a fuzzy world because Yin is never only Yin, it is also Yang to some extent and vice versa. In a sense Yin-Yang is even more radical than fuzzy logic because it excludes 0% and 100% membership since nothing can be 0% Yin or Yang and 100% Yin or Yang. Everything is somewhat in between the extremes, which means that, literally and metaphorically, there is no 100% black and white, only gray. Some of the gray may, of course, come very close to either black or

white so that for practical purposes either/or logic can be used. For this reason either/or logic can complement fuzzy logic to a limited extent.

However, if we think in terms of black or white in a metaphorical sense, then the world is fundamentally divided into all the mutually exclusive opposites that black and white represent. And division is the basis for conflict, aggression and war. If, however, everything is gray in a metaphorical sense according to Yin-Yang, then everything is basically undivided, although there are the two major forces of Yin and Yang. This has far-reaching consequences. It means, for example, that nobody can be only good or only evil. Even if we are good, we also have evil in us, if only in traces, and thus we are connected to the man who is predominantly evil. Hermann Hesse in "Siddhartha" put it this way: "The world itself, being in and around us, is never one-sided. Never is a man or a deed wholly Samsara or wholly Nirvana; never is a man wholly saint or sinner" (Hesse 1957: 115).

If we apply Yin-Yang to hierarchy and the continuum, we come to the surprising conclusion that there is no 100% hierarchy and no 100% continuum. In other words, there is no hierarchy in the strict sense and no complete continuum. There is always at least a trace of the continuum in a hierarchy and vice versa. Consequently, those who think in terms of hierarchy and those who prefer a continuum view are linked, although they operate at opposite ends of the same hierarchy-continuum spectrum.

Another consequence of Yin-Yang is that there is no 100% right and no 100% wrong. This is an important warning for all those—and there are many—who think that they are completely right and others, who contradict them, are completely wrong. It is a warning to all those who have the urge to possess the absolute. And it is a warning to all those who think that they actually are in possession of the absolute as they have often done so much harm to themselves, to others and the world.

The recognition of Yin/Yang, continuum and network views are of fundamental importance for the modern human condition. Since they connect, they heal splits and wounds that have led to enormous suffering through antagonisms, stress, conflicts, and wars.

A third limitation in Wilber's map (but not in his writings!) is that it is only evolutionary in a temporal sense. It does not include involution in time, which, according to him and others, is the movement from the One to the Many, whereas evolution is the opposite. Furthermore, his map does not include involution and evolution beyond time in the eternal present. His map only represents evolution beginning with the Big Bang in the

center of the map and then leads through various hierarchical levels toward transpersonal levels culminating in the One of the formless and nondual.

Being aware of both evolution and involution in time and especially in the eternal present can create greater fulfillment and peace than evolution alone that is geared toward progression to higher levels and thus may entail a striving and even struggle that is not conducive to total fulfillment and peace.

In Part 2 of the book I present a self-referential dynamic mandala that does not have the limitations of Wilber's AQAL map. I introduce it as a simple version with an empty center that is surrounded by circles of concepts. The empty center represents the unmanifest, the unnamable, mystery, emptiness, the causal (formless) (in Wilber's map). It is the source of the manifest that is represented by the circles of concepts. The number of concepts and circles can be varied as well as the structure of the mandala, which may be two- or three-dimensional.

The mandala can be interpreted in many different ways: as a hierarchy, or in terms of undivided wholeness, or a continuum, or a network, or in terms of Yin-Yang, or the complementarity of the circles; furthermore, it can be interpreted in terms of evolution and involution in time or beyond time in the eternal present. And since one of the concepts of the mandala is "dynamic" and another "self-reference", the mandala itself is dynamic, which means that it can be transformed in many ways. In other words, transformation is built into the mandala, and therefore this mandala is a multitude of mandalas. It is not just one map like Wilber's map that, although it allows for several versions with regard to the number of dimensions, levels, lines, states, and types, it has a fixed basic structure.

One could even say that all mandalas of the past, present and future could be seen as transformations of the dynamic mandala—of course, not actual transformations in a literal sense, but transformations in the sense of a dynamic relationship.

The dynamic mandala can also be transformed into forms that are no longer mandalic, which means, for example, that the mandala also contains its destruction as a mandala in the strict sense, that is, with the formless in its center. One such transformation yields Wilber's map, which has the formless at the periphery instead of in the center as in typical mandalas. Thus, Wilber's map turns out to be one special transformation of the mandala. The reverse, however, is not the case because the mandala cannot be generated from Wilber's map, which is not self-referential. Thus, the

mandala is more comprehensive than Wilber's map, which is understandable because it does not have the limitations of Wilber's map that I pointed out in Part 1 of this book.

Since the self-referential dynamic mandala contains the concept of the organic, it can also be transformed into organic/artistic mandalas. Furthermore, all artistic and spiritual mandalas, including those of the great wisdom traditions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, can be seen as transformations of the mandala. Each artistic mandala is, of course, a free creation, and in this sense it is not an actual transformation; but it can be seen as such. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to simply say that all mandalas are related.

Since mandalas have been created in practically all cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions, the dynamic mandala that relates all mandalas also relates the cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions in which they originated. Therefore, the dynamic mandala has the potential to unify and connect diverse cultures, religions, and wisdom traditions. The unification occurs through the center that all mandalas share; the connection through the different peripheries of the mandalas that can be seen in a dynamic relationship.

Contemplating the mandala does not only provide insight into reality, the Kosmos, but also communion with it. As we become aware of the source in the empty center of the mandala, we can realize that this center is the center of the Kosmos and ourselves. Thus, the centers of the mandala, the Kosmos, and ourselves coincide—they are one center, not in a spatial or temporal sense, but in the sense of the unnamable mystery that pervades all existence.

Contemplating the mandala can also be liberating in several ways: instead of being caught in only one meaning of each concept, we can move freely to other complementary meanings; instead of being caught in only one way of relating the circles of concepts, we can entertain other complementary relations; and instead of being caught only in the manifest world cut off from its source, the empty center, we can see everything in relations to the source which bestows sacredness on the Kosmos including ourselves.

In a sense, mandalas are "the architecture of enlightenment" (Thurman 1998) because, especially in the great wisdom traditions, they can be the expression of an enlightened state, and through their contemplation they can be used to gain access to this enlightened state. One single mandala, especially if designed by an enlightened master, can be a guide to reaching the formless in the form. However, since the form in

any single mandala is always limited, many different mandalas represent form more comprehensively than any single mandala.

The fluidity of the mandala with its many transformations mirrors the fluidity of the Kosmos: the makrokosm that includes all the galaxies, stars, and planets; and the mikrokosm of our individual lives. Since mikrokosm and makrokosm are ultimately one, our "personal" experience can reach makrokosmic dimensions, dimensions that mystics have alluded to, although they all agree that words and language are insufficient to convey the depth and scope of their experience and insight.

Through fluidity we can reduce or eliminate suffering, since, according to Buddhism, suffering results from fixation and attachment. Fluidity also restores physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health.

All interpretations and transformations of the fluid, dynamic mandala—that is, all mandalas—complement each other: they present different complementary perspectives of the Kosmos including ourselves. Thus, we do not lock ourselves into just one perspective, assuming that it is the true map or theory of everything. Instead, in the spirit of complementarity, we have to be dynamic: we have to move from one standpoint to another, to yet another, and so on. When this movement is spontaneous and free, it becomes a dance, a dance with the many interpretations and transformations of the mandala. This is a kosmic dance when the mandala symbolizes the Kosmos.

Dancing with the mandala recalls the dance of Shiva in his form of Nataraja, the kosmic dancer. Nataraja is seen as the source of all movement in the Kosmos. Through his dance he destroys and creates, thus symbolizing that destruction and creation are inseparably linked. In this sense his dance is a release from illusion, the illusion of separation and permanence in the manifest world. It is lila, the kosmic play, pure spontaneity, lightness, freedom, and joy.

Freedom can also be glimpsed through jokes in as much as at the punch line they transcend the strictures of logic and the thinking mind and thus can help to relax into the lightness and laughter of no-mind and emptiness (in the Buddhist sense). Looking at life and the Kosmos as a kosmic joke may be liberating in a deeper sense.

Humor, laughter, and dance can become a form of meditation. As Osho pointed out, laughter and dance are the two most natural, easily approachable doors to meditation, the realm of no-mind and oneness, or, in other words, to the center of the mandala, the formless, mystery, and the nondual represented by the mandala as a whole. Other natural and easily approachable doors to meditation include toning, chanting, singing,

and listening to or playing music in such a way that one flows with the sound or music and dissolves in it.

Beyond Wilber's AQAL Map

Since Wilber's AQAL map is of immense value, this book should be seen as an appreciation of his map. However, it also points out limitations of his map and shows how they can be overcome. The mandala of this book goes beyond Wilber's map in the following ways:

1. Because of the multitude of transformations and interpretations, the mandala does greater justice to the complexity of the manifest world than Wilber's map with only a few versions, all of which are holarchical.
2. Besides Wilber's hierarchical (holarchical) holism, the mandala offers a nonhierarchical holism (undivided wholeness), which at least to some extent overcomes fragmentation of the world into holons (entities) that are then hierarchically (holarchically) ordered.
3. The mandala offers a continuum view in addition to the holarchical view. This continuum view applies also to levels within the quadrants. Wilber too endorses a continuum when he refers to waves instead of levels. However, with regard to the basic structure of his AQAL map, this continuum still implies the "Include and Transcend" Principle, whereas the continuum of the mandala may or may not imply this principle.
4. The recognition of continua liberates us from either/or thinking (categorical thinking) and emphasizes fuzzy thinking (fuzzy logic) in addition to Aristotelian either/or logic that is so prevalent in our culture.
5. In addition to Wilber's hierarchical "Include and Transcend", the mandala also allows a Yin-Yang view with regard to levels, which means that the lower level contains (if only as a germ) the upper and vice versa. As an extension of this view one can envisage a partial belonging to more than two levels. In Chapter 1 I pointed out that this view was actually endorsed by Wilber to a limited extent. Related to the Yin-Yang view is the dialectical view according to which any level is the total or partial negation of its preceding level or the synthesis of the two preceding levels. Negation is contrary to the holarchical view, whereas synthesis is compatible with the latter.

6. The mandala can be interpreted in a linear fashion as Wilber's map, but also in a less linear way, and therefore it allows for more network interconnections. Wilber recognizes many networks including interconnections between lines and quadrants (which are not indicated in his map). He insists, however, that the levels in the holarchy follow each other in a linear fashion, which means that levels cannot be skipped (in the individual quadrants). Whether levels can be skipped or not, in my opinion depends at least to some extent on their definition; if they are defined very loosely, they may not be skipped, but if they are defined more rigorously, at least some levels may be skipped and the linear sequence becomes more of a network (see Chapter 2).
7. Wilber's map and his thinking are flexible, but because the mandala takes into consideration more alternatives it is still more flexible.
8. Besides the evolutionary arrows from the center toward the periphery as in Wilber's map, the mandala also offers interpretations with involutory arrows in the opposite direction and no arrows at all denoting involution and evolution beyond time in the eternal present.
9. With regard to evolution, the mandala offers perhaps even more room for "regressions" than Wilber's map. And "regressions" are not necessarily seen as negative, but as a playful up and down. Therefore, the mandala places greater emphasis on playfulness and also on the lightness with which positions are held, humor, and laughter, which are the healing antidote to all basically fixed structure and the seriousness that I often (but not always) sense when Wilber talks and writes about his AQAL map.
10. The mandala utilizes complementarity and perspectivism to a greater extent than Wilber's map that applies complementarity and perspectivism within the four quadrants and eight zones but not with regard to the basic holarchical structure of his map, although, according to Integral Post-Metaphysics, "the world of manifestation is the world of perspectives" (Wilber 2006: 288).
11. Since the mandala is dynamic, it emphasizes movement and dance more than Wilber's map. In contrast to Wilber's map that has only a few versions, the mandala is a mandala of all mandalas, a map of all maps, each of which represents another aspect of reality (unless it is totally false, a possibility that I do not want to rule out dogmatically but consider most unlikely).

12. In general, the mandala is less restrictive than Wilber's map and therefore allows for a greater range of views and experiences. For example, as pointed out above, Wilber's map restricts perspectivism and complementarity to the four quadrants, the eight zones, and some other domains; it excludes perspectivism and complementarity from the basic structure of the Kosmos, which according to Wilber is hierarchical (holarchical). According to the mandala, holarchy is only one perspective of the Kosmos. Other perspectives are a nonholarchical holism, continuum, network, and Yin-Yang views. However, to avoid misunderstandings, I want to emphasize that Wilber also recognizes continuum, network, and Yin-Yang views in many ways, but not with regard to the most basic structure of the manifest Kosmos which, according to him, "is a series of nests within nests within nests indefinitely" (Wilber 2001: 40), that is, a hierarchy (holarchy). According to Integral Post-Metaphysics, this hierarchy with its levels is not eternally given; it evolved, and "once a level has evolved, it is a very real structure existing in the universe" (Wilber 2006: 272). I do not want to deny evolution, but I want to emphasize that the process and product of evolution can be interpreted in hierarchical and nonhierarchical ways.

In sum, in comparison with Wilber's map the mandala offers a still greater range of perspectives, interpretations, and transformations, more dynamics and playfulness, more openness, flexibility and complexity, less linearity, and more emphasis of nonholarchical holism (undivided wholeness), fuzzy logic, Yin-Yang, continuum and network views.

Needless to say that the mandala is far less worked out than Wilber's map. In fact, so far the mandala is only a sketch that highlights how we can transcend Wilber's map. It is an invitation to everybody to work it out in greater detail and to provide additional evidence. Furthermore, as I shall point out in the following section, it is an invitation to expand Wilber's map so that it is less limited.

Removing Limitations in Wilber's AQAL Map

In addition to creating a new map as I have done, one could also change Wilber's map in such a way that many or most of its limitations are overcome. To achieve this, one would have to add instructions to his map that would allow for complementary interpretations. Since he also presented his map as an Integral Operating System (IOS 1.0), one would enrich this basic version by creating a more inclusive version. Here are some specific suggestions on how to achieve this.

Instead of reading his map only as a holarchy, one would add complementary interpretations (perspectives) in terms of a nonhierarchical holism (undivided wholeness), a continuum, Yin-Yang, dialectics, and a network. Wilber has already suggested that the levels should be seen as a continuum of waves, but for the levels in the individual quadrants he wants to retain the principle of "Include and Transcend," which means that the higher level includes and transcends the lower level(s). At least according to one notion of the continuum that I proposed in this book, this principle does not apply. For example, in the color continuum of the rainbow to which Wilber also referred, blue does not include yellow; it is simply linked to yellow through a continuum. Thus, in a continuum of this sort there is change, but not inclusion.

On the other hand, if inclusion is envisaged and if fuzzy thinking is applied, the inclusion could range from 0% to 100% depending on the situation.

When we apply the Yin-Yang perspective to the levels, we recognize that the lower level may also contain to some extent the higher level as the higher level includes to some extent the lower level. This view again is rather different from Wilber's holarchical view according to which the higher level includes the lower, but not vice versa.

Adding a network view as yet another perspective might remove at least some of the remaining linearity of stages from Wilber's map and make other interconnections such as those of lines (that are recognized by Wilber) more obvious.

Another suggestion is to add two transformations to his map: one in which the arrows point in the opposite direction to indicate involution in time, and another without arrows to indicate involution and evolution beyond time in the eternal present. This change of his map would provide consistency between his general thinking and his map because in his general thinking he emphasizes both evolution and involution in time and beyond time, but in his map with arrows pointing only in one direction this is not reflected.

All of the above additions to IOS 1.0 would result in an upgraded version of IOS from which most of the limitations I pointed out in this book would have been removed. It would, however, still be more limited than the mandala of this book that, through its manifold interpretations and transformations, comprises many mandalas and could be even envisaged as a mandala of all mandalas or a map of all maps. Because of its organic/artistic transformations, the mandala also represents art besides science, philosophy and spirituality. In contrast, Wilber's map is only a conceptual map that also points to art, but in its representation is not artistic in the general sense of the term.

A Message for Educators and Educational Institutions

Throughout this book I have stressed the importance of incorporating alternative ways of thinking and being into the educational curriculum from kindergarten to university and adult education, that is, lifelong learning. Thereby students and adults would gain a broader and more balanced outlook and this in turn would lead to a beneficial transformation of society: better health, more tolerance, peace, and happiness.

Each school, college, and university should incorporate into its teaching program Wilber's (2005) *Integral Operating System* and the *Integral Life Practice* using the *Integral Life Practice Starter Kit* that was prepared by Wilber's Integral Institute (2006). *Integral Life Practice* addresses body, mind, and spirit in science, art, and culture, nature, self, and morals. Its practice would lead to enhanced health and balance in individuals and society.

Teaching perspectivism and complementarity is also of fundamental importance and would lead to far greater tolerance and peace. Similarly, teaching network thinking, fuzzy thinking, and Yin-Yang would be very beneficial.

Laughter Yoga, or just humor and laughing, as well as dance could be introduced already in kindergarten and continued up to university. Exposure to other forms of meditation and the contemplation of mandalas would also be most beneficial. It would create more awareness of the center, the source, the unnamable, the mystery, where we are all united.

Finally, teaching the dynamic mandala of this book would lead to greater creativity, playfulness, tolerance, and peace.

Epilogue

With regard to “Sex, Ecology, Spirituality” (SES) in which Ken Wilber presented his AQAL map for the first time, he wrote “that every tomorrow brings new truths, opens new vistas, and creates the demand for even more encompassing views. SES is simply the latest in a long line of holistic visions, and will itself pass into a greater tomorrow where it is merely a footnote to more glorious views” (Wilber 2001: 41). I can say the same about the dynamic mandala I presented in this book. At the same time, I hope that it will be useful until someone will devise an even more encompassing map. We have to keep in mind, however, that regardless of the comprehensiveness of the map, the map is not the territory, the menu is not the meal. Unfortunately, many people continue eating the menu instead of the meal and thus deprive themselves of delicious meals. Many people get obsessed with maps, fight for their maps, go to war for their maps, and kill for their maps instead of enjoying the beauty and wonders of a tree, a flower, an animal, a woman, or a man.

Maps like Wilber's map and the mandala maps of this book have the advantage that in a sense they go beyond themselves because transpersonal, transmental realms are part of them. Thus they point to no-mind, emptiness, mystery, the unnamable beyond anything that can be named, talked about, written and argued about. Both Wilber's map and the mandala of this book coincide in this deepest way. The difference between the two is with regard to manifest reality, the relative, that which can be named and talked about. Only in this respect do I find Wilber's map too limited, and therefore I proposed a mandala that does not have the limitations of his map.

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Integral World: [http://www.integral world.net/](http://www.integralworld.net/)

Wilber Watch: Blog dedicated to the work of Ken Wilber, including both his fans and his critics, as long as there's debate) <http://www.wilberwatch.blogspot.com/>

The Integral Sphere: A Mathematical Mandala of Reality (by Thomas J. McFarlane):
<http://www.integralscience.org/sphere.html>

M. Alan Kazlev's integral mandala: www.kheper.net/topics/Wilber/AQAL_critique.html