

Kent Academic Repository

Full text document (pdf)

Citation for published version

Schlamm, Leon (2001) Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model: Identifying Alternative Soteriological Perspectives. *Religion*, 31 (1). pp. 19-39. ISSN 0048-721X.

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.1006/reli.2000.0306>

Link to record in KAR

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/11270/>

Document Version

UNSPECIFIED

Copyright & reuse

Content in the Kent Academic Repository is made available for research purposes. Unless otherwise stated all content is protected by copyright and in the absence of an open licence (eg Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher, author or other copyright holder.

Versions of research

The version in the Kent Academic Repository may differ from the final published version.

Users are advised to check <http://kar.kent.ac.uk> for the status of the paper. **Users should always cite the published version of record.**

Enquiries

For any further enquiries regarding the licence status of this document, please contact:

researchsupport@kent.ac.uk

If you believe this document infringes copyright then please contact the KAR admin team with the take-down information provided at <http://kar.kent.ac.uk/contact.html>

Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model: Identifying Alternative Soteriological Perspectives

Leon Schlamm

I identify two problematic strands of Ken Wilber's transpersonal theory. First, I question Wilber's claim that his *spectrum* model is supported by the materials of all the world's major mystical traditions. I argue that his integral, hierarchical perspective privileges some traditions but distorts others. Drawing heavily upon Andrew Rawlinson's recent, taxonomic study of mystical traditions, which identifies four authentic routes to spiritual emancipation (*Cool Structured*, *Cool Unstructured*, *Hot Structured* and *Hot Unstructured*), I argue that while Wilber's model, itself *Cool* (the source of spiritual liberation lies within oneself) and *Structured* (developmental, hierarchical), provides a valuable cartography of transpersonal structures and states of consciousness, it cannot adequately handle the materials of the alternative, soteriological paths of *Hot* traditions (emphasising the numinous, and as other than oneself) and of *Unstructured* traditions (affirming that there can be no gradual, or progressive, spiritual development at all). Second, and more cursorily, I argue that it is Wilber's *Cool Structured* perspective that informs his categorisation of Jung as an *elevationist*. I try to demonstrate that Jung's psychic model of the conjunction of opposites is a *Hot Structured* one, which provides an alternative, soteriological path for persons whose spiritual needs are different from those addressed by Wilber. _ 2001 Academic Press

Wilber

Ken Wilber is the most influential contemporary writer in the field of transpersonal psychology, having over the past two decades been widely acclaimed as its preeminent theoretician. Working self-consciously in the tradition of such systematic philosophers as Hegel, Schelling and more recently Habermas, he has presented his readers with a cartography of *the spectrum of consciousness* which, in spite of much elaboration on his original speculative model of the development of consciousness, has continued to be one of the defining features of his *integral psychology*. Drawing upon an impressive variety of sources from the world's mystical traditions (particularly Hindu and Buddhist contemplative traditions), developmental psychology, psychoanalysis, analytical psychology, humanistic psychology, philosophy, anthropology, biology and physics, Wilber has consistently argued that human consciousness possesses a hierarchical structure. According to Wilber, there are many different psychological and spiritual levels of development, and each level both integrates the properties and achievements of the lower level and transcends it. Identifying an underlying metaphysical pattern that integrates the natural and human sciences with the spiritual perspective of the perennial philosophy, Wilber introduces the concept of the *holon*, which is simultaneously both a whole (in relation to the parts that are at developmentally lower levels) and a part (of a greater whole that is at a higher developmental level). According to Wilber, all human experience, individual and collective, is evolving through a hierarchically organised great chain of holons, or 'Great Chain of Being', towards the self-realisation of spirit in non-dualistic mystical experience (see Rothberg 1998), although evolutionary fixation can occur at any developmental level.

It is this vision of *holarchical integration* and of the evolution of consciousness, including the correlation of ontogenetic with phylogenetic stages of development, which shapes Wilber's assessment of the relationship between psychological and spiritual

_ 2001 Academic Press

0048-721X/01/010019+21 \$35.00/0

development. Wilber identifies many different structures of consciousness: the prepersonal, prerational, preegoic (fulcrums 0 to 4: *primary matrix*; *sensoriphysical*; *phantasmicemotional*; *representational mind*; *rule/role* [concrete operational]), the personal, rational, egoic (fulcrums 5 and 6: *formal reflexive* [formal operational]; *centaur* [*vision logic*]), and the

transpersonal (or spiritual), transrational, transegoic (fulcrums 7 to 9: *psychic* [nature mysticism]; *subtle* [deity mysticism]; *causal* [formless mysticism]), beyond which lies the *non-dual* ground of all experience, of unmanifest formlessness and manifest form (often identified as level 10). Moreover, he argues that, by integrating the materials of Western depth psychology and developmental psychology, particularly Piaget, with those of the Hindu and Buddhist contemplative traditions, he can delineate the different developmental competences and pathologies of each level of the spectrum of consciousness.

Wilber claims that competing schools of psychotherapy and spiritual emancipation, with their different treatment modalities, address different levels of the spectrum and different developmental problems. Since depth psychology and developmental psychology address the prepersonal and the personal structures of consciousness, and since mystical traditions address the transpersonal levels, no school of psychotherapy or spiritual liberation is marginalised. Each is understood to convey partial and complementary truths about human consciousness (see [Cortright 1997](#)).

It is Wilber's claim that all types of psychotherapeutic and spiritual practice can be graded by being integrally embraced within the holarchical spectrum of consciousness which has provoked intense controversy among transpersonal psychologists. The issue at the heart of this controversy is Wilber's understanding of the role of the ego (the personal self) in transpersonal development. Wilber argues that the ego (fulcrum 5), with its capacity for detached witnessing of the conventional world, is not dissolved but preserved, and typically strengthened, by transpersonal structures (see [Wilber 2000](#), p. 91). Although exclusive identification of consciousness with the ego is transcended and thereby dissolved, during spiritual development, the ego, with its rational competences and its scientific world view, is included within, and utilised by, all transpersonal levels of consciousness. The acquisition of the ego, as well as modern rationality and science, should therefore be viewed not as an obstacle to spiritual development, not as the cause of alienation of consciousness from spirit, but as a significant spiritual achievement, as a necessary step towards spiritual maturity, a movement of spirit towards spirit. Accordingly, Wilber argues that the spiritual function of science and modern rationality is to strip us of our infantile and adolescent, prerational views of spirit, to dismantle the transitional, *archaic*, *magical* and *mythic* world views of the prerational or prepersonal fulcrums, in order to make room for the genuinely trans-rational insights of authentic mystical traditions. This critique by modernity of premodernity enables us to realise that mysticism is evolutionary and progressive, not devolutionary and regressive, and thus lies in our collective future, not in our collective past (see [Wilber 1991](#), p. 201).

Moreover, it is this linear model of psychological and spiritual development, and the pivotal role of the ego in spiritual transformation, which have led Wilber to another defining feature of his integral psychology: his persistent disjunction of spiritual evolution from psychological regression. He criticises many contemporary writers who confuse or equate spiritual development with regression, thereby obscuring the differences between prepersonal and transpersonal stages of development. Because prepersonal and transpersonal stages appear to share certain characteristics (e.g., the quality of fusion or union and the lack of a primary focus on rationality), these writers conflate them, thereby committing what Wilber calls the *pre/trans fallacy*.

20 L. Schlamm

The *pre/trans fallacy* can assume two forms. The first (ptf-1) claims that transpersonal, mystical experiences are nothing but a regression to prepersonal, infantile states. It is Freud and his followers who are charged with ptf-1, or the fallacy of *reductionism*. However, Wilber engages more passionately and persistently with ptf-2: the fallacy of *elevationism*. He argues that Jung and the Romantic movement and, more recently, much of New Age and countercultural spirituality are responsible for the elevation of prepersonal, infantile fusion states, in which a stable personal ego has not yet emerged, to the trans-egoic and trans-rational 'glory' of mystical union, in which the personal ego has already been transcended (see [Wilber 1991](#), p. 189). More specifically, Wilber

charges Jung with several kinds of elevationism, thereby leading to the misidentification of psychological regression with spiritual evolution: (i) the confusion of primary matrix (fulcrum 0) with causal level, formless mysticism (fulcrum 9); (ii) the confusion of magic (fulcrum 2) with psychic level, nature mysticism (fulcrum 7); (iii) the confusion of mythic images (fulcrum 3) with subtle level archetypes (fulcrum 8) (see [Wilber 1983](#), pp. 240–2).

During the past two decades, Wilber has repeatedly censured Jung for failing to adopt a linear, evolutionary perspective which differentiates between the ‘ape side’ and the ‘angel side’ of human nature, the prepersonal and the transpersonal levels of the collective unconscious. For Wilber, this elevationism is particularly evinced in Jung’s assumption that archetypes are image of instincts and in Jung’s failure to discriminate between experiences of prepersonal mythic images, which are more self-centric and narcissistic than egoic experiences, and those of transpersonally located archetypes. Wilber concludes that Jung’s archetypes are actually a pre/trans fallacy mixture of divine and primitive psychic contents, which ‘wobble between transrational glory and prerational chaos’ ([Wilber 1983](#), p. 243).

Among the growing number of Wilber’s critics, it is Michael Washburn and Stanislav Grof who have most robustly challenged Wilber’s claim that his linear model of spiritual evolution does not marginalise any school of psychotherapy or spiritual tradition. Washburn and Grof have formulated an alternative Jungian model of psychological and spiritual development which, while acknowledging Wilber’s distinction between prepersonal and transpersonal developmental levels, affirms that regression is a powerful tool for spiritual transformation. Washburn observes that it is the assumption that, for the ego, regression and spiritual evolution are movements necessarily unfolding in opposite directions which leads Wilber to rule out the possibility of any instrumental role for regression in spiritual life. In contrast to Wilber’s purely ascending, integral path to transcendence, Washburn identifies an alternative *spiralling* path of spiritual development, a path that leads the ego to return to repressed, preegoic, developmental expressions of the unconscious, or the *Dynamic Ground*, on its way to higher integration with trans-egoic expressions of those lost psychic potentials. This path of descent followed by ascent Washburn calls *regression in the service of transcendence* (see [Washburn 1998](#), pp. 68–71). Similarly, Grof, drawing on decades of clinical experience of nonordinary states of consciousness (NOSC) induced by LSD and more recently by holotropic breathing, argues that his observations of spiritual transformation, facilitated by intense regression to the *perinatal* unconscious (fulcrum 0), suggest that, contrary to Wilber, ‘spiritual evolution typically does not follow a direct linear trajectory from the centaur (fulcrum 6) to the subtle and causal levels, but involves a combined regressive and progressive movement of consciousness . . .’ ([Grof 1998](#), p. 113). For Grof, the potential for transpersonal awareness inherent in prepersonal structures (denied by Wilber) is demonstrated by the perinatal realm of the psyche, which provides ‘a natural

Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model 21

experiential interface’ between memories of biological birth and the spiritual domain, as well as by the peculiar mixture of regressive phenomena and transpersonal elements in psychotic (fulcrum 1) and mystical experiences. Accordingly, Grof concludes that the therapeutic process addresses the prepersonal, including the biographical, and the transpersonal bands of the spectrum of consciousness simultaneously rather than progressively and that it is impossible to delineate clearly between psychotherapy and spiritual development (see [Grof 1998](#), pp. 100–13).

Grof and Washburn, by formulating a Jungian model of transpersonal development, have objected not only to Wilber’s assumption that regression is always in the service of ego development and never of ego transcendence but also to his claim that his linear, evolutionary spectrum model is supported by the materials of all the world’s major mystical traditions. Washburn, for example, has criticised Wilber’s privileging of non-dualistic religious traditions (see [Washburn 1988](#), pp. 38–40; see also [Cortright](#)

1997), and Grof as well as many other writers has questioned Wilber's claim of a single invariant sequence of transpersonal development through fulcrums 7 to 9 (see Grof 1998; Cortright 1997; Kornfield and Rothberg 1998; McDonald-Smith and Rothberg 1998). Still, no transpersonal theorist has yet employed a taxonomy of all spiritual traditions to engage critically with Wilber's integral, hierarchical perspective. I introduce Andrew Rawlinson's recent taxonomic study of mystical traditions, which identifies four different paths to spiritual emancipation, to illustrate the scale of Wilber's misinterpretation of spiritual traditions not in conformity with his own soteriological perspective. Rawlinson's taxonomy of mystical traditions provides the foundation not only for the vindication of the Jungian model of transpersonal development of Washburn and Grof but also for the questioning of Wilber's claim to speak authoritatively for all transpersonal psychology.

Rawlinson's Taxonomy of Mystical Traditions

In *The Book of Enlightened Masters* (1997) Andrew Rawlinson presents a taxonomy of mystical traditions based on research on the variety of twentieth-century Western teachers in Eastern spiritual traditions. This taxonomy deserves the serious attention of all those engaged in transpersonal psychology, although his book contains no discussion of transpersonal psychology itself, or of any of the main schools of depth psychology. By training, Rawlinson is a phenomenologist of religion,¹ who has learned to live with the uncertainty of *not* adjudicating among inconsistent, ultimate truth claims and among alternative, soteriological perspectives. It is this training that informs the disarmingly simple observation, which introduces his account of alternative paths to spiritual emancipation: 'opposite truths apply to the human condition. The only option open to us, therefore, is to come to terms with ambivalence. . . . Opposites have to be embraced' (Rawlinson 1997, p. 97). What follows constitutes for Rawlinson simply an elaboration upon, and confirmation of, this judgment.

Rawlinson begins his account by identifying two pairs of polar concepts: *Hot* and *Cool* mystical traditions, and *Structured* and *Unstructured* traditions. He offers the following definitions:

Hot is that which is other than oneself; that which has its own life. It is not something that one has access to as of right. It is powerful and breath-taking, and is associated with revelation and grace. It is very similar to Otto's numinous.

Cool is the very essence of oneself; one need not go to another to find it. Hence one *does* have access to it as of right. It is quiet and still, and is associated with self-realisation.

22 L. Schlamm

The meaning of *Structured* is that there is an inherent order in the cosmos and therefore in the human condition. There is something to be discovered and there is a way of discovering it. A map is required to find the destination.

By contrast, *Unstructured* teachings say that there is no gap between the starting point and the finishing post. Method and goal are identical. We are not separate from reality/truth/God and so no map is required. Everything is available now and always has been. (Rawlinson 1997, pp. 98–9)

Rawlinson then argues that the two pairs of polar concepts, each connected by a straight line, intersect to form a cross and quadrant. The vertical line proceeds from *Hot* at the top to *Cool* at the bottom. The horizontal line progresses from *Structured* on the left to *Unstructured* on the right. The result of the intersection of lines is the creation of four different types of mystical traditions: *Hot Structured*, *Hot Unstructured*, *Cool Structured*, *Cool Unstructured* (see Rawlinson 1997, pp. 100–9). These types of mystical traditions are for Rawlinson all true because they provide equally effective vehicles for spiritual emancipation. This is the reason for Rawlinson's attribution of equal value to competing soteriological traditions and for his refusal to countenance any privileging of any particular spiritual perspective.

Before we turn to an examination of these kinds of mystical traditions, a caveat is necessary. Rawlinson's model is not a rigid and inflexible one, for he acknowledges and discusses many examples of teachers and traditions which cross several quadrants (two or even three) (see [Rawlinson 1997](#), p. 101). Indeed, the value of the model is that it can be used to help us to differentiate among an amazing variety of spiritual perspectives. Nevertheless, typically, the primary focus of individual teachers or traditions is located in one, or at most two, quadrants.

The originality of Rawlinson's quadrant model, presented in the following diagram, can be appreciated:²

Upper Left: Hot Structured Traditions

1. Summary: The cosmos is vast and inhabited by innumerable powerful beings; liberation consists in finding one's way through the labyrinth with the appropriate passwords. The teaching is never given all at once, but only when necessary and then only in cryptic form. This is typical of all forms of esotericism.
2. Characteristics: (a) initiatory knowledge (granted by another and may be disturbing); (b) hierarchical; (c) the exercise of will, which allows the practitioner to break through spiritual barriers in an ever-increasing series of leaps; (d) expansion away from a point; (e) *Hot* magic (necessary and powerful)—the manipulation of the laws of the cosmos in the service of self-transformation.
3. Further details: (a) Ontology: many powers/beings; (b) Cosmology: a vast labyrinth; (c) Anthropology: man contains all powers (the microcosm/macrocosm homology); (d) Soteriology: the great journey or initiatic adventure; (e) Consciousness: divine and hierarchical; (f) Spiritual Practice: a series of leaps/initiations—recreating the cosmic within oneself; (g) Teacher: magician/knows the secret; (h) Spiritual Transmission: by ordeal; (i) Nature of teaching: cryptic/esoteric; (j) Inner States: access to all levels, all powers; (k) Individual Spiritual Qualities: ecstatic, unpredictable; (l) Social Spiritual Qualities: a whirlwind of projects; (m) Traditional Way of Life: crucible/means of transformation; (n) Entering the Tradition: by unexpected encounter; (o) Realisation/Liberation: serving the cosmic purpose.
4. Advantages/Disadvantages: there is

plenty of help; the entire universe, from the colour of a rose to the celestial music of the archangels, is designed to aid the practitioner on the way (though some thicken the plot by saying that there are counterfeit designs as well); the task, however, is correspondingly awesome; the journey is demanding, even dangerous—this is not an adventure for the fainthearted.

5. Images: magician/gambler: jump.

6. Examples: Hindu Tantra, Vajrayana, the Siddha tradition, Vedic ritual tradition, Kabbalah, Hermeticism, Alchemy, Shamanism.

Upper Right: Hot Unstructured Traditions

1. Summary: There is a divine power, quite other than oneself, which encloses us and is the source of liberation. There is no teaching—only love and submission.
2. Characteristics: bliss, love, obedience, discipline, wisdom.
3. Further details: (a) Ontology: only God is real (exists) and He is unknowable; (b) Cosmology: the universe is God's creation/projection and is entirely dependent on him; (c) Anthropology: man is nothing before God; (d) acceptance of God's will; (e) Consciousness: divine and universal; (f) Spiritual Practice: submission; (g) Teacher: servant of God/embodiment of God; (h) Spiritual Transmission: a gift; (i) Nature of Teaching: only God; (j) Inner States: remembrance of God;
Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 23
- (k) Individual Spiritual Qualities: giving love and responding to the love of others; (l) Social Spiritual Qualities: serving the divine; (m) Traditional Way of Life: celebration of the divine; (n) Entering the Tradition: just ask for God (or His lovers); (o) Realisation/Liberation: to love and serve God.
4. Advantages/Disadvantages: we are always failing; but the solution to this failure is simply to ask the divine for assistance; the reason that asking is the solution is that the central truth of *Hot Unstructured* 'teachings' is that love is freely given to all who request it (or, in the *hottest* version of all, it is given to every being whether it is requested or

not).

5. Images: lover, martyr: submit.

6. Examples: *bhakti*, e.g., Chaitanya, Pure Land Buddhism, Sufism, Christian mysticism, e.g., St Teresa, St John of the Cross.

Lower Left: Cool Structured Traditions

1. Summary: Liberation is within oneself, but it must be uncovered by disciplined practice.
2. Characteristics: (a) awareness is dispassionate and part of oneself; (b) the path is very restrained, the method is ordered and gentle, the practitioner starts on p. 1 of the manual and works his way through to the end, and everything happens as it should in the fullness of time; (c) all that is required is constant effort; (d) concentration on a point; (e) at a certain point of spiritual development *Cool* magical powers (optional and peripheral) appear, but they are incidental to the aim of spiritual practice, which is balance and timing.
3. Further details: (a) Ontology: everything has its place, everything comes and goes; (b) Cosmology: a harmonious whole; (c) Anthropology: man is the centre of the universe; (d) Soteriology: clear awareness, non-entanglement; (e) Consciousness: natural and particularised; (f) Spiritual Practice: graduated and gentle; (g) Teacher: clear discriminator/guide; (h) Spiritual Transmission: learning how to use a map; (i) Nature of Teaching: open, complete, ordered; (j) Inner States: uncluttered insight; (k) Individual Spiritual Qualities: unpretentious, simple; (l) Social Spiritual Qualities: responding to the needs of beings; (m) Traditional Way of Life: organic, intricate; (n) Entering the Tradition: formal, public; (o) Realisation/Liberation: detachment brings freedom.
4. Advantages/Disadvantages: it is very easy to start and there is no disgrace in being a beginner; progress is slow and gentle, like a flower opening in the sun; the drawback is that it may take a very long time indeed—perhaps eons—to complete the journey and you have to take every step of it yourself.
5. Images: yogi, craftsman: work.

6. Examples: Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, Theravada Buddhism, Zen, early Vedanta [Upanishads], Samkhya, Aurobindo, Plotinus.

Lower Right: Cool Unstructured Traditions

1. Summary: One's own nature is liberation; everything else is illusion. The teaching is constantly given—the same truth over and over again—but no one understands.

2. Characteristics: being.

3. Further details: (a) Ontology: only the self is real, or reality is empty (sunya);

24 L. *Schlamm*

(b) Cosmology: illusion;

(c) Anthropology: man is identical with reality; (d) Soteriology: know yourself;

(e) Consciousness: natural and universal;

(f) Spiritual Practice: just realise;

(g) Teacher: embodies truth; (h) Spiritual Transmission: none—truth already exists;

(i) Nature of Teaching: there is no teaching; (j) Inner States: oneness;

(k) Individual Spiritual Qualities: unruffled calm; (l) Social Spiritual

Qualities: let things be; (m) Traditional Way of Life: none; (n) Entering the

Tradition: there is no tradition, the Self already exists; (o) Realisation/Liberation: the Self is already complete.

4. Advantages/Disadvantages: the truth is simple, but the drawback is that it is very elusive; hence the practitioner (if that is the right word, since there really cannot be practice on an *Unstructured* 'path') is constantly failing; but that does not matter because truth is ours as of right, so we can always try again in the very next moment; nothing has to be set up—just by being alive, we are on the 'path'.

5. Images: sage, hermit: let go.

6. Examples: Advaita Vedanta, Ramana Maharshi, Dzogchen, Mahamudra, Zen, Taoism, Madhyamika. (Rawlinson 1997, pp. 100–18).

This taxonomy is not only broader than any to date in the literature on mysticism but also far more detailed. Prior taxonomies have tended to focus too narrowly on the content of mystical experience and have avoided engagement with many of the other dimensions of mystical traditions referred to by Rawlinson (see, for example, Forman 1999; Wainwright 1981; Zaehner 1961; Stace 1960). Rawlinson does not discuss any *Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 25* taxonomic literature, but it is clear that his distinction between *Hot Unstructured* and *Cool*

traditions is supported by much twentieth-century research on theistic and non-dualistic mystical traditions (see, for example, Pike 1992; Wainwright 1981; Berger 1981; Staal 1975; Zaehner 1961; Zaehner 1969; Smart 1958; Otto 1932). However, Rawlinson's distinction between *Structured* and *Unstructured* traditions has rarely been acknowledged by taxonomers of mysticism (see Staal 1975), and it is this distinction which provides the foundation for a more comprehensive taxonomy than has been available. In particular, it enables Rawlinson to compare *Hot Structured* traditions (discussed by, among others, Silburn 1988; Samuel 1993; White 1996; Miller 1985), which are typically ignored by taxonomers of mysticism (as exceptions, see Feuerstein 1991; Staal 1975), with traditions of the other three quadrants.

The ensuing discussion of Rawlinson's taxonomy of mystical traditions will begin with an examination of the *Cool Structured* traditions of the lower left quadrant because Wilber's spectrum model, and particularly his claim that progress through the transpersonal levels or fulcrums of consciousness is sequential and unalterable (from psychic to subtle to causal to non-dual), is essentially the product of a *Cool Structured* spiritual perspective. This perspective distorts, to a lesser or greater degree, his interpretation of the religious traditions of the other three quadrants. I will then turn to the *Cool Unstructured* traditions of the lower right quadrant, with which Wilber has repeatedly identified himself, in order to demonstrate that he tends to superimpose upon them *Cool Structured* features which in fact do not belong to them. Then turning to what are, for Wilber, the much more problematic *Hot* traditions, because they evince an interest in regression which can have no spiritual function in *Cool Structured* traditions, I will first consider the *Hot Unstructured* traditions of the upper right quadrant, which are furthest removed from Wilber's own spiritual perspective. Then I will examine the *Hot Structured* traditions of the upper left quadrant, with which, as I will illustrate, Wilber has an ambiguous relationship. I will argue that it is essential to identify several strands of this relationship if we are to understand fully the significance of his charge against Jung of elevationism.

Before embarking upon this discussion, I want to summarise some of the most important conclusions Rawlinson draws from his model and the research which supports it:

- (i) The model shows that the very notion of what a teaching is, is variable.
- (ii) *Cool* teachings . . . are available, whereas . . . *Hot* teachings are mysterious. This is because teachings, according to the *Cool* ideal, are our right, whereas the *Hot* ideal is that they are a gift. (Rawlinson 1997, p. 108)
- (iii) *Unstructured* traditions tend to collapse all distinctions. Hence all the dimensions, including the two 'ends'—entering the tradition and realisation/liberation—are often expressed in practically the same terms. In *Hot Unstructured* traditions, for example, . . . the devotee ends up at the same point that he or she started from . . . there are no distinctions in love. (Rawlinson 1997, pp. 111–2)
- (iv) The quadrants adjacent to each other complement each other: *Hot Structured* and *Unstructured*; *Cool Structured* and *Unstructured*; *Hot* and *Cool Structured*; *Hot* and *Cool Unstructured*. (Rawlinson 1997, p. 105)
- (v) The opposite corners of the model have nothing in common (which is to say that they will find great difficulty in communicating with, or even understanding, each other): the magician (*Hot Structured*) regards the hermit (*Cool Unstructured*) as a stick-in-the-mud, someone who avoids life and its challenges, while the hermit

26 L. Schlamm

sees the magician as at best all show and flummery, and at worst as positively dangerous. The yogi (*Cool Structured*) looks upon the martyr (*Hot Unstructured*) as someone with more conviction than sense; the lover has no doubt that the craftsman has missed the point *completely*. Similarly, JUMP! (*Hot Structured*) is the exact opposite of LET GO! (*Cool Unstructured*); and the same is true of the other two corners: SUBMIT! (*Hot Unstructured*) and WORK! (*Cool Structured*).

(Rawlinson 1997, p. 107)

We are now in a position to assess Wilber's relationship to each of Rawlinson's four quadrants.

Cool Structured Traditions

Rawlinson characterises *Cool Structured* traditions as those which 'advocate clear-cut distinctions that are public and subject to discussion' (Rawlinson 1997, p. 135). He also argues that such 'traditions tend to be the ones that are most easily accepted in our culture—at least by the intelligentsia' because they resonate with scientific rationalism (Rawlinson 1997, p. 136). Accordingly, they emphasise the value of analysis and regard any spiritual traditions 'not readily susceptible to *Cool Structured* analysis (and analysis is itself a *Cool Structured* notion) . . . as suspect', meaning 'both not soundly established and worthy of suspicion' (Rawlinson 1997, p. 136). Wilber has frequently argued that there is a consensus among the adepts of different mystical traditions which can be likened to the consensus to be found among scientists. He repeatedly emphasises the empirical, testable nature of transpersonal states and stages, or transitional and basic structures. Roger Walsh has recently summarised Wilber's position:

For Wilber, validity claims for transpersonal experiences, states and stages are in essence no different from those in other realms. In any realm, testing knowledge claims involves three steps: injunction, observation and confirmation. One is first given an injunction by those familiar with the phenomenon as to how to create the conditions in which to observe it; one then observes, and then tests one's observation against the observations of adequately developed and trained individuals. Contemplative paths designed to induce transpersonal experiences and stages possess all these three strands of valid knowledge accumulation and therefore are open to the falsifiability criteria of all genuine knowledge. That is, they set out the injunctions to practice this discipline; then you can carefully observe your own experience, and finally test your observations against those of people at similar or more advanced stages. (Walsh 1998, p. 41)

Moreover, Wilber contrasts the transpersonal states and stages of mystical or contemplative traditions with the prepersonal states and stages of mythological traditions (see Wilber 1999, p. 117; 1997, pp. 264–5; 1995, pp. 246–9; 1991, p. 201; 1983, p. 243), but this is just what *Cool Structured* traditions themselves do. It is a defining feature of these traditions to separate themselves from the mythology of their surrounding cultures. Patanjali as well as Theravada and Zen Buddhism demonstrates this characteristic. Finally, Wilber's spiritual perspective is defined by his understanding of the nature of spiritual transmission. His sequential model of transpersonal development suggests that for him learning how to use a map is essential to distinguishing the psychic, subtle, causal and non-dualistic stages. In this way, an individual can establish clearly at any time a particular relationship to the spiritual path and goal. Spiritual knowledge in these traditions requires precise discrimination in order to orient the individual.

Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 27

These observations should not, however, lead us to the conclusion that Wilber's spiritual perspective is exclusively *Cool Structured*. *Cool Structured* traditions tend to be conservative, and Wilber's insistence that the great mystical traditions of the past need to be supplemented by the Western intellectual traditions of depth psychology and developmental psychology if they are to survive (see Wilber 1999, pp. 118–20) certainly shows that Wilber does not fear change. This radical aspect of his thinking does suggest a *Hot* dimension of his spiritual perspective perhaps influenced by the Tibetan Vajrayana tradition, which constantly encourages innovation and with which Wilber has been so closely associated. Perhaps the most interesting question that Wilber's model 3, with its two dozen developmental lines (see Wilber 1997, pp. 212–23), raises is: what is the nature of enlightenment? If development does not cease after enlightenment, then what is the nature of this post-enlightenment development? There has been a growing

interest in this question during the last decade (see, for example, Feuerstein 1991; Cohen 1992), and much further research is needed.

Cool Unstructured Traditions

As is well known, Wilber has identified himself with *Cool Unstructured* traditions throughout his writing career. In *Sex, Ecology and Spirituality* (1995), for example, he argues that Nagarjuna in the East and Plotinus in the West provided spiritual inspiration for all later generations of mystics and contemplatives because they discovered the possibility of uniting spiritual ascent with spiritual descent, *Reflux* with *Efflux*, *Eros* with *Agape* in non-duality (see Wilber 1995, pp. 638–9),³ or ‘One Taste’. Wilber has always been well disposed to what he has characterised as the ‘always already’ teachings⁴ of *Cool Unstructured* traditions.

The problem with Wilber’s account of these spiritual traditions is that he has given them a *Cool Structured* interpretation by arguing that there is *always* sequential progression towards the non-dualistic, from psychic to subtle to causal to non-dualistic. In making this claim, he has conflated two distinct kinds of mystical tradition and has thereby distorted *Cool Unstructured* traditions. Wilber continues to insist on a *Cool Structured* interpretation of *Cool Unstructured* traditions even in *OneTaste* (1999). He argues that Ramana Maharshi’s awakening to non-duality was ‘a three day ordeal, in which he passed through *savikalpa samadhi* (psychic and subtle forms) and *nirvikalpa* and *jnana samadhi* (causal formlessness), only then to awaken to *sahaja* (pure one taste or non-dual suchness)’ (Wilber 1999, p. 286). But the genesis of Ramana Maharshi’s own experience of non-duality is irrelevant for an estimation of the nature of his teaching. His teaching was that the practice of meditation is not necessary for the attainment of Self-realisation. Self-enquiry, or the path of ‘attention to the ‘I’ ’ is the direct path, he insisted. ‘All others are indirect ways’ (Godman 1985, p. 115). At best, meditation practices and experiences may enable one to begin Self-enquiry. At worst, they are a distraction that prevents Self-enquiry (see Godman 1985, pp. 115–23). Moreover, if there is any doubt about Wilber’s distortion of *Cool Unstructured* traditions, one has only to turn to Sankara, the founder of Ramana Maharshi’s Advaita Vedanta tradition, who insisted that neither liberation nor the knowledge that leads to it admit any degrees or gradations (see Nelson 1996, p. 20). As Sankara observes in his commentary on the *Brahma Sutra*, ‘There cannot be in knowledge any distinction characterised by superiority as opposed to inferiority because that which is inferior is not knowledge at all’ (*Brahmasutra with Sankarabhasya* 3. 4. 52, cited Nelson 1996, p. 20). This uncompromising position is absolutely indifferent not only to Wilber’s stages of transpersonal development but also to his more general evolutionary theory of

28 L. Schlamm

phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, since from the perspective of *Cool Unstructured* traditions there is never any change and therefore any history at all! Moreover, those traditions are bound to regard Wilber’s recent acknowledgment of the need to integrate their teachings with psychotherapy and recent attention to some two dozen lines of development as evidence that he has not understood them since there is nothing outside these teachings worthy of attention. *Cool Unstructured* traditions, because of their definition of what the nature of a spiritual teaching is, must dismiss Wilber’s integration of One Taste philosophy and spiritual practice with psychotherapy as a distortion of that teaching. Indeed, the discoveries of twentieth-century Western depth psychology are bound to be greeted by them with indifference.⁵

Hot Unstructured Traditions

When we turn our attention away from *Cool* traditions to *Hot* traditions, with their orientation towards what Rudolf Otto identified as the ‘wholly other’ nature of the numinous (see Otto 1923), we enter spiritual territory unfamiliar to *Cool Structured*

traditions and, to a large extent, to Wilber. For this reason Wilber has difficulty incorporating materials from these traditions into his spectrum model and does so only by distorting them. The result is not only that these traditions are presented as incompletely developed, as failing to reach the causal and the non-dualistic stages of development of *Cool* traditions, but also that the distinctive voices of these traditions, with their accompanying metaphysical world views and definitions of what a spiritual teaching is, are to some degree silenced.

As Rawlinson's quadrant model reveals, Wilber's *Cool Structured* perspective, with its emphasis on analysis and discrimination, is further removed from *Hot Unstructured* than from *Hot Structured* traditions. Wilber's distance from *Hot Unstructured* traditions is illustrated by some of the defining features of these traditions, which are antipathetic to Wilber's spiritual perspective: there is only love and submission, and there are no distinctions in love; God alone exists and He is unknowable; all beings are entirely dependent on Him; man is nothing before God; God's love is a gift and a mystery, not a right. Wilber's inability to handle these features of *Hot Unstructured* traditions has led him to avoid sustained discussion of Sufism, Pure Land Buddhism and Hindu *bhakti*. Still, his failure to discuss *bhakti* in any systematic way is surprising, given the persistent claim of later Indian spiritual writings, originating in the *Bhagavad Gita*, that *bhakti* and *jnana* are interdependent and that each can be reached by means of the other.⁶ Nevertheless, Wilber does display considerable interest in Christian mysticism, and I take his recent discussion of St Teresa of Avila in *Sex, Ecology and Spirituality* (see [Wilber 1995](#), pp. 293–301, 617–8) to illustrate, with the assistance of Evelyn Underhill's seminal monograph on *Mysticism* (1961), how he misinterprets *The Interior Castle* and thereby misunderstands the purpose of most Western Christian mystical literature. Wilber begins his account of St Teresa's inner life by leading his readers through the seven mansions of the soul with sensitivity and passion. He is clearly impressed by Teresa's experiences of 'cessation' and 'absorption', when the soul is united with God, as well as her illuminations, her raptures, her dark ecstasies and her account of the Dark Night of the Soul. He particularly applauds Teresa's 'exquisite and precise discriminative awareness' that enables her to distinguish between the transpersonal pathologies or agonies of the soul and emotional problems which have their source in 'diseased' 'fancy' and 'imagination', which Wilber identifies with the prepersonal fulcrums 1, 2 and 3 (see [Wilber 1995](#), p. 298).

Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 29

However, Wilber locates her different spiritual experiences within the different transpersonal stages or fulcrums of his spectrum of consciousness. He argues that her raptures and illuminations can be located in the psychic and low subtle stages (see [Wilber 1995](#), pp. 296, 618) and that her experience of the union of her complete soul with God can be placed in the high subtle stage (with intimations of low causal) (see [Wilber 1995](#), pp. 297, 618). Teresa's experiences of 'cessation' and 'absorption' he equates with conditional *nirvikalpa samadhi*, or formless awareness not yet fully established, since her experiences were transitory (anything from half an hour to a few days) (see [Wilber 1995](#), pp. 295, 617–8). The function of these experiences was merely to trigger development through the psychic and subtle stages (see [Wilber 1995](#), p. 618). Thus Teresa was never able to transcend the subtle dualism of God and soul and to identify herself with pure causal Godhead, as Eckhart was able to do (see [Wilber 1995](#), pp. 301, 618), in spite of the fact that, as Wilber himself records, Teresa reports that at the culmination of the spiritual process, 'the little butterfly (the soul) dies and with greatest joy, because Christ is now its life' ([Wilber 1995](#), p. 301). What Wilber has done is to superimpose his developmental model on to Teresa's journey through the seven mansions and has thereby distorted both the texture and the content of her spiritual testimony.

Wilber's distortion of Teresa's testimony is illustrated by his assumption, informed by Mahayana Buddhist teachings about the *sambhogakaya*, that in subtle level or deity mysticism there is a union of the soul with its *own* 'Archetypal Form', 'deepest

Structure', God, *saguna brahman* (see Wilber 1996, p. 211; 1999, p. 157). Similarly, he expresses approval for petitionary prayer (to Jesus, Mary, Kwannon, Allah, etc.) when the mystic is suffering from the profound despair of the Dark Night of the Soul because such prayer is to one's *own* higher 'Archetype' (see Wilber 1986, p. 140). For Teresa, however, God is *not* her soul's *own* higher Archetype but rather, in Otto's words, 'wholly other' to her soul. Every spiritual experience, even 'the union of the whole soul with God', even the Spiritual Marriage of the seventh mansion, is a favour, a blessing, a gift, contingent on the will of God. Thus Teresa's dualism persists until the soul dies and Christ becomes its life.

Wilber's *Cool Structured* treatment of the Dark Night of the Soul leads to an even more significant distortion of Teresa's testimony. He argues in his earlier essay 'The Spectrum of Psychopathology' (1986) and in *Sex, Ecology and Spirituality* (1995) that the Dark Night of the Soul is a psychopathology or disorder belonging to the psychic stage of development,⁷ and he defines it as a profound depression in response to God's abandonment of the soul (see Wilber 1986, p. 121; 1995, p. 296). 'The Dark Night', he says, 'occurs in that period *after* one has tasted Universal Being, but before one is established in it, for one has now seen Paradise . . . and seen it fade' (Wilber 1995, p. 296).

There are three reasons that Wilber's *Cool Structured* account of the Dark Night of the Soul is questionable. First, his description of it is inadequate. Second, his definition of its function as a psychopathology or disorder is suspect. Third, his location of it at the psychic rather than the subtle level is mistaken. I turn first to his incomplete description. Underhill demonstrates that the experience of the 'Absence of God' is only one aspect or expression of the state of the Dark Night of the Soul. Among the many other experiences produced by this multifaceted state are the following: (a) psychic fatigue in reaction to the strain of mystical lucidity; (b) mental chaos; (c) intellectual impotence; (d) loss of volition; (e) emotional chaos; (f) loss of self-control; (g) self-naughting; (h) spiritual poverty; (i) acute sense of sin or imperfection; (j) the pain of God, or dark ecstasy (see Underhill 1961, pp. 380–412).

30 *L. Schlamm*

From this description, as well as from Underhill's insistence that the purpose of the state of the Dark Night of the Soul is the completion of the purification of the self begun in the earlier spiritual stage of purgation (see Underhill 1961, p. 395), it is clear that the Dark Night of the Soul is not a pathology or disorder of another spiritual stage of development (the psychic), as Wilber argues,⁸ but itself a separate stage of spiritual development which, she suggests, 'normally intervenes between the Illuminative and the Unitive Life' (Underhill 1961, p. 388; see also p. 381), that is, between the low and the high subtle levels of Wilber's spectrum model (see Wilber 1995, pp. 296, 297, 618). From Wilber's perspective, the self or self-system cannot establish itself permanently at the subtle level prior to the Dark Night of the Soul, but then the spiritual experience of Christian mystics does not conform to *Cool Structured* rules. As Underhill's account demonstrates, the Illuminative Life is an established stage of spiritual development, the loss of which, together with the regression to lower spiritual and psychological levels which accompanies it, is more devastating than Wilber can imagine.⁹ And what is the goal towards which this terrible path of purification of the Dark Night of the Soul leads? In contrast to Wilber's *Cool Structured* perspective, in which the mystic integrates ever more competencies and experiences ever greater empowerment, as the mystic progresses from the psychic to subtle to causal to non-dualistic levels of spiritual attainment, the Christian mystic experiences ultimate disempowerment, in Underhill's words, 'self-naughting' (Underhill 1961, pp. 401, 412), in order to eliminate any lingering residue within the soul of desire for personal spiritual satisfaction which itself prevents its union with God (see Underhill 1961, p. 395).

Hot Structured Traditions

Wilber's relationship to *Hot Structured* traditions is curious. On the one hand he persistently celebrates Vajrayana, and far less frequently Kabbalah, as mystical traditions capable of reaching beyond the psychic and subtle to the causal and non-dual levels of spiritual attainment. On the other hand he insists that Hindu Tantra (Kundalini Yoga) and Shamanism are psychic and subtle paths of spiritual development (see Wilber 1995, pp. 572–3, 608).¹⁰ While impressed by the somatically based, ecstatic experiences of yogis and shamans (often accompanied by extraordinary, paranormal powers over the laws of time and space) of psychic level mysticism, he regards them as only the expression of an instrumental, transitional phase of spiritual development, to be passed through as quickly as possible, rather than, as they are typically viewed by *Hot Structured* traditions themselves, as of central, if not always of ultimate, concern.¹¹ Wilber's relative lack of interest in the somatically based mysticism of *Hot Structured* traditions is, I suggest, symptomatic of a more pervasive discomfort with many other features of those traditions,¹² which are irreconcilable with his *Cool Structured* perspective.

Among the features of these traditions, which are furthest removed from Wilber's spiritual orientation, are the following: (a) esoteric, cryptic, disturbing, initiatory knowledge, revealed (granted) piecemeal, often miraculously (see Rawlinson 1997, pp. 106, 114, 129), which is in sharp contrast to the openness or transparency of the knowledge revealed by *Cool Structured* traditions; (b) the emphasis on ecstasy rather than on enstasy, and the tendency to attract unpredictable, shape-changing, 'crazy wisdom' teachers (see Rawlinson 1997, pp. 114, 128, 131; see also Feuerstein 1991), who require of practitioners the ability to make connections, even jumps, across considerable gaps (see Rawlinson 1997, p. 136); (c) most significantly, the microcosm/macrocosm homology (based upon the image of the human body) and the emphasis on *Hot* magic: *Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 31*

the manipulation of the laws of the cosmos in the service of self-transformation (see Rawlinson 1997, p. 106). Clearly, these traditions espouse a magical world view, concerned with the recreation of the cosmic in oneself (see Rawlinson 1997, p. 114), which explicitly conjoins prerational fulcrum 2 (phantasmic-emotional, that is, Bodyego, or typhon, and Freud's magical, primary process) (see Wilber 1983, p. 240; 1986, p. 69; 1996, p. 173)¹³ with trans-rational fulcrum 7 (the psychic level).¹⁴ In other words, these traditions are riddled with pre/trans fallacies, specifically of the ptf-2 form of elevationism. Since they encourage what Michael Washburn has called 're-encounter with nonegoic potentials (in retarded, "pre-" form)' (Washburn 1988, p. 36), they are irreconcilable with Wilber's developmental model and therefore belong to our collective past, not to our collective future (see Wilber 1991, p. 201; 1997, p. 63). For Wilber, the gradual spiritual evolution of millennia of human history has enabled us to transcend their spiritually limited and imprisoning world views.

However, there is something curious, even confusing, about this position, given Wilber's close association with the non-dualistic teachings of the Tibetan Vajrayana tradition. The inconsistency here, however, is apparent rather than real because, as Rawlinson observes, '*Hot* traditions can refer to a lower-order truth in *Cool* terms' (Rawlinson 1997, p. 115). Wilber is able to present the Tibetan Vajrayana tradition in *Cool Structured* terms because he focuses his attention on its *Cool*, monastic, *sangha* values and links these with the *Cool Unstructured* teachings of Dzogchen at the pinnacle of the tradition. But what he does not discuss is the *Hot Structured* magical/supernatural material intervening between the beginning and the culmination of the tradition—for example, its interest in 'the transmission of power, often in unexpected ways, from a great number of non-physical beings, ranging from local 'spirits' to celestial Bodhisattvas, and utterly dependent upon its hierarchy of *tulkus* for its continuity' (Rawlinson 1997, pp. 116–7).

I want to conclude this discussion of *Hot Structured* traditions by offering another example of how Wilber reinterprets Tibetan Vajrayana teachings in *Cool Structured*

terms. He observes in *One Taste* (1999) that ‘according to Tantra, . . . even the worst sin contains, hidden in its depths, the radiance of its own wisdom and salvation. In the centre of anger is clarity; in the middle of lust is compassion; in the heart of fear is freedom. It all (rests) on a simple principle: the higher transcends and includes the lower, not transcends and denies it’ (Wilber 1999, pp. 135–6). Notice the order: the higher *first* transcends and *then* includes the lower rather than the higher first including, then transcending, the lower. According to Wilber’s *Cool Structured* model of spiritual development, the self or self-system must first separate itself from, for example, anger, by identifying itself with the higher witness which then includes that anger, by recognising its source in itself. Transformation of that anger into clarity then follows automatically by the higher spiritual competence acting on the lower one. It is the spirit’s ‘telic pull’, its ascending Eros, which effects any transformation of pathology from above (see Wilber 1995, p. 522).

Now let us compare this treatment of anger with that of Chogyam Trungpa:

The neurotic aspect (that is *samsara*) is the counterpart of wisdom (that is *nirvana*), so you cannot have one without the other. In the ideal case, when enlightenment is attained, the neuroses are still there, but they have become immense energy. . . . You have to have a harmonious relationship to your energy, to be completely in your own energy.

Q: So in the meantime while we are trying to make the relationship, do we just sit with anger if it comes up?

32 L. Schlamm

A: Not necessarily. The question is whether the anger is part of you or something separate. You have to make a greater connection between the anger and yourself. So even just sitting with it is not enough. It could still be like a bad marriage where there is no relationship. Emotions are part of you, your limbs. If you don’t have energy or emotion, there is no movement, no way to put things into effect. You have to regard emotions as part of you to begin with. (Trungpa 1979, pp. 193–4)

It is clear from these observations that whereas Chogyam Trungpa’s approach to anger and all other defilements is non-dualistic,¹⁵ Wilber’s approach is dualistic.¹⁶ Wilber offers his readers a dualistic path towards a non-dualistic, soteriological goal.¹⁷

Jung’s Elevationism

Several conclusions emerge from this examination of Rawlinson’s four quadrants and of Wilber’s relationship to them. First, there is an abyss separating *Hot* from *Cool* traditions, which is particularly evinced by their contrasting judgments on the relationship between spirit and psyche. Whereas *Cool* traditions discriminate between prepersonal, psychological experiences and transpersonal, spiritual experiences and stages of consciousness and regard the pursuit of the prepersonal as obstructive or at best irrelevant to the attainment of the transpersonal, *Hot* traditions tend to interpret prepersonal, psychological experiences teleologically, as an expression of transpersonal, spiritual development, either because they are perceived to be a gift from God (*Hot Unstructured* traditions) or because they possess a *Hot*, magical function of transformation of the self and the cosmos, illustrating the mysterious, microcosm/macrocosm homology (*Hot Structured* traditions). Clearly, Wilber’s charge against Jung of elevationism is informed by his *Cool Structured* perspective, which separates psychological from spiritual development through some two dozen developmental lines. Yet equally clearly, Jung’s psychic model of individuation, which conjoins rather than disjoins prepersonal and transpersonal development and experience, belongs in Rawlinson’s quadrant of *Hot Structured* traditions.

Jung does not, as both Wilber and the traditionalists charge (see Burckhardt 1974), confuse prepersonal and transpersonal development and experience and is therefore not an elevationist but rather is a ‘conjunctionist’. His emphasis on the *coniunctio oppositorum*, which lies at the heart of his spiralling, developmental model, provides evidence not for his prerational confusion but for his conviction that continuous examination of the

teleological relationship between ‘pre-’ and ‘trans-’ states and structures is essential for spiritual transformation.¹⁸ Accordingly, Jung has created a secular form of *Hot Structured* path to spiritual transformation, which, like other *Hot Structured* traditions, does not resist regression in the service of transcendence.

Among the most significant features of Jung’s *Hot Structured* teachings are the following: (a) archetypal images are numinous and ‘wholly other’ (having their own life) *to the ego*; (b) cryptic, initiatory knowledge is granted by these inner images, in Jung’s case by Elijah and Philemon; (c) the inner cosmos is a labyrinth, and liberation from the powers/beings in it, created by the archetypes, is effected by images which function as esoteric passwords; (d) expansion away from a point is triggered by the practice of active imagination, producing leaps in understanding; (e) the danger of the journey towards individuation is psychosis; and (f) both the withdrawal of psychic projections from the world and the experience of synchronistic links between inner and outer events serve the cosmic purpose. Given the enormous influence of alchemy and Hermeticism on Jung’s work, his intimate relationship to the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century

Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model 33

Western occult revival (see [Webb 1981](#)), his passion for mythology, and his reputation among his disciples as a shaman (see [Sandner and Wong 1997](#)), Jung surely belongs in Rawlinson’s quadrant of *Hot Structured* traditions. Any claim that the path towards individuation is spiritually incomplete, or even wholly mistaken, can thus only be substantiated by other *Hot Structured* traditions. Moreover, the recent, heated exchange between Wilber on the one hand and Grof and Washburn on the other about elevationism and the value of regression in the service of spiritual development (see [Grof 1998](#); [Washburn 1998](#); [Wilber 1998](#)) does not trace its provenance merely to the origins of depth psychology in the West but goes much further back in history, in fact millennia rather than centuries, and most transparently in India.

The second conclusion which emerges is that no model of spiritual development can be privileged over others. This position does not mean, as Wilber claims, that spirit has been blinded by relativism, or by what he calls ‘aperspectival madness’ (see [Wilber 1996](#), pp. 192–3). It means that we should recognise the variety of soteriological paths chosen by spirit to facilitate its revelation. Each model of spiritual development has strengths and weaknesses, and the variety of spiritual perspectives and traditions is itself testimony to the variety of spiritual needs which have always existed and which are now especially apparent in the West. If this conclusion is accepted, then it is incumbent on us to acknowledge the authority of Wilber’s transcendence and integration model of spiritual development, which has a long history of success extending back for millennia. At the same time we should be conducting research into how beneficial his *Cool Structured* perspective is for the West today in the light of the mind-body split (acknowledged by Wilber as the ‘European dissociation’) (see [Wilber 1981](#), pp. 191–200, 262–5; 1995, pp. 222–3) which has persisted throughout the history of Christianity.

Research may well confirm what Jung already suspected in the 1930s: that because the mind-body split of the West is unknown in India, it provides much more fertile ground for *Cool Structured* traditions (see [Schlamm 1998](#)). Indeed, in spite of Jung’s limited understanding of Indian spirituality, his observation that prepersonal, instinctual, psychic tendencies can only be transcended in India because they are not subjected to constant repression, as they are in the West, is sound. It is for this reason that I believe that the West today is in greater need of *Hot Structured* traditions, which focus attention on mind-body-spirit integration, than of *Cool Structured* soteriological paths. In my view, Wilber’s attempt to address the problem of the Western mindbody split by integrating *Cool* traditions with contemporary depth psychological practice is misguided because, for the most part, depth psychology is not transpersonally oriented.

Moreover, Wilber can contribute towards research on the Western mind-body split by responding to Washburn’s recent question concerning the centaur (fulcrum 6), which unites the mind with the body, the noosphere with the biosphere. Is it a stage

of development belonging to humankind generally or to Europeans exclusively? Washburn argues that the centaur's function, to integrate alienated or repressed, typhonic or biospheric levels of development, is inconsistent with Wilber's claim that normal, holarchical development includes rather than excludes lower structures or levels at each stage. Furthermore, he observes that Wilber has not made clear whether he regards the tendency of the mental ego towards dissociation from typhonic experience as the rule or the exception. If non-Western persons do not succumb to the mind-body split of the West, they do not need to achieve centauric mind-body integration (see Washburn 1998, pp. 71–7). Wilber, in his response to Washburn in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue* (1998), has failed to address these issues (see Wilber 1998, pp. 314–9).

34 L. Schlamm

The third conclusion which emerges from our discussion of Rawlinson's quadrant model is that just as Wilber can offer a *Cool Structured* rebuttal of Jung's psychic model, so Jung can offer his own *Hot Structured* response to Wilber's spectrum model. This is how I imagine it would be formulated, if Jung were alive today. Wilber's spirit possesses no shadow and has been dissociated from instinct.¹⁹ The prepersonal fulcrums, transitional as well as basic structures, are the shadow of the transpersonal ones (the alchemical lead which must be transformed into gold) and need to be reintegrated with them, if pneumatic dissociation and dualism are to be avoided. Clearly, Wilber has failed to acknowledge the potential of prepersonal structures to fuel spiritual development, as Chogyam Trungpa's observations about defilements have also demonstrated. Moreover, it is through the experience of *enantiodromia*—that everything that exists within consciousness turns into its opposite²⁰—that we discover that the more spiritual light we experience, the more we are confronted by our own darkness,²¹ which may wreak havoc on us as well as on others if it is unconsciously projected rather than contained and transformed by the burning, sealed, alchemical retort of consciousness. It is the uncomfortable confrontation with the constant interplay of opposites within the crucible of consciousness which reveals that the 'ape' and the 'angel' in us can enter into a mutually enriching relationship and that numinous archetypes do indeed 'wobble', but teleologically, 'between transrational glory and prerational chaos' (see Wilber 1983, p. 243).

Notes

1 For an accessible introduction to the phenomenology of religion, see Sharpe 1975, ch. 10.

2 I have added the bracketed mystical traditions, which are not referred to by Rawlinson.

3 See Wilber 1995, pp. 332–44, 608–9, 631–7, for his sustained discussion of the revolutionary legacy to the West of Plotinus. It should be noted that Plotinus, unlike Nagarjuna, is a *Cool Structured*, not *Cool Unstructured*, teacher.

4 However, Wilber is critical of those in the state of One Taste, who lose all motivation to eliminate deep and painful neuroses because they are no longer identified with the psyche and the body. He argues that this attitude is bound to produce messages of liberation distorted by neurosis, which therefore cannot be heard. In order to honour the Bodhisattva vow to communicate One Taste to sentient beings in a way that can liberate all, the teachings of the One Taste schools need to be complemented with attention to the lower stages of development, including psychotherapy, diet and exercise, relationships, and livelihood: see Wilber 1999, pp. 138–9.

5 For the claim that, because all of the great mystical traditions of the past have little understanding of the prerational levels of development investigated by Western developmental psychology, they are 'open to massive pre/trans fallacies', see Wilber 1999, p. 118.

6 See *Bhagavad Gita* XVIII. 54f. and *Bhagavata-Purana* VI. 9. 47. Ramakrishna's spirituality provides a particularly vivid example of the intimate relationship between gnosis and devotion, evinced by much of later Hindu tradition. For further discussion of the interdependence between trans-rational, mystical experience and what Wilber regards as pre-rational, devotional experience, see Schlamm 1991.

7 In *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (1995), Wilber does not actually specify that this pathology belongs to the psychic stage. But we must assume that it does because Wilber's definition of the Dark Night of the Soul in this monograph conforms with that of his earlier essay, in which it is

identified as a psychic disorder.

8 It is not clear to me how it can be a pathology or disorder, if, as Wilber himself admits, 'It is as if the depression of the Dark Night had a "higher" or "purgatorial" or "intelligent" purpose—exactly the claim of contemplatives' (Wilber 1986, p. 140).

9 For Underhill, such regression constitutes the ultimate defeat for the ego, and particularly the ultimate annihilation of its potential for spiritual inflation, caused by its foolish identification with transpersonal, religious experiences which are 'wholly other' to itself. For further

Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 35

discussion of regression in the service of transcendence in the context of *Hot Unstructured* traditions, see Washburn 1988, who observes, 'The ego must submit to a radical regression with an uncertain outcome, a regression that can lead to psychosis as well as transcendence, disintegration as well as higher integration' (p. 37).

10 More precisely, the first five *chakras* of Kundalini Yoga are located at the psychic level, the sixth at the subtle level, and the seventh 'begins to transcend the psychic-subtle dimension altogether and open on to the radiant causal' (Wilber 1995, p. 608).

11 *Hot Structured* traditions focus their attention on the conscious *mastery* of somatically based mysticism, whereas Wilber regards this mastery as unnecessary for progress towards the causal and non-dualistic levels of spiritual attainment (see Wilber 1995, p. 609).

12 This discomfort is evinced by Wilber's failure to discuss Western, Indian and Chinese alchemy, the Western Hermetic tradition, and the Vedic ritual tradition.

13 Fulcrum 2 combines the emotional-sexual level (the sheath of bioenergy, *elan vital*, libido or *prana*) with Freudian primary process, which confuses inside with outside, whole with part, subject with predicate, image with reality.

14 Examples of traditions which focus their attention on the image of the body of cosmic man are Kabbalah; the Purusha Sukta (*Rig Veda* 10.90), which was so influential on the early *Upanishads*; and, of course, Hindu Tantra. See Ponce 1974; O'Flaherty 1981; Feuerstein 1998.

15 See note 11.

16 It is this *Cool Structured* (transcend and then include) dualistic approach to nature mysticism or cosmic consciousness (see Wilber 1995, pp. 279–92) which leads Wilber to brand any regressive union with, or descent into, nature as '*magical indissociation*, where spirit is simply equated with nature . . . very "this-worldly"' (Wilber 1995, p. 287). But as Washburn has observed, regression may not always merely trigger indissociation but rather may, at least on some occasions, function as the 'downward loop' of a spiralling path (in contrast to Wilber's purely ascending, integral path) to transcendence: see Washburn 1998, pp. 69–71. Moreover, he argues that if, in at least some instances, pre-egoic and trans-egoic states 'are lower and higher developmental expressions of the same psychic potentials', then Wilber's resistance towards regression in the service of transcendence is vulnerable to the charge that Wilber himself has so frequently laid at the feet of 'otherworldly', spiritual *Ascenders*; see Wilber 1995, pp. 341–9: the repression of nature, body and instinct which are the very bases of trans-egoic experience (see Washburn 1998, pp. 78, 80). This conclusion is forced upon us by Wilber's insistence that the integration of pre-rational with rational, and of rational with trans-rational, basic structures is effected by an 'Absolute Spirit' only from above.

17 Rawlinson observes that '*Structured* traditions can express a higher-order truth in *Unstructured* terms' (Rawlinson 1997, p. 115).

18 Washburn has provided a philosophical defence for regression in the service of transcendence (what Jung calls the 'night sea journey') and for the metapsychological presupposition, endorsed by Jung, that 'pre-' and 'trans-' are lower and higher developmental expressions of the *same* psychic potentials, by arguing that Wilber's critique of Jung's elevationism (ptf-2) itself commits a pre/trans fallacy, which Washburn abbreviates as ptf-3. For discussion of the technical details, see Washburn 1998, pp. 79–80. For a Jungian response to Wilber's criticisms of Jung, see Odajnyk 1993. Odajnyk's discussion of archetypes as *scintillae* provides an instructive illustration of Jung's unequivocal commitment to archetypes as subtle level forms (the first forms of timeless spirit). His engagement with Wilber's spectrum model is, however, otherwise suspect, first, because it is based on Wilber's model 2, rather than model 3, and second, because his discussion of non-duality is flawed. Like Jung, he has failed to understand the meaning of *synyata* (emptiness) or One Taste. Non-duality is not oneness; 'not two' is *not* one. And non-duality cannot be reinterpreted as a conjunction of opposites, as his discussion of the *Heart Sutra* and Zen *kensho* experience appears to suggest.

19 'In spite or perhaps because of its affinity with instinct, the archetype represents the authentic element of spirit, but a spirit which is not to be identified with the human intellect, since it is the latter's *spiritus rector*. . . . Archetype and instinct are the most polar opposites imaginable. . . . But, just as between all opposites there obtains so close a bond that no position can be established or even thought of without its corresponding negation, so in this case also "les

extremes se touchent’’ (Jung 1969, par. 406).

20 *Enantiodromia* means a ‘running counter to’. In the philosophy of Heraclitus it is used to designate the play of opposites in the course of events—the view that everything turns into its

36 *L. Schlamm*

opposite. Jung quotes Heraclitus: ‘‘From the living comes death and from the dead life, from the young old age and from the old youth; from waking, sleep, and from sleep, waking; the stream of generation and decay never stands still’’. . . . Such is the *enantiodromia* of Heraclitus. . . . He himself says: ‘‘It is the opposite which is good for us. Men do not know how what is at variance agrees with itself. It is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre. . . . The way up and the way down are the same’’ (Jung 1971, par. 708).

21 Critical examination of the shadow, created by spiritual practice, is one of the most challenging tasks facing transpersonal psychology today: see Zweig and Abrams 1991; Vaughan 1995; Feuerstein 1991.

Bibliography

- Berger, Peter L. 1981 ‘Problem and Agenda’, in *The Other Side of God: A Polarity in World Religions*, 3–27. Ed. by Peter L. Berger. New York: Anchor Books.
- Burckhardt, Titus 1974 ‘Cosmology and Modern Science’, in *The Sword of Gnosis: Metaphysics, Cosmology, Tradition, Symbolism*, 122–78. Ed. by Jacob Needleman. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Cohen, Andrew 1992 *Autobiography of an Awakening*. Corte Madera, CA: Moksha Foundation.
- Cortright, Brant 1997 *Psychotherapy and Spirit: Theory and Practice in Transpersonal Psychotherapy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Feuerstein, Georg 1991 *Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools, and Rascal Gurus*. New York: Paragon House.
- 1998 *Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Forman, Robert K. C. 1999 *Mysticism, Mind, Consciousness*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Godman, David (ed.) 1985 *Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi*. London: Arkana.
- Grof, Stanislav 1998 ‘Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Psychology: Observations from Clinical Consciousness Research’, in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 85–116. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Jung, C. G. 1969 *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. Collected Works, vol. 8. Trans. by R. F. C. Hull. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- 1971 *Psychological Types*. Collected Works, vol. 6. Trans. by R. F. C. Hull. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Kornfield, Jack, and Donald Rothberg 1998 ‘The Mandala of Awakening’, in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 154–64. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- McDonald-Smith, Michele, and Donald Rothberg 1998 ‘Bringing Awareness Back Home: Toward an Integrative Spirituality’, in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 165–78. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Miller, Jeanine 1985 *The Vision of Cosmic Order in the Vedas*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Nelson, Lance E. 1996 ‘Living Liberation in Sankara and Classical Advaita: Sharing the Holy Waiting of God’, in *Living Liberation in Hindu Thought*, 17–62. Ed. by Andrew O. Fort and Patricia Y. Mumme. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Odajnyk, V. Walter 1993 *Gathering the Light: A Psychology of Meditation*. Boston: Shambhala.
- O’Flaherty, Wendy D. 1981 *The Rig Veda: An Anthology*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Otto, Rudolf 1923 *The Idea of the Holy*. Trans. by John W. Harvey. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model 37**
- 1932 *Mysticism East and West: A Comparative Analysis of the Nature of Mysticism*. Trans. by Bertha L. Bracey and Richenda C. Payne. New York: Macmillan.
- Pike, Nelson 1992 *Mystic Union: An Essay in the Phenomenology of Mysticism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Ponce, Charles 1974 *Kabbalah: An Introduction and Illumination for the World Today*. London: Garnstone Press.
- Rawlinson, Andrew 1997 *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions*. Chicago: Open Court.
- Rothberg, Donald 1998 ‘Ken Wilber and the Future of Transpersonal Inquiry: An Introduction to the Conversation’, in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 1–27. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.

- Samuel, Geoffrey 1993 *Civilised Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Sandner, Donald F., and Steven H. Wong (eds) 1997 *The Sacred Heritage: The Influence of Shamanism on Analytical Psychology*. London: Routledge.
- Schlamm, Leon 1991 'Rudolf Otto and Mystical Experience', *Religious Studies* 27:389–98.
- 1998 'C. G. Jung's Ambivalent Relationship to the Hindu Religious Tradition: A Depth-Psychologist's Encounter with "The Dreamlike World of India"', *Harvest* 44:58–74.
- Sharpe, Eric J. 1975 *Comparative Religion: A History*. London: Duckworth.
- Silburn, Lilian 1988 *Kundalini Energy of the Depths: A Comprehensive Study Based on the Scriptures of Nondualistic Kashmir Saivism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Smart, Ninian 1958 *Reasons and Faiths: An Investigation of Religious Discourse, Christian and Non-Christian*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Staal, Frits 1975 *Exploring Mysticism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Stace, W. T. 1960 *Mysticism and Philosophy*. London: Macmillan.
- Trungpa, Chogyam 1979 'A Dialogue with Psychotherapists', in *The Meeting of the Ways: Explorations in East/West Psychology*, 192–6. Ed. by John Welwood. New York: Schocken.
- Underhill, Evelyn 1961 *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*. New York: Dutton.
- Vaughan, Frances 1995 *Shadows of the Sacred: Seeing Through Spiritual Illusions*. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Wainwright, William J. 1981 *Mysticism: A Study of its Nature, Cognitive Value and Moral Implications*. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Walsh, Roger 1998 'Developmental and Evolutionary Synthesis in the Recent Writings of Ken Wilber', in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 30–52. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Washburn, Michael 1988 *The Ego and the Dynamic Ground: A Transpersonal Theory of Human Development*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- 1998 'The Pre/Trans Fallacy Reconsidered', in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 62–83. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- Webb, James 1981 *The Occult Establishment*. Glasgow: Drew.
- White, David Gordon 1996 *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 38 L. Schlamm**
- Wilber, Ken 1981 *Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press.
- 1983 *Eye to Eye: The Quest for the New Paradigm*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press.
- 1986 'The Spectrum of Development', 'The Spectrum of Psychopathology', 'Treatment Modalities', in *Transformations of Consciousness: Conventional and Contemplative Perspectives on Development*, 65–159. Eds. by Ken Wilber, Jack Engler and Daniel P. Brown. Boston: Shambhala.
- 1991 *Grace and Grit: Spirituality and Healing in the Life and Death of Treya Killam Wilber*. Boston: Shambhala.
- 1995 *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution*. Boston: Shambhala.
- 1996 *A Brief History of Everything*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.
- 1997 *The Eye of Spirit: An Integral Vision for a World Gone Slightly Mad*. Boston: Shambhala.
- 1998 'A More Integral Approach', in *Ken Wilber in Dialogue: Conversations with Leading Transpersonal Thinkers*, 306–67. Ed. by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.
- 1999 *One Taste: The Journals of Ken Wilber*. Boston: Shambhala.
- 2000 *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Zaehner, R. C. 1961 *Mysticism Sacred and Profane: An Enquiry into some Varieties of Praeternatural Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 1969 *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*. New York: Schocken.
- Zweig, Connie, and Jeremiah Abrams (eds) 1991 *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*. Los Angeles: Tarcher.

LEON SCHLAMM is Lecturer in Religious Studies in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Kent at Canterbury. He is the author of articles on Jung and Otto in books and journals, including *Harvest and Religious Studies*. His current research is on transpersonal and analytical psychology and mystical experience.

Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Kent at Canterbury, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NF, U.K. E-mail: L.P.Schlamm@ukc.ac.uk

Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model 39