

WHERE'S WILBER AT?

The Further Evolution of Ken Wilber's Integral Vision During the Dawn of the New Millennium

By Brad Reynolds

PART I

Where's Wilber At?

Where's Wilber at? That is, what is the present philosophical position of Ken Wilber, the pundit who many claim to be the world's most intriguing and foremost philosopher? This is not an easy question to answer, for the breadth of Wilber's encyclopedic vision is enormous and covers over a quarter century of prolific publication and continual evolution. In other words, Wilber's work too has evolved over the years. Indeed, its progressive unfoldment in complexity and depth allows us to recognize at least *five* consecutive and distinct phases or periods in his career to date (which we'll discuss in depth below). Because of this, many people, reading from an array of sources, often find him hard to pin down, to really understand exactly "where he's at." But where he is at, stated quickly and summarily, is Phase-5 or Wilber-5 or Wilber/Phase-5¹ – the post-metaphysical AQAL approach (reviewed in detail in Part II and III of this essay). Therefore, by including in our understanding the important contributions and advancements of all four previous phases, we may better understand where the philosophy of Ken Wilber stands today and where it's going during the opening years of the new millennium.

From the perspective of an overview, Wilber/Phase-5 is a continuation of the **AQAL** (pronounced *ah-quil*) or the "**all-quadrants, all-levels**" – which is actually short for "***all quadrants, all levels, all lines, all states, all types***" – approach to integral studies pioneered by

Wilber since 1995. This began with the publication of *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution*, his magnum opus that initiated the fully integral approach of Wilber/Phase-4.

However, Phase-5 is an even more radical direction in that it undermines traditional metaphysics, making it truly revolutionary, as well as integral, in nature. Although this Phase-5 “post-metaphysics” can appear complex and far outside the traditional “box” of spirituality, it is really very simple and straightforward, once you include the important contributions of the postmodern mind. By honoring (and embracing) the significant truths of postmodernity (as well as modernity and premodernity), Wilber is offering a post-metaphysical underpinning to traditional spirituality and metaphysics. By doing so, the integral philosopher is presenting an entirely new and radical approach to philosophy based on the native perspectives of sentient beings, on all levels, in all contexts (including interiors and exteriors). Consequently, this comprehensive understanding generates an **integral methodological pluralism** (IMP), or a way to analyze and pragmatically implement a fully integral approach, thus grounding the postmodern world’s first truly integral system in the real world.

The radical – or revolutionary – nature of this approach cannot be over-emphasized, and *this is where Wilber’s at* during the opening years of the twenty-first century. Indeed, this accomplishment even goes beyond the incredible strides made by his earlier breakthroughs, such as with the “spectrum of consciousness” (in the 1970s), the “pre/trans fallacy” (in the 1980s), or the “four quadrants” (in the 1990s). Phase-5 is now the mature phase of Wilber’s “**Integral Vision**” – a catchall phrase for “where Wilber’s at” – a vision that’s been expanding and developing with each published work for over twenty-five years. Yet still, as we’ll see, this development very naturally unfolds from Wilber’s previous phases and is thus seamlessly integrated with them. Consequently, Phase-5 can still be comprehended with some serious study, even if it’s radically revolutionary. So revolutionary, in fact, that it’s even tripping up some of

his best students, such as Frank Visser, as demonstrated in his recent book *Ken Wilber: Thought As Passion* (2003).² Visser's well-documented and critical overview of Wilber's work takes a historical approach in presenting the unfolding phases of Wilber's career. However, this type of presentation somewhat skews Wilber's current positions (especially Phase-5) since they aren't reviewed until the book's end, thus confusing the reader to Wilber's principle ideas and present-day positions. Consequently, although clearly-written and basically supportive of his grand integral enterprise, Wilber himself has stated that Visser's book does a disservice to his recent and most significant writings, and therefore he does not recommend it if you want an accurate view of his work.

Indeed, I too have written a critical chapter-by-chapter summary review of Wilber's numerous books from 1977 to 2003 (see *Embracing Reality: The Integral Vision of Ken Wilber: A Chapter-By-Chapter Review of His Major Works*, Tarcher/Putnam, 2004), yet I also fall short of fully comprehending the many details and overall enterprise that's currently being undertaken with Phase-5.³ This difficulty in interpreting Wilber is partly due to the fact that there are so many gifts of insight offered by his work that every person walks away with their own valuable understandings (and misunderstandings). This shows, in my opinion, that it's not really a weakness of Wilber's presentations but rather a reflection of the depth and grace given to us all by studying one of the most passionate philosophical geniuses of our time.

In today's technological and multilayered world of telecommunications, Wilber's presence on the Internet or the worldwide web is another significant factor that needs to be taken into account in determining "where Wilber's at." First of all, there's the fact that his recent Phase-5 writings have been premiering on his popular web site at Shambhala Publications (www.wilber/shambhalapublications.com). But perhaps even more significant is the fact that Wilber's integral vision is appearing on the web with even greater frequency due to his

involvement in founding **Integral Institute** (reviewed in more detail below). Also called “**I-I**”⁴ this venture is a type of integral “think tank” comprised of colleagues and other professionals who are actively promoting the AQAL approach by pragmatically applying its methodology to the numerous fields of modern study (such as politics, ecology, medicine, art, law, etc.). Also of primary significance is the cutting-edge web site of **Integral Naked**, an exciting, graphically-powerful site presenting conversations and interviews by the world’s leading integral thinkers, often hosted by Wilber himself. There is also the establishment of numerous web sites domains by active members of I-I that are being presented as **Integral University** or the “**Multiplex**,” a learning environment for accessing and sharing information about the AQAL or “all-quadrants, all-levels” approach. Thus we’ll continue to see that although Wilber’s integral theory has been well established in over twenty-five years of publication, his current work and projects are still in a state of further evolution and continual modification as he interacts with an army of associates, supporters, and students from around the world.

To some degree, therefore, the question “where’s Wilber at?” can only be answered by searching and surfing the Internet (a topic explored in greater detail below). This is especially true since this interconnected network is becoming the treasure trove where much of his new Phase-5 writings can be found (to be published in future books). This essay (in all its parts) will take a look at Wilber/Phase-5 and its revolutionary implications by presenting an overview of Wilber’s developing integral vision throughout all of its previous phases, a vision that offers an unprecedented approach to integrating science and spirituality, the past and the present. Indeed, many people today see the maturing integral philosopher as a present-day beacon to what future thinkers will better see and understand about the totality of our existence. Thus, even if it’s hard to fully understand all the places and phases where Wilber’s been, and where he’s currently at, it’s still incredibly useful to contemplate where this philosophical giant stands as the world

moves forward into the third millennium. This is especially true since *now* is the time, as Wilber noted in 1997, when we truly need “an integral vision for a world gone slightly mad.”⁵

The Emerging Integral Vision

This essay is a result of having worked with Wilber's writings for over twenty years, reading each book and covering it with copious notes as it appeared in print. In addition, I was invited to study under his personal guidance for nearly ten years. This essay, therefore, will be a “brief history” of Wilber's writing and philosophical career as seen from my perspective, which, at a minimum, is from the point-of-view of one of his more dedicated students.

One of the first things we notice is that Wilber's integral philosophy has expanded dramatically from his first books going through numerous “**phases**” (which we shall review further in Parts II & III), so much so that he now concedes that “the books prior to *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution* (1995) are preliminary explorations in integral studies, and, although many of them present what I hope are important pieces of an integral view... the earlier books [are only]... useful in forming the subcomponents of a more integral theory.”⁶ In this case, one of the ways we shall examine “where Wilber's at” is by also seeing where he's been as his career has evolved and *phased* through its various periods on its way towards a deeper and more integral embrace.

This type of review is much easier said than done. Since his first publication in 1977 Wilber has published, to date (late 2003), nearly two dozen books and hundreds of articles. And, significantly, this was accomplished despite a nearly ten-year hiatus from writing and publishing as he attended to his wife Treya's fatal fight with cancer (during the years 1983-1989). Between the years 1995 and 2000 he published *seven* detailed and complex books, over 2500 pages of printed material! During the year 2002 alone, he wrote over 2000 pages of additional publishable

material (that's at least five books worth!) which have summarized and stretched his integral position into what's now identified and called Phase-5 or Wilber-5. With this extremely prolific output, although every page is clearly articulated and brilliantly composed, it becomes nearly impossible to determine exactly where Wilber's at or precisely what he's saying in full. This is especially true since *everyone* brings their own liabilities (and misunderstandings) to the table.

Consequently, such a bountiful outpouring by a *living*, ever-evolving philosopher can even be frustrating for a teacher's admiring students, as we've already mentioned. Yet, as one can also imagine, such a generous (or obsessed) output is doubly difficult to digest for his flabbergasted "critics," many of whom get lost in the quagmire of trying to critique his earlier, "outdated" books and phases. Often his more current views and later phases are already addressing many of these critic's concerns and confusions. Therefore his response to them is that they usually need to do more "homework" and comprehensively read his Phase-4 AQAL approach and then the more current Phase-5 "post-metaphysical" material. In other words, in trying to grasp or ascertain "where Wilber's at," one soon realizes that it's an open-ended (and not a closed) system. Thus, like life itself, Wilber's Integral Vision is ever-evolving, ever-growing, ever-expanding, inclusively embracing more and more as more and more is revealed, known, understood, and ultimately, transcended.

In fact, the vast encompassing nature of the integral enterprise – which essentially concedes that "everybody is right,"⁷ even if only partially so – must always be willing to accept or integrate *any* new evidence disclosed by a wide variety of paradigms and worldviews. As Wilber likes to remind us, "**Integral**: the word means to integrate, to bring together, to join, to link, to embrace. Not in the sense of uniformity, and not in the sense of ironing out all the wonderful differences, colors, zigs and zags of a rainbow-hued humanity, but in the sense of

unity-in-diversity, shared commonalities along with our wonderful differences.”⁸ Thus his friend and colleague, Jack Crittenden, panoramically explains:

Wilber's approach is the opposite of eclecticism. He has provided a coherent and consistent vision that seamlessly weaves together truth-claims from such fields as physics and biology; the ecosciences; chaos theory and the systems sciences; medicine, neurophysiology, biochemistry; art, poetry, and aesthetics in general; developmental psychology and a spectrum of psychotherapeutic endeavors, from Freud to Jung to Piaget; the Great Chain theorists from Plato and Plotinus in the West to Shankara and Nagarjuna in the East; the modernists from Descartes and Locke to Kant; the Idealists from Schelling to Hegel; the postmodernists from Foucault and Derrida to Taylor and Habermas; the major hermeneutic tradition, Dilthey to Heidegger to Gadamer; the social systems theorists from Comte and Marx to Parsons and Luhmann; the contemplative and mystical schools of the great meditative traditions, East and West, in the world's major religious traditions. All of this is just a sampling....

[Thus] ...if his approach is generally valid, it honors and incorporates more truth than any other system in history.⁹

This embracing view of reality – Wilber’s Integral Vision – attempts to include as many perspectives, styles, methodologies, and paradigms as possible, all situated within the domains of self, culture, and nature.¹⁰ Thus it presents a comprehensive and coherent worldview or a “**grand theory of everything**,” which, in this case, is grounded in and includes enlightenment (or God-realization), the esoteric goal of all the world’s religions. Indeed, this “**true but partial**” approach is the essential definition and mission of the integral approach. In this essay, as we surf and explore Wilber’s various “phases” we’ll see that one of the true beauties of his integral enterprise is that its theory and methodology have remained remarkably consistent throughout

the decades. In my opinion, this inclusive nature of Wilber's integral approach continues to unfold with such systematic brilliance that it sometimes reminds me of Indra's bejeweled net of interconnectivity (explored below), which is embracing every aspect of reality in a rationally-aligned, yet dharmically-attuned, expression of enlightenment itself.

For this point, too, as we'll continue to recognize, is really the principle scope and import of Wilber's work: it is an inclusive, intellectual representation of the whole of reality which also follows and guides a person on their journey from *prior to birth* (involution) to *birth to selfhood* to *spiritual enlightenment* (evolution) to *beyond death*. This is an unfolding process of development that Wilber believes is best modeled as a "nested hierarchy of Spirit." or more accurately, a nested **holarchy** of ever-more embracing spheres of existence. This "Great Nest of Spirit" includes matter, nature, body, mind, soul, and spirit, yet they're always situated in the context of the **four quadrants** (or nature, systems, self, and culture) and they are all correlated with one another (interiors are reflected in exteriors and vice versa).

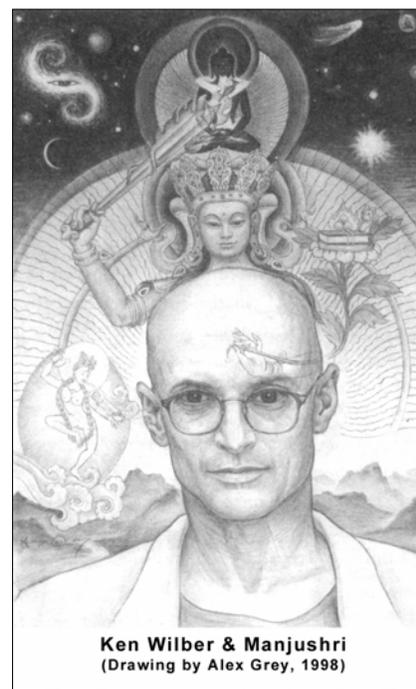
This type of interactive patterning, on all levels, in all quadrants, has prompted Wilber to describe the universe more as a *kosmos* (with a "k"), which the ancient Greeks used to mean "the patterned Whole of existence, including the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual realms."¹¹ Therefore Wilber's integral model embraces the entirety of the whole Kosmos – a real "theory of everything" (T.O.E.) – and so it can be seen as a multilayered "Kosmic Mandala" of involution and evolution dynamically interacting as "Spirit-in-action" while paradoxically existing as "One Taste" (or the nondual condition of Real God). These are some of Wilber's current terms for designating the energetic, evolving universe as an AQAL Matrix grounded in and as Nondual Spirit, instead of just being limited to a universe composed of chance collisions of physical matter or energetic particles, the accepted usage of today's word "cosmos" (with a "c"). Thus Wilber's model of integrating science and spirituality, the modern and the ancient, certainly

wants to include the physical sphere of “cosmology” (or the study of the origin and structure of the universe), but it also includes the rest of reality (nature, body, mind, soul, and spirit). In summary, the Integral Vision presents us with an embracing and divinely-oriented “kosmology,”¹² giving us a more inclusive and tolerant vision than the ones we’ve inherited from any of our conventional cultures.

In this case, no matter what you may think Wilber is saying, the crucial point is that he’s always emphasizing the necessity to understand and integrate *all* the levels of your own being and to rightly take up a transpersonal and spiritual practice in order to continue your personal evolution toward “the further reaches of human nature” and “the depths of the divine.”¹³ It’s only by *practice*, not just *theory*, or only by diligent, inner evolution imbued with both grace and grit, that the more embracing, yet transcendental, levels of existence will unfold in your own case. Then the Divine Itself (or Nondual Spirit) will become your present realization and experience, especially since it’s “always already”¹⁴ *your* innate condition or “Original Face” – *you* are the Face of God Itself! It is with that deep, inner realization – *Here – Now* – that wisdom and love-bliss radiate eternally leaving the heart and mind always already Free. And it is to *That* truth, ultimately, that Wilber is *always* pointing beyond any matrices, models, or metaphysics that he or anyone else can dream up.

Manjushri with a ThinkPad

One of the more useful ways that I envision Ken Wilber and his work is to see him as a Bodhisattva serving the enlightenment of other sentient beings, the practical definition of a *bodhi-sattva* (Sanskrit, lit., *bodhi* = enlightenment; *sattva* = being¹⁵). Having worked under his tutelage for nearly a decade, I have personally seen the commanding power and adeptness to which he pursues this aim. To read and “grok” his books and articles is the only other proof needed to verify this personal observation.



Manjushri is a Buddhist bodhisattva usually associated with Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism, and specifically with Madhyamika (or the “Middle Way”) and its Teaching of Emptiness (*sunyata*). This is the worldview with which Wilber’s philosophy is most closely aligned. As the integral philosopher explained in a mid-1990s interview: “I am a longtime practicing Buddhist, and many of the key ideas in my approach are Buddhist or Buddhist inspired. First and foremost, Nagarjuna and Madhyamika; pure Emptiness and primordial Purity is the ‘central philosophy’ of my approach as well. Also Yogachara, Hua Yen, a great deal of Dzogchen and Mahamudra, and yes, the fundamentals of Abhidharma.... Again, I’m trying to take the best from each of these traditions and bring them together in what I hope is a fruitful fashion.”¹⁶ Combined with the knowledge of the West (in its many forms), these are indeed some of the essential ingredients in Wilber’s integral stew.

Manjushri, as a spiritual hero, is usually depicted wielding the “sword” of transcendent wisdom (*prajna*) which represents the liberating truth of enlightenment (or God-Realization), the condition of awareness that all beings are ultimately seeking to realize. Manjushri’s flame-tipped, two-edged sword, held with his right arm above his head, is a symbol of razor-sharp critical wisdom mastered by the penetrating insight of enlightenment which tears through all partial or relative truths to reveal the absolute truth of Ultimate Reality. Combined



with compassion and exercised as “skillful means” (or *upaya*), this heart-felt Bodhisattva uses the intellect to break through the confused darkness of the clouded egoic mind unveiling the pristine clarity of awakened consciousness. In addition, the Buddhists tell us, Manjushri is called “Lord of the Word” (*vagisvara*) which, when used consciously and adeptly by an enlightened being, is another tool of liberation, cutting away the tangles of ignorance (or misknowledge) that, as Robert Thurman clarifies, “traps humans and gods in the automatic habit patterns of cyclic living.”¹⁷ This is an apt image: piercing sword of critical insight in one hand, a book of sacred literature or the enlightened word in conjunction with the other. This certainly describes much of the written work of Ken Wilber in its deeper understanding.

Thus I like to see Wilber as a modern-day human-embodiment of Manjushri, sitting there cross-legged in the lotus posture (he’s a long-time meditator), wielding his enlightened “sword” of fierce intelligence and critical insight in order to cut through the mass of bullshit, so to speak,

perpetuated by the ego and the social conditions of our suffering world while simultaneously championing enlightened awareness, primordial purity, and clear thinking. Indeed, he's already become one of the West's greatest proponents of **meditation**, claiming (and demonstrating) that this technique of inner development is not just narcissistic regression to *prepersonal* oceanic awareness (a claim of misunderstanding fostered by the early schools of psychology and modern scholarship). Rather meditation is a tool for positive growth into *transpersonal* or inner spiritual maturity.

However, instead of waving a sword high above his head, Wilber writes away on yellow legal pads and pounds away on an IBM ThinkPad (or notebook computer) to get his ideas across, down, and printed. Instead of "cutting through" the shrouds of ignorance with a sharp saber, Wilber glides over his computer keyboard (at frightening speeds) creating a vast series of words and ideas which, if properly understood, have the power to dispel darkness and enlighten your own innate awareness, which is "always already the case" in each and every sentient being. In other words, as the genius-like Manjushri does, Wilber engages in a skillful job of balancing the compassion of enlightened understanding with the need for piercingly-brilliant wisdom.

This is another reason why Wilber is best described as a "**pandit**" (Sanskrit, or in English, the root of "pundit"), which in India is a sacred teacher and *scholar* of enlightenment, a "defender of the dharma, an intellectual samurai."¹⁸ This is in contrast to the sacred role of a "**Guru**" (Sanskrit, lit., "heavy one") or a spiritual "therapist" who's actually an initiator of a spiritual transmission and a personal relationship with a student or devotee that directly and intimately serves their karmic purification and awakening to enlightenment. In a similar manner, by clearly recognizing the distinction and different levels in the spectrum of consciousness, Wilber's famous *pre/trans fallacy* (discussed below) has even developed a cogent system which can determine the difference between *prepersonal* cultic behavior (or cult organizations) and

authentic *transpersonal* practices (or spiritual communities). Therefore, from his earliest writings to his most recent, Wilber has always placed himself within the parameters of a teacher-student relationship, not a guru-devotee one.¹⁹ Nevertheless, he fully acknowledges and supports the necessity for both forms of guidance and communion, especially since both methods are vital and important tools used by the enlightenment traditions. The American pandit once explained his position on being an intense intellectual: “It has been my good fortune to find that when the intellect is polished until it becomes radiant and shining, it is a staunch defender of a Truth and Beauty that reaches quite far beyond its own capacities, and in that reach it serves its master more than faithfully.”²⁰ The words of Manjushri, even in a modern form, still carry great capacity to awaken and reveal the truth of innate enlightened awareness, especially since, paradoxically, it’s “always already” the case for each and every individual.

Although several modern Manjushris are currently living in the contemporary modern/postmodern world (and there are a few), their roots, so to speak, are still found in this “great tradition” of enlightenment teaching. And although this “tradition” has also evolved in expression over the millennia, it reaches back through the lineages of many enlightened spiritual masters, men and women alike, from Buddhists to Hindus to Sufis to other awakened mystics throughout human history. Wilber, too, finds roots and inspiration in this perennial wisdom as he continues their tireless task as an intellectual pandit of pointing to enlightenment itself. Indeed, over the years he has studied directly under the guidance of numerous spiritual sages from several esoteric enlightenment traditions (although most have been Buddhist, his chosen traditional path).²¹ However, it is critical to understand that as a “post-postmodern” integral scholar, Wilber is *not* just continuing their traditional premodern values and worldviews, but rather he has shifted gears into a Phase-5 AQAL embrace that incorporates the advancements of

modernity, postmodernity, and takes the “miracles” of modern science fully into account (while simultaneously rejecting their negative aspects).

Consequently this point must be made very clear: Wilber is extremely adamant that he is *not* simply presenting an updated version of the traditional premodern spiritual point-of-view (namely, that of an apparent metaphysics), which is sometimes tagged with the title “perennial philosophy.” Rather, more accurately, Wilber’s integral vision is presenting a current update of the basic “Emptiness” (*sunyata*) teachings of Nagarjuna and Yogachara Buddhism (a subject too complex to detail here), although in the end, they claim that the ultimate truth can never be summarized, *only realized*. Yet the discussion of relative phenomena (or theories of everything), from Wilber’s integral perspective, must include all the branches of science, as well as the recently discovered knowledge gained by the postmodern mind, in addition to the premodern wisdom of spirituality and religion. Therefore, he prefers to title this updated consideration, if anything, “**Integral Post-Metaphysics**” (a difficult topic discussed in further detail in Parts II & III). However, as consistently stated throughout his writings, and once compassionately but forcefully stated to me in an email: “my position is that of Nagarjuna’s: you cannot categorize Emptiness in any fashion, including that one. It cannot be stated, only realized.”²² Or, as one modern-day spiritual master summarized: “the truth is revealed, not published.”²³ Thus again, real God-Realization, or enlightenment itself, and the practice and discipline that realizes “That” (*tat tvam asi*, “you are That”) and only “That” *is* exactly and ultimately where Wilber’s at, where he’s coming from, and what he’s all about when all is said and done.

By writing in an integral language, speaking as a centaur with vision-logic (Wilber’s terms for the integrated self), yet geared towards an enlightened understanding (or the transcendence of all stages and states), the American bodhisattva pandit paints a picture of possible liberation for all human beings. He himself has termed this approach “**emancipatory**

writing,” that is, his work can be included in the “great tradition of emancipatory writing, of intellect in the service of liberation – helping to undo repression, thwart power, and shun shallowness, quaint as all that sounds to this year’s ear.”²⁴ Yet this particular integral version of the postmodern Manjushri, sitting in the middle of the USA hammering out philosophy on an IBM ThinkPad, and who looks like a tall, bald Buddha, can appear to be assuming the guise of an irreverent rock star who meditates. At 6’-4,” Wilber has been shaving his head long before it was vogue to do so, due to his early Zen practice and naturally receding hairline, yet, notice too, the look of Ed Kowalczyk of the rock band Live, or Stuart Davis (“Kid Mystic”), the bald-headed boy-genius of pop, both of whom are friends of Wilber’s and who sport a similar style of hairless heads. In any case, the philosophical giant of Boulder, in observing his own tendencies, has wryly commented: “I have often described myself as a northern European thinker with a southern European lifestyle who practices Eastern religion – or something like that.”²⁵ A bald American Buddhist, a philosopher without peer in today’s fractured world, another manifestation of Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of critical wisdom serving the liberation of all beings, yet this time under the guise of a “post-postmodern” Integral Vision? Well, perhaps, or perhaps not, but at least he’s trying.

In the end, therefore, in more deeply understanding where Wilber is truly at, I believe it’s indispensable to picture the Manjushri-like pundit as a staunch defender of the nondual realization of enlightenment in its most pure and naked state. Nonetheless, because he’s also assembled the vast reams scientific evidence and cross-cultural studies into a cohesive whole, he has revealed an evolutionary tale of the Kosmos that delineates a spectrum of consciousness unfolding as “Spirit-in-action.” In addition, Wilber also describes the basic contours of the various *states*, *structures*, and *stages* in consciousness evolution (individually centered in the “Upper-Left quadrant”) in blistering first-person (or subjective) accounts, gathered from his own

personal experience and meditative practice, as well as accessing the stories of previous enlightened explorers. Yet, as mentioned, Wilber is ultimately pointing to the transcendence of all experience as revealed in *satori* or the initial glimpses into the enlightened state of God-Realization. Thus, with an unwavering focus, sometimes termed as “pointing-out instructions,”²⁶ Wilber consistently refers to “**the Witness**” of all these multilayered stages and various states of consciousness, the ultimate True Self (or Atman) which is the real root or truth of all beings and all awareness. And yet, in harmony with the highest nondual teachings, he goes even further by personally confirming that consciousness really is “not a Witness but a **Nondual consciousness** that is not other than radical Spirit itself.”²⁷ Let me allow the integral champion of enlightenment to explain it best in his own words:

The ultimate reality is in the Witness, not in the concepts, right or wrong. As long as you are trying to work at the level of thoughts and concepts and ideas and images, you will never get it....

Radical consciousness is unqualifiable, which can be metaphorically indicated by saying that pure consciousness is pure Emptiness. But I repeat, Emptiness is not a concept, it is simple and direct awareness.... So the entire world of Form is arising in your own Formless awareness right now. In other words, Emptiness and Form are not-two. They are both One Taste in this moment. And you are That. Truly. Emptiness and Consciousness are just two names for the same reality, which is this vast Openness and Freedom in which the entire universe is arising moment to moment, an Emptiness that by any other name is radical Spirit itself.²⁸

Only *this*, ultimately, is where Wilber is truly at, which you may or may not realize, for it's actually nowhere at all but everywhere at once.

Wilber's on the Internet

In more practical terms, we can still ask, so “where *is* Wilber at?” Well, *physically*, he's mostly in Denver and Boulder, Colorado, where he's been living for nearly twenty years (first moving there with his late wife, Treya), and where he remains today. Usually housed in his self-styled mountain home in the outskirts of Boulder, he's recently been spending a lot of time in Denver, residing in a loft, in order to help promote and establish his newest and most public project: Integral Institute.

In the summer of 2000, admiring philanthropists and enthusiastic business people approached Wilber about establishing a non-profit organization that he designated “**Integral Institute**” or “**I-I**,”²⁹ for short. Integral Institute (“the” is usually dropped) was designed to assist, finance, and *interconnect* the growing network of integral theorists, many leaders in their own fields, who were responding to the fully-developed Integral Vision proposed by Wilber, especially since Phase-4 had begun in

1995. This specifically includes the **AQAL** or “all-quadrants, all-levels, all-lines, all-lines, etc.” methodology, plus an integral philosophy of “**constructive**



postmodernism” which boldly “reconstructs

deconstructionism” or the failures of postmodernity (discussed in detail in Parts II & III below).

The domain of Integral Institute (see: www.integralinstitute.com) is where Wilber's presence on the Internet is now most keenly felt, thus the best place to learn about this leading-edge organization, its numerous projects and many branches, ranging from Integral Spirituality to Integral Art to Integral Business to Integral Feminism to Integral Law and Integral Medicine, is at their eloquently-designed web site (always in a constant state of redesign). The most exciting

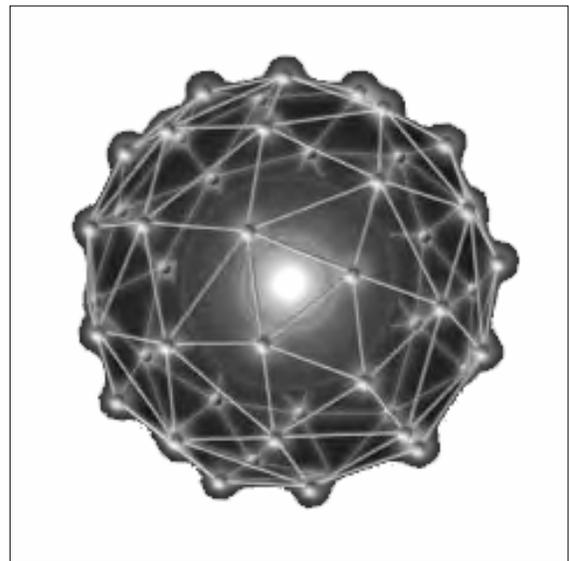
web site to emerge yet associated with Wilber's vision is probably **Integral Naked**, an information dispensing site presenting the world's leading integral visionaries (see below for more detailed information). Please take the time to visit and explore the many places where Wilber's at and where he's going.

Ultimately, I-I's main interest is in exercising the practical and pragmatic *application* (and *applications*) of integral theory in the real world. Using Wilber's AQAL "**integral operating system**" (**ISO**) and "**integral methodological pluralism**" (**IMP**) as the backbone, I-I is dedicated to, in the words of the Founder, President, and Chairman of the Board: "the integration of body, mind, soul, and spirit in self, culture, and nature" which intends "to honor and integrate the largest amount of research from the greatest number of disciplines."³⁰ This massive project, which will act as a training and teaching forum, is intended to help Wilber, and others of like-mind or "Friends of I-I,"³¹ fulfill his vision of an "**integral millennium** – where the sum total of extant human knowledge, wisdom, and technology is available to all."³² Or at least that's part of the stated mission and basic game plan.

One of the more ambitious projects to emerge from Integral Institute in the early years of the new millennium (due to take off by the end of 2003) is **Integral University** – also known as the **Multiplex** – which will be the world's first "Integral Learning Community." This is an interactive link-up of a worldwide "Rising Culture" (after Toynbee) promoting and practicing the AQAL approach and implementing the depth and breadth of the Integral Vision. Inspired, in part, by theologian Paul Tillich's observation that "what we call the 'Renaissance' was participated in by about one thousand people," and the fact that those thousand seem to have been financed by about a dozen, Wilber is attempting to plant the seed to for a nonviolent, compassionate, synergistic "**Integral Revolution**"³³ by using both traditional and advanced technological means. Therefore, all interested people and parties, including financiers (the "**New**

Medici”), are invited to join in and actively participate by making their own contributions to the emerging Integral Age. Or, as Wilber likes to now say, be part of “a small cultural elite at the leading edge,” be part of “an integral age at the leading edge.”³⁴

Using the multilayered and interconnected image of a **geodesic sphere** (with numerous “nodes” or hubs connected to other the hubs or centers of activity), Wilber is fashioning this integral enterprise as “a *multidimensional matrix of integral learning*... grounded in knowledge and compassion, theory and practice, care and justice, consciousness and culture.”³⁵ Importantly, this dawning of an Integral Age and integral community “reaches beyond (and yet includes) any existing cultural types – beyond the culture creatives, beyond traditional, modern, and postmodern habits – to create, by its own learning and self-organizing, a more genuinely integral and embracing culture of consciousness.”³⁶ Incredibly, it’s an embrace of all that’s come before and might possibly unfold in the future, grounded with a critical eye to making adequate judgements and compassionate decisions.



The initial launch of **Integral University** (aka the Multiplex) will initiate a simultaneous link-up of numerous web site domains – each a “**college**” of integral learning and practice – hosted by various associates of I-I who are some of the foremost authorities in their particular field. These will include Integral Ecology, Integral Psychology, Integral Art, Integral Medicine, Integral Business, Integral Law, and so on. This means that anywhere from 20-50 original web sites or nodes will all be launched at the same time, creating a matrix of interconnectivity

between like-minded integral explorers and visionaries. Entry through these web domain colleges or portals in the Multiplex leads out onto the **Integral Commons**, the core of the interlinked geodesic sphere. The Integral Commons offers learning opportunities, archives (word, audio, visual), discussion areas, starter kits, plus a newsletter connecting members with a wide variety of upcoming integral seminars, courses (graduate-accredited classes in the near future), workshops, and integral salons (incubators of integral thinking) all initiated by fellow members who have literally from around the world. Overall, it's hoped that a huge interactive, interconnected worldwide "mega-feedback loop" of integral information will be shared and cross-pollinated by all active participants and compatriots. This gives the world and global culture an *integral* alternative to the mass of confusion and brutal solutions propagated by most of today's institutional structures.

These type of **Integral Institute** projects will help fulfill its mission to act as an "information clearing house," "multidimensional feedback dynamism," a "creative synergy" where I-I is likened to the center hub in a wheel with the spokes radiating outward as the various integral branches and colleges, ranging from Institute of Integral Psychology, Institute of Integral Politics, Institute of Integral Business, Institute of Integral Medicine, and so on. Nonetheless, while off to a promising start the dot.com crash of the early millennium (and the loss of mega-funding), plus the weakened US economy, has put a damper on some of these projects. Nevertheless, with I-I's synergetic creativity already being activated they have entered into new spheres of development, such as with **Integral University** and the fabulous new site, **Integral Naked**. Consequently, numerous members, associates, and affiliates are diligently working towards completing a slew of integral projects and endeavors. As only one example, there's the slated *The Encyclopedia of Human Transformation*, an integral review of all the forms of transformation available to human beings and how they reside within an AQAL matrix.

The overall plan, therefore, has been for Integral Institute and its various members to act as a vehicle of *integral influence* on the major institutions of politics, business, science, medicine, and higher education. Another one of their primary projects, carried out by “**core teams**” of professional researchers and professors, is to try and establish a series of well-defined, academic textbooks and multimedia presentations, which can then to be used in university departments and for teaching the younger generations. This hopefully, and realistically, better serves our society’s transition into “a more integral AQAL approach.”³⁷ Thus I-I will be a vanguard organization representing an integral or “second-tier”³⁸ position in the global culture. However, as with all ambitious projects, the appropriate funding and economic times will dictate the speed of implementation and degree of success, but in the long run, it’s worth the tireless efforts by everyone involved in envisioning and enacting the comprehensive and compassionate Integral Vision.

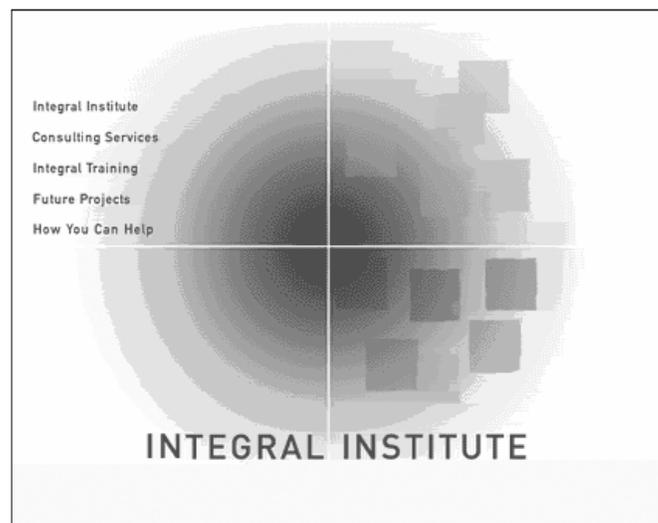
Before I introduce you to some of the numerous ground-breaking web sites and activities that Wilber is currently engaged in, let me bring to your attention to perhaps the most exciting web site happening on the Internet today, Integral Naked (www.integralnaked.org). **Integral Naked** (or **IN**) refers to being “*integral*” or simply “comprehensive and inclusive,” plus being “*naked*” or “plain, unadorned, uncovered, not aided by artificial means,” in other words, it’s offering “open, honest, transparent conversation” about integral topics – or *everything*. On a deeper and more esoteric level, “naked” is also referring to “naked awareness” which is the “nondual consciousness” that’s innate in all human beings and is the source of true enlightenment. In this case, however, an interested person can activate “**streaming audio**” (played on Real Audio, Media Player, iTunes, MP3, etc.) or access audio downloads in order to listen to “a series of unedited, uncensored, live, and taped-live conversations between the most influential, provocative and important thinkers and leaders in today’s world.”³⁹ These “naked”

conversations, usually hosted by Wilber himself, are with some of the world's brightest integral visionaries, such as Don Beck, Deepak Chopra, David Deida, Andrew Cohen, Frances Vaughan, Jim Garrison, Lama Surya Das, George Leonard, Michael Murphy, Caroline Myss, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Jenny Wade, plus Stuart Davis ("Kid Mystic" pop star) and Eddie Kowalczyk (lead singer from the rock band Live); and of course, Ken Wilber himself. Whether presented live (via **Integral Naked Live**) or as archived conversations ("past perfect"), these are the pioneering "Visionaries" and voices of the emerging Integral Age, and they are openly inviting everyone to come join the discussion and search for more integral answers and methods to solving the mass of both individual and collective problems.

These integral conversations and interviews, examining the influence of Wilber's integral vision (and AQAL approach) as well as the important work being done by these leaders in the field, can be found nowhere else. They transcend normal, conventional channels, and reveal the "naked truth" behind the social roles and ideas of these integral practitioners, hence the prominence of the word "naked." Any interested person is invited to join Integral Naked and actively participate in the open dialogue, generally by accessing the "discussion forum" (yet, as always, conducted with good manners and civility). Where else can anyone be told that "the IN posse is in the station, kickin' back, sippin' whiskey, chewing the transcendental cud; don't piss 'em off, and you're free to ride your wild horses all day, and all night" – it's a ticket to interact with other integral-minded people from around the world. Thus, one way or another, the Integral Revolution is off to an exciting start where the old and partial ways are beginning to fall away and be replaced with newer and more integral approaches and solutions. Quite simply, if you believe that some type of integral direction, whatever that may look like exactly, is the wave of the future and a viable solution to today's local and global problems, then Integral Naked

(sponsored by Integral Institute) is the place to be in order to keep a pulse on forthcoming integral activities and inspiring visions.

Already Wilber has been successful in implementing various practical and applicable ventures that will assist Integral Institute in further promoting a fully-developed integral vision or AQAL approach in the world-at-large. These range from a series of Internet web sites to private ventures with integral colleagues to university classes emphasizing (and critiquing) the integral AQAL approach. The best place to find out about these integral avenues and Wilber's essential online presence is to go to the "**Bulletin Board**" at www.integralinstitute.com (**Integral Institute**) or visit www.integralnaked.com (**Integral Naked**) or www.integraluniversity.org (**Integral University**) for the latest updates. It's also important to attend to the site maintained



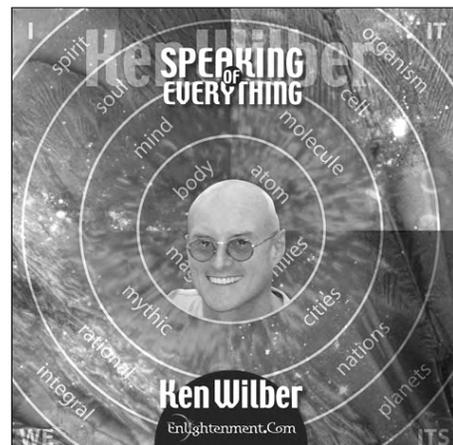
by Wilber's primary publisher at www.wilber.shambhala.com (**Shambhala Publications**), especially for the latest on his recent publications and essays. . This technological matrix has *now* become a secret key in staying attuned with Wilber and knowing where he's really at.

In this modern, high-tech sense, Ken Wilber has also been making his debut in **multimedia** as the new millennium continues to dawn, a venue that he's usually shied away from previously, preferring instead to concentrate on his writings and ideas. However, with the

establishment of the fully developed AQAL perspective (Wilber/Phase-4 & 5) and the founding of Integral Institute, Wilber has realized that he must be more publicly engaged in *teaching* the integral vision if it's to be effective and truly represent his intentions. Therefore, one of the ways he's responded to this demand is to release a number of interviews about the AQAL approach and "where he's at," such as the ones published as a series in *What Is Enlightenment?*, including the issues appearing in 2002 and 2003, plus he's now released some in-depth interviews on CD and the worldwide web.

This phase probably had its start in 1998, when Audio Renaissance, as a promotion for *The Marriage of Sense and Soul* (1998, Random House), released the first audiocassette of a Wilber book (read by Denis deBoisblance). It's a marvelous overview of the AQAL approach and its constructive power in "integrating science and religion" (the book's subtitle). Plus, I believe, it's simply an excellent teaching tool to hear the integral language developed by Wilber in spoken word (instead of the written page). We hear about Wilber's integrative method which "marries" the premodern Great Chain of Being (simplified as body, mind, soul, and spirit) exemplified by traditional religion, with the differentiations of modernity (self, culture, nature) exemplified by modern science. The power and efficacy of the integral language, hearing it's unique terms properly announced and applied, expands one's integral thinking right on the spot as the new ideas and paradigms are explored and pondered. This method is a very effective and powerful tool in spreading the integral vision and its message.

The first spoken-CD interview, *Speaking of Everything*, was released in 2001, when Jordan Gruber, Founder & CEO of Enlightenment.Com, interviewed Wilber covering a wide



range of topics, from intimate discussions of his personal life to humorous and insightful considerations about his integral AQAL theories and the budding Integral Institute. It was the “first-ever interview released to the public” in Wilber’s 30-year career, available on two audio CDs with an attractive colorful cover and an illustrated pamphlet containing artwork by Alex Grey.

However, the most recent *tour de force* is a 10-CD, 12-hour affair called *Kosmic Consciousness*, released in the fall of 2003, and promoted as “Ken Wilber’s First In-Depth Audio Learning Course.” Produced by Tami Simon of Sounds True (see: www.soundstrue.com), a successful audio-education



business, *Kosmic Consciousness* is an amazing presentation and thorough overview of Wilber’s AQAL Phase-4/5 approach. This presentation is spliced together with his uncanny ability to scan a wide spectrum of topics, from “guidelines for choosing a spiritual teacher” and “the transmission of nondual awareness,” to “making love in the gross, subtle, and causal body” or “integral peace-making and the vision of a World Federation,” to an endless selection others subjects, a plethora of unprecedented integral information.

With this type of media output beginning to be realized by Wilber, the meditative pandit who once shunned the public spotlight so he could concentrate on writing only, this is indeed a new stage or phase in his career. And, of course, there are other multimedia products in the plans, such as a possible PBS production that’s been on the drawing board for years, so stay tuned to all your media outlets, especially the Internet, to find out where Wilber will appear next!

At this time, we've come to the end of Part I and reviewing some of the *physical* and *virtual* places where Wilber's at during these opening years of the new millennium and twenty-first century. Yet the core of what this essay wants to examine is where he's at *theoretically*. Yet, as mentioned, this task is difficult indeed (and subject to revision), so let me first attempt in Part II to summarize some of the places the Bodhisattva pandit has been hovering as he enters "Phase-5" or the "post-metaphysical" phase of his illustrious career.

Endnotes

¹ The preference of this author is to usually use the Phase-# designation since using Wilber's last name is too redundant and self-centered for mine or Wilber's tastes, although the Wilber/Phase-# is the most accurate representation.

² Frank Visser, a transpersonal psychologist from Holland (and webmaster for the excellent Wilber web-site www.theworldofkenwilber.com), has been the first to publish a review book on the work and life of Wilber, titled *Ken Wilber: Thought As Passion* (SUNY, 2003). However, while Visser shows a good understanding of many important points in Wilber's earlier phases, he fails to grasp the significance involved in the radical nature of integral post-metaphysics (and consequently, Phase-5). Visser admits that his own theosophical orientation colors his reading of Wilber's integral approach to spirituality (see in particular Chapter 7: "Ken Wilber In Perspective"), especially with his honoring of the perennial philosophy, another topic that Wilber is currently putting to task. Thus Visser finds it hard to agree with Wilber's post-metaphysical approach and, in so many words, states that Wilber is wrong here. Therefore, while offering a very well-written review of much of Wilber's work and some of the corresponding events in his personal life, especially the earlier phases and their important contributions, his book stands as an unfortunate misreading of where Wilber is really at. In offering his own personal, yet misguided reading of Wilber, Visser states that he sees Wilber as being basically a traditionalist, a perennial philosopher, even if cloaked in a different form. Yet Wilber himself has been denying this type of characterization of his work for nearly a decade, and actually, in an earlier expression, since 1983 (with the publication of "The Neo-Perennial Philosophy")! Visser also overstates his case by claiming that the core of Wilber's system is the "Great Chain of Being," the traditional image of a hierarchical universe (body, mind, soul, spirit) whereas actually Wilber only uses the Great Chain as a metaphor *to begin* explaining where he's really at, which is actually a radical "post-postmodern" philosophy and spirituality that reaches beyond (by embracing more than) the traditional, premodern spiritual mind and worldview. Therefore, while supportive of his student's diligent efforts in writing and publishing the book, Wilber has had to explicitly reject the book as an introduction to the true nature of his work.

³ Nonetheless, *Embracing Reality* reviews each one of Wilber's previous books for their own sake and thus is an excellent source guide to the breadth of Wilber's career. Consequently, it is a very useful compendium for easily ingesting Wilber's earlier phases, which are brilliant in and of themselves. Thus if you want clarification of his

principle ideas and his well-articulated definitions, then *Embracing Reality* becomes an indispensable resource that everyone, especially Wilber's students, should include in their library.

⁴ The phrase “**I-I**” for the **Integral Institute** actually has numerous levels of meaning, thus making it somewhat of a pun because it's also a common phrase invoked in Wilber's Phase-4 writings to refer to the highest state of consciousness (beginning with *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* in 1995). For one, it recalls Sri Ramana Maharshi who, as Wilber explains, “refers to the Self by the name ‘I-I,’ since the Self is the simple Witness of even the Ordinary ‘I.’ We are all, says Ramana, perfectly aware of the I-I, for we are all aware of our capacity to witness in the present moment.” (*SES*, p. 306) Therefore Wilber often uses this phrase “I-I” in his mystical writings where he poetically, and beautifully, explains his realization of the Witness and its nondual ground, therefore, it's an apt acronym for his institute and integral “think tank” or the Integral Institute or simply “I-I,” for short.

⁵ Ken Wilber, *The Eye of Spirit: An Integral Vision For a World Gone Slightly Mad* (1997), the subtitle.

⁶ Ken Wilber, Foreword to *Ken Wilber: Thought As Passion* (2003, SUNY Press) by Frank Visser.

⁷ See: Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (2000, Shambhala), p. 140: “True But Partial.”

⁸ Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (2000, Shambhala), p. 2; “**Integral**,” as a word for a particular stage in the evolution of consciousness, was introduced by Swiss cultural historian Jean Gebser (1905 – 1973) in the early twentieth-century and adopted by Wilber in the mid-1970s, along with other stage-headings, such as *archaic*, *magic*, *mythic*, and *rational*. Wilber gleaned this vital information after reading one of Gebser's English-translated essays, “Foundations of the Aperspectival World,” *Main Currents*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 1972. Gebser's magnum opus, *The Ever-Present Origin* (1949), was finally published in English by Ohio University Press in 1985, confirming Gebser's pioneering work in delineating the stages of consciousness in human history was a major influence on Wilber's *Up From Eden* (1981), although, again, Wilber had garnered Gebser's essential arguments from only that one original article.

⁹ Jack Crittenden, Foreword “What Is the Meaning of ‘Integral’?” in *The Eye of Spirit* (1997, Shambhala) by Ken Wilber, pp. viii-ix.

¹⁰ As we will see, the all-important “**four quadrants**” in Phase-4 are often translated into the “**Big Three**,” or the “cultural value spheres” of art, morals, and science, or self, culture, and nature, respectively.

¹¹ *Kosmos* (with a “k”) is actually a Pythagorean term, which Wilber has reintroduced in Phase-4 to refer to the universe as a whole, not just the physical universe, which is how “cosmos” (with a “c”) is commonly used today. He explains further: “The Greeks had a beautiful word, **Kosmos**, which means the patterned Whole of existence, including the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual realms. Ultimate reality was not merely the **cosmos**, or the physical dimension, but the **Kosmos**, or the physical and emotional and mental and spiritual dimensions altogether. Not just matter, lifeless and insentient, but the living Totality of matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit. The **Kosmos!** – now there is a real theory of everything!” Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (2000, Shambhala), p. xi.

¹² Ken Wilber, *A Brief History of Everything* (1996, Shambhala), p. 19: “I think what we want to do is **kosmology**, not cosmology.”

¹³ “The Farther Reaches of Human Nature” is the title to an important book (1971, Viking) by pioneering transpersonal psychologist, Abraham Maslow, which was adopted and slightly modified by Wilber as the title to chapter 7 in *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (1995, Shambhala) discussing the advanced *personal* stages of consciousness development (integral-centaur, meditation, and the validity claims of mysticism), while “The Depths of the Divine” is the title to chapter 8 in *SES* discussing the even higher transpersonal stages in the evolution of consciousness (psychic, subtle, causal, nondual).

¹⁴ “**Always already**” or “always already the case” is a phrase often used by Wilber to indicate the nondual, ever-present nature of the indescribable Divine Spirit that he picked up from Adi Da (Franklin Jones) who used it extensively in *The Knee of Listening* (1972, Dawn Horse Press), as indicated by Wilber in his first book *The Spectrum of Consciousness* (1977, Quest Books), p. 343, 36n. Often Wilber will end a book with a chapter discussing the “always already” nondual condition, to cap off a book’s worth of intellectual discussion, such as with *The Spectrum of Consciousness* (1977), Chapter 11: “That Which Is Always Already,” or *The Eye of Spirit* (1997, Shambhala), Chapter 12: “Always Already: The Brilliant Clarity of Ever-Present Awareness.”

¹⁵ Mircea Eliade & Ioan P. Couliano, *The Eliade Guide to World Religions* (1991, HarperSanFrancisco), p. 266.

¹⁶ Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1998, Shambhala), p. 351.

¹⁷ Robert Thurman, *The Central Philosophy of Tibet* (1984, Princeton), p. 3.

¹⁸ Ken Wilber clarifies further: “In India, as I have often pointed out, a distinction is made between a *pandit* and a *guru*. A **pandit** is a spiritual practitioner, who also has a flair for the academic or scholarly or intellectual, and so

becomes a teacher of the Divine, an articulator and defender of the dharma, an intellectual samurai. A **guru**, on the other hand, is one who engages people directly and publicly, and who gets intimately involved with the ordeal of transforming their karma,” in “Mind and the Heart of Emptiness: Reflections on Intellect and the Spiritual Path,” in *The Quest*, Winter 1995, p. 21.

¹⁹ See: Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1999, Shambhala), pp. 222-226; also see: *What Is Enlightenment?* “The Guru and the Pandit: Andrew Cohen and Ken Wilber,” issues: Spring/Summer 2002:” Dialogue I: The Evolution of Enlightenment,” Fall/Winter 2002: “Dialogue II: Breaking the Rules,” Spring/Summer 2003: “Dialogue III: Exploring the Future of Religion.”

²⁰ Ken Wilber, “Mind and the Heart of Emptiness: Reflections on Intellect and the Spiritual Path,” in *The Quest*, Winter 1995, p. 22.

²¹ See: *Embracing Reality: The Integral Vision of Ken Wilber* (2004, Tarcher/Putnam) by Brad Reynolds, for further discussions on Wilber’s teachers and spiritual masters.

²² Ken Wilber, email to author, March 28, 2002.

²³ Adi Da Samraj, *Water and Narcissus* (unpublished) by then Franklin Jones.

²⁴ Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1999, Shambhala), p. 14.

²⁵ Ken Wilber, Foreword to *Ken Wilber: Thought As Passion* (2003, SUNY Press) by Frank Visser.

²⁶ See: Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1999, Shambhala), p. 137.

²⁷ Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1999, Shambhala), p. 125.

²⁸ Ken Wilber, *One Taste* (1999, Shambhala), p. 125, 126.

²⁹ Again, “**I-I**” itself being a play on words for “I-I” is also one of Sri Ramana Maharshi’s terms, one of Wilber’s most admired sages, representing the awakened divine consciousness of the Witness or the True Self “I AM” which fully embraces (yet transcends) the individual egoic “I”.

³⁰ Ken Wilber, “Announcing the Formation of the Integral Institute” @ www.wilber.shambhala.com.

³¹ A partial list comprised from Fall 2003 includes: Andrew Cohen and *What Is Enlightenment?* Magazine; Don Beck and Spiral Dynamics Integral; The Executive Integral Leadership Program at Notre Dame; The Natural Capitalism Group; David Deida and 3D Training; Global Integral Research; Stuart Davis and Dharma Pop Records; Lama Surya Das and Dzogchen Center; and Jim Garrison and State of the World Forum.

³² Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (2000, Shambhala), p. 1.

³³ Ken Wilber, Integral Institute web site (www.integralinstitute.com), "Join Us," Fall 2003.

³⁴ Ken Wilber, Excerpt B: "The Many Ways We Touch – Three Principles Helpful for Any Integrative Approach," November 2002.

³⁵ Ken Wilber, Integral Institute web site (www.integralinstitute.com), "Join Us," Fall 2003.

³⁶ Ken Wilber, Integral Institute web site (www.integralinstitute.com), "Integral University: A Multidimensional Matrix of Integral Learning," Fall 2003.

³⁷ Ken Wilber interview, *Speaking of Everything* CD (2002, www.enlightenment.com).

³⁸ "**Second-tier**" (colored as "yellow" and "turquoise") is a term culled from Clave Grave's and Don Beck's "Spiral Dynamics" of memetic development which corresponds closely with Wilber's "**centaur**" or "**vision-logic**" stage of consciousness evolution, usually emerging after the mental-rational level, and which is capable of integrating all the previous stages without privileging any one stage. Turning into the new millennium, Wilber began using the terms of Beck's Spiral Dynamics to further illustrate his consciousness development theories, especially on a worldview-cultural level (the "Lower-Left quadrant"). See: Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything* (2000, Shambhala) and Don Beck, *Spiral Dynamics" Mastering Values, Leadership, and Change* (1996, Blackwell).

³⁹ Most quotes in the paragraphs about Integral Naked are taken from the web site www.integralnaked.org, unless otherwise indicated. Nonetheless, for ease of time, the archived conversations have been edited only to the degree to make them more enjoyable and easy to learn from.