

Integral Nondual Philosophy:
Ken Wilber and Herman Dooyeweerd

by

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Introduction

Ken Wilber attempts to integrate philosophy, psychology and other sciences, and spirituality. Judging by the popularity of his books, there is a lot of interest in such an integrative approach. Wilber's first book, *The Spectrum of Consciousness*, was published in 1977. Wilber says that his ideas have changed somewhat since then, so most of my citations will be from his later works, such as *The Marriage of Sense and Soul: Integrating Science and Religion* (Wilber 1998).

Herman Dooyeweerd's *Philosophy of the Law-Idea* [*De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, cited here as 'WdW'], was published more than 40 years earlier. Dooyeweerd also sought an integral approach; he dealt with many similar issues and historical sources. But Dooyeweerd never achieved the same kind of popularity. Why not? His major work, *WdW*, was not translated until 1953 (*A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, cited here as 'NC'). Some of his works have never been translated. Second, his philosophy was misunderstood as a kind of Christian Aristotelianism (Friesen 2010), or he was misinterpreted in terms of the very different philosophy of his brother-in-law Dirk Vollenhoven (Friesen 2005c). Dooyeweerd's nondualism was also misunderstood as either monism or dualism (Friesen 2005b). Finally, Dooyeweerd's philosophy was regarded as of interest only to Dutch Calvinists, whereas Dooyeweerd himself rejected such a narrow approach (Dooyeweerd, 1964).

The philosophies of Wilber and Dooyeweerd are not identical. Wilber writes from the perspectives of Buddhism and *Advaita Vedanta*. Dooyeweerd writes from a Christian perspective. Both philosophers reject dualism. Both philosophers use the metaphor of a spectrum to describe our different modes of consciousness. They give similar answers to

some questions, but very different answers to other questions. A comparison can help to understand each of them better, and will also show Dooyeweerd's relevance today.

We will begin by looking at the idea of a perennial philosophy, which both Wilber and Dooyeweerd rely on. How does this idea relate to Wilber's idea of a Chain of Being, and of different levels of reality? What are Dooyeweerd's views on levels of reality? How does their use of the prism/spectrum metaphor relate to these differing views on levels of reality? What do they mean by 'religion' and 'spirituality'? And what do they mean when they say that they reject dualism? Finally, I will use Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique in order to compare their philosophies in relation to questions of Origin, supratemporal totality (selfhood), and temporal coherence.

I. Perennial Philosophy

A. Meaning of 'perennial philosophy'

The term 'perennial philosophy' (*philosophia perennis*) is often ascribed to Leibniz, but Leibniz relied on the even earlier idea of a *prisca theologia*. This is the idea, shared by many writers including Lactantius, Augustin, Giordano Bruno, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola that there is one true theology, which was already given in ancient times, especially to Hermes Trismegistus. They believed that Hermes Trismegistus was a contemporary of Moses. In later philosophy, the meaning of 'perennial philosophy' shifted, especially in the 20th century. Wouter Hanegraaff discusses these changing meanings in his *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*. The term is most often used in the sense of "an enduring tradition of superior spiritual wisdom, available to humanity since the earliest periods of history and kept alive through the ages." It gives the sense of a trans-historical "community" whose members would have agreed if they had been able to meet (Hanegraaff I, 1125-26). René Guénon used the term to refer a Tradition based on first principles that cannot be doubted, although they cannot be proved. Guénon did not appeal to history, since he regarded "historical consciousness" as itself a result of modernity. For Guénon, Tradition survives mainly in Chinese, Hindu and Islamic contexts; the West represents a degeneration. Guénon's views were followed by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Frithjof Schuon and Huston Smith. In contrast, Étienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain used the term to refer to the enduring truth of Catholic

theology and philosophy. Aldous Huxley's book *The Perennial Philosophy* (1944) referred back to Leibniz.

B. Dooyeweerd's use of 'perennial philosophy'

In 1935, Dooyeweerd recognized *philosophia perennis* in the sense that his philosophy cannot be dissociated from "the development of an age-old process of philosophical reflection" (*WdW* I, 82; *NC* I, 118). Dooyeweerd therefore acknowledges truth in previous philosophy; he qualifies this by saying that the idea of a perennial philosophy must not be used to relativize the religious ground-motive governing such philosophies. By this he means that different philosophies have radically different starting points, based on differing religious ground-motives. A religious ground-motive is a driving force or motivation in the center of our being, our heart, where we orient ourselves either towards God as Origin, or away from God. Ground-motives are themselves prior to all theory, although they are certainly influenced by our pre-theoretical belief system. But we must not make the mistake of thinking that the ground-motives themselves are based on theory; it is the other way around. Our theory is based on our ground-motives. In philosophy, we elaborate and seek to approximate the meaning of these ground-motives by theoretical ground-Ideas. Ground-Ideas are "theoretical expressions" of the underlying religious ground-motive (*NC* I, 185, 506).¹ When philosophy is oriented away from God, it is no longer transcendent, but immanent—it seeks meaning within or immanent to time—and this results in dualisms. Even such 'immanence philosophy' contains *some* truth (Dooyeweerd, 1937-38, Response 2).² But, to use Hanegraaff's

¹ The failure to distinguish between ground-motives and ground-Ideas, and the failure to see that ground-motives are pre-theoretical, has caused a lot of confusion in reformational philosophy. It has led to the incorrect view that Dooyeweerd's philosophy is based on concepts that he derived from theology. His view is that theology is based on philosophy, and that both kinds of theoretical thought are based on our pre-theoretical experience of ontical conditions.

² Contrast this with the presuppositionalist approach used by Reformed epistemology, as well as by Cornelius Van Til, who reject the idea of a community of thought, there is an "absolute antithesis" between those who do not share the same theoretical presuppositions. Van Til rejects the idea of a pre-theoretical experience, and the attempt to discuss the nature of theoretical thought in itself, apart from such presuppositions. He rejects Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique and says that there can be no point of

language, different religious ground-motives means that there are different “trans-historical communities.” What Dooyeweerd believed to be common to all philosophical reflection is the belief in the necessity of there being some kind of absolute origin, totality, and temporal coherence. Different religious ground-motives give different content to the theoretical Ideas describing them.

Apart from his reference to perennial philosophy, Dooyeweerd also disclaimed any originality to his own philosophy (*WdW* III, vii-viii). So what is the “enduring tradition” to which he belongs? Although Dooyeweerd refers to the neo-Calvinist tradition of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), recent research has shown that Kuyper himself was influenced by Franz von Baader (1765-1841). This places neo-Calvinist philosophy—to the extent that it was appropriated by Dooyeweerd—within the tradition of Baader’s Christian theosophy, particularly with respect to the idea of man’s heart as a supratemporal totality, the idea of cosmic time, as well as many other key ideas (Friesen 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Mietus 2006, 2007). Of particular importance is the way that both Kuyper and Dooyeweerd used Baader’s critique of Kant’s idea of the “autonomy of thought.” This is important in our analysis, since, despite his claim to be nondualistic, Wilber retains the idea of the autonomy of thought.

C. Wilber’s ‘perennial psychology’

Wilber refers to perennial philosophy as a basis for his integral philosophy (Wilber, 1997, 39). But Wilber does not use the term in the sense of an enduring tradition. Instead, as Hanegraaff points out, Wilber’s pronounced evolutionism means that he rejects any looking back for a lost truth as sentimental romanticism; instead his philosophy aspires to transcendence “as the final term of the evolution of consciousness.” For Wilber, perennial

contact in discussing ideas of origin, totality or temporal coherence. (Van Til, 1971). Dooyeweerd rejects this approach; he says that such a merely transcendent (and rationalistic) critique of other philosophy would make it impossible to communicate with other traditions. His philosophy seeks a transcendental approach, which examines the conditions that make any philosophy possible. It distinguishes between theoretical presuppositions (*vooronderstellingen*) and the ontical conditions (*de vóór-onderstelde*) that make possible any presuppositions whatsoever (Friesen 2009, Thesis 2). When a philosophy does not give a proper account of such ontical, the philosophy ends in antinomies.

philosophy has “left the realm of history and entered the domain of the mind” (Hanegraaff I, 1134-35). In other words, Wilber has psychologized the term ‘perennial philosophy.’ I don’t think that Wilber would disagree, since already in his first book, he speaks of “a psychological interpretation of the *Philosophia perennis*” (Wilber 1977, 26). He refers to his philosophy as a ‘perennial psychology’ (Wilber 1977, 165). But Hanegraaff’s point is still important, since it helps to explain Wilber’s frequent lack of concern with historical continuity or even of historical accuracy.

II. Levels of Reality

A. Wilber’s Great Nest of Being

Wilber relates perennial philosophy/psychology to what he says is the universal idea of the Great Chain of Being:

Central to the perennial philosophy is the notion of the Great Chain of Being. The idea itself is fairly simple. Reality, according to the perennial philosophy, is not one-dimensional; it is not a flatland of uniform substance stretching monotonously before the eye. Rather, reality is composed of several different but continuous dimensions. Manifest reality, that is, consists of different grades or levels, reaching from the lowest and most dense and least conscious to the highest and most subtle and most conscious. At one end of this continuum of being or spectrum of consciousness is what we in the West would call “matter” or the insentient and the nonconscious, and at the other end is “spirit” or “godhead” or the “superconscious” (which is also said to be the all-pervading ground of the entire sequence, as we will see). Arrayed in between are the other dimensions of being arranged according to their individual degrees of reality (Plato), actuality (Aristotle), inclusiveness (Hegel), consciousness (Aurobindo), clarity (Leibniz), embrace (Plotinus), or knowingness (Garab Dorje) (Wilber 1997, 39).

Wilber also calls the Great Chain of Being the ‘Great Nest of Being’:

Reality is a rich tapestry of interwoven levels, reaching from matter to body to mind to soul to spirit. Each senior level envelops or enfolds its junior dimensions—a series of nests within nests within nests of Being—so that every thing and event in the world is interwoven with every other, and all are ultimately enveloped and enfolded by Spirit, by God, by Goddess, by Tao, by Brahman, by the Absolute itself (Wilber 1998a, 2).

There is an *involution* from Spirit down to matter, and an *evolution* back from matter to Spirit. For this idea of evolutionary ascending consciousness, Wilber was influenced by

the Hindu sage Aurobindo (1872-1950). There is a hierarchy of levels from the subconscious (pre-personal), to the self-conscious (personal—rational) and finally to the superconscious (transpersonal).

Wilber uses the idea of the Great Chain of Being to support his view of a hierarchy of states of consciousness. In Western Philosophy, this idea of a Chain of Being is often associated with Plotinus and neo-Platonism (Lovejoy, 1936). Lovejoy also refers to Aristotle's *De Anima*, of a "Scale Naturae," linking God, man, mammals, birds, fish, insects, and plants in a hierarchical ladder or chain; Aristotle called each link in the chain a "species." The more perfect species were those which have more fully realized their potentialities, and they were placed higher in the ladder. God has no privation or imperfection. Wilber refers to Plotinus's 12 levels: matter, life, sensation, perception, impulse, images, concepts, logical faculty, creative reason, world soul, *nous*, and the One. Wilber compares these levels to Aurobindo's 12 levels: matter, vegetative, sensation, perception, vital-emotional, lower mind, concrete mind, logical mind, higher mind, illumined Worldmind, Overmind and *Satchitananda/overmind* (Wilber 1998a, 19).

Wilber does not just correlate Plotinus and Aurobindo. Wilber's methodology is to correlate as many hierarchies as he can find in religions, philosophies and psychologies. For example, he also tries to correlate Piaget's stages of development, *Advaita Vedanta*'s stages of consciousness, Buddhism's stages of enlightenment, Kabbalah's *sephirot*, and the *chakras* of *kundalini* yoga.³ He tries to place all of these on one scale of ascending consciousness. In his book *A Sociable God*, Wilber correlates these hierarchies in 10 levels (Wilber 1983, 19-26):

1. Physical. This is the lowest yogic *chakra*.
2. Sensoriperceptual. The areas of sensation and perception.
3. Emotional-sexual. The level of bioenergy, libido, *prana*; second *chakra*.
4. Magical. The beginning of mental realms; images, symbolism, rudimentary concepts; Piaget's preoperational thinking (belief that one's own ego is the source and creator of reality), third *chakra*; dream aspects

³ Jung had already correlated stages of consciousness with the *chakras* of *Kundalini* yoga. See Jung 1996 and my analysis (Friesen, 2005d).

of mentation; wish-fulfillments.

5. Mythic. Piaget's concrete operational thinking (not hypothetico-deductive); lower mind, fourth *chakra*.

6. Rational. Piaget's formal operational thinking; fifth *chakra*; here we think about thinking; if a, then b; this is the beginning of spiritual insight. But it is what German Idealists called *Verstand*. It is a systems logic, but still chained to external surfaces. (See also Wilber 1998a, 132-33).

7. Psychic. Vision-logic—a network of ideas, an integrative structure; panoramic awareness which adds up all the perspectives. Pluralistic perspectives. This can result in nature cosmic consciousness, or a merging of the self with natural universe (not theistic or monistic mystical experiences); the sixth *chakra*. It is what German Idealists called *Vernunft*.

8. Subtle. This is the seat of archetypes, Platonic forms, subtle sounds, audible illuminations, transcendent insight; the personal deity form; *savikalpa samadhi*; intuition; gnosis, *jnana*; halos of truth and light; saints, *sahasrara chakra*

9. Causal. *Nirvikalpa samadhi*, unmanifest source or transcendental ground of all the lesser structures. Aurobindo's overmind. 8th of the 10 oxherding pictures; *kether* in Kabbalah;

10. Brahman. The ultimate, absolute One, *Sahaj samadhi*, Aurobindo's supermind, Zen's "One Mind", Tillich's Ground of Being, Spinoza's Eternal Substance, Hegel's *Geist*. Here, the subject-object duality is radically transcended; One becomes radically egoless, free of a separate sense of self. We no longer contemplate Divinity, but we become Divinity, Supreme Identity. Christ's "I and the Father are One." The level of the Upanishads' "I am Brahman" and "Thou art That" [*tat tvam asi*].

Level 1 is matter, levels 2-3 are the body, 4-6 are the mind, 7-8 are soul, and 9-10 are the level of what Wilber calls 'Spirit' (Wilber 1983, 35).

Many of Wilber's attempted correlations seem forced. How can Christianity's belief in God be correlated with a non-theistic religion like Buddhism? Or how can Hinduism's emphasis on our selfhood (*atman*) be correlated with Buddhism's emphasis on no-self (*anatman*)?

Wilber's solution is to "transcend and include"—each higher level envelops or includes the lower ones. Higher levels emerge from the lower, but they are initially undifferentiated from the lower levels. Spirit transcends but includes mind, which transcends but includes the vital body, which transcends but includes matter. The lower levels have partial truths, which are transcended and included in the higher ones. This is a

very familiar pattern, used by spiritualities that appear to be tolerant but are often not tolerant at all towards those truths that they regard as “lower” and “included.” For example, although traditional Hinduism is inclusive, it did not recognize ideas of human freedom and equality, and it was intolerant towards the non-Hindu foreigner (*mlechha*). Wilhelm Halbfass says that inclusivism of this kind is “a subordinating identification of the other, the foreign with parts or preliminary stages of one’s own sphere” (Halbfass, 411). Paul Hacker has suggested that there is an affinity between monism and inclusivism (Halbfass, 412). Wilber is of course both monistic and inclusivistic.

A further problem is that Wilber is not sufficiently historically critical of some of his sources. Some of the ideas that Wilber wants to place at the apex of perennial psychology were in fact influenced by Western ideas. For example, Aurobindo’s philosophy was based on a synthesis of Hinduism and Western ideas:

In what Paul Hacker has described and critically analysed as Neo-Hinduism, the Hindu tradition is reinterpreted and transformed by applying Western concepts and responding to Western expectations and presuppositions. This requires experiencers who are willing and able to acquire the necessary capacity, to be transformed as subjects of experience to ascend to higher levels of awareness and being (Halbfass, 380).

Aurobindo is a prime example of neo-Hinduism. He differs from traditional Hinduism in that he does not accept the timeless presence of the Absolute in the sense of Sankara (788-821?). Instead, influenced by evolutionists and by Hegel, Aurobindo believed that the Absolute manifests itself in the historical development of man’s ascent to new stages and dimensions of consciousness (Halbfass, 250-51). Aurobindo ignored traditional Hinduism’s distinction between the metaphysical absolute, and what is merely empirical and observable. His view that religious experience must be verifiable is not found in traditional Hinduism. Aurobindo “interprets the Upanisads and other Indian texts as records of experience, which ought to be verified by the reader’s or the hearer’s own experience” (Halbfass, 385). This emphasis on religious “experience” is itself Western in origin.

And the idea of *tat tvam asi* [“that art thou”], which Wilber uses in the final stage of consciousness, is an idea from traditional Hinduism, but not when used for ethical purposes. The neo-Hindu Vivekananda obtained this ethical usage of the term from Paul

Deussen, who obtained it from Schopenhauer (Halbfass, 239-40).

If the neo-Hindu ideas that Wilber relies on are not rooted in traditional Hindu thought, then his philosophy is not as ‘perennial’ as he claims. Wilber does not discuss these problematics of neo-Hinduism. His correlation of levels is a syncretistic attempt to combine reports of psychological states without regard for historical influences on those who report these states. But that was already the point made by Hanegraaff in his criticism of Wilber’s use of the term ‘perennial philosophy.’

B. Dooyeweerd’s view of levels of reality and modes of consciousness

Dooyeweerd also has a list of modes of consciousness (*WdW* I, 5, 36; *NC* I, 3):

1. numerical
2. spatial
3. physical
4. kinematic (movement; Dooyeweerd distinguished this from the physical mode only after the *WdW*, although he spoke of a modality of movement as early as 1922).
5. biotic (organic life)
6. psychical (note: this is not man’s soul, which functions in all modes and is supratemporal, but only the mode of psychical feeling),
7. analytical (logical)
8. historical (formative). Note: this mode is not the same as historical *events*, which function in all modes.
9. lingual
10. social (association)
11. economic (valuation)
12. aesthetic (beautiful harmony)
13. juridical (legal retribution)
14. ethical (morality)
15. pistical (the temporal expression of religious faith, distinguished from the central religious motivation, which is supratemporal)

It is tempting to try to correlate these modes with Wilber’s list of hierarchies, but Dooyeweerd’s modes of consciousness differ in many ways from Wilber’s. First, Dooyeweerd’s modes are not spheres of being or levels of reality. They are not ontological categories.⁴

⁴ Dooyeweerd distinguishes his idea of modes from Nicolai Hartmann’s idea of “spheres of being” (*NC* II, 51 fn3).

Dooyeweerd does recognize these different levels of reality: (1) God's eternity (2) the supratemporal state of the *aevum*, the realm of our selfhood and (3) the temporal realm of modes of consciousness, of our body, of events, and of individual things (4) the merely intentional (i.e. non-ontical) reality of our theoretical thought (*NC* II, 552, 560). We will discuss these levels in more detail below. What is important here is that for Dooyeweerd, the modes of consciousness are within one level of reality (the temporal); they do not themselves represent ascending levels of reality.

Nor does Dooyeweerd regard modes in terms of a Chain of Being (*NC* II, 57-58; III, 67). The idea of a Chain of Being is linked to the idea of substance. Dooyeweerd rejects any idea of substance as dualistic (Dooyeweerd 1943-46).

III. Dualism and Nondualism

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd reject dualism. But they do not agree on what constitutes a dualism. Nor do they agree on the nondualist approach that overcomes dualism.

A. Dualism

For Wilber, each stage in the Chain of Being (his spectrum of consciousness) represents a dualism that needs to be overcome, in order to arrive at the nondual consciousness from which the spectrum derives, and to which we return. This nondual consciousness is like white light that is split into a spectrum. The cause of this split from the unitary white light is our rationality, which distinguishes one stage of being from another. For Wilber, every rational distinction is a dualism. He does not distinguish dualities (distinctions) from dualisms. Thus, every level of the temporal world represents a dualism that has not yet been overcome in the ascending evolution of consciousness.

For Dooyeweerd, the different modes of our consciousness do not represent different dualisms to be overcome. For Dooyeweerd, a dualism occurs only when we elevate one of these modes to be the source (the "white light" that is split into the spectrum) of the other modes. The rational is only one among many of our modes of consciousness. If we elevate the rational, and consider it to be the source of the other modes, then that results in a dualism between that elevated (or absolutized) mode, and the other modes. This

gives rise to a polar opposition between the elevated mode and the other modes, and this dualism will result in antinomies in our thought.

Although he claims to be nondualistic, Wilber's philosophy is highly dualistic, opposing the logical mode to the other modes of consciousness. He claims that the diversity of the world results from our ability to logically distinguish things and modes from each other. It is our rationality that creates the diversity of the other modes. All diversity for him is therefore ultimately logical. He says that Adam's original sin is that of classifying—by naming the animals, he creates boundaries (Wilber 2001a, 19, 40). “For the primary boundary severs unity consciousness itself, splitting it right down the middle and delivering it up as a subject vs an object, as a knower vs a known, as a seer vs a seen, or in more earthy terms, as an organism vs an environment” (Wilber 2001a, 68). By creating these boundaries, our unity consciousness becomes individual consciousness, Self becomes a self.

Wilber cannot say why this boundary making, which causes the misery of samsara and maya (illusion) arises in the first place. There cannot be a first cause; otherwise there would be a new boundary. “The primary boundary arises of itself” (Wilber 2001a, 67). But in his insistence that our rational drawing of boundaries creates the diversity of the (illusory) temporal world, Wilber's philosophy is an example of what Dooyeweerd calls ‘logicism’—mistaking cosmic diversity for logical diversity (*WdW* II, 23; *NC* I, 19). It is an absolutization of the logical or analytical mode of our consciousness.

For Dooyeweerd, it is not our rationality, but rather cosmic time that refracts the original white light of consciousness into the temporal modes of being. In the supratemporal totality (the “white light”), all temporal modes coincide in a radical unity (In the fullness of meaning, the aspects coincide in a radical unity (*NC* I, 106). We will discuss this further in reference to the second transcendental problem of totality, or the selfhood.

B. Nondualism

As we have seen, Wilber and Dooyeweerd do not agree on what constitutes a dualism; it is not surprising that they also propose different solutions to overcome dualism.

Because Wilber believes that every distinction is a dualism, he cannot distinguish between nonduality and nondualism. If all distinctions and boundaries are dualisms, then

his philosophy results in monism. Wilber conflates nondualism with monism. He says, “The East, in seeing that reality was nondual, not-two, saw that all boundaries were illusory” (Wilber 2001a, 38). Therefore, following the *Lankavatara Sutra*, he holds that universal, undifferentiated, inscrutable, ‘Suchness’ is the only Reality (Wilber 2001a, 39). But if the undifferentiated reality is the only ultimate reality, that means that our differentiated universe is ultimately an illusion, *maya*. And such a monism cannot integrate science and spirituality. Science will then deal in what is ultimately illusory.

I am not the only one to criticize Wilber for confusing nondualism with monism:

Others, including Georg Feuerstein, argue that Wilber’s neo-Perennialism is a confusion between concepts of *differentiated nondualist* doctrines (such as Plotinus's neo-Platonism and Ramanuja's *Vishishtadvaita Vedanta*) with the *unitary monism* of Zen and *Advaita Vedanta*: the former philosophies distinguish between emanated or manifest reality and the unchangeable source, while for Zen or Advaita the Source and reality are essentially one and the same. This is expressed in a famous Zen saying of which Wilber is quite fond: “Nirvana is Samsara fully realized; Samsara is Nirvana rightly understood.”⁵

This quotation does not give the source for Feuerstein’s critique of Wilber, although Feuerstein, an authority on yoga, has written about differentiation from *prakriti*, understood as the primal transcendental source from which the multiform universe issues. Feuerstein discusses several differentiations from this Origin (Feuerstein, 26-29). And the Hindu philosopher Ramanuja (1017-1137) certainly did set out a differentiated nondualism (*Vishishtadvaita Vedanta*), where Brahman and creation are differentiated, allowing a relation of love or *bhakti* between them. Such a differentiated dualism is very different from Wilber’s monism.

What is Wilber’s response to this distinction between a monistic nondualism and a differentiated nondualism?⁶ In his book *Integral Spirituality*, Wilber cites the Mahayana Buddhist view that the undifferentiated *nirvana* is the same as the differentiated *samsara*;

⁵ This quotation appears on many websites. I have used the Ken Wilber forum on “Lightgate” (posting by “theurj” on 03/23/07 at [http://www.lightgate.net/boards/viewtopic.php?start=0&t=6424&topic_view=threads]).

⁶ Again, I am indebted to the posting on Lightgate for this information.

emptiness is form. Nevertheless, emptiness is absolute, and is realized by the nonconceptual mind. The relative and differentiated forms, *samsara*, are known only by the conceptual mind (Wilber 2006, 108). Wilber is trying to hold both views—the absolute and the relative, saying that they are different stages of consciousness. But if the ultimate stage of consciousness is the realization that undifferentiated emptiness is the only reality, what happens to the previous stages of consciousness in which we recognize differentiated temporal forms? Wilber says

...when I lay out the stages of development, I am giving what I explicitly called in SES [*Sex, Ecology, Spirituality*] a rational reconstruction of the trans-rational (Wilber 2001c).

But if rationality is the cause of dualism, then such a rational reconstruction will also be dualistic. In Wilber's own view, it must be overcome by the trans-rational truth of emptiness. This was Wilber's view from the outset. In *The Spectrum of Consciousness*, he said that he was attempting to describe

...the apparent (i.e., illusory) creation or evolution of our conventional levels of consciousness “from” or “out of” the Level of Mind, somewhat as a physicist would describe the optics of a prism that creates a rainbow from a single beam of white light. But this is not an actual evolution of Mind *through* time, as we will explain, but a seeming or illusory evolution of Mind *into* time, for Mind itself is intemporal, timeless, eternal (Wilber 1977, 26).

Wilber wants it both ways—to hold to monism as well as to speak of differentiated stages of development shows a real conflict. It is what Dooyeweerd calls an ‘antinomy,’ which is the result of a dualism. In this case, Wilber's dualism is his view that our rationality is the cause of cosmic diversity, thus elevating rationality above the other modes of consciousness.

Dooyeweerd's philosophy is neither dualistic nor monistic (Friesen 2005b). Using Ramanuja's terminology, it is a differentiated or qualified nondualism. Although everything arises from the Origin, and is therefore “from, through and towards” God, creation is a real differentiation from God. Humans are distinct from God as Origin, and also distinct from each other and from the world. But although distinct, there is also a commonality in everything; humans are the image of God, so in loving each other, they love God. And just as humans image God, so the temporal world images

humans—temporal reality has no existence apart from our selfhood, its root (NC I, 100; II, 53). Humanity is its root, in which temporal reality finds its fulfillment.

IV. Spirituality and Religion

A. The meaning of spirituality and religion

Dooyeweerd says that the horizon of our human experience has several dimensions or levels: the religious, the temporal, the modal, and the dimension of individuality structures. The religious level is the level of our selfhood, which is above time (supratemporal). From there we descend to the temporal level. The temporal level includes the modal level. And the temporal and modal levels together encompass the fourth level, that of things or ‘individuality structures.’

Thus, for Dooyeweerd, ‘religious’ or ‘spiritual’ refers to the *central experience of our selfhood, which transcends time*. Our spirituality is directed either towards God as Origin, or towards the temporal world, a part of which we then absolutize or idolize as a false origin. Such absolutization is spirituality in the wrong direction. As discussed, the elevation of one mode leads to dualism with the other modes.

Wilber is more ambiguous about the meaning of ‘religion’ and ‘spirituality.’ He says that religion gives value, depth, care, concern, worth, significance, and meaning for our lives (Wilber 1998a, xi). But because he places religious (spiritual) consciousness in the same spectrum as our temporal stages of consciousness, he does not have the same emphasis on a central experience that informs all of our temporal experience. Instead, the lower stages are left behind as dualisms to be overcome.

Sometimes Wilber speaks of spirituality as being a different “side” of reality, or a different way of looking at reality that exists alongside other views. For example, Wilber contrasts the eye of nature with the eye of mind and the eye of Spirit (see discussion below of Wilber’s epistemological pluralism). Wilber says that he is integrating science and spirituality, but it seems to me that this idea of different ways of seeing leaves science to itself, with spirituality being added on. This is not an integrative view, but rather a dualistic approach to science and spirituality.

B. Developmental stages of spirituality

Wilber distinguishes between two functions of religion: (1) to console and (2) to transform:

Religion creates meaning for the separate self: myths and stories and tales and narratives and rituals and revivals that, taken together, help the separate self make sense of, and endure, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. This function of religion does not usually change the level of consciousness in a person; it does not deliver radical transformation. Nor does it deliver a shattering liberation from the separate self altogether. Rather, it consoles the self, fortifies the self, defends the self, promotes the self...But religion also has served—in a usually very, very small minority—the function of radical transformation and liberation. This function of religion does not fortify the separate self, but utterly shatters it—not consolation but devastation, not entrenchment but emptiness...(Wilber 1999, 27).

It is only transformative religion that counts as “authentic religion.” Religion in this sense is experiential—the transformation to higher levels of consciousness. We experience a crisis when we are challenged by higher levels of consciousness. Magic, myth and reason cannot be the source of authentic religious insight. There are four major stages of spiritual unfolding: belief, faith, direct experience, permanent adaptation (Wilber 1999, 312).

Authentic religion that transforms must be experiential:

Authentic spirituality, then, can no longer be mythic, imaginal, mythological, or mythopoetic: it must be based on falsifiable evidence. In other words, it must be, at its core, a series of direct mystical, transcendental, meditative, contemplative or yogic experience,—*not sensory* and *not mental*, but transsensual, transmental, transpersonal, transcendental consciousness—data seen not merely with the eye of flesh or with the eye of mind, but with the eye of contemplation. Authentic spirituality, in short, must be based on direct spiritual experience... (Wilber 1998a, 166).

Wilber leaves open the issue of whether “esoteric, mystical, nonfundamentalist Christianity” can carry out this required task of transformation (Wilber 1983, 172).

Wilber emphasizes that authentic spirituality does not regress to pre-rational, infantile or pre-personal levels. He provides important critiques of such kinds of spirituality—for example, some kinds of Jungian psychology that emphasize instinct and the pre-rational.

Wilber calls this the pre/trans fallacy—confusing pre-rational/pre-personal states of spirituality with trans-rational states. The pre-rational includes sensation, vital life feeling, bodily emotion, organic sentiment. Transrationality is never anti-reason. (Wilber 1998a, 92).

Wilber criticizes as regressive romanticism any view that society should return to primitive de-differentiated structures (Wilber 1995). Wilber's view is not politically correct today, but I believe that it is important. He condemns ecofeminism (which values horticultural societies) and ecomasculinism (deep ecologists, who value foraging societies) as examples of such regressive romanticism. Many new age movements are related to such romanticism; they passionately demand unity and wholeness and to be united with nature, but they seek this in the wrong way, by glorifying preconceptual and natural impulses. They long for the “wholeness” of the “primal” state, for a return to nature, to the “noble savage” (Wilber 1998a, 91-94). These movements seek to undo modernism. But modernism has had a positive influence in differentiating between art, morals and science. It represents an advance in our consciousness; we must not underestimate the ideas of equality, freedom and justice, feminism and universal rights that it brought about. To attempt to de-differentiate society would erase the freedoms and dignities that we have achieved through modernism. Romantics who are just anti-modern confuse differentiation with dissociation. But dissociation is caused by a “scientism” that took over all other spheres of our experience, leading to a “disenchantment of the world” (Wilber 1998a, 11-13, 52). The premodern world was not holistic, but merely pre-differentiated.

There were as yet no separate spheres to be brought together into a synthesis or integration; there was simply a fusion of spheres that robbed each of its autonomy and dignity (Wilber 1998a, 48).

With differentiation, each sphere can pursue its own truth without violence and domination from the others.

Dooyeweerd also emphasizes that philosophy is always based on our experience (Friesen 2009, Thesis 1). But Dooyeweerd and Wilber differ in the nature of that experience. Dooyeweerd's nondualism denies dualisms without succumbing to monism. Furthermore, Wilber is not aware enough of how this very idea of “experience” as the basis for religion

is itself a very Western idea.

Like Wilber, Dooyeweerd opposes any Romanticist ideas of a regression to childhood. The pre-theoretical attitude is not to be viewed as a "lost paradise" still inhabited only by children and primitive people (*NC III*, 30-31). We should not romanticize the "Wild Child" as being more purely related to naive experience:

It is, therefore, a fundamental error to seek the pure pattern of this experience [naive experience] in infants who have not yet learned the practical function of things and events in social life. (*NC III*, 32).

There is progress in history. We develop from "primitive" and "mythical" states of consciousness, from the pre-rational and pre-social. An infant does not even have pre-theoretical experience. The infant's experience is pre-experiential. The infant does not experience individuality structures in terms of the subject-object relation,⁷ and therefore he or she does not distinguish among things, plants, animals and people (*NC III*, 32). Primitive animism has the same difficulty:

Animistic representations may belong to an infantile and consequently pre-experiential phase of human development. Such representations are due to a provisional inability to conceive subject-object relations (*NC III*, 33).

Thus, as adult men who have outgrown animistic representations, we know perfectly well, that water itself does not live. Nevertheless, in the aspect of organic life, we ascribe to it the objection function of being a necessary means for life (*NC I*, 42).

Dooyeweerd speaks of our development from these primitive stages as an "opening up" of our experience. This opening process is guided by faith, which is the temporal expression of the supratemporal and religious directedness of our selfhood either away from or towards its Origin. Even apostate faith, directed away from God, accomplishes some opening up from the primitive state. The opening up process allows us to differentiate different cultural spheres, such as church, state, school, and family. Dooyeweerd refers to these spheres as having "sovereignty" with respect to each other.

⁷ Note: For Dooyeweerd, naive experience involves the subject-object relation. This must not be confused with a relation between entities that are totally disconnected from us. The subject-object relation is an intra-modal relation (Friesen 2006b, Part 3).

This is similar to Wilber's appreciation of the differentiated cultural spheres not being dominated by any one sphere.

But Dooyeweerd does not discuss these developmental stages of the opening process in enough detail. And perhaps, in his polemics against the dualism of modernism, Dooyeweerd does not express enough appreciation for modernism's achievements in human rights. His emphasis that even an absolutizing faith can open up our experience is a recognition of this fact, but it needs to be developed in more detail. Here, Wilber may be helpful. On the other hand, Wilber confuses historical stages of development with the modes of our consciousness. For Dooyeweerd, the modes are always there, but they have not always been fully opened up in their anticipations towards ultimate fulfillment.

Wilber also has a helpful emphasis on "pathologies" that result when we get stuck at a certain stage of consciousness. I believe that we should regard these pathologies as different kinds of dualism that result when any one mode of our consciousness is absolutized. It seems to me that Wilber's emphasis on rationality as the cause of cosmic diversity is itself such a pathology, but one that he cannot recognize because of his adherence to monism. But it is a mistake to identify such dualisms with the modes of temporal reality themselves. For Dooyeweerd, our consciousness expresses itself in *all* of its temporal modes. The different stages in our development are not the modes themselves, but the extent that our experience has been opened out the anticipations in our modes of experience.

Finally, although Dooyeweerd sees science as theory as part of the opening out process, he is opposed to the absolutization of science. This is in some ways similar to Wilber's critique of scientism. Dooyeweerd speaks of a certain "impairment" of our experience when we get stuck in a science that has not been opened out—when the setting apart of our experience by theory is not integrated back to the supratemporal unity of our selfhood (Friesen 2009, Thesis 90 and references).

IV. Dooyeweerd's Transcendental Critique

Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique compares answers given to three transcendental problems: (1) what is the temporal coherence that we experience? (2) what is the

supratemporal totality from which that coherence derives? (3) what is the origin of everything? (Friesen 2009, Theses 36-37 and references).

Does using Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique mean that this article is biased in favour of Dooyeweerd? Yes, but it would also have been biased if I had used Wilber's assumptions. What is important is the attempt to open a dialogue between these two different perspectives. Such a dialogue can illuminate both Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique as well as the idea of nondualism itself. We will look at how Dooyeweerd and Wilber provide different answers to these three transcendental problems.

Who am I? What is my experience of my own selfhood? How do I relate to other humans? How do I relate to the world around me? How do I relate to God? These experiences are all inter-connected (*NC II*, 560). If any one of these ways of experience is flawed or untrue, our other experiential knowledge will also be untrue. In particular, if we experience any of these relations in a dualistic way, then the other experiences will also be experienced incorrectly. In avoiding dualistic solutions, what does a nondual relation with God look like? With our own selfhood? And with the temporal world that we experience?

A. Origin

1. Avoiding dualism in relation to God

Let's begin with Dooyeweerd's third transcendental problem: what is the origin of everything? As we have seen, Dooyeweerd's philosophy is theistic. True spirituality is directed to God as Origin, and not to a temporal idol (an absolutized temporal mode, elevated above the other modes of consciousness).

Wilber says that theism is only partially true. Theism is a higher development than earlier stages of consciousness (such as nature mysticism), but ultimately he believes that theism is also dualistic; for him, the ultimate stage is monism.

Wilber refers to previous discussions of this issue. R.C. Zaehner distinguished between nature mysticism, monistic mysticism, and theistic mysticism. Zaehner gave a higher status to theistic mysticism than to monistic mysticism. Ninian Smart denied the distinction between theistic and monistic mysticism. Wilber doesn't bother citing the

original sources, but rather a textbook summarizing their views; he then says that both Zaehner and Smart are partially right. Wilber says that monistic mysticism is the highest level attainable (Wilber 1983, 32). This is an example of Wilber's superficial "include and transcend" methodology; it is convincing only to those who already accepted monism as the ultimate truth. I don't believe that Zaehner's ideas can be that easily dismissed. And as already discussed, there is a theism that is not monistic, but nondual. "Not-two" is not identical with "only One" (Friesen 2001, 2005b).

I agree that theism is frequently understood in a dualistic way. Dooyeweerd is critical of how many kinds of Christian theology continue to promote dualistic ways of thinking. Theology has often not been sufficiently critical of its philosophical assumptions. It is important to look at some ways that theism is incorrectly understood in a dualistic way.

a) God as supreme Mind

If we have a dualistic split between physical and mental, we may wrongly view God as the supreme Mind who created physical matter. This is again an over-valuation of rationality, and sets up a dualism between mind and matter. Or we may devalue rationality, and speak of God (or the Goddess) as irrational Mother Earth, and in this way emphasize impersonal instincts, drives and forces. But this is the same dualism, only inverted to favour the non-rational over the rational. We cannot overcome a dualism by reducing one pole to the other. For example, we cannot reduce rational "mind" to physical "matter" (materialism). And we cannot reduce matter to mind (spiritualism).

b) God as totally other

Another indication of dualism is when we regard God as totally separate from the world (deism). We then have the problem of how such a "totally other" God can interact and reveal Himself to His creation. We may attempt to escape this dualism by identifying God with the diversity of the world (pantheism), or by reducing the diversity of the world to God (monism). But pantheism fails to acknowledge the unity in the world, and monism fails to respect individuality. In monism, individuality is of no importance—it is as if we are all a part of God just like many drops in an ocean. But that discounting of individuality results in seeing the world as an illusion (*maya*), and seeing our relationships with others as merely games without any deep meaning. Dooyeweerd

speaks of God's law as the "boundary" between God and creation. But by that, he does not mean we are separated from God, but only that we are dependent on God.

The boundary is not to be understood as a separation [*scheiding*] between God and creature, which would be in conflict with the community with God in Christ (Dooyeweerd 1937-38, Second Response).

2. Creation, emanation

To the extent that Wilber acknowledges theism, he follows the pantheistic idea of Schelling and Hegel that Absolute Spirit, as the fundamental reality, manifests itself, or goes out of itself, forgets itself and empties itself into creation.

Thus the world is created as a "falling away" from Spirit, as a "self-alienation" of Spirit. Having "fallen" into the manifest and material world, Spirit begins the process of returning to itself... (Wilber 1998a, 106).

According to this idea, involution is the self-alienation of God. Nature is "slumbering Spirit," because nature is not yet self-reflexively aware. Wilber cites with approval Hegel's idea that nature is "God in its otherness." After such involution, we then require evolution to go forward to "radiant Nonduality" (which for Wilber means monism) (Wilber 1998a, 108). Evolution is "God in the making" (Wilber 1998a, 110). He says that modern science improperly rejected the spiritual nature of evolution, but retained the idea of evolution.

Wilber praises the German Idealist philosophers; he believes that their only failing is that they did not provide a spiritual practice (such as yoga or meditation) for people to reach nondual Spirit. Idealism was therefore dismissed as mere metaphysics (Wilber 1998a, 112).

In contrast to this pantheistic idea of evolution towards God, Dooyeweerd's nondual perspective acknowledges our existence as "from, through, and towards" God (*WdW* I, 11; *NC* I, 9). We come from God, but God is always more than His creation. Although creation has no meaning or existence except in relation to Him, our dependent form of existence is nevertheless more than merely illusion; it is a real expression of God. I have

described this as panentheism, which is distinct from pantheism.⁸ In pantheism, God and creation are identical. In panentheism, God is always more than His creation (Friesen 2009, Thesis 52). Panentheism means that creation is out of God. The idea of creation *ex nihilo* [out of nothing] is confusing. If by ‘nothing’ it intends to refer to a principle outside of God, so that our existence does not derive from God, then that would be a dualism. Dooyeweerd makes this point:

But it is well known that the words *ex nihilo* have turned out to be not entirely harmless in Augustine's theological exposition of the doctrine of creation, since they foster the idea that nothingness would be a second origin of creaturely being bringing about a metaphysical defect in the latter (Dooyeweerd 1971, 459 fn15).

According to the idealistic and pantheistic philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, it was necessary for God to create the world. Baader specifically rejected Schelling's views on this point. The created world is dependent on God, but God is not dependent on the world. To say that God is dependent on the world results in a pantheistic identification of God and creation.

B. What is the supratemporal totality from which temporal coherence derives?

1. The need for totality beyond the temporal *systasis*

As we shall see when we come to the third transcendental problem—the problem of the temporal coherence—both Wilber and Dooyeweerd agree that temporal reality is a ‘*systasis*’ [see discussion below]. What is interesting is that both Wilber and Dooyeweerd believe that there must be a timeless totality that serves as the undifferentiated root or ground of this temporal coherence. This idea of an undifferentiated unity existing prior to cosmic diversity has become almost unknown in today's philosophical discussions.

The idea of totality has some relation to German Idealism (Friesen 2005a), so it is no surprise that Wilber praises such Idealism. Wilber refers to “the absolute totality of Godhead or Spirit” (Wilber 1997, 44). Wilber says that although we can devise systems

⁸ The term “differentiating nondualism” is better, but the term ‘panentheism,’ first used by Karl Krause (1781-1832) is perhaps easier for Western readers to understand, although we must always be careful not to understand theism in a dualistic way.

approaches to study reality in its inter-relatedness, there must be a unity beyond such systems. Otherwise we have only a “flatland holism” (Wilber 1998a, 57). We need Spirit, the undifferentiated totality, the “white light” that is refracted or differentiated in time.

We have already discussed how for Dooyeweerd it is cosmic time that differentiates the totality, and how for Wilber, because of his logicism and monism, there is not a real differentiation from the white light of the totality, but only an apparent differentiation caused by our logical distinctions.

Dooyeweerd’s idea of totality also differs from German Idealism in that he does not identify totality with God. Rather, totality is itself a created reality. Totality is a created supratemporality, which unfolds in time. Dooyeweerd refers to Kuyper’s idea of the undifferentiated part of our consciousness.⁹ Both Kuyper and Dooyeweerd obtained from Baader this idea of a created undifferentiated root of temporal reality.

Wilber, however, follows German Idealism in identifying totality with absolute reality. For Wilber, there is an (illusory) emanation or involution from absolute undifferentiated reality, and then an evolution back towards it.

2. Totality and self-enquiry

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd relate the idea of the totality to the Selfhood. And both use a method of self-reflection as a way to understand totality.

Wilber refers with approval to Ramana Maharshi’s method of self-inquiry to reach our true self. We find references to Ramana’s self-enquiry even in Wilber’s first book, *Spectrum of Consciousness* (Wilber 1977, 308). In *Grace and Grit*, Wilber emphasizes how his dying wife Treya found comfort in Ramana’s method (Wilber 1992).

In Ramana’s method of self-enquiry, we learn that we are not our body, nor our emotions. But we are not the mind, either. We are not our thoughts. Our real center is in our heart, the center of all our functions (Friesen 2001, 2006a). Ramana’s self-enquiry has been

⁹ Abraham Kuyper refers to

...that point in our consciousness in which our life is still undivided and lies comprehended in its unity,—not in the spreading vines but in the root from which the vines spring (Kuyper 1898, 20).

interpreted in different ways. Some interpretations are by Ramana's popularizer, Paul Brunton, who later admitted that he had used Ramana as a "peg" for his own ideas (Friesen 2006a, 28 and 2005e). Other followers gave different interpretations. Wilber gives a Buddhist interpretation, where the final totality that we experience is Buddhist emptiness, beyond even the selfhood. For Wilber, *nirvikalpa samadhi* produces subjectively complete cessation of all mental activity, a radically formless consciousness that at the same time is experienced as immense (even infinite) freedom and boundless existence, the great Abyss or Emptiness from which all manifestation emerges. It is complete cessation of alpha, beta and theta brain waves, large increase in delta (usually associated with deep dreamless sleep) (Wilber 1998a, 200).

Ramana's method of Self-enquiry was not original to him; he obtained it from earlier Hindu Scriptures, especially the *Vivekacudamani*, the *Tayumanavar*, and the *Yoga Vasistha* (Friesen 2006a, 94-98). For example, according to the *Yoga Vasistha*, liberation is achieved only by the conquest of the mind by self-enquiry, and specifically the question "Who am I?" And the *Yoga Vasistha* does not support Wilber's view of a monistic absolute reality. Instead, it says that when the mind drops the perception of duality there is *neither duality nor unity*. In other words, the "not-two" of *advaita* does not mean monism.

The fact that Ramana used Hindu sources for his method of self-enquiry should make us doubt that he intended to go beyond the true self to some Buddhist emptiness. Ramana said that *sahaja* awareness is the highest state, and in that state, "one sees the only Self, and sees the world as a form assumed by the Self." Ramana opposed any view of meditation as a void. He says, "Absence of thought does not mean a void. There must be one to know the void." His emphasis is on the Self, and not on the Buddhist emphasis in seeking *sunyata*. Ramana advised against the practice of meditation, or the attempt to reach *nirvikalpa samadhi*, where all forms disappear (Friesen 2006a, 19, 114). He cites the *Vivekacudamani* in support of his view that *sahaja*, where one sees the true Self, is superior to the formless trance of *nirvikalpa Samadhi*. So all this casts doubt on Wilber's interpretation and use of Ramana's method.

Furthermore, Wilber is very confusing when he compares Ramana's method of self-enquiry to Descartes' methodical doubt. He says that Descartes' meditations are "just like Ramana Maharshi's Self-Enquiry."¹⁰ In the same video, Wilber praises Descartes as "the West's greatest modern Vedantist." We need to look at this in more detail. Wilber relies on something that Ramana Maharshi said (although he does not acknowledge Ramana as the source). When asked by a disciple whether he agreed with Sankara's view that reality was an illusion, Ramana replied that Sankara said three things

1. The world is illusory
2. Brahman alone is real
3. Brahman is the world.

Ramana's point is that the world is not totally illusory. It is real because it is *Brahman* (Friesen 2001; 2006a, 110).

Now Wilber refers to these same three points. But he uses them to try to reach a Buddhist conclusion. He says that point 2, *Brahman* alone is real, means that there was something before the Big Bang, and that this is the transcendent self, the Witness of which Ramana speaks.¹¹ It is what Jung calls transindividual, collective, transcendent, archetypal awareness—I have a body but am not my body; have desires, not my desires, have emotions, not my emotions; have thoughts; not my thoughts; the transpersonal Witness. It is our Original Face before we identify with passing states of consciousness (Wilber 2001a, 112-14). But we do not end with the Witness. We proceed to Point 3 that Brahman is the world, which Wilber interprets in a Buddhist sense as meaning that *nirvana* is *samsara*. In view of the Hindu sources of Ramana's method, and Ramana's own preference for *sahaja* Samadhi over *nirvikalpa samadhi*, Wilber's interpretation does not seem to be correct. Nor is Wilber's interpretation of Descartes correct.

Wilber says that Descartes' meditations point to what is enduring in the self when we take away everything that is contingent and temporal. He says that Descartes' only

¹⁰ Undated YouTube video. "Descartes: Reviving the West's Greatest Modern Vedantist," online at [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fa4WtuR0wbY>].

¹¹ I like Wilber's distinction between Witnessing and depersonalization. In the former you are nonattached; in the later [sic], detached (Wilber 1999, 248).

problem was that he did not push these conclusions to the nondual (Step 3). Wilber says that Descartes' "*cogito ergo sum*" has been terribly misunderstood, and that it really means, "Consciousness, therefore be." But that cannot be correct. '*Cogito*' means 'thinking' and not consciousness in general.¹² It is our intellectual activity. By his method, focusing on our rational intellect, Descartes introduced an extreme dualism into modern thought, elevating the rational above the physical, resulting in a dualism of body and soul. Western philosophy has been seeking to overcome that dualism ever since. I suggest that the reason why Wilber regards Descartes as achieving the same result as Ramana is that Wilber has himself (like Descartes) absolutized rationality. Wilber regards logical diversity as the cause of cosmic diversity. This is something that not even Descartes would have agreed to, since Descartes had a dualistic view, opposing rationality to physical substance. So Wilber's rationalism exceeds even that of Descartes.

Dooyeweerd is more consistent. For him, the totality is our selfhood (Friesen 2009, Theses 6, 40, 64-67). And we obtain knowledge of our selfhood through what he calls "religious self-reflection." This is a non-theoretical reflection on our selfhood, and our experiential realization that our central selfhood transcends time, although it expresses itself temporally in our body. This awareness of the cosmos from our supratemporal selfhood is what he calls 'cosmic consciousness' (Friesen 2009, Theses 5, 91). Insofar as it is a reflection on a center that transcends all our temporal modes of consciousness, including the rational, Dooyeweerd's method is similar to Ramana's method of self-enquiry. But it is different in that Dooyeweerd rejects any idea of attaining to any "pure consciousness." The idea of pure consciousness usually means that some part of our consciousness is "impure" and needs to be eliminated. Frequently, pure consciousness is seen as an overcoming of the logical side of our experience. Pure consciousness is a level of consciousness where there are no logical distinctions, and no longer any distinction between subject and object. Paul Griffiths correctly points out that this kind of loss of consciousness may achieve the overcoming of a subject-object distinction, but in a tautological way:

¹² For consciousness in general, we might better use the words '*conscientia*' [from which we get 'conscious' and 'conscience'] or '*animus* [soul].'

It does seem to follow, though somewhat trivially, from (some) Buddhist descriptions of this condition that it is an instance of nondualistic consciousness: for any X, if X contains no consciousness events, then X contains no nondualistic consciousness events (Forman 1990, 91).

If there is no consciousness of anything at all, then of course there is no distinction between 'subject' and 'object.' Robert Forman refers to Ramana's distinction between *nirvikalpa samadhi*, where there is no awareness of the world, and *sahaja samadhi*, which is "a state in which a silent level within the subject is maintained along with (simultaneous with) the full use of the human faculties" (Forman 1990, 8). *Sahaja samadhi* is more complex than the trance state of *nirvikalpa samadhi*, and it is clearly not a state where there is no distinction between subject and object, for otherwise one could not function in the world.

Nor should our cosmic consciousness be seen as somehow separated from our logical mode of consciousness. Cosmic consciousness is the relation between our supratemporal center and our temporal peripheral functions. In the periphery, it is not that there is no logic, but that logic "coincides" in a fullness of meaning with the other modes. It may be that in the central transcendent experience we move beyond logic. Dooyeweerd certainly says that our concepts cannot grasp the supratemporal; concepts are restricted to our temporal experience, and even the retrocipatory direction of experience. But cosmic consciousness does not involve splitting off our logical side. It is the fullness of all our experience. And Dooyeweerd is opposed to any ascetic spiritualizing away of our temporal functions. Dooyeweerd also rejects any viewpoint that seeks a static reality. That is a metaphysical-Greek idea of supra-temporality.

Thus, Dooyeweerd's idea of cosmic consciousness should not be interpreted as a *nirvikalpa samadhi*, where there is no awareness of subject or object. It may perhaps be similar to *sahaja samadhi*, although further research needs to be done on this point. See my thesis, *Abhishiktananda's Non-Monistic Advaitic Experience* (University of South Africa, 2001). For Dooyeweerd, our supratemporal consciousness always *expresses* itself in our temporal modes of consciousness. At death, there is no temporal body left in which we express our supratemporal selfhood. I believe that his philosophy allows for the possibility that expression of our selfhood would continue in a new and fulfilled supratemporal nature.

But because he places the enlightened consciousness on the same spectrum as the other levels of consciousness, Wilber cannot account for selfhood being beyond time, at least not in a way that it functions as a center for the temporal modes. It does not make sense to have a mode that is non-temporal within the same spectrum as the temporal. In my view, Dooyeweerd's philosophy accomplishes this much better.

Furthermore, Wilber has moved beyond this quest for the true self. He now seems to see his earlier works, in their quest for the selfhood, as Romanticism. Wilber now sees the selfhood as another intermediate step to overcome in favour of a Buddhist emptiness. He is trying to "transcend and include" even this idea of the supratemporal selfhood. He says that Raman's idea of the Witness (the self that watches the ego) is overcome in the final stage (Wilber 1983, 19-26). This move represents a shift away from Ramana Maharshi's neo-Hinduism, with its emphasis on the self (*atman*) to Buddhism's emphasis on no-self (*anatman*). There has been a longstanding controversy between these two views, and yet Wilber wants to blithely "include and transcend" the view of self into the view of no-self. He cites the Buddhist Padmasambhava: the seeker himself, when sought, cannot be found (Wilber 2001a, 45).

3. Avoiding dualism in our relation to our selfhood

As humans, we are able to think. You are thinking as you read the words on this page. Our acts of thought are characterized by our rationality, our ability to make logical distinctions. But our thoughts are not always logical; sometimes we draw improper conclusions or think irrationally. An act of thought may be affected by our emotions, by the physical state of our brain, by how much sleep we had the night before, or whether or not we are impaired by alcohol or drugs. And even when we reason correctly, such reasoning is an act of our selfhood *as a whole*; we exist as much more than only our logical function. And yet we often wrongly suppose that our true nature—our soul or mind—is purely rational. We then oppose this purely rational mind to our other functions, which we group together and call our physical "body." We oppose what we believe to be a mental substance to a physical substance. This mind/body dualism is unsatisfactory, because it results from an over-emphasis of one of our functions at the expense of the others. If we are rationalists, we give priority to the mind over the body,

and we tend to devalue the body. If we are irrationalists (or romantics), we turn the scheme around. Instead of valuing reason, we choose instead to emphasize our physical body with its feelings, emotions, instincts and drives. But both of these approaches are dualistic. A nondual approach regards our selfhood as the center of our whole existence: our selfhood is then the center of our entire body. Our body is not merely physical, instinctual, and emotional, but it also has rational and other normative functions. Our central selfhood is outside of time, but it expresses itself in time in all of these temporal functions. And even the very idea of “substance” is rejected as based on dualism. Instead of being a substance, or two separate substances, human nature is restless and dynamic, with no existence or being of its own, but dependent on God for its existence. Both Dooyeweerd and his brother-in-law Vollenhoven were opposed to dualism. In particular, both of them opposed the scholastic dualistic view of man as being composed of an eternal rational soul and a temporal physical body. But both men gave entirely different solutions. Vollenhoven tried to resolve the dualism by doing away with the eternal part of man; instead, he believed that man is entirely temporal. Dooyeweerd took the opposite approach: he objected to any philosophy that views our existence as entirely bound to time. He refers to such philosophy as ‘immanence philosophy,’ because it takes its start within (or immanent to) time. Such immanence philosophy will always produce a dualism or a split in our experience of reality. For Dooyeweerd, man exists both within time as well as above time in his heart-center. But this distinction of a supratemporal heart and a temporal body is not a dualism, for our heart center is not to be interpreted in terms of one temporal function such as rationality. Rather, it is a center that expresses and reveals itself within cosmic time in all of our functions, including our rational function. Dooyeweerd’s philosophy thus is able to account for our survival after death. As well, he is able to show the present spiritual power that we are given as image-bearers of God, existing above time and revealing/expressing ourselves within time.

For Dooyeweerd, our selfhood is a supratemporal totality. This totality expresses itself within time in our temporal modes of consciousness. Sometimes he refers to selfhood as “soul,” but this is not to be understood in Descartes’ dualistic sense. Our selfhood is not just rational. Rationality is one of the temporal modes. Our selfhood is the center of all the modes, which are differentiated in time.

Wilber's view avoids a dualism between mind and body, but only at the expense of eliminating the body (and the world) as ultimately real. Because Wilber sees our rationality as itself causing cosmic diversity, his view avoids dualism only by his monism.

4. Totality is beyond time

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd agree that totality, the undifferentiated unity, is beyond time. Wilber refers to the "secret cave of the heart where time touches eternity and space cries out for infinity." Our selfhood is the Witness, the I-I. I do not move through time, but time moves through me (Wilber 1999, 105). He refers to our transpersonal self, where something deep within actually transcends space and time (Wilber 2001a, 111, 126). He says that 'soul' has come to denote not that which is timeless in you but that which most loudly thrashes around in time. "Care of the soul" becomes focusing intensely on your ardently separate self (Wilber 1999, 36).

But again there are differences. For Dooyeweerd, totality's supratemporality is distinguished both from cosmic time as well as from God's eternity. It is an intermediate state that he calls the '*aevum*.' But these distinctions between eternal, supratemporal and temporal are not indications of dualism. They arise out of and are differentiated from each other. A dualism occurs only when we elevate one temporal mode of temporal consciousness above other modes.

Furthermore, Wilber's idea of the timeless present seems to be a *diminishment* of the past, and not its fulfillment. He says it is not a forgetting past and future; it is realizing that they *do not exist* (Wilber 2001a, 60). The timeless is a state of unmanifest cessation (Wilber 1999, 234 fn21). In contrast, Dooyeweerd's view of the supratemporal is that it is a fullness. In Baader's words, the supratemporal is the past, present and future, whereas the temporal world does not have a present, but only a past and a future. In Dooyeweerd's terms, we could say that the temporal world has only retrocitations and anticipations, but that the present is found in the supratemporal center (Friesen 2009, Theses 7, 46).

5. Totality is a coincidence of temporal modes

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd speak of all modes of consciousness coinciding in the supratemporal totality. But there are important differences. Wilber speaks of nondual

reality as being a “union of opposites” (Wilber 2001a, 54). He says “Spirit is not the good half of the opposites, but the ground of *all* the opposites” (Wilber 1999, 209). This idea of *a coincidentia oppositorum* goes back to Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64) and before him to the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus (c.535-475 BCE). Wilber refers to Nicholas of Cusa in support of his idea; “Not good vs. Evil but beyond good and evil” (Wilber 2001a, 23). Dooyeweerd criticizes Nicholas of Cusa’s idea of a coincidence of opposites in the sense of a metaphysical mathematical doctrine (*NC I*, 199). Dooyeweerd’s idea of coincidence is not a logical identity but a fullness (*WdW I*, 44, 71).

Dooyeweerd’s idea of the coinciding of the modes is not the same as Wilber’s idea of overcoming all opposites. For the modes are not opposite to one another. Opposites occur only within a mode (for example, logical/illogical within the rational mode, social/antisocial within the social mode, economic/wasteful/within in the economic mode, beautiful/not beautiful within the aesthetic mode, just/unjust within the juridical mode, good/evil within the ethical mode, faith/unbelief in the mode of faith). To say that the modes of consciousness coincide in our central selfhood means for example that God’s love and God’s justice are one. “In the religious fullness of meaning love, wisdom, justice, power, beautify, etc. coincide in a radical unity” (*NC I*, 106).

It is true that totality is the ground and source of all the modes, including the opposites within the modes. So if there is a coincidence of modes, then the opposites within each mode are also found in that coincidence. But that does not mean that justice is equivalent to injustice. I find Baader helpful here, who follows Boehme. In God, good and evil are contained; evil is not independent of God (otherwise there would be a dualism). But God’s will keeps evil in check. If we are the image of God, then in our fulfilled center, where the modes coincide, our will also should suppress the opposites that are not conducive to love, which is God’s law in its central sense.

Of more importance is whether temporal diversity ceases to exist in the supratemporal fullness of meaning. As a differentiating nondualism, Dooyeweerd’s view is that, although temporal diversity finds its center in a supratemporal totality, where all temporal modes coincide, temporal diversity is nevertheless real. Wilber’s view tends towards the

view that temporal diversity is illusory, or not real. It is *maya*, in distinction to the central undifferentiated unity, which alone is real. That is his monism.

6. Totality is supra-individual

Wilber says that the true self is also trans-personal. This explains ESP, telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, out-of-body experiences, the experience of being “the witness” of our actions and thoughts, and peak experiences (Wilber 2001a, 7).

Dooyeweerd also refers to totality being “supra-individual” (NC I, 60). This relates to his idea that the supratemporal totality is the root of all temporal individuality.

7. Identity of Selfhood and God [*Atman/Brahman*]

To the extent that Wilber does acknowledge the Selfhood, he accepts the monistic view that the Selfhood is identical to God, or that *Atman* is identical with *Brahman* (Wilber 1998a, 112). “In principle, your transcendent self is of one nature with God” (Wilber 2001a, 123). He compares this with Fichte’s idea that the radical Self is the source of the entire world. Although that is one view within *Advaita Vedanta*, it is not the only possibility in nondual philosophy, even within Hinduism. (Friesen 2001).

Dooyeweerd emphatically refuses to identify our selfhood and God. There is a difference between the supratemporal and the eternal. The supratemporal totality of our selfhood is a created eternity. It is not the same as God’s eternity.

8. *Enstasis*

For Dooyeweerd, our selfhood is outside of time. But our selfhood enters into the temporal; it is “fitted into” these temporal modes in what Dooyeweerd calls ‘*enstasis*.’ The word ‘*enstasis*’ is generally attributed to Mircea Eliade, who used the word ‘*enstasis* [*l’entase*]' in his 1958 book *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (Eliade 1958, 76ff). Eliade says the term ‘*enstasis*’ has several senses. As a kind of knowing, it grasps the object directly, without the help of categories or the imagination. As a yogic “state,” it makes possible the self-revelation of the Self (*purusha*). This “state” can be attained with the help of concentrating on an object or an idea, in which case it is called “*enstasis with support*,” or “*differentiated enstasis*.” In the highest forms of *differentiated enstasis*, the yogin experiences the happiness of eternal luminosity and consciousness of the Self, and

realizes that he is other than his body. This leads to undifferentiated enstasis, which is without support—without any meditation or contemplation.

Dooyeweerd used the term ‘enstasis’ as early as 1931, and therefore well before Eliade. The idea of ‘enstasis’ played a central role in his 1935-36 work *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. He continued to use the word right up to the last article he wrote (Dooyeweerd 1975). Dooyeweerd used ‘enstasis’ to describe the resting relation of equilibrium, experienced in pre-theoretical thought, between our supratemporal selfhood and that selfhood’s expression within the temporal world (Friesen 2009, Theses 10, 71). There is no corresponding term in Wilber’s philosophy for the relation of our supratemporal selfhood and its pretheoretical expression in the temporal world. This is because he does not separate the modes of consciousness from the supratemporal selfhood; Wilber sees the modes as different stages of the selfhood itself, and not as the ways that the selfhood expresses itself in time. To be sure, Wilber does speak of a pure consciousness, but that is not a relation to the temporal, but a withdrawal or cessation from the temporal. This results in a devaluation of our temporal experience in favour of monistic nondual awareness, which Wilber places at the apex of his spectrum.

C. The temporal coherence

1. *Systasis*

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd emphasize the coherence of the world. And both use the word ‘*systasis*’ to refer to this coherence. The word ‘*systasis*’ means, “to stand together.” It was used by the Greeks to refer to political unions. The use of the word in the sense of an integral whole is sometimes attributed to Jean Gebser (1905-1973), who used it to mean “the conjoining or fitting together of parts into integrality” in his book *The Ever Present Origin* (1986, first published in 1949 as *Ursprung und Gegenwart*). Wilber refers to Gebser for his usage of ‘*systasis*.’ He says it is a neologism coined by Gebser. He also relies on Gebser for the idea that consciousness evolution is the underlying framework of human development. Some people have questioned whether Wilber’s usage of the term ‘*systasis*’ accurately reflects the usage in Gebser’s own texts, but that issue is beyond the scope of this article.

Although Wilber thinks that Gebser coined the word ‘*systasis*,’ Dooyeweerd used the

term more than thirty years before Gebser, in a somewhat similar sense. Dooyeweerd uses the term ‘*systasis*’ to describe the *coherence* of our everyday experience, where the modes of our consciousness are not distinguished from each other, and where each mode is related to the others in a relation of temporal coherence. For Dooyeweerd, it is cosmic time that provides the basis for this coherence. Because they are refracted by cosmic time, the modes exist in an order of time, of before and after, and there is a web of interconnectedness by way of backward looking retrocitations to previous modes as well as a forward looking anticipations to later modes.

But there are significant differences in the way that Wilber and Dooyeweerd use the term ‘*systasis*.’ Wilber uses the term to express the unity within things (see discussion on holons below) as well as for the unity among things. Dooyeweerd reserves the term ‘*systasis*’ for our experience of the continuity of the temporal modes of consciousness; he uses the term ‘*enkapsis*’ for the intertwinement of different structures, things and events (See below for more discussion of *enkapsis*). Wilber places our modes of consciousness and things that function in our consciousness all on the same spectrum. I believe that Dooyeweerd’s idea of coherence, which distinguishes between *systasis* and *enkapsis*, is therefore more sophisticated than that of Wilber, and better able to explain the coherence of our temporal experience.

Furthermore, Wilber does not acknowledge *systasis* as having true reality. If all distinctions rest on dualisms, which are to be rejected, then ultimately the diversity of the world is not real. Dooyeweerd says that this results from the ‘absolutizing’ of rationality, mistaking logical diversity for cosmic diversity.

2. Holons and Individuality Structures

Wilber relies on Arthur Koestler’s idea of holons—that things are all parts of larger wholes:

...each element is a whole that is simultaneously a part of another whole: a whole atom is part of a whole molecule, a whole molecule is part of a whole cell, a whole cell is part of a whole organism (Wilber 1998a, 67).

Wilber says that Koestler coined the term ‘holon’ to indicate a whole/part relationship. There is an irreversible hierarchy of increasing wholeness, increasing holism, unity and

integration “higher-archies.” Each successive unit transcends but includes its predecessors. Each unit adds something emergent and distinctive.¹³ Quantum physicists discovered that reality could not longer be viewed as a complex of distinct things and boundaries. “Rather, what were once thought to be bounded “things” turned out to be interwoven aspects of each other” (Wilber 2001a, 37). Reality “is composed of holons within holons within holons *indefinitely*, with no discernible bottom or top” (Wilber 1998a, 124).

This last idea—that there is an indefinite chain of holons, seems to be an overstatement, even on Wilber’s view. For in his Chain of Being, Spirit would be the ultimate encompassing holon. That would be an end-point. And there would be no reason not to find a beginning point, despite Wilber’s assertion that it is “turtles all the way down.” For elsewhere, Wilber says that matter is the lowest of the nests (Wilber 1998a, 7).

Dooyeweerd does not use the term ‘holon’ but rather the term ‘individuality structure.’ An individuality structure is not composed of matter in the sense of substance, for that would be to introduce a dualism (Dooyeweerd, 1943-46). An individuality structure is an architectonic grouping of various modes of consciousness. One of the modes has the leading function, qualifying the individuality structure. For example, an individuality structure may be qualified by the physical mode.

For Dooyeweerd, an individuality structure is more complex than a single mode of consciousness. But an individuality structure is not yet a thing, which is even more complex. A thing requires at least two individuality structures, intertwined in an enkaptic relationship. One structure encompasses the other (much as one holon encompasses another). The qualifying function of the encompassing structure is called the ‘guiding function’ and the leading function of the encompassed structure is called the ‘founding function’ (Friesen 2009 Theses 30-32 and references). And such a thing may be enclosed

¹³ Jacob Klapwijk argues that Dooyeweerd’s modes can be understood in such an emergent way (Klapwijk 2008), but this is a misunderstanding of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy. Although there is historical development of individuality structures, things and events, the modes themselves do not emerge from one another.

in another enkaptic relation, including an event, or an imagined structure (as in works of art).

The advantages of Dooyeweerd's idea of individuality structures over Wilber's idea of holons are (1) Dooyeweerd avoids the dualistic view of substance (2) Dooyeweerd can distinguish between individuality structures and modes of consciousness (3) Dooyeweerd can distinguish between a part/whole relationship and a truly enkaptic relationship, where what is produced is something totally new. Because Wilber does not have the idea of enkapsis, he encounters problems, since, as he admits, members of a society are not parts to a whole. And he also wants to avoid saying that a heap of parts is the same as a whole (Wilber 2000a, 2000b).

3. Wilber's Four Quadrants

Wilber says that every holon has four quadrants. And these are four different types of hierarchies (marriage 63):

Upper left: Interior-Individual (Intentional)¹⁴

Lower left: Interior-Collective (Cultural) collective worldviews, based on communities of upper left

Upper right: exterior-Individual (Behavioral)—atoms, molecules...[these are not modes]

Lower Right (Exterior Collective (Social)—communities of the upper right holons.

These four quadrants thus depend on Wilber's distinction between interior subjective meaning (values) and exterior objective truth. But this distinction between objective facts and subjective values is itself a dualism. Wilber is not trying to change science's view of objective truth; he is supplementing it with subjective values. But such a fact/value dichotomy is not an integration. Contrast this with Dooyeweerd's philosophy, where there are no facts that do not also participate in the normative modes of consciousness. There is no split between fact and value.

¹⁴ Note: this is a different use of 'intentional' than Dooyeweerd's meaning of non-ontical. For Wilber, it means "introspection and interpretation" (Wilber 1998a, 117).

Wilber says that scientism tries to reduce all left-hand quadrants, ignoring the role of interpretation. But this results in flatland. And postmodernism tries to deny all right hand quadrants, saying everything is interpretation. He wants to avoid both errors. But because Wilber merely supplements supposed objective facts with subjective interpretation, he has not advanced their integration at all, but merely placed them in different compartments in his epistemological pluralism.

4. Connectedness and Cosmic Consciousness

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd emphasize the connectedness of reality. For Dooyeweerd, this is because of the *systasis* of our modes of consciousness, and the way that individuality structures are not only architectonic groupings of these modes but also participate in each mode, either as subject or as object, and the way that individuality structures are *enkaptically* interwoven with each other. Dooyeweerd also speaks of our “cosmic consciousness” in how we recognize that we, although supratemporal in the center of our being, are fitted into this temporal coherence.

In this cosmic self-consciousness we know that the temporal cosmic reality is related to the structure of the human selfhood qua *talis* [as such]. This temporal reality, in its conformity to laws of universal validity, is essentially a religious structure of relations in which individuality is fitted [*gevoegd*].

All theoretical pushing away of the human selfhood from this central position in experience rests on a lack of philosophic self-reflection (*WdW* II, 494)

Dooyeweerd says that only man has this cosmic consciousness because only man has a religious root that transcends time, grounded in a selfhood. By this selfhood we can, using our intuition of time, think within [*in-denken*] the cosmos and theoretically understand its modal aspects of meaning in *dis-stasis* [*uiteen-vatten*] and synthesis (*tezamen vatten*). (*WdW* II, 415). Dooyeweerd distinguishes this pre-theoretical cosmic consciousness from a theoretical understanding, or cosmological consciousness (Friesen 2009, Theses 5, 83, 91 and references).

The idea of cosmic consciousness was asserted by Richard Maurice Bucke, a Canadian doctor who wrote a book of the same name, and who describes his unitive experiences. It was described in *the Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*:

All at once, without warning of any kind, he found himself wrapped around, as it were, by a flame-colored cloud. For an instant he thought of fire—some sudden conflagration in the great city. The next (instant) he knew that the light was within himself.

Directly after there came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness, accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Into his brain streamed one momentary lightning-flash of the Brahmic Splendor which ever since lightened his life. Upon his heart fell one drop of the Brahmic bliss, leaving thenceforward for always an aftertaste of Heaven. Among other things he did not come to believe, he saw and knew that the Cosmos is not dead matter but a living Presence, that the soul of man is immortal, that the universe is so built and ordered that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love and that the happiness of every one is in the long run absolutely certain (Bucke, 10).

The experience that Bucke reports is visionary and ecstatic. It uses Hindu terminology, relating the experience to Brahman. It is intensely experiential. Bucke says that cosmic consciousness carries with it the conviction of immortality. It is a consciousness not that a personal shall have eternal life but that it is possessed already.

Bucke's experience was frequently referred to by later philosophers of mysticism. William James refers to Bucke in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*. We know that Dooyeweerd had read William James as early as 1915, when Dooyeweerd refers to James in his student article about Frederik van Eeden. Dooyeweerd was still reading James in 1940 when he wrote about James's idea of the “specious present.”

Wilhelm Wundt (whom Dooyeweerd also read) refers to the idea of cosmic consciousness in his *Principles of Physiological Psychology*:

We may say, then, that the mechanistic explanation of the movements of the lower animals is not the outcome of impartial and unprejudiced observation. But the rival theory, which ascribes mind and consciousness to the plant-world, is in no better case. Fechner, the chief representative of this theory, himself expressly declares that he derived it from considerations of general philosophy: he further attributes consciousness to the earth and the other heavenly bodies, making this cosmic consciousness the whole, of which the individual forms of consciousness in plant and animal are parts (Wundt 1902).

Wundt's reference is to Gustav Fechner's *Zend-avesta oder über die Dinge des Himmels und des Jenseits*. Dooyeweerd makes express reference to that book, so we know he read it (*WdW* III, 554ft; *NC* III, 631 ft).

Wilber also refers to ‘cosmic consciousness.’ He expressly refers to Bucke (Wilber 2001a, 1-2). And he refers to Fechner, one of whose books he found “while rummaging through a store filled with wonderfully old philosophy books” (Wilber, 2000). In my

view, this shows the time lag before ideas reach a North American reader like Wilber. Dooyeweerd was familiar with Fechner's views long before Wilber re-discovered them. And Dooyeweerd gives a more balanced critique of Fechner's pantheism (*NC III*, 630-31).

For present purposes, what is important to recognize is that Dooyeweerd and Wilber give different interpretations of 'cosmic consciousness.' For Dooyeweerd, it is related to our supratemporal selfhood being fitted into the coherence of temporal reality. For Wilber, it is the feeling of being one with the universe (Wilber 2001a, 2).

Wilber connects this to the Buddhist doctrine of independent Origination, or interdependent arising (*pratitya-samutpada*):

No beings or phenomena exist independently of other beings and phenomena. All beings and phenomena are caused to exist by other beings and phenomena. Further, the beings and phenomena thus caused to exist cause other beings and phenomena to exist. Things and beings perpetually arise and perpetually cease because other things and beings perpetually arise and perpetually cease. All this arising and being and ceasing go on in one vast field or nexus of beingness. And there we are. (Wilber 1996, 42-43)

In Buddhism, there is no teaching of a First Cause. Instead, "Stuff happens, because other stuff happens." How all this arising and ceasing began, or even if it had a beginning, is not explained. Buddha emphasized understanding the nature of things as-they-are, and cautioned against over speculation of what might have happened in the past or what might happen in the future. Every entity interpenetrates every other entity. The universe is like a vast net of jewels [Indra's net] (Wilber 2001a, 38).

In contrast, Dooyeweerd emphasizes the idea of creation by God as Origin. But within that created reality, there is an amazing inter-connectedness.

5. Naïve and theoretical thought

For Dooyeweerd, our modes of consciousness are not distinguished in naïve or pre-theoretical experience. The modal aspects of an individual thing are then experienced only implicitly (*NC III*, 57). It is only in theoretical thought that we obtain an explicated or articulated knowledge of the aspects. But this explicit distinguishing is not to be regarded as a logical distinguishing, for that would again elevate the rational mode of

consciousness. In theoretical thought, the temporal modes of consciousness are recognized as distinct; this setting apart of the modes in *dis-stasis* from *systasis* is experienced only in theoretical thought. It is not a real separation, but only what Dooyeweerd calls ‘intentional.’¹⁵

Wilber does not adequately distinguish between our pre-theoretical experience and theory. He therefore cannot see that the drawing of boundaries in our awareness—which he rightly sees as making our world fragmented and disjointed (Wilber 2001a, 40)—is a result of our theoretical thought. As Dooyeweerd emphasizes, the real world is not fragmented in this way, even though there are distinctions between things, events and people. It is the distinction between the modes of consciousness which causes fragmentation, and which then needs to be united back to the integrative and total view of our supratemporal selfhood.

6. Science

a) Critique of constructivism

Wilber and Dooyeweerd both criticize constructivism—the idea that all our experience (including our religious experience) is “shaped,” “formed,” and “mediated” by the beliefs, concepts and language that we bring to the experience. Constructivism is itself a hyper-Kantianism, as Perovich has demonstrated (Perovich 1990).

Dooyeweerd said that Kant’s synthetic *a priori* is not to be understood as a constructive creation of the human mind. And Dooyeweerd opposed the Humanistic science-ideal, which ascribes a creative logical function to human consciousness (*NC II*, 555). Long before Dooyeweerd, Baader said that knowledge [*erkennen*] is not a matter of inventing new principles, but of discovering them. It is a *finden* (finding), and not an *erfinden* (invention). This idea of a ‘finding’ is reflected in Dooyeweerd’s idea that reality is *given* to us (Friesen 2009, Thesis 2 and references).

Wilber gives a strong critique of postmodernism’s view that science is only interpretation, and that the world is not perceived, but only interpreted. According to

¹⁵ Dooyeweerd does not use the term ‘intentional’ in a phenomenological sense. For him, it just means “non-ontical” (Friesen 2009, Thesis 88).

postmodernism, science is arbitrary, relative, socially constructed, interpretive, power-laden, and non-progressive (it proceeds by leaps and ruptures in new paradigms). Wilber says that Thomas Kuhn denounced this misuse of the word 'paradigm' and that Kuhn himself gave up using the term. Paradigms disclose data; they do not invent it. "...one's own ego cannot impose on the universe a view of reality that finds no support from the universe itself." (Wilber 1998a, 22-3, 29, 32, 159).

Wilber says that this extreme postmodernism is internally self-contradictory, in that it "cannot itself claim to be true" (Wilber 1998a, 34). He gives a similar critique of deconstruction, which says that all meaning is within a context, and of the "linguistic turn," where there are only "free-floating signifiers" cut loose from any anchoring at all (Wilber 1998a, 124, 125, 130). If postmodernism is right, there can be no Spirit whatsoever (Wilber 1999, 311).

And yet Wilber is inconsistent. His own philosophy is constructivist in the extreme, insofar as he regards cosmic diversity the result of rational distinctions and setting of boundaries. He refers with approval to the rise of idealism, beginning with Kant's view things are not merely perceived, but also constructed by the categories of the mind. Later, Fichte said the entire perceived universe is the product of mind. For both Fichte and Vedanta, "liberation consists in rediscovering the absolute Self of which the finite self and finite world are but a manifestation." And Wilber criticizes the idea of "givenness." He approves of Wilfrid Sellars' view that the given is a myth, and that in fact most of the structures with which science approach the empirical world are nonempirical structures. By that he means *interior* [subjective] structures (Wilber 1998a, 104-5, 146).

Although Wilber says that it is not the individual ego that constructs the world, but only the absolute Self, that does not excuse his extreme constructivism, for on his view, even the individual self has been constructed by the Absolute. There is no given at all that is not ultimately illusory. Wilber's monism does not provide an adequate base from which to critique postmodernism and constructivism.

b) Separate science for each mode.

Each level of reality has a specific branch of knowledge associated with it. Physics biology, psychology, theology, mysticism (Wilber 1998a, 8). As discussed, Dooyeweerd does not agree that modes are levels of reality. But he does agree that there is a special science associated with each mode.

c) Science and values

For Wilber, science is value-free, and the problem is when science tries to invade the other value spheres.

...scientism is the belief that there is no reality save that revealed by science. The “interior dimensions” of morals, artistic expression, introspection, spirituality, contemplative awareness, meaning, and value and intentionality—were dismissed. Flatland (Wilber 1998a, 56).

Science tells us what “is” and not what “should be or ought to be” (Wilber, 1998a, x); therefore he needs “interior” truth to *complement* exterior truth. He says that the sphere of science speaks in *objective* “it” language. The expressive-aesthetic sphere is described in “I” language. This *subjective* domain represents the self and self-expression, aesthetic judgment and artistic expression. And the moral-ethical sphere expresses itself in “we” language.” These three spheres: the ethical, the scientific and the aesthetic, correspond to the Good, the True and the Beautiful (Wilber 1998a, 50).

Although he wants reconciliation and integration, Wilber’s approach leaves science to do its own thing while complementing it with religious values. This is not real integration. The distinction between is and ought is itself a dualism. So is Wilber’s understanding of the distinction between subjective and objective.

Dooyeweerd is more integral in the way that he wants to unite spirituality and science. In Dooyeweerd’s view, science must anticipate the normative modes of consciousness (e.g. analytical, social, ethical), as well as the modes that are earlier in time. And these normative modes of consciousness are not just “subjective.” Rather, everything participates in all modes of consciousness. The capacity to be analyzed, to be used socially and economically, to be treated ethically are all inherent in things, and not added on to things as a subjective extra. Even our perception of things is inherent in the thing.

Dooyeweerd rejects the distinction between primary qualities of a thing (i.e. matter) and secondary qualities that inhere in the perceiving subject. All qualities inhere in things, which participate in all functions, either as a subject or as an object.

d) Reductionism

Dooyeweerd says that the meaning of any one of our modes of consciousness cannot be reduced to another mode. He illustrates this with the prism analogy. The modes of consciousness are like colours refracted from the white light. But no colour can be reduced to any other colour. Each retains its own “sphere sovereignty.” When we elevate one mode above the others, we are then trying to explain the other modes in terms of it. That is reductionism. For example, if (like Wilber), we elevate the rational, and explain all other diversity in terms of logical diversity, we have absolutized the rational and attempted to reduce the other modes to it. This logicism results in insoluble antinomies of thought.

Wilber also speaks of avoiding reductionism. He says that Freud reduced transrational experiences to prerational infantilisms. And Jung improperly elevated [absolutized?] some prerational childhood productions to transrational glory. Reductionism and elevationism are related. Another example is reducing consciousness to the brain, reducing transcendent mind to a function of the body (Wilber 1998a, 2).

Dooyeweerd’s response would be that such reductionism is an improper use of science, since in reducing mind to brain, it has absolutized the physical mode. But Wilber allows this scientific absolutization to be valid; he just wants to supplement it with another viewpoint. He says, “the mind is known by acquaintance, the brain by objective description” (Wilber 1998a, 70). This is his interior/exterior distinction, which maintains a dualistic perspective.

Wilber calls these different ways of knowing “epistemological pluralism.” Science is one of several valid modes of knowing. Science is correct in its way of knowing, but there are other ways of knowing, other “eyes” of perception. He refers to Bonaventure’s distinctions between the eye of flesh (empiricism), the eye of mind (rationalism), and the eye of contemplation (mysticism). Science (empiricism) studies matter/energy:

Empirical science, according to epistemological pluralism, can tell us much about the sensory domain and a little bit about the mental domain, but virtually nothing about the contemplative domain (Wilber 1998a, 36).

Wilber claims to rely on Jean Gebser for this pluralistic or multiple perspectives view. He also refers to this as vision-logic or network-logic. No single perspective is privileged. Vision logic “adds up the perspectives.” This gives more holistic or integral view. Wilber says that this parallels the Idealists’ distinction between *Verstand* (formal rationality, monological, empiric-analytic) and *Vernunft* (network-oriented, vision logic). Systems logic is a crippled vision logic, chained to the exterior surfaces. All interior dimensions were reduced to exterior surfaces. The result is a “flatland” view of reality (Wilber 1998a, 10, 17-19, 35, 131-3).

Wilber says that science needs to acknowledge that its own operations depend on interiority. As proof, Wilber refers to mathematics, which is not sensory (Wilber 1998a, 144, 149). But the fact that mathematics is not sensory does not make mathematics interior. For Dooyeweerd, the numerical is just as objective a mode as the physical. For Dooyeweerd, what is ‘interior’ is not any one of our temporal modes, but our central, supratemporal selfhood.

For Dooyeweerd, the various modes of consciousness are not various perspectival views, as phenomenology asserts. They are modes of consciousness that cannot be reduced to one another. With respect to the rational mode, Dooyeweerd says that our concepts are related to retrocipations from the rational mode. Perhaps this corresponds to what Wilber calls ‘*Verstand*.’ Dooyeweerd says that the rational mode can be opened out to include anticipations of later modes of consciousness. Perhaps there is some similarity there to vision-logic, or Wilber’s use of ‘*Vernunft*.’ But for Dooyeweerd this is the same mode of consciousness, only opened up. It is not a different mode. And, unlike Kant’s use of the term, even this opened up analytical mode of consciousness is not to be identified with our supratemporal selfhood; on the contrary, it is still just a temporal expression of our selfhood. Our supratemporal selfhood relativizes all of the temporal modes. And unlike Wilber’s philosophy, which places religion and spirituality alongside a value-free science, Dooyeweerd’s view of the opening up process seeks to effect a religious transformation of all of our experience. Dooyeweerd wants to transform science, by

extending the realm of science so that it anticipates the later (or what Wilber calls ‘higher’) modes of consciousness. Far from it being value-free, Dooyeweerd believes that science impairs our worldview unless it is opened up to include the normative spheres. In my view, that is a far more integral relation of fact and values than is found in Wilber. Wilber just wants to have a synthesis of science and his kind of spirituality, leaving each to their own kind of knowledge. We have seen from the history of philosophy how this kind of dualism, between truths of “reason” and truths of “faith” will continually war with each other in a dualism and not in any integrated way.

The very distinction of *Verstand/Vernunft* is taken from Kant and the Idealists. Dooyeweerd, following Baader (and using many of Baader’s arguments), gives a “New Critique of Theoretical Thought,” in which he criticizes Kant.

From out of this central Christian viewpoint [the heart, the religious root of human existence], it appeared to me that a revolution was necessary in philosophic thought, a revolution of so radical a character, that, compared with it, Kant’s “Copernican revolution” can only be qualified as a revolution in the periphery. For what is at stake here is no less than a relativizing of the whole temporal cosmos in what we refer to as both its “natural” sides as well as its “spiritual” sides, over against the religious root of creation in Christ. In comparison with this basic Scriptural idea, of what significance is a revolution in a view of reality that relativizes the “natural” sides of temporal reality with respect to a theoretical abstraction such as Kant’s “*homo noumenon*” or his “transcendental subject of thought?” [*WdW* I, vi: my translation; inadequately translated in *NC*]

Kant relativized the natural sides of temporal reality in favour of the rational transcendental ego. But Dooyeweerd’s idea of a central selfhood relativizes all of our temporal functions, including our rationality. It is therefore a much more radical revolution than Kant’s “Copernican Revolution.” For Dooyeweerd, rationality is merely one temporal mode of consciousness. But all these modes are merely in the temporal periphery. The central totality of the selfhood relativizes all of them. No single mode is autonomous. Dooyeweerd goes on to say that if temporal reality cannot be neutral with respect to this central religious supratemporal reality of the selfhood, then we can certainly no longer accept the idea of the religious neutrality of theoretical thought (*WdW* I, vi-vii)..

And yet that is what Wilber is doing in his epistemological pluralism, where he compartmentalizes various kinds of knowledge. He allows scientific knowledge to be value-free, or in Dooyeweerd's terms, "religiously neutral." Wilber has not challenged Kant's idea of the autonomy of reason. Indeed, Wilber elevates or absolutizes reason even more than Kant, since he makes logical diversity the basis for all cosmic diversity. In *The Atman Project*, Wilber seems to have had some idea that autonomy means a failure to keep the totality of the selfhood in view. He cites Rollo May:

neither the ego nor the body nor the unconscious can be 'autonomous' but can only exist as part of a totality. And it is in this totality [the centaur] that will and freedom must have their base (Wilber 1980, 56).

But Wilber fails to see that his own elevation of rationality makes it autonomous, and not part of the totality of the selfhood. Wilber is quite content to accept Kant's conclusions, except that they do not extend to spiritual knowledge. In his own philosophy, Wilber continues to keep these different ways of knowing—science and spirituality—in separate compartments, for he says that Kant's critique has shown that there could not have been a nonmaterial Logos governing the patterns of creation prior to the Big Bang (Wilber 1998a, 21). Wilber says this is a "category error"—attempting to use eye of mind to see that which can be seen only with the eye of contemplation.

Wilber's epistemological pluralism is therefore not integrative at all. It does not integrate various modes of knowing, but places them alongside each other.

IV. Ethical implications

Dooyeweerd's ethical philosophy is related to the three transcendental problems of Origin, Totality and temporal coherence. We love God as the Origin and ultimate Source of meaning, we love other people because they also bear the image of God, and we love the temporal world because, in being the image of God, we in the sense of the totality which is our true Self, are the root of the temporal world, and responsible for it. All our modes of consciousness coincide in the central commandment of love (Dooyeweerd 1968, 123). We can compare this with Dooyeweerd's Christian theosophical source in Baader, who also emphasized the centrality of love (Betanzos 1998). When we are separated from our own true selfhood because of the split we make between mind and body, we end up also being alienated from other people, regarding them as totally

separate from us, like objects whom we observe and whom we interact with by rules that are made to govern these interactions. We call this acting “ethically,” but this misses the deep connection with others based on the fact that we are all God-images (image of God). A nondual approach recognizes our selfhood in the other, for we are both images of God. And that is why Christ linked the command to love God with the command to love others as ourselves (NC II, 155).

Wilber has a much harder time providing a basis for ethics. In his monistic view, there is no distinction between us and God. How then can we love God? And there is also no “other person” to love. And if the world is ultimately illusion, the product of our rational distinctions, how can we love it?

Wilber is aware of these issues. His solution is to hold them together as a paradox. In a YouTube video, he says that we can only help when we recognize that there are not others to help. But that is not a satisfying solution for us to act. It results in narcissism of giant proportions, since there is then nothing other than our self as ultimate unity. This is not Wilber’s intent; indeed, he decries narcissism (Wilber 2002). But in practice, his kind of monistic nondualism is not only narcissistic but also dualistic and rationalistic.

He says that there are no others who can inflict suffering, and that the Self, which is One, does not suffer:

Right now you *already* are the cosmos, you *already* are the totality of your present experience.” “When it is realized that one’s self is the All, there is then nothing outside of oneself which *could* inflict suffering.... Only parts suffer, not the Whole (Wilber 2001a, 49-50).

The same problem of how we can love when there are no “others” to love was the problem that ultimately made Paul Brunton reject the ideas of Ramana Maharshi. Ramana was indifferent to the suffering of those being bombed in the war. Ramana asked, “What others?” (Friesen 2005e). Wilber, too recognizes Ramana’s ethical problems. He says,

I don’t think we could say that Ramana was an exemplary representative of an integral view; but his own Self-realization—or the recognition of the always-already truth of the Witness and its ever-present ground in One Taste—was unsurpassed (Wilber 1999, 286)

If there are no others to whom we are ethically responsible, we can end up justifying all sorts of crazy actions. This problem arose with one of Wilber's first teachers, Adi Da, also known by many other names, such as Da Free John; his original name was Franklin Albert Jones (b. 1939). Many devotees claimed that he was involved in financial, emotional and sexual abuse. Although Wilber at first supported Adi Da, he has also criticized some of his practices. In his latest statement, Wilber says that although Adi Da "might be highly spiritually realized, he seemed to have several problematic, perhaps even pathological, aspects to his personality and the way he was running his community." Yet Wilber continues to affirm his belief in "his great spiritual realization" even if he no longer recommends Adi Da's community for the "typical spiritual aspirant" (Wilber 1998b).

Wilber recognizes that we need others, but he says that we *invent* these others in order to "play." We ourselves have to take the role of the other and then forget that we are playing both sides. We have to forget who we are (Wilber, 1999, 208). But such ethical "play" does not involve any real relation of love between ourselves and others. Wilber cannot provide a coherent basis for ethics.

Although Wilber describes these ethical issues in terms of paradox, I see them as antinomies. For Dooyeweerd, such insoluble antinomies are always the sign of dualistic thinking. In Wilber's case, they result from his elevation of the rational mode of consciousness to the source of all temporal diversity.

Wilber cites Aquinas

True nondual mystics are not haters of this world, but celebrators of it.
Grace, said St. Thomas, perfects nature, it does not obliterate it (Wilber 1999, 84)

True, but does not Wilber's monism obliterate nature? Wilber refers to the Hindu idea of *tat tvam asi* [That art thou] as the basis for our acting ethically towards the world. "Your real Self is identical to the ultimate energy of which all things in the universe are a manifestation" (Wilber 2001a, 50). But as already discussed, Wilber does not acknowledge the origin of this use of *tat tvam asi* for ethical purposes in the Western philosophy of Schopenhauer. And if Absolute reality is monistic, there is no real world to love, either.

For Wilber, the highest ethical ideal is to dissolve all boundaries and to regain our unity consciousness. He says that Eastern and esoteric Western liberation seek to deliver people from their boundaries: “one who sees through the illusion of boundaries is liberated” (Wilber 2001a, 41). The “ultimate metaphysical secret” is that there are no boundaries in the universe. We need to die to our false, separate self in order to awaken to our immortal and transcendent self. When we regain unity consciousness, it is like God praying to himself. There is no boundary between subject and object, self and not-self, seer and seen.

For when we see through the illusions of our boundaries, we will see, here and now, the universe as Adam saw it before the Fall: an organic unity, a harmony of opposites, a melody of positive and negative, delight with the play of our vibratory existence (Wilber 2001a, 29).

He recommends Ramana and Adi Da (Bubba Free John). (Wilber 2001a, 29, 30, 41, 43, 121, 129, 138, 143-44). It is true that Wilber tries to retain some reality for the world. He says, “This is not to say that the real world is a mere product of our imaginations (subjective idealism), only that our boundaries are.”(Wilber 2001a, 37). But his philosophy does not explain how that reality can be maintained if all boundaries are illusion.

V. Conclusion

Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd have sought an integral philosophy that overcomes dualism. But they have given very different solutions. Wilber gets rid of dualism by an absolute monism. Dooyeweerd’s nondualism is neither monistic nor dualistic.

I have learned a lot from Wilber, particularly with respect to some of his ideas regarding stages of spiritual development, pathologies that develop from dualisms, and his critique of the pre/trans fallacy. I cannot follow him in his rejection of theism. And I believe that his monism has created numerous insoluble antinomies in his philosophy. Although he opposes dualism, his own philosophy elevates the rational mode of our consciousness above the other modes of consciousness insofar as he says that it is this rationality that creates cosmic diversity. In ethics, he has no place for love, since there is no “other” to be loved, whether God, or other people, or the cosmos. Science relies on distinctions and analysis. If these distinctions are ultimately not real, and are the illusory product of our

rationality that creates boundaries, then Wilber has devalued science, and not integrated it with his spirituality.

I find Dooyeweerd's philosophy to be more integral and less dualistic than Wilber's:

(1) Dooyeweerd's philosophy provides a basis for nondual relationship to God, others, and the cosmos. A differentiated nondualism allows for real relationships among all three. In contrast, Wilber's philosophy ends in antinomies that cannot provide a basis for ethics or science. Science relies on distinctions and analysis. If these are ultimately not real, then he has devalued science, and not integrated it with his spirituality. And if, at root, everything is One, then there is no ethical basis to act, since there are no "others" whom we can love.

(2) Dooyeweerd's idea of cosmic time, the way that modes are ordered in time and anticipate and refer back to each other, and the interconnectedness of individuality structures in their enkaptic relationship in things and events gives a better basis for temporal coherence than Wilber's idea of holons.

(3) Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd refer to the temporal coherence in terms of *systasis*. But Wilber does not explore any use of this term prior to Gebser. And Wilber does not investigate how it is theory that disrupts this systasis by making it into a dis-stasis. Dooyeweerd's view of dis-stasis as non-ontical is to me more satisfying than Wilber's view that all boundaries are created by the mind and therefore illusory.

(4) Dooyeweerd's explanation of the subject-object relation is more integral than Wilber's. Whereas Wilber maintains a dualism of fact/value, and of exterior/interior, Dooyeweerd locates the subject-object relation within the modes of consciousness themselves in such a way as to avoid any idea of primary and secondary qualities.

(5) Dooyeweerd really tries to reform the dualistic tendencies in science by questioning the idea of substance, and rejecting Wilber's idea that science is value-free.

(6) Dooyeweerd distinguishes between pre-theoretical and theoretical experience. Theoretical experience is not ontical, but only intentional. In this way, he avoids Wilber's conclusion that the making of theoretical distinctions and boundaries has an ontical function. In Dooyeweerd's view, that is an absolutization of the rational mode, resulting in logicism.

(7) Wilber has correctly pointed out errors of constructivism and extreme postmodernism. Dooyeweerd's philosophy is also opposed to constructivism and the ideas of postmodernism, and Wilber's critique of these ideas can only strengthen Dooyeweerd's view of the "givenness" of our experience. But Wilber has failed to see that his own view

of rationality creating cosmic diversity is constructivistic to an extreme degree.

(8) Dooyeweerd distinguishes between ontical levels of experience. The temporal modes of consciousness are not themselves levels of consciousness, but are all within one ontical level of experience. Wilber sees modes of consciousness as themselves different levels of ontical reality.

(9) Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd refer to stages of development, or the opening up of our experience. But for Wilber, this is in terms of ascending to higher modes of consciousness, whereas for Dooyeweerd it is an opening out of anticipations of fullness that are already there in each of the temporal modes.

(10) Dooyeweerd's idea of totality as a coincidence of the modes of consciousness is preferable to Wilber's, who follows Nicholas of Cusa's idea of the coincidence of opposites.

(11) Both Wilber and Dooyeweerd use the prism analogy to illustrate differentiation from the "white light" of totality. But Dooyeweerd's differentiation is caused by cosmic time, and not by rational thought. And for Dooyeweerd, he differentiation is real, and not illusory.

(12) Dooyeweerd's idea of totality as the root of the temporal world gives a better basis for responsibility for the world than does Wilber's idea that the diversity of the world is an illusory boundary that must be overcome.

(13) Dooyeweerd's philosophy is more respectful of perennial philosophy, in the sense of "an enduring tradition" than Wilber's. Wilber's method of "transcend and include" does not do justice to many of the philosophies that he wants to subsume under monism. And Wilber has not sufficiently examined the historical sources used by the people he claims to follow (e.g. Ramana). Wilber's work too often shows signs of forced syncretism, and a lack of historical perspective.

(14) For purposes of inter-religious dialogue, Dooyeweerd's view of religious self-reflection has more affinities to Ramana's method of self-enquiry, and to Ramana's interpretation of *sahaja samadhi* than to Wilber's Buddhist and Cartesian interpretations.

(15) For purposes of inter-religious dialogue, Dooyeweerd's philosophy has less affinity with either Buddhist or Cartesian philosophy than Wilber's. This is particularly so in Dooyeweerd's view of the selfhood, his emphasis on fullness and not emptiness, and his insistence that rationality is not the cause of cosmic diversity.

(16) Dooyeweerd rejects any idea of a pure consciousness or of a spirituality that is disconnected from the temporal. His idea of cosmic consciousness is that of knowing

ourselves to be supratemporal, but entering into and expressing ourselves within temporal reality by the relation of enstasis. There is never a consciousness without expression. Such expression continues after death, but in a glorified body and a fulfilled nature. In contrast, Wilber's idea of fulfillment is to leave all boundaries behind and to enter the Buddhist state of cessation of awareness.

This comparison has shown that ideas of origin, supratemporal totality, and temporal coherence can all be discussed without presupposing any Christian belief system or theology. Of course, the content given by Dooyeweerd to these ideas is certainly informed by his Christian faith, although he was careful to distinguish even there between his pre-theoretical Christian ground-motive and the theoretical philosophical of that ground motive by his ground-Ideas.

I suppose from Wilber's standpoint, my argument in favour of Dooyeweerd's Christian nondualism is only true from my presumed lower stage of consciousness—a partial truth that will be incorporated in Wilber's higher monistic vision. And I suppose that Wilber, from his standpoint, might try to point out alleged antinomies in Dooyeweerd's thought, trying to turn Dooyeweerd's transcendental method against him. But I hope that I have shown how Wilber's argument is itself open to question. His “transcend and include” methodology is convincing only to those who have already made the religious choice of accepting his monistic view.

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