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# The Shadow of Evolutionary Thinking

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- (1998). The shadow of evolutionary thinking. In D. Rothberg & S. Kelly, *Ken Wilber in Dialogue* (pp. 237-258). Wheaton, Illinois: Quest. (Reprint of 1996)
- (1998). Lingering Shadows. In D. Rothberg and S. Kelly, *Ken Wilber in Dialogue* (391-393). Wheaton, IL: Quest. (Reprint of 1996)
- (1997). Probleme mit Ken Wilber's evolutionären kognitionspsychologischen Annahmen. Teil II. *Ethnopsychologische Mitteilungen*, 6(2), 132-158.
- (1996). Probleme mit Ken Wilber's evolutionären kognitionspsychologischen Annahmen. Teil I. *Ethnopsychologische Mitteilungen*, 6(1), 41-58.
- (1996). The shadow of evolutionary thinking. *ReVision*, 19(1), 41-48.
- (1996). Lingering shadows. *ReVision*, 19(2), 43-44.

*To all my ancestors!*

*To all my ancestral relations!*

*To all my relations!*

When I try to fathom what it means to be alive these days in 1996, what my obligation as an individual may be, then I have to be present in a variety of ways. Let me first speak more personally before I explicate my major points in a more theoretical way. I have made an attempt in the style of this paper to reflect my understanding of the indigenous mind process as I am recovering it (see Kremer 1994, 1995a, b, c, 2002). This is why I begin with an honoring, continue with a personal story as an evocation of the recovery of the indigenous mind process identifying the specific place from which I speak, and proceed to a description of indigenous consciousness in a contemporary society. I finish the article with yet more descriptions of the indigenous mind process. In this sense the paper is a compromise between the more common academic writing style (of the middle part of the paper) and indigenous presentations, including my own attempt to speak from a recovered indigenous perspective.

## I. RECOVERING MY INDIGENOUS CONSCIOUSNESS PROCESS

*At the threshold of this coming-to-be-present I encounter a variety of guardians: The land I live on is not my ancestral land - it is the ancestral land of the Ramaytush-speaking people of the San Francisco peninsula, the first people of this particular land with a name we still remember; for the purposes of dealing with the shadow of*

*evolutionary thinking the original keepers of this land. The beauty of the land I live on has suffered from the devastating consequences of technological progress - overpopulation, overbuilding, pollution of the waters, pollution of the air... I live in a society where the destruction of its aboriginal cultures is scarcely acknowledged and is not mourned by the majority of people; living in this society I am in a certain way complicit in the ongoing perpetration of racism and cultural genocide. Yet, I also live in a city which seems to be among the most comfortably and richly multicultural places in the U.S., with less pollution than in many other metropolitan areas.*

*My Germanic ancestry puts me in the gateway of the Holocaust. I recall Hitler's perversions of mythology in the service of genocide; I will never forget the image of the Germanic goddess Nerthus cattle-drawn past Hitler, which I saw in the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. I recall the aberrations of the Vikings, their vicious slaughters and conquering - another guardian at the threshold. Passing these and more guardians, witnessing what they hold, is to heal old collective wounds as they have been passed down to me as an individual, passed down consciously and unconsciously. These guardians don't stand at the threshold simply to propagate guilt. The guardians are medicine for the collective shadow of the Western world. They are the medicine of remembrance with all that it entails, be it fear, pain, guilt, anger....*

*Having taken this medicine I see the outlines of an old tree, the tree of the Nordic and Eurasian traditions that is spoken about in a language simultaneously poetic and scientifically precise: At this tree stories are told of the Great Return, the great round of the precession of the equinoxes, the **ragnarök** of the past (footnote 1); these stories contain the native scientific star knowledge of my traditions. The **spakona** and the **spamaðr**, the women and men seers and healers, travel along this tree across the rainbow bridge, across the milky way - **bifrost** - to the ancestral souls of the past and future. These seers place those in need of healing at this center of the universe, one of many known to them, to see if they can help the sick find their place of balance. Stories are told at the tree, of ancestors, trade, and migrations. Ceremonies are held to honor the great and the small cycles of the season, to honor the law of balance, of **fríðr**. Community gathers at the tree. I hold ceremony to honor the protective spirits, the **disir**, and the **mátr og megin** or gift which they hold for me; I hold ceremony to find balance and to honor balance. I look at the stars and see the image of a deerlike animal and I look at the rock carvings by the tree and see images of various deer. And I see boats, boats filled with ancestors travelling the skies and travelling the seas. Across the stream three spirits appear. In the rock I see the deer carrying the sun. My conversation which is also a prayer or chant is with all these relations within **fríðr**. I offer amber as I am held by by all these beings and by the guardians.*

*The only way to reach the tree for somebody like me is to pass the guardians at the threshold and to take the medicine they offer. They offer their painful medicine kindly.*

All this helps me understand what my obligation is as I recover ancient memory for the future, today. (For background information on this section see for example: Bonnefooy

1993a & b; Coles, 1990; Crichton, 1976; Davidson 1964, 1988, 1993; Graham-Campbell, Batey, Clarke, Page & Price, 1994; Metzner, 1994; Tacitus, 1967; Titchenell, 1985)

## **II. NURTURING AND BEING NURTURED - A CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS CONSCIOUSNESS PROCESS**

The contemporary Andean peoples of Peru have their own way of talking about their obligation. This is how it has been described:

*The **ayllu** is a group of related persons living in a particular place. The **ayllu** consists not only of a group of related humans but of other beings of that place: the animals, the mountains, streams and rocks and the local deities. The ayllu should therefore not be considered simply a sphere of kinship. Rather one could say that kinship in the Andes extends to the non-human realm.*

*The conversations held between persons and the other inhabitants of the world are not primarily engaged in for the purpose of "knowing reality." They are engaged in it as part of the activity of **criar y dejarse criar**, of nurturing (raising) and letting oneself be nurtured (raised). The verb **criar** is used to speak of raising children, animals, plants, relationships, etc. It is the activity that fosters the growth and development of any potentiality or generativity. It is a fundamentally mutual or reciprocal activity: as one nurtures one is simultaneously nurtured. The action in the world does not leave the actor untransformed; acting in the world is being in relationship with that world, so the language of conversation is more appropriate than the language of knowledge. There is here no knower and known, no subject and object. Rather there are actors in relationships of mutuality. By acting one transforms not only the world but oneself as well. Therefore it is a fundamentally dynamic world, always moving, always changing, always in flux. There is, as it were, no simple act of knowing as we moderns understand the term for such knowledge-acquiring activity presupposes that there is something to be known, irrespective of who knows it.*

*This is not to say that conversing with the world does not involve cognitive faculties, it of course does, but that the activity is not primarily and certainly not exclusively a cognitive one. **Criar** demands not only understanding but love, tenderness, patience. But it is to say that the point of conversation is not the attainment of knowledge through the interrogation of nature, it is rather to generate and regenerate the world and be generated and regenerated by it in the process. (Apffel-Marglin, 1994, p. 9)*

## **III. WILBER'S EVOLUTIONARY THINKING IN THE LIGHT OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

The above descriptions of *friðr* and the knowing and nurturing conversation in the *ayllu* are illustrations of what can be called rather inadequately 'the indigenous mind process' (the reader may consult Valkeapää, 1985 & 1996, for a Saami description of *siida* life or Colorado, 1988, for an Iroquois description of *skanagoah*); they are descriptions of an integral way of knowing and being which is difficult to capture in its richness and

subtleties. They circumscribe my place of analysis and point of departure for dialogue with Ken Wilber's books.

I am writing this article as somebody who is remembering his indigenous roots without any claim to being native or having shared native experiences of discrimination and colonialism; I grew up as part of the dominant culture in Germany (see Kremer, 1994, 1995a for further discussions of my stance). The endeavor which I call "recovery of indigenous mind" is a process which does not invite romanticism or nostalgia - it is a painful process of remembering back in order to go forward. There is no going back. My way into the future moves through the integration of historical wounds, painful memories and seemingly senseless events in order to work out a future based on *ayllu* or *friðr*, based on an ecologically specific notion of balance.

The indigenous mind or consciousness process I am referring to is not based on an essentialist understanding of tribalism or indigenism (footnote 2), but a discourse view in which individuals understand themselves in an ongoing conversation with the surrounding community, in which the local animals, plants, ancestors, and other spirits take as much part as the humans (cf. Apffel Marglin, 1994; Rengifo, 1993; Valladolid, 1995); this conversation is carried on as a part of unfolding one's own gifts while paying attention to the ceremonial and seasonal cycles as well as the larger astronomical cycles. This is a worldview of total immanence. It is acknowledged that the social construction or conversation in one place is different from other conversations in other places, yet seeing this is to stay grounded in the detailed observations of and conversations with the community and the cycles of the specific place one is in. This is not a mind process where egoic consciousness and transcendence stand in some form of opposition or tension to each other, but where individuals of the permeable, participatory consciousness live with spirits as much part of their community as other human beings or plants. "*El mundo es inmanente* - the world is immanent" (PRATEC, 1996, 10).

Since the 1977 publication of *The Spectrum of Consciousness* Ken Wilber has emerged as one of the most significant and productive transpersonal thinkers. Walsh (1998, p. 33) regards Wilber view as "unique in not only providing a far-reaching vision but also in grounding that vision in contemporary research in fields such as cosmology, biology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and ecology." In 1996 three issues of the journal *ReVision*, edited by Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly, critically reviewed Wilber's work and attempted to engage him in dialogue; the articles were subsequently, together with additional material published in book form as *Ken Wilber in Dialogue* (1998). The current compilation is based on my contributions to these publications. My primary focus in this article is on Wilber's *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (1995a), and *Up from Eden* (1981). My central question in looking at social evolutionary theories such as Wilber's is: How do evolutionary theorists deal with contemporary indigenous peoples? Or, to return to my initial descriptions: How would Wilber conceptualize the conversational process of the *ayllu* in the Andes?

My discussion of Wilber's more recent work focuses on two major aspects of this broad issue:

1) What is the nature of the indigenous mind process and are Wilber's descriptions consistent with the available data? My point below is that closer attention to the indigenous consciousness process suggests a different model of history than the eurocentered conceptualizations and cannot be subsumed under stage models without being made invisible. (Discussed below in this section.)

2) If Wilber's conceptualizations of evolutionary stages imply "losers" (meaning: the so-called 'lower' stages and their contemporary "remnants"), then how does his theory deal with this shadow of evolutionary theorizing? The stance which I take is that we can no longer afford to think about evolution of consciousness and so-called civilizations without explicitly addressing the shadow of purported advances. (Discussed below in section IV.)

In addition, I address the following topics:

3) If it is indeed reasonable to assume qualitative differences between eurocentered and indigenous discourses, then what are the requirements for the facilitation of dialogues between these two types of discourse? My basic argument is as follows: Dialogues between cultures steeped in a eurocentered worldview and cultures engaged in indigenous consciousness processes have to be conducted in such a fashion as to insure that the voices of both groups have a chance to be heard directly and without intermediaries. (Section V below.)

4) I discuss Wilber's critical commentary on sections I through IV and VII of this article. (Section VI below.)

5) I conclude this article with a continuation of the indigenous mind process descriptions given at the beginning of this article which suggest alternate conceptualizations of universality, evolution, and knowledge exchange. It is beyond the scope of this article to explicate these alternate conceptualizations fully; all I can do is give the rough outlines and some general parameters. (Section VII below.)

At the root of my concerns is the question of cultural ownership of evolutionary thinking which I have raised in a recent ReVision article (Kremer, 1996), and the call for theorists of human evolution to reflect consciously and explicitly on the cultural biases inherent in their thinking.

Wilber's model of social evolution is in the tradition of 19th century evolutionary conceptualizations (cf. Winkelman, 1993, 5). Julian Huxley gives a good example of this thinking in the field of biology:

If we accept the doctrine of evolution, we are bound to believe that man has arisen from mammals, terrestrial from aquatic forms, vertebrates from invertebrates, multicellular from unicellular, and in general the larger and the more complex from the smaller and simpler. To the average man it will be indisputable that a man is higher than a worm or a polyp, an insect is higher than a protozoan, even if he cannot exactly define in what resides this highness or lowness of organic types. (Huxley, 1923, 10; quoted from Barlow, 1994)

Of course, if this type of evolutionary thinking is extrapolated into the field of evolution of consciousness and societies, then we can see how the prehistoric peoples of all continents and the contemporary remaining indigenous peoples can be classed as "lower" and the euro-centered as "higher" (even if there are yet higher stages to come). In E.B. Tylor's words:

Human life may be roughly classified into three great stages, Savage, Barbaric, Civilized, which may be defined as follows. The lowest or savage state is that in which man subsists on wild plants and animals,

neither tilling the soil nor domesticating creatures for his food. ... Men may be considered to have risen into the next or barbaric state when they take to agriculture. ... Lastly, civilized life may be taken as beginning with the art of writing, which, by recording history, law, knowledge, and religion for the service of ages to come, binds together the past and the future in an unbroken chain of intellectual and moral progress. (1881, quoted from Wenke, 1980, 32-33)

Evolutionary thinking concerns itself with the development according to inherent tendencies of anything that may be compared to a living organism (OED). Theories of evolution, whether in the fields of biology, consciousness or culture fundamentally have a mono-causal structure, where things unfold from some point of origin basically in a linear fashion (however complex and multi-dimensional the descriptions of this causal line may be) toward some future or utopian stage which represents the unfoldment of the inherent tendencies, particularly of human beings and their cultures.

Let me give a very brief summary overview of Wilber's model as it appears to pertain to contemporary indigenous peoples. In *Up from Eden* (1981), Wilber has delineated dates for stages of the evolution of human consciousness, and he has provided us with updated descriptions since.

— Hominids appear during the *uroboric stage* which lasted roughly from 3 to 6 million years ago to 200,000 years ago (Wilber, 1981, 28). "Simple sensorimotor intelligence and emotional-sexual drives" are seen as characteristic for the early hominids of this epoch (Wilber, 1983, 240; see also Wilber, 1987, 239 for descriptions of the "archaic", and 1995a, 153ff.).

— The subsequent *typhonic stage* lasted roughly from 200,000 years ago to 10,000 B.C.E. (Wilber, 1981, 39 & 87). Here we find "the first symbolic cognitive mode, the primary process, which confuses inside and outside, whole and part, subject and predicate, image and reality" (Wilber, 1983, 240). "Magical thinking" is an important characteristic of the mental process of the *typhonic epoch* which Wilber describes as follows: "This includes simple images, symbols, and the first rudimentary concepts, or the first and lowest mental productions, which are "magical" in the sense that they display condensation, displacement, "omnipotence of thought," etc. ... The magic realm is the beginning of *mind*" (1987, 239). He further elaborates that "the mind and the body are still relatively undifferentiated, and thus mental images and symbols are often confused or even identified with the physical events they represent, and consequently mental intentions are believed to be able to 'magically' alter the physical world, as in voodoo, exoteric mantra, the fetish, magical ritual, 'sympathetic magic,' or magic in general" (1995a, 165).

— The more recent *mythic-membership stage* lasted from about 12,000 B.C.E. to 2,500 B.C.E., with the high membership period dating from about 4,500 to 1,500 B.C.E. (1981, 87). According to Wilber, "this stage is more advanced than magic, but not yet capable of clear rationality or hypothetico-deductive reasoning" (1987, 239).

— And the current *solar ego stage* began about 2,500 B.C.E. (with the low ego period dating from 2,500-500 B.C.E., the middle ego period dating from 500 B.C.E. to 1,500 C.E., and the high ego period dating from 1,500 C.E. to the present; Wilber, 1981, 179-

180). Wilber more recently has set the incipient egoic-rational phase at about 500 B.C.E. (1995a, 179). "Egoic rationality and formal-operational logic" (1983, 240) are some of its central characteristics in the individuals of this epoch.

Wilber clarifies (1995a, 172-173) the meaning of his stage descriptions by stating that these various 'epochs' ... refer only to the *average* mode of consciousness achieved at that particular time in evolution - a certain 'center of gravity' around which the society as a whole orbited. In any given epoch, some individuals will fall below the norm in their own development, and others will reach quite beyond it. ... Thus, in the magical, as I just mentioned, the most advanced mode seems to have been the psychic (embodied in a few genuine shamans or pioneers of yogic awareness); in mythological times the most advanced mode seems to have reached into what is known as the subtle level (embodied in a few genuine saints); and in mental-egoic times the most advanced modes reached into the causal level (embodied in a few genuine sages).

Plotinus and Plato may serve as illustrations for this: They were situated in an average-mode mythological background worldview (mythic-rational), against which they had to fight (while delicately and unavoidably embracing aspects of it). They spoke from the center of a mythic worldview, even as their own substantive Reason transcended it, and even as their own contemplation transcended Reason; but mythically situated they could not avoid (Wilber, 1995a, 637).

Wilber comments in regard to the contemporary situation that the majority of individuals in rational societies still settle in somewhere around the mythic-rational, using all the formidable powers of rationality to prop up a particular, divisive, imperialistic mythology and an aggressively fundamentalistic program of systematic intolerance (1995a, 252). The statement "the majority of individuals in rational societies still settle somewhere around the mythic-rational" is somewhat inconsistent with the definition that this is the epoch where "the average mode of consciousness achieved" is the rational mode; this implies that at least fifty per cent of the population is functioning in that mode, particularly if the "high egoic period" is dated to the present. "The majority of individuals in rational societies still settle somewhere around the mythic-rational" suggests more the "low ego period" rather than the time when the next epoch is beginning to emerge, even if only as the low vision-logic period. In any event, Wilber appears to put contemporary eurocentered societies (the modern state) at the rational stage, and he places "the rough beginning of this new emergence (egoic-rational) in the middle of the first millennium BCE ... it reaches its fruition with the rise of the modern state, roughly the sixteenth century in Europe" (1995a, 179; similarly on p. 396). All this "brings us up to the present, and the new integration that is struggling to emerge" (1995a, 184), namely "vision-logic."

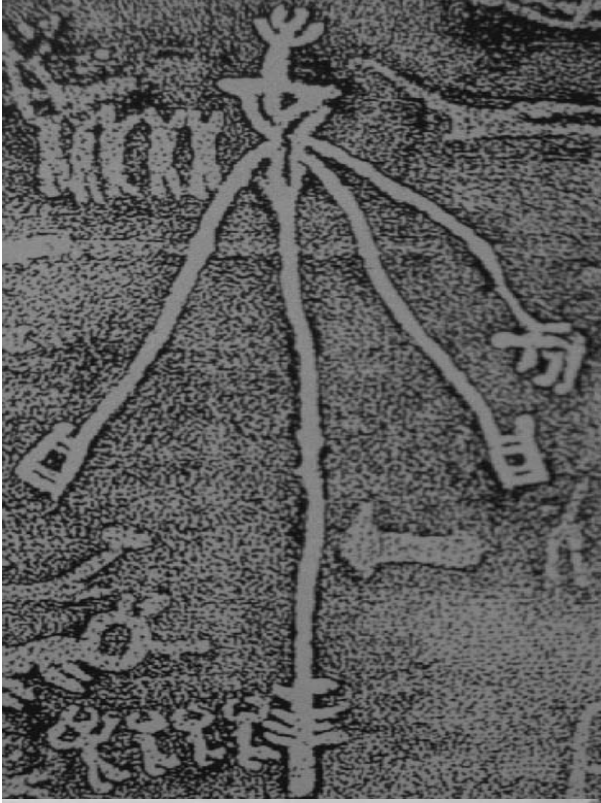
Wilber never concerns himself explicitly with the indigenous peoples who remain. He primarily discusses the anthropological construct "shamanism" and "shaman" when elaborating the earlier evolutionary stages. This isolation of shamans and the "shamanic state of consciousness" inappropriately focuses only on certain aspects of the holistic and integral process of indigenous conversation described at the beginning of this article. How this particular lense may be related to some of the problems which I identify in Wilber's theory should become apparent below. Since contemporary indigenous peoples continue to use ceremonies, for example, in which, according to anthropologists and in Wilber's valueladen words from above, "mental intentions are believed to be able to 'magically' alter the physical world, as in voodoo, exoteric mantra, the fetish, magical ritual, 'sympathetic magic,' or magic in general," (1995a, 165) they could be considered contemporary remnants of the typhonic stage, or at best the mythic stage. In any event,



contemporary indigenous peoples still engaged in their traditional cultural practices would *not* fit Wilber's various descriptions of the mythic-rational stage or more recent epochs. Nevertheless, as previously quoted, he would concede that some of their authentic spiritual practitioners may be able to reach the psychic or subtle levels.

Wilber is reluctant (1995a, 571) to use anthropological material about contemporary indigenous peoples in order to discuss past evolutionary stages (such as the magic or mythological stages), yet much of the understanding of the past evolutionary stages is based on projection of the anthropological literature of this century into the past (see e.g., Cazeneuve, 1972; or McGrane, 1989). He also does not include the direct voice of indigenous peoples in his discussions of the contemporary situation. (In scanning his approximately 640 references listed in 1995a I found two - Lake and McGaa - where indigenous peoples speak with a voice of their own (problematic as they are to some traditional natives); I was unable to determine during my reading or with the help of the index how these references actually have been used.) I am assuming that this is either because he does not see them as significant for or part of the cutting edge of the evolutionary arc he describes, or that they don't offer descriptions which illuminate this evolutionary arc. Whatever his reasoning, contemporary indigenous peoples end up de facto as a negligible quantity in his writings. The terms "mythos," "mythic," and "tribe" are frequently used in a negative or even contemptuous sense - indeed, no different from everyday usage in dominant eurocentered discourse; this suggests that racist thinking is at work (e.g. in 1995a on p. 572 or 582).

The following two illustrations demonstrate graphically the need to question Wilber's *model*.



The practices of *voladores* (the flyers) from the Totonac, Nahuatl, and Huastec natives of the Mexican Gulf Coast [right illustration] is said to be at least 1500 years old. It is sacred to Quetzalcoatl, the Morning Star. It spread from the Gulf Coast to the Aztec Capital Tenochtitlan. It is a ceremonial celebration of a calendrical count that can be traced back to the Olmec culture (1500 to 400 BCE; cf. Hancock, 1995; Markman & Markman, 1992). The rock carving from Bohuslän [left illustration] presently is dated to 1000 to 850 BCE (Coles, 1990) and can be viewed in the context of various descriptions of the Norse tree of life (*Yggdrasil*) and the contemporary May pole (Brodzky, Danesevich & Johnson, 1977; Gimbutas, 1958; Grimm, 1966). The calendrical and navigational cognitive capacities implied in these images go far beyond what evolutionary theories commonly attribute to humans of these time periods. For example: Wilber sees the "Mexico of the Aztecs and Mayas" at the stage of "mythic membership" (1981, 92). Since the Olmecs preceded these cultures they would have to be regarded either at the stage of mythic membership or the earlier typhonic stage. During the typhonic period "subject and object are undifferentiated, ... image and entity are confused, symbol and object are conflated, and thus subject and predicate, whole and part, class and member, are all 'magically one'" (Wilber, 1981, 49). At the subsequent mythic membership stage "mind is *tentatively* starting to emerge" (Wilber, 1981, 93, italics in original). In subsequent publications Wilber characterizes this stages as capable of "higher representational thought, but still incapable of formal-operational insight; still anthropomorphic; mixture of logic with previous magic" (Wilber, 1983, 240).

It is somewhat difficult to imagine how people would be capable of crossing the Atlantic one way or the other without having at least mythic-rational consciousness, to stay in Wilber's frame (unless we invalidate the potential significance of the implied event by calling it chance or accident). Navigational capacities, the art and science of identifying one's own position and tracking a ship's course (determination of latitude and longitude), require formal-operational cognitive capacities (cf. Kyselka, 1987, 38-45; Graham-Campbell, Batey, Clarke, Page & Price, 1994, 180/1; or Aveni, 1993, 149ff. for sample descriptions). Formal operational awareness "introduces a new and more abstract understanding of mathematics, logic, and philosophy, but those are all quite secondary to the primary and defining mark of reason: *reason is a space of possibilities* (italics in original), possibilities not tied to the obvious, the given, the mundane, the profane" (Wilber, 1995a, 231). This description would subsume the possibility to navigate oceans with the help of these capacities. If the Olmec culture is indeed accurately described as "typhonic" or "mythic" in character, then its members should be incapable of the complex mathematics, astronomical observations and calendrical calculations the Aztecs and Mayans based their developments on (cf. Hancock, 1995; Aveni, 1980; Closs, 1986). And they should not have possessed the nautical and navigational capacities for the long sea journey from Mexico to Sweden (or Bronze Age people in Southern Sweden should not have been capable of navigating toward what is now called Mexico). Of course, we could argue that these early navigators were individuals of the typhonic or mythic epochs with a level of personal development that reached significantly beyond the majority of the times. Such an argument would only hold if we do not find too many exceptions to the claims made by Wilber's theory.

My review of the literature indicates that it is at least questionable to use the "special case argument" (i.e., in these cases especially gifted, highly developed individuals with capacities far beyond the general level of development accomplished these significant achievements). The numerous exceptions to Wilber's theory deserve at least explicit discussion. The following sampling may serve as illustration for numerous cases in archaeology, anthropology, and mythology that do not seem to fit dominant evolutionary conceptions, including Wilber's. Winkelman (1990) offered significant objections against the literature used in *Up from Eden* (1981), yet Wilber has only provided incomplete responses (he claims that his new descriptions and new timelines resolve all these issues and that Winkelman's relativistic approach is "simplistic and hypocritical;" 1995a, 575).

The following is a brief listing of some examples from past and continuing indigenous cultures, which by all appearances not only require, if they are to be integrated, a fine tuning of Wilber's theory, but, if taken seriously, a rethinking of the entire model (see Winkelman [1990] for a first extensive list of objections). All these brief descriptions highlight the cognitive aspects of the indigenous mind process in order to show limitations in Wilber's descriptions and interpretations; the integral nature of this process is implied in each of the examples, but not explicated here. Readers may use their own imagination to see how the various sacred sites mentioned below, for example, represent the indigenous conversation I have described at the beginning of this paper using the examples of *frid̄r* and *ayllu*.

— The first example is the Aztec and Mayan calendars (which can be dated back to the Olmec times) with the calendar of the great pyramid in Chichen Itza as an elaborate example of the thinking and architectural skills of these peoples; we can add to this example Mayan mathematics in general (these civilizations are according to Wilber part of the mythic stage; 1981, 92). All of these instances presuppose cognitive skills which do not fit his descriptions of any of the stages before the rational (Aveni, 1980; Closs, 1986; Men, 1990; Vergara & Güemez, n.d.). How these feats could have been achieved without, for example, hypothetico-deductive cognitive skills is not clear to me.

— The alignments of the pyramids in Teotihuacan (just outside of Mexico City) and the knowledge of the number pi are other examples which do not fit Wilber's scheme (Aveni, 1980; Hancock, 1995; Stierlin, 1963; Tompkins, 1976); again, according to Wilber, these buildings were erected by a mythic culture, yet the architecture, astronomy, and mathematics embodied in these pyramids require cognitive skills at odds with Wilber's descriptions of "magical oneness."

— The Egyptian pyramids, their alignments and architecture, are yet another example of similar feats on a different continent (see, e.g., Bauval & Gilbert, 1994 or Hancock, 1995; see also the recent unpublished research by Hawas, Verner and Dreyer, reported in Anonymous, 1995/6, which pushes the dates for certain accomplishments in the early Egyptian cultures farther back). Wilber considers these Egyptian cultures also at the mythic-membership stage (1981, 92).

— The architecture and alignments of Tiahuanaco in Bolivia (at Lake Titicaca) also don't fit Wilber's outline by a long shot; according to persuasive evidence the building of this sacred site can be dated to at least 15,000 B.C.E. (Hancock, 1995).

— The architecture and alignments of Stonehenge, dating to about 3,000 B.C. E., and Newgrange, dating to about 3,200 B.C.E. are European examples which are out of sync with Wilber's descriptions (Aveni, 1993; Biaggi, 1994; Brennan, 1980, 1983; Burenhult, 1993; Mohen, 1990) in terms of the skills required for the building of these sacred sites.

— Finch (1996, 25) points out that the Dogon have known (probably for seven hundred years) that Sirius B was a mostly invisible white dwarf that periodically underwent nova explosions which spewed matter ("grains") into space that ultimately became the stuff from which other heavenly bodies - including our solar system - were made. This traditional knowledge of an ancient African tribe, which is consistent with the findings of contemporary astronomy, questions definitions of "primitive" and Wilber's descriptions of the stages prior to the rational (see also Finch, 1991 & 1995; Griaule & Dieterlen, 1986; de Santillana & v. Dechend, 1969).

— We have evidence of very early global travel across the oceans, which again requires cognitive skills not ascribed to peoples of these early stages by Wilber. Examples of such evidence are: (a) the Piri Reis map dating to 1513 which includes an image of the eastern promontory of South America and is comparable to the most detailed and accurate of nineteenth century maps. It proves that the ancient cartographers who constructed it possessed precise knowledge of the dimensions and shape of the earth, its lands, and its seas (Finch, 1996, 21); (b) accurately mapped images (Piri Reis, Oronteus Finaeus, Mercator, Buache) of Antarctica before it was covered with the current ice cap (which began to occur beginning around 13,000 B.C.E. and was complete by 4,000 B.C.E.; Hapgood, 1966; Hancock, 1995); (c) the chalice which Hostetter (1991) acquired in Saudi Arabia which led him to the re-discovery of ancient astronomical and navigational knowledge; (d) Mayan, Olmec, and Zapotec (Monte Alban) sculptures and reliefs of individuals found in Mexico which are clearly not Native American, but obviously Chinese, African or European; we have similar evidence from the Moche culture of Peru.

— Gimbutas' description of early European writing from the 6th millenium on (Gimbutas, 1991, 308ff.; Haarmann, 1990, 70ff.) is also not easily reconciled with the cognitive skills Wilber ascribes to those times in Europe.

— And most recently the rock art of Chauvet thought to be about 30,000 years old (Chauvet, Dechamps & Hillaire, 1995) points to cognitive skills akin to our own.

We could argue in each single instance given in my list above that these feats were accomplished by the most advanced individuals of those times, but this argument to my mind is increasingly difficult to sustain with all the examples given (and this list is not complete). And this argument could hardly be made for the following instances, which represent widespread skills, rather than skills conceivably attributable solely to an elite:

— The cognitive skills required for flintknapping provide an example for the mentations of early hominids. Gowlett (1993, 54/5) gives a detailed analysis of the sophisticated cognitive skills the making of the stone tools of the Oldowan people (in Wilber's scheme of uroboric times) imply.

The stone-workers knew what was possible, and this implies that they had the whole routine for the tool-making process stored in their heads, somewhat like a computer programme. ... Many activities of early man [sic!] which have left traces were co-operative, social ones. Does this then imply the use of language from the time of early tool-making? There is no direct evidence for this, but the sequences of operations involved in toolmaking have parallels in structure with those of producing sentences. (p. 55)

Lewin (1988) suggests that the behavior of early hominids increasingly was governed by complex rules, and that these abstractions seem impossible in the absence of language.

"The creation of paintings, carvings, and engravings is surely unthinkable in the absence of language, because such activities represent true abstraction of the mind" (p. 186).

These descriptions are a far cry from Wilber's discussions of the uroboric stage to which this type of tool making is assigned.

— Additionally, Wilber has yet to answer the various points Winkelman (1990) makes regarding evidence for language use among the earliest hominids, the similarities in cognitive capabilities in humans of today and 40,000 - 100,000 years ago, the non-existence of the uroboric stage, and astronomical observations as early as 30-32,000 years ago (see also Aveni, 1993, 23). Marshak (1991) provides extensive discussions and illustrations of the complexity of cognitive processes of paleolithic hominids from 35,000 to 10,000 B.C.E.

All of these examples presuppose complex cognitive processes supposedly unavailable to humans during those time periods. They suggest that a stage model may not be the most appropriate way to take these data into account. Gowlett (1992, 345) suggests that through the past 30,000 to 40,000 years the brains of modern homo sapiens were similar to our own. Physical and cultural evidence points to lower levels of mental ability and craft skill in the earlier periods. Nevertheless, we may have to concede that the foundations of many basic human skills were laid 1 or even 2 million years ago, rather than at the origins of our own species.

Even Lévy-Bruhl, who wrote extensively about 'primitive mentality' stated in his last works that he no longer assumed a structural difference between contemporary Europeans and indigenous humans:

Let us expressly rectify what I believed correct in 1910: there is not a primitive mentality distinguishable from the other by two characteristics which are peculiar to it (mystical and prelogical). There is a mystical mentality which is more marked and more easily observable among 'primitive peoples' than in our societies, but is present in every human mind. (*Les carnets*, 1949, 131-2, quoted from Cazeneuve, 1972, 87)

This seems to lead to what appears like a paradox on the surface: Peoples of these earlier mythic or even typhonic times may indeed have participated in the phenomena, yet they may simultaneously have been capable of cognitive feats requiring skills commonly associated with the much later times of the egoic-rational processes. Mayan architecture, glyphs, mathematics and calendrics may serve as a surviving and continuing illustration (see recently Freidel, Schele & Parker, 1993) that participation in the phenomena and cognitive skills like formal-operational logic are a contradiction in the eyes of the solar ego only.

The pieces of evidence which don't fit easily with Wilber's timelines and descriptions lead me to doubt that his model adequately represents contemporary and past indigenous peoples and their mind process. His abstract descriptions and the available data don't match sufficiently, and if Wilber continues to think that they do, then he is under an obligation to explicate this much more than he has done in response to Winkelman. His descriptions of the "earlier evolutionary stages" render the integral mind and being process of past and present indigenous people invisible in his model and devalue it in these distorted representations.

The rapid developments in the fields of prehistorical research indicate a general trend to date certain cognitive capacities earlier and earlier. This should lead us to be cautious. This trend can be explained not only through previously unavailable evidence but it may also point to research assumptions that hindered the field of prehistorical research: It is possible that a goodly portion of our reconstruction of prehistory is projective in nature. Recent anthropological and archaeological research examples investigating human sacrifice and cannibalism indicate how past evidence had been tainted by its *Zeitgeist*. Hassler (1992), for example, has concluded that evidence for ritualistic human sacrifice or sacred ritualistic killing among the Aztecs and other Mesoamerican peoples is lacking; he asserts that past discussions are based on eurocentric assumptions, prejudices, and misunderstandings in the communication with indigenous people or that they were based on their deceptive maneuvers. Peter-Röcher (summarized in Anonymous, 1996) developed a similar argument regarding cannibalism in prehistoric Germany. These are two out of a number of examples that should induce utmost caution in our use of descriptions of so-called primitive peoples, past cultures and contemporary indigenous peoples. Wilber, however, believes that "what we call civilization, and what we call human sacrifice, came into being together" (Wilber, 1981, 127). Evidence for cannibalism and human sacrifice, whether among the Hisastsunon (Anasazi), Aztecs, or early Germanic peoples, require complex interpretive maneuvers and special self-reflective awareness of presuppositions (whether idealizing or discriminatory).

#### **IV. THE SHADOW AND PROJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION**

From a native perspective, evolutionary thinking in general has always been problematic because of its (at least implicit) notion of progress toward some better, more complete or more actualized way of being, some outopos (Greek: utopia) or nonexistent place to be realized in the future.

European utopian visions have been used to rationalize a range of criminal behaviors including the enslavement of millions of Africans and the annihilation of entire American Indian peoples as the (sometimes) regrettable but necessary consequence of the construction of some kind of future state of human perfection (Dion-Buffalo & Mohawk, 1994, p. 33).

This statement cannot be taken seriously enough and should be a clear warning signal to pay attention to the shadow of evolutionary thinking. Unless we do so evolutionary thinking will remain misguided and dangerous because there is no reason to assume that it is outside of its history which - at least implicitly - justified cultural and physical genocides. In order to step outside of this intellectual history it is necessary to address explicitly shadow material issues such as the ones Dion-Buffalo and Mohawk mention in their quote. Otherwise whatever is written is at least an unconscious continuation of

eurocentered dominance and (cultural) genocide. McGrane (1989) in his critical analysis of the history of "the Other" and anthropology comments that

when the 'sun' of civilization dawns on the virgin forest of the Other, instead of nourishing him, it chars and blackens him. ... *At the very instant they (primitive societies) become known to us they are doomed* (108, last sentence quoted from Bastian).

This would mean that one of the most important current historic tasks of eurocentered cultures is to retract its attention and periodic obsession with other cultures and to focus on its own history, including the shadow of its own history.

Wilber talks about the emergence of global market economy and acknowledges that it is "tinged, *initially*, by remnants of imperialism, which indicated not an excess of reason but a lack of it" (1995a, 178, emphasis added) - an acknowledgment which is far from sufficient given the ways in which the rise of what he considers evolutionarily positive is entwined with rather lethal shadow material. The words genocide, colonialism, imperialism do not show up in the index of the book, and they do not seem to warrant special analysis within his evolutionary scheme. The phrase "*tinged, initially, by remnants of imperialism*" implies that this is in the past - a denial of the ongoing destruction of native cultures (Bodley, 1982; Berger, 1990); it is also a denial of such continuing imperialism (biocolonialism) as is exemplified by the hunt for certain nutritional plants and plant medicine among native people, which then get patented and resold to the indigenous peoples they were taken from (Abya Yala News, 1994; Mies & Shiva, 1993; Shiva, 1993). Imperialism and colonialism have taken on the mantle of economic development thinking, under which they continue their contemporary expression and continue to have a destructive effect on indigenous peoples (cf. Sachs, 1995 for a history of the term and a critical discussion in terms of sustainability; see also: Pratec, 1993; Parajuli, 1996 for analyses). All of these destructive events are, of course, a result of the increasingly global market economy and the expansiveness of eurocentered ways. While Wilber may label these events pathological within his system, *their effect on new emergent and purportedly desirable qualities still needs to be critically reviewed.*

Looking at the historical shadow material created by what the dominant discourse of eurocentered cultures calls "evolutionary advances" or "achievements" (Wilber's rational societies) is not just a question of intellectual honesty or integrity; it is much more a question of doing one's best to avoid inflation, ethnocentricity, and prejudice. If eurocentered societies are to step out of the *continuing* history of colonialism, then evolutionary thinking produced by the intellectuals of these societies needs to grapple with the fact that the so-called evolutionary advances have come at a price, and that this price is even now being paid by peoples which can be identified as the "primitive," "archaic," "mythic" peoples of contemporary "backward" societies. As Wilber and others would say: these peoples have had their chance, and "they all failed - each in their own special and wonderful and spectacular fashion" (1995a, 243). In evolutionary models, "losers" are inevitable if there is to be evolution, and the winners of today may be the losers of tomorrow. The aura of inevitability is part of the justificatory function of evolutionary thinking. It creates a context in which cultural and physical genocide can easily be understood as a given, 'unfortunate as that may be.' The continuation of economic development thinking in relation to so-called Third World countries is part of this genocidal context: The dominant, primarily materialistic, euro-centered standards



identify them as inferior societies and cultures, and they are consequently in need of help so that they may join the fold of "developed" countries. This development thinking devalues their own cultural roots and richness destroying communities and killing people in the name of progress.

McGrane (1989) has done an admirably lucid job of tracing the history of the relationship between euro-centered cultures and the Other, the alien, the different - an "archaeology of anthropology," so to speak. One of his fundamental premises is that "a culture that discovers what is alien to itself simultaneously manifests what it is in itself" (McGrane 1989, 1). He sees anthropology as an endeavor which is "fundamentally involved in the reproduction of Western society... It manifests and highlights that egocentric tendency of our Western mind to identify itself as separate from what it perceives as external to itself" (1989, 5). Wilber's model, of course, draws on just this anthropological literature. MacGrane's discussions are also helpful in contextualizing historically the aspects of indigenous lives on which Wilber primarily focuses, i.e. shamanism.

In the Renaissance Christianity came between the European and the non-European; demonology determined that the Other, the fallen, was in need of naming, christening. Trances (and the concomitant healing practices) were seen as a practice which maintained the contact with demons and christianization meant the termination of such evil proceedings; killing or arrests of tribal members during ceremonies, the destruction or confiscation of artifacts (even during recent history, such as potlatch masks in Canada) are a result of this paradigm. During the Enlightenment ignorance was the fundamental coordinate around which the understanding of the Other was constituted: indigenous peoples were living with the errors of superstition. For example, trances and alternate modes of healing were seen as superstitious practices which could not provide any true help or serve a healthful function. The 17th and 18th century saw the beginning of colonization. The evolutionary thinking of the nineteenth century used the coordinate of time to understand natives as "primitives," a fossilized developmental stage from the prehistory of European civilizations. Thus trances were conceptualized as contemporary remnants of an outmoded, primitive human potential; their usefulness was superseded by the emergent medical and other sciences. The 19th century saw the height of colonialism and imperialism. It was also the time of in which evolutionary theories were first proposed. MacGrane shows how this notion of the "primitive" is entwined with the idea of progress:

The very identification of and naming of the non-European Other as "primitive," as "primitive mentality," as "primitive culture," presupposed a theory (language) of rational progress, of progress in and by reason (Enlightenment) and/or progress in and by history (nineteenth century). The very possibility of the conception of "primitive" presupposed the prior commitment to a conception of progress. (McGrane, 99)

The notion of progress implies that there is something at least insufficient or even bad in the past and that the good lies in the future.

When we talk about the lamentable and unfortunate price of evolution paid by certain peoples of past and present, but without simultaneously confronting the presumed advances with their own shadow, then we act arrogantly, coldly, and, ultimately, dishonestly. The historical connection between the arising of enlightenment philosophy and colonialism is not just accidental.

Anthropology has been an extremely subtle and spiritual kind of cognitive imperialism, a power-based monologue about alien cultures rather than, and in active avoidance of, a dialogue with them in terms of sovereignty, i.e., the untranslatability and irreducibility of one 'culture' to the being and language of the other (McGrane, 1989, 127).

Until we understand the impact of this connection the cultural shadow material will determine what eurocentered cultures are as "rational societies" - to an extent difficult to fathom. Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) have noted how what is suppressed in society inevitably returns through the backdoor - now with increased power.

The U.S. constitution was paid for with the genocide of the Native Americans. The social and economic stability of the colonies rested on the success of pushing the Native Americans out; the possession of the land was necessary for the development of the ideas and allowed the appropriation of native ideas, e.g. during the development of the constitution. What does it mean that the freedom of the early immigrants was achieved at the price of tremendous destruction? What does it say about the civil society that was put in place of the autochthonous cultures which also had elaborate "legal codes"? The best known example is probably the Iroquois confederacy, and its significant impact on the U.S. constitution is largely unacknowledged by the dominant culture (Barreiro, 1992).

In keeping with one brand of rather conventional wisdom, Wilber describes the process of Hawaii becoming a state of the United States of America - its annexation - as follows: "all the *basic structures* and functions are preserved and taken up in a larger identity, but all the *exclusivity* structures and functions that existed because of isolation, set-apartness, partialness, exclusiveness, separative agency - these are simply dropped and replaced with a deeper agency that reaches a wider communion" (1995a, 52 [italics in original]; see also p. 245). I doubt that traditionally spiritual Hawaiians (let alone political activists) would agree with this statement as an appropriate abstract principle derived from this specific historical example. Not only is his theoretical statement racist and colonialist when applied to the analysis of actual historical events by virtue of discounting native notions of interconnectedness, history and science ("isolation," "partialness," "separative agency"), it also lends itself to the justification of genocide in the the service of the emergence of higher order holons. After all, "each emergent holon transcends but includes its predecessor(s)" (1995a, 51). Wilber may consider such use of his theories abuse. However, his *model* adds to a justificatory context which facilitates this kind of thinking in contemporary euro-centered cultures. Such justification happens culturally, when "progress" is accepted as a framework, which then inevitably entails the notion of losers in the service of progress. To my mind the Hawaii illustration of his eighth's tenet does not hold, and his model would be invalidated if it is based on other examples of a similar nature.

When I analyze other instances which his tenet should cover (and the above quote of his principle) then his model becomes increasingly questionable in the form stated. If we look, for example, at the reality of the relationship between Native American tribes and the dominant society, and apply his abstract statement to the specifics of an ongoing history, then his statement is simply ludicrous. The history of invasion and colonization has destroyed native ceremonies, instituted boarding schools, and used missionary activity as a major avenue to genocide (all these are things which are still happening in

the present in one form or another); in the process the reservation system was created. I don't think it is an adequate theoretical precept to subsume this under "the exclusivity structures and functions that existed because of isolation, set-apartness, partialness, exclusiveness, separative agency - these are simply dropped and replaced with a deeper agency that reaches a wider communion." Wilber's statement has a certain compelling logic in its abstractness (and if we agree with the implicit assumptions of progress and universalization as he defines it), but this generality obfuscates the inflated stance hidden in it. This inflation is based on the culturally narcissistic assumption that we have truly understood peoples who live in an entirely different consciousness.

Our current challenge appears to be to develop a quality of thinking that is no longer based on fundamentally mono-causal and linear models (models with roots in 19th century thinking and to which I am referring with the label "evolutionary thinking"). Nitecki summarizes the current scientific Zeitgeist as follows: "The concept of progress has been all but banned from evolutionary biology as being anthropocentric or at best of limited and ambiguous usefulness" (1988, quoted from Barlow, 1994, 49). It seems necessary to remove notions of progress from our descriptions of the evolution of consciousness and civilizations (indigenous civilizations and others), since it is entirely eurocentric. McGrane states pointedly that "if the rather deeply sedimented, institutionalized belief in 'progress' disappeared, the 'primitive' would vanish" (1989, 99). The notion of progress is an essential ingredient of Wilber's system and "the primitives" are alive in his model, even if they are not doing so well.

Alternative models of conceptualizing socio-historical changes in structure and process of consciousness would address directly and with specificity such difficult issues as genocide, colonialism, and imperialism; they would address the ancient spiritual foundations of the European peoples, their ancestries, and their ceremonial practices. Such models would self-consciously restrict themselves to self-reflective acts by people of European heritage in order to understand their history of increasing dissociation, the dominance of the masterful, bounded modern self, and the possibilities to remember and recover integral beingknowing (Kremer, 1994). These would be inquiries aimed at resuming the European conversations analogous to those of the Andean *ayllu*. Other cultures would be *invited* to dialogues dedicated to the mutual exploration of historical and evolutionary meanings. This would break the pattern of colonial thinking assigning non-Eurocentric cultures their status from the domineering vantage point of Eurocentric discourses.

The assumptions we hold about ourselves as modern, scientific and rational people are at times rather self-righteous - if we take the time to look in the mirror. For example, Wilber states: "The modern solution to this developmental nightmare [that the majority of individuals haven't made it to the rational stage yet, J. W. K.] is that the rationality structure of the democratic state *tolerates* magic and mythic subholons..." (1995a, 252) While this statement makes sense on the face of it - the sad fact is that it hasn't and still isn't working out this way. I don't think the traditional hill tribe peoples of Thailand or the Saami people in Sweden or the Wintu people of Northern California (to give just a few examples) have an experience of tolerance. Yes, maybe the rational stage theoretically

*should* afford this tolerance, yet it doesn't in so many cases and development thinking ("help for the Third World") is *inherently* intolerant and destructive of indigenous cultures (Berger, 1990; Bodley, 1982). Is this because there is an inherent problem with the rational stage that makes it so difficult for its members to embody this tolerance or is it just the fact that "the majority of individuals in rational societies will settle in somewhere around the mythic-rational" (Wilber, 1995a, 252), that there isn't enough rationality? From a native perspective the inherent problem of the so-called rational stage is the notion of progress and the "primitive".

Wilber recommends "regression in service of higher integration - a regression that allows evolution to move forward more harmoniously by healing and wholing a previously alienated holon." (1995a, 105) This is a somewhat unfortunate analogy to individual psychological theory, since it presupposes the ego constructed by modernity, an ego - as I have pointed out elsewhere (see Kremer, 1995a) - which is constructed dissociatively (from nature, community, ancestry, - from what I have described as the conversation in the *ayllu* above). Consequently, this ego is likely to project from its personality make-up into the past whatever it has dissociated from. In fact, projective identification may be the most apt clinical term to point to the psycho-emotional process eurocentered cultures are engaged in with contemporary indigenous peoples (this term also acknowledges that history is carried and handed down specifically in the process of socialization in each individual). Projective identification means that other people are made to feel the highly conflicted and split off material dominant cultures unconsciously injected into them - so that they feel and experience it as if it is their own. Natives feel the eurocentered dissociation from prehistory, ancestry, nature, etc. as self-hatred ("primitives") which is so destructive to their cultures. Of course, self-hatred as an effect of internalized colonization warrants a much longer statement than I can offer here. Notably, in individual psychotherapy projective identification is known to be a pathological process oftentimes quite resistant to change because of its strongly self-reinforcing nature; this would seem to imply that we can assume strong resistance to the healing of the history of colonialism in the relationship between indigenous and eurocentered cultures. I would think that the retraction of these projections is the first order of business; for this we need a different metaphor than "regression in the service of the ego" (an adequate statement in the psychotherapeutic context, of course). The reintegration of cultural shadow material presupposes the possibility of an ego - the indigenous ego in communal conversation, if you wish - which would be differently constructed than our contemporary ego can easily imagine (see Kremer 1994 for descriptions). (Footnote 3)

We know from individual psychology that the shadow, the aspect of the self that is most troublesome and inimical to the ego-ideal, has a significant impact on the conscious awareness of the individual. Individual psychotherapy is in many ways the process of integration of this shadow material. Just as denial of the personal shadow distorts development of self, denial of the cultural shadow - indigenous peoples past and present - distorts the development of our understanding of history and consciousness. My point is that the evolutionary thinking needs to grapple with the fact that there are not only parts of history which have been denied (that we are or can easily be conscious of), but that there may be parts of history, just as with the individual shadow, which we are not aware

of and which we need to struggle to become aware of and integrate. The fundamental question is this one: Is somebody who publishes *A brief history of everything* (Wilber, 1995b) under an obligation to struggle with the non-mediated voices of contemporary indigenous peoples? Since the Rio Earth Summit, if we venture to take that as a watershed event, this seems to be more necessary than ever (cf. Rogers, 1993). Can Wilber legitimately write *A brief history of everything* without delving into cultural shadow material? My answer would be that any contemporary author writing on social evolution does have this obligation - unless he wants to continue perpetrating an unfortunate history which created the cultural shadows I am referring to.

## V. MINDFUL DECOLONIZATION - RECOVERY OF INDIGENOUS MIND PROCESS

Yvonne Dion-Buffalo and John Mohawk (1994) outline three choices which colonized peoples have in response to cultural colonization.

They can become "good subjects" of the discourse, accepting the rules of law and morals without much question, they can be "bad subjects" arguing that they have been subjected to alien rules but always revolting within the precepts of those rules, or they can be "non-subjects", *acting and thinking around discourses far removed from and unintelligible to the West* [EMPHASIS ADDED, J.W.K.]... In a world composed of fewer than a dozen distinct civilizations (including the metropolitan West) plus 3,000 to 5,000 distinct indigenous societies, the range of possible experiences is very great indeed. These are the autochthonous peoples whom such luminaries as Arnold Toynbee wrote entirely out of history. Much of what remains of the range of human potential for creating versions of reality exists in the framework of the arts, stories, oral traditions, music and other cultural manifestations of these peoples. Their lived and dreamed experiences are the world's richest sources of exploration of the human potential. - Gaining access to these experiences will not be easy. Not only are the voices of these distinct "others" remote, the channels of communication are practically non-existent. Few individuals from tribal societies write novels or history texts (p. 35).

"Non-subject" is a double-edged term: It refers not only to the choice native peoples may make not to be in reaction to their dominant societies, but it also signifies how the non-subjects do not show up in the prevailing discourses, because these don't have the capacity to make them present (traditionally indigenous peoples are present to each other through the appropriate "legwork", meaning knowledge exchanges set up in an equitable way). The words "*acting and thinking around discourses far removed from and unintelligible to the West*" are of great significance. I have explored the qualitative differences between indigenous consciousness and eurocentered consciousness in my other publications (Kremer, 1995b). To put it simply: the cross-cultural differences between Germans and Italians are not of the same order as those between Italians and Navajos. Cross-cultural differences between cultures engaged in the participatory conversation with the phenomena are of one order, while cross-cultural differences between cultures representing a dissociative mind process are of a different order. Within each of these orders comparisons are easier, while they are very difficult between these two broad classes of cultural consciousness processes. The integral consciousness of indigenous minds and their cognitive capacities fall through the cracks of the eurocentered, anthropological lenses; what they allow us to see ends up as earlier developmental stages in models of the evolution of consciousness (in models à la Piaget, Wilber, Kohlberg, etc.). As such they are a reflection of the eurocentered minds and their

dissociation from their own origins and not an appropriate model to capture the worlds of native peoples. Advocates of stage models claim to be able to capture indigenous consciousness as archaic, typhonic or mythic. As I have tried to illustrate above, this type of conceptualization is a categorical error, inappropriately conflating two worlds: the eurocentered conceptualizations of non-subjects make them appear as "primitives" thus making them part of the dissociative eurocentered universe - a continuation of colonial thinking. Until such time when we as eurocentered people begin to pay attention to this error, our impact on native peoples will continue to be lethal.

Wilber doesn't do any better than Toynbee. The indigenous peoples and individuals have no voice of their own in his writing. Whatever is said about them is written through the lense of received anthropology - a lense which is part and parcel of colonial history (more recent critical deviations within the field of anthropology notwithstanding). The literature by native people may not be extensive, for the reasons that Dion-Buffalo and Mohawk point out, but it is extensive enough to help us question quite clearly the prevailing discourses on legal, transpersonal, scientific and many other issues (see for example Lyons et al., 1992; Wa & Uukw, 1989; Wub-E-Ke-Niew, 1995).

Wilber quotes Roszak affirmatively (1995a, 571) as saying that "it is always risky to infer from contemporary to prehistory tribal groups." Of course, this needs to be done thoughtfully. All this is contrary to the stance that other scholars such as Martin have arrived at when he imagines "that the speech and artisanry of modern (i.e., sixteenth- to twentieth-century) hunting peoples is a close approximation of that mesolithic ancestral model" (1992, 35). Nevertheless, one of the examples from contemporary literature which Wilber gives shows clearly the process how native peoples become non-subject. He uses the "Hopi Rain Dance" (1995a, 128) as an example to discuss the distinction between hermeneutics and structural-functionalism. This discussion, interestingly enough, clearly ends up on the functionalist side: "Whether it is really going to make rain or not, or trying to make rain or not, is quite secondary to our concerns; because what it is really doing is providing an occasion that binds individuals together into the social fabric of the tribe" (1995a, 128/9; emphasis added). Wilber later clarifies that the "really" in this quote is indeed his position, and not just a disinterested discussion of functionalism: "Complex systems of mythology, whatever other functions they might have performed, began to serve first and foremost as a way to unify peoples beyond mere blood lineage" (1995a, 169, emphasis deleted). As other examples in his text show, his interpretation of tribal cultures, here even a contemporary one specifically mentioned by name, gets reduced to the "real meaning" which functionalism provides for him and which fits his general evolutionary scheme. The rest of the Hopi cultural practices, which presumably fall under the category of "magic," are not considered as real and are relegated to the shadowlands. As long as members of the dominant discourse assume that they can intelligently talk about everything (with the implicit assumption that non-subjects are non-existent and with the corollary assumption that the possibility of non-subjects as defined above is a figment of "retro-romantics" or likeminded folk - as long as this is the case it continues to perpetrate colonialism and imperialism. The direct, unmediated Hopi voice is required in these discussions.

The question of how a non-subject might engage in dialogue with Ken Wilber is a tricky one. The fundamental problem is, of course, that a non-subject does not really have any place within the scheme which Wilber outlines except in the historical past as an evolutionarily earlier occurrence. Non-subjects thus only show up as the projections of the civilized eurocentered mind appearing at the earlier evolutionary stages - rather than as past and *contemporary* subjects in their own right with a fundamentally different way of knowing and being. The only way to gain or claim a place is to engage in a dialogue on the stage which has been prepared by the grand scheme he and others in the 19th century evolutionary thinking lineage. This means leaving non-subjecthood in order to gain or maintain credibility as an academically honorable conversational partner. This is the trap of colonialism and internalized colonialism. When I am striving to be seen through the eyes of the dominant paradigm - and Wilber is a part of that, different as he may appear on the surface - I am losing my otherness as I am trying to communicate using the forms and conventions which are not mine. Obviously, the style of my paper is an attempt to be respectful of the tremendous amount of work which he has put into his writing, while at the same time engaging in a way that is respectful of who I am. If I were to engage on the stage which he has prepared, then I would violate who I am; and if I don't then my credibility is questionable in the eyes of the conventional discourse. Given this predicament I am trying to frame the dialogue in a way that more than just a meeting of minds may become possible. If Wilber is interested in dealing with his own indigenous cultures of origin and with contemporary native peoples in a way which is not dismissive, then he needs to seek an avenue of conversation and knowledge sharing which is different from standard academic discourse.

I have described the notion of participatory or shamanic "*concourse*" as a way of having knowledge exchange based on equity in a framework in which all participants are free to choose participation (Kremer, 1992a & b, 2002). The change from *discourse* to *concourse* is intentionally somewhat provocative. In reviewing the etymology of both words it becomes apparent that the embodied running of the Latin *currere* has become the disembodied movement of the mind in current academic discourse. *Currere* also connotes the running of waters or the circular movement of wheels. Instead of the antagonistic *dis* of the critical review of reality models (or truth claims), where scholars and others dispute conclusions reached in relative isolation by moving from premises to consequences, I am suggesting the *con* of communal, social reality creation (this is based on the presupposition that there is no genuine community without conflict and agonistic moves). Participatory *concourse* would be a circle where the communal reality creation is reviewed through talking as well as ritualistic embodiment; this circle would have space for silence, stories, humor, theater, dancing and other arts.

If scholars were to engage in participatory *concourse*, then this would mean that they are resuming an ancient conversation (where in *ayllu*, *friðr*, or elsewhere). They would understand that consensus about a particular truth claim is not something which can be achieved by means of the rational mind alone. The knowing of the body, the knowing of the heart, the knowing which comes from states of shifted awareness (including the dialogue with the ancestors) are all valuable processes. Even though every consensus will have to withstand the challenges posed in verbal, rational discourse, the words of

resolution will have to withstand the challenges from all other human dimensions of experience - somatic, sexual, emotional and spiritual. Such an embodiment of knowing can heal the various splits, such as between body and mind. Any resolution has to include the explicit, verbal expression of agreement as well as the felt sense of common understanding. Any resolution needs to be open not just to be questioned through the pragmatics of testing propositional truths; it also needs to be open to moral and aesthetic (in the Batesonian sense [1991]) investigations. Somatic knowing and intuition need to see the light of the rational mind, while the mind needs to see the light which is in the body. While it is true that we are always challenged to reflect our resolutions in language, this does not mean that language is the sole arbiter of truth. It is in the open and fluid interaction of the different dimensions of the participatory concourse that we can discover how our resolutions of truth address the alignment issues we are faced with. To deny science is foolish; not to acknowledge its participation in the phenomena (in the Barfieldian sense) is equally dangerous. Participatory concourse allows us to appreciate scientific achievements without denying the body, the heart, sexuality, gender differences and the divine.

I have given this rudimentary description to indicate that there are ways in which qualitatively different paradigms could be with each other and explore each other's knowledge (which takes more than the written word). All the issues which Wilber discusses are of tremendous consequence for eurocentered cultures and those peoples who are at the butt of their paradigm. I wish there were an occasion to engage about these issues in a setting which is respectful to all sides willing to participate. I hope that such a forum will be created and that discussions, such as in *ReVision* and *Ken Wilber in Dialogue* (discussed in the next section) may be the beginning of such participatory concourse (See Edwards, 2002, for a contribution to this debate). This would also allow eurocentered people to focus on our own history, the tribal perversions which we know about in our own past, and come to terms with the dissociation from our own prehistory.

## **VI. LINGERING SHADOWS**

In 1996 a number of authors appreciatively and critically engaged with Wilber's work in the journal *ReVision*. Editors Donald Rothberg and Sean Kelly developed a generative format for the discussions they intended to facilitate. After an overview by Donald Rothberg, Roger Walsh, Sean Kelly, Peggy Wright, Michael Zimmerman, Michael Washburn, Stanislav Grof, Jeanne Achterberg, Robert McDermott, and I discussed various aspects of Wilber's publications; in addition, Rothberg interviewed Joseph Goldstein, Jack Kornfield and Michel McDonald-Smith. Wilber wrote an extensive reply to these contributions. All authors then briefly replied to Wilber. The final words were written by Wilber and the editors. All these articles were published in *ReVision* (1996), Vol. 18 #4, Vol. 19#1 and #2. In 1998 this dialogue, together with additional contributions, was published by Quest.

Wilber responded to the critique voiced above in this article in three ways (1996, 31 & 46): 1) Future publications will address my concerns in detail and discussion the shadow of evolutionary thinking; 2) he repeated positions previously published without additional



explanations; 3) Wilber assumed that my critical points represent a stance that he himself had taken in his earlier publications. Beyond that I did not find any specific responses to my remarks. Indeed, this appears to be the case in his responses to almost all appraisals of his works in these *ReVision* issues. In that sense the debate does not resemble participatory concourse, however, the discussion can be seen as solid preparation for such process.

Gregory Bateson pointed out that lack of response is a significant piece of information (rather than no information). I find Wilber's responses in this discussion disappointing, primarily because they fall short on engagement with the current writings of the contributors, while they are long on restatements of published positions and engagement with previous publications of some of the contributors. The stance that author X "tends to misrepresent my [Wilber's] overall model" seems to be the stimulus for extensive restatements instead of a detailed dialogue with the thoughtful reflections offered by the various authors. Of course, a perceived misrepresentation can mean at least three things: a) an actual misrepresentation and distortion of something clearly stated; b) a misrepresentation of something open to interpretation or unclearly or insufficiently stated; c) something perceived or framed as a misrepresentation, which is actually a disagreement based on a correct or at least possible reading of an author's statements. While I can deeply appreciate an author's concern with the desire to be represented as accurately as possible in the secondary literature, the experience of misrepresentation could at the same time also occasion an introspective exploration of the possible causes that might contribute to such misunderstandings from the author's side. The small amount of space dedicated by Wilber to dialogue about significant issues as they are described and identified by the present discussants results in less of a conversation and much more of a series of monologues than I had hoped for. But then: Wilber's vision-logic, and certainly the indigenous mind process I am talking, about calls in part for a different setting and a different kind of interpersonal exchange than a journal can offer.

It is interesting to notice how Wilber reads McDermott and fails to distinguish between critical disagreements, outspokenness and level confrontation on the one hand and put downs, dismissive commentary and demeaning caricatures on the other hand. (And no response to Zimmerman on this topic.) I heartily agree with Wilber's advocacy for honest disagreements and outspokenness. Yet: Wilber writes about my article that "I find his [Kremer's] actual argument rather confused" without either saying what his reading of the argument is or why the argument is confused. An equivalent statement would be "I find Wilber's actual writing rather dissociated." Either of these remarks may be true, but they may be stated dismissively or in engaged level dialogue; the latter requires different wording and the creation of context through argument and explication.

One of the central issues around Wilber's conceptualization of our evolutionary past is his image of peoples of previous historical stages. Stephen Jay Gould, who can hardly be called a "retromantic," discusses the nature of many of these assumptions commonly held about prehistoric peoples in a recent article about the Chauvet Cave art: "Old should mean rudimentary - either primitive by greater evolutionary regress toward an apish past or infantile by closer approach to the first steps on our path toward modernity. (...) This

equation of the older with more rudimentary both violates the expectations of evolutionary theory when properly construed and has now also been empirically disproved by discoveries at Chauvet Cave and elsewhere. (...) The hypothesis of progressivism in paleolithic art cannot hold" (1996, 17, 72). Gould, of course, also advocates that the notion of progress be removed from evolutionary thinking.

Let me address some more of the specifics in Wilber's reply to my article: Wilber points to my lack of his discussion of Winkelman's reviews of his work. However, Wilber's critique of Winkelman's approach is quite beside the points which I am trying to make - no need for me to respond to his criticism. To use Wilber's words: "Alas, you have misread my model." My model is not one of cultural relativism and Wilber fails to explain how the performative contradiction identified in Winkelman's work applies to my article. And Wilber has yet to answer to the detailed objections by Winkelman and myself regarding available archaeological and anthropological evidence which challenge his model as a whole (a discussion of cultural relativism, even if valid, is no response to these specific points).

Wilber's statement about a society's center of gravity is a restatement of his own published wordings and not a response to the inherent contradictions and unclarity related to Wilber's work I point out in my article, especially in regards to his contradictory statements about rational societies and the present stage of the majority of its members.

Wilber finds my discussions of the indigenous mind process neither "fair, balanced, [n]or anthropologically representative." This reminds me of debates around racism where one of the defensive responses to discussions of the Middle Passage is: "Well, African peoples had slaves, too." Indeed - but it misses the point of engagement with the complicity in racism and colonialism. Naturally, within the euro-centered place where Wilber stands he has to find my discussion unbalanced - which is exactly what my critique addresses.

I find nothing in Wilber's responses that persuades me that his model is not complicit with the continuation of racism and colonialism, I am sorry to say. The shadow of modernity continues to loom.

No author can be expected to address all the critical issues raised in the *ReVision* issues, yet Wilber's selection of topics for his responses is disappointingly non-dialogical. - Wilber's contributions to the field of transpersonal theory are impressive, yet, vision-logic, to my mind, requires a quality of dialogue about these issues which I have yet to see manifested in his response. The groundwork for the emergence of that possibility may have been laid with these *ReVision* issues. I am eager to be engaged in a quality of discourse (which I have called participatory concourse) which would do justice to the stage which Wilber sees emerging. His perspective and provocative engagement will be desirable in a context of shared assumptions about the nature of such a critical dialogue.

## **VII. ALTERNATE FRAMES**

Let me return to the beginning of this paper and add some descriptions, which point to alternate frames for history, evolution, and universality through grounding conversations in the astronomical cycles and facilitating universality through equitable knowledge exchange within a consciousness of the same indigenous quality. The constraints of this article don't allow for the elaboration of these practices of being and knowing, but I will briefly sketch some of the fundamental assumptions. The knowledge exchange between peoples in a dissociated consciousness process and peoples in an integral, non-dissociated consciousness process is likely to be governed by a paradigm of domination (driven by the dissociative process), while knowledge exchanges among peoples in an integral, non-dissociated consciousness process have a greater chance of being equitable. Universality is created in the latter exchanges through the specific understanding of relatedness and the sharing of the specific conversations engaging each other - the ceremonial context of such exchanges supports equity and reaches for global connections and universality in a different way than the process of abstraction. Deloria gives a succinct description of such an indigenous perspective from one of the Native American traditions:

The Plains Indians arranged their knowledge in a circular format - which is to say, there were no ultimate terms or constituents of their universe, only sets of relationships which sought to describe phenomena. No concept could stand alone in the way that time, space, and matter once stood as absolute entities in Western science. All concepts not only had content but were themselves composed of the elements of other ideas to which they were related. Thus it was possible to begin with one idea, thoroughly examine it by relating it to other concepts and arrive back at the starting point with the assurance that a person could properly interpret what constituted the idea and how it might manifest itself in concrete physical experiences. ... A list of the most important components of the Indian universe:... The universe is alive ... Everything is related ... All relationships are historical ... Space determines the nature of relationships ... Time determines the meaning of relationships. (Deloria, 1996, 40ff.)

Returning to the Andean peoples of Peru we find the following descriptions of the indigenous mind process:

The *chacra* is the piece of land where the peasant lovingly and respectfully nurtures plants, soil, water, micro-climates and animals. In a broad sense *chacra* is all that is nurtured, thus the peasants say that the llama is their *chacra* that walks and whereof wool is harvested. We ourselves are the *chacra* of the *wakas* or deities that care for, teach and accompany us. ...[There is a] continuous conversation and reciprocation between the relatives with the Andean *ayllu*, forming an organicity that facilitates the nurturing of the *chacra*, through practices of mutual help... This help takes place in an atmosphere of fiesta, with joy and always asking permission of the *wakas* or Andean deities. (Valladolid, 1995, 23 & 46)

What happens between the Andean communities of humans, deities and nature is reciprocal dialogue, a relationship which does not assume any distancing and objectification between those dialoguing, but rather an attitude of tenderness and understanding towards the life of the other. Such dialogue does not lead one to a *knowledge about the other*, but rather to empathize and attune oneself with its mode of being, and in company with that other, to generate and regenerate life. It is a dialogue ... that leads [not to knowledge but] to wisdom. (Rengifo, 1993, 168, translation by Appfel-Marglin)

These are descriptions of a process of an immanently present visionary socially constructed being, which is sustained without a need to progress or overcome some insufficient state - conversations are held for balance' sake. These descriptions are different from Wilber's definition of vision-logic. Given the space limitations let me just briefly sketch some coordinates. The two quotes and my initial sections above describe the immanent, ongoing conversation with everything, including spirits, which constitutes the community for human beings. Within this framework, if individuals do not know their ancestry, place in the community, the cultural stories, the land they live on, the cycles of the seasons, the stars, etc. - then these persons are lost to who they are, and

pathology ensues - these individuals are in need of healing or balancing. These indigenous models, which to my mind require cognitive skills akin to Wilber's vision-logic, allow for an alternate understanding of time, history, and the variety of cultures; they also allow people to be in participation or conversation while exercising high level rational skills. Part of this conversation is the observation of the precession of the equinoxes and other larger historical cycles. This indigenous conceptualization allows each culture to understand its historic spiritual mission in its own ecological niche, so to speak. It is not just that this type of model is preferable, I would suggest that it has greater accuracy because it is more complete and integral. It facilitates cultural exchange because it establishes equality among prospective partners of knowledge trade and avoids implicit or explicit imperialistic thinking. From this particular perspective Wilber's evolutionary story is a sad one, because it seems so desperately to seek that place of balance and healing of dissociation - but, sadly, continues to speak from a place of dissociation from parts of the self which indigenous consciousness considers essential for well-being; it continues to perpetrate the splits from participatory or conversational self, shadow and historical roots. As long as there is a trajectory of progress and as long as vision-logic is described without full attention to all aspects of the conversation in the *ayllu* (Wilber, 1995a, 185), we further the dissociation from the ancient conversation of balance, and Wilber's grand scheme remains additive holism still in need of further integration.

Much of the current interest in native peoples - especially among New Age folk - is permeated with nostalgia and romanticism. The Hopi Indians of Arizona have been the object of such inappropriate and insufficient understanding. Yet, their history and stories show a complex struggle for balance, which all too frequently ends in *kooyanisqatsi* or social disarray - with all the gore of killed fellow tribal members, burnt villages, etc. (see M. Lomatuway'ma, L. Lomatuway'ma, Namingha & Malotki [1993] for illustrative stories narrated by Hopi people). I am giving this reminder so that the reader may resist temptations to see my descriptions as amounting to some form of ideal or perfect image of native peoples which can be - maybe nostalgically or romantically - projected into the past. There is nothing ideal about these descriptions in the contemporary sense of the word. The present dialectic of the ideal and the flawed are machinations of contemporary discourse fueled by the shadows of its past; the creation of these figments support its addictive hunger for power and domination. Life is never ideal, it never has been. Human follies and fallacies have always been there. Trading in ideals is the narcissism of the dominant culture. Good-bad, ideal-flawed have always been contextualized, relative, historical. Romanticism and nostalgia are the the reaction to the denial of the presence of indigenous mind and non-subjects in contemporary life; neither know who they are in terms of the indigenous framework which I have just described. Both are lost to the sacred obligation which humans have to all their relations on this planet.

This article is dedicated to the memory of Eduardo Grillo, one of the founding members of PRATEC and their *primus inter pares*, who unexpectedly passed away on April 23, 1996.

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Footnote 1: The precession of the equinoxes (the westward drift of the vernal equinox through the zodiac) is caused by the wobble of the earth; as a result her axis points to different parts of the sky at different times (e.g., while Polaris is the current North Star, Vega will have that position 13,000 years from now). See Kyselka & Lanterman (1976) for a basic overview discussion of this astronomical phenomenon. De Santillana & v. Dechend (1969) have written the fundamental work - from the European perspective - for an interpretation of myths in astronomical terms, demonstrating how the language of ancient stories can be simultaneously poetic and scientifically precise (especially in regards to the example just given in my text).

Footnote 2: Cf. Warrior, 1995 for a discussion of these positions; cf. Vizenor, 1989, 1994a, 1994b for an example of Native American discourse stance.

Footnote 3: Thanks to Betty Bastien for our conversations about internalized colonization which led me to conceptualize the dynamic in terms of projective identification.