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# Beyond Mind III: Further Steps to a Metatranspersonal Philosophy and Psychology (Continuation of the Discussion on the Three Best Known Transpersonal Paradigms, with a Focus on Washburn and Grof)

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This paper gives continuity to the criticism, undertaken in two papers previously published in this journal, of transpersonal systems that fail to discriminate between nirvanic, samsaric, and neither-nirvanic-nor-samsaric transpersonal states, and which present the absolute sanity of Awakening as a dualistic, conceptually-tainted condition. It also gives continuity to the denunciation of the false disjunction between ontogenically ascending and descending paths, while showing the truly significant disjunction to be between existentially ascending and metaexistentially descending paths. However, whereas in the preceding paper the focus was on Wilber's so-called integral system, in this paper the focus of the main body is on the systems of Washburn and Grof. It features an appendix discussing psychedelics and the use of the term *entheogens* in their regard, and another appendix showing Wilber's system to give continuity to the Orphic dualism of Pythagoreans, Eleatics, and Plato, and the covert Orphic dualism of Neo-Platonics.

In the preceding article in this series, *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), I discussed at length the most conspicuous elements of Wilber's conception of the Path of Awakening that outright contradict Buddhist views (even though I misrepresented his system insofar as I reduced his ten fulcra to nine, my criticism is perfectly valid, as may evidenced by the corrected version of this criticism in the note having its reference mark at the end of this sentence and in version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]). In the first article of this series, *Beyond Mind*, I discussed Grof's views, but for reasons of space I was unable to do so extensively, and had to leave aside some of the points of Grof's system that contradict the views of Buddhism and Dzogchen, as well as my own experience (any misconceptions of Grof's I may have incurred in that paper, are hopefully mended in this paper, and in a more thorough and complete way in version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]). Washburn was mentioned and quoted in the *Beyond Mind II* section entitled, "The 'Pre / Trans Fallacy' and the 'Ascender / Descender Debate,'" but there was no space to evaluate his system. In this paper I intend to scrutinize the important points of Grof's system I failed to discuss in the first article of the series and analyze Washburn's system as a whole; since this must involve a more in- depth evaluation of the

ongoing debate concerning that which Wilber called the pre / trans fallacy (which he often perceived where there is no such fallacy) and what he called the "ascender / descender debate," and hence on what Washburn called the "structural hierarchic paradigm / dynamic dialectical paradigm," I will have to incur some repetition so that the present paper may be understood by readers who have not read the preceding papers of the series.

It is well known that Ken Wilber (1993b) imputed to Stanislav Grof and Michael Washburn what he called the "pre / trans fallacy," which is directly related to what the same author referred to as the "ascender / descender debate" (Wilber, 1995) and which consists in the "confusion of early, prepersonal life experiences for transpersonal experiences of higher consciousness."<sup>2</sup> It is equally well known that Grof (1985, 2000) and Washburn (1995) denied the existence of such a fallacy, and that the former has defended the view that Wilber criticized by asserting early, *prenatal* life experiences to be legitimate sources of transpersonal experience that can be interpreted as instances of *deeper* consciousness.

The polysemic character of the ascending / descending metaphor has made room for different interpretations among transpersonal theorists: (1) Wilber and other theorists have understood it as a disjunctive

between a spirituality that views and seeks the sacred or the spiritual in a “beyond” to which it is oriented, and a worldview that favors immanency and values nature, including the body and often its natural impulses—some varieties of which see the latter as sacred and as means for achieving spiritual realization, and therefore seek to put an end to the current alienation of consciousness from the body and the latter’s feelings and impulses (however, Wilber [e.g., 1996, pp. 10-11<sup>3</sup>] incorrectly asserted transcendent spirituality to posit inherent oneness and immanentist spirituality to posit inherent plurality, when in truth most otherworldly religions see the universe as separate from their supposedly transcendent divinity and as constituted by a plurality of substances [and some of them go so far as to posit and worship manifold deities], whereas many thisworldly believers assert the universe to be a single substance—sometimes attempting to validate this view with the theories of the new physics—and assert the unconcealment of this single substance to be the remedy for ecological crisis and most other evils of our time). (2) Wilber also understood it as the disjunctive between his view of spiritual development as a process of producing successive structures, each of which is founded on the preceding one and cannot be produced before the preceding one has been established, and the contending view of the same process as a dissolution of ego structures and so on. (3) Another way in which some of the same theorists have understood it, which is intimately related to the first, is as the disjunctive between an *après moi le déluge*<sup>4</sup> spirituality bent on achieving liberation on the individual plane while totally disregarding ecological, social, economic, political, gender, generational, cultural, and related issues, and another one that is deeply concerned and engaged with the latter (Wilber, in particular, seems to have in mind Plato’s assertion in *Republic* VII 540B that philosophers must at some point take on official posts in order to serve the *polis*—which amounts to a “descent” from the contemplation of *eidos*—and the idea that compassion “embraces from above”—where Wilber understands “above” as referring to his idea of the end-term of evolution). (4) I myself use it metaexistentially and metaphenomenologically as the disjunctive between a spirituality intent on *producing* or *building* states that as such Buddhism characterizes as arisen / produced / caused (Pali *bhuta*; Skt. *nutpada* or *nutpatti*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*; Wiley transliterations are offered in semibold italics throughout this paper]), born (Pali and Skt. *jata*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*]), or compounded /

conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated (Pali, *sankhata*; Skt. *samskrita*; Tib. *düjaj* [*’dus byas*]) and thus leading to what Buddhism calls higher samsaric realms while pretending to lead to *nirvana*, and one that lies in Seeing through all conditioned / constructed / produced experiences into their unproduced / unbecome / uncaused (Pali *abhuta*; Skt. *anutpada*, *anutpatti*; Tib. *makyepa* [*ma skyes pa*]), unborn (Pali and Skt. *ajata*; Tib. *makyepa* [*ma skyes pa*]) and unconditioned / uncompounded / unproduced / unmade / uncontrived (Pali, *asankhata*; Skt., *asamskrita*; Tib., *dümajaj* [*’dus ma byas*]) true condition<sup>5</sup>—on the occasion of which the delusive experiences in question spontaneously liberate themselves. Each time this occurs, conditioning and delusive propensities are neutralized to some extent, and hence repetition of this gradually undoes conditioning and delusion (thus undoing the serial simulations that Laing [1961] described in terms of the diagram of a spiral of pretences,<sup>6</sup> which are secondary process / operational cognition elements both in the construction of delusive self-identity and in the implementation of the unauthentic project of ascent to higher levels of *samsara*) until Dzogchen-*qua*-Base—i.e., the true condition of reality—is never again concealed and hence Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—that is, full Awakening—is attained. Insofar as the unmade, unborn, unconditioned, nondual Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is concealed by our dualistic, conditioned interpretations of it in terms of concepts such as thisworldliness / otherworldliness, oneness / plurality and so on, and since this nondual condition can only be realized by Seeing through all conceptual—and as such *conditioned*—interpretations, truly nondual Paths are necessarily descending in the metaphenomenological and metaexistential senses of the term.

As explained in previous installments of this work (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a), the term phenomenological, rather than being used in the narrower sense given it by Husserl and successive twentieth century phenomenologists, refers to the temporal, irreversible dynamics that characterize the succession of states of being in experience, in contrast with the atemporal, reversible logical dynamics that rules thought. Since the Greek term *phainomenon* means that which appears, if appearance were defined in contrast with truth, the term phenomenology would only be applicable to the analysis of the deceiving appearances of *samsara*—to which, in any case, Hegelian and twentieth century phenomenology are confined. Since the hermeneutics of

human experience undertaken here, rather than being confined to the experiences of samsara, also considers different instances of nirvana and the oscillation between samsara and nirvana proper to metatranspersonal spiritual Paths, given the etymology of the Greek term *phainomenon* and the universal confinement of phenomenology to the appearances of samsara, I coined the neologism *metaphenomenology* to refer to this larger consideration. Like Madhyamika philosophy and the Dzogchen teachings, and in tune with the directions of twentieth century phenomenology, *metaphenomenology* maintains the phenomenological *epoché* or suspension of judgment that forbids speculation with regard to the existence or nonexistence of a basis for experience that is not part of experience or that cannot be experienced, or of anything deemed to be other than experience. In fact, in agreement with Wittgenstein's posterior, matter of fact assertion of the truism according to which, insofar as it is impossible for one to perceive whatever is not part of our own experience, it is just as illegitimate to assert that there is nothing outside this experience as to assert there is something outside it, Husserl (1982, I, § 31-32) stated that, without denying the natural world (and, it must be added, without denying perceivers other than oneself) or casting doubts with regard to it, one must place it within brackets.

As also noted in previous installments of this work (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a), the term *existential*, in its turn, rather than being applied to those theories that give primacy to human existence—or to those that, like Sartre's (1982) *existentialism*, assert existence to precede essence—here refers to those systems that, like *existential* and *existentialist* thought in general, view authenticity as lying in the non-elusion of a distressful experience that is supposed to reveal the true being or condition of the human individual. Authentic Paths of Awakening, and in particular Buddhism and Dzogchen, bring about a deficiency in the mechanisms whereby one eludes distress, yet the point in so doing, rather than being that, for the sake of authenticity, human beings should live perennially in distress, is that this may be a condition for the eradication of the source of distress, which as the higher version of the Four Noble Truths makes clear, is the delusion called *avidya*—source of an all-pervasive lack of plenitude, of recurrent pain and conflict, and of the host of defects of samsaric experience, and fundamental human contradiction. In fact, so long as one can derive even slight pleasure or comfort from

experiences based on that delusion and contradiction, one will unreflectively adhere to those experiences and will have no chance of applying the pith or core instructions that make spontaneous liberation possible. On the contrary, if contradiction is shown for what it is, so that it turns into conflict and one experiences in its bareness the distress inherent in it, one may be driven to put an end to this distress by applying the pith or core instructions that make the spontaneous liberation of delusion possible. It was in order to categorize those metatranspersonal systems that are based on this principle that I coined the neologism *metaexistential*. (This explanation should not cause readers to regard metatranspersonal, *metaexistential* systems as dreadful, for what is dreadful is the elusion of distress proper to normality: although one eludes the inescapable lack of plenitude and the recurrent pain and conflict that issue from *avidya*, they continue to be there, and there is no way to avoid being always haunted by the former or recurrently meeting the latter throughout one's life. On the contrary, in a *metaexistential* system such as Dzogchen *Atiyoga* these experiences and the *avidya* at their root liberate themselves in the absolute plenitude of nirvana as soon as they arise. Moreover, since intense experiences help the recognition of our true condition and the concomitant spontaneous liberation of delusion / contradiction and thus may be used for instantly switching from samsara to nirvana, in order to make this switching possible *metaexistential* systems such as the Inner Buddhist Tantras based on the principle of transformation and Dzogchen *Atiyoga*—based on the principle of spontaneous liberation—employ methods that induce experiences of delight far more intense than whichever pleasure one may otherwise experience.)

The combination of the two neologisms defined above—*metaphenomenological* and *metaexistential*—thus refers to the type of spiritual theory and practice, proper to Buddhism and Dzogchen, which is based in the following four premises: (1) whatever is produced / contrived / compounded / conditioned is impermanent and spurious; (2) absolute truth and authenticity is reached by Seeing through the produced / conditioned / contrived into the unproduced / uncontrived / uncompounded / unconditioned true condition of the whole of reality; (3) the non-elusion of distressful states is more authentic than their elusion; and (4) distressful states compel one to See through one's produced, conditioned experience into the uncreated /

unconditioned true condition of all phenomena and thus attain the total authenticity of absolute truth. Therefore, those spurious spiritual paths in which the *dubkha* or unhappy consciousness inherent in *avidya* is eluded by constructing produced / conditioned / contrived states which as such are transient and forged—such as the formless realms that make up the highest sphere of *samsara*—and taking refuge in them, are ascending in phenomenological-existential terms. Contrariwise, true, supreme Paths of Awakening are descending in metaphenomenological-metaexistential terms insofar as they involve facing the suffering inherent in delusion in order to use it as the alarm of a delusion detector that reminds one to apply the pith or core instructions that facilitate the Seeing through the produced / conditioned / contrived into the unproduced / uncontrived / uncompounded / unconditioned true condition of ourselves and all phenomena that instantly results in the spontaneous liberation of the produced / conditioned / contrived—and when they construct produced / conditioned / contrived states (whether of the sphere of formlessness, of the sphere of form, or of the sphere of sensuality), the purpose is to See through them into their uncreated / unconditioned / uncontrived true condition. (For a thorough discussion of this, cf. Capriles, 2007a [Vol. I, II].)

In fact, according to Buddhism in general, the true Path is the one based on the realization of what is nonarisen / unproduced / uncaused, unborn, and unconditioned / uncompounded / unmade / unproduced / uncontrived / unfabricated; whereas the Theravada claims these adjectives apply only to *nirvana*, the Mahayana applies them to the true condition of ourselves and the whole of reality, which the Essence-Sutras of the Third Promulgation call the Buddha-nature, and therefore to the true condition of all phenomena as different from our perception of them, which from the conventional standpoint is arisen / produced / caused, born, and compounded / conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated. Most significant, the Dzogchen teachings stress the fact that Awakening is the nonarisen / unproduced / uncaused, unborn, and unconditioned / uncompounded / unfabricated / unmade / unproduced / uncontrived disclosure of the Buddha-nature, and that as such it is beyond cause and effect (and, in fact, were the disclosure of the Buddha-nature *produced* by causes and conditions, true, irreversible Awakening would simply be impossible). The truly nondual traditions are those

that do not view the material world as separate from the divine; that rather than regarding the body's impulses as evil or as running against the highest human aims, know them to be sacred impulses to be employed for realization of the divine; that do not contrast oneness and plurality; and that acknowledge that the true condition of all of reality cannot be understood in terms of any concept—for example, as oneness or as plurality—but must be realized directly beyond conceptual interpretations. Since dualistic beliefs arise from grasping at concepts that are defined by *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*; since from a conventional standpoint all concepts and concept-tinged experiences are arisen / produced / caused, born, and compounded / conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated; and since the true condition of all reality can only be correctly apprehended by Seeing through the arisen / produced / caused, born, and compounded / conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated and hence through conceptual interpretations, into what (is) nonarisen / unproduced / uncaused, unborn, and unconditioned / uncompounded / unmade / unproduced / uncontrived / unfabricated, as suggested above all spiritual Paths transmitted by genuinely nondual spiritual systems are descending in the senses I am calling metaphenomenological and metaexistential.

Buddhism includes within what it characterizes as produced / caused (Pali *bhuta*; Skt. *nutpada* or *nutpatti*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*]), born (Pali and Skt. *jata*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*]), and compounded / conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated (Pali, *sankhata*; Skt. *samskrita*; Tib. *düjaj* [*'dus byas*]), whatever originates from the conjunction of causes and conditions, or from interdependent arisings.<sup>7</sup> Wilber has viewed spiritual growth as the production of successive structures, each of which is founded on the preceding one and cannot arise before the preceding one has been established, and classifies them into, (a) *basic* structures—which result from a multidimensional learning process and which are conserved when development proceeds to a higher psychic level, being integrated into the subsequent basic structures—and (b) *transitional* or *replacement* structures—defined as “ways in which the world is experienced through the basic structures of a psychic level” and which unlike the former are not preserved when development proceeds to a higher psychic level (Wilber, 1990). Therefore, each structure arises from the conjunction of causes and conditions. Besides these

structures Wilber posited the “self,”<sup>8</sup> which *identifies* with the successive basic structures, producing what Wilber calls fulcra (and, needless to say, giving rise to a sense-of-self—which in Buddhist terms must necessarily be *false* insofar as senses-of-self are by definition spurious and delusive). Since *identification* involves the *conjunction* of the *subject that identifies* and *that with which it identifies*, the self’s identification with basic structures is *produced* and *conditioned*. Since according to Buddhism all that is *produced* and *conditioned* pertains to samsara, Wilber’s view of spiritual development applies to paths to higher samsaric realms, but in no way can it apply to Paths of Awakening. In fact, as will be shown below, the subject-object duality is the very core of samsara and manifests only in samsara.

According to Wilber (1996, pp. 220-226) at the end of the spiritual process the self goes beyond *identification*; in order to evaluate this claim, Wilber’s description of the two highest fulcra must be submitted to hermeneutical analysis. Though this was already done in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), and though a revised version of it is provided in note 1 to this paper, at this point it is important to underline that in the ninth fulcrum, which Wilber (1996) viewed as the *dharmakaya* and as the realization of emptiness, and posited as the final realization of dualistic systems:

You pursue the observing Self, the Witness, to its very source in pure emptiness, [and] then no objects arise in consciousness at all. This is a discrete, identifiable state of awareness—namely, *unmanifest absorption* or *cessation*, variously known as *nirvikalpa samadhi* ... *nirodh*, classical *nirvana*. This is the causal state, a discrete state, which is often likened to the state of deep dreamless sleep, except in that this state is not a mere blank but rather an utter fullness, and it is experienced as such... Because it can never be seen as an object, this pure Self is pure Emptiness. (p. 220)

As shown in *Beyond Mind II*, the *witness* or *sakshin* is a Brahmanic concept shared by Patañjali’s *Yoga darshana*, the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutra* and Shankara’s *Advaita Vedanta*. It is a pure observing self that is different and separate from the observed, which according to Wilber in this fulcrum does not identify with the latter. The hermeneutical analysis, carried out in

Capriles (2006a, 2007 [Vol. II]), of Wilber’s descriptions of this fulcrum and of the “pith instructions” he gave as a means for realizing the witness or *sakshin*, demonstrated it *not* to be the reGnition of the *dharmakaya* aspect (or of any other aspect, for that matter) of the nondual primordial awareness of the Dzogchen teachings (cf. note 1 to this paper, where the analysis in question is reproduced), which, just like the witness, is *not* one with or equal to the phenomena that in *samsara* appear as object, yet unlike the witness it is proven not to be separate or different from these phenomena. The fact that in the above quotation Wilber referred to the witness or *sakshin* as “the observing self,” thus showing it to be the observer that seems to be different and separate from the observed and which is relative to the latter and cannot exist without it, and in general the whole of the analysis, showed the witness or *sakshin* to be the mental subject that arises interdependently with its objects by virtue of the delusory valuation-absolutization of the supersubtle threefold thought structure (Tib. *khor sum* [*’khor gsum*]) as *samsara* develops from the neutral condition of the base-of-all—which is the only observer that appears to be different and separate from the observed; which, insofar as it is an interdependent arising, is *produced* and *conditioned*; and which is one of the poles of the dualistic structure that constitutes the second sense of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the classification favored by Longchenpa and a central element of this second sense of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the classification adopted in this paper, and as such is the pivot of *samsara*. However, in this fulcrum the subject has detached itself from its objects through the practice of mental pacification (in Buddhism referred to by the Pali *samatha*, the Sanskrit *shamatha*, the Tibetan *zhinai* [*zhi gnas*] and so on), thus obtaining an *experience of emptiness*—which as such is a *produced, conditioned* state of the kind the Dzogchen teachings compare with a *reflection in a mirror* and call *the state of the reflected*, which they contrast with the state of the mirror representing the reGnition of nondual awareness called *rigpa*. In spite of asserting it to involve the witness of *sakshin* that he himself defined as being different and separate from its objects, Wilber asserted this fulcrum to be beyond the subject-object chasm, likening it to dreamless sleep and characterizing it as *nirodha* or cessation—which in combination applies to one variety of absorptions of the neutral base-of-all, but not to the *dharmakaya*, which is not comparable to dreamless sleep and does

not involve nirodha.<sup>9</sup> Thus Wilber's description of this fulcrum is self-contradictory, and the only thing that is clear about it, is that it is *not* any instance of nirvana, for all such instances are free from the subject-object duality, yet may not be either compared with deep sleep or reduced to nirodha or cessation insofar as higher nirvana involves an absolute freedom of awareness and does not involve either the obliteration of the sensory continuum or the arrest of motility / spontaneous activity.

In a passage cited in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and reproduced in note 1 to this paper that was explicitly validated by Ken Wilber, Roger Walsh (1998, p. 41) noted that Wilber associated this fulcrum with the condition of *nirodhasamapatti* (a state of sustained deep mental absorption that follows the attainment of nirodha in the sense of the *temporary cessation of the four mental skandhas*, but *not so of the rupaskandha* or *skandha of form*). Although, as shown in note 1 to this paper, the Theravada regards nirodhasamapatti as a condition of nirvana manifesting while the body is alive, from the standpoint of higher vehicles, identifying this fulcrum with nirodhasamapatti amounts to placing it within samsara, for as the words of the Buddha Shakyamuni in the following excerpt from the *Vajrasamadhisutra* (Oon, n.d.) make clear, the Mahayana views the condition in question as a deviation from the Path of Awakening lying on the way to the highest of the realms of formlessness: the one involving neither perception nor lack of perception (*naivasamjñanasamjñayatana*; Tib. *dushe me dushe memin kyeche* [*'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched*]), which constitutes the peak of samsara (*bhavagra*):

The Buddha responded, “So it is. Followers of the two [dualistic, lesser] vehicles [which are the *Shravakayana* and the *Pratyekabuddhayana*] are attached to mental absorption (*samadhi*) [as a means] to gain the *samadhi*-body [through the trance of cessation (Skt. *nirodhasamapatti*), whereby they attain neither perception nor non-perception]. As far as the Single-*bhumi* [of Buddhahood] or the sea of [the Absolute] void is concerned, they are like alcoholics who are drunk and unable to sober up, [and hence] continuing through countless tests, they are unable to attain Awakening... until the liquor has dissipated off, [and so] they [can] finally wake up. They will then

be able to cultivate the practices [referred to in this Sutra], eventually attaining the body (*kaya*) of Buddhahood. When a person abandons the [status of] *icchantika* (which is that of a person blocked from attaining Awakening), he will be able to access the six practices. Along the path of practice, his mind is purified [by awareness of *tathata*] and he definitely [comes to] Know. The power of his diamond-like wisdom renders him [not subject to spiritual retrogression]. He ferries sentient beings across to liberation with boundless mercy and compassion.” (n.p.; some additions were made so that the reader could get the sense without reading the previous passages of the Sutra, and a few changes in terminology and style were made in order to adapt it to the terminology and style of this paper)

In fact, nirodhasamapatti is an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, and as shown elsewhere in this paper, when subsequently the delusory valuation of the threefold thought structure gives rise to the subject-object duality, the subject takes the ensuing pseudo-totally as object,<sup>10</sup> giving rise to a samsaric formless absorption.<sup>11</sup>

In Capriles (2006, 2007 [Vol. II]) I used abundant scriptural quotations to prove that Mahayana, Vajrayana and Dzogchen forms of Buddhism assert the condition of nirvana, whether manifesting transitorily on the Path<sup>12</sup> or definitively as the Fruit, *not* to involve the subject-object duality (a duality that as we have seen does not occur even in the neutral base-of-all), and hence *not* to involve a mental subject that may either identify with this or that, or—like the witness or sakshin in this fulcrum—not identify with anything and therefore keep aloof from the movements of *prakriti* (i.e. of whatever in samsara appears as object). As suggested above, the fact that this fulcrum is defined as involving the witness or sakshin that all traditions define as a subject different from objects, and therefore features the subject-object duality, and that in it one is supposed to *identify* with that witness or sakshin (ratified by Wilber's assertion [1996, p. 227] that in fulcrum-10 one disidentifies with the witness—which implies that in fulcrum-9 it was identified with—and attain the nonduality of awareness and forms, which in his view constituted the *swabhavikaya*), contradicts the assertion that fulcrum-9 was objectless, the qualification of this fulcrum as

nirodha, and its comparison with deep sleep—which, let it be said, in combination apply only to one class of absorptions of the neutral base-of-all (all classes of which are devoid of the subject-object duality and thus cannot involve identification). In fact, though the inclusion of the witness or sakshin and other of Wilber’s assertions shows that this fulcrum involves the subject-object duality and as such is within samsara, Wilber also suggests that it is free from the duality in question, as it is actually the case with the states of nirodha or cessation that Wilber associates to this fulcrum and in particular with the samadhi that is the fruit of the Yoga Darshana and that is compared with dreamless sleep—which rather than the dharmakaya (which as we have seen is not comparable to dreamless sleep and does not involve nirodha) or other instances of nirvana, are instances of one particular variety of absorptions of the neutral base-of-all. It is in the formless samsaric absorptions that as a rule follow the occurrence of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, that there is a subject-object duality and the mental subject identifies with the pseudo-infinity appearing as object—or, in the “infinitude of consciousness” (Skt. *vijnananantayayatana*; Tib. *namshe thaye kyeche [rnam shes mtha’ yas skye mched]*), which is the second formless absorption, with the idea of itself as an immutable, detached perceiver of phenomena, which thus could seem to be what Wilber’s characterization of his ninth fulcrum reflects. And if fulcrum-9 involves a confusion of formless samsaric states with neither-samsaric-nor-nirvanic states of nirodha, fulcrum-10 cannot be the swabhavikaya, for in Wilber’s system, which in this regard is based on the Tantric Path of Transformation, this kaya must go after the dharmakaya.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, as shown in note 1 to this paper and in version 1.9 of Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]), Wilber described fulcrum-10 as featuring the subject-object duality yet involving what seems to be certainty as to the fact that this duality and the phenomena that accompany it are insubstantial manifestations of the ultimate reality—a description that does not apply to Buddhahood, yet aptly describes what is known as the “post-Contemplation state” (Skt. *prishthalabdha*; Tib. *jethob [rjes thob]*), which in levels (Skt. *bhumi*; Tib. *sa [sa]*) one through ten follows the “Contemplation state” (Skt. *samahita*; Tib. *nyamzhak [mnyam bzhabag]*) but which no longer arises in the eleventh level that corresponds to Buddhahood, and which results from the filtering down into the dualistic post-Contemplation state, of

the realization of the true nature of all phenomena by nondual awareness while in the Contemplation state, which somehow impregnates with the “taste” of the single essence of reality the dualistic state of post-Contemplation (and which therefore can only derive from the manifestation, over and over again, of the Contemplation state in which there is no subject-object duality, and by no means could result from pointing out nondual suchness from the state in which nondual suchness is totally concealed by the subject-object duality: the duality in question has to dissolve, for so long as there is a frog at the bottom of a deep well, no matter how much you point to him the limitless sky, he will continue to take it for a small luminous blue circle surrounded by dark walls; however, this dissolution could not be an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, for otherwise what would follow would be a formless absorption rather than the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas).

At any rate, one must conclude that true Paths are descending, not only in the sense I give the term, but also in meaning (2) of those listed above (which is one of the senses in which Wilber used the term, except in that he wrongly attributes regression to descending paths, whereas as shown below true Paths need not involve regression, which only occurs exceptionally in unprepared individuals). In its turn, Wilber’s view is ascending, not only in sense (2) of those listed above, but, as shown above and what is more significant, also in the metaphenomenological and metaexistential senses, and as such it reflects unauthentic spirituality. Though some authentic Paths are gradual and as such coincide with Wilber’s view, and the Fruit of all authentic Paths is stable and as such also coincides with Wilber’s descriptions, the same applies to the ascent to the formless realms and beyond, into the base-of-all, which is gradual insofar as inducing the absorptions of the neutral base-of-all and climbing to the formless realms requires systematic practice of mental pacification over a very long period, and which produces a stable result insofar as the absorptions of the formless realms and the base-of-all can last for periods subjectively experienced as aeons—yet at some point they come to an end, as a result of which the meditator falls into lower realms.

The spiritual systems I practice and propound, as all metaphenomenologically / metaexistentially descending Paths, are perfectly nondual; yet in terms of the definitions given above it might be possible to



classify them as descending in other two of the above senses as well, for: (1) rather than being antisomatic, they view the body and its impulses as sacred and use them as means of Awakening; and (3) they have always been profoundly concerned with ecological, social, economic, political, gender, generational, cultural, and other related issues (a fact that has occasioned murders, persecutions, and incarcerations: Tibetan King Mune Tsampo was killed by his mother in complicity with his country's nobility because of his attempts to implement his teachers' social doctrines;<sup>14</sup> various twentieth century Masters<sup>15</sup> and many teachers of older times were jailed for socio-political reasons; etc.). The same applies to my own writings, which include a series of books, papers, and book chapters devoted to the issues in question (Capriles, 1986, 1994, 1997a, 2006b, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007b, 2007c, 2007d, in press, work in progress 2), which I view as being of central importance—especially in our time, in which (as shown in Capriles, 1994, 1986, 1997a, 2006b, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007b, 2007c, 2007d, in press, work in progress 2) the changes that formerly were impossible to implement are not only about to become possible, but have become the condition of possibility of the continuity of life on this planet. (However, it is important to note that a descent in sense [3], if divorced from a descent in the other senses of the term, would be counterproductive, for, as shown in my book *Individuo, sociedad, ecosistema* [Capriles, 1994, work in progress 2] and other writings [Capriles, 1986, 1997a, 2006b, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007b, 2007c, 2007d, in press], unless progress on the Path of Awakening *dissolves* the vertical, oppressive structures and relationships in our own psyche, the latter will be reproduced in whatever new order is established—and, furthermore, it is likely that societally the Jungian shadows would be projected unto the former rulers and other members of the former ruling class, attempting to eradicate the former by punishing and destroying the latter.)

As commented above, descent in the metaphenomenological, metaexistential sense indicated as (4) does neither involve regression to prepersonal states (even though in some unripe individuals it may derail into some kind of regression), nor result in a “return to nature” (from which, by the way, *in truth* humans never became alienated). In the definition of (4) it was made clear that I characterize the process in terms of descent because its principle is that of repeatedly Seeing *through* conditioned experiences *into* the unconditioned-*qua*-Base

that these experiences conceal, until all conditioning and delusion are undone and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit is established. In *Beyond Mind* (Capriles, 2000a) and in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]) it was shown that this process involves what the *Divine Comedy* represented as a descent through Hell to its bottom and a subsequent “ascent” through Purgatory and Heaven toward the Empyrean; however, from a metaphenomenological perspective, this subsequent ascent is a descent as well, for it also consists in Seeing through all that is conditioned so that it spontaneously liberates itself. In fact, any ascent that does not constitute a descent in the metaexistential and metaphenomenological senses is a flight from authenticity whereby one climbs through the levels of samsara toward its summit—and possibly beyond, into absorptions of the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana are active. Likewise, insofar as nirvana is the condition of absolute equality and only samsara has up and down, levels are delusive phenomena that must be surpassed if one is to attain Awakening. It was mainly for these reasons that in Capriles (1999a, 2000a, 2003, 2007a [Vol. II]) I objected to Wilber's characterization of the process of Awakening as a progressive ascension through levels in a hierarchy or so-called “holarchy.”

Furthermore, the above view of the Awakening process as a successive, ladder-like production of structures, each of which requires the preceding one as its support, is what Wilber (1995) referred to as the “front-door entry into the transpersonal,” which he contrasted with a “back-door entry” that Grof (1998c) interpreted as referring to access to the transpersonal through so-called “nonordinary states of consciousness” (NOSCs)—an interpretation Wilber (1998, pp. 319-327) did not explicitly reject in his reply to Grof. The latter (Grof, 1998c, pp. 106-114) was quite right in noting that if this were understood to mean that authentic spiritual development must exclude NOSCs, and that major breakthroughs must occur outside the context of NOSCs, then most of the mystics with whom Wilber illustrated the higher fulcra would be fakes rather than authentic mystics. Whether or not Grof's interpretation of Wilber is correct, it is a fact that Shakyamuni Buddha attained Awakening after a NOSC involving visions of the apsaras seducing him and of demons attacking him; that Jesus was tempted in the desert; that Milarepa had his initial reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base after being attacked by the female guardian Tserinma—and

that as a rule great mystics went through experiences of the kind, which provided the setting for the initial occurrence of a major spiritual opening. Likewise—and what is even more significant—the most direct, and in this sense “highest” Buddhist practices, such as that of *Chö* (*gcod*) and the upper practices of the supreme series of Dzogchen teachings—those of *Thögel* (*thod rgal*) and the *Yangthik* (*yang thig*)—are based on NOSCs, which they induce by means that are among the most powerful and direct to this aim.<sup>16</sup> Since Wilber studied Dzogchen under at least one important Master and has regularly used the Dzogchen terms *rigpa* (nondual Awake awareness) and Great Perfection to refer to the true condition, if his dichotomy between a “front door” and a “back door” spirituality were understood to mean that true spiritual development must exclude NOSCs and that major spiritual breakthroughs must occur outside the context of NOSCs, one would be facing a paramount contradiction. At any rate, Stan Grof (1998c) was quite right when he noted that:

If [Wilber’s front-door entrance] is something resembling William James’s “educational variety” of spiritual development, where one would gradually open to the mystical dimension over a long period of time, in the way in which one learns to speak or develops an ego,<sup>17</sup> it does not seem to be the mechanism driving the spiritual evolution of humanity... the spiritual opening of most famous mystics involved dramatic episodes of NOSC. (p. 109)

However, as shown in the section on Grof below, the Czech-born psychiatrist failed to realize that NOSCs are supremely useful only when used as an opportunity for applying one or another of the instructions that are a condition of possibility of the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. Otherwise, though they may be inconsequential, in many cases they may have rather good or seriously bad consequences: they may result in an episode spiritual openness—which could as well be an instance of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path (i.e., a transient reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base while on the Path) but that is most likely to remain within the bounds of the realm of relativity and delusion—or trigger a “psychotomimetic experience”<sup>18</sup> or a psychosis, which given the prevailing disorientation with regard to these processes and experiences would most likely be ravaging.

Wilber’s ascending, stratified vision is not limited to his conception of the process of Awakening; throughout his career he has viewed the whole process of ontogenesis in an extremely stratified way, and until a rather late period he did not consider the possibility that “genuine transpersonal experiences” (whatever this means, since as noted in Capriles [1999, 2000a, 2006a, 2007a (Vol. II)] so far he has failed to distinguish between instances of nirvana, transpersonal states within samsara and instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all) and key spiritual breakthroughs having a decisive repercussion on spiritual development could occur while progress on developmental lines other than the spiritual is incipient. The Wilber that he himself (e.g., 1998) has called “Wilber III” posited nine or ten basic structures of consciousness as a type of central skeletal frame, incorporating to his previous system the thesis that through these structures there move at least a dozen distinct developmental lines that, beside going through these enduring structures, involve other ones that he referred to as “transitional structures.” The late Wilber that Stan Grof (1998d) called “Wilber IV” asserted these lines of development to be relatively independent (quasi-independent), being loosely held together by the “self-system,” and admitted that often “the self is all over the place.” Wilber (1998, quoting Donald Rothberg’s [1998] characterization of Wilber’s stance) explained this as follows:

Development doesn’t somehow proceed in some simple way through a series of a few comprehensive stages which unify all aspects of growth .... The developmental lines may in fact be in tension with each other at times. Furthermore some lines do not typically show evidence .... of coherent stages ... There might be a high level of development cognitively, a medium level interpersonally or morally, and a low level emotionally... These disparities of development seem especially conditioned by general cultural values and styles. (p. 329)

However, the idea of all-encompassing basic structures or fulcra implies that higher levels of spirituality can only be reached in a stable way and gone through, after significant advancement has been reached along all developmental lines. And, in fact, this implication has been stated explicitly throughout

Wilber's writings; for a sample, consider the following passage by Wilber IV (1998):

Each time the self identifies with a developmentally-unfolding basic structure, that exclusive identification generates (or is the support of) the corresponding set of transitional structures. Thus, for example, when the self identifies with preoperational thought (symbols and concepts), this supports a preconventional moral stance (Kohlberg), a set of safety needs (Maslow), and a protective self-sense (Loevinger). When higher basic structures emerge (say, concrete operations rules), then the self (barring arrest) will eventually switch its central identity to this higher and wider organization, and this will generate a new moral stance (conventional), a new set of self-needs (belongingness), and a new self-sense (conformist persona)—and so forth. (p. 308)

Viewing the spiritual as the culminating stages of all lines of development, or as one of the twelve or so developmental lines that would be defined in terms of "trans-" or of "higher than," would amount to the same, for as Wilber (1998) remarked in the same renowned response, in both cases it would be available *only to those having attained a rather high stage of overall ontogenetic development and thus having reached higher domains* (p. 331). Whereas the reason for the latter is self-evident in the context of Wilber's system, the reason for the former is that, if one defines the *spiritual* as "higher than" *this or that*, or as "trans-" *this or that*, then clearly *this or that* must have developed before this "higher than" or this "trans-." In Wilber's words:

If... we define *spiritual* specifically as transmental, then clearly the transmental cannot stably emerge until the mental has in some rudimentary sense solidified. Likewise, if we define *spiritual* as transverbal, or as transegoic, or as specifically transpersonal, then the spiritual domain cannot stably emerge until there is a verbal, mental, egoic self to transcend in the first place. (p. 330)

Although the conclusion that transpersonal realms are open (at least in a stable way) only to those who have become established on higher domains is

consistent with Wilber's view of spiritual development as an "ascending" process occurring in terms of rather rigid stages, defining the spiritual as corresponding to the higher stages of various developmental lines would cause it *not* to be a line of development like the other ones he posited, which are supposed to extend along the whole process of ontogenesis. In order to make the spiritual be like the rest of the lines of development he posited, and by the same token maintain his evolutionist schema of spiritual development as occurring in terms of a succession of rather rigid states, he opted for a conception of the spiritual as a separate line of development defined in terms borrowed from theologian Paul Tillich: as consisting in an individual's ultimate concern at each stage of her or his life, on each of the "transitional structures" Wilber posited (among which, as it is widely known, some of the most important ones are: worldviews, self-needs, self-identity, and moral stages [Wilber, Engler, & Brown, 1986; Wilber, 1996, 1998]). This *ultimate concern*:

...unfolds through the general expanding spheres of consciousness, from preconventional concern (egocentric), to conventional concern (sociocentric), to postconventional concern (worldcentric), to post-postconventional concern (bodhisattvic). Or again, in more detail, using the names of the associated worldviews: archaic concern to magical concern to mythic concern to mental concern to psychic concern to subtle concern to causal concern. (Wilber, 1998, p. 331)

In Capriles (2006a) I showed that the fulcra Wilber called psychic, subtle, and causal do not correspond to the higher levels of realization on gradual Buddhist Paths. With regard to the concerns Wilber associated with his fulcra, it is true that nowadays as a rule egocentric concern prevails in the very first stages of life and the concern Wilber called bodhisattvic can only prevail at a later stage. However, as shown in Taylor (2003, 2005) and Capriles (2007a [Vol. III]), the same cannot be said with regard to human phylogenesis, in which development does not go right through the same stages as in ontogenesis. Furthermore, with regard to ontogenesis, the rigid succession of concerns Wilber posited does not occur even in gradual Paths. In fact, in all systems involving bodhisattvic concern the latter

begins to develop at a rather early stage of the Path: (a) in the gradual Mahayana, which belongs to the *Hetuyana* or causal vehicle, it is held that the rupakaya aspect of Buddhahood will result from the accumulation of merits and the dharmakaya aspect will result from the accumulation of wisdom, and hence one must set to develop the qualities of the bodhisattva from the onset of the Path; (b) on the Dzogchen Path, which is beyond cause and effect and in which the qualities of bodhisattvas need not be cultivated, the latter begin to arise spontaneously the moment one enters the Path in the real sense of the term (i.e., when Dzogchen-*qua*-Path manifests for the first time).

To finish with the consideration of Wilber's amplified *lamrim* (*lam rim*) model, consider Sean Kelly's brilliant denunciation of some of its contradictions. Wilber claimed that human experiences of the transpersonal domain could not occur before what he called the magical-typhonic phase of consciousness in the process of phylogenesis, and that the first such experiences occurred in some special "typhonic" individuals. Kelly (1998a) objected:

Apart from throwing into question the whole notion of the prepersonal, the fact that "the first true psychics [i.e., individuals at the first transpersonal stage] ... emerge[d] in the magic period" [a so-called prepersonal collective stage] (Wilber 1995, 322) also renders highly problematic the general principle of *linear continuity* (according to which] levels/stages cannot be bypassed) implied in the metaphor of the Great Chain of Being. For if it is possible for typhonic individuals to experience a transpersonal epiphany or "influx" (i.e., the psychic or low subtle realm) prior to the emergence of the mental ego, then it clearly makes no sense to conceive of the transpersonal as following the mental egoic (Wilber's "personal" consciousness) in the same manner that the mental egoic follows the membership and typhonic. Again, to do so would require an explanation of how it is possible for a supposedly holarchically "higher" structure—in this case the psychic—to transcend as it includes a lower structure—in this case the mental-egoic—that had not yet emerged. Wilber himself recognizes that "at any of its stages of stable growth and development,

the self has access to temporary experiences ('influxes' or 'infusions' or 'transfusions') from the transpersonal domains (1995, 743). But if all levels of the Great Chain manifest the same principles of holarchical integration, why is it possible for transpersonal influxes to occur at virtually any lower level of organization (even if they don't attain to enduring traits), whereas it is impossible for someone at, say, cognitive stage 2 (preop) to experience, again however fleetingly, an influx from cognitive stage 4 (formop)? Clearly, the transpersonal "levels" as a whole are of a completely different order than the ones that "precede" them. (pp. 121-122)

Also Washburn's (1998) highlighting of crucial contradictions in Wilber's system is very much to the point; however, since Washburn's discussion is too long to be reproduced here, I direct the reader to his text.

The problem with Wilber's system is not his *lamrim* model, for *lamrim* Paths are perfectly legitimate so long as there is awareness that they are defined by contrast with nongradual Paths, that development along the former is radically different from development along the latter, and that the former are "lower" than the latter. The problem with Wilber in this regard is threefold: firstly, as shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a; imprecisions amended in note 1 to this paper and in version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]), his schema of stages (fulcra) outright contradicts that of the gradual Mahayana and those of higher Buddhist Paths, with which he explicitly or implicitly has claimed agreement; secondly, he carried stratification much farther than traditional *lamrim* outlooks; and thirdly, he gives to understand that his views express universal truths that as such apply to Dzogchen—which as noted above and in *Beyond Mind II* he has studied with at least one important Tibetan Master—and other Paths that cannot be characterized as gradual, whereas in fact the views he expressed negate the very essence of Paths such as Dzogchen.

However, just as Buddhism is the "Middle Way" between hedonism and asceticism, existence and nonexistence and so on, Buddhist gradual Paths or vehicles may be seen as a "Middle Way" between descending and ascending. In the process of ontogenesis from birth to adulthood, there is gain and progress insofar as one develops ever-greater skills, yet there is

loss insofar as one does so at the expense of the greater wholeness characteristic of infancy. If one then sets foot on a Buddhist gradual Path, it will be legitimate to see progress on the Path as being comparable to climbing a ladder in that reaching each stage requires setting foot on the preceding one—and although in particular stages of the Path one may be encumbered by self-consciousness and conflict, overall there will be gain but no loss of positive qualities, for as one progressively recovers wholeness skills continue to develop, and if at the end one attains Buddhahood, one achieves absolute wholeness and consummate skillfulness (the latter being related to the concept expressed by the Sanskrit term *bala* and Tibetan term *tob* [*stobs*]). This fact, together with the need to instill respect for the Buddhas, higher bodhisattvas and so on, and with the necessity to spur seekers on the Path, led gradual Buddhism to produce schemas that verticalize the division into samsara and nirvana, placing nirvana above and samsara below, and to present and explain spiritual development as a progressive process of ascent. This is apparent in gradual Buddhist vehicles such as the *Shravakayana* of the Hinayana and the *Bodhisattvayana* or gradual Mahayana, for both of them represent their respective, gradual Paths as a progressive ascension through five successive paths, each of which is more advanced—in the sense of being less deluded and in this sense involving greater truth—than the preceding, and the Bodhisattvayana or gradual Mahayana explains the last three of its five successive paths in terms of an ascension through eleven levels (Skt. *bhumi*; Tib. *sa* [*sa*]). And yet from the metaexistential, metaphenomenological standpoint emphasized in this series of papers and throughout Capriles (2007a), which corresponds to the perspective common to all Buddhist teachings, spiritual development is *always* a process of descent, for one must face dukkha (unhappy consciousness), mortality and so on, and See through all that is conditioned into the unconditioned. Furthermore, as noted above and as shown in Beyond Mind II (Capriles, 2006a; imprecisions amended in note 1 to this paper and in version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]), development along the Path in the vehicles in question does not at all follow the developmental schema Wilber set forth.

At any rate, in the above context “ascent” is not to be understood either in the sense of movement to the otherworldly, or in that of unconcern with ecological, social, political, or economic issues. Furthermore, the gradual Buddhist vehicles arose through the skillful

means of a Buddha, who made it clear throughout his teachings that the condition of adult human beings in samsara results from a process of *conditioning* that establishes countless illusory divisions, giving rise to a conditioned, constructed, made up experience, and who, as we have repeatedly seen, in the highest Mahayana teachings made it clear that the Path consists in *Seeing through* the experience in question *into* the Buddha-nature characterized as *unborn, unmade, unconditioned, unfabricated* and *not intentionally contrived*—which, as will be shown below, *in ordinary individuals is concealed in the newborn, in perinatal experience, and throughout the intermediate state* (Skt. *antarabhava*; Tib. *bar do*) *between death and rebirth*. As noted, this is the reason why from a metaphenomenological standpoint the Path is one of descent, and why this is not confined to nongradual Paths, but applies to gradual Paths as well—including the Shravakayana, which Tibetan tradition views as the lowest vehicle, for as shown in Beyond Mind II (Capriles, 2006a) in the *Atthasalini* Master Buddhaghosha emphasized the *apachayagami* or “tearing down” meditation.

Wilber’s extreme lamrim (*lam rim*), ladder-like model of the Path—according to which spiritual progress unfolds through successive, mutually corresponding concerns and worldviews, understood as transitional stages that build upon previous competences and that as such can neither be bypassed nor jumped over—even in watered down versions such as Wilber IV, in which the stages are said to be so in a “soft” sense and the self is said to be often “all over the place,” fails to correspond even to gradual, or lamrim, Buddhist Paths. Far less could it then correspond to a Path such as Dzogchen, which, as so many teachings and testimonies attest, does not involve rigid stages of development.<sup>19</sup> Wilber should be aware of this insofar as he has studied Dzogchen, yet he views his model as a universal map applying to *all* Paths, whether gradual, nongradual, or neither-gradual-nor-nongradual—and consequently to Dzogchen as well, even though his model negates the very essence of this Path.

No doubt, most of those who enter the spiritual Path in the truest sense of the term, which is that of the initial occurrence of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, do so as adults; however, it is not rare for true tulkus to enter the Path in this sense during infancy or adolescence. Among the very many examples of this found throughout Tibetan history, let me quote just the following: (1)

our contemporary, the late high Master, Uryen Tulku (2005), told Marcia Schmidt that his meditation as a child was not different from what manifested in his mental continuum upon being introduced to the state of rigpa. (2) The same Master told the same lady that Ngaktrin of Argong (*ngag phrin [ngag dbang phrin las]* from... *ar gong?*), of whom his own root Master, Samten Gyamtso (*bsam gtan rgya mtsho*), was recognized as the immediately following incarnation, at the age of eight realized the nature of mind when a *gönla* (*mgon la*: monk in charge of the chants for the guardians) who was doing his job while Ngaktrin and other kids played boisterously around him, upbraided the child for his misbehavior, telling him, “Don’t let your mind wander.” The child asked, “How does one not wander?” Whereupon the monk told him, “Look at your own mind!” It was as he automatically applied this unintended instruction that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path manifested in his continuum (Uryen Tulku, 2005). (This example is so much to the point because the child not only was eight years old, but also was behaving—in the words of the monk scolding him—as a “spoiled brat.”) (3) The previous examples do not conclusively refute Wilber IV insofar as one does not know for sure that the realizations of the Masters involved were *stabilized* at a very early age. The case of Treasure-Revealer (*tertön*) Namchö Mingyur Dorje (*nam chos mi ’gyur rdo rje*) is wholly different in this regard, for it is well known that his realization soared in such a way between the age of ten and his death at the age of twenty-one, that from the age of eleven through thirteen he dictated thirteen volumes of *termas* of the extraordinary kind called “appeared in space” (*namchö [nam chos: nam mkha’i chos]*), which only manifest through Revealers who are firmly established in the state of rigpa—a feat that conclusively demonstrated that he achieved a stable realization since a very early age, possibly while being still a playful, perhaps even boisterous child.<sup>20</sup>

In fact, what is characteristic of nongradual Paths is that individuals can enter them in the true sense at any stage of their life, independently of their development in one or another field. Then the repeated occurrence of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path bears a strong influence on all areas of their life, inducing a spontaneous, swift yet gradual transformation in all of them, so that the virtues proper to bodhisattvas spontaneously arise without the individual applying the relative practices the gradual Mahayana employs to this end, intelligence often soars to unforeseen heights, all-encompassing learning

sometimes arises spontaneously in people who have not carried out systematic studies (as in the astonishing case of the “all-knowing” Jigme Lingpa),<sup>21</sup> and skills become consummate. Were it necessary to wait until developing structures and skills that can only arise late in life for people to begin developing spiritually, it would be hardly possible to attain Buddhahood in a single lifetime, and the realizations proper to Dzogchen that result in special modes of death or even in deathlessness could be simply out of the question.<sup>22</sup>

It is Dzogchen *Ati*—the Path bequeathed by Tönpa Garab Dorje, which is neither gradual nor sudden, and which is the one I have recurrently illustrated with the symbolism of the *Divine Comedy*—that embodies most perfectly the principle of the Path as *Seeing through* all conditioned phenomena manifesting in our experience, into the unconditioned Dzogchen-*qua*-Base (Capriles, 1977, 1986, 1989, 1994a, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, work in progress 1, work in progress 2, work in progress 4, work in progress 5). The fact that the vehicle in question does not involve a clear sequence of stages of realization, as realization may arise beyond stages, or without any particular order of stages, is clearly stated by the late Dudjom Rinpoche (1979):

[In the practice of the Dzogchen Menngagde (*man ngag sde* or *man ngag gyi sde*; Skt. *Upadeshavarga*)] the stages of experience and realization may appear either progressively, or without any particular order, or all at once, according to the capacities of different individuals. But at the time of the Fruit there are no differences. (p. 28)

Although the Dzogchen teachings, in order to make the point that they lead beyond the realizations of other vehicles and show exactly the way and the sense in which they do so, occasionally posit a sequence of sixteen levels (Skt. *bhumi*; Tib. *sa [sa]*)—a higher number than those found in any other vehicle—what is characteristic of Dzogchen Atiyoga is the presentation of the Path as a single level (Skt. *ekabhumi*; Tib. *sa chik [sa gcig]*) and hence as having neither bottom nor summit: both Dzogchen and Ch’an or Zen stress the fact that realization does not involve any kind of ascending progression, for it consists in the sudden, instant unconcealment of the original, unconditioned condition of absolute equality that involves no high or

low, no up or down, which the Dzogchen teachings call Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, and which in no sense whatsoever may be viewed as the pinnacle of a process of ascent. The Dzogchen teachings use the example of the *garuda* bird that is mature and in the full possession of its qualities from the moment it breaks out of the egg, to illustrate the noted fact that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path is not essentially different from Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—even though the former’s duration is limited because, since the propensities for delusion to manifest have not been purged, this delusion is bound to arise and conceal Dzogchen-*qua*-Base again. In fact, though there is a Dzogchen Atiyoga sequence of realization, which begins with the dharmakaya, continues with the *sambhogakaya*, and concludes with the *nirmanakaya*, each of these successive dimensions, rather than being a higher rung in a ladder, constitutes, on the one hand, a *more thorough unconcealment*, and on the other, a different dimension,<sup>23</sup> of the unborn, unproduced, unconditioned *trikaya-qua-Base* that is characterized by absolute equality rather than by hierarchies or holarchies.

In fact, all Buddhist Paths and vehicles that define themselves as nongradual, and not only Dzogchen Atiyoga, abstain from positing Paths and stages of realization: this is the case with the Pratyekabuddhayana of the Hinayana and with the Sudden Mahayana, which is Ch’an or Zen Buddhism. Among these, Ch’an or Zen, just like the Dzogchen teachings, places the strongest emphasis on the fact that *the unconcealment of Dzogchen-qua-Base* (whether as Dzogchen-*qua*-Path or as Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit) *is just as uncaused, unproduced, and unconditioned as that which is so unconcealed*, and that therefore, as so many Ch’an or Zen stories and Dzogchen teachings show, it *cannot be caused, produced, or cultivated*—this being a most basic reason why it is utterly wrong to believe Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit to be attainments obtained through a process of ascent, and why, unlike all that is attained by ascending (which is subject to the law of gravity according to which whatever ascends sooner or latter will fall), the Fruit of these Paths is not impermanent and as such provides a definitive solution to our problems rather than a temporary escape from them.

Therefore, although Buddhist Paths, and particularly so Buddhist gradual Paths, may be ultimately viewed as constituting the Middle Way between ascent and descent, as shown above *all* Buddhist systems make it clear, in their respective terminologies, that

*from what I call a metaphenomenological standpoint and from what I call a metaexistential standpoint*, the Path of Awakening is one of descent: it can never be repeated too much that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path consists in nondually, nonconceptually Seeing into the unconditioned Dzogchen-*qua*-Base *through* the conditioned experiences that cover and conceal it, which on the occasion of this Seeing liberate themselves instantaneously, and that the creation of a deficiency in the mechanisms whereby one eludes duhkha is the catalyst that precludes distracted clinging to conditioned experiences and forces one to apply the instructions which are the condition of possibility of this Seeing and concomitant spontaneous liberation—Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit being the consequence of the total neutralization of the propensities for conditioned experiences to manifest as a result of the repeated spontaneous liberation of such experiences. However, this is not what Grof, Washburn, and other advocates of descending in the “ascender / descender debate” have proposed, for they at no point insist on the need to reGnize Dzogchen-*qua*-Base or outline means whereby this may be accomplished, but, contrariwise, like the rest of transpersonal theorists, they fail to distinguish nirvanic transpersonal states—those in which the reGnition in question takes place—from samsaric ones and from instances of the neutral base-of-all. Grof, in particular, has seemed to take occurrences that fall into the last two categories for instances of the first. Although as will be shown below the same is the case with Washburn (though apparently to a lesser degree), at least he made it clear that he was referring to a long-term process that leads to the relative condition he called “integration” and as a rule does not result in what he called mystical illumination. Furthermore, Washburn implicitly coincides with the higher Buddhist view of being and value as subjective experiences rather than as the true condition of reality (Capriles, 1994, 2000b, 2003, 2006a, 2007a [Vol. I]), insofar as he discussed some of the means whereby one is able to “conquer being and value” at different stages of life (Washburn, 1995, pp. 97-118; 1996a [Spanish ed.], pp. 147-178).

In short, there is no universal map that may apply to all Paths, and Wilber’s map in particular, with its strict succession of rigid stages, does not apply even to gradual Buddhist Paths—so that pretending that it applies to the Dzogchen Path is like pretending a cylindrical piece of wood will fit into a square hole. Furthermore, those who do not posit basic structures of consciousness as a skeletal

frame and manifold developmental lines involving both enduring and transitional structures, need not define the spiritual as a Wilberian line of development—which at any rate would be too wide a category including all types of needs and endeavors (shamans healing with elemental spirits, witches doing black magic against enemies, common folks hoping to avoid hell and enter heaven, old ladies interceding before god or the saints on behalf of their grandsons, nuns spiritually married to Jesus, soccer fans praying for their team to win a contest, Indian fakirs standing on one leg for years, hatha yogis practicing asanas, adwaita vendantists applying *jñana yoga*, Buddhist monks keeping vows, Tantrics uniting with consorts or engaging in Bacchanalia, Chö [*gcod*] practitioners offering their bodies in terrifying charnel grounds, yogis in dark rooms practicing the Yangthik, etc.). What is necessary to define is *supreme spirituality*, and to do so in such a way as to prevent the confusion between what Buddhism views as genuine spiritual development, on the one hand, and the mere induction of transpersonal, holotropic states either pertaining to samsara or being instances of the neutral base-of-all, on the other. And to do so in such a way that the definition will equally apply to gradual Paths, to nongradual ones, and to Paths that, like Dzogchen, are neither gradual nor sudden. I believe a definition of supreme spirituality as “all that is involved in the transition from samsara to nirvana” does this.

### **Three Paradigms and the Conception of the Base**

Washburn contrasted two paradigms in transpersonal theory: (1) Wilber’s, which Washburn has called structural-hierarchical, and which combines evolutionary theories in the fields of psychology and the theory of human social and spiritual evolution, with a hierarchical, stratified classification of psychic states that is essentially based on the Upanishads and on Vedanta but that is said to be equally based on Buddhism, and (2) the one Washburn has called dynamic-dialectical, which in his view has Carl Jung (1928, 1968, 1972, 1975)<sup>24</sup> as its initial exponent and presently includes those of Stan Grof, David M. Levin<sup>25</sup> and his own (Washburn, 1995, pp. 1-45). (Assagioli [1965], Norman O. Brown [1959/1968],<sup>26</sup> and most of the authors I subsume under the label antipsychiatry [Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II], and note 48 to this paper] posit “descending” paths as well; however, perhaps because of the way he defined

the dynamic-dialectical paradigm, or for some reason unknown to me, Washburn did not include them within it.) Consider Washburn’s (1995) words: :<sup>27</sup>

Similar to the views of Jung, Grof, and Levin, the view presented here is one that postulates the existence of an original dynamic, creative, spontaneous source out of which the ego emerges, from which the ego then becomes estranged, to which, during the stages of ego transcendence, the ego returns, and with which, ultimately, the ego is integrated. Jung, Grof, Levin, and I differ in the specific ways in which we describe the basic source of the ego’s existence and the ego’s spiral journey of departure from and higher return to this source; nevertheless, the underlying paradigm is substantially the same.

Basically, I think Wilber loses sight of the transpersonal potentials of the deep unconscious and consequently mistakenly conceives of the course of [ontogenetic] development as a straight ascent to higher levels rather than as a spiral loop that, after departing from origins, bends back through origins on the way to transpersonal integration. (p. 4; 1996a [Spanish ed.], p. 21)

The ego—in most senses of the term, and certainly in all senses relevant to this discussion—involves the illusion that the individual is an entity inherently separate from the rest of the original dynamic, creative, spontaneous, Supreme Source<sup>28</sup> and true condition of both itself and all other phenomena I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Base—which includes both those aspects *of our experience* that are typically regarded as an external reality and the psychological and somatic contents that are made unconscious. Washburn asserted the development of ego—which he seemed to understand mainly in the late Freudian sense of the term, in which it comprises functions such as judgment, tolerance, reality-testing, volition, control, planning, synthesis of information, intellectual functioning, defense, memory, and so on<sup>29</sup>—to give rise to an illusory alienation from the source of our own energy and experience, and notes that (in his view, once the ego is fully developed and at a rather mature age) some individuals may undergo a process of reintegration susceptible of dissolving the ego’s alienation from the source in question. However,



he did *not* posit a round trip from egolessness to ego and then back to egolessness, as would someone who, unlike Freud, realizes the ego's alienation from the source of experience and from somatic impulses to be pathological, but who nonetheless adheres to the Freudian view of the infant as completely lacking an ego, and to the Buddhist view of Awakening as an utterly egoless condition: firstly, he cited the psychological and cognitive research carried out in the last decades suggesting that infants possess an embryonic ego (Lichtenberg, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1987; Stern, 1985); secondly, he did not assert reintegration to involve the dissolution of the ego (in which, as already implied and as will be shown below, he contradicts Buddhist views and introduces an obstacle to Awakening).

Above, I noted that ego in most senses of the term involves the illusion that the individual is an entity inherently separate from the rest of the original dynamic, creative, spontaneous, Supreme Source and true condition of both ourselves and all other phenomena I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, and what followed could have caused the reader to understand this to coincide with Washburn's view. However, as shown below, what Washburn called Dynamic Ground excludes what deluded beings regard as an external world, as it is no more than an energetic and psychological aspect of the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base within the individual, which he asserted to have become alienated and concealed from the ego as a result of the "act of primordial repression" that occurred at a rather early stage of the present life and that he deemed to represent a decisive step in the development of the ego (for it is the condition of possibility of the development of what Wilber and Washburn have called the "mental ego," and that Washburn also called "Cartesian ego"<sup>30</sup>). In contrast, as advanced above, the original dynamic, creative, spontaneous, undivided Supreme Source I call Dzogchen-*qua*-Base involves the totality of what manifests *in experience*, including both those aspects *of experience* that deluded beings view as aspects of an external world, and those aspects *of experience* they regard as being part of themselves (since both what is viewed as aspects of an external world and what is seen as aspects of the self are aspects of experience; contrarily to Washburn's belief this view does not breach the phenomenological epoché he seemed so keen on maintaining<sup>31</sup>).

Furthermore, illusory alienation from the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is neither a result of an "act

of primordial repression" that occurred at a rather early stage of present life, nor a consequence of the associated arising of the ego. Ordinary beings have ignored the true condition of the Source or Base in question during beginningless samsara as an effect of avidya in the first of the senses the term has in all Dzogchen classifications—which is that of the unawareness of our true condition produced by the beclouding element of stupefaction indicated by the Tibetan term *mongcha* (*rmongs cha*), which has always been flowing with the continuum of beings who have never realized their true condition, and which is the subtlest kind of estrangement from the Source or Base—and hence our illusory alienation from the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is both metaphenomenologically and chronologically previous to the *development* of the ego in all senses of the term. Likewise, since earliest infancy a proto-subject-objectuality and a protoillusion of self-being arise each and every time consciousness awakens, and these phenomena gradually develop as the infant grows up, producing the increasing illusion that he or she is at a distance from the rest of the Source or Base. Furthermore, according to the energetics of the Buddhist Paths of Transformation and Spontaneous Liberation, as infants grow up, punishments induce muscular contractions that in the long run produce knots in the focal points of experience called chakras, which reduce the volume of energy entering higher centers and thus reduce the scope of awareness—resulting in the figure-ground mind that is the condition of possibility of the illusion of there being a multiplicity of entities possessing self-being, on the one hand, and of both self-identity and repression / elusion / bad faith, on the other.<sup>32</sup> As a result of all of this, and especially of the mental subject repeatedly *becoming* (in Sartre's [1980] sense of establishing a *link of being* with<sup>33</sup>) the projections others make on the infant, the experience of being a separate, autonomous self progressively consolidates, and a self-image the mental subject regularly *becomes* or *identifies with* is formed—all of which has to do with the development of the ego in the early Freudian conception as sense-of-self (which is not excluded either from the late Freudian concept of ego, or from Washburn's concept of ego—the body ego and the mental ego being different senses of self, as is also what Washburn referred to as the *worldly identity of the mental ego* [Washburn, 1995, p. 231; 1996a [Spanish ed.], p. 350], which depends on the mental subject *becoming* a self-image).<sup>34</sup> As this process develops, in

connection with the infant's interpersonal experiences, what Wilhelm Reich (1969) called the body armor is produced.

However, primordial repression constitutes a turnabout in the process of alienation that develops over the first stages of ontogenesis, for it introduces a further dimension in the estrangement of consciousness by causing the latter (or, in terms of the second Freudian topic, the latter's ego aspect) to become alienated from phenomena that are regarded as "internal" to the individual, such as sensations, vital energies, tropisms, drives, and psychic contents, and re-structuring the individual's experience in terms that roughly correspond to the second Freudian topic's ego-cum-superego / *id* dichotomy. Washburn underlined primordial repression because his concern was the ego's alienation from what he called the Dynamic Ground (which as shown below he placed at the base of the spine and associated with *kundalini*, the Freudian *id* and so on) rather than its alienation from the much wider Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. Yet he should also be concerned with the alienation produced by the types of avidya / marigpa distinguished in the Dzogchen teachings (some of which, as I have shown elsewhere [Capriles, 2000b, 2003, 2007a (Vol. III)] depend on the reduction of the volume of energy entering the higher centers in the organism) insofar as this alienation is of primordial importance to transpersonal theory in that it is responsible for "closing the doors of perception" and thereby barring access to transpersonal and holotropic realms.

Freud and Jung viewed the ego as being somehow inherent in the psyche and as not being able to dissolve at any stage of life: though in Freud's view infants were egoless, the Viennese analyst assumed the existence of an inborn tendency to develop an ego which, once developed, would be ineradicable (though of course its functioning could be seriously impaired, as occurs in the various kinds of psychoses). As noted above, research carried out in the second half of the twentieth century contradicted Freud's view of infants as egoless, suggesting the ego to be operational since earliest infancy. It is not surprising that Washburn, as a spiritual heir of Freud and Jung who assimilated the "findings" of the research in question, in spite of admitting (against Freud's warnings and ignoring Jung's reservations with regard to yoga and Asian Paths of Awakening) the validity of spiritual paths that present themselves as means for the dissolution or eradication of the ego, should view the ego as a functional structure

that does not and cannot dissolve even in Awakening, and the psyche as a bipolar structure featuring two ineradicable selves—a superior one that he has called Dynamic Ground and that in his view has its seat in the lower part of the body, and an inferior one that at some point in the process of ontogenesis comes to appear to be located within the head, somewhere behind the eyes and between the ears (which as such corresponds to what I call the mental subject). At any rate, what is at issue here is that since, as shown below, the ego involves avidya and marigpa in all senses these terms have in the Dzogchen teachings, Washburn's view of the ego as ineradicable and hence as persisting even in the ultimate spiritual attainment, implies that Awakening, at least as explained by Buddhism, is impossible (even though I believe Washburn does not realize this implication of his theory).

In fact, Washburn's division of transpersonal psychology exclusively into the two alternatives represented by the dynamic-dialectical paradigm and the structural-hierarchical one amounts to the negation of the possibility of Awakening. The structural-hierarchical paradigm cannot lead to Awakening because, as made clear in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and in far greater detail in Capriles (2007a [Vol. III]), the process of Awakening is, from a metaphenomenological standpoint, a *descending* process insofar as it consists in undoing the metaphenomenological concealment of our original condition—Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which consists in the trikaya of Buddhahood-*qua*-Base. Furthermore, in the same works Wilber's conception of the fulcra or stages of the Path was shown to contradict the views of all Buddhist Paths (as already noted, the imprecisions in the description of these fulcra were corrected in note 1 to this paper and in version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]). However, as advanced above, Washburn has defined the dynamic-dialectical paradigm as conceiving the ego as an "inferior self" that must persist at least so long as the individual is alive, rather than as an illusion (which is how Buddhism views the ego *qua* illusion of selfhood, the ego *qua* sense of self [and hence how it would view the ego of the second Freudian topic<sup>35</sup>], etc.) or as a delusion-inducing functional structure (which is how Buddhism *would* view the ego in the late Freudian sense and to some extent in all other senses of the term). In Washburn's view, the ego that is our "inferior self;" by achieving a reconnection and a fusion with the nonegoic pole of the psyche that he has called Dynamic

Ground and apparently viewed as the superior Self, and thus overcoming the mistaken belief about itself as autonomous and independent from the Dynamic Ground, can overcome the problems and suffering that derive from the belief in question (Washburn, 1995, pp. 43-45; 1996a [Spanish ed.], pp. 73-76). This paradigm could perhaps work for achieving some integration, which at any rate is the avowed end of the self-healing process Washburn was concerned with, but it bars Awakening—which probably he intended to correspond to what he called “mystical illumination” and viewed as a very rare outcome of the process he was concerned with.

Furthermore, both the dynamic-dialectical paradigm and the structural-hierarchical one, just like the rest of transpersonal and “integral” systems, fail to make the key distinction that has to be made in order to avoid the deviations consisting in, (a) ascending in samsara for its own sake, and (b) squandering one’s precious human existence in neutral absorptions: the one between, (1) nirvana, in which liberation and genuine harmony lie; (2) the neutral base-of-all or *kunzhi lungmaten* in which neither nirvana nor samsara are active, which is no more than an oasis on the Path that will become a jail if taken for the final destination; and (3) higher samsaric experiences such as those pertaining to the formless sphere and some of those pertaining to the sphere of form or to the higher regions of the sphere of sensuality—which, as shown repeatedly in *Beyond Mind*, *Beyond Mind II* and others of my works (Capriles, 1977, 1986, 2000b, 2003, 2007a [Vol. II]), are more pleasant instances of delusion that will sooner or later give way to more unpleasant states. It is insofar as Wilber has not distinguished among these types of occurrences, that he could disregard the fact that those transpersonal experiences that may occur on the ascending path are as a rule non-nirvanic, and having taken them to be instances of realization, disparaged Washburn (1995) and Grof (1985, 2000) on the grounds that the latter “confuse early, prepersonal life experiences with transpersonal ones” (which from his own confused perspective is like saying “mistake them for realization”)—when the truth is that non-nirvanic transpersonal experiences are just as trivial when they are prepersonal as when they are postpersonal. It is because Grof also failed to discriminate among the three conditions in question that he could take his “good” BPMs for realizations susceptible of radically altering subsequent hylotropic experience. And it is because Washburn equally failed to discriminate among them

that he asserted that realization does not to put an end to the ego and in general incurred in the errors discussed below.

Washburn stated that infants have an embryonic ego that develops into a body ego and then, in adolescence, becomes a mental ego that in his view is located behind the eyes and between the ears, thus corresponding to the mental subject—presenting this view in the context of a theory of ontogenesis I view as being to a considerable extent sound (even though it includes elements of psychoanalytical theory with regard to which I keep a cautious epoché, and explained the process of regression-regeneration-integration with a proficiency of detail that might go beyond what may be decisively ascertained). Though the body ego and the mental ego are mainly senses of self and hence egos in the earlier Freudian sense of the term, as noted above it seems evident that Washburn’s use of the term ego privileges the sense it acquired in the second Freudian topic, in which the psyche is geographically viewed as though it were a territory, and the ego is the “part of the mind” which “contains” the consciousness (although it may not be equated with it, which is the reason why maps have been drawn showing the relationship between the elements of the two successive Freudian topics)—which works in terms of secondary process / operational cognition; which has the function of mediating between the id, the superego, and the world so as to find a balance between what Freud miscalled “primitive drives,” morality, and reality; which as already mentioned comprises psychic functions such as volition, judgment, tolerance, reality-testing, control, planning, defense, synthesis of information, intellectual functioning, and memory; and which is responsible for producing and maintaining the ego *qua* sense of self based on a self-image.<sup>36</sup> This is the sense in which the ego was compared to the rider that, operating on a reality principle and standing for reason and caution, guides the horse of id—the former controlling the direction in which he wants to go (yet often having to let the horse go where *it* wants to go), and the latter providing the energy and the means for obtaining the necessary information.<sup>37</sup> Since all of the functions of the ego in this sense are dynamic attitudes of the mental subject to an object, it has as a precondition the subject-object duality. The same applies to the early Freudian sense of “sense of self”: for example, the mental ego has as a precondition the subject-object duality because in this

case one is speaking of the *mental subject* itself (which is the perceiver that cannot be perceived directly: in terms of a Madhyamika definition, it appears “implicitly and indirectly”). And it applies also to what Washburn called the “worldly identity of the mental ego,” which has as a precondition the subject-object duality insofar as it consists in the *mental subject*’s identification with self-images that were synthesized on the basis of those projections that others made on the individual and that the latter embodied in different occasions throughout his or her life.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, so long as the ego persists, the subject-object duality cannot dissolve—and since in Beyond Mind II it was demonstrated that, according to the higher Buddhist Paths and schools, Awakening involves the dissolution of the subject-object duality, this means that so long as the ego persists, Awakening cannot be attained. Furthermore, the three senses of avidya in the different classifications found in the Dzogchen teachings are preconditions of the ego in the earlier Freudian sense, for among the requisites for developing a sense of self some of the most significant ones are: that our limitless, undivided, unthinkable true condition is ignored; that reality is perceived as fragmented; that the contents of thought are taken as absolutely true or false; and that one remains unaware of the fact that experience does not give access to the way things are in themselves.

As has been seen, Michael Washburn asserted the process of regression-regeneration-integration he was concerned with, to result in the relative condition called *integration* and only rarely to lead to what he has called *mystical illumination*—which I assume he intended to be a category subsuming what Buddhism calls Awakening and the final realization of other spiritual systems as well. However, he asserted the ego not to dissolve even in these unlikely cases. Though he did not make his concept of ego explicit and did not expose the grounds for his claim that the ego persists even in what he called mystical illumination, I tend to believe the reason for this to be that Awake individuals continue to talk and teach, judge whenever necessary, synthesize information, and function intellectually—which are functions of operational cognition and therefore of secondary process, and which Freud viewed as ego-functions in the later sense he gave the term ego. However, in Awake individuals all of these functions are performed in the absence of the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought and without the manifestation of the subject-object duality that as noted is the condition of possibility

of the ego in all acceptations of the term. Moreover, in accordance with Washburn’s notion of *integration*,<sup>39</sup> the functions in question are performed in a condition characterized by the coalescence of secondary process and primary process. (If one reduced ego to secondary process and Dynamic Ground to primary process, insofar as after Awakening the individual continues to have two cerebral hemispheres, and the one on the right continues to work analogically and therefore in terms of primary process, whereas the one on the left continues to function digitally and thus in terms of secondary process, in spite of the coalescence of these processes—which consists in the functioning of the process proper to each hemisphere in concerted integration with the process proper to the other, so that no positive feedback loops occur<sup>40</sup> and no energy is wasted, and thus operational efficiency is optimal—one would conclude that after Awakening there continues to be an ego and a Dynamic Ground; however, in psychoanalysis the ego-cum-superego is much more than secondary process, and the id that Washburn identified at least in part with the Dynamic Ground is much more than primary process.) Furthermore, Awake individuals do not need and do not possess a functional structure to mediate between an id, a superego and the world so as to find a balance between “primitive drives,” morality, and reality, for they no longer have an id involving Freud’s miscalled “primitive drives,” and rather than exerting volition and, on the basis of a superego, organizing behavior in terms of moral rules (all of which would require a mental subject and an object), they manifest a totally unrestrained spontaneity that naturally benefits all. This amounts to the eradication of the functional structure involving a rider (that stands for reason and caution and operates on a reality principle) and impulses and drives that must be controlled as though they were a horse: the teachings of Vajrayana Buddhism in general and those of Dzogchen Atiyoga in particular use the analogy of the rider and the horse for mind and energy (two of the three aspects of the individual, the other being body), and make it clear that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit involve the dissolution of this duality in the condition of spontaneity or *lhundrub* that naturally benefits both self and others. Insofar as most functions Freud attributed to the ego have ceased to operate, insofar as there is no experience of the rest of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base—including what Washburn called the Dynamic Ground—as other with regard to any aspect of conscious awareness, and

insofar as there is no duality of controlled and controller, it is not legitimate to view the persistence of the various functions of operational cognition as the persistence of the ego, or that of the two types of mental process associated with the two mental hemispheres as being a persistence of the ego and the Dynamic Ground—or to hold for whichever reasons that these two poles subsist. Thus it is clear that not only in Buddhist senses of the term is the ego an illusion that temporarily dissolves in the occurrence of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and irreversibly dissolves in Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit: also the ego in both the late Freudian sense and the early Freudian sense are illusions and functional structures that dissolve in these conditions. The point is that the psychoanalytic concepts of superego, ego, and id were not intended to apply to the Buddhist and similar conceptions of reality or to the spiritual Path and Fruit, but, on the contrary, to sustain repression and a sense of ego, preventing mystical exploits; therefore, if one accepts the existence of such functional structures and also accepts the possibility of what Buddhism calls Awakening and of Paths such as the Buddhist ones, one cannot expect the functional structures in question to persist either in the Fruit or in the Contemplation state while on the Path.

Furthermore, Washburn explained the reconnection and fusion of the ego or inferior self with the Dynamic Ground or superior self in dialectical terms as a “superior synthesis” of the egoic and nonegoic poles of the psyche. He did not explain what he understood by “dialectic,” but since he was speaking of a synthesis of two aspects of the psyche it is clear that what he had in mind was not the laws that rule abstract thinking understood as something different and independent from the changes occurring in reality, and insofar as he posited a position (often called thesis), a counterposition (often called antithesis) and an unification (often called synthesis), it is apparent that he had in mind Hegel’s model of dialectic.<sup>41</sup> The adoption of this model (or that in Engels [1998/2001], which is not substantially different in this regard<sup>42</sup>) implies the abolition of the crucial map / territory distinction, the existence of the negation Hegel called *Aufhebung* or sublation<sup>43</sup> (which, as shown in various of my works [Capriles, 1986, 1992, 1994b, 2007a (Vol. III)], is not found in any process, logical or phenomenological; it *may seem* to occur in non-phenomenological processes such as scientific development, in which new theories often negate older ones while retaining a great deal of what the older ones

posited—as in the case of the negation / incorporation of Newtonian physics by Einsteinian physics cited by Washburn [1995]—but what actually happens in these cases is that ordinary *logical negation* is applied to some aspects of the older theory but not to other aspects), and the view of the spiritual and social evolution of our species as a process of perfecting (all of which go together insofar as sublation was invented because Hegel viewed the territory of reality as a projection of thought that was inseparable from the latter and was ruled by the latter’s laws, so that the arising of a new state in the territory amounted to the negation of the former one, and since he wanted spiritual and social evolution to constitute a process of perfecting, he had to *invent* a negation that, rather than canceling former negations, or incorporating them and in this way increasing fragmentation and delusion, incorporated them in such a way as to give rise to an increase of wholeness and truth). However, as shown in detail in various works of mine (Capriles, 1992, 1994, 2007a [Vol. III]), the only existing negation that incorporates the preceding negation, rather than canceling or annulling it as logical negation does, is the phenomenological negation that occurs in Sartre’s (1980) bad faith and that Laing (1961) explained in terms of a spiral of pretenses; Hegel’s *Aufhebung* / sublation is a misrepresentation of the phenomenological negation in question that he fancied with the aim of expounding and validating his inverted view of spiritual, social, and political evolution. Since the phenomenological negation discussed by Sartre and Laing that Hegel misrepresented as *Aufhebung* / sublation and that is the one involved in phenomenological dialectical development, increases unauthenticity, fragmentation, and delusion rather than increasing wholeness and truth, the achievement of a unification (or synthesis) of ego and Dynamic Ground could not give rise to a truer, more whole and more authentic condition. In fact, the only possible integration giving rise to wholeness and truth would lie in the dissolution of dialectic and its elements (i.e., position [or thesis], counterposition [or antithesis], and unification [or synthesis]), which is what is put forth in my own philosophy of history (Capriles, 1986, 1992, 1994, 2007a [Vol. III]): the phylogenetic deactivation of delusion and of the dialectic inherent in it that would take place as a result of the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion *cum* dialectic in the current planetary ecological crisis, is analogous to the ontogenetic deactivation of delusion and the dialectic inherent in it as a result of the *reductio ad*

*absurdum* of delusion *cum* dialectic in the disintegration of normal ego-function and subsequent dissolution of delusion and of the illusory alienation with regard to the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base it implies (for the phylogenetic process cf. Capriles 1986, 1994, 2007a [Vol. III]; for the ontogenetic process cf. Capriles 1999a, 2000a, 2006a, 2007a [Vol. II]).

Thus it is necessary to reject both the paradigm that Washburn called structural-hierarchical and the paradigm he called dynamic-dialectical, and assert the true Path, as discussed here, to be properly understood only in terms of a paradigm which is different from these two, and which nonetheless shares Wilber's conception of the ego as being at the same time an illusion and a functional structure (which does *not* amount to reducing the illusion of ego to a structure that should be regarded as not being itself illusory,<sup>44</sup> *nor* does it imply the view that the illusion in question is to be replaced by a new *identification*—in this case one having as its object a supposedly ultimate *unity*), and Washburn's view of human ontogeny in terms of the emergence of ego from an original dynamic, creative, spontaneous Source (which, however, rather than consisting in what he called the Dynamic Ground, is what I am calling Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base) and a growing experiential estrangement of the ego from this Source. However, this paradigm acknowledges that the illusory estrangement from the Source does not arise in the process of ontogeny, for the beclouding element of stupefaction indicated by the Tibetan term *mongcha* (*rmongs cha*) has always been flowing with the continuum of those beings that have never realized their true condition. Likewise, it negates the idea that the ego can return to the Source during some supposed stages of transcendence and finally integrate with it without ceasing to be a [separate] ego, and asserts that it has to dissolve, together with the subject-object duality on which it depends, in the unveiling of the nondual Supreme Source—while on the Path, repeatedly for limited periods corresponding to the Contemplation state, and finally in an irreversible way as the Fruit (which it would be legitimate to call “reintegration” only in case one made it clear that this term is used in a figurative sense, to refer to the dissolution of the ego—so that no entity reintegrates—and of the subject-object duality in the patency of the Base). The ego is not an *a priori* functional structure involving the belief of being separate from its source that, incapable of dissolving at any stage of ontogenesis, finally reidentifies with the

source in question, but the most elaborate and extreme aspect of an illusory alienation from the Source that at the end must dissolve in the patency of that Source—and this applies to all senses of the term ego having a referent, including the late and the early Freudian senses (though, it must be noted, all such referents are effects of delusion).<sup>45</sup> This is how the Path that is descending in the metaphenomenological and metaexistential senses of the term is to be understood (the gradual varieties of which, as has been seen, in some senses may be said to constitute the Middle Way between ascending and descending).

The paradigm at issue, despite being listed third in the preceding paragraph, is in reality the first, for it is the one which in the primordial age Khyeu Nangwa Samgyi Mikhyappa (*khye'u snang ba bsam gyis mi khyab pa*)—meaning “Supreme Child Inconceivable Vision”—expounded in the root Tantra of the Dzogchen Menngagde (*rdzogs chen man ngag sde*; Skt. *Upadeshavarga*), the *Drataljur Chenpo Gyü* (*sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*) or *Shabda Maha Prasamga Mula Tantra* (cf. Namkhai Norbu & Clemente, 1999, p. 23). Then around 1,800 BCE (according to some accounts, 16,000 BCE) Tönpa Shenrab Miwoche (*ston pa gshen rab mi bo che*) reformulated this same paradigm in the Bönpo version of the Dzogchen teachings,<sup>46</sup> and finally Tönpa Garab Dorje (*ston pa dga' rab rdo rje*) reformulated them not far from the beginning of the Common Era in the Buddhist version of these same teachings.

As noted above, this paradigm, rather than positing the Dynamic Ground conceived by Washburn, is based on the reGnition of what the Dzogchen teachings call the Supreme Source, Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, or simply the Base or *zhi* (*gzhi*). Washburn's (1995) inclusion of David Levin among those who posit a Ground and avow for recovery of awareness of this Ground makes me suspect he may have taken from the latter (Levin, 1985) the noun “Ground” and combined it with the adjective “Dynamic”—in which case the compound term Dynamic Ground would derive from Herbert V. Guenther's translation of the Tibetan term *zhi* (*gzhi*) as “Ground,” which, together with Heidegger's *Grund*, was one of the disparate sources for David Levin's usage of this term (for Levin's [1985] use of Guenther's translation of *zhi* as Ground cf. pp. 109-113; for his use of Heidegger's *Grund* cf. pp. 281-319).<sup>47</sup> However, as has already been seen, Washburn's Dynamic Ground is

not at all the same as Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, for the latter is the true condition of the whole of reality, consisting in the trikaya of the Buddha-nature-*qua*-Base, whereas in Washburn the Dynamic Ground corresponds to kundalini<sup>48</sup> (which he oddly identified as a discrete entity “located” literally in the anal-genital region at the base of the trunk, where the source and potentiality of kundalini is as a rule said to reside), and partly to the Freudian id (which, strangely enough, must therefore be a discrete entity literally located in the base of the trunk), and is supposed to be the nonegoic pole of an ego-id bipolar structure that he viewed as being inherent in the psyche and as being ineradicable. The reason why I say the identity of Dynamic Ground and id is partial, is that Washburn criticized the Freudian conception of the id for responding to what the latter has supposedly become as the result of repression in civilized societies—which he oddly called a “partly preegoic or subegoic” conception, despite the fact that there could not be a *pre-egoic* id insofar as most characteristics Freud attributed to the id resulted from the development of the ego in civilized societies, and insofar as the id is id only with regard to the illusory ego.<sup>49</sup> In fact, positing an *a priori* id, which as such would exist previously to the development of the ego in civilized societies and subsequently to the attainment of Buddhahood, implies accepting the concept of instinct, which as Gregory Bateson (1972) has noted, comes from the Bible, which leading scientists have discarded (for decades they have been speaking of tropisms rather than instincts), and which is simply inadmissible in a contemporary transpersonal paradigm, which as such should be nonreductionistic. In fact, the Supreme Source clearly could not be reduced to libido, kundalini energy, somatic / sensual experience, instinctuality (which I assume Washburn used solely in the sense of Freud’s *Instinkt* rather than, as in James Strachey’s translation of Freud’s *Complete Works* [Freud, 1953-1974], as including that of the German *Trieb*<sup>50</sup>), affect, emotion, imaginal / autosymbolic cognition, collective memories, complexes, and archetypes.

Since Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is the true condition of the whole of our experience, insofar as he posited a dualism as inherent in our psychic structure, Washburn has offered a dualistic conception of the Base, and insofar as he asserted this dualism not to dissolve even in the rarely attained state of mystical illumination, he has put forth a dualistic conception of the Fruit. The hypothesis that a dualism is inherent in the Base and that it is

retained in the Fruit is proper to the *Yoga darshana* of Patañjali’s and its counterpart, the *Samkhya darshana* of Kapila’s, in which consciousness is passive, male Purusha, and the world of experience is active, female Prakriti, and these constitute an insurmountable duality, so that the best Purusha can do is to be faithful to its own nature and remain passive in the sense of keeping aloof before the movements of Prakriti. Though the fact that Washburn shared with Patañjali and Kapila the belief in an unsurpassable duality between consciousness-ego and an ampler dynamic principle could lead to the conclusion that Washburn’s system is a form of neo-Samkhya or neo-Yoga, this conclusion would be wrong, for his model is radically different from those of the Indian dualists (to begin with, because Washburn’s dualism is not the one between consciousness and the “external world,” but the one between ego and *id*).

In general Buddhism, the Base, the Path, and the Fruit must be congruent with each other, and the same applies to the three aspects of the Path—the view or *tawa* (*lta ba*), consisting in the theoretical understanding of the true condition and functionality of reality; the meditation or *gompa* (*sgom pa*), which is the application of a practice congruent with the view; and the behavior or *chöpa* (*spyod pa*), consisting in the maintenance of a conduct congruent with the view and the meditation. In Dzogchen, the Base, the Path, and the Fruit are *more than* congruent with each other: they are *in a sense the same* insofar as the Base is the true condition of reality, the Path is the repeated, temporary patency of this condition, and the Fruit is the continuous, irreversible stabilization of this patency so that practice is no longer necessary. In these teachings the same occurs with the three aspects of the Path: rather than merely being congruent with each other, they are the same condition, for the Vision or *tawa* (*lta ba*) is the unconcealment of the true condition of the whole of reality these teachings call the Base, the Contemplation or *gompa* (*sgom pa*) consists in the continuity of the Vision during sessions of meditation, and the Behavior or *chöpa* (*spyod pa*) consists in the continuity of the Contemplation beyond the sessions of meditation and as much as possible throughout a practitioner’s life. Given the congruency (in general Buddhism) or identity (in Dzogchen) that must exist between Base, Path, and Fruit, and between view, meditation, and behavior, it is an insurmountable contradiction to view Buddhist types of meditation as valid, effective means of inducing and catalyzing the

process of regression-regeneration-integration Washburn was concerned with—as below he is shown to have done—and nevertheless deny that the Fruit of the Path is as explained by Buddhism.

As shown above, in Washburn's paradigm the view involves the error of asserting the Base to involve two selves as innate, unsurpassable poles of the psyche, which subsume but are not limited to the elements of the second Freudian topic (criticized in Capriles [2007a (Vol. II)] for not acknowledging the elements in question to be functional structures that arise in the processes of human phylogenesis and ontogenesis, and which in Dzogchen yogis and other practitioners of genuine Paths dissolve both in Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and as Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit)—the nonegoic pole that Washburn called the Dynamic Ground involving the id yet having spiritual potentialities that Freud never acknowledged in his descriptions of that “region” of the psyche, and the egoic pole involving the superego and ego. As noted, according to Washburn also the Path and the Fruit involve these two poles; although this means that, as Buddhist systems demand, the Path and the Fruit are congruent with the Base, the dualism that Washburn posited in the Base is false, and so is the dualism he posited in the Path and Fruit. Therefore, Washburn's system is apt for illustrating the *Surangama Sutra's* assertion, in terms proper to the Hetuyana or cause-based vehicle, that *if the causal ground is false, its fruit will be distorted, and the quest of Buddha's Enlightenment will become impossible* (Luk, 1966, p. 221). And indeed it is hardly possible that Awakening, which consists in the dissolution of the illusory functional structures inherent in samsara—for as has been seen, the ego can only reintegrate itself into the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base in a figurative sense: through the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which dissolves the ego together with the subject-object duality that is by the same token its condition of possibility and pivot, rather than reintegrating itself into it properly speaking—may be attained on the basis of a system that asserts such functional structures to be inherent in the true condition of reality and to be unsurpassable. Since the ego and the subject-object duality / phenomenon of being that is the ego's condition of possibility and pivot, encumber the individual's performance, in the long run the dissolution of the illusory functional structures inherent in samsara can result in a consummate, unhindered performance. Since they are at the root of egotism and of the Jungian shadow, their dissolution results in the individual

spontaneously achieving the good of both self and others.

Thus it is clear that in the above regard David Cooper's (1971) position in *The Death of the Family* is sounder than Washburn's, for Cooper realized that the superego and the ego must dissolve in *anoia*, and that when superego and ego are not manifest what remains can no longer be called id, insofar as there is nothing with regard to which all that the id formerly included may be regarded as other.<sup>51</sup> In fact, Awakening is by definition a condition in which action (Skt. *karma*) is no longer active. This is due to the fact that there is no positional, thetic, reflexive consciousness to conceive an intention and carry out an act, or to judge the intention and the action in terms of an internalized moral code: what there is, is the perfect spontaneity beyond action of nondual, nonreflexive Awareness that Ch'an Buddhism calls *wei-wu-wei* or *action through nonaction*, and that the Dzogchen teachings refer to by terms such as lhundrub (*lhun grub*), thindle (*phrin las*) and dzepa (*mdzad pa*). How then could Awakening involve a superego, an ego, and an *id*?

#### Grof's View of the Path

Antipsychiatry in the ample sense of the term (in which it is not circumscribed to the views and praxis of David Cooper but includes those of Ronald Laing and the theorists and therapists the Scottish psychiatrist influenced, as well as those of like-minded theorists and therapists<sup>52</sup>), by acknowledging some of the experiential journeys psychiatry labels as psychotic to be potentially self-healing processes that in a supportive environment and with the help of wise and experienced assistants can fulfill their healing potential, and catering to people unintendedly undergoing such processes, has offered the latter a possibility of achieving healing rather than self-destruction, and by the same token has made a crucial contribution to the understanding by contemporary Western science of the human mind and experience. Stan and Christina Grof share some of the credit for these achievements insofar as they have acknowledged the healing potential of such processes and have set up their Spiritual Emergency Network (SEN) in order to cater to people undergoing them; however, in my view they have failed to provide the frame of reference that would unambiguously orient such processes toward greater sanity, for as shown at the end of this section they have encouraged a number of occurrences that in my view hardly have a therapeutic potential, and that on the



contrary may have quite unhealthy consequences. With regard to antipsychiatry in the ample sense of the term and in particular to the views of David Cooper, it must be noted that, in spite of the fact that under the right conditions the right spontaneous processes can result in greater individual harmony and integration of eluded contents, and by the same token open the individual up to transpersonal, more holistic dimensions, it is a mistake to think that, in themselves and by themselves, the processes in question could result in the *absolute sanity* Buddhism and similar systems call Awakening. As hinted in the preceding sections of this paper, Washburn incurred in a similar error with regard to the process of reintegration that he was concerned with—even though he did not refer to it as psychosis, and seemed to favor its activation through meditation and other traditional means. However, I believe the worst distortion with regard to what the Grofs call spiritual emergency (Grof & Grof, 1992) to be the one they introduced by admitting as valuable and wholesome a series of occurrences that are extremely dangerous and that in my view involve hardly any therapeutic potential.

The other most important contribution transpersonal psychology and antipsychiatry in the ample sense of the term made to Western science was the vindication and validation of transpersonal, holotropic, and holistic conditions—the latter including the two conditions that constitute *absolute sanity* as defined below: Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit, which is the ultimate realization and final fulfillment of human life and the only true, definitive solution to the dissatisfaction and suffering of samsara, and Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, which has to manifest again and again for Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit to be attained—which all mainstream Western schools of psychology and psychiatry consistently overlooked and, whenever they were brought to the attention of its leaders (as writer Romain Rolland did with Sigmund Freud), the latter pronounced them to be psychotic pathologies. However, antipsychiatry shares the defect of transpersonal psychology in general, including Grof's: that of failing to discriminate among the different kinds of transpersonal states of seeming oneness and infinitude and equating them in value and usefulness—namely those belonging either to samsara or to passive, inactive conditions which pertain neither to samsara nor to nirvana (so that coming to dwell in them would keep one either whirling in samsara or stuck in the passive, inactive, neutral conditions in question), and the just mentioned conditions of absolute

sanity. In fact, for absolute sanity to be possible, it is vital that one distinguish most clearly between the three kinds of seemingly or truly holistic states discussed in previous papers of mine published in this journal (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a):

(A) What Buddhism calls nirvana, and in particular the modality of nirvana it calls Awakening, which here I call absolute sanity, and which rather than being merely holotropic—that is, tending to wholeness (from the Greek verb *trepein*, meaning “to turn to,” and the Greek noun *holos*, meaning “whole”)—is a truly and fully holistic condition.<sup>53</sup> It must be noted that, although Awakening is the common aim of all higher Buddhist vehicles and Paths, the higher the Buddhist vehicle or Path followed in order to reach it, the more thorough the condition in question will be. In the case of the Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*) teachings, for example, Awakening is the consolidation of the state of Awake awareness they call rigpa, involving the full patency and operativeness of what they refer to as *all-liberating single gnosis* or *chikshe kundröl* (*gcik shes kun grol*), so called because, so long as it is manifest, delusorily valued thoughts—coarse, subtle / intuitive, and super-subtle<sup>54</sup>—liberate themselves spontaneously. When rigpa manifests for limited periods while on the Path, it constitutes what here is being called Dzogchen-*qua*-Path; when it manifests irreversibly as the Fruit, it constitutes what here is being called Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit.

(B) Conditioned experiences of holotropic, pseudo-holistic transpersonal realms that pertain to samsara and that as such feature the delusory valuation of thought and involve all three of the senses the terms avidya and marigpa have in the Dzogchen classification adopted here<sup>55</sup>—and that therefore comprise the subject-object duality that is the most basic of all deceiving phenomena. Among these experiences, those of the formless sphere that, in the psycho-cosmology of Buddhism, constitutes the highest region of conditioned cyclic experience (samsara), are frequently mistaken for nirvana or Awakening. These states are holotropic because they are the result of a panoramification of the scope of awareness asymptotically tending to wholeness (i.e. tending to wholeness without ever reaching it), and they may be called pseudo-holistic because, though they appear to be realizations of totality or wholeness, they are structured in terms of the subject-object duality that constitutes the fundamental partition and that is the basis of all further fragmentation.

(C) The transpersonal and *sometimes in some sense* holistic, yet inoperative conditions wherein neither samsara nor nirvana are active, which involve the ignorance of the true condition of reality (or, what is the same, of all-liberating nondual primordial gnosis) that is the first of the three senses the terms avidya and marigpa are given in the Dzogchen teachings, but not so the second and third of these senses, and therefore do not feature delusion as such. When these conditions feature the continuum of sense data, they may be regarded as being *in a limited sense* holistic (even in this case they are not truly and fully holistic because they do not involve the full awareness and operativeness of holism, which is proper to the sambhogakaya's wisdoms of quality [Tib. *ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes*] and quantity [Tib. *ji bsnayed pa'i mkhyen pa'i ye shes*], and therefore exclude awareness [of] some of the four dharmadhatus of the *Avatamsakasutra*<sup>56</sup>), but cannot be regarded as being in any sense holistic when they exclude this continuum (a condition in which one is cut off from all *sensa*, which are part of the whole, cannot be said to be in any sense holistic). In all cases, these states are instances of the condition the Dzogchen teachings call kunzhi lungmaten (*kun gzhi lung ma bstan*), which, as the all-knowing Jigme Lingpa (*'jigs med gling pa*) had predicted, in our time many yogis confuse with the dharmakaya that is the first level of realization in the process of Awakening, and which would become a jail—albeit a comfortable one—should one manage to establish oneself in it, for one's freedom would be suspended and one's progress on the Path blocked. (Wilber contributed to this confusion by equating the dharmakaya that in his view is realized in fulcrum-9 with conditions of nirodha such as the nirodhasamapatti of the Hinayana and, what is worse, the samadhi that is the final result of the Yoga Darshana.)

In terms of a simile in which Mount Kailash represents the condition of absolute sanity indicated as (A), the states designated as (B) and (C) are compared with finding a nice and comfortable place on the way to the great Tibetan mountain and staying there in the belief that one has reached one's destination. As shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), since these resting places are impermanent, rather than being a definitive Refuge, they are new sources of danger: sooner or later one has to fall from them, and when this happens one is likely to reject with all one's might the more conflictive states that one has come to face and that one has become

disaccustomed to—which, given the heightened energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness (Skt. *kundalini*; Tib. *thig le*) characteristic of these conditions,<sup>57</sup> is quite likely to give rise to a hellish experience.<sup>58</sup> In particular, the Dzogchen teachings compare the state of imperturbability indicated as (C) with cutting one's own head: as suggested above, were it possible for one to remain in it indefinitely, it would represent a squandering of a precious human lifetime, as one would be unable to accomplish the ongoing journey-to-Kailash-in-which-Kailash-is-always-dawning, which constitutes the genuine meaning and sense of human existence.

As noted in previous papers in these series (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a), the pioneers of transpersonal psychology failed to discriminate between the above three types of holistic or pseudo-holistic / holotropic states; they subsumed all of them under the term *peak experiences*, which was coined by Abraham Maslow and which—in spite of the author's later warning against pursuing them for their own sake and insistence that for them to be truly valuable, they had to arise in the context of a self-consistent method<sup>59</sup>—subsequently most transpersonal psychologists took as ends in themselves to be achieved by whichever means, under whichever circumstances. Furthermore, most of the *descriptions* of peak experiences, whether by Maslow or other transpersonal psychologists, fail to correspond to nirvana and, on the contrary, portray quite precisely the formless realms that make up the highest region of samsara.<sup>60</sup> This is evident in Maslow's description of these experiences, according to which in them the whole world is perceived in a profound and deep way as an integrated and unified whole of which one is part and to which one belongs, nature is easily seen as being there for its own sake rather than having been put there for human purposes, perception can be ego-transcending and hence unselfish, the everyday consciousness of time and space can dissolve, the world is seen as beautiful and good, even bad times in life are accepted more easily, and there tends to be a temporary loss of fear, anxiety, inhibition, defense, control, perplexity, confusion, conflict, delay, and restraint.<sup>61</sup> Finally, Maslow's concept of self-actualization—roughly corresponding to Jung's concept of self-realization—sets up a standard for sanity that falls short of Awakening or nirvana and as such is not at all conducive to absolute sanity.

The fact that subsequent transpersonal theorists perpetuated Maslow's failure to discriminate among the three different kinds of seemingly holistic or truly holistic states under consideration was illustrated in *Beyond Mind* (Capriles, 2000a) and *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) with Ken Wilber's definition of liberation (Skt. *moksha* or *mukti*) as the "comprehension" of what by 1977 he was calling the *mental level*, which in his own words was "what is commonly known as mystic consciousness," and which involved the "*sensation of being* fundamentally one with the universe" (Wilber, 1993a, italics supplied)—a definition that clearly implies the existence of a mental subject separate from its object that feels fundamentally one with it, as occurs in the holotropic and pseudo-holistic formless sphere that occupies the highest region of samsara. Significantly, throughout the whole of their writings, the rest of the beacons of transpersonal psychology failed to distinguish between the three different kinds of conditions under discussion.

Stan Grof is one of the transpersonal psychologists who have failed to distinguish among the conditions in question. He has contrasted what he called *hylotropic* or *matter-oriented consciousness* (an infelicitous term<sup>62</sup> compounded of the Greek verb *trepein* and the Greek noun *hyle*, meaning "matter"<sup>63</sup>)—which embraces, among others, the manifold varieties of the narrow, restricted perceptual perspective and state of mind that are standard in modern societies and that mainstream psychology and psychiatry, in the belief that this perceptual perspective and state of mind correctly reflect what they view as an objective reality, equate with sanity and view as the only legitimate perspective and state—with what he called *holotropic consciousness*, which according to his system offers an alternative to the experience of the world as made of discrete entities in absolute linear time and three-dimensional space (reflected by Newton's physics), for it involves awareness of the fact that the discontinuity and solidity proper to the experience in question are illusions generated by a particular orchestration of events in consciousness, of the fact that time and space are ultimately arbitrary,<sup>64</sup> of the fact that being a part is not incompatible with being the whole, of the fact that something can be true and untrue at the same time, of the fact that emptiness and form and of nonexistence and existence are interchangeable, and so on.

It must be kept in mind that, if one understands the etymology of the term holotropic consciousness, in the sense of "wholeness-oriented consciousness," one may

understand it as referring to consciousness when it is oriented to wholeness—as occurs in the formless realms, in which consciousness takes a pseudo-totality as object. Thus it may be more than a coincidence that our author (Grof, 1985, p. 346) asserted *holotropic consciousness* to involve *identification* with an area of consciousness lacking definite limits: since *identification* can only occur between a mental subject and an object that is understood in terms of a concept, it necessarily involves the delusory valuation-absolutization of the threefold thought-structure that gives rise to the subject-object duality—and since the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought and the resulting appearances, including the subject-object duality, as exhaustively demonstrated in *Beyond Mind II*, are absent both in nirvana and in the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana are active, it is clear that Grof's definition of holotropic consciousness excludes these two states, corresponding solely to the formless absorptions which are the highest regions of samsara. Moreover, among these absorptions, Grof's definition of holotropic consciousness (as noted, like one of Wilber's descriptions of the ninth fulcrum) seems to fit the second one, called *infinitude of consciousness* (*vijñananantyaayatana*; Tib. *namshe thaye kyeche* [*rnam shes mtha' yas skye mched*]), in which the mental subject identifies with the concept that an infinite consciousness perceives the seemingly infinite continuum of sense data. However, since Grof was unaware of the fact that there are various kinds of pseudo-holistic experience, on the one hand, and truly, fully holistic realization, on the other, it is most likely that when he conceived his definition he intended it to apply to all of the experiences he deemed holistic (including both the holotropic psychedelic experiences he observed directly and the Awakening and/or nirvana he read about in books of genuine spiritual traditions)—yet formulated it on the basis of experiences of the formless realms of samsara, which were the only ones he had witnessed (i.e., reflexively perceived).

Stan Grof has worked mainly with abrupt ways to raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness (Skt. *kundalini*; Tib. *thig le*), and in particular with psychedelic substances of the specific kind I have christened *chemical raisers of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness that have an epochotropic, non-dissociative, non-hypnotic, potentially "psychotomimetic," consciousness expanding effect* (CREV), which are discussed in Appendix II to this paper and

which *in themselves and by themselves* cannot give rise to stable, clearly recognizable instances of nirvana—yet can easily induce instances of the neutral base-of-all immediately followed by samsaric experiences of the formless realms (which, however, does *not* mean that nirvana could not have occurred in some people under the effect of these substances who, probably as a result of previous practice, were ripe for it to occur, or who on the basis of teachings received and practice applied in “past lives” happened to apply traditional instructions). I believe that Grof structured his definition of holotropic consciousness in terms of the characteristics of the formless realms because, (1) the instances of the neutral base-of-all cannot be reflexively remembered insofar as they do not involve awareness (of) consciousness of object, and hence Grof could not evaluate them, whereas the experiences of the formless realms, as all samsaric states, can be easily remembered insofar as they involve reflexive awareness (of) consciousness of object,<sup>65</sup> and (2) he confused the realms of formlessness with nirvana, which was most likely what he wanted his concept of holotropic consciousness to reflect. This interpretation seems to be corroborated by the definition of holotropic states of consciousness quoted below, which clearly suggests Grof had in mind psychedelic experiences—whether induced by those substances I call CREVs, or attained by other means. He wrote:

Holotropic states of consciousness are characterized by a profound change in perception in some or all sensory areas usually associated with the intrusion of other dimensions. Typically the experience is very intense, even overwhelming and “real” yet a person usually does not completely lose touch with everyday reality. A holotropic experience is often accompanied by extraordinary changes in day-to-day sensory perception with profound changes in color, shapes, sounds, smells and tastes as well as profound perceptions that have no counterpart in this realm. With eyes closed a person is often flooded with visions drawn from personal history and the collective subconscious involving various aspects of the cosmos and mythological realms. (Grof, 1998a, p. 5)

The above description does not apply either to instances of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit such as the Awakening of a Buddha or the nirvana or an *Arhat*, or to instances

of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, such as the Contemplation state of a superior bodhisattva, a yogi and so on, among other things because in none of these states are people supposed to experience a flood of visions upon closing the eyes; therefore, it does not seem to refer to any instance of the nirvanic conditions subsumed under (A) in the threefold division of holistic and seemingly holistic states discussed above.<sup>66</sup> Nor does it apply to any instance of the neither samsaric nor nirvanic condition indicated as (C): whereas in the type of samadhi Patañjali described as “being asleep and simultaneously being fully awake” one completely loses touch with everyday reality, in the absorptions of the condition of the base-of-all in which there is awareness (of) the sensory continuum there is no awareness (of) consciousness of object and hence whatever occurs in them cannot be self-consciously, reflexively remembered—while on the other hand one lacks the capability to effectively manage reality. Contrariwise, as shown in the discussion of psychedelic experiences in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]), some of the characteristics in the description fit quite well those psychedelic experiences pertaining to the formless realms indicated as (B), whereas others fit quite well psychedelic experiences of the realms of form and sensuality.

As shown in the discussion of the *mandala* in *Beyond Mind* (Capriles, 2000a), not all holotropic states are characterized by plenitude, harmony, and security. Since Grof has had such a wide experience in the use of so-called psychedelics, it is not surprising that he is well aware of this. Consider the following quotation:

The emotions associated with holotropic states cover a broad spectrum that extends far beyond the limits of our everyday experience. They range from feelings of ecstatic rapture, heavenly bliss and “peace that passeth all understanding,” often associated with a sense of “connectedness” or “oneness” with the universe, through to episodes of abysmal terror, overpowering anger, utter despair, consuming guilt and other forms of emotional suffering. Depending on the content of the experience, a person can experience a sense of extraordinary health and well-being, optimal physiological functioning and orgasmic sexual sensations of enormous intensity or alternatively extreme discomfort such as excruciating pain, pressure, nausea or suffocation. (Grof, 1998a, p. 6)

Incidentally, the above contradicts Grof's definition of holotropic consciousness as involving identification with an area of consciousness lacking definite limits (and as such being holistic) insofar as a holotropic state—i.e., a state with a scope of awareness more panoramic than the average in civilized modern societies—can only involve such extreme discomfort when it comprises the divisiveness inherent in the subject-object duality, and the mental subject clings to the divisive, fragmentary perspective and values proper to what Grof calls hylotropic states (which excludes “identification with an area of consciousness lacking definite limits”). For example, the *panic* that people of lower capacities may experience upon having an incipient intuition of totality and thereby intuiting the lack of self-being of their own selves and the manifold entities, occurs because the mental subject has not dissolved and, since it clings to the divisive, fragmentary perspectives and values that characterize what Grof calls hylotropic states, it dreads its own dissolution, together with that of the illusion of there being a substantial and autonomous individual of which it is a part (and that it has *become* and with which it identifies). Furthermore, even the dreadful experiences people of higher capacities can have when fortuitous occurrences make anguish and the like manifest while a high energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness is giving rise to a more panoramic condition, can only occur so long as there is a mental subject that seems to be different and separate from the feeling tone associated with the anguish, and that complains about the latter. In short, holotropic states can only involve extreme discomfort when in a holotropic condition elements of the hylotropic condition such as the subject-object duality remain—especially if the spurious mental subject *becomes* or *identifies with* the illusory, seemingly substantial human entity that is a most essential illusion in the framework of the divisive, fragmentary perspective proper to what Grof calls hylotropic states. Hence in terms of Grof's definition of holotropic consciousness, the phrase “holotropic states involving extreme discomfort” is an oxymoron.<sup>67</sup>

At any rate, since pleasant samsaric experiences of the kind Grof called holotropic are further sources of danger insofar as they are often followed by experiences of the lower realms, and since panic, dread, and other unpleasant experiences cannot occur in any of the varieties of the truly, fully holistic condition of nirvana insofar as it does not involve a seemingly separate subject

that may react to experience either with dread or with elation, only the truly, fully holistic condition of nirvana represents a true, definitive, changeless Refuge. This is why Grof's distinction between holotropic and hylotropic states, and other distinctions between seemingly holistic states and divisive, tunnel-like perspectives, are not the most significant ones either for transpersonal psychology or spirituality: the truly significant distinction is the one between samsaric states (whether they seem to be holistic, or are openly and outright divisive-fragmentary), the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana are active, and the truly holistic condition of nirvana that constitutes the only genuine liberation from the drawbacks of conditioned existence.

Beside his distinction between hylotropic and holotropic states, Grof posited four interdependent levels or realms, into which he divided the human psyche. These are:

- (1) The sensory barrier.
- (2) The individual unconscious, corresponding to the biographic realm, which is the one Freud, among others, took as the object of his study.
- (3) The level of birth and death, corresponding to the perinatal realm and involving intrauterine life previously to the onset of the process of birth, the process of birth itself, and the experiences immediately following birth. As Grof has noted in his works, Freud had touched upon this area, but it was Freud's disciple Otto Rank (with his 1924 work *The Trauma of Birth* [Rank, 1973]) who opened it to study by going deeper into it. Later on Nandor Fodor and Lietaert Peerbolte further developed it, and then it became an object of interest to antipsychiatry as well.
- (4) The transpersonal domain, which has been the privileged object of study for the mystics of all religions and ages, who often dealt with it in poems, yet—especially in the East—on countless occasions did so in philosophical and / or psychological treatises. In the West, late nineteenth and early twentieth century philosopher William James, who revived and reformulated pragmatism, took this domain as an object of psychological study, as had done before him various other Western philosophers. However, C. G. Jung and Roberto Assagioli may have been the first among the so-called scientific psychologists to have taken it as an object of psychological research. Later on this domain became of primary concern to the two humanistic psychologists who subsequently founded transpersonal psychology—

namely Maslow and Sutich—and to antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term. Finally, it became the chief object of study of transpersonal psychology and a privileged object of interest to so-called integral psychology.

Grof coined the concept of *systems of condensed experiences* or *COEX systems*, which he defined as “emotionally-charged memories from different periods of our life that resemble each other in the quality of emotion or physical sensation that they share” (Grof, 1998b, p. 346; cf. also 1985 and other works), which he called “constellations of emotionally relevant memories stored together,”<sup>68</sup> and which he deemed determinant in the formation of individual psychology. Among these so-called COEX systems, most determinant are the four Basic Perinatal Matrices or BPMs, which according to Grof’s initial view originated in the third of the above realms: that of “birth and death” making up the “perinatal realm” (however, in Grof [1998d, pp. 377-378] the Czech-born author acknowledged that, though he continued to classify some of the experiences that manifest in nonordinary states of consciousness [NOSC] in terms of *perinatal matrices*, those experiences need not be seen as determined by the birth process or as replicating the later: though BPMs often accompany reliving of birth, they can also emerge independently of such liaison, and the manifestation of BPMs in NOSC and the process of birth itself may be both determined by an archetypal dynamic, rather than the former being determined by the latter). These BPMs—within each of which various COEX systems can manifest (Grof, 1985 and others of the works listed in the references to this paper)—are viewed as conditioning human experience in all of the levels and realms into which our author divided the human psyche, and in particular as determining the experiences of the fourth of the above levels / realms, which is the transpersonal domain. It must be noted that, for roughly the same reasons why above it was said that experiences involving partial intuitions of totality can be either harmonious or conflictive, in Grof’s view (1985, p. 350) the experiences of the transpersonal domain can either be “positive” (as in the case of “positive” COEX systems, “positive” BPM 1 and BPM 4, and “positive” transpersonal matrices), or “negative” (as in the case of “negative” COEX systems, BPMs 2 and 3, “negative” BPM 1 and BPM 4, and “negative” transpersonal matrices)—a distinction I do not endorse, for the fact that an experience is conflictive does not mean it is necessarily negative (on the contrary,

as shown in the discussion of the symbolisms of the *Divine Comedy* and the *mandala* in *Beyond Mind* [Capriles, 2000a] and other works [Capriles, 1977, 1986, 1990a, 2000b, 2003, 2007a (Vol. II)], on the Dzogchen Path conflictive experiences may be more valuable than serene ones).

BPM 1 corresponds to the fetus’ experience in the womb before the start of labor. When this experience is positive, it involves feelings of safety and oneness; therefore, in later life positive manifestations of this BPM are associated with oneness and belonging, as well as with the capacity to surrender to divine play with full trust: it is the content of good *holotropic* experiences, and is associated with experiences in which the world is radiant, safe, nourishing. Its negative side is psychotic distortion; dissolution of boundaries which is confusing and experienced as threatening, as in the case of panic; experiences in which one feels endangered, under attack by demonic forces, possibly poisoned, and in which there is all-embracing uncertainty and paranoia.

BPM 2 starts when the birth contractions begin, so that there is pressure on the fetus yet no possibility of release. Its initial phase is similar to a negative BPM 1, for it involves disruption of the intrauterine paradise—the difference lying in the fact that it includes a sense of mechanical entrapment and claustrophobia. In fact, full BPM 2 is a feeling of no exit, of hell, of a world hopeless, full of meaningless suffering; in the case of an adult, he or she may feel deeply guilty and precisely because of this identify with the role of helpless victim.

BPM 3 starts when contractions are still occurring, but the birth canal is now open, and so titanic forces squash the head and body and there is a feeling (and reality) of a life-death struggle, with great emotional and physical tension. In later life, the pattern is one of problems with the control of destructive impulses (directed to self or / and others), cruel fantasies, sexual disturbances, and preoccupation with demonic, perverted, or scatological themes: the world is a dangerous place, an existential battlefield ruled by the law of the jungle where one has to be strong to survive and fulfill one’s needs.

BPM 4 is the release of all tension and pain upon birth, which according to Grof corresponds to the death-rebirth experience; if uncomplicated, it gives rise to feelings of physical and spiritual rebirth, rejuvenation and emotional renewal: being full of excitement and energy, yet centered and peaceful, it involves perceiving

the world as though through cleansed senses, and adds zest for life. However, it may have a negative aspect when birth is followed by traumatic experiences, such as beatings, circumcision, isolation from mother, war and so on.

In Dzogchen terms, the aspects or manifestations of BPM 1 Grof viewed as positive would include, (C) cozily resting in meditative absorptions or samadhis of the neutral base-of-all, and (B) formless samsaric absorptions or samadhis. However, they would exclude (A) all instances of nirvana, insofar as the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base and the concomitant spontaneous liberation of thought are out of the question in intrauterine states, and though it would be conceivable that in reliving them as adults one could apply the instructions that may facilitate the occurrence of the reGnition in question, this is not what Grof proposed.<sup>69</sup>

Among the above, (C) the meditative absorptions of the neutral base-of-all include the various kinds of deep thought-free absorptions, including: the Hinayana's nirodhasamapatti; the Vedantic nirvikalpa samadhi; the samadhi or *turiya* that is the supreme realization of Patañjali's Yoga darshana (the blank condition that is similar to sleep yet different from it insofar as one is simultaneously fully awake); the absorption in the so-called "inner" luminosity of the dang form of manifestation of energy known as *tingsel* (*gting gsal*) and in general in the nondual luminosity that manifests in the *chikhai bardo* (*'chi kha'i bar do*) so long as there is no reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base;<sup>70</sup> the various thought-free absorptions involving the continuum of sensations, the dharmadhatu or space where all phenomena manifest, yet not featuring the subject-object duality or the singling out and recognition of sensations—and probably the state of *turiya-ananda* described in Upanishads such as the *Mandukya*<sup>71</sup> and *Taittiriya*, as well as in Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta<sup>72</sup> (the uncertainty in this regard being due to the ambiguity in the definitions of the state in question).

For their part, (B) the samsaric formless absorptions include those experiences that take place when the delusory valuation-absolutization of the threefold thought structure gives rise to a mental subject that intends to take as object the infinitude that manifested in the experience of the base-of-all, and that either *becomes* or *identifies with* the seemingly

limitless (or unthinkable, etc.) object that arose as a result of the same operation—which, however, at this point is no longer an infinitude insofar as it excludes the mental subject experiencing the object and which arose together with it—and derives joy from or takes pride in *being* that seemingly limitless (or unthinkable, etc.) object.

Though, as Jigme Lingpa had predicted, in our time it is common to mistake the neutral condition of the base-of-all—and hence what Grof called BPM 1, with its typical sensation of nonduality—for the dharmakaya that in the Dzogchen Path is the first stage in the progressive unveiling of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base (a confusion that seems to be at the root of Ken Wilber's already discussed association of his fulcrum-9 both with the dharmakaya and with different instances of the condition of the base-of-all), unlike the base-of-all the dharmakaya is not in any sense analogous to cozily lying in the safety of the womb before labor begins (whereas the absorptions Wilber mistook for the dharmakaya, on the other hand, are analogous to it). In fact, the patency of the all-accommodating voidness that constitutes the essence aspect of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is the dharmakaya if and only if it involves reGnition of the stuff of dang [*gdang*] energy (independently of whether this energy is manifesting as the "inner" luminosity called *tingsel* or as the various types of thought)—which, insofar as this reGnition is the "all-liberating single gnosis" (Tib. *chikshe kundröl* [*gcig shes kun grol*]), automatically results in the spontaneous liberation of whatever type of thought may be manifest. With regard to the already mentioned, partial analogy between Grof's BPMs and the stages of the intermediate state between death and rebirth, just as *in the absence of the reGnition of Dzogchen-qua-Base* the luminosity of the *chikhai bardo* (which as noted above is the first intermediate state) may be seen as an instance of BPM 1, reacting with aversion to the shining forth of luminosity initially may be seen as what Grof would call a "negative" BPM 1, and then it may give rise to the subsequent BPMs the author in question posited.

Bateson, Laing, Cooper, and others of the authors I subsume under "antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term" and report as having dealt with unsought, spontaneous manifestations of the self-healing processes occurring in the miscalled "altered states of consciousness"<sup>73</sup> I have related to the *Divine Comedy*, the *mandala* and the intermediate state between death

and rebirth, describe all such processes in terms of a death and a rebirth. Stanislav Grof accepted that these processes and some transpersonal (and in particular psychedelic) experiences involve a death and a rebirth, but as noted above, related them, and in general most “nonordinary states of consciousness” (NOSCs), to the third of the above levels: that of “birth and death” making up the “perinatal realm,” which as has been seen in his view determines to a great extent individual psychology and involves the four BPMs (Grof, 1985, and others of the works listed in the references to this paper). (However, a relationship may be established between Grof’s BPMs and the structure and function of the intermediate state between death and rebirth that, as has been seen, involves three successive bardos. In fact, if those BPMs manifested as a sequence beginning with BPM 1 and concluding with BPM 4, this sequence would be *partly* analogous to the unfolding of the intermediate state from the moment of the shining forth of the clear light in the first of the bardos between death and rebirth [the one called *’chi kha’i*] until the moment of the reGnition of the true nature of the rölpa energy of the visions of the wrathful deities in the second of the bardos between death and rebirth [that of the *dharmata* or *chönyi (chos nyid)*] and the concomitant spontaneous liberation of delusion—provided this reGnition and spontaneous liberation occurred, and did so in the second bardo rather than in the first one. Nevertheless, this unfolding of the intermediate state would *not* be *fully* analogous to a sequence of BPMs 1, 2, 3, and 4 insofar as BPM 4 does not involve reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. )

As to the symbolism of Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, BPM 2 exemplifies the no-way-out character of the experience of Hell and corresponding passages of the bardo, whereas BPM 3 exemplifies the experiences of runaway of tension occurring in Purgatory and the corresponding passages of the bardo. Likewise, BPM 4 corresponds to the openness that, in unsought self-healing processes occurring outside the context of a wisdom tradition, manifests right after the spontaneous resolution of tension and conflict following their runaway to the threshold level at which they break like a rubber band pulled beyond its maximum resistance—so long as this openness is not the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, which does not occur in the process of birth upon the transition from the struggle of labor to the openness of BPM 4. Above it was noted that I do not endorse Grof’s view that experiences of the

“transpersonal domain” can be “positive” or “negative,” because the fact that an experience is conflictive does not mean it is necessarily negative. It is clear that an all-out experience of paranoia in which the individual feels persecuted by a ubiquitous enemy, which Grof would see as an instance of BPM 2, is most difficult to use as an opportunity to reGnize the Base in which the experience manifests, or that some BPM 3 can be very dangerous. However, as shown in this paragraph, the self-healing process illustrated by the *Divine Comedy* may be seen as involving a succession of various of these BPMs, including some that Grof deemed negative, and yet this process can result in greater wholeness and harmony—or, if undertaken in the context of a Path such as Dzogchen, may be the royal way to full Awakening.

Since I have never compared trustworthy first hand reports of what actually happened to specific individuals during birth and in the preceding intrauterine life, with their experiences in life in general or in psychedelic experiences, psychoses and so on, I can neither endorse nor contest the early Grof’s assertion that the perinatal process determines the events occurring in NOSCs or on individual psychology in general. Furthermore, though doubts have been expressed as to the existence of genuine grounds for distinguishing BPM 1 from BPM 4, as well as to whether the boundary between BPMs 3 and 4 is just as Grof established it to be (Bray, 1998),<sup>74</sup> as shown above Grof’s perinatal stages *partly* correspond to stages of the intermediate state, and BPMs 2, 3 and 4 have precise analogies in the process symbolized by the *Divine Comedy*.<sup>75</sup> However, in the lhundrub processes occurring on the Dzogchen Path I have explained in terms of the *Divine Comedy*, the occurrences that *resemble* the transition from BPM 3 to BPM 4 (but which are different from the latter insofar as they involve reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which the latter do not), rather than being the concluding stage of the process, are something that initially occurs in the transition from Hell to Purgatory and that thereon occurs again and again in Purgatory and Heaven until samsara is exhausted. In its turn, the intermediate state between death and rebirth begins with undifferentiated light, which if unreGnized would be comparable to a BPM 1, and then may go through experiences comparable to a BPM 2—yet as noted above a pattern comparable to the sequence BPM 3 - BPM 4 (except for the fact that in this case BPM 4 would involve reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-



Base) manifests if and only if, in the second bardo, which is that of the dharmata or chönyi (*chos nyid*), there is reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base when the visions of rölpa energy manifest in a wrathful context, so that the perception of these visions as objects to a subject, and as lying in an external dimension, spontaneously liberates itself together with the associated tensions. However, as just noted in terms of the symbolism of the *Divine Comedy*, in the Dzogchen practices carried out in the intermediate state of the dharmata or chönyi, which are those of Thögel and the Yangthik, this spontaneous liberation occurs repetitively and hence it is far from being the concluding stage of the process.

Furthermore, in the light of the findings of paleopathology which are interpreted as showing that prior to 4,000 BC (or to 12,000 BC in the only sites, located in the Nile valley and Australia, which are an exception to this rule) no violence occurred between human beings (Lochouarn, 1993; van der Dennen, 1995; DeMeo, 1998; Taylor, 2003, 2005),<sup>76</sup> if the early Grofs were correct in tracing the origin of violence to BPM 3, one would have to conclude that before that time women bore children utterly without struggle or pain, either on their own part or on that of the infant—which seems to be suggested by the words the *Book of Genesis* attributes to God on the occasion of punishing Eve: “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children.” Likewise, children born through a caesarean operation before labor begins would *possibly* lack a major source of violence—yet I have seen no evidence supporting this assumption (on the contrary, it is believed that Nero was born of caesarean section, and eventually he killed his own mother, Agrippina, and engaged in wanton violence; King Richard III of England was also born of caesarean section, and he was accused of killing the little princes he had confined to the tower;<sup>77</sup> etc.).

It has been noted that none of the holotropic conditions, transpersonal experiences and BPMs Stanislav Grof posited involves the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base I call Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and the concomitant spontaneous liberation of thought (a fact that is discussed in greater detail below)—which is the main reason why I criticize his system from what I have christened a *metatranspersonal* standpoint. At this point it is important to emphasize the fact that Grof classified all shamanic experiences, experiences of spirit and demon possession, and many other occurrences that are

not necessarily *holotropic* or mystic, as belonging to the transpersonal domain, while failing to alert his readers to the fact that shamanic experiences—at least as defined in Harner (1973)—have little (if any) relation with the transition from samsara to nirvana, and that spirit and demon possession can hardly have a wholesome outcome for the individual him or herself. In fact, concerning Grof’s views, my critique of transpersonal psychology from what I call a metatranspersonal perspective needs to be coupled with the following warnings, issued from the standpoint I have christened *metashamanic*, with regard to the shamanic (Capriles, 1990b [also in Capriles, 1999a, 2000a, 2007a (Vol. II)]):

[Though shamanic cultures had a pan-communicative vision that caused human beings to relate communicatively with natural phenomena and therefore to preserve the ecological order, shamanism also has serious defects.] Michael Harner (1973) pointed out that the South American shaman thinks the reality to which he or she gains access through shamanic means—which is different from everyday reality and which Western culture would consider supernatural—is the true reality, and that his or her everyday vision, as well as that of other individuals, is a false reality. [According to Harner,] information on shamanic cultures from other regions suggests that [this] may be applied to a great deal of what goes under the term shamanism: although [different] shamanic tribes and cultures may attribute a greater or lesser degree of reality to the everyday vision of normal individuals, most of them [would] attribute a higher degree of reality to “supernatural” shamanic experiences that are equally sustained by delusory valuation-absolutization. It is perhaps the greater scope of the focus of conscious [aware]ness and the greater intensity of the experience associated with the higher energetic [volume] (*kundalini* or *thig-le*) at the root of such experiences that make these seem more real to shamans than the ones they face in their everyday lives.

In Tibet and its zone of cultural influence, popular culture [contains] important shamanic elements<sup>78</sup> that representatives of the two most important religious systems never tried to

discourage. Lamas, Bönpo as well as Buddhist, referred to local spirits and demons as relatively existing, [actual] entities capable of causing great harm to human beings and social life, and, in general, encouraged the belief in supernatural entities that could harm or help human beings. The reason for this is that as long as the tendency to experience “supernatural” reality as inherently, absolutely true, and to become its victims is still present, it is of no use to simply tell oneself that the reality in question does not exist. In fact, [Lamas of both systems used to teach the bravest and most capable of their students, practices considered very dangerous that] allowed them to experience the “supernatural” reality with their gods and demons and that, if all went well, resulted in the spontaneous liberation of the experience [in the state of rigpa] and therefore of dualism and tension—which freed them from the influence and power [of this reality so long as they remained in the state of Contemplation, and which kept them aware of its illusory character and progressively freed them from its influence and power in post-Contemplation]...<sup>79</sup> [In fact, the incessant] repetition of this practice [progressively neutralized] the tendency to experience the reality accessed by shamanic and yogic means as self-existing, independent of the practitioner’s mental processes, and absolutely true. As they learned not to take seriously visions and experiences that seemed so real, those practitioners learned not to be conditioned by the illusion that their normal everyday experiences were self-existing, independent of their own mental processes, and absolutely true. Liberating themselves from delusory valuation-absolutization during shamanic experiences, they were able to free themselves from it—and therefore from delusion in general—in their daily lives as well.

[Dzogchen and the other spiritual systems transmitted in Tibet] regard as delusory both our experience of everyday reality and the experience of supernatural reality that shamans and yogis may have access to.<sup>80</sup> This does not mean they consider both realities as mere hallucinations; [on the contrary, some such

systems posit] the existence of something *given* that, once processed and interpreted by our mental functions, is experienced as the world in which we live, with all its entities. Delusion arises when we fail to recognize that entities do not exist inherently and absolutely; that they depend on other entities and on our own mental processes in order to exist in the manner [in which] they exist for us. Thus, delusion is a confusion regarding the mode of existence of entities (including that of human individuals): when we believe that our objects and we ourselves exist inherently and substantially (in the sense of being self-existing: not depending on the mind and/or other objects or subjects to exist), that the relative is absolute, we are under delusion. [This delusion is a result of the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought in combination with the mechanisms of perception].

Delusion gives rise to a series of emotional responses that produce recurring suffering, dissatisfaction, and frustration. If we take shamanic nonordinary reality to be inherently and absolutely existent, we may become the victims of demons and spirits, as has happened to many Tibetans and members of tribal cultures;<sup>81</sup> if we believe in the inherent, absolute truth of the entities, beliefs, and values of normal everyday reality, we will strive to maintain our identities, possessions, and so on, thereby giving rise to: (a) constant discomfort, dissatisfaction, and personal frustration; (b) contradictions and social conflicts; and (c) ultimately, an ecological crisis such as the one we presently face.] (pp. 141-142)

As I have shown elsewhere (1990b, 1999a, 2000a, 2007a [Vol. II]), though I regard worldviews based on shamanism in the specific, narrow sense in Michael Harner gave this term, as far less noxious than the scientist worldview, it is the metashamanic spirituality of Awakening traditions that I regard as truly therapeutic and as the key to the survival of our species and the transition to a new age of Communion, harmony and plenitude—the term “Communion” not having in this case the sense given it by Gilligan (1982), Tannen (1990), Wilber (1995, 1998), among others, for

I capitalize it to make it clear that I am using it in what I believe was its original sense: to refer to the dissolution of the illusory boundaries separating us from each other and from the rest of nature, in the unveiling of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base.

The above does not imply disparaging hunter-gatherers, early horticulturalists, and primal peoples in general, for according to the *Kunje Gyalpo* (*kun byed rgyal po*; Skt. *Sarwadharmamahashantibodhichittakulayaraja*) and other root texts of Dzogchen, the Dzogchen teachings, which constitute the very paradigm of metashamanism, were promulgated in the primordial era (cf. Namkhai Norbu & Clemente, 1999)—whereas shamanism, according to the late Sufi Master Idries Shah (1964), was a late result of the *degeneration* of true Paths of Awakening within tribal cultures. Furthermore, according to the *Kunje Gyalpo* (cf. Namkhai Norbu & Clemente, 1999) and other Dzogchen texts, the Dzogchen teachings and their transmission disappeared and were reintroduced on successive occasions—most of them in prehistoric times. Who can then categorically assert these teachings not to have survived until our age, at least partially, among hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists, and so on? (Mircea Eliade [1964] showed Paleo-Siberian shamanism to have used a spiritual map analogous to the one Dante drew in the *Divine Comedy*, which as such applies to metashamanic teachings as well. Though I have always believed Carlos Castañeda's books to be concoctions elaborated on the basis of Eastern teachings and a great deal of imagination, and at any rate the teachings he attributed to Don Juan Matus are certainly not Dzogchen teachings, since they claim to lead the apprentice beyond both the way of seeing of normal human beings and the way of seeing of the witch,<sup>82</sup> in case they were not concoctions by Castañeda they could as well come from a genuine metashamanic tradition. Furthermore, a Mexican shaman—I seem to remember it was María Sabina—spoke of two different ways followed by her colleagues, one of them leading to realization of the divine—which suggests that they possessed a metashamanic Path, or at least a path leading to higher samsaric realms that they mistook for the realization of the divine.<sup>83</sup>)

Above I asserted that from a general Buddhist or a specific Dzogchen perspective most of the ten types of *spiritual emergency* listed by Christina and Stan Grof (1992) have no ultimate therapeutic potential. In fact, my evaluation of these occurrences is as follows:

(1) “Episodes of unitive consciousness” or “peak experiences.” *So long as they are not mistaken for instances of nirvana*, they may be useful for awakening faith in the possibility of attaining states of consciousness more holistic and wholesome than normal hylotropic consciousness, and for arousing interest in the Paths of Awakening. However, they may also be a source of ego inflation.

(2) “Awakening of kundalini.” This is what I am calling *increase of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness*, which as shown repeatedly throughout this series of papers (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a) and in other works of mine (Capriles, 2000b, 2003, 2007a vol. II) is the source of most so-called *nonordinary states of consciousness* (NOSCs) and condition of possibility of all kinds of spiritual breakthrough. In fact, though the Grofs classify this “awakening of kundalini” as one of the ten varieties of what they call spiritual emergency, what they refer to by that term is the energetic basis of most types of spiritual emergency, and although they describe it as involving rushes of energy, violent shaking, extremes of emotion, “speaking in tongues,” visions of nonordinary beings and archetypes, auditory phenomena such as celestial music, visions of beautiful geometric patterns, perception of agreeable odors or other such phenomena, most of these occurrences (and in particular energy rushes, violent shaking, extremes of emotion, and “speaking in tongues”) take place only when the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness increases spontaneously in individuals who are not duly prepared. If, with a very high energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness, we question our dualistic experience in terms of specific, secret oral instructions, it is very likely that the result may be an instance of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path—yet the phenomena the Grofs listed *need not* manifest. And in fact the sole purpose of raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness on the Dzogchen Path is that of using the ensuing states in order to apply this questioning. The reason for this is that, if the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness increases spontaneously without this resulting in a spontaneous breakthrough, and the ensuing experiences are not used for questioning their structure and function in terms of traditional instructions, this increase will have no value and will most likely become an obstacle to progress on the Path of Awakening. This is why here it is claimed that the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness

should only be raised in the context of a practice such as Dzogchen and in individuals fulfilling the requisites for the raise in question to result in reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base:<sup>84</sup> because otherwise this raise may either result in destructive varieties of madness, or generate interests that deviate the individual from the Path of Awakening, give rise to attachment, and inflate the ego.

(3) “Near death experiences” (NDE). They very often have the beneficial effect of eliciting interest in the Path of Awakening, but they are random occurrences no one in his or her right mind would intentionally induce.

(4) “Emergence of memories of past lives.” This is always a distraction that as a rule inflates the ego and can hardly have a beneficial effect on the individual.

(5) “Psychological renewal through return to the center.” As the Grofs presented this term, it appears to refer to a vaguely defined type of occurrence in which dreams, fantasies, and so on indicate one is entering a spiritual journey and may provide useful orientation for the journey in question. However, though the signs listed by the Grofs<sup>85</sup> will be beneficial if they actually orient the individual spiritually, they may also beget infatuation.

(6) “Shamanic crisis.” What the Grofs called by this name may involve experiences in which one journeys to the underworld or world of the dead, or that feature rituals and ceremonies, rites of dismemberment, or animals that later appear as power animals or as guides. They typically involve an experience of annihilation followed by resurrection and ascent to celestial realms. And the journeys that may occur often include those into hidden realms of reality. Though such occurrences may be an index that a spontaneous self-healing process is beginning or is in course, and though they often take place in Awakening Paths, in unprepared individuals they may also become sources of attachment and give rise to obsessions that most likely would deviate the individual from the direction of Awakening.

(7) “Awakening of extra-sensory perception” or “psychic ability.” According to the Grofs this often includes the ability to make intuitive connections and an awareness of synchronicity. However, not only are the ensuing experiences difficult to tell from outright delusions, so that they may either have a relative usefulness or become hindrances, but, like those of the fourth type, in unprepared individuals they inflate the ego and give rise to deviating obsessions.

(8) “Communication with guide spirits and channeling.” Such occurrences may be relatively useful

to some people (Jung’s [1964] meetings with Elijah-Philemon, Salome and the black serpent seemed to be somehow useful to him), yet to others they may spell the beginning of trouble (for example, when in a Thögel or related context someone takes such guides as self-existing realities and reacts emotionally to them with either pride or fear<sup>86</sup>). Furthermore, in unprepared individuals they may result in attachment to the extraordinary and the paranormal, and reinforce belief in and dependence on so-called extrasensory forces and phenomena.

(9) “Experiences of encounters with UFOs.” These occurrences are spiritually useless, as a rule awaken a morbid interest in phenomena that have no role in eradicating delusion, and in general inflate the ego. However, on the Dzogchen Path the presentation of *thigles*—in the sense of immaterial spheres of light—is a condition of possibility of the practice of Thögel.

(10) “States of spirit and demon possession.” Occurrences in this category are in general morbid and extremely dangerous, have no healing potential, and hence as a rule should be avoided. (However, there are exceptions to this rule: the use of spirit possession for oracle consultation has been practiced in Tibet with seemingly useful results, and elemental spirit possession is successfully practiced by Amerindian shamans for medical purposes.)

The term *spiritual emergence*, originally used for these occurrences (later changed to “spiritual emergency” because of the dangers inherent in them), implies that they occur without having been sought—and in fact, for the reasons adduced above, except in the case of inducing the first two in the context of the practice of metashamanic, metatranspersonal systems, it would be a grave error to intentionally induce them. Since they involve illusory experiences of the kind that with regard to *vipassana* practice the Pali Canon calls the “ten corruptions,” that Ch’an / Zen calls by the Mandarin term *mo-ching* and the Japanese word *makyo*, that Dzogchen refers to as *nyam* (*nyams*), and that Sufis denominate *hal*, when they manifest spontaneously, if one is unable to employ them as a platform for applying secret oral instructions (Skt. *upadesha*; Tib. *menngag* [*man ngag*]) susceptible of resulting in the reGnition of the true condition of the experience and thereby in the latter’s spontaneous liberation (rather than giving them importance either as a positive or a negative occurrence) one should regard them as dream-like, illusory occurrences. Since

Washburn rightly identified such experiences as instances of the “ten corruptions” and stated that, should one deal with them in the right way, they would subside with the passing of time, his attitude to such phenomena was indisputably wiser than that of the Grofs. However, the ideal way of dealing with such experiences is that of the Dzogchen teachings, in which, as has been seen, rather than remaining as aloof as possible in their regard and waiting for them to subside of their own accord, these are employed as precious occasions for applying the secret oral instructions that facilitate the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that results in the spontaneous liberation of the experience. In fact, when such experiences are occurring, not only are the instructions in question more likely to result in spontaneous liberation, but this liberation has a greater power for neutralizing karma and by the same token increasing the individual’s capacity of spontaneous liberation.

What may be really useful to highly deranged individuals who have not received instructions or introductions to a Path of Awakening and who have no capacity of spontaneous liberation is the kind of process discussed by Gregory Bateson (1961, 1972), R. D. Laing (1967), David Cooper (1971), John Perry (1974) and several others, as well as the type of process discussed by Michael Washburn (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b), which is not essentially different from the former but which the transpersonal theorist does not classify as psychotic (as its milder varieties would probably not classify as psychosis under most prevailing reference systems).

### Grof’s View of the Fruit

Elsewhere (Capriles, 2007a [Vol. II]) I referred to Awakening by such terms as *absolute sanity* and *absolute mental health*, by contrast referring to *deluded normality*—in which most of the time others are elicited to project on oneself a *persona* that is acceptable and that is generally deemed to be sane, thus eluding conflict and avoiding functional or legal incapacitation—by the name *masked insanity*. These labels are based on the fact that both Dzogchen and Buddhism in general acknowledge statistical normality to involve the basic human delusion called avidya or marigpa, which is at the opposite extreme from soundness, sanity, and mental health, and agree that true soundness, sanity, and mental health is exclusive to Awakening.

In the above usage, the term “delusion” denotes a distorted perception of reality that is taken for reality itself

or for an accurate perception of reality—the distortedness of which is revealed both by the contradictions between the intentions behind one’s actions and the latter’s effects, and by its contrast with what manifests in the undistorted awareness of the Buddhas. Different systems of psychology and psychiatry have their own conceptions of delusion; however, in terms of most of them normal avidya or marigpa could not be categorized as delusion, for they reserve this term to those degrees of seeming distortion of reality which are characteristic of psychosis, and which cannot be reached in either neurosis or normality (even though what they view as instances of delusion occurring in psychosis are often metaphoric ways of soundly perceiving relative reality<sup>87</sup>).<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, the semantics of Alfred Korzybski (1973), according to which sanity is determined by the structural fit between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world, and insanity by the lack of such fit, lends itself for a definition of delusion coincident with the one sketched in the preceding paragraph, in that the terms delusion and insanity would be applicable to whichever distorted perception of reality were taken for reality itself or for an accurate perception of reality, and not only to those occurring in psychosis. In fact, in terms of the criteria set out by Korzybski, the delusion that Shakyamuni Buddha called avidya or marigpa is certainly a form of insanity (and indeed it is the widest and most ubiquitous form of insanity), for it gives rise to a severe structural discrepancy between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world: our attempts to achieve satisfaction yield dissatisfaction, our efforts to suppress pain produce pain, and our efforts to destroy death and all negative aspects of life and build a technological Eden have originated the ecological crisis that is producing major natural disasters and which threatens to disrupt human society and put an end to human existence in the course of the present century.

However, in Korzybski’s view, the sciences could achieve the structural fit defining sanity, for in terms of his renowned map-territory analogy, the map is not the territory but, when correct, it has a structure similar to that of the territory that allows it to be useful in dealing with the latter. In fact, Korzybski’s criterion seems to correspond to the one that, in the face of Hume’s law and the accumulated objections of subsequent epistemologists (cf. Capriles, 1994, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007c), Alfred Julius Ayer (1981) devised with the aim of validating the sciences: the one according to which “we are authorized

to have faith in our procedure, so long as it carries out its function, which is that of predicting future experience and thus control our environment.” However, as noted above, in trying to control our environment with the avowed aim of creating an artificial Eden and kill death and pain, the sciences and the technology based on them, rather than achieving their avowed effect,<sup>89</sup> have produced a hellish chaos and taken us to the brink of our extinction—and, moreover, at no moment did they foresee this result. Therefore Ayer’s criterion, and by implication Korzybski’s, rather than validating, *invalidates* the sciences.

The reasons for this have been discussed in depth in other works of mine (Capriles, 1994, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007c); at this point suffice to say that, whereas conceptual maps are digital and thus discontinuous, the sensory territory is analog and thus continuous—and hence it is impossible for the former to correspond precisely to the latter (in some of the cited works I illustrated the impossibility of our digital maps to correspond precisely to the analog territory they interpret with a series of examples; at this point suffice to mention the mismatch between a digital photograph and the analog reality it is intended to replicate: though the mismatch may be imperceptible when the number of dpis is very high, if one just zooms in, one will see a combination of colored squares bearing no resemblance with the continuous reality that was photographed). Even more important is the fact that the sensory territory is holistic and intricately interconnected, whereas the perception at the root of our maps is lineal, and has a fragmentary character that makes it unable to grasp the interconnectedness of the territory. Thus it is not surprising that, by acting on the ecosphere with the powerful technology that has been devised to that end, all kinds of mishaps arise, and ultimately the ecosystem is disrupted to the point at which its viability is threatened. However, the fact that action taken on the basis of digital maps and lineal, fragmentary perception produces effects that diametrically contradict those intended and as such betrays the most extreme lack of structural fit between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world, in general becomes evident only in the long run, for such action is often instrumental to our *most immediate* aims (for example, the first times one applies a pesticide one may manage to exterminate most of the mosquitoes in a swamp, and only in the long run, after its repeated application, does one realize that our drinking water has become polluted,

that *anura* and other species have been exterminated, that mosquitoes have developed resistance to the poison, etc.<sup>90</sup>)

Our current problems arise from the fact that the progressive intensification of the delusion called *avidya* or *marigpa* at the root of the degenerative spiritual and social evolution of our species, has brought to an extreme the functioning of what *Gestalt* theory calls figure-ground minds, as well as our understanding of the territory in terms of delusorily valued-absolutized, digital secondary process maps, thereby exacerbating the fragmentation of our perception in such a way that the figures singled out in the sensory continuum appear to be *in themselves* isolated from the ground, and one becomes consciously unaware of the indivisibility of the analog continuum of the territory and of the interdependence of the singled out figure and the rest of the continuum, and of all *potential* figures among themselves. The result is a grave lack of overall understanding of the holistic, indivisible, analog continuum and network of interdependences that is the territory—which, according to the *Udaana* (third book of the *Khuddaka Nikaya* in the Pali Canon, which contains the sermons of the First Promulgation at the root of the Hinayana), the *Prajñāparamitasūtras* (Second Promulgation), the philosophy of Nagarjuna (based on the latter sources) and other Buddhist sources and systems, is a central aspect of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or *marigpa*. K. Venkata Ramanan (1966) paraphrased the explanation the *Prajñāparamitashastra*, which the Chinese attribute to Nagarjuna,<sup>91</sup> gives of this key aspect of delusion:

We select from out of the presented only the aspects of our interest and neglect the rest; to the rest that is neglected we become first indifferent and then blind; in our blindness, we claim completeness for the aspects we have selected. We seize them as absolute, we cling to them as complete truth... While the intellectual analysis of the presented content into its different aspects is conducive to and necessary for a comprehensive understanding, analysis is miscarried if the fragmentary is mistaken for the complete, the relative is mistaken for the absolute. (pp. 107-108)

In the *Udaana* of the First Promulgation, Shakyamuni Buddha illustrated this aspect of the basic

human delusion with the story of the six blind men and the elephant, according to which the one who held the elephant's head asserted the object to be like a pot, the one who held the ear said it was like a winnowing fan, and so on (Steinthal, 1885/1982, pp. 66-68; Venkata Ramanan, 1966, pp. 49-50, reference in note 138 to ch. I, p. 344): each of them held so firmly to his partial view, taking it to be the exact, absolute view of totality, that they quarreled bitterly, unable to come to an agreement as to the nature of the object before them. The same story is told in the *Tathagatagarbhasutra* of the Third Promulgation, as follows (Dudjom Rinpoche, 1991, vol. I, p. 295):<sup>92</sup>

The king assembled many blind men and, [placing them before] an elephant, commanded, "Describe [this object's] particular characteristics." Those among them who felt the elephant's nose said that [the object] resembled an iron hook. Those who felt the eyes said that [it] resembled bowls. Those who felt the ears said [it] resembled winnowing baskets. Those who felt the back said it resembled a sedan chair, and those who felt the tail said it resembled a string. Indeed, though [their respective descriptions responded to the parts of the] elephant [they touched], they were lacking in overall understanding...

Furthermore, as shown in various works of mine (Capriles, 1994, 2001, 2007 [Vol. II, III], etc.), because of the radical difference between the digital code of the process that in the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* of 1895 Freud called secondary (based on the computations of the left cerebral hemisphere) and the analog code of the process that he called primary (based on the computations of the right hemisphere), the action of consciousness in terms of the former is very often read inversely in the latter—which causes it to yield effects diametrically opposed to the ones intended, as is proper to the samsaric "reverse law" or "law of inverted effect" reviewed toward the end of the last chapter of Capriles (2007a [Vol. I]).<sup>93</sup> The result of the inverted meaning that contents of digital secondary process have in the analog code of primary process, of the perception of parts of the whole as intrinsically isolated entities and the incapacity of consciousness to apprehend interconnections, and in general of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or *marigpa*, is the above-mentioned lack of fit between the

aims behind our actions and the results these produce. In this regard I wrote elsewhere (Capriles, 2003):

A delusion is a distorted perception of reality. Someone who, being deluded with regard to the direction of cardinal points, tries to go south, at a given moment could as well discover she or he is going north. As we have seen, this happens all the time in our daily lives, as so often our attempts to get pleasure result in pain, the actions whereby we intend to get happiness give rise to unhappiness, what we do achieve security produces insecurity, and so on and on. In fact, the essential human delusion (*avidya* or *marigpa*) gives rise to an inverted dynamics that often causes us to achieve with our actions the very opposite of what we set out to accomplish—which is what a popular twentieth century British-born author (Watts, 1959) called "law of inverted effect" or "reverse law."<sup>94</sup> The great Dzogchen Master Vimalamitra provided us with an excellent example of this law in the *Three Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces*, where he noted that all the happiness of *samsara*, even if it momentarily appears as such, is in reality only suffering, maturing in the same way as the effects of eating an appetizing yet poisonous fruit (Namkhai Norbu, 1999/2001, p. 41):<sup>95</sup> again and again the appetizing aspect of the fruits of *samsara* beguile us into gobbling them, yet we fail to learn from the ensuing stomachaches. In *The Precious Vase: Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Samgha*, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (1999/2001, p. 44) explains the examples [in terms of the five senses] with which the *mahasiddha* Sarahapada illustrated this law:

Not knowing what to accept and what to reject, even though we crave happiness we obtain only sorrow, like a moth that, attracted by a flame dives into it and is burnt alive; or like a bee that, due to its attachment to nectar, sucks a flower and cannot disengage from it, dying trapped inside; or like a deer killed by hunters while it listens to the sound of the flute; like fish that, attached to the taste of the food on the fisherman's hook, die on the hot sand; like an elephant that, craving contact with something

cool, goes into a muddy pool and dies because it cannot get out. In fact the *Treasury of the Dohas (Do ha mdzod)* says:

Observe the deeds of the fish, the moth, the elephant, the bee and the deer, [each of which brings about its own suffering through attachment to objects of one of the five senses]! (Version 1.5, pp. 57-58)

From the *Three Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces* (op. 3: p. 7, 1):

There is no end to all the various secondary causes, just like following the mirage of a spring of water.

In fact all the beings that transmigrate through the power of *karma*, whether they are born in the higher or lower states, are in fact beguiled and dominated by the diverse secondary causes so whatever actions they perform become a cause of suffering. They are never content with what they do and there is nothing on which they can really rely.... (Version 1.5, pp. 57-58)

Each society has its conventions, which contradict those of many other societies and which are as arbitrary as the latter: while the Arabs see burping after partaking of a meal at someone else's home as a sign of politeness showing one is satisfied, many Europeans would see the same behavior as a scandalous breach of etiquette. However, the problem does not lie in the contradiction between conventions, but in the fact that both the Arab and the European, just as all other peoples, mistaking convention (Greek, *nomos*) for nature (Greek, *physis*), view their social rules as absolute, universal standards. Far worse, religiously sanctioned ideologies have brought about terrible forms of repression of children and women, caste systems that justify oppression and condemn dalits to unthinkable forms of ignominy, and so on. Likewise, insofar as the followers of theistic (and especially monotheistic) religions take their own faith to be divinely sanctioned, and insofar as the followers of each ideology take their own doctrine to be the only true and/or just one, religious and ideological divergences have for millennia produced sheer insane behavior like wars, massacres, crucifixions, the Inquisition with its tortures and stake, lynching, and so forth. However, in the last centuries things have turned for the worst, for as

shown in Capriles (1994, 2007a [Vol. III]), the currently prevailing ideology, which is that of progress and of science as the bearer of truth, has given rise to courses of behavior that, unless our delusion is healed and we radically change course, are likely to destroy human society and even put an end to human life on this planet in the course of the present century, and which as such are the most insane ever taken by our species.

Thus one must agree with seventeenth century French thinker Blaise Pascal (1962), who compared the state of mind of normal individuals to a psychological disorder, and with ex-Frankfurt philosopher, social psychologist, and transpersonal forerunner Erich Fromm (1955), who gave to understand that our society as a whole is far from sanity:

Just as there is a *folie à deux* there is a *folie à millions*. The fact that millions of people share the same vices does not make these vices virtues, the fact that they share so many errors does not make the errors to be truths, and the fact that millions of people share the same form of mental pathology does not make these people sane. (pp. 14-15)

In fact, deluded normality consists in being well adapted to an extremely deranged society, and as such implies becoming extremely deranged. In its turn, society is deranged because its members are affected by an extreme instance of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or *marigpa*, which has led them to develop common, clearly insane cultural views and conventions. Roughly twelve centuries before Erich Fromm, Buddhist Madhyamika-Prasangika Master and philosopher Chandrakirti related the fable of a king that consulted a famous astrologer, who predicted that a rainfall of "maddening water" would pollute the reservoirs in his kingdom, as a consequence of which all who drank from them would be driven insane. Consequently the king warned his ministers and subjects, telling them to prepare a protected supply of water and avoid drinking the deranging water. However, the subjects, being less wealthy, exhausted their reserves more rapidly, and soon had to drink contaminated water. Since the King and the ministers behaved quite differently from the subjects who had drunk the maddening water, the latter concluded that all of the former had become insane. When the ministers used up their reserves, they also had



to drink the deranging water—upon which the rest of the subjects thought the ministers had become sane, and all agreed the only one still insane was the King. Thus in order to keep his kingdom and avoid being impeached and put into an asylum, the King had no option but to drink the polluted water (Trungpa, 1976; Capriles, 2005; Sufi version in Shah, 1970).<sup>96</sup>

As noted above, the current, mortal ecological crisis our culture has produced is ample proof that there is a structural lack of fit between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world, for as noted, confirming that one is heading South while intending to go North proves that one's actions are based on a delusive perception and therefore that, in terms of criteria such as Korzybski's, one is at the extreme opposite to sanity—which is just what Chandrakirti suggested, what Pascal and Fromm asserted, and what antipsychiatry in the ample sense of the term turned into common knowledge.

It must be noted that when masked insanity is unmasked in the context of a Path of Awakening with the concurrence of the necessary conditions—the main ones being the transmission and instructions given by a genuine holder of a lineage in the Path chosen—a transition toward absolute sanity could be set in motion. However, when in contemporary societies the insanity under discussion is unmasked by adventitious circumstances, what in other circumstances could have been a spontaneous self-healing process turns into the pathetic madness one sees in most psychiatric patients, which rather than leading them straight to ever greater sanity, endlessly repeats loops of pain.<sup>97</sup> Though antipsychiatry is right in claiming that in the right environment and with the support of the right assistants this madness *might* become the spontaneous self-healing process Laing called “true madness,” it is wrong (with exceptions such as those of James Low and Noel Cobb,<sup>98</sup> who are well aware of the importance of transmission in the context of a Path of Awakening) in giving to understand that in itself and by itself going through madness can give rise to absolute sanity.

One of the contributions of antipsychiatry and transpersonal psychology (which as noted has a precedent in Erich Fromm and a few other authors) is their radical rejection of the misconception of sanity or mental health as corresponding to “normality” in the sense of relatively conflict-free functional adaptation to socially sanctioned rules, myths and, in general, pseudoreality. However, so far as I know, no transpersonal psychologist has ever

defined absolute sanity / absolute mental health in as precise terms as done above. In terms of this definition, it is clear that absolute sanity / absolute mental health does not correspond to shamanic experiences, for these always involve avidya or marigpa in all three of the senses the terms have in the Dzogchen classification adopted here, being totally conditioned by delusion. Nor could it lie in transpersonal states pertaining to *samsara* such as the four formless absorptions and realms, for these also comprise avidya or marigpa in all three of the senses the terms have in the Dzogchen classification adopted here (though not so in the third of the senses they have in the classification favored by Longchen Rabjampa<sup>99</sup>): absolute sanity must necessarily exclude the subject-object duality that is at the heart of the formless absorptions, for this duality introduces the most fundamental distortion of the true, undivided condition of reality—and, insofar as the absorptions in question are often taken for the absolute sanity or absolute mental health of Awakening, they are the most treacherous, dangerous instances of masked insanity, which could be referred to as *doubly masked* insanity.<sup>100</sup> However, one may *not* reduce absolute sanity to the absence of the basic human delusion that involves the subject-object duality, for then those meditative absorptions of the neutral base-of-all or *kunzhi lungmaten* (*kun gzhi lung ma bstan*) which are free from the delusion and the duality in question, but which involve avidya or marigpa in the first of the senses the terms have in the two main Dzogchen classifications, would be cases of absolute sanity—which in terms of the Korzybski-founded criterion adopted here cannot be the case, for in such absorptions no reactions to the world occur that may either fit or fail to fit what is actually going on in it, and which in terms of Buddhism in general and the Dzogchen teachings in particular is not the case insofar as they are not Awakening. In fact, absolute sanity must necessarily exclude the unawareness of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base constituting the first of the meanings of avidya and marigpa in the classification adopted in this book, and involve a capacity to effectively and consummately manage everyday situations—and hence it could not lie in conditions of cessation of Gnitive activity or *nirodha* such as the neutral (i.e., neither *samsaric* nor *nirvanic*) condition of the base-of-all that Tibetans call *kunzhi lungmaten* (*kun gzhi lung ma bstan*). Since both the formless absorptions and the neutral condition of the base-of-all are transpersonal insofar as they do not

involve the illusion that one is an inherently separate individual limited to the bounds of the human organism, and yet neither of these absorptions may be said to be an instance of what I am calling absolute sanity, the sanity in question cannot be reduced to the manifestation of unspecific transpersonal conditions.

Grof avoided the above errors insofar as, rather than positing as the ultimate fruit of therapy one or another kind of holotropic, transpersonal condition, he asserted the fruit in question to consist in a mode of hylotropic consciousness that does not take hylotropic experiences as absolutely true occurrences or as absolutely serious, important events. This is roughly the same view as the one Wilber expressed in his description of fulcrum-10, and as such it contradicts the higher Buddhist views in roughly the same way as the latter (cf. the regular text toward the beginning of this paper as well as note 1). In fact, since the mode of hylotropic consciousness Grof posited as the ultimate fruit of therapy involves avidya or marigpa in the first and second of the senses the terms have in the Dzogchen classification adopted here (it does not involve avidya in the third of the senses in question because we have some awareness that our experience involves delusion) it could not constitute absolute sanity or absolute mental health. In fact, as we have seen, absolute sanity or absolute mental health may consist in the Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit of Dzogchen Ati, or in the irreversible supreme Awakening (*anuttara samyak sambodhi*) of the Mahayana. However, what Grof viewed as the ultimate fruit of therapy roughly corresponds to one of the conditions that succeed each other in what I call *relative sanity* or *relative mental health*, which consists in the alternation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path or the undeluded Contemplation state (Skt. *samahita*; Tib. *nyamzhak [mnyam bzhab]*) of superior bodhisattvas, yogis, and siddhas, with the ever more mitigated instances of delusion and hylotropic consciousness occurring in the post-Contemplation condition (Skt. *prishthalabdha*; Tib. *jethob [rjes thob]*) of these individuals, in which, roughly as in the condition that Grof saw as the ultimate fruit of therapy, they are aware that delusion is delusion, do not take the characteristics of hylotropic consciousness as absolute truth, and do not feel the events occurring in this state to be absolutely serious and important, for they have considerable systemic wisdom and their experience is imbued with a sense of apparitionality.

Many people under the effect of CREVs have driven their cars and motorcycles, some have gone

so far as to practice extreme sports without suffering accidents—and some have even accomplished feats they never achieved in their ordinary condition. However, such exploits are cases of extreme irresponsibility, for in some psychedelic sessions some people lose touch with reality to the degree of requiring a caretaker—and, in fact, no one in his or her right senses would give a jetliner to a pilot under the effect of so-called psychedelics. In short, it would be wrong to take for granted that under the effect of such substances people will be able to consummately manage reality. Since Grof's criterion of sanity appears to agree with the Korzybskian one expressed earlier, in terms of which those states in which one cannot manage reality cannot constitute absolute sanity, if it were true that, as suggested above, Grof took the states induced by what I call CREV—which, by the way, cannot be prolonged indefinitely and therefore cannot be a model for sanity—as the model for his definition of holotropic consciousness, it would be easy to understand why he concluded that “superior sanity” or “true mental health” did not consist in any kind of holotropic consciousness. The thesis that the states in question are the model for Grof's definition of holotropic consciousness seems to be substantiated by suggestive sentences in the passage cited above—such as, “With eyes closed a person is often flooded with visions drawn from personal history and the collective subconscious involving various aspects of the cosmos and mythological realms,” or, “Typically the experience is very intense, even overwhelming and ‘real’ yet a person *usually does not completely* lose touch with everyday reality” (which implies that he or she loses touch with it to some extent). The thesis in question seems to be substantiated as well by the following passage:

Usually in holotropic states the intellect is not impaired but rather operates in a way significantly different from its day-to-day functioning. While *we might not be able to rely in these states on our judgment in ordinary practical matters*, we can be literally flooded with remarkable new information on a variety of subjects. (Grof, 1998a, p. 6, italics supplied)

In the standard hylotropic consciousness that the prevailing civilization and current mainstream psychology refer to as “normality,” individuals alternate between experiencing themselves as a body *qua* tangible

physical entity with definite boundaries and with a limited sensory range, as a *ghost inside the machine* that as such is different from the body, and so on. Grof states that in this condition the world seems to be a collection of self-existent material objects, and has distinctly Newtonian characteristics: time is linear, space is three-dimensional, and events seem to be governed by chains of cause and effect. He further noted that experiences in this mode systematically support commonsense assumptions about the world such as: matter is solid; two objects cannot occupy the same space; past events are irretrievably lost; future events are not experientially available; one cannot be in more than one place at a time; one can exist and experience in only one temporal framework at a time; a whole is larger than a part; something cannot be true and untrue at the same time; and so forth. Since Grof concluded that superior sanity or true mental health could not be any kind of holotropic condition, and he clearly recognized the standard hylotropic condition I have called the “masked insanity of deluded normality” to involve delusion and as such to give rise to a lack of fit between our reactions to the world and what actually goes on in the world (which as we have seen is so extreme as to have produced the ecological crisis that has put human survival at stake), Grof concluded that the sanity or mental health in question should lie in a particular mode of hylotropic consciousness in which, having assimilated the holotropic outlook, one does not take the perceptions and experiences of this condition as absolute realities or as something ultimately serious, and one possesses enough systemic wisdom as not to give rise to effects contrary to the ones one wishes to produce.

The gradual Mahayana and other higher forms of Buddhism make it clear that the repeated occurrence of nirvana while on the Path that corresponds to the Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas and so on, causes these individuals, while in their post-Contemplation state, to cease taking everyday experiences as absolutely true or as extremely serious and important events and, by the same token, to acquire enough systemic wisdom as to avoid being caught in the law of inverted effect or reverse law. Thus, if what Grof called holotropic consciousness when he wrote that the repeated manifestation of this type of consciousness gradually affects hylotropic consciousness, causing the individual to cease taking hylotropic experiences as absolutely true, extremely serious and important events, had been the instances of nirvana that manifest on the

Path, what he called superior sanity / true mental health would consist in the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas, and so on, which in Capriles (2007 [Vol. II]) was called, “the ever more *mitigated insanity* of those samsaric states in which delusion has progressively lost strength,” and which, in alternation with the provisional absolute sanity of the instances of nirvana that manifest on the Path, constitutes the condition I called relative sanity.<sup>101</sup> However, as we have seen repeatedly, according to Grof the holotropic condition involves, (1) *identification* (and hence the subject-object duality and delusorily valued thought in general), and (2) a difficulty to consummately manage reality. Since neither of these two is involved in the Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, yogis, and siddhas, which is devoid of the subject-object duality and of delusorily valued-absolutized thoughts in general, and in which one manages reality with increasing effectiveness as one becomes accustomed to the condition in question, what Grof called the holotropic condition could not be this Contemplation state. Furthermore, what Grof calls hylotropic consciousness can only develop the feeling of apparitionality, playfulness, and lack of compulsion to control experience he ascribed to what he called superior sanity or true mental health (Grof, 1985, pp. 396–404), as a byproduct of the repeated occurrence of the Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas and so on—or, to a minor degree, of a combination of practices such as “illusory body” (Skt. *mayadeha*; Tib. *gyulü* [*sgyu lus*]), recurrently imagining awake experiences to be sequences of a dream, and dream yoga (Skt. *swapanayoga*; Tib. *milam naljor* [*rmi lam rnal 'byor*]). Since in the framework of Grof’s system either he himself or his patients could hardly have access to Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, it seems most unlikely that Grof could have derived his concept of superior sanity or true mental health either from the results of a spiritual practice of his own, or from the observation of his patients—and so I suspect his conception to have been inspired by the descriptions of the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas in Buddhist texts. Worse still, by claiming that in holotropic states it is impossible to manage reality in a truly effective way, and by reducing superior sanity or true mental health to a hylotropic condition, he negated the possibility of attaining full, irreversible Awakening (Skt. *anuttara samyak sambodhi*)—for this condition excludes all forms of hylotropic experience, the subject-object duality, dualistic self-consciousness, and the ego-delusion,

with their respective defects (such as the self-hindering inherent in self-consciousness, the evil inherent in ego-delusion and in the unconscious phantasy Jung called the shadow,<sup>102</sup> and so on), yet involves all the learning and skills individuals develop in hylotropic and holotropic states throughout their life, and therefore is characterized by a consummate managing of reality (which the *Chuang-tzu* illustrates with the cases of the artisan who made circles more perfectly by hand than with the compass, and the butcher who for years did not need to sharpen his knife), and by the natural goodness that makes morality superfluous. (For a Buddhist scriptural substantiation of the explanation of full, irreversible Awakening given here, cf. Capriles [2007 (Vol. II)].)

Finally, most of transpersonal psychology is wrong in giving to understand that the repeated occurrence of transpersonal, holotropic states of the kind Maslow called “peak experiences” as a result of the application of its own methods and techniques is in itself a Path to a condition saner than the standard “normality,” which is often thought to be the same as the absolute sanity of full Awakening. In fact, psychology needs to acknowledge its inherent limits and limitations, make it clear that the absolute sanity of Awakening can only be reached by treading a traditional Path of Awakening having its source in a fully Awake individual, and circumscribe itself to its inherent tasks—such as describing and explaining mental processes and operations, defining sanity and insanity, describing the self-defeating mechanisms of samsara, distinguishing and describing the various psychoses and neuroses, mapping self-healing processes, helping individuals who face over average levels of suffering and who are confused with regard to the causes of their suffering and disoriented in life, solving the psychological troubles that preclude some of those who intend to tread a traditional Path of Awakening from effectively doing so, and so forth—and, in the best of cases, charting the process of Awakening. It must be noted, however, that although I have criticized many aspects of transpersonal psychology—from its failure to distinguish the various types of holistic and pseudo-holistic conditions, through its breaching the limits of psychology—I view the movement in question as a most valuable development. In fact, by coining the adjective metatranspersonal (Capriles, 1999a, 2000c, 2006a, and 2007b), rather than calling for the birth of a wholly new philosophical-psychological movement, I am stressing the need to rid transpersonal psychology of blemishes like those denounced throughout this series

of papers and in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]), and make it keep within the limits proper to psychology in general.

I find it necessary to make a concluding remark: though Grof asserted that his view of the process of human evolution differs from Wilber’s only in minor aspects, his view of the present crisis as exhibiting the characteristics of a BPM 3 just before the transition to BPM 4 contradicts Wilber’s characteristically modern, fairy tale, “happy ending” view of spiritual and social evolution and to some extent seems to coincide with the one shared by the great spiritual traditions of humankind and my own works (Capriles, 1986, 2004, 2007a [Vol. III], 2007b, 2007c, etc.)—even though, as shown throughout this section, Grof did not distinguish between BPMs and the reGnition of the nondual awareness in which they manifest. In fact, it has been seen that the structure and function of the sequence of BPMs is to some degree analogous to those of the intermediate state between death and rebirth; now it must be added that it is equally analogous to that of the aeon (Skt. *kalpa*; Tib. *kalpa* [*kal pa* or *bskal pa*]) discussed in the initial section of *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and in the other works referred to in this paragraph. Since the transition to a BPM 4 at the level of the species that we are about to go through appears to correspond to the transition from the end of the era of darkness (*kaliyuga*) to a new era of truth (*satyayuga*) or era of perfection (*krityayuga*), or to a final Millennium like the one prophesized in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, I think that in this particular point the author under consideration has made a most important contribution.

### **Conclusion with Regard to the Path and Fruit in Wilber and Grof**

As stated in the *Chuang Tzu* (Capriles, 1977, 1986, 2000a, 2007b [Vol. II]), the earliest stages of infancy may seem a bit similar to Awakening in that they involve panoramic vision and spontaneous motility free of self-hindering. In the same way, the late Dudjom Rinpoche (1979) wrote the following in a book teaching the practice of Tekchö:

Whatever perceptions arise, you should be like a little child going into a beautifully decorated temple; he looks, but grasping does not enter into his perception at all. You leave everything fresh, natural, vivid and unspoiled. When you

leave each thing in its own state, then its shape doesn't change, its color doesn't fade and its glow does not disappear. Whatever appears is unstained by any grasping, so then all that you perceive arises as the naked wisdom of Rigpa, which is the indivisibility of luminosity and emptiness.

However, it is also clear that infants have not achieved the learning necessary for dealing with reality effectively, and that, what is worse, they are born with avidya or marigpa in the first of the senses of the terms in the Dzogchen classification adopted here—that of unawareness of the true condition of reality as an effect of the beclouding element of stupefaction called mongcha [*rmongs cha*])—and with an embryonic avidya / marigpa in the second sense of the term in the classification adopted here (and hence with an embryonic avidya / marigpa in the second and third senses the term has in the classification favored by Longchenpa) and a deep-seated propensity to develop it in all other senses of these terms—whereas Awake individuals, on the contrary, manage reality far more effectively than deluded beings and have become totally free from avidya or marigpa in all senses of the terms and from the propensities for it to develop once more (and in fact the true condition of reality has been perceived in an “inverted way” each and every time samsara has arisen from the base-of-all: the phenomena that are the function of the energy [thukje (*thugs rje*)] aspect of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base [i.e., of the nirmanakaya-*qua*-Base in a wide sense of the term] have been perceived as though they were self-existent and as such were in themselves different from the essence [ngowo (*ngo bo*)] aspect of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base [i.e. of the dharmakaya-*qua*-Base], which is no-thing-ness and which implies the voidness of self-existence of all entities [Capriles, 2004, 2007a (Vol. I)]).

In their turn, those intrauterine states that are totally free from differentiation, in spite of being prepersonal, are virtually identical to some transpersonal states, and therefore *there is no reason* why the conditions in which these are relived should *not* be validly regarded as transpersonal. However, such conditions are instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all rather than cases of nirvana, for the basic shortcoming of the prepersonal states of early infancy is involved in all intrauterine states and in the bardo or intermediate state that precedes intrauterine states: ordinary sentient beings do not

reGnize the Buddha-nature in these conditions, for avidya or marigpa in the first of the senses the term has in all Dzogchen classifications prevents this reGnition.

For example, as shown above, when the clear light that is the expression of the dang form of manifestation of the energy or thukje aspect of the Buddha-nature shines forth in the intermediate state of the moment of death or chikhai bardo (*'chi kha'i bar do*), as a rule ordinary sentient beings fail to reGnize the true condition of the form of manifestation of energy in question, which is the dharmakaya, and hence what obtains is merely an instance of the condition of unawareness of the Buddha-nature that the Dzogchen teachings call the base-of-all (kunzhi [*kun gzhi*]) or rigpa-*qua*-Base. In the Vajrayana Paths of spontaneous liberation and transformation, in order to attain liberation in the intermediate state rather than being reborn by the power of the passions as a deluded sentient being, practitioners undergo a training that prepares them for reGnizing the true condition of the shining forth in question, realizing the dharmakaya, and for reGnizing the true condition of the visions of non-Jungian archetypes that arise thereafter and that are expressions of the rölpa form of manifestation of energy, thus realizing the sambhogakaya. Moreover, even in the case of those who reGnized rigpa when the clear light shone forth after the moment of death, or in subsequent stages of the intermediate state (or in “previous lives,” for that matter), it would not be precise to assert rigpa-*qua*-Path to obtain by *retroceding* and *undoing*: the reGnition of Buddha-nature is beyond reflexive memory, for reflexive remembrance is a function of mind understood as that which conceals the true condition of primordial awareness, and the reGnition of the Buddha-nature is always a new event that in general requires the application of a specific instruction in the present (which, by the way, might be difficult to achieve in a state of regression in which one becomes like a baby, or in which one *relives* stages of the perinatal process rather than having experiences analogous to these—unless someone having great confidence in this reGnition and being a holder of the traditional instructions is present to help).

As noted, the concealment of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is not a chronological process, and Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit cannot obtain merely by undoing the illusory divisions and wayward habits resulting from the process of socialization so as to discover a pre-existing condition that at some point was concealed by them, in some sense regressing to it, or by carrying

this regressing and undoing further, to intrauterine life, the intermediate state or “previous lifetimes:” Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit do *not* consist in the recovery of the greater wholeness of prepersonal stages in early infancy, in reliving the supposed “liberation” of the moment of birth in a BPM 4, or in cozily resting in absorptions of the neutral condition of the base-of-all such as those that obtain through the stabilization of a BPM 1 (i.e. of an experience of undifferentiation like those that occur in intrauterine life), or through the stabilization of a state like the one that obtained when luminosity shone forth in the chikhai bardo or intermediate state of the moment of death without the true condition of this luminosity being reGnized. In the best of cases, such regressions could make one relive more wholesome states experienced in infancy, in intrauterine life, in the intermediate state between death and rebirth, or perhaps even in “previous lives,” but by no means could they result in the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and/or of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit. As stated repeatedly in this paper, both the experiences that obtain in the course of the process of reintegration and the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base are new, unprecedented occurrences, and the latter, in particular, is of a kind that most individuals have never gone through in the past. Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit may be validly viewed a “Pre” condition both from a metaphenomenological and from a metaexistential perspective, but *not* so from a chronological one: they are “Pre” in the metaphenomenological sense because they are the patency of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which is our *true, original unaltered condition* that is *illusorily concealed* by avidya or marigpa in the first of the senses of the term in all Dzogchen classifications, and in the metaexistential sense because the Path to the patency in question (particularly in the case of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit) goes through the hellish experiences that existential thinking deems authentic and that as a rule one eludes by means of bad faith. This is a fact that can never be emphasized too much.

This is why above it was made clear that the Dzogchen Path and its paradigm as presented in this series of papers (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a, and the present paper) and other of my works (Capriles, 2000b, 2003, 2004, 2007a) may not be characterized in terms of the spurious dichotomies that Wilber posited by coining the concepts of a “Pre / Trans Fallacy” (Wilber, 1993b) and an “Ascender / Descender Debate” (Wilber, 1995), or

of the one Washburn (1995) introduced by contrasting what he called the dynamic-dialectical paradigm with what he called the structural-hierarchical one. In fact, from the standpoint of Dzogchen, both factions of the current debate are equally off the mark. Wilber is wrong in positing a “higher self” and a process of gradual climbing to it that at the end results in Awakening, for the process of Awakening simply consists in the repeated unconcealment of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base (note that in this case the term Dzogchen is qualified as “*qua* Base” rather than as “*qua* Summit”), which is both the foundation and the *prima materia* of all conditioned constructions that in *samsara* conceal that very Dzogchen-*qua*-Base—and, as noted, spiritual ascents, unless they are stages of a descent in the metaphenomenological and metaexistential senses of the term (as is the case with the ascent through the Heavens toward the Empyrean in the *Divine Comedy*, which is part of the process of purging all that conceals Dzogchen-*qua*-Path), will always constitute a flight from more authentic yet more painful states toward higher *samsaric* realms. Moreover, in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and in the revised version in note 1 to this paper, it was shown that Wilber’s description of the successive levels or fulcra in his map is mistaken, at least with regard to the various forms of Buddhism, and that he is simply wrong in asserting Awakening to involve the subject-object duality. For their part, adherents of “descending” paths would be mistaken if they believed the aim of genuine spiritual Paths to be the mere undoing of the constructions established in the process of ontogenetic evolution in order to discover a “deeper self,” failing to realize that before those constructions were established avidya or marigpa in the first of the senses the terms have in all Dzogchen classifications was already preventing the reGnition or our true condition; they would be equally mistaken if, like Grof, they believed “good” BPMs to be instances of realization able to influence subsequent *hylotropic* experience so that one no longer takes its events as absolutely true, extremely serious and important, and develop a feeling of apparitionality, playfulness, and lack of compulsion to control experience; and they would also err if, like Washburn, they posited two self-existent selves that do not dissolve at any stage in life or under any conditions, one of them being “superior” and the other one being “inferior” and in need of reintegrating with the former—or functional structures of any kind that would be inherent in the psyche and could not be undone even by Awakening, for that matter.

The dispute seems to stem from the fact that both sides are based on seemingly contrary errors, which may have ensued from the methods each employs. Grof's approach, which a writer characterized as one of "*descent into chaos* suggesting the symbolism of a regression from the ego and the concomitant inhibition (repression / bad faith) that allows entrance into the sphere Freud referred to as the id as a precondition for reintegration and sanity" (Daniels, 2004), is mainly based on the observation of psychedelic experiences (not only induced by drugs, but also by other means) that Grof interpreted as often involving a regression from personal states to so-called perinatal states that are prepersonal but that he asserted to be genuinely transpersonal as well. Furthermore, according to Grof, holotropic consciousness is incapable of managing reality effectively, and hence he cannot assert superior sanity / true mental health to be a holotropic condition. Apparently on the basis of the fact that in those who make progress on the Buddhist and similar Paths, repetition of nirvana in the Contemplation state affects post-Contemplation experience, mitigating the samsaric illusion of self-existence, seriousness, importance and heaviness, as well as the drive to control experience, he views superior sanity / true mental health as consisting in a relative condition in which this illusion and this drive have been mitigated, and a feeling of playfulness and apparitionality obtains (Grof, 1985, pp. 396-404)—which, however, cannot be an outcome of transpersonal, holotropic experiences that are not instances of nirvana. It is clear at this point that Awakening, which alone is truly liberating, is not a condition involving the subject-object duality and as such relative and dualistic, which has become lighter as a result of the *a posteriori* influence of holotropic states in which we were unable to manage reality (as occurs to some people in psychedelic experiences), but an absolute condition free from the relativity of subject and object and from delusorily valued-absolutized concepts in general, in which reality is managed far more consummately than in relative, samsaric deluded conditions.

Wilber, on the other hand, viewed the Path as a meditation-based, gradual process of ascension that, as his ladder-like view of relatively harmonic development along manifold lines implies, involves developing the ego-mechanisms far beyond the degree they reach in normal adults (he has claimed that in his everyday life he does not even for a moment lose presence or mindfulness—which, being based on the subject-object duality, is a samsaric phenomenon, and which in the Dzogchen practice

called Tekchö [*khregs chod*: "spontaneous breaking of tension"] or Tenchö [*dran chod*: "spontaneous breaking of mindfulness or presence"] is to dissolve again and again until the propensity for it to arise is neutralized), and that as such, rather than leading to Awakening, gives rise to higher samsaric transpersonal states—this being the reason why he viewed the Fruit as lying far beyond the normal condition of adulthood in a process of progression. I believe the denunciation of the confusions in Wilber's views throughout this series of papers has made this distortion sufficiently clear. (It has been claimed that also through this approach there may be a surpassing of repression, the difference being that in this case repressed contents gradually enter the spheres of ego and consciousness, rather than the latter dissolving into chaos as in the approaches of Washburn and Grof [Daniels, 2004].<sup>103</sup> However, firstly, as noted, Washburn did not propose that ego and consciousness should dissolve into chaos. Secondly, as shown below, not all types of meditation lead to the reintegration of repressed contents—and certainly those types which are intended to make one ascend in samsara for the sake of dwelling in higher samsaric states rather than in order to use the ensuing conditions as a platform for questioning dualistic experience on the basis of secret oral instructions such as those of Dzogchen, only as an effect of the samsaric law of inverted effect or "reverse law" could possibly let repressed contents enter consciousness.) At any rate, Grof and Washburn overtly speak from emergent perspectives of Western psychology, and though they believe their views to partly coincide with those of traditional Wisdom traditions, they evaluate the traditions in question on the scale of their own psychological perspectives; on the other hand, Wilber claimed to be expressing the views of Buddhism and other traditions that he has characterized as nondual—yet as shown throughout *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a, which as noted features the imprecisions that were mended in note 1 to this paper), as well as in version 1.9 of *Capriles, 2007a* [Vol. II] and in the present paper (and as will be further demonstrated in *Capriles [2007a (Vol. III)]*) his views outright contradict those of all Buddhist schools and traditions, and therefore rather than helping repair what *The Legend of the Great Stupa* (Padmasambhava, 1997) called the *machinery* [*giving rise to*] *Buddhahood*, outright damages this "machinery." This is why Wilber is the transpersonal author with whom I identify the least, and whose doctrines I feel a greater urge to refute.

In conclusion, although the transpersonal and holotropic states achieved through both methods are indeed genuinely transpersonal and holotropic, there is no point in setting out to induce “peak experiences,” “transpersonal states,” “holotropic conditions” and so on for their own sake, for samsaric holotropic conditions sustain samsara, and absorptions of the neutral base-of-all squander the precious human existence. As noted again and again, only the spontaneous liberation of delusion in the nirvanic condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path neutralizes karma, and does so in an extremely powerful way, thus allowing practitioners to, in the long run, become established in Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit.

The capital errors common to Wilber and Grof may be classified into, (1) those concerning the nature of the Path, and (2) those concerning the nature of the Fruit—both of which are interdependent insofar as the nature of the Fruit depends on the nature of the Path. With regard to (1), both Wilber and Grof seem to have neglected the fact that supreme sanity cannot be achieved by taking holotropic conditions, states of seeming oneness, and other special experiences as aims in themselves, or by inducing journeys of regression-regeneration-integration without providing those who set out on these journeys with the means for reGnizing the true condition of the experiences they go through: it can only be achieved by treading genuine Paths of Awakening possessing the methods whereby one can reGnize the true condition of all experiences—including holotropic ones, hylotropic ones, personal ones, prepersonal ones, postpersonal ones, transpersonal ones, perinatal ones, and whatever other kinds there may exist—that here I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, so that all that is caused, made, produced, conditioned, or intentionally contrived spontaneously liberates itself. With regard to (2), both Wilber and Grof failed to acknowledge Awakening to be a holistic condition free from the subject-object duality and involving the consummate handling of reality. As shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), in his late period Wilber was incorrect in asserting Awakening to be an experience involving the subject-object duality but which has been impregnated by the “single taste” of the true condition of reality.<sup>104</sup> Grof incurred in a similar error by picturing superior sanity / true mental health as a dualistic, relative experience—diverging from Wilber in that he views this condition as the after-effect of performance-impairing holotropic states, yet coinciding with him in believing it to be the result of states that,

as shown in the three papers of the present series and in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]), in terms of Buddhism in general and Dzogchen in particular are not instances of nirvana. Having clarified both Wilber’s and Grof’s misconceptions of the Path and the Fruit, it is time to consider Washburn’s views in these regards

### Washburn’s View of the Path

Despite Washburn’s failure to realize that one is born with fully fledged avidya in the first sense the term has in the Dzogchen classification adopted here, and with fledging avidya in the second sense of the term in the same classification, and despite his conception of the Base, Path, and Fruit as involving the duality of ego / Dynamic Ground, his system may seem to be more in agreement with the principle of Buddhist Paths than the other main system in the field of transpersonal psychology positing a “descending” conception of the Path, which is Stan Grof’s. To begin with, although the former spoke of a return to the origins, used the term regression to refer to it, and claimed that it is necessary to return to the preegoic as a preparation for a regenerative ascent to the transegoic, he did not reduce what he called regression to a reverse reliving of one’s personal and prepersonal history, and did not ascribe a special value to the reliving of the “positive” varieties of Grof’s BPMs. Washburn does not see the return to the origins as being *merely* a regressive process, for in his view, though the process may abort into a pure and simple regression, this is not the normal consequence for an ego in condition of sailing through what Jung (1967b) called “the night sea”: in his view, the lifting of “primordial repression” leads to a regressive reopening of the egoic pole of the psyche to its nonegoic pole, or of the ego to the Dynamic Ground, whereby the ego returns to the source from which it emerged and from which it had alienated itself, and this process may be viewed as involving regression *only in the sense* that the ego loses its power, is bared of its defensive isolation, and is put in contact with the resurgence of nonegoic life—which amounts to the return of the repressed. In a symbolism reminiscent of the *Divine Comedy*’s (to which, like Claudio Naranjo [1973] before him, he made explicit reference), he stated that this descent is followed by an ascent, consisting in regeneration in the spirit, or, which is the same, that it is followed by a regenerative transformation of the ego by the power of the Ground. More important, rather than dissociating



the different experiences occurring in this journey to the origins, dichotomously classifying them into “positive” and “negative” BPMs, and appreciating the former while deprecating the latter, Washburn emphasized the continuity of the process through experiences Grof would view as positive and experiences he would view as negative, and said that it must continue to develop through its [endogenously generated] stages until it radically transforms the ego, making it become a faithful instrument of the Dynamic Ground (Washburn, 1995, pp. ix-x).

Thus Washburn’s system seemed to agree with the one presented in this series of papers and in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]) in that it is exclusively in an ontologically-metaphenomenological sense (i.e., not in a chronological one), that the journey to the origins involves a “going back”—even though in the process repressed experiences may be relived and repressed contents may be met. He also agreed with the view I present in describing the journey in question as having to follow its endogenously determined course through pleasant and unpleasant experiences until the habits and dispositions that make the ego assert itself as an entity independent from the Source have been purged—even though, as noted, this source is not for him Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, but what he called Dynamic Ground (a point that has been discussed sufficiently). It has also been seen that the scope of the journey Washburn posited is limited, for the “reintegration” it aims at is a relative, dualistic, samsaric condition, and in his view only exceptionally does it result in what he called “mystical illumination,” which I assume is his name for Awakening, but which he described in a way that does not fit Awakening. This is congruent with the way in which he described the journey in question, which in his view begins with the lifting of primordial repression and consequent recovery of awareness of the Dynamic Ground, and consists in the spontaneous occurrences and transformations spontaneously brought about by having become open to the Ground. Therefore, it is a journey belonging to the same ample category as those discussed and induced by antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term, which as such will, like the latter, have limited, relative results, rather than being a journey like the one that is undertaken in the context of the practice of the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings. In fact, as has been seen, the latter consists in the repeated, constant reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which is the Buddha-

nature involving the three kayas, and requires that those undergoing it be provided with the means for achieving this reGnition (which in its transitory manifestations I call Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, and which when irreversibly stabilized I call Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit)—namely Direct Introduction, secret oral instructions, and the blessings of the Master, the Lineage, and through these of the Supreme Source.<sup>105</sup> As shown in the discussion of the symbolism of the *Divine Comedy* in Beyond Mind (Capriles, 2000a) and elsewhere (Capriles, 1986, 1994, 2000b, 2000c, 2007a [Vol. II]), the initial reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base marks the beginning of the process of ascent that follows that of descent (an ascent that, as noted, in the metaphenomenological and metaexistential senses is still a descent): it marks the transition from the bottom of Hell to Purgatory, through which one must climb to Heaven, so that then one may climb through Heaven to the Empyrean.

Thus with regard to the Path the main flaw I find in Washburn is roughly the same I find in antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term: that it acknowledges the value of self-healing “descending” journeys—which is a great exploit insofar as these processes, under the appropriate conditions, may result in a more integrated and harmonic relative condition—yet does not provide one with the means for making this process become a means for catalyzing the repeated, constant occurrence of the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base I call Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, so that it may progressively neutralize karma until the point is reached at which nothing prevents the reGnition in question from persisting uninterruptedly as Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—and yet he implicitly presented the process as being analogous to the Paths of Awakening of traditions such as Buddhism and so on.

The above does not imply that Washburn obviated the need for meditation practice; as will be shown below, unlike Jung (1977) he believed meditation to be an important element in activating the self-healing process and keeping it on track so that, rather than aborting, it may reach what he viewed as its optimal conclusion. However, the main types of meditation he listed are not at all the most effective for inducing the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that would make of the journey the swift Path to Awakening; therefore, it is not surprising that Washburn asserted the attainment of what he called mystical illumination to be so rare: Awakening is the rarest Fruit unless one practices a system such as Dzogchen Atiyoga, which has the most

direct and swiftest means for activating the spontaneous descent journey, but also creates the ideal conditions in which the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base can easily occur, and in which this reGnition can immediately take place each and every time delusion manifests. The point is that, just as a process of ascent that is not preceded by a process of descent is necessarily a process of climbing in samsara that in all cases leads one farther away from the patency of the source, a “descent to deeper consciousness,” though it offers most valuable opportunities for reintegrating projections, facing the Jungian shadow and so on, will only lead to irreversible Awakening if one profits from the greatest opportunity it offers: that of reGnizing the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base by the means traditional systems always used to this end, and of creating the conditions for this reGnition to occur each and every time delusion arises anew, the very moment it does so.

With regard to the problems I find in Washburn’s conception of meditation, firstly it must be noted that he classified meditation into two main types, consisting in what he calls Receptive Meditation (RM) and defined as a sustained practice of nonselective awareness in which the meditator maintains the attitude of a receptive and unmovable witness (the *sakshin* that, as noted, implied the subject-object duality, sustaining it so long as it persists), and what he referred to as Concentrative Meditation (CM), which is in a sense opposite to RM, for whereas RM is supposed to involve a totally nonselective focus, CM maintains a singular and concrete one: one selects a specific object—an image or any other reference point—and fixates one’s undivided attention on it (which, insofar as it involves the mental subject’s fixation of attention on an object, also sustains the subject-object duality).

(1) The first problem I find with this taxonomy lies in the fact that the distinction between two types of meditation it posits does not seem to be the one that determines what type of states may be achieved through the practice—the essential classification of such states being, as noted, the one dividing them into samsaric, neither-samsaric-nor-nirvanic, and nirvanic conditions, yet another important one being the one classifying them into states involving awareness of and responsiveness to *sensa*, and insentient conditions excluding awareness of and responsiveness to *sensa*. Insofar as the classification under consideration is binary, so that all types of meditation have to fall into one or another of the categories it sets up, types of meditation leading to

fruits which lie at opposite extremes of the spectrum are classified into the same category, whereas types of meditation leading to analogous or identical results are classified into opposite categories. Thus the raja yoga of Patañjali’s is absurdly placed in the same category as the visualizations of the Inner Tantras of Vajrayana Buddhism and the koan (Chin. *kung-an*) study of Ch’an or Zen Buddhism, whereas the practice of sitting meditation of Ch’an or Zen (Chin. *tso-ch’an*; Jap. *zazen*) and the type of insight (Pali *vipassana*; Skt. *vipashyana*; Tib. *lhantong* [*lhag mthong*]; Chin. *kuan*; Jap. *kan*; Viet. *quán*) proper to the Burmese Theravada are placed in the opposite category—even though Patañjali’s Yoga darshana considers subject and object as two inherently different substances constituting an ineradicable duality, and the ultimate attainment of the raja yoga it teaches consists in insentient, blank absorptions of the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana are manifest, whereas the rest of the meditations listed may result in some type of nirvanic realization of the nonduality of awareness and appearances (which, however, even in the case of practices belonging to the same tradition, should not be taken to mean that they have the same potential in this regard; for example, in Ch’an or Zen Buddhism, the *shikantaza* or “simply sitting” of *zazen* often results in absorptions-of-the-neutral-base-of-all-involving-sense-data that are likely to be mistaken for Awakening, whereas koan study is most unlikely to lead to such a state and on the contrary is very likely to result in instantaneous *satori*—i.e., in an instance of nirvana).<sup>106</sup>

If one resorts to binary divisions, in order to avoid the blunder of classifying together types of meditation that result in utterly different conditions, the more divisions one uses, the better. I think at a minimum the following binary distinctions should be employed if one is to obtain meaningful results: (a) the one between meditations that take the production of extraordinary experiences as aims in themselves, and those that induce such experiences in order to reGnize the nondual awareness that is their true condition and in which—as in a mirror—they manifest; (b) that between meditations that are based on dualistic ideologies and that maintain dualism, and those that are based on nondualistic realizations and that are effective for facilitating the dissolution of dualism; (c) the one between those involving openness to the senses, and those involving withdrawal from the senses and resulting

in absorptions in which one is dualistically cut off from *sensa* and life experiences; (d) the one between those that increase control and build up states of the higher spheres of *samsara* without employing them as a platform for achieving the dissolution of the subject-object duality and realizing *Dzogchen-qua-Base*, and those which, like the one that Buddhaghosha called *apachayagami*, have the function of undoing all that is constructed or built up; (e) the one between those designed for fulfilling their avowed aim, and the more sophisticated ones that are self-defeating;<sup>107</sup> (f) the one between those that, like the *Tekchö* (*kbregs chod*) of the *Menngagde* (*man ngag sde*) or *Upadeshavarga* series of *Dzogchen* teachings, are skillful means for instantly Seeing through the contents of thought into the stuff of which thought is made and thus realize the *dharmakaya*, and those that lack such instantaneous skillful means; (g) the one between those that, like *Thögel* or the *Yangthik*, place delusion in an untenable position so that it spontaneously liberates itself as soon as it arises, and those that give delusion space to manifest; (h) the one between meditations that induce runaways of vibratory rates that lead the latter to the threshold at which, under the right conditions, the spontaneous liberation of delusion may occur (such as *kung-an* / *koan* study in *Ch'an* / *Zen* and the practices of the *Menngagde* or *Upadeshavarga* series of *Dzogchen* teachings), and meditations that slow down vibratory rates in order to induce mental calm and potentially those instances of the base-of-all that may be wrongly taken for realization.<sup>108</sup> Washburn's failure to make these distinctions is directly related to his failure to refer to those types of meditation that may result in the instant dissolution of the subject-object duality and the concomitant unconcealment of the true condition of *Dzogchen-qua-Base* (such as, for example, the *lhantong* [*lhag mthong*; Skt. *vipashyana*; Pali, *vipassana*; Chin. *kuan*; Jap. *kan*; Viet. *quán*] of the *Mahamudra* tradition of the *Tibetan Kagyupas*, in which one applies ways of looking at the mind that create conditions in which the *dharmakaya* may instantly be unconcealed, or the more abrupt and radical *Tekchö* practice of the *Upadeshavarga* / *Menngagde* series of *Dzogchen* teachings, in which one deals with thoughts in such a way that these instantly liberate themselves spontaneously in the patency of the *dharmakaya* and tensions instantaneously free themselves, etc.).

(2) The second problem I find consists in the fact that Washburn asserted both types of meditation

(though to a greater extent *RM*) to have the potential of lifting primordial repression and thus inducing the "journey back to the origins" briefly discussed above. It is well known that Jung (1977) believed Eastern practices of yoga, meditation and so on to be unsuitable for Westerners because in his view the principal item in the Western spiritual agenda consisted in gaining access to the unconscious, and he believed the practices in question to exclusively involve the conscious mind and volition and thus to be ineffectual to this aim. Though Washburn was right in contradicting Jung in this regard, he was wrong in asserting *all types* of meditation (though to a greater extent *RM*) to have the power to lift primordial repression and induce the process of regression, regeneration, and integration he is concerned with. In fact, Patañjali's *raja yoga*, not being one of the types of meditation that may be characterized as self-defeating, would lift primordial repression and induce the journey back to the origins only in the *most unlikely* case that *for fortuitous reasons* it derailed and backfired. Furthermore, by asserting systems involving mutually contradictory principles such as Patañjali's *raja yoga*, on the one hand, and various types of Buddhist meditation, on the other, to have the potential of bearing the same fruit, Washburn was unwittingly implying that the reason why Buddha Shakyamuni, Garab Dorje, and other great sages of old (re)introduced practices that had become unknown in the times in which they lived, and rejected the distortions arisen in the immediately preceding centuries on the grounds that they led to fruits wholly different from the ones sought by their own systems, was that they were entrenched in *frog-in-a-well* perspectives—and that he himself rose over the conflicting *frog-in-a-well* perspectives of those sages and realized that the practices they rejected led to the same results as the ones they taught. (Washburn is to a considerable degree right, however, in claiming that after crossing the threshold of primordial repression, meditation may become something that *happens to the individual* rather than being something that *the individual does*, and that in this stage one is most likely to face illusory experiences of the kind that in the context of the *vipassana* meditation practice of the *Pali Canon* are called the "ten corruptions," which *Ch'an* / *Zen* calls by the Mandarin term *mo-ching* and the Japanese *makyō*, and which *Dzogchen* calls *nyam* [*nyams*])—which, however, will subside with the passing of time, provided they are dealt with in the right way.)

(3) Finally, the third problem I find lies in the fact that the author does not distinguish those Paths in which it is enough to know the rudiments of a practice, from those requiring would-be practitioners to receive both transmission and traditional oral instructions from a Master holding a genuine lineage having its source in the Tönpa or Primordial Revealer who introduced in the human realm the Path they intend to tread—which are the most direct, powerful Paths. On such Paths, and especially on the Path of Spontaneous Liberation of Dzogchen Atiyoga, the transmission and instructions in question, in interaction with the blessings of the Master and of the Lineage, and through these of the Supreme Source, are the conditions of possibility of the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base and the concomitant spontaneous liberation of delusion. When this reGnition and liberation occur in such a way as to endow us with a capacity of spontaneous liberation, the journey toward reintegration can become a process of constant repetition of this reGnition-*cum*-liberation, and therefore it can neutralize in record time the propensities for avidya or marigpa in all senses of the term and ultimately result in Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit.

It is apparent to me that all of the problems discussed under the above three headings seem to be a consequence of the lack of first hand experience of the spontaneous liberation that instantly puts an end to the subject-object duality and that by the same token makes the dharmakaya patent.

Washburn asserted mystical illumination, which he viewed as the most thorough yet most unlikely fruit that may be attained, to be a gift conferred by the grace of the Dynamic Ground, which the latter may bestow if one entrusts oneself to it and, by means of prayer, open up to it and thus unite with it (regardless of whether one addresses this Dynamic Ground as god or goddess, Tao, Buddha-nature, *logos*, nature, or whatever); therefore, he concluded that prayer is more in tune than meditation with systems which, like his own, posit a Ground that is the source of both the ego and transpersonal experience (Washburn, 1995, pp. 155-158; 1996a [Spanish ed.], pp. 230-234). In order to discuss the view of prayer as more effective than meditation, one must replace Dynamic Ground with Supreme Source (i.e., Dzogchen-*qua*-Base) and mystical illumination with Dzogchen-*qua*-Path. Since the ego is a collection of functions of the Supreme Source in an individual rather than the source of all experience, Dzogchen-*qua*-

Path is a condition in which ego has dissolved (which, moreover, cannot be produced by causes and conditions), and all actions that seem to be carried out by the ego assert the illusion the ego is and sustain its existence, the ego certainly could not induce the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path through its own operations. This does not mean, however, that prayer is the best means for achieving the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path. In the Buddhist Paths of Spontaneous Liberation of Dzogchen *Ati* and of Transformation of the Inner Tantras, the function Washburn attributed to prayer is played by transmission, practices of guru-yoga-with-form (which strictly speaking belong to the Path of Transformation, but which are universally applied by practitioners of the Path of Spontaneous Liberation), and guru devotion. Transmission is based on the fact that a Master's certitude with regard to the true condition of reality and confidence on realization allows him or her to somehow empower his or her disciples so that they may have an initial instance of this realization (which on the Path of Transformation goes along with the transmission of the power of a mantra by one who has received that transmission from his or her Master and who has obtained the fruit of its application). The guru yogas in question feature the visualization of our teacher, in the form of the Master who introduced in our world the teaching we practice, sending rays of light (or thigles in some Nyingthik [*snying thig*] systems) to us, which represent the Supreme Source's empowerment for realization—often in combination with *mönlams* (*smon lam*) or “wish-paths” that have a function roughly analogous to that of prayer. Furthermore, as a rule Tantric practices of Transformation involve mantra recitation, which also addresses a power not residing in the ego that is ultimately the Supreme Source's—even though in this case the latter is addressed as the sambhogakaya form personifying the pertinent aspect of the Source in question.<sup>109</sup> Also the recitation of a Buddha's name (Skt. *buddanusmriti*; Chin. *nien-fo*; Jap. *nembutsu*), which in the Pure Land School of Buddhism (Chin. *Ching-t'u-tsung*; Jap. *Jodo-shu*) is that of Buddha Amitabha, addresses a power that is acknowledged not to reside in the ego and to be in truth the Supreme Source's—and, according to D. T. Suzuki (French, 1972b, pp. 146-148), in Japan this simple practice allowed more people to have a first *satori* (i.e., an initial manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path) than the various practices of Ch'an or Zen.<sup>110</sup> However, prayer / wish-paths, mantra recitation and

guru-yogas with form, alone or in mutual combination, unless used as an aid for a main practice consisting in one or another type of meditation, can hardly take one beyond the initial manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path—and, moreover, in the Paths of Transformation and Spontaneous Liberation, they are rarely the occasion for the initial manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path.<sup>111</sup> This is why these Buddhist Paths are not circumscribed to transmission, practices of guru-yoga-with-form, and generation and cultivation of devotion to the Master; beside these elements, all of them involve intensive practice of types of meditation which are self-defeating in the sense that they make the ego act on the basis of its illusion of separate agency, yet by the same token trip it so that its own action makes it collapse—which in this case symbolizes by the same token the realization that the ego cannot cause or induce the occurrence of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, and the dissolution of the illusion of separate agency and hence of the ego in the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path by the grace of the Supreme Source. Therefore, it is incorrect to view prayer and meditation as mutually exclusive, and to claim the former to be more in tune with Paths that posit a source from which the ego has alienated itself and to which it must return.

In its turn, Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—at least in our time—can only manifest as a result of the neutralization of all propensities for delusion through the latter's repeated, constant spontaneous liberation in optimal conditions (which are those discussed in *Beyond Mind* [Capriles, 2000a] and other works of mine [e.g. Capriles, 1986, 2000c, 2004, 2007 (vol. II)] and which include a high energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness, the transformation of contradiction into conflict and so on). When in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings, a practitioner who has received transmission / direct introduction applies the secret oral instructions of Tekchö, spontaneous liberation may take place through the blessings of the Master, of the Lineage, and through these of the Supreme Source. Once repetition of this has endowed the practitioner with a good capacity for spontaneous liberation, he or she must begin to apply the more advanced practices, which as noted have a principle totally different from those of the types of meditation Washburn reviewed, which consists in placing the practitioner in a situation in which the basic contradiction consisting in the three tiered delusion called avidya or marigpa turns into conflict, he or she becomes like the eye in which the hair

of dukkha (the First Noble Truth, usually rendered as “suffering”) stings, and the mental subject's attempts to control experience backfire, so that the only alternatives are the spontaneous liberation of the ego and the subject-object duality that is its pivot, or hell and psychotic disintegration—so that obtaining the desired outcome depends on receiving the blessings of the Supreme Source through those of the Master and the Lineage, as well as on the Master's guidance and supervision. The most powerful examples of practices of this kind are Thögel and the Yangthik, which have been considered in some detail in Capriles (2000b [ch. II], 2007a [Vol. II]) and which have the function of carrying the spontaneous self-healing process that Washburn described in terms of the three stages consisting in regression, regeneration, and integration, far beyond the point it could reach without the help of these practices—and thus attain the degrees of integration that result in special modes of death and even in deathlessness.<sup>112</sup>

#### Washburn's View of the Fruit

Washburn is not very ambitious with regard to the Fruit, contenting himself with a reintegration that remains within the relative realm—which as such fulfills the Buddhist requisite of being congruent with the path, for no more than a relative integration is likely to be attained in a single lifetime in the absence of means facilitating the instant reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. In fact, as noted repeatedly, our author claimed that the ego cannot be dissolved and must remain forever one of the two poles of a bipolar psyche, even though it must open up to the Dynamic Ground and in some sense unite with it: Washburn (1995) defined what he called the “highest state of psychic organization” (p. ix) as a condition in which the ego, totally developed and responsible for itself, has become a faithful instrument of the Dynamic Ground, and described this state as a *reintegration* consisting in the “totally harmonious duality” that he referred to by Nicholas of Cusa's term *concordantia oppositorum*, and that in his view involves the reconciliation and unification of poles that formerly were to a great extent in opposition—mind and body, thought and senses, logic and creativity, civilization and instinct, ego and Dynamic Ground—so that these come to work in a completely unified and complementary way (Washburn, 1995, pp. 231-248; 1996a [Spanish ed.], pp. 337-363).<sup>113</sup> Since I assume he believed what he called mystical illumination to be the same as what Buddhism

calls Awakening, I believe he is right in claiming the Fruit in question to be very rarely obtained, for it can hardly be attained in a single lifetime through means such as the ones he described.

However, as noted, he explained mystical illumination in a way that does not fit Awakening. Firstly, he explained what he called reintegration as the recovery “as spirit,” and without losing the learning achieved throughout ontogenesis, of awareness of what he called the Dynamic Ground and in general of all that was concealed by the “act of primordial repression,” yet he did not explain the meaning of recovering this awareness “as spirit” or how the ensuing condition is different from the original condition of the infant; therefore, it seems apparent that such a recovery would involve avidya in the first of the senses the term has in the Dzogchen classification adopted here, fledging avidya in the second sense in the same classification, and the propensities for the second and third types of avidya to develop—all of which, as has been seen, are inherent in infants. Secondly, he claimed that in this ultimate realization the ego persists rather than dissolving; since, as shown repeatedly, the threefold avidya or marigpa that involves the beclouding element of stupefaction called mongcha, the subject-object duality and the illusion of self-existence, is inherent in the ego—both in the sense of the body ego and in that of the mental ego, both in the early and the late Freudian senses, and in general in all senses of the term ego—this implies that according to Washburn threefold avidya or marigpa persists in Awakening, and as such our author’s view outright contradicts the Buddhist teachings in general and the Dzogchen teachings in particular. In the same way, asserting the ego to have become at this point responsible for itself amounts to positing a more effective dualistic self-consciousness and self-control, which as shown throughout this series of papers (Capriles, 1999a, 2000a, 2006a) and Capriles (2007a [Vols. I, II]) are based on the most basic manifestation of avidya or marigpa in the second of the senses of the term in the Dzogchen classification adopted here, consisting in the subject-object duality and the phenomenon of being—and therefore contradicts the Awakening of Buddhism, which involves the end of self-consciousness and self-control, and the arising of a host of spontaneous, actionless activities (Tib. *thinle* [*pbrin las*] or *dzepa* [*mdzad pa*], Chin. *wei-wu-wei* or *tzu-jan*), and therefore by no means could involve *responsibility*.

Furthermore, Washburn identified what he called “saintly compassion” with moral consciousness, and although he did not understand this concept in the Kantian-Freudian way,<sup>14</sup> but rather as F. J. C. Schiller (Curran & Fricker, 2005) conceived the possibility of moral behavior—as the rooting of the moral imperative on the natural tendencies so that morality may become a second nature to human beings rooted in their sensibility—it is clear that he was speaking of something that, congruently with his ideal of integration, occurs in the relative realm and involves the subject-object duality, and hence is not the compassion that according to the Mahayana and higher forms of Buddhism may manifest in Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and which characterizes Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit: a nonreferential compassion that is free from relativity and from the subject-object duality. In fact, Washburn’s “saintly compassion” resembles the compassion that in the gradual Mahayana manifests as a result of the development of relative *bodhichitta* rather than the one that may spontaneously arise in the Contemplation state of the superior bodhisattva, or than the one proper to Buddhas. And yet in the view of our author, congruently with his conception of the path and the fruit, it is something that—just like “prophetic vision” and “mystical illumination”—manifests only exceptionally (in his discussion of saintly compassion Washburn spoke of *egoless spirits*; since he explicitly asserted this condition to involve the persistence of the ego, I assume that in this context he was using the term “egoless” in the sense of “unselfish”). For all of the reasons reviewed one must conclude that Washburn’s conception of reintegration does not correspond to the Awakening of the higher forms of Buddhism, and that if one aspires to Washburn’s ideal and sets to achieve it one will hardly have any possibilities of achieving Awakening in this lifetime.

Furthermore, Washburn’s concepts do not seem very clear or distinct. He defined mystical illumination as an objectless condition—which, since the absence of an object implies the absence of a subject, is by implication a subjectless condition—that, unlike the other four “objectless conditions,” is a gift only grace can confer. However, he said of this condition that in it the ego is infused, illuminated, and exalted by spirit, and that it is thus infused, illuminated, and exalted to a greater degree than in any other condition—whereby he contradicted his assertion that the condition in question is objectless, for as has been seen, there can be no ego

without the subject-object duality. It must be noted that beside mystical illumination Washburn posited other four supposedly “objectless” states (which, however, he claimed are less perfectly so), namely, (1) those of “inert voidness” that occur in the mental-egoic stage, (2) the empty trances occurring in the second period of regression in the service of transcendence, (3) the undifferentiated ecstasies and inflations occurring during the regeneration in the spirit, and (4) the objectless contemplations that obtain in the last stage of the regeneration in the spirit and throughout the integrated stage. Though some of these may be instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all that Washburn has the merit of distinguishing from the final stage of mystical illumination,<sup>115</sup> in the case of (4) objectless contemplations, he used as synonyms the terms *asamprajñata samadhi*, which Patañjali regards as the final, seedless (*nirbija*) *samadhi* and which is an extremely deep instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all excluding sensory data that as such is really objectless (even though from a Buddhist standpoint is not an instance of realization, for it is neither samsara nor nirvana, and the Dzogchen teachings warn against remaining in it), and *arupa jhana*, which is the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit *arupa dhyana* and which indicates the formless meditations that pertain to samsara and that as such involve the subject-object duality—the object being, as shown in *Beyond Mind II*, a condition free from the figure-ground distinction that as such may be experienced as an infinitude (even though it may involve the form of a sensory continuum lacking the figure-ground distinction, which is what it is and can only be conceptualized as such in contrast with the form of conditions involving the distinction in question), or the concept of a limitless subject that cannot be affected by experiences, or the concept that this condition one has achieved cannot be conceptualized. At any rate and as just noted, no state can be objectless if it is not subjectless, and since the ego in all senses involves the subject-object duality, there is no way an objectless condition may involve ego (as according to Washburn is the case with mystical illumination and with what he referred to as the four objectless contemplations).

I believe that, had Washburn’s books traveled across time and reached me during my youth, probably I would have liked them considerably (which is something I could by no means say of Wilber’s works). Furthermore, I am sympathetic to the fact that Washburn had Herbert Marcuse as the tutor of his doctoral thesis. However,

presently I cannot avoid realizing how his views of the Base, Path and Fruit fail to correspond to those of the Path I practice and in general to all Paths having the same basic principle. Hence my critique of Washburn’s theory.

To conclude, the way Washburn presented the process of regression-regeneration-integration gives the impression that it is excruciatingly painful. Though spontaneous self-healing processes are indeed painful, their Dzogchen variety, despite involving difficult passages, is far from being painful in the sense and in the way Washburn’s descriptions presented such processes, and on the contrary involve a great deal of supreme bliss.

### Conclusion

Now that Washburn’s system has been briefly discussed, it become possible to more thoroughly place in perspective the positions of both sides in the so-called *ascender-descender debate* and the supposed *pre/trans fallacy*, comparing them with the varieties of the Buddhist Path. If Wilber’s views had truly derived from the practice of meditation, the methods on which he based himself would be of the same general kind as those of the Buddhist Paths in general; however, in genuine Buddhist Paths, when higher states of the three samsaric spheres are pursued and attained, this is done with awareness that they are samsaric states and with the sole purpose of reGnizing their true condition—and it is deemed extremely harmful for a practitioner to take them as ends in themselves or to establish him or herself in them in the belief that they are a genuine refuge. Likewise, if rather than “descending” merely in order to relive basic perinatal matrices wrongly taken to possess a transforming power (as in Grof’s system), or in order to meet the unconscious and ultimately reintegrate the ego with a misconceived “Dynamic Ground” without this involving the dissolution of the beclouding element of stupefaction that prevents reGnition of our true condition, as well as that of the subject-object duality and all delusorily valued-absolutized thoughts and therefore of the ego (as in Washburn’s system), “descent” were undertaken after receiving transmission and oral instructions from the holder of a lineage of a tradition such as Dzogchen and obtaining the necessary capacity of spontaneous liberation, with the aim of turning contradiction into conflict and thus facilitating the reGnition (of) the true condition of all concepts and all

concept-tinged experiences the instant they arise (the reasons for this being, as noted repeatedly, that if delusion becomes pleasant one will neither detect its existence nor be forced to apply the instructions that are the condition of possibility of its spontaneous liberation, and that conflict and a heightened energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness make the spontaneous liberation of delusion neutralize karma to a greater degree), this would be the approach of Dzogchen Ati and of this series of papers (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a, and the present work) and other works of mine (Capriles, 2000b, 2003, 2007a). It is clear, therefore, that the dispute arises from the fact that neither of the parts is firmly rooted in a genuine Wisdom tradition and neither of the parts has obtained the realizations that are the essence of the Path in such traditions—and therefore both of them are off the mark. This means that the basic error of Washburn and Grof is the same shared by most of humanistic psychology and antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term, which set out to undo repression in the absence of the means that facilitate the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base.

In the Dzogchen teachings the highest and supreme realization possible is the one attained through the practices of Thögel and/or the Yangthik, which are carried out in the intermediate state between death and rebirth (which, as we know, does not imply the death of the organism, for one enters the state in question while the physical body is alive), and in which one must deal with bardo experiences the Dzogchen way, so that all that manifests liberates itself spontaneously and in this way the propensities for delusion are progressively neutralized, until they no longer have any hold. Although the intermediate state between death and rebirth may equally be seen as lying in the past, which is the direction in which Grof leads (and inadvertent readers may think Washburn takes one in the same direction), or as lying in the future, which is the direction in which according to Wilber realization lies, ultimately realization does not lie merely in accessing the intermediate state, but in the spontaneous liberation of all experiences that manifest in this and in all other states, which can only occur by reGnizing their true condition. Furthermore, Awakening is neither the summit of a mountain nor the bottom of an ocean, but the condition of absolute equality in which there is neither high nor low, neither upwards nor downwards, and which consists in the spontaneous liberation of the experiences of the summit, the bottom, and the middle.

Sean Kelly (1998, p. 128; also in Daniels, 2004, p. 76) asserted that, “an essential task for transpersonal theory will be to set Wilber’s paradigm in dialogue with those of Grof (1975, 1985, 1987, 1996, 2000) and Washburn (1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b), currently the two most substantial alternatives to Wilber’s paradigm.” Though in my view Grof’s explanation of the genesis and character of COEX systems needs to be completed and set in perspective, I believe the concept of such systems might be part of a future, synthetic metatranspersonal psychology; likewise, as noted in Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]), in spite of the Grofs’ misleading views with regard to what they call “spiritual emergencies,” their “Spiritual Emergency Network” (SEN) could help people who unwillingly and unknowingly face psychotic (or “psychotomimetic”) episodes or set out on psychotic journeys (at the very least, it could save them from psychiatrization). As has been seen, although these journeys are not in themselves Paths of Awakening, in the appropriate setting and with the right guidance and support they can become spontaneous healing processes, which is most likely what they were in Paleo-Siberian Shamanism (so that what Washburn called “regression in the service of transcendence” is actually “regression in the service of a more balanced ego open to transpersonal realms”). I think for his part Wilber is right when he suggested that the states found in processes of descent like the ones discussed by Washburn and Grof may be mistaken for the realms of highest aspiration, and hence those who become content with them may forsake the quest for true Awakening; however, exactly the same may occur with the states Wilber posited in his maps of spiritual ascension, which, as noted, in Buddhist terms are *not* instances of nirvana—and, even worse, if one follows him and conserves the subject-object duality and the illusion of self-being there is no way one may attain Awakening. Furthermore, I believe that for the dialogue in question to be fruitful it should include Jungian psychology, antipsychiatry (in the ample sense of the term that includes Laing, Bateson, Basaglia, Perry, and the many others listed in Capriles [2007a (Vol. II)]), Freudian psychoanalysis, some trends of British psychoanalysis,<sup>116</sup> existential psychoanalysis (and in particular a reinterpretation and fine-tuning of Sartre’s theory of bad faith), and other relevant systems. At any rate, for such a dialogue not to be dry speculation begetting wrong views, it must be undertaken in the context of a genuine understanding of Awakening or



nirvana and of the means wisdom traditions have always used to achieve this condition, on the basis of personal practice of at least one such tradition.

The above is partly what I have attempted in Vol. II of my book in three volumes *Beyond Being, Beyond Mind, Beyond History: A Dzogchen-Founded Metatranspersonal Philosophy and Psychology* (provisional version freely available in Internet at the URL <http://www.webdelprofesor.ula.ve/humanidades/elicap/>)—though in that volume I failed to cover important areas of psychological theory that I deem relevant for such a synthesis to be truly exhaustive. To a lesser degree, it is also what I have attempted in this series of papers, which are far less comprehensive than the aforementioned volume, and in the forthcoming book *Transpersonal and Metatranspersonal Theory: The Beyond Mind Papers*, which reproduces the three papers of the series in revised versions. I hope in the future what has been presented in the books in question may be integrated with those of the factors mentioned above that I had no space to discuss in it.

#### APPENDIX I:

##### **The Transreligious Fallacy in Wilber's Writings and its Relation with Wilber's "Philosophical Tradition" and Views**

Wilber (1998, p. 318) has noted that:

Chögyam Trungpa (1988) pointed out in *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*, as did Huston Smith (1976) in *Forgotten Truth*, that the great wisdom traditions without exception—from the shamanic to the Vedantic, in the East as well as the West—maintain that reality consists of at least three great realms: earth, human and sky, correlated with body, mind and spirit (gross, subtle and causal), and these are further correlated with the three great states of human consciousness: waking (gross, body), dream (subtle, mind) and deep sleep (causal, spirit).

This is an instance of what here I will call the “transreligious fallacy,” which lies in ascribing views, practices and other elements of one spiritual tradition, to other traditions in which they simply do not fit. In this particular case, the instance of the fallacy in question

in which Wilber incurred is one discussed in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), consisting in believing levels of the kind posited by some *Upanishads* to apply to all spiritual systems, and taking some of them to be types of Buddhist realization (if the views of the *Upanishads* were compatible with those of Buddhism, the Buddha Shakyamuni, rather than preaching his own system, would have referred his followers to the sacred texts in question).

Vajrayana Buddhism posits six bardos: the three of “life”—that of waking (*kyenai bardo* [*skyes gnas bar do*] or *rangzhin bardo* [*rang bzhin bar do*]), that of dream (*milam bardo* [*rmi lam bar do*]) and that of meditative absorption (*samten bardo* [*bsam gtan bar do*], consisting in states of *samadhi*)—and the three between death and rebirth—the *chikhai bardo* (*'chi kha'i bar do*), the *chönyi bardo* (*chos nyid bar do*), and the *sidpa bardo* (*srid pa bar do*). As noted in the discussion of Grof's views,<sup>117</sup> these—which rather than levels are *modes of experience*—cannot be divided into samsaric, nirvanic, and neither samsaric-nor-nirvanic, for all of them involve the three possibilities, which are the ones which are truly relevant to spiritual development in the Buddhist sense in which I have defined it. In fact, while waking, ordinary human beings constantly switch between the neutral base-of-all and samsaric states—whereas higher bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas, and mahasiddhas switch between these two conditions and instances of *nirvana*. Also, while dreaming, ordinary human beings switch between the neutral base-of-all and samsaric states—whereas yogis, siddhas, and mahasiddhas may switch between these two, samsaric states of lucid dreaming, and instances of *nirvana*. In the bardo of absorption, *nirvikalpa samadhis* are very often instances of the base-of-all, which, when a mental subject arises and takes a pseudototality as object, may be replaced by formless samsaric conditions; however, in the case of higher bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas, and mahasiddhas, these are always led to spontaneous liberation in *nirvana*. The same applies to the *chikhai bardo*: in those who have not reGnized their true condition, the experience of *dang* energy consisting in the shining forth of the clear light is an instance of the base-of-all, which is then followed by the perception of light as something external, at which point *samsara* manifests as a formless realm; only in practitioners possessing the appropriate means can this shining forth become an instance of the *dharmakaya*. With respect to the *chönyi bardo*, the experiences of

*rölpa* energy consisting in non-Jungian archetypes are initially instances of the consciousness of the base-of-all, which as soon as they are perceived as external, become phenomena of samsara pertaining to the realm of form; only in the case of practitioners possessing the appropriate skillful means can they become instances of the *sambhogakaya*. In the case of the sidpa bardo, the experiences of *tsel* (*rtsal*) energy in which one sees copulating beings of the six realms, are initially instances of the consciousness of defilements, which immediately become samsaric experiences of the realm of sensuality; only in mahasiddhas and the like can they become instances of the *nirmanakaya*. Therefore, to speak of levels in the sense in which Wilber has done is utterly irrelevant to spiritual development, with regard to which what is relevant is whether one is having a samsaric experience, an instance of the neutral base-of-all, or a clear instance of nirvana. (This implies as well that in Wilber's [1980] view of the "cosmic cycle," not only his conception of the spiritual and social evolution of our species as a process of gradual perfecting is wrong, but also his view of the preceding involution of consciousness is both mistaken and antisomatic [as is to be expected in a system of apparent Orphic roots, as below I show Wilber's to be], for the intermediate state or bardo between death and rebirth is not a process of involution from dharmakaya to sambhogakaya to nirmanakaya to incarnation: the dang manifestation of the energy of *thukje* aspect of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base includes both the manifestation of the clear light in the chikhai bardo (*'chi kha'i bar do*) and that of ordinary thoughts in this life, and the latter may not be seen as an involution of the former, for both of them may either be delusively perceived, or serve for the reGnition of the true condition of dang energy—a reGnition that, as noted, is the manifestation of the dharmakaya.<sup>118</sup><sup>119</sup>)

The root of Wilber's confusions seems to be betrayed by what he declared to be his "philosophical lineage," which Roger Walsh (1998) described as follows: "This lineage has its origins in the work of Pythagoras, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and then passes through Augustine and Aquinas, Maimonides and Spinoza, Hegel and Heidegger."

At this point Walsh has not yet mentioned Plotinus, but whether or not one includes the latter, the "lineage" in question is in its greater part of Orphic origin—or, what is the same, it has dualistic and antisomatic roots, and it is based on the mistaken belief that the delusorily valued-absolutized contents of

knowledge, and hence limits and differences, are *given*, absolute and most precious—rather than being based on realizing them to be the essence of the relative sphere that in Buddhism is referred to by the Sanskrit term *samvriti satya* (which, as Gendün Chöphel [Capriles, 2005] indicated, and as commented in Capriles [2007a (Vol. I)], has the etymological meaning of "obscuration to correctness" or "thoroughly confused"<sup>120</sup>) and as such to be the most basic hindrances introduced by delusive perception (i.e., perception conditioned by the second and third types of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the Dzogchen classification adopted here), which must be dissolved by the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base (Socrates could be an exception to this, but only in case the true Socrates had been that of the Cynics, and Plato's Socrates had been the result of the former ascribing his own ideas to his teacher<sup>121</sup>). The views of the Orphics, which seem to be of Kurgan (Proto-Indo-European) origin,<sup>122</sup> are at the opposite extreme of those of the contending, pre-Indo-European Dionysian tradition,<sup>123</sup> which seems to be the source of the views of Heraclitus, the different Skeptic schools and philosophers, some of the so-called "sophists," and the Cynics, among others,<sup>124</sup> and which, insofar as Alain Daniélou has seemingly demonstrated the identity of Shiva and Dionysos and of the spiritual traditions associated to these deities, is to be identified as one of the traditions having their source in the nondual Dzogchen teachings and the rest of the teachings Shenrab Miwoche gave at the foot of Mount Kailash, probably around 1,800 BCE,<sup>125</sup> and which had a practice that consisted in the dissolution of all illusory boundaries, often by using to this end the impulses of the sacred human body (as in the Bacchanalia).

In fact, Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans drew from the Orphics, whose dualistic, antisomatic system posited a soul inherently separate from the body, viewing the latter as the jail or tomb of the former and the soul as an originally pure entity that is contaminated upon being cast into the body—and as recovering its original purity only through initiation into the Orphic mysteries.<sup>126</sup> The Pythagoreans replaced the mysteries as the vehicle of purification with the contemplation of mathematics and music—possibly because they believed the "soul's contamination by the corporeal" to be purified by contemplating the incorporeal, and disharmony to be healed by contemplating the harmonic.<sup>127</sup> They equated *limits*—which are introduced by thought, and the delusory valuation-absolutization of which is the source

of *samsara*—and the male with Good, while equating the limitless—and by implication the dissolution in Communion (as noted above, *not* in the Gilligan-Tannen-Wilber sense of the term) of the boundaries resulting from the delusory valuation-absolutization of limits—and the female with nongood (which to the Greeks amounted to *Evil*<sup>128</sup>). As shown in the notes to Capriles (2007a [Vol. I]), historians of philosophy agree that the system of Parmenides had an Orphic origin as well;<sup>129</sup> his valorization of limits manifested as his equation of thought with truth and being, and his contempt toward the corporeal expressed itself as a total negation of reality to the material, corporeal world. As I showed elsewhere (Capriles, 2000c; definitive discussion to appear in work in progress 3), Plato synthesized the systems of the Pythagoreans and the Eleatics, giving rise to the first openly proclaimed ontological dualism of ancient Greece: for the first time there were, on the one hand, absolutely nonmaterial, ontological entities such as the *eidōs*, the demiurge and the souls, and, on the other hand, formless matter. Although all of these “realities” were eternal, they pertained to diametrically opposite categories: (eternal) matter constituted nontruth, nonbeing, nonbeauty and nongoodness itself, whereas truth, being, beauty, and goodness lay in the (eternal) nonphysical world of *eidōs*, which replaced Parmenides’ world of *thought* as the true reality, but which, *seemingly* unlike Parmenides’ thought,<sup>130</sup> was external to the soul. In its turn, nonbeing no longer consisted in the physical world, as in Parmenides, but in *unformed matter*: the physical world, insofar as it was made of matter, partook of the latter’s untruth, nonbeing, nonbeauty, and nongoodness, yet insofar as it had been given form (*eidōs*), it partook of the latter’s truth, being, beauty and goodness<sup>131</sup>—thus lying half way between truth and untruth, being and nonbeing, beauty and its lack (*ugliness*), and good and its lack (*evil*).<sup>132</sup> Plato drew his immortal souls from the Pythagoreans, and incorporated the Pythagorean view that the soul was corrupted by the body; however, he made of perception through the senses the source of this corruption, insofar as the knowledge thus obtained replaced the true knowledge (*noein*) of *eidōs* the souls of the would-be philosophers had before birth, for the half-true, half-false knowledge of the half-true, half-false physical reality—which was mere opinion or *doxa*, involved contamination by the corruptible, and may be said to involve error insofar as it takes the half true to be absolutely true—and as a result of this the

memory of the *eidōs* and therefore of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty became inaccessible (which, insofar as Plato believed that the awareness of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty made the individual true, good, and spiritually beautiful, implied the impossibility of achieving these qualities). As noted, just like Parmenides’ physical world, matter was nonbeing and falsehood (absence of truth), but it also was, just like for the Pythagoreans, absence of Good (*evil*) and absence of Beauty (*ugliness*). In the noted allegory of the cave in *Republic VII*, 514a-517a (Plato, 1979), the world of shadows represents the half true, half false physical world: it contains the forms projected by the *eidōs* (i.e., cast by the Demiurge taking the *eidōs* as models), yet these appear on the cave walls, which represent matter. In this allegory, turning toward the source of light, which was the *eidōs* of Good, rather than representing the spontaneous liberation of knowledge, represented the reminiscence of the *eidōs* that would-be philosophers had supposedly grasped before birth by means of *noein*—an exclusively intellectual intuition not involving the senses (i.e., not involving *aisthesis*) in which the *eidōs* were presumably apprehended as absolute truth, and which as such from my perspective would have clearly involved the delusory valuation-absolutization of knowledge. In fact, Plato developed the theory of *eidōs* in order to destroy the relativism of the so-called “sophists”—at least some of whom seem to have shown the relativity of the relative as a medicine against the illness of taking the relative as absolute, and by the same token as a means for allowing people to See through the relative into the absolute (this may have been the intent of both Protagoras and Gorgias;<sup>133</sup> in his turn, Cratylus’ raising his finger as a reply whenever he was questioned, *may* have been exactly the same skillful means as those of Ch’an Master Chu-ti, successor to T’ien-lung [Cleary & Cleary, 1977 (Vol. I), pp. 123-128])<sup>134</sup>).

Plato’s Orphic lineage is evident in *Gorgias* 493B (Plato, 1973), which speaks of “one of the wise, who holds the body to be a tomb;” furthermore, in both *Phaedo* 69E (Plato, 1980) and *Gorgias* 493B (Plato, 1973), Plato condoned the malevolent Orphic myths concerning the afterdeath, telling us approvingly how in the Hades or underworld the souls of the initiated into the Orphic mysteries tortured the souls of the uninitiated.<sup>135</sup> However, it seems that Plato (as the Pythagoreans<sup>136</sup> before him and perhaps the Orphics themselves) incorporated into his works earlier, pre-Indo-European myths and views associated with the Dionysian tradition, which

he reshaped so as to make them fit his Orphic-inspired worldview. A Platonic myth that seems to be an example of this is that of the inverted cycles the foreigner tells in *Statesman* 268d-273c (Plato, 1957), which combines the ancient cyclic, degenerative vision of human spiritual and social evolution shared by Heraclitus and the Stoics (who might have received it from Heraclitus via the Cynics<sup>137</sup>), with the germ of Orphic antisomatism, theism, and so on.<sup>138</sup> In its turn, the allegory of the cave could be a modification of a Dionysian parable in which the source of light represented Dzigchen-*qua*-Base, so that turning to the former represented the latter's unconcealment, and the apprehension of shadows represented perception in terms of delusorily valued-absolutized thoughts. With regard to philosophical views, a characteristic Platonic notion that seems to have resulted from the same type of operation is that of the identity of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty: at the end of *Hippias Major* (Plato, 1988)<sup>139</sup> Plato discussed at length the identity of Goodness and Beauty (which the Pythagoreans called *kalokagathia*); in *Republic* 502c-509c (Plato, 1979) he posited the Good as supreme eidōs and thereby as supreme Truth; and in *Symposium* 211E (Plato, 1995)—where he also discussed the indivisibility of Beauty and the Good—he asserted Beauty to be the supreme eidōs. These views might have derived from ancient Dionysian wisdom insofar as in the state of *rigpa* (Skt. *vidyā*), of which *avidyā* or *marigpa* (*ma rig pa*) is both the concealment and distortion, and which therefore constitutes Truth in the sense of absence of delusion (rather than truth *qua* *adequatio*), the world is apprehended in an immediate way, without the interposition of the filter of the known that “closes the doors of perception” and thus dims the perceived, making everything dull<sup>140</sup>—so that this immediate apprehension could from some perspective be understood as supreme Beauty—and one is free from selfishness and from the dynamic of the shadow, so that there is no seed of evil—which in its turn could be understood as supreme Good. If this interpretation were correct, it could be Plato's assimilation of Dionysian myths and views of high antiquity that has misled so many scholars into taking him for a nondual mystic.<sup>141</sup> At any rate, it is clear that Plato's eidōs could not be the reGnition of Dzigchen-*qua*-Base, for as shown below it is achieved by means of the reasoning Plato called *noesis*, and although as shown above the supreme eidōs coincide, there is a multitude of other, lower eidōs that do not coincide with each other. Finally, the communism

Plato posited for the guardians (and for the magistrates and philosopher-kings that would be chosen among the aptest of guardians) in his allegedly utopian, actually dystopian *Republic* seems to have been inspired by the egalitarian ideals of the Dionysian tradition—shared by all traditions originating in Mount Kailash<sup>142</sup>—and the egalitarian character of pre-Indo-European societies espousing Dionysian religion (what Riane Eisler [1987] called the “Old Europe”)—yet it was proposed for utilitarian reasons as part of a system that was intended to reproduce the three-tiered caste system of the Indo-Europeans, with the only difference that a person's place in that system, rather than being determined by his or her parents' place, was to be decided on the basis of spiritual character and intellectual capacity. In fact, the political ideal of Plato's *Republic* was that of the rule by a few over the vast majority of the people, and the ideal of justice in the text, rather than consisting in a reasonable degree of socio-economic and political equality, was that each citizen should occupy the place in society that allegedly corresponded to his or her spiritual character and intellectual capacity, thus justifying sharp social and political differences.<sup>143</sup>

To sum up, on the spiritual-epistemological-ontological plane, rather than calling for us to See through divisive, delusorily valued knowledge into the limitless, undivided, unthinkable, absolutely true Self-*qua*-Base, Plato called for potential philosophers to attain the *anamnesis* or reminiscence of the eidōs or Forms that their souls were supposed to have perceived directly before being cast into a material body, and which they supposedly forgot as memory of the eidōs was concealed by the subsequently established memories of the half true, half false knowledge received through the senses. Since this *anamnesis* was reached through *noesis* or thinking that takes its premises as hypothetical but that concludes in an instance of *noein* or intellectual intuition that is experienced as the apprehension of absolute truth (and which both to Plato and to the Eleatics was absolute truth),<sup>144</sup> it is clear that it occurred in the realm of delusorily valued knowledge, and therefore that Plato was an advocate of delusion. In fact, *neither* Buddhism in general, *nor* the Dzigchen teachings in particular, *nor* common sense, do posit immaterial, eternal, absolutely true eidōs existing outside the mind, and Buddhism in general and the Dzigchen teachings in particular, which do not posit immaterial realities, outright reject the supposed existence of an eternal individual soul (which

may have grasped or not grasped anything before birth); therefore, in terms of Buddhism and Dzogchen the noein posited by both Parmenides and Plato must necessarily be a perception in terms of delusorily valued subtle and supersubtle thoughts, and as such a manifestation of avidya or marigpa in all three senses these terms have in the teachings in question. Since true knowledge involved perfect awareness of the distinctions between the different eidōs and excluded Communion in the unconcealment of the single true condition or ourselves and of the whole of reality, Plato's epistemological-ontological-spiritual ideal was inherently divisive, and thus it is apparent that his divisive ideal of society responded to his spiritual-epistemological-ontological ideal, and that both ideals arose from the experiential perspective of avidya or marigpa.

Plotinus, in his turn, on the premise that the absolute could not be finite, and aware that *being* is negated or limited by *nonbeing*, established that the absolute could not lie in *being*, and concluded it had to consist in the One. However, this was no solution, for the One is, just as much as being, a concept defined in relation to other concepts (it is relative to those of nothing, two and manifold)—and his assertion that it is the One that makes the oneness of each and every entity possible,<sup>145</sup> does not atone for the error of positing as the absolute a concept that as such is relative to other concepts (in Capriles, 1994a, pp. 136-146, these views of Plotinus were compared with those of Shankaracharya's<sup>146</sup>). At any rate, the true problem with Plotinus is that he betrayed his Orphic-Platonic roots by retaining, underneath his assertion of oneness, the Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic dualism between the spiritual and the material, and although he attempted to conceal this dualism by positing a continuum of manifestation, he asserted the continuum in question to extend itself *from* the One, conceived as transcendent, *to* matter and the manifest in general, to which the One remains in contrast and subtly alien. In fact, although the manifest is considered to be the radiance of the One, which attenuates itself as it goes farther from its source yet remains the One, matter is in itself formless and indeterminate, like *the limit where the radiance of the One, and therefore of the Good, has become exhausted*. In this sense, it represents the lack of Good (i.e., evil). And, since Beauty is the radiance of the Good/the One (this being Plotinus' revised version of the Pythagorean kalokagathia and of Plato's indivisibility of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty), matter is also lack of

Beauty (i.e., the ugly) (Cappelletti, 2000, p. 252; Bréhier, 1961, pp. 47ff.). Thus Plotinus' strategy for denying his dualism is the same as Parmenides': since matter is nonbeing, it is not a second reality apart from the One, and therefore matter and the One cannot constitute a duality. However, this is a specious argument, for he spoke of matter as having specific characteristics, such as formlessness and indeterminacy, and as being, by contrast with the One, ugly and evil, and as therefore having the power to contaminate the soul; therefore, matter is the concept that constitutes the *differentia specifica* of the One, and Plotinus' claims of nonduality are spurious.

However, the worse is that Plotinus' views elicit contempt toward all that may be characterized as material or sensual, reinforcing the antisomatic attitude that is a central element of ecological crisis. In fact, though Plotinus viewed the desire for a beautiful body with the aim to procreate as licit, the noblest love is the one that, rather than involving carnal desire, has the *incorporeal* as its object and comprises the thirst to break the body and live in the depths of one's "I" (Cappelletti, 2000, pp. 257-258; Armstrong, 1966-1988, *Ennead III* 5, 1). The material perverts the soul and is therefore to be overcome, for it is an *extraneous agent* (i.e., as noted above, it is alien to the One and to the soul that is the lowest level of the One, and therefore the One is not One that includes all insofar as there is something extraneous to it<sup>147</sup>) that overpowers it and degenerates it, corrupting it and inducing it to all kinds of perversion and impurity—whereby it abjures its very essence and falls into the body and matter. Plotinus' view of the soul's contamination by the body is thus like the Pythagoreans': the soul's disgrace lies in ceasing to be alien to the material, because just as gold loses its beauty when mixed with particles of earth and recovers it when these are removed, the soul loses its beauty when mixed with the body and recovers it when freed from it (which, again, proves the One not to be the One that includes all insofar as it shows that in Plotinus' view there is something alien to it that may become mixed with it). Plotinus viewed so-called "physical" pleasure as dirty and impure, and Wisdom as the act whereby intelligence takes the soul away from the inferior region of the sensitive to elevate it to the summits of the spiritual (Cappelletti, 2000, p. 257-258; Armstrong, 1966-1988, *Ennead I* 6, 5).<sup>148</sup>

Positing and asserting the existence of a transcendent spirit is so crucial to Wilber that he

disqualified deep ecologists for supposedly failing to postulate it,<sup>149</sup> and he has been ready to close his eyes to the above-demonstrated subtle dualism of Plotinus just because he liked so much the idea that the One is transcendent (so that he can see it as *spiriti*) and that the world is the radiance/manifestation of the One—even though this is not truly so insofar as in Plotinus’ view matter, which is the basic constituent of all entities, is alien to the soul and is the limit at which the radiance of the One has been exhausted. Contrarily to Wilber’s preferences, the Buddhist teachings, both in their original form and in all their presently existing forms, keep the metaphenomenological epoché, asking one to suspend judgment and abstain from speculating about the existence or nonexistence of something prior and / or posterior to manifestation and as such transcendent. To begin with, the Pali Canon, containing the reconstruction of Shakyamuni’s discourses, asserts the origin of the world to be un conjecturable, and warns that conjecturing about it brings about madness and vexation (*Anguttara Nikaya* 4.77: *Acintita Sutta*); it lists among the fourteen *avyakrtavastuni*—i.e., the *avyakrita* questions, which are those before which Shakyamuni remained silent—the four questions regarding the “origin of the universe” (*Khuddaka Nikaya*, III: *Udaana*, VI, 4-5 [“The various sects,” 1 and 2])<sup>150</sup> (the other questions being the four that concern the universe’s extension, the two regarding the relationship between the human body and what common sense views as a *jiva* or soul [but which one could view either as consciousness or as the body’s animating principle], and the four concerning what follows after the *parinirvana* [decease] of a Tathagata),<sup>151</sup> and compares those who demand replies to these questions as a condition for setting foot on the Path, to one who, being wounded by an arrow, refuses to let the surgeon remove the shaft until he is told everything concerning the man who shot it, the bow with which it was shot, the arrow itself, and so on (*Majjhima Nikaya* 63: *Cula-Malunkhovada Sutta*). Buddhism not only acknowledges such questions to go beyond the sphere of valid human knowledge, hence shunning metaphysical speculation about them, but views them as distracting people from the fundamental aim of Buddhism, which is that of quenching suffering. This applies to the Mahayana as well, which beside shunning speculation concerning the origin of the world, views Buddhist systems that may seem suspicious of positing an everlasting universal spirit, a personal soul and so on, as instances of the extreme view

that Buddhist philosophy calls “eternalism” and regards as a deviation from the Middle Way: both the Nirvana School of the Mahayana in China and the Jonangpa School of the Vajrayana in Tibet were accused of heresy because their opponents read in their tenets what they saw as eternalist, substantialist, or theist elements. H. H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has said that:

On the philosophical level, both Buddhism and modern science share a deep suspicion of any notion of absolutes, whether conceptualized as a transcendent being, as an eternal, unchanging principle such as soul, or as a fundamental substratum of reality. Both Buddhism and science prefer to account for the evolution and emergence of the cosmos and life in terms of the complex interrelations of the natural laws of cause and effect. (Punnadhammo Bhikkhu, 2005)

It is worth mentioning that the Madhyamaka philosophical school of the Mahayana discards, (1) production from a self-existing self, (2) production from a self-existing other, (3) production from both a self-existing self and a self-existing other, and (4) production from neither a self-existing self nor a self-existing other.<sup>152</sup> Rather than being specifically a negation of all possible myths of creation, this expresses the view of voidness with regard to all possible instances of what one may conceptualize as production; however, Buddhism has always discarded all myths of creation as instances of these extremes. Therefore, none of the following would be admissible to Buddhism: (a) that of creation of the universe by a God that is and remains foreign to it (like the one in orthodox Judeo-Christian-Muslim belief); (b) that of creation of the universe as the manifestation of a transcendent spirit that is in no way separate from the latter (as in Wilber’s understanding of Plotinus); and (c) that of the infusion of forms in matter by the demiurge on the model of the eternal eidos (as in Plato).

In the Vajrayana one finds cosmogonies and cosmologies, but none of them posits an everlasting transcendent universal spirit or a personal soul. For example, the *Kalachakra Tantra* lays out a theory of the formation of reality, yet it does so without any reference to a transcendent spirit or a creator. (Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, 1995). Also the Dzogchen teachings have a cosmogony, but rather than positing the manifestation

of the universe out of a transcendent spirit, it explains the Base (i.e., what I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Base)—which may not be viewed either as transcendent or as immanent insofar as it is the true condition of all reality that as such has neither *genus proximum* nor *differentia specifica*, thus being beyond conceptual extremes and as such being unthinkable—to be beyond time and hence not subject to creation or destruction, and to manifest as the universe through its own internal dynamic on the basis of karmic traces: the dang (*gdangs*) form of manifestation of the Base’s energy—which rather than being transcendent is the basic constituent of thought and of the luminosity that shines forth in the chikhai bardo (*’chi kha’i bar do*), among other realities that appear through any of the six senses (the dharmakaya being the reGnition of the true condition of this form of manifestation of energy)—gives rise to rölpa (*rol pa*) energy—which is the basic constituent of the visions of the chönyi bardo (*chos nyid bar do*), as well as of the colored light that constitutes the subtle essence of each of the five coarse elements (the sambhogakaya being the reGnition of the true condition of this form of manifestation of energy)—which in its turn gives rise to tsel (*rtsal*) energy—which is the basic constituent of the physical or material world that one perceives as external to the dimension of dang energy—as a result of which one experiences dang energy as an internal dimension (the nirmanakaya being the reGnition of the true condition of tsel energy).<sup>153</sup> It is thus clear that none of the elements of this cosmogony is a transcendent spirit: all is the play of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which from its own perspective is beyond time and therefore beyond creation and destruction, and which being beyond conceptual extremes is beyond transcendence and immanence.<sup>154</sup>

Furthermore, those intelligent, informed interpreters of Buddhist philosophy who have understood Buddhist teachings as taking a position in the above regard have read them as positing immanence rather than transcendence. For example, the student of Mahayana, Vajrayana and Dzogchen Ati Buddhist philosophy John Whitney Pettit (1999), has written:

Vajrayana meditation is based on the principle of the immanence of ultimate reality, which is a coalescent continuum (*tantra, rgyud*) of gnosis (*jñana, ye shes*) and aesthetic form (*rupa, gzugs, snang ba*). Exoteric Buddhist scriptures (*sutras*) know this immanence as Buddha nature or

*tathagatagarbha*, while tantric scriptures describe it as the pervasive, unfabricated presence of divine form, divine sound, and gnosis-awareness.

All of the above demonstrates that by disqualifying those who fail to postulate a transcendent spirit, Wilber unwittingly disqualified the Buddha and all Buddhist Masters—as well as the founding fathers of Taoism, who did not posit such transcendent spirit either. Wilber may think the dharmakaya posited by the Mahayana and the other higher forms of Buddhism to be transcendent, but the Dzogchen teachings make it crystal clear that the dharmakaya, rather than a transcendent reality, is the realization of the true condition of dang energy, which is the basic constituent of thought and of the luminosity the Dzogchen teachings call *tingel* (*gting gsal*), among other events in our experience. In fact, what is essential for attaining the spiritual Awakening on which both the survival of life on this planet and the transition of our species to the next stage of its evolution depends, is the direct reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that instantly results in the spontaneous liberation of thought. As shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and throughout the present paper, Wilber’s system sows confusion with regard to the structure and function of the Path, thus hindering the reGnition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base; now it has been shown that the system in question also falls into what Buddhism views as the error of positing metaphysical theories asserting the transcendence or immanence of a “spirit,” which can hardly have a function different from that of keeping one in the prison of delusorily valued-absolutized thought. Buddhism refers to those who assert the existence of transcendent realities as *tirthika* (Tib. *mutegpa [mu stegs pa]*), and those who assert the material to be the only reality and/or deny the law of cause and effect, Awakening and so on as *charvaka* or *lokayata* (Tib. *gyangphenpa [rgyang ’phen pa]*)<sup>155</sup>—which are two of the extreme views refuted by philosophers representing the Buddhist Middle Way.

At any rate, it is clear that Wilber incurred in a transphilosophical / transmystical fallacy when he mentioned Plato and Plotinus as examples of dharmakaya mystics:<sup>156</sup> he was unwittingly implying the kaya in question to be equally realized by Seeing through the contents of thoughts into the latter’s true condition (as occurs in the *Tekchö* practice of Dzogchen), and by remembering, in terms of delusorily valued-absolutized noein / subtle thoughts, the supposed vision of immaterial

Forms that according to Plato potential philosophers had previously to birth. If the dharmakaya is the direct realization of the true condition of the dang energy that is the constituent of thought and if this realization instantly results in the spontaneous liberation of thought, then it *could not be* the reminiscence, in terms of thoughts, of some supposed extrasensory, immaterial reality that was supposedly perceived before birth by some would-be philosophers. The ideologies of the Pythagoreans (who were first to engage in a spree of development of science and technology<sup>157</sup>) and Plato, amalgamated with the literal interpretation of the Old Testament by Christians, constitute one of the principal elements at the root of the course taken by “Western” civilization that led to the current ecological crisis—which threatens to disrupt human society, possibly destroy human life, and perhaps even put an end to all life on our planet, but which by the same token, insofar as it has achieved the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion, for the first time since avidya or marigpa became predominant has opened up the possibility that this delusion may be disconnected at the level of the species and hence that Communion may become generalized. (It would take too much space to discuss or even list the other thinkers Wilber saw as having achieved one or another type of realization, but whom I view as having achieved something quite different from Buddhist realizations that is often noxious rather than healing.)

Thus there seems to be no doubt that, as suggested above, Wilber’s descriptions and classifications resulted from mixing the accounts different traditions provide regarding the sequence of their respective paths and / or the essence of their respective views. However, some Paths lead to nirvana, others lead to higher realms of samsara, still others may allow us to establish ourselves for longer or shorter periods in the cessation (*nirodha*) constituted by the neutral condition of the base-of-all—and others, like Plato’s, by the same token sustain delusorily valued-absolutized knowledge and reinforce antisomatism, both of which are at the root of ecological crisis. Among Buddhist Paths, some lead to the realization of a *shravaka*, others lead to the realization of a *pratyekabuddha*, others lead to the realization of a bodhisattva, and still others may lead to the realization of a yogi, to that of a siddha, to that of a mahasiddha or to that of a Buddha. Besides, in Buddhism there are gradual Paths and nongradual Paths. How could a single map be drawn that would apply to all of these paths?

Only someone who has successfully trodden a given Path can produce an accurate description of it, and such description will apply to the Path on the basis of which the description was drawn, and at best to other Paths based on the same principle, but not to Paths based on utterly different principles and leading to totally different fruits. Therefore, it would be absurd to try to derive a “universal map of the Path” from one’s experience of the Path one has followed,<sup>158</sup> and it would be even more absurd to fabricate such “universal map” by piecing together accounts belonging to different traditions: if we put together the trunk of a mammoth, the teeth of a saber-toothed tiger, and the body of a dinosaur, what one obtains is a monster existing solely in one’s own fantasy. Such concoctions, rather than expressions of “aperspectival freedom” understood as the capacity to view phenomena and events from different, mutually contradictory perspectives with awareness of what each and every perspective responds to and may apply to (which as noted according to Wilber manifests in the sixth fulcrum, but which in truth is a consequence of the repeated disclosure of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base), are monstrosities springing from confusion and lack of perspective (thus being aperspectival only in the sense in which at night all cows are black).

At any rate, it is a fact that Wilber’s descriptions and classifications fail to provide a clear criterion for distinguishing samsara from nirvana, and both of these from the base-of-all, such as the criterion found in the Dzogchen teachings.

## APPENDIX II:

### Psychedelics / Consciousness-Expanders / CREVs / Entheogens

Insofar as so-called psychedelics were a constant in Stan Grof’s early therapies and continue to be crucial in his theoretical elaborations, in my critique of his work in the main body of this paper I was obliged to refer to these substances. Upon so doing, for the class of such drugs he privileged I coined the neologism *chemical raisers of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness that have an epochotropic, non-dissociative, non-hypnotic, potentially “psychotomimetic,” consciousness expanding effect* (CREVs)—which, however, I left undefined. This, together with the fact that a great deal of transpersonal researchers, theorists, and therapists have been passionate promoters of so-called psychedelics,



with the fact that the etymology of the latter term failed to express the most *specific* effects of the substances it refers to, and with the fact that most specialists now refer to the substances in question by the term “entheogens”—the etymology of which, in the light of true Paths of Awakening, reveals itself plainly self-contradictory—inspired me to include this Appendix in order to reveal the etymological flaws of the term psychedelics, define the neologism I introduced, briefly distinguish the effects of some varieties of psychoactive substances from those of other varieties, explain some of the effects of the most representative of the varieties in question from the perspectives of Buddhism in general and Dzogchen in particular, and expose the self-contradictory character of the term “entheogens” in the light of the systems just mentioned.

To begin with, it must be remembered that psychedelics is the term that in 1957 Humphrey F. Osmond coined for designating the class of psychoactive substances that includes LSD, mescaline and those tryptamines present in psilocybe mushrooms (such as psilocin and psilocybin), among others, and that nowadays the term is applied to an ample class of psychoactive substances that beside the tryptamines present in magic mushrooms is deemed to include tryptamines from other sources such as DMT, 5-MeO-DMT, N,N-DMT, DET, DPT, 5-MeO-DIPT, 5-MeO-MiPT, AMT, 5-MeO-AMT, and so on;<sup>159</sup> such atypical designer amphetamines as MDA, MDMA, DOM (4-Methyl-2,5-Dimethoxyamphetamine, widely known in the streets as STP) and TMA; dissociative general anesthetics such as PCP, DXM/DM and ketamine; miscellaneous substances such as the harmala alkaloids present in Syrian rue and Amazon plants of the *Banisteriopsis* family (such as harmine and harmaline), muscimol (the active principle of both *amanita muscaria* and *amanita pantherina*) and ibogaine (the active principle of the Central African shrub *Tabernanthe iboga*); and a daily growing, huge list of substances possessing a kind of consciousness expanding effect, yet having other effects as well, which differ widely from one substance to the next.

For example, PCP, DXM/DM, ketamine, and similar drugs, which often induce states that have been compared to lucid dreaming, have dissociative, anesthetic, mind-numbing and heroic effects, making people feel detached both from the environment and their own selves and often inducing feelings of strength,

power, invulnerability and the like<sup>160</sup>—their effects thus being radically different from those of substances such as LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin, except in that, just like the latter, these substances have a powerful consciousness expanding function that *tends* to dissolve ego boundaries and induce depersonalization, and are potentially psychotomimetic (cf. for example Krystal et al., 1994). In their turn, so-called psychedelic, designer amphetamines such as MDA, MDMA and DOM (aka STP), and harmala alkaloids such as harmine and harmaline,<sup>161</sup> in spite of having effects that differ widely from one drug to the next, in the 1970s were classed together under the heading “non-psychotomimetic psychedelics” (a doubtful characterization insofar as frightening, “psychotomimetic” episodes have been reported by users of some if not all of these substances; however, consumers of STP, in spite of reporting weariness as a result of the breathtaking, long-lasting, exhausting torrent of experiences this drug unleashes, have also claimed it does not cause pronounced depersonalization or identity confusion, for “you know who you are” [Don McNeil in *The Village Voice*, cited in Stafford, 1992, p. 299]—this being probably one of the reasons why it was classed under the heading in question).<sup>162</sup> Fly agaric (*amanita muscaria*), the famed mushroom containing muscimol as its main psychoactive alkaloid that was employed in paleo-Siberian shamanism for inducing so-called shamanic states in general and sequences of “shamanic ascension” in particular (the latter in many cases involving a dynamic partly analogous to the one illustrated by the *Divine Comedy*), in spite of being potentially psychotomimetic, unlike substances such as LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin does not induce “structured” hallucinations, at the onset of its activity may induce sleep (which according to the way the mushrooms are prepared may either be a state of utter unconsciousness that external observers may mistake for death, or sleep involving very vivid dreams),<sup>163</sup> and in parts of Asia was used for enhancing awareness of erotic pleasure<sup>164</sup>—roughly like Foxy Methoxy (5-MeO-DIPT) in the US, ayahuasca in the Amazon, *Bufo* toad exudations<sup>165</sup> *allegedly* in Asia and the West Indies, and so forth. Because of the vividness and continuity of the visions produced by ibogaine, the effects of this substance have been described as a “visionary onslaught” and an “unending flow of encyclopedic images” (David Anirman [1979], *Sky-Cloud-Mountain*, cited in Stafford, 1992, p. 365); besides, the substance has been reported to have a strong aphrodisiac effect. And, in general, countless other

so-called psychedelics have a host of other, very different effects.

Substances such as cannabis and MDMA are often placed in the borderline of so-called psychedelics. Cannabis, which Shaivas regard as a sacred plant of their Lord Shiva—a status later endorsed by the *Atharva Veda* and therefore accepted by orthodox Brahmanism—whether ingested orally in the form of *bhang* or smoked in the form of *ganja*, *charras* or *hashish*<sup>166</sup> has a much milder consciousness expanding effect than LSD, mescaline or psilocybin and the like, and besides is somewhat hypnotic—yet in some cases consumers have reported effects similar to those of the latter drugs. The designer amphetamine MDMA (ecstasy), which is often excluded altogether from the class of drugs called psychedelics, induces tingling along the spine and throughout the body, which may increase in intensity to enraptured levels; furthermore, if the individual engages in erotic relationships, this sensation may mingle with erotic pleasure, making the latter particularly intense; however, on the other hand it has been established as the cause of many deaths, and the fact that it elicits loving acceptance of both self and environment, blocking inhibitions, and arousing enthusiasm for the ideas received during its effects even when these contradict the individual's ideology, in spite of having been deemed useful in treating some types of psychoses, could also make the drug effective as a brainwashing tool.

Since the Greek etymology of psychedelic is “making the psyche evident” or “showing the psyche,” the term should apply to *all* drugs having the power to bring “unconscious” contents into conscious awareness (and thus show the hidden aspects of the user's psyche), to make one perceive through the senses phenomena that do not belong to the commonly perceived reality called the “physical world” (which as such common sense would view as manifestations of the user's psyche), to induce feelings or emotions that do not respond to the events in our commonly perceived reality that normally would elicit them (and that as such would be seen as evidencing dispositions or traits of the user's psyche). Infamous opiates are narcotic, heroic, anesthetic, addictive, and extremely detrimental drugs having a mild hallucinogenic effect; because of the latter, strictly on the basis of the etymology of the term psychedelics they should qualify as members of this class. Likewise, such psychoactive plants of the *solanaceae* family as the diverse species of *Datura*, *Hyocamus*, and reportedly also

*Atropa belladonna* and *Mandragora autumnalis*/*Atropa mandragora*, beside their hypnotic and anesthetic effect, have a greater hallucinogenic potential than many of the so-called psychedelics, being capable of producing visions that, due to their lifelike character and probably also to the hypnotic effect of the drugs generating them, ordinary people are unable to recognize as such and as a rule tend to mistake either for elementals, spirits, or demons, or for phenomena of the commonly perceived, so-called “material” reality<sup>167</sup>—and hence on the basis of the etymology under consideration they should qualify as psychedelics. However, neither opiates nor the just mentioned plants of the *solanaceae* family can expand the focus of conscious awareness, thereby inducing experiences of seeming cosmic union or the like (the only member of the *solanaceae* family that to my knowledge has this potential is *Vestia foetida*, which unlike her previously listed cousins contains tryptamines having the power to raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness and thus expand the focus of conscious awareness)—and, coincidentally, nowadays the most serious researchers in the field classify neither the ones nor the others as psychedelics.<sup>168</sup> In fact, it seems that all substances *unanimously* classed under this heading have a consciousness expanding effect, and that those substances lacking this effect, even if they may be said to make the psyche evident or show the psyche, are not *universally* classed as such. This suggests that the term in question, rather than being universally understood in its etymological sense, is often understood in the sense of “consciousness expanding”—an effect for which at some time I coined the neologism *psychedeltic*.<sup>169</sup> Therefore I have to conclude that, (1) the etymology of the term psychedelic does not properly respond to the most characteristic effects of the substances *universally* classed as such, and (2) the category in question includes quite different subcategories that need to be clearly distinguished from each other.

Here I will circumscribe myself to reviewing the effects of those drugs that were the main focus of interest of the most influential among twentieth century publicists of so-called psychedelics in the West—including the founding members of MAPS (the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) and the authors who wrote for *The Psychedelic Review*—and that became most popular among the young in the 1960s, being to a great extent responsible for the occurrence of such a consequential social phenomenon

as the hippy movement: those drugs pertaining to the class including LSD, mescaline, and tryptamines like psilocybin, psilocin, DMT and 5-MeO-DMT, among many other substances. The reasons for this are: (1) that they are the most renowned of so-called psychedelics; (2) that they—and in particular LSD—were the ones privileged both by the theorists, researchers, and therapists I class under the label “antipsychiatry in the wide sense of the term” and by that transpersonal icon who is Stan Grof; and (3) that they are the most relevant to this discussion insofar as, like so many of the traditional methods of true Awakening traditions, they raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness (Skt., *kundalini*; Tib. *thig le*)<sup>170</sup>—and do so more dramatically than many of the traditional methods in question.

The most visible effect of a marked raise in the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness could be what is called “consciousness expansion”: a widening in the scope of conscious awareness that *tends* to dissolve the figure-ground distinction and thus bring into this awareness the totality of the sensory continuum (not only in the field of sight, but in those of all senses). A closely related effect of the raise in question is that of deferring the interposition of judgment in sensory awareness, thus deferring perception—an effect for which I coined the adjective epochotropic, compounded of the Greek verb *trepein*, here understood in the sense of *to tend to*, and the Greek noun *epoche*, usually rendered as *suspension of judgment*. Finally, another crucial effect of that raise is its so-called psychotomimetic or altogether psychotic potential. It is because so-called psychedelics of the class including LSD, mescaline, psilocybin, and DMT, among others, are *chemical raisers of the energetic volume*, and as such they combine the three effects just described, and because their effects contrast with those of hypnotic hallucinogens such as most of the psychoactive plants of the *solanaceae* family and with those dissociative general anesthetics such as PCP, DXM/DM and ketamine, that for the drugs in question I coined the neologism *chemical raisers of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness that have an epochotropic, non-dissociative, non-hypnotic, potentially “psychotomimetic,” consciousness expanding effect* (CREV).

The effects of CREVs may be viewed from different perspectives, among which the most frequent so far has consisted in relating them with the stages of

dissolution, death, and the bardos between death and rebirth (the most famous work on psychedelics based on the *Bardo Thödrol* being probably Leary, Metzner, & Alpert, 1964). However, my initial mission here is that of determining the reasons why these substances may occasionally trigger mystical experiences that are often taken for the realizations of higher forms of Buddhism and other genuine Paths of Awakening (a misunderstanding that, as shown below, caused a group of researchers to call them “entheogens”), and ascertaining the nature of such experiences in Buddhist and Dzogchen terms—a task for which it is more appropriate to consider their effects in the context of the subsequent stages in the arising of *samsara* from the neutral condition of the base-of-all (which, however, is to some extent analogous to the post-mortem sequence of bardos).<sup>171</sup> After this I will switch to a different interpretative framework in order to explain why such substances may give access to those ego-dystonic contents that are normally eluded by human consciousness and to realms of experience that, due to the associated mental coding or other attributes, are ordinarily excluded from the ambit of consciousness—and in general why they may induce so-called “psychotomimetic experiences” and fully-fledged psychoses (which, however, as shown throughout this series of papers, as well as in Capriles [2007a (Vol. II)] and in other works of mine, when allowed to unfold in an appropriate environment, have a healing potential). Finally, I will ascertain whether the etymology of the term “entheogens” is legitimate or unwarranted.

Perception is always preceded by an extremely short instant of uninterpreted, pure sensation, which one is unable to reflexively remember insofar as it is an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all that as such does not involve the awareness (of) consciousness-of-an-object-perceived-in-terms-of-a-concept that is responsible for the production of a reflexive mnemonic imprint (cf. Capriles, 2007a [Vol. I]).<sup>172</sup> It has been noted that a significant raise in the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness (Skt., *kundalini*; Tib. *thigle* [*thig le*]) will widen the scope of conscious awareness to a greater or lesser degree, while simultaneously deferring the coming into play of judgment in human perception. Whereas the widening of the scope of conscious awareness *tends to* dissolve the figure-ground split and thus result in a panoramic awareness encompassing the whole of the continuum of potential sense data of any of the senses of a given

individual at a given moment, the delay in the coming into play of judgment postpones the manifestation of the supersubtle threefold thought structure, temporarily inhibiting the interposition of the subject-object duality in awareness (of) sense-data (the latter including the data of the sixth sense posited by Buddhism<sup>173</sup>)—and insofar as the recognition of *sensa* in terms of subtle / intuitive concepts can only occur when the subject-object duality is manifest, and since on the top of this the drugs in question defer the recognition of *sensa*, they defer perception altogether (furthermore, if thereafter coarse / discursive thoughts come into play, mentally expressing in words whatever was perceived, this also may take longer to occur).

The combined effect of the panoramification of awareness and the suspension of the interposition of the threefold apparitional structure in sensory awareness may result in an unusually long instance of nondual, nonconceptual panoramic awareness (of) the limitless space of *dharmadhatu* (i.e., of the basic space of phenomena) and therefore (of) the whole of our continuum of potential *sensa* at given moment, which insofar as there has been no recognition of the nondual primordial awareness in which experience occurs and therefore *nirvana* has not manifested, keeps one in the condition the Dzogchen teachings call *base-of-all carrying propensities* (Tib. *bagchagkyi kunzhi* [*bag chags kyi kun gzhi*]) for a shorter or longer lapse. Then the delusory valuation of the threefold thought-structure gives rise to the subject-object duality, which at this point manifests as dualistic consciousness of an undivided continuum that retains some of the basic features of the *dharmadhatu* and that seems to involve the totality of sense-data, but which at this point, insofar as it excludes the mental subject, rather than a totality is a pseudo-totality. Thus there occurs a samsaric experience of the sphere of formlessness, in which the mental subject usually establishes a *link of being* with the pseudo-totality appearing as object, thus obtaining the feeling of *being* that totality and of having its characteristics, and deriving elation and pride from it. If one managed to make this experience stable (which, fortunately, is hardly possible while under the effect of CREVs), one would come to dwell in the samsaric sphere of formlessness.

After the experience of the samsaric sphere of formlessness that succeeded the manifestation of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, the consciousness of the base-of-all (Tib. *kunzhi namshé* [*kun gzhi rnam shes*])

comes into play, dividing the sensory totality into figure and ground. Even if the form that has been singled out is a simple grain of sand, for a longer or shorter lapse one remains beyond concepts in the awareness of the form's multiplicity-in-oneness (consisting in the fact that although the form is being taken as an undivided figure, it would nevertheless be possible to successively distinguish in it countless aspects, features or details), and so when a subtle, intuitive concept comes into play to interpret the occurrence, one is in awe *before* the marvelous character of the form, for one understands it in terms of the kind of admiring aesthetic judgments that could be expressed coarsely / discursively as "inexpressible wonder" and so on, thereby obtaining an experience of the sphere of form. If one managed to make this experience stable (which is hardly possible while under the effect of CREVs), one would establish ourselves in the samsaric sphere of form.

Finally, if the singled out object is what one views as an attractive sexual partner, and particularly so if the sense of touch has come into play, the consciousness of defilements (Tib. *nyönmongpa chen yikyi namshé* [*nyong mongs pa can yid kyi rnam shes*]) may come into play, giving rise to erotic arousal and thereby to what could be conceptualized as all-pervading, boundless, inexpressible pleasure, which is instantly taken as object. If at this point the experience is interpreted in terms of intuitive conceptualization of this pleasure, attachment arises and an experience of the higher regions of the sphere of sensuality ensues. If one managed to make this experience stable (which is hardly possible under the effect of CREVs), one would come to dwell in the realm of the gods of sensuality.

However, after a while one may get used to the pleasure, in which case the attitude would switch to one of indifference, and since there is no longer a pleasure so intense as to keep one absorbed in it, distractive thoughts of all kinds would toss the person about. Thus one comes to yearn for a more intense pleasure, which is an experience proper to the realm of *pretas* (Tib. *yidag* [*yi dvags*]), Tantaluses, or "hungry ghosts"—which, in its turn, may lead one to act in a way that, it is hoped, will increase pleasure and thus take one back to the higher regions of the sphere of sensuality. If one ends up making love with one's partner, the intensity of sensation may facilitate the recurrence of the suspension of judgment or *epoche* in the face of sensation and subsequent interpretation of this sensation in terms of

contents of intuitive thoughts such as the one that could be expressed discursively as *all-pervading, boundless, inexpressible pleasure*. At any rate, independently of whether or not one ends up making love with a partner, sooner or later different emotions will succeed each other, making one transmigrate through the six realms of the samsaric sphere of sensuality (between one realm and the next, a sequence roughly of the same kind as the one just discussed occurs, yet insofar as it is impelled by intense passions, rather than developing as slowly and distinctly as the one already discussed, is likely to occur rapidly and confusedly, as it does in everyday experience). In any case, it is important to keep in mind that entrance into the sphere of sensuality does not depend on the occurrence of erotic pleasure, and that the initial experience of the sphere in question need not be one of pleasure. In fact, this sphere arises when the consciousness of defilements comes into play and subsequently *sensa* are interpreted in terms of subtle thoughts, triggering passionate reactions on the part of the mental subject inherent in dualistic consciousness.

Among transpersonal theorists who have ingested CREVs, many seem to have taken for the initial manifestation of Awakening or nirvana, what in fact was no more than an instance of the condition of the base-of-all carrying propensities followed by an experience of the formless sphere. In fact, since, as noted, instances of the neutral base-of-all cannot be reflexively remembered, when someone reflexively remembers having fused in totality while under the effects of CREVs, as a rule what he or she remembers is the experience of the formless sphere that took place immediately after the manifestation of the neutral base-of-all, on the occasion of taking the sensory totality as object, conceptualizing that object as oneness, totality, inexpressible reality, or the like, and in most cases establishing a link of being (or identifying) with it. After this experience of the formless sphere, the figure / ground distinction arises again, yet the singled out figure—which may be a segment of what ordinarily is interpreted as “the material world”—is not immediately experienced in terms of a delusorily valued subtle / intuitive thought: memories of the inexpressible wondrousness of a tree, a grain of sand or any other material structure experienced under the effects of CREVs are recollections of the moment when, after having spent a longer or shorter lapse in the nonconceptual experience of the figure corresponding to the consciousness-of-the-base-of-all, this figure is

interpreted in terms of a subtle thought that could be expressed discursively as “ineffable wonder” or the like. In the same way, memories of all-pervading, nondiscrete pleasure are recollections of subsequent experiences of the higher regions of the sphere of sensuality.

Does the above mean that, contrarily to what was affirmed in the main body of this paper, instances of nirvana may not occur while under the effects of CREVs? This would be a wholly wrong conclusion, for as has been seen their essential effect is that of raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness, and as noted a heightened energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness may as well be the most important of those conditions that facilitate the occurrence of instances of nirvana. In fact, all true Paths of Awakening have means for raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness, thus inducing highly energetic, panoramic states, and without such means they would not be Paths of Awakening, for the higher the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness, the more likely the recognition (of) our true condition. Furthermore, the Dzogchen teachings (especially those of the Semde [*sems sde*] series) compare primordial, nondual awareness with a mirror and experiences with reflections in the mirror, and make it clear that it is very often on the occasion of trying to find and apprehend the mental subject that seems to perceive the extraordinary experiences/states induced by the raise of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness and that seems to be different and separate from the object of these experiences/states—or, alternatively, of trying to apprehend the awareness represented by the mirror—that, provided that the individual has received both what Vajrayana and Ch’an Buddhism call “transmission” and the oral instructions for a practice such as Dzogchen, the unconcealment of the true condition of the awareness symbolized by a mirror may spontaneously take place.

Nevertheless, no Buddhist Path, Vehicle or School teaches methods involving the use of CREVs, and those that possess traditional means for abruptly raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness warn that these must be restricted to duly prepared individuals, for the effects of such raise are too dangerous for those who are not so prepared; that they must *not* be used in the context of mere experimentalism; and that the illusory experiences they induce, rather than being taken for realizations, are to be used as specified

by the teachings: as images in a mirror that are used to reGnize the true condition of the mirror. (The necessity for transmission is almost universal on both the Paths of Transformation and Spontaneous liberation and in Ch'an or Zen; even those rare treasure-revealers or *tertöns* [*gter ston*] of the Paths of Spontaneous liberation and Transformation who, without depending on a *nirmanakaya* ["physical"] teacher, receive instructions and empowerment, obtaining the unconcealment of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that here I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, in order to continue to proceed on the Path need to receive transmission and teachings from a Master in human form holding a genuine lineage. In fact, among the very few who receive transmission and teachings without depending on a Master in human form, the only ones who receive complete systems of teachings and do not depend on receiving further teachings or transmissions in order to continue to proceed on the Path, or in order to teach others, are those that the teachings call primordial revealers or *tönpa* [*ston pa*], of which according to the Dzogchen teachings there have been only twelve in our cosmic time cycle, and which arise only when the teachings and the associated transmission have disappeared from the face of the planet.<sup>174</sup>)

The reason why here I am so cautious and critical with regard to CREVs is that a significant raise in the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness / modification of brain biochemistry such as the one induced by these substances widens the focus of conscious awareness in a sudden manner, inducing more or less panoramic states in which, insofar as perceptual divisions such as that of subject and object and that of figure and ground are either obliterated or to some extent blurred, the emptiness of all entities may become patent, and the mechanisms of elusion responsible for what in the Dzogchen classification adopted here is the third of the senses of the term *avidya* (namely, unawareness that the illusory is illusory, that the baseless is baseless, that the relative is relative) may be to a greater or lesser extent impaired. In individuals of lower capacities, this incipient dawning of voidness may induce *panic* and thus give rise to a painful feeling-tone<sup>175</sup> that, since the individual no longer has a narrow, relatively hermetic focus of conscious awareness that may be zeroed in on a different object,<sup>176</sup> is experienced in its full intensity. This elicits wholehearted rejection, which makes the feeling-tone all the more painful—which in its turn elicits further rejection, thus activating a hellish positive feedback loop that makes

the painful feeling tone rapidly become unbearable. Since the individual clings to the illusion of self-being that is in the course of dissolving and struggles against the process he or she is undergoing, in terms of the symbolism of the *mandala* (cf. Capriles, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2007a [Vol. II]), rather than "going through the intermediate zone" and dissolving in the center, he or she may stay in the zone in question, facing a psychotic episode that in some cases might continue long after the drug's effects have run out.<sup>177</sup> Something similar may occur in unprepared individuals if ego-dystonic contents (i.e., contents contradicting their self-image) emerge while they are under the effects of the drug, for the panoramification of the focus of conscious awareness and the concomitant thinning of the latter's walls that makes them more "transparent"<sup>178</sup> makes it impossible to shield those contents, and hence those individuals could react to them with horror or anguish—and since they cannot shield the feeling-tone in the center of the chest at the level of the heart, they would react to it wholeheartedly, giving rise to the positive feedback loop just considered. And something comparable could occur even in individuals of "higher capacities" who would experience no panic before the panoramification of the focus of conscious awareness and who would not be disturbed by the intrusion of ego-dystonic contents, in case that for adventitious reasons anguish manifests in their continuum: being unable to shield the feeling-tone, they would react wholeheartedly to it, unleashing the positive feedback loop in question.<sup>179</sup>

The experiences briefly discussed above may occur independently of whether or not the conditioned states induced by CREVs are taken to be the unconditioned unveiling of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that constitutes Dzogchen-*qua*-Path—or, what is the same, whether or not they are taken to be instances of nirvana. However, as noted above, falling prey to this confusion would involve the extra danger of self-inflation—which, what is worse, may turn into long term spiritual pride, taking those who indulge in it further away from authenticity and therefore from Awakening, and in some cases leading them to set themselves up as gurus and use disciples to exacerbate their conceit and unauthenticity, by the same token leading the latter along the misguided way they themselves trod. For these and many other reasons, youth intending to transform consciousness and take society away from the self-destructive path that it presently treads, should avoid the psychedelic hedonism

of the hippies in the 1960s, which in the short term produced a number of psychoses and suicides, and gave rise to a drive to obtain certainty, security, and a positive identity that furthered both the proliferation of pseudo-gurus and spiritual groups based on manipulation and deceit, and the rapid propagation of ego-enhancing, body-damaging stimulants and narcotics. Likewise, the painful experiences that so many hippies and parahippies obtained from retaining delusion and clinging to emotions and conventional frameworks while opening to new states of mind, experiences, and ways of relating to others, gave rise to fear of change, which in its turn resulted in a political reaction to the right. In order to achieve a complete, truly therapeutic transformation of consciousness and experience, and thus have a possibility to change the course our species presently follows, one must first receive transmission and instructions from a Master officially holding the transmission of a genuine tradition of Awakening, and then set out to apply those instructions in a consistent way.

Alan Watts (1962), despite having been a lucid expositor of Zen Buddhism and related Paths and views, and having been one of the first Western writers to grasp and explain the spiritual causes of ecological crisis,<sup>180</sup> was prey to one of the distortions denounced above, for in the nineteen sixties he wrote that the ingestion of LSD and similar substances could *induce* episodes of *satori* without the individual having to undergo the training that in Eastern Paths of Awakening is the precondition of such occurrences. Furthermore, his descriptions of his experiences while under the effects of CREVs in that work, rather than reporting episodes of nirvana, narrate experiences that any genuine *dharmakaya* yogi would automatically recognize as not being what Watts believed them to be: while some of them may have corresponded to some of the experiences described above, most of them, despite expressing most valuable insights, obviously featured the understanding of reality in terms of delusorily valued coarse / discursive thoughts.<sup>181</sup> In order to prevent this kind of error, it is vital to stress the fact that Awakening *cannot be caused, induced, produced, or fabricated*.<sup>182</sup>

In fact, since Dzogchen-*qua*-Path is by its inherent nature uncaused / unproduced / unbecome (Pali *abhuta*; Skt. *anutpada*, *anutpatti*; Tib. *makyepa* [*ma skyes pa*]), unborn (Pali and Skt. *ajata*; Tib. *makyepa*) and unconditioned / uncompounded / unproduced / unmade / uncontrived (Pali *asankhata*; Skt. *asamskrita*;

Tib. *dūmajai* [*'dus ma byas*]), genuine Paths of Awakening, and with a special emphasis the Supreme Path of Awakening which is Dzogchen *Ati*, make it clear that it *cannot be generated*—either by raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness or by whatever other means—and that it can only occur *spontaneously*. In fact, raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness can produce potentially panoramic states in which, as shown above, recognition in terms of thoughts takes longer to occur, and which often involve conditioned experiences of emptiness, clarity, pleasure and so on—which are what Tibetans call “illusory experiences” (Tib. *nyam* [*nyams*]), what Sufis call “states” (Ar. *hal*), what Chinese and Japanese Buddhists call “demonic states” (Chin. *mo-ching*; Jap. *makyo*), and probably instances of what in the context of the *vipassana* practice of the Pali Canon are called the “ten corruptions”—and in general can produce many kinds of illusory experiences, but *it cannot produce the unproduced*. In terms of the symbolism that in the Dzogchen teachings illustrates primordial nondual awareness by a mirror, these illusory experiences are no more than reflections in the mirror, which have value *if and only if* they are used as the occasion for discovering the true condition of the mirror I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Base in the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path.

As noted, according to Buddhism, conditioned experiences arise as a result of the combination of a main cause (Skt. *hetu*; Tib. *gyü* [*rgyu*]), which is one of our *karmas*, with a set of secondary causes or circumstances (Skt. *pratyaya*; Tib. *kyen* [*rkyen*]). Recreational users of CREVs may have “good trips” if they have the karma for having experiences of the gods’ absorptions and this karma coincides with the right contributory causes or circumstances. However, since at some point they will use up all their accumulated good karma in obtaining experiences of those spheres, and before that time, in one or another occasion, unfavorable contributory causes will most likely concur, sooner or later they will have to face a “bad trip.” Among the effects of CREVs, this is the one most feared by recreational users, precisely insofar as it is the only one that does not allow them to squander away their precious human lifetime in useless enjoyment of wonderful, pleasurable, extraordinary experiences—and in the case of unprepared individuals, it is also the one that represents the most immediate danger, for it can even unleash psychoses that, insofar as in most cases the individuals themselves and their

human environment will react in ways that block the process that was thus unleashed, may cause them to spin in endless loops of suffering. However, “bad trips” may be said to mimic the experiences of the wrathful mandalas in higher Dzogchen practices, which in duly prepared individuals are the occurrences having the highest potential for rapidly exhausting samsara.

It has been noted that in 1957 Humphrey F. Osmond christened a wide class of psychoactive substances as psychedelics. Then, in 1979, Carl A. P. Ruck, Jeremy Bigwood, Danny Staples, Richard Evans Schultes, Jonathan Ott, and R. Gordon Wasson coined the term *entheogens* to refer to so-called psychedelics, including CREVs. My reasons for rejecting the etymology of the term “entheogens” and arguing against the use of the word are very different from the ones that made me question the etymology of the term psychedelics, and consist in the fact that, for the reasons explained in the last few paragraphs, it reinforces and consolidates the confusions denounced in this Appendix.

The term *entheogen* derives from the Greek words *entheos* and *genesthe*, meaning “god within,” and “to generate,” respectively. Thus, it identifies such substances as ones that generate an experience of the divine that is within the individual. Evidently, those who coined the term *entheogens* could not have applied it to psychoactive plants of the *solanaceae* family such as *atropa belladonna*, *hyocamus*, the eleven species of *datura*, and so on, or to other drugs not having the potential to induce states of seeming cosmic union or the like. Thus the question is whether or not it is legitimate to apply it to CREVs and other so-called psychedelics—which is the one that Roger Walsh (2003) made in a paper titled “Entheogens: True or False?” Though Walsh’s reply was in the affirmative, the arguments expounded in this Appendix have categorically demonstrated that, if one uses the term *god* to refer to what, in the last chapter of the first volume of Capriles (2007a) and after redefining the term used by Sartre (1980), I called *holon*, and which here I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—which are instances of nirvana—these substances are false *qua* *entheogens*: whatever experience elicited by the ingestion of a substance is something *produced*: the *holon*, like the Christian god, is by its very nature uncaused / unproduced / unbecome (Pali *abhuta*; Skt. *anutpada*, *anutpatti*; Tib. *makyepa* [*ma skyes pa*]), unborn (Pali and Skt. *ajata*; Tib. *makyepa* [*ma skyes pa*]) and unconditioned / uncompounded / unproduced /

uncaused / uncontrived (Pali, *asankhata*; Skt., *asamskrita*; Tib., *dümajai* [*’dus ma byas*]).

Neither psychoactive drugs nor spiritual practices can do more than inducing illusory experiences or *nyam* (*nyams*); however, whereas followers of traditional Paths (and in particular Dzogchen practitioners) are supposed to know how to employ the experiences produced by spiritual practices as reflections in a mirror allowing them to discover the uncreated, uncaused, nondual primordial awareness illustrated by the mirror, spontaneous, recreational users of CREVs do not know how to use drug-induced experiences in this way: those who believe they experienced nirvana under the effect of such substances as a rule have not gone beyond the experiences of the formless realms (or those of other higher samsaric realms) that manifest immediately after the occurrence of the neutral condition of the base-of-all. Therefore, *only if we used the term “being in god” to refer to the beings dwelling in the samsaric realms of the gods of formlessness, of the gods of form and of the gods of sensuality*, would it be *partly* justified to use the term *entheogens* for referring to these substances: though it is karma and not any substances that are the primary cause for spending some time in the realms in question, these substances can be secondary causes or circumstances allowing users to spend short lapses in those realms—during which, however, part or all of the karma that is the primary cause for spending time in them is used up, and therefore the individual runs the risk of subsequently falling into lower realms.

The effects of the traditional methods Wisdom traditions use for raising the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness are so familiar to the tradition prescribing them that the ensuing developments are to a great extent predictable, and hence the dangers inherent in the raise in question are minimized. Most such methods are wholesome and many of them even improve health, and in the more gradual Paths they increase the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness in a quite gradual way, making it easier for practitioners to apply the instructions prescribed. The means used to this aim in the Tantric Path of Transformation raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness far more rapidly than those used in the Path of Renunciation. And methods of the *Upadeshavarga* series of Dzogchen such as those of *Thögel* and the *Yangthik* raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness



in a small fraction of the time it would take through Tantric practices of the Path of Transformation working on the energetic system, setting the conditions for the reGnition of the unconditioned Base and true condition of the experience to occur, so that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path may manifest and by the same token whichever thoughts may be interpreting the experience spontaneously liberate themselves. Moreover, though these methods of the Upadeshavarga do not have as immediate an effect as CREVs, they can raise the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness to a higher level than any drug and keep it on that level for days, weeks, months, or even longer periods. Nevertheless, these methods are exclusively taught to extremely advanced practitioners having a great capacity of spontaneous liberation and as such being able to use the ensuing experiences to maximize and accelerate the process of spontaneous liberation, rather than developing pathological attachments or undergoing psychoses the natural self-healing course of which is most likely to be blocked—which as noted would lead the individual undergoing them to spin in endless loops of suffering.

I wrote this Appendix in order to keep readers from indulging in the use of so-called psychedelics in general and of CREVs in particular, which, as is often seen, make users mistake samsaric and neither-samsaric-nor-nirvanic experiences for nirvana and thus derive unwarranted pride and infatuation, and which as noted involve far more consequential dangers. Nevertheless, *some* of those who used them in hippy times may have been lucky to do so, for certain Tibetan Masters have noted that some of their best students are former users / abusers of CREVs who under their effects had holotropic experiences that inspired them to practice Buddhism.

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## Notes

1. Moreover, though Wilber has studied Dzogchen, he has posited a progression of realization beginning at the seventh fulcrum that he wrongly took for the *nirmanakaya* that is the first level of realization in the *Anuttarayogatantras* of the *Sarmapa* and in the Inner Tantras of Transformation of the *Nyingmapa* (but which does not match any of the levels of realization that obtain in the genuine Paths I am familiar with), followed by the eighth fulcrum that he mistakenly identified with the *sambhogakaya* that is the second level of realization in the *Anuttarayogatantras* of the *Sarmapa* and in the Inner Tantras of Transformation of the *Nyingmapa* (but which does not match any of the levels of realization that obtain in the genuine Paths I know well), then followed by the ninth fulcrum, which he confused with the *dharmakaya* that is the third level of realization in the *Anuttarayogatantras* of the *Sarmapa* and in the Inner Tantras of Transformation of the *Nyingmapa* (but which, again, does not match any of the levels of realization that obtain in the genuine Paths I am familiar with), and concluding at the tenth fulcrum, which he confused with the *swabhavikaya* that is the final level of realization in the *Anuttarayogatantras* of the *Sarmapa* and in Inner Tantras of Transformation of the *Nyingmapa* (but which I have been unable to identify as any of the levels of realization that obtain in the genuine Paths I know well). In so doing, not only did he mistake for the four kayas experiences that are not these kayas, but he also posited a sequence of the kayas that is correct in the *Anuttarayogatantras* of the *Sarmapa* and in the Inner Tantras of Transformation of the *Nyingmapa*, but that is opposite to the one that is characteristic of the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* [*man ngag sde*; Wiley transliterations appear in semibold italics] series of Dzogchen teachings—which begins with realization of the *dharmakaya*, continues with realization of the *sambhogakaya* and concludes with realization of the *nirmanakaya*. (It is important to note that in each of these levels of realization all three kayas are realized. For example, the first level of realization is the realization of the *dharmakaya* because it is the realization, in the practice of *Tekchö* [*khregs chod*], of the true condition of the *dang* [*gdangs*] form of manifestation of energy, which in the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* series of Dzogchen teachings is the *dharmakaya*, and which illustrates the essence or *ngowo* [*ngo bo*] aspect of the

Base or *zhi* [*gzhi*—which from another standpoint [which, however, is also adopted by the Dzogchen teachings], insofar as it is the voidness aspect of the Base, is also identified as the *dharmakaya*. However, in this level one realizes the emptiness of *dang* energy simultaneously with its clarity and with its unceasing manifestation, and therefore in the sense in which realization of the Base's emptiness [its essence or *ngowo* aspect] is realization of the *dharmakaya*, realization of the Base's clarity [its nature or *rangzhin* / *rang bzhin* aspect] is realization of the *sambhogakaya*, and realization of the Base's unceasing manifestation [its energy or *thukje* / *thugs rje* aspect] is the *nirmanakaya*, the realization of the three kayas is complete in the realization of the true condition of *dang* energy that, in the special sense proper to the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* [*man ngag sde*] series of Dzogchen teachings being considered, is the *dharmakaya*. ¶ Likewise, the second level of realization is the realization of the *sambhogakaya* because it is the realization, in the practice of *Thögel* [*thod rgal*], of the true condition of the *rölpa* [*rol pa*] form of manifestation of energy, which in the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* series of Dzogchen teachings is the *sambhogakaya*, and which illustrates the nature or *rangzhin* [*rang bzhin*] aspect of the Base or *zhi* [*gzhi*], which from another standpoint [which, however, is also adopted by the Dzogchen teachings], insofar as it is the clarity aspect of the Base, is also identified as the *sambhogakaya*. However, in this level one realizes the emptiness of *rölpa* energy simultaneously with its clarity and with its unceasing manifestation, and hence in the sense in which realization of the Base's emptiness [its essence or *ngowo* aspect] is realization of the *dharmakaya*, realization of the Base's clarity [its nature or *rangzhin* aspect] is realization of the *sambhogakaya*, and realization of the Base's unceasing manifestation [its energy or *thukje* aspect] is realization of the *nirmanakaya*, the realization of the three kayas is complete in the realization of the true condition of *rölpa* energy that, in the special sense proper to the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* series of Dzogchen teachings being considered, is the *sambhogakaya*. ¶ Similarly, the third level of realization is the realization of the *nirmanakaya* because it is the correct apprehension, as a result of advanced *Thögel* realization, of the *tsel* [*rtsal*] form of manifestation of energy—a realization that in the *Upadeshavarga* or *Menngagde* series of Dzogchen teachings is the *nirmanakaya*. It is also

the nirmanakaya because this realization illustrates the energy or thukje aspect of the Base or zhi, which from another standpoint [which, however, is also adopted by the Dzogchen teachings], insofar as it is the unceasing manifestation aspect of the Base, is also identified as the nirmanakaya. However, here one realizes the emptiness of tsel energy simultaneously with its clarity and with its unceasing manifestation, and hence in the sense in which realization of the Base's emptiness [its essence or ngowo aspect] is realization of the dharmakaya, realization of the Base's clarity [its nature or rangzhin aspect] is realization of the sambhogakaya, and realization of the Base's unceasing manifestation [its energy or thukje aspect] is the nirmanakaya, the realization of the three kayas is complete in the realization of the true condition of tsel energy that, in the special sense proper to the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings being considered, is the nirmanakaya. ¶ Thus one could say that in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings the realization of the true condition of dang energy is the dharmakaya, but that this dharmakaya has a dharmakaya, a sambhogakaya, and a nirmanakaya aspect in a sense that is not limited to the Dzogchen teachings. Likewise, one could say that in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings the realization of the true condition of rölpa energy is the sambhogakaya, but that this sambhogakaya has a dharmakaya, a sambhogakaya, and a nirmanakaya aspect in a sense that is not limited to the Dzogchen teachings. And one could say that in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings the realization of the true condition of tsel energy is the nirmanakaya, but that this nirmanakaya has a dharmakaya, a sambhogakaya, and a nirmanakaya aspect in a sense that is not limited to the Dzogchen teachings.)

Independently of the above, I want to note that in a prior work (Capriles, 1977), I presented the diagram of a "spiral of spirals," which was an elaboration on Ronald D. Laing's diagram of the "spiral of pretences." In it, it seemed that from the level wherein the anguish that is the being of the human individual is fully experienced (which in this sense would seem to correspond to Wilber's sixth fulcrum), one proceeded to the realization of the nirmanakaya, and then from it to the successive realizations of the sambhogakaya and the dharmakaya. Therefore, an error could be

appreciated that was partly similar to the one I am criticizing in Wilber; however, in my diagram this level was represented as the very bottom of *samsara*, and was not said to involve the "integration of body and mind" Wilber posited in relation to it.)

A sequence of realization beginning with the nirmanakaya, continuing with the sambhogakaya, then featuring the dharmakaya, and concluding with the swabhavikaya that consists in the indivisibility of the first three kayas, is posited in the Buddhist Tantras of the Path of Transformation. As shown in Capriles (2007a, vol. I), this inversion by the Tantras of the Path of Transformation of the sequence of realization of the kayas that occurs in Dzogchen *Atiyoga*, the "universal ancestor of all vehicles" (*Nubchen Sangye Yeshe* [*gnubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes*], *Samten Migdrön* [*bsam gtan mig sgron*]) is related to the fact that, though in both systems the names of the kayas are the same, what the names indicate is *not in all senses* the same reality—which is evidenced by the fact that, as noted in Capriles (2000b, 2003, 2004, 2007a, vol. I), the final realization of the Inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation, which these Tantras call swabhavikaya and consider as the fourth and last kaya to be attained, corresponds to the state of Direct Introduction to Dzogchen that is the precondition of genuine Dzogchen practice and that, in the Upadeshavarga series of teachings, is prior both to the practice of Tekchö (*lebhregs chod*) that must establish the dharmakaya and to the subsequent practice of Thögel (*thod rgal*) that must establish the sambhogakaya and finally result in the nirmanakaya. Therefore, the levels of realization that Dzogchen Ati calls sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya go far beyond the final level of realization of the inner Tantras of the Path of transformation and by no means can be attained through the methods of these Tantras.

In fact, in the Menngagde series of Dzogchen Ati, but not so in the Inner Tantras of the *Vajrayana*, in the present context the dharmakaya is the correct apprehension of the dang (*gdangs*) mode of manifestation of energy in the practice of Tekchö, the sambhogakaya is the correct apprehension of the rölpa (*rolpa*) mode of manifestation of energy in the practice of Thögel, and finally the nirmanakaya is the correct apprehension of the tsel (*rtsal*) mode of manifestation of energy that obtains as the result of carrying the practice of Thögel to a given threshold; this is the reason why the Dzogchen teachings place

so much emphasis on these forms of manifestation of energy, which are ignored in the Anuttarayogatantras of the Sarmapa (*gsar ma pa*) and in the *Nyingma* (*rnying ma*) Tantras of the Path of Transformation, and in all lower vehicles as well. The point is that in Tekchö the practitioner works principally with the *katak* (*ka dag*) aspect of the Base, which is voidness, and with the dang mode of manifestation of energy, which is the single, fundamental constituent of all thoughts—and whenever the true condition of the dang energy is reGnized the dharmakaya, which in this context is the first aspect of Awakening, manifests. In Thögel the practitioner works mainly with the *lhundrub* (*lhun grub*) or “spontaneous perfection” aspect of the Base, which comprises the absolutely uncontrived and unrestrained spontaneity of our Gnitiveness (and in particular the positive feedback loops that make up the *Thanatos*), and with the intangible self-luminous visions that occur in the intermediate state of *dharmata* or *chönyi bardo* and which are the paradigmatic expressions of the *rölpa* (*rol pa*) mode of manifestation of energy—and it is when the true condition of *rölpa* energy is reGnized, so that the mental subject that seemed to be perceiving it disappears, that the sambhogakaya manifests. Finally, the nirmanakaya only manifests in a stable manner once integration with the self-luminous visions in the practice of Thögel has neutralized the tendency to experience phenomena as external objects, and so we no longer experience ourselves as separate from the phenomena of the “material” world constituted by tsel (*rtsal*) energy: the *rölpa* and tsel forms of manifestation of energy have fused and there is no longer anything that may interrupt the condition of indivisibly or *jerme* (*dbyer med*) that constitutes the nirmanakaya (cf. Capriles, 2003 or, for a more in depth explanation, Capriles, work in progress 1). Since tsel energy has acquired the characteristics of *rölpa* energy, the wisdoms of quality and quantity, inherent in the sambhogakaya, apply to the nirmanakaya, and thus laymen perceive the person as “having a capacity of miracles.”

The fact that the sequence of realization of the kayas on the Path of transformation seems to coincide with the one Wilber (1996) posited in the work considered here does *not* at all mean the “holarchy” here considered coincides with the sequence of realization on the Path in question. To begin with, in the 1996 work that is under study, Wilber equated the nirmanakaya with what he called “psychic level,” but his description of this

level was ambiguous enough as to apply equally to transpersonal samsaric states, to neither-samsaric-nor-nirvanic transpersonal states, and if one is not too strict perhaps even to some nirvanic states—though apparently *not* so to the nirmanakaya as understood by any Buddhist system:

A person might temporarily dissolve the separate-self sense (the ego or centaur) and find an identity with the entire gross or sensorimotor world—so-called *nature mysticism*. You’re on a nice nature walk, relaxed and expansive in your awareness, and wham!—suddenly there is no looker, just the mountain—and you are the mountain. You are not in here looking at the mountain out there. There is just the mountain, and it seems to see itself, or you seem to be seeing it from within. The mountain is closer to you than you own skin. (p. 202)

(Concerning Wilber’s wording at this point, it seems relevant to note that the dissolution of the “separate-self sense” is not something that a person can *do* but something that *happens*, for all actions affirm and sustain the illusory mental subject.)

I assume that what Wilber meant by *identifying with* is what Sartre called *becoming* and contrasted with *identifying with* (Sartre, 1980. For an explanation cf. Capriles, 2007a, vol. I, ch. IV and vol. II, ch. V). Whatever the case, if one *identifies with* / *becomes* the world *qua* totality, the subject-object duality is still present, for *it is the mental subject that identifies with* / *becomes* the object *qua* totality—and in such a case what has taken place is a samsaric experience of the formless realms. However, immediately after speaking of identification, Wilber used the expression *disappearance of the observer*, which implies that there is no mental subject that may *identify with* / *become* this or that—in which case one would not be speaking of an experience of the formless realms, which like all samsaric conditions involves the subject-object duality. Neither in *nirvana*, nor in the neutral condition of the base-of-all or *kunzhi lungmaten* (*kun gzhi lung ma bstan*) wherein neither samsara nor nirvana are active, is there a mental subject / observer; however, since in individuals who are not intensively training in a genuine Path of Awakening it is hardly possible that an initial manifestation of nirvana may take place fortuitously while “taking a walk through nature, relaxed and open,” one can be almost certain that if the mental subject / observer actually disappeared in such circumstances, that

occurrence would be an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all. Nevertheless, since as has been seen this condition cannot be reflexively remembered, what one reflexively remembers must necessarily be the instance of the samsaric formless realms that takes place when, immediately after the occurrence of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, the subject-object duality arises, so that the undivided sensory continuum is taken as object and the mental subject / observer *becomes* this pseudo-totality, having the feeling of *being what is perceived* rather than having the feeling of being inherently different from it. The fact that in the same paragraph Wilber spoke of disappearance of the observer and of *identifying with* (which I understand in the sense of Sartre's *becoming*) the world *qua* totality suggests that Wilber was referring to an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all immediately followed by the arising of the mental subject / observer in an experience of the formless sphere, and that *a posteriori* he mixed these two successive occurrences with each other, taking them for a single occurrence. At any rate, what the Inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation call the nirmanakaya does not manifest in the fortuitous manner in which, according to Wilber, the occurrence he identified as the seventh fulcrum comes about, nor does it consist in a particular type of apprehension of the phenomena of the natural world. (There is a contradiction between Wilber's reference to a "disappearance of the observer" in this fulcrum and his claim that in it there occur the first glimpses of the pure "witness" [Rothberg, 1998a, p. 9]; likewise, the Vajrayana Buddhist traditions that posit a sequence of realization nirmanakaya-sambhogakaya-dharmakaya-swabhavikaya have never claimed that the observer disappears in the manifestation of the nirmanakaya and then is reestablished in that of the swabhavikaya, as Wilber implied by asserting that the observer disappears in the seventh fulcrum and yet asserting the supposedly nondual realization of the tenth fulcrumless fulcrum involves the subject-object duality—a claim that, beside being self-contradictory in that it asserts the nondual to involve the duality of subject and object, will be refuted below with numerous cites from canonical scriptures and authorized commentaries and treatises.)

However, elsewhere Wilber has produced a far more serious misconception of the nirmanakaya, which is the one Sean Kelly (1998a) summarized as follows:

The Nirmanakaya is alternately described by Wilber as the 'psychic' (or 'astral-psychic') or 'low subtle' realm, and includes such things as 'out-of-body' experiences, certain occult knowledge, the auras, true magic, 'astral travel,' ... [and] what we would call 'psi' phenomena: ESP, precognition, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, and so on' (Wilber 1980, p. 67). It is here that 'consciousness starts to go transpersonal' (1980, p. 66). (p. 121)

This description does not apply to nirmanakaya. In fact, as has already been seen, in one Dzogchen interpretation the nirmanakaya is the realization of the true condition of tsel energy. In one interpretation pertaining to the Inner Tantras of Transformation, the nirmanakaya is impure vision (the one that perceives a material dimension), whereas the sambhogakaya is pure vision (which perceives an immaterial dimension of pure light), and the dharmakaya is the true condition of the former two. In another Tantric interpretation shared by the Dzogchen teachings the dharmakaya is emptiness, the sambhogakaya is clarity, and the nirmanakaya is unceasing manifestation. If one takes the Mahayana interpretation at face value, then the nirmanakaya is a Buddha in physical form (as, for example, the individual who, in the fifth century BCE, gave rise to the Buddhist teachings of our time), the sambhogakaya is that same Buddha's voice / energy, and the dharmakaya is that same Buddha's undeluded awareness. Though there may be other interpretations of the terms as well, in the Buddhist teachings I have seen no descriptions that may suggest an interpretation of the nirmanakaya in any way similar to the one produced by Wilber and summarized above by Kelly.

Then comes the eighth fulcrum, which Wilber called the "subtle level," asserting that in it one contacts non-ordinary strata of perception and subtle non-Jungian archetypes. It must be remarked that *per se* the manifestation of "non-ordinary strata of perception" and "subtle non-Jungian archetypes" does not correspond to any level of realization—and, in fact, such experiences may take place in psychosis or upon the ingestion of a psychedelic drug. Realization does not at all depend on *what is it* that manifests, but on *how* it manifests: Dzogchen-*qua*-Path must necessarily involve recognition of the nondual awareness in which, as in a mirror, experiences manifest, and the

concomitant spontaneous liberation of conceptuality (and therefore of dualism). When the intangible, self-luminous visions of the intermediate state of dharmata or chönyi bardo occur while the organism is alive, and the reGnition of the nondual awareness in which they manifest results in the spontaneous liberation of conceptuality, the illusion that the vision is an object appearing to a subject and that it is manifesting in an external dimension dissolves, yet the vision continues to be manifest: it is this that the Dzogchen teachings call sambhogakaya. If visions occur but there is no such reGnition and therefore no spontaneous liberation of conceptuality, what one has is a vulgar illusory experience or *nyam* (*nyams*) of clarity—initially, as an instance of the consciousness of the base-of-all, but immediately, the very moment it is recognized, as a samsaric experience of the sphere of form (*rupadhatu* or *rupa loka*). Insofar as Wilber identified the subtle realm with the sambhogakaya, his assertion that *at the summit* of the subtle realm there *may be* union with these intangible, self-luminous visions implies both the incorrect claim that the rest of the sambhogakaya involves the duality between a separate observer and visions, and the error of mistaking the union of the subject with the object for nonduality *qua* Path—which consists in the disappearance of the subject-object duality rather than in the identification of one side of this duality with the other.

Furthermore, what the Dzogchen teachings call sambhogakaya manifests as a result of the application of the most advanced practices of the highest and most direct Buddhist Way (those of Thögel [*thod rgal*] and the *Yangthik* [*yang thig*], pertaining to the Menngagde [*man ngag sde*] or Upadeshavarga series of Dzogchen teachings), which can only be undertaken by yogis who are proficient in the immediately lower practice of the same Way (that of Tekchö, which pertains to the same series of Dzogchen teachings) and who, consequently, can no longer experience the dread of voidness I call *panic*—yet Wilber associated the dread in question with the stage at which the sambhogakaya is realized, which he fancied to be his eighth fulcrum. Only human beings of lower capacities go through the experience of *panic*, and they do so in *earlier* stages of the Path, *before* the initial occurrence of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, rather than in the far posterior stage at which the sambhogakaya is realized, which is close to the consolidation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit. In fact, *Prajñāparamita* and *Madhyamika* literature states

that the dread of voidness that Wilber associated with this fulcrum is characteristic of the *shravakas*, and that it is this dread that distinguishes them from the individuals of *Mahayana* capacities—the reason why Buddha Shakyamuni abstained from transmitting the *Prajñāparamita* Sutras to his direct disciples and decided to entrust them to the King of the *nagas* for him to bestow them on Nagarjuna, being that the former were shravakas and hence these teachings would have inspired panic in them, which could have scared them away from the *dharma*. Furthermore, the second of the five paths in all gradual *Sutrayana* vehicles is that of preparation (Skt. *prayoga marga*; Tib. *zorwe lam* [*sbyor ba'i lam*]), which in the gradual Mahayana has four stages, the third of which is called “forbearance of the unborn” because in it practitioners become increasingly familiar with the emptiness that previously inspired terror in them, until the point at which they totally overcome the terror in question: the name “path of preparation” is due to the fact that it prepares practitioners for the transition to the first supramundane path, which is called the “path of Seeing” (Skt. *darshana marga*; Tib. *thong lam* [*mtshong lam*]) and which in the gradual Mahayana comprises the initial realization of absolute truth, featuring the realization of voidness beyond the subject-object duality (it is the *Madhyamaka Prasangika* school and the schools of the Inner Madhyamaka that emphasize the fact that the absolute truth is disclosed in a gnosis beyond the subject-object duality that makes patent the true nature of phenomena [Skt. *dharmata*; Tib. *chönyi* (*chos nyid*)], showing phenomena to be utterly void of self-nature [and, according to the Inner Madhyamaka, showing this gnosis to be void of anything extraneous to itself]. The Inner Madhyamaka explains the absolute truth as the indivisibility of appearances and voidness [this is the Mahamadhyamika definition], and identifies it with the Buddha-nature [see upcoming revised version of Capriles, 2004]). If terror of emptiness can no longer manifest in the last level of the path of preparation of the gradual Mahayana, which is a rather early stage of a rather lower Path, far less could it manifest in the extremely advanced stage of the supreme and most direct Path at which the sambhogakaya is realized. (Dread can be felt in advanced practices, as it often does in the practice of *Chö* [*gcod*], which is applied for boosting the practices of Tekchö or the Nyingthik in which the

dharmakaya manifests again and again. However, this dread, rather than panic, is terror before what is believed to cause injury and death—and, at any rate, it could no longer manifest in those who have successfully practiced Tekchö or the Nyingthik to the point of being prepared for approaching the practices of Thögel or the Yangthik: if they face fear in the latter practices, this means that they are not ready to approach them, and thus it would be wise for them to boost their Tekchö / Nyingthik by practicing Chö in the traditional way.)

It has been seen that Wilber related the bare experience of the being of the human individual in *Angst*, *angoise*, and so on, to the stage he referred to as the sixth fulcrum. However, the being of the human individual continues to manifest in post-Contemplation so long as Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—irreversible Buddhahood—has not been attained, and the function of the supreme practices of the Upadeshavarga series of Dzogchen teachings, such as those of Thögel and the Yangthik, which are catalyzed by the wrathful mandalas (cf. Capriles (1990a, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2003, 2007a, Vol. II) and which are the ones in which the visions Wilber associated with the eighth fulcrum arise, have the function of making one experience in its bareness the anguish inherent in the being of the human individual each and every time this mode of being manifests, so that one may use the associated feeling as an alarm, a reminder to apply the core instructions—or, if one is advanced enough, so that delusion liberates itself spontaneously the moment it arises without there being need for any action (it must be stressed once more that the basic experience of the anguish inherent in the being of the human individual has nothing to do with what I call panic and which Wilber associated with the manifestation of the intangible self-luminous visions of the intermediate state of dharmata or chönyi bardo). Though at this stage a considerably high degree of mind-body integration has been achieved, which in Wilber's view occurred in his sixth fulcrum, unlike the latter this phase is not previous to the realization of voidness or of absolute truth. On the contrary, it is by far posterior to this realization, for as has been seen, it immediately precedes the transition from the Path to the Fruit of Dzogchen, in which delusion and relative truth no longer arise, awareness has totally integrated with the body and the whole of physical reality, and death takes place in one of the three special ways described in the Dzogchen teachings—

or, in case Thögel realization has reached its farthest point, simply does not occur.

According to Wilber, it is in the ninth fulcrum that what Mahayana Buddhism calls “voidness” or “emptiness” (Skt. *shunyata*; Tib. *tongpanyi [stong pa nyid]*; Chinese *k'ung*; Japanese *ku*) is realized. In order to place this fulcrum in perspective, one must begin by distinguishing voidness *qua* nyam [*nyams*] or illusory experience, from the instances of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path in which the dharmakaya is realized and in which the emphasis is on voidness: the Dzogchen teachings compare the illusory experiences of voidness (which comprises the various types of experience of nonconceptuality, lack of characteristics and so on, and the intuitive conceptual realization that entities are empty of self-being [Skt. *swabhava shunya*; Tib. *rangzhinggyi tongpa [rang bzhing gyis stong pa]*), unto reflections in the mirror that represents the primordial awareness of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, and contrast them with the dharmakaya, explained as the realization of the aspect of the primordial awareness represented as the mirror called *katak (ka dag)* or primordial purity (in the twofold classification) and *ngowo (ngo bo)* or essence (in the threefold division), which is voidness, and, in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde (*man ngag sde*) series of teachings, more specifically as the direct realization of the true condition of the *dang (gdangs)* form of manifestation of energy—a realization that in the practice of Tekchö (lower level of practice in the series of teachings in question) recurs each and every time the true condition of thought is reGnized in a gnosis free from the illusory subject-object duality. Even though voidness *qua* illusory experience is not the dharmakaya, if one employs it for directly reGnizing the essence aspect of the awareness in which it manifests and which is compared to a mirror, it will be the door to the realization of the dharmakaya that makes the all-liberating, nondual, single gnosis patent and functional, and that therefore results in the instant spontaneous liberation of delusorily valued thoughts. It must be noted that the grounds on which Wilber asserted this fulcrum to be different from the seventh fulcrum are not at all clear, for if the latter were, as he seemed to believe, an instance of nirvana involving the dissolution of the observer before a natural phenomenon, it would involve the realization of the voidness aspect of the absolute truth of the Mahayana (the dissolution of the observer shows that the observer was void: that it

was but an appearance that can dissolve without this affecting our Gnitiveness or the appearance of the myriad forms that manifest through the senses) beyond the subject-object duality. At any rate, the way in which, according to Wilber, this fulcrum manifests, is most relevant for discerning that author's misconception of the Path. In the excerpt from Wilber (1996, p. 220) quoted in the regular text of this paper in which he claimed that one pursues the observing Self, the Witness or *sakshin*, to its very source in pure emptiness, and then no objects arise in consciousness at all, he asserted this fulcrum to be a discrete, identifiable condition of *unmanifest absorption* or *cessation* (*nirodha*), claiming *nirvikalpa samadhi* and "classical" nirvana to be this same state, which he likened to deep dreamless sleep, and noted that because it cannot be perceived as object, the Self or Witness is pure Emptiness. The emptiness that according to Wilber (1996) manifests in this state is, in his view, the first of two meanings of emptiness:

Emptiness has two meanings....On the one hand...it is a discrete, identifiable state of awareness—namely, unmanifest absorption of cessation (*nirvikalpa samadhi*, *jñana samadhi*, *ayin*, *vergezzen*, *nirodh*, classical nirvana). This is the causal state, a discrete state. (p. 227)

The second meaning of emptiness in Wilber's conception will be discussed below, in the consideration of the tenth fulcrum, with which Wilber associated it; what is at issue at this point is that the author's identification of the dharmakaya with unmanifest absorption suggested he wrongly believed the former to be an experience of either pure light or pure darkness in which no forms are perceived—which is *not at all* the case, for most instances of the dharmakaya do not involve the absence of sensory forms (certainly in the recurring reGnition of the true condition of the dang form of manifestation of energy that is the stuff of which thoughts are made, which is the essence of the practice of Tekchö in the Dzogchen Menngagde, thoughts liberate themselves spontaneously without this involving the dissolution of the forms manifesting through the five senses oriented to what in *samsara* seems to be an external dimension), and, conversely, the shining forth of the clear light both after physical death and after falling asleep, *will only manifest as the dharmakaya if the dang energy of which it is made is reGnized* (if unreGnized, it manifests

as a variety of the base-of-all in which neither *samsara* nor *nirvana* are active—other varieties of the base-of-all being the blankness or darkness of utter unconsciousness, the unmanifest absorptions the *Yoga* and *Samkhya darshanas* take for ultimate realization, etc.). In fact, the dharmakaya is said to be formless because it is the realization of the true condition of dang (*gdangs*) energy, which does not exhibit either color-form (which is exhibited by both the *rölpa* [*rol pa*] and *tsel* [*rtsal*] energies, even though the former, just like dang energy, is intangible) or tangibility (which is a quality exclusive to *tsel* energy), rather than being said to be formless because it is realized in an unmanifest absorption—which is definitively not the case. On the other hand, most unmanifest absorptions are cases of the neutral base-of-all rather than instances of *nirvana*—and, in fact, as shown below, the terms *nirvikalpa samadhi*, *jñana samadhi*, *ayin* (*ayin sof obr*, which in the Kabbalah is the eternal light that surrounds the void, or, like *Amitabha*, infinite light, and which as such should not be identified with the dharmakaya, with which this light may be identified only when its true condition—which is dang energy—is reGnized), *vergezzen* (Middle German for *vergesen*, used by Meister Eckhart in sentences such as *Hie muoz komen in ein vergezzen und in ein nihtwizzen*, and identified by various commentators on Zen / Ch'an Buddhism, beginning with D. T. Suzuki, with the Buddhist *shunya* or *shunyata*), *nirodha*, and classical nirvana, *do not at all refer to one and the same condition*. Finally, it is worth noting that the term *causal level* places Wilber's view of the dharmakaya within the ambit of the cause-effect relation—and hence of the subject-object duality and so on (as in human individuals there can be no causality in the absence of the subject-object duality, which is the reason why Awakening is beyond *karma*)—and as such within the sphere of the relative (i.e., the deluded), of the caused / produced (Pali *bhuta*; Skt. *nutpada* or *nutpatti*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*]), the born (Pali and Skt. *jata*; Tib. *kyepa* [*skyes pa*]), and the compounded / conditioned / constructed / made / contrived / fabricated (Pali, *sankhata*; Skt. *samskrita*; Tib. *düj'ai* [*'dus byas*])—or, what is the same, within the sphere of *samsara*, and therefore of delusion, impermanence and dissatisfaction—thus being in stark contrast with the dharmakaya. (I explained within parentheses that the relative is the deluded because this is the case according to the Mahayana—as reflected by

the fact that the Sanskrit term for “relative truth” in Buddhism is *samvriti satya*, which, as Gendün Chöphel pointed out [in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. I, p. 137], has the etymological meaning of “obscuration to correctness” or “thoroughly confused.” In fact, in Gendün Chöphel, 2005, p. 148, one reads: “‘Relative’ is the word ancient scholars used for translating the Sanskrit *samvriti*, which means ‘obscuration to correctness’ or ‘thoroughly confused’. Because one is ‘deluded about the meaning’, we must also understand ‘relative truth’ as ‘deluded [pseudo-]truth.’”)

The Yoga darshana of Patañjali, which in the traditional classification of the six orthodox Brahmanic darshanas or philosophical systems is coupled with Kapila’s Samkhya darshana, is universally acknowledged to be dualistic insofar as it affirms the existence of a plethora of souls, on the one hand—the male Purushas that it defines as being inherently different and separate from the objects of knowledge—and of the female *Prakriti*, which corresponds to nature, on the other. In this system, the disinterested witness or sakshin is the freedom of *Purusha* from the hold of the naturally active *Prakriti*, to be achieved by ignoring the latter’s movements in a samadhi that resembles sleep insofar as sense data do not manifest, yet is different from it insofar as it involves being asleep and simultaneously fully awake, and thus becoming unaffected by those movements: the sakshin is the witness of the samadhi that allows *Purusha* to regain its naturally passive condition. In the *Upanishads*, in the *Vedanta Sutra*, in *Gaudapada’s Mayavada* (which was influenced by the *Yogachara* school of Buddhist philosophy) and in the *Advaita Vedanta* philosophy of *Shankaracharya* (which incorporated from the Madhyamaka school of Buddhist philosophy all it could without coming to contradict the basic tenets of Brahmanism)—all of which, each in its own way and to its own degree, are supposed to be nondualistic—the disinterested witness or sakshin appears to correspond to that which Kant called *pure apperception* and which the German philosopher viewed as the condition of possibility of the *empirical apperception* that consists in awareness that one is perceiving. Bina Gupta (1998) defined as follows the conception of the *sakshin* in the allegedly nondual tradition beginning with the *Upanishads*:

1. The witness-consciousness, in spite of being the base of all knowledge, *is different from the known object*. It is the ultimate

subject; it can never become an object of knowledge.

2. It is the element of pure awareness in all knowledge. It is an immutable, indivisible reality.

3. It shines with its own light; it is self-luminous.

4. It is different from the empirical individual [*jiva*], who knows and enjoys. In other words, it is different from the empirical individual trapped in the threefold state of wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep.” (p. 18; italics supplied)

Thus in all traditions the sakshin is a consciousness that, in spite of being a subject and of excluding all objects, does not get involved with these objects. Though the Advaita Vedanta philosophy of Shankaracharya proclaims itself to be nondual (*advaita*), it incurs in a dualism by positing a subject that it characterizes as “absolute” and which cannot and must not be eradicated, but which it defines as separate and different from its object—and that, as such, strictly speaking cannot be truly absolute, for it must be *relative* to the object. In fact, in the context of Idealism, Western philosophers raised the famous objection according to which an absolute could not be an *absolute of knowledge* insofar as the object and the subject that are the poles of knowledge are relative to each other, and Dzogchen and Vajrayana Masters, as well as the founders of the Madhyamaka school and later on the Madhyamika Prasangikas, had raised the same objection many centuries earlier. This is why the Dzogchen teachings, which rather than being logical constructions are descriptions of what is realized in Contemplation and in Awakening, as well as of the implications of this, make it clear that the absence of the subject-object duality implies the absence of a witness that notices what is happening (Trungpa, 1972, simplified translation of Jigme Lingpa’s *Lion’s Roar*).

Of course, one cannot discard the possibility that the sakshin as conceived in the Brahmanic traditions that declare themselves to be nondual, may be the nondual awareness inherent in Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, for both have in common that they cannot be turned into an object of knowledge, that they are the element of pure awareness in all knowledge, and that they are self-luminous. However, if this were so, these Brahmanic traditions would have erred in asserting it to be different from the known object,



for as Longchen Rabjam (1998) noted:

Although phenomena appear as they do to the mind, *they are not mind nor anything other than mind*. Given their illusory nature as clearly apparent yet unthinkable, void manifestations,

moment by moment they are beyond description, imagination or expression. For this reason know that all phenomena that appear to the mind are unthinkable, ineffable and empty even as they manifest.

The apparent phenomena that manifest as the five kinds of sense objects [visual forms and so forth], and the phenomena of the universe that seem to appear in their own right, manifest to the mind and [in fact] are nothing other than [manifestations appearing to the mind]. Even though they appear to be something other [than the mind], like dreams and illusions they are by nature empty, and, [being unthinkable and ineffable, *they*] *have never been anything other [than mind] and have never been mind [either]*. In accordance with the eight traditional metaphors for illusoriness, an examination of phenomena as forms of emptiness, clearly apparent yet unthinkable, ineffable and void—whether considered to be composed of reducible or irreducible particles—determines their equalness in having no identity. One knows the basic space of unchanging emptiness through these natural manifestations of the nature of mind...” (p. 84-87; language has been adapted to the terminology used in this paper; italics supplied)

Wilber (1996, p. 220) noted that also *Hinayana* Buddhism views nirvana as a condition of *nirodha* or cessation, and Roger Walsh (1998), in his presentation of Wilber’s conception of his ninth fulcrum (in a piece of writing that Wilber [1998] himself asserted to be one of the best expositions of his own ideas so far) noted that in Wilber’s view: “At the causal level (fulcrum-9) all form and experiences drop away leaving only pure consciousness, such as the Buddhist’s *nirodhasamapatti*, the Vedantist’s *nirvikalpa samadhi*, the Gnostic’s abyss” (p. 41)

It is well known that the Third Noble Truth, which is the cessation of suffering or, more precisely, of *dukkha*, is referred to by the Pali term *dukkha-nirodha-ariya-sacca*, and that this is the goal of the

Hinayana, achieved by *arhats*. And it is equally well known that the vehicle in question, and the *Theravada* School that is its only surviving representative, hold *nirodhasamapatti* (cessation of thought and perception) to be an actual experience of nirvana (Pali *nibbana*) that is attained while the body is physically alive (at any rate, all Hinayana schools agree that in fully Awake Buddhas suffering and *dukkha* in general are totally eradicated, so that Buddhahood involves the cessation of *dukkha*, yet does not involve the coming to a halt of Gnitiv activity in a deep absorption [Skt. *samadhi*; Tib. *tingngedzin* [*ting nge 'dzin*]). Furthermore, all philosophical schools of the Hinayana view conditions of *nirodha* in which all Gnitiv activity is arrested in a deep absorption (Skt. *samadhi*; Tib. *tingngedzin* [*ting nge 'dzin*]) as unconditioned / uncompounded (*asamskrita*) phenomena. However, unlike Brahmanic spiritual systems that posit indefinite, ill-defined states of *nirodha* involving the arresting of Gnitiv activity in an absorption excluding all data of the six senses as *moksha* or “release from the grip of illusion or *maya*,” Hinayana schools only attribute supreme value to absorptions involving *nirodha* when they are the outcome of discrimination (the *Vaibhashikas*, for example, posited two types of *nirodha* or cessation: nonperception of phenomena due to the absence of *pratyaya* or contributory conditions and resulting from concentration rather than discrimination [*apratisamkhyanirodha*], and supreme wisdom of cessation deriving from discrimination [*pratisamkhyanirodha*]: though the first may be to some degree similar to that of Brahmanic darshanas such as the Samkhya of Kapila or the Yoga of Patañjali, not so the second, which is the cessation of all modalities of *trishna* that takes place in nirvana). In fact, it is clear that if the aim of the Theravada tradition were the same as that of the Yoga darshana of Patañjali and the associated Samkhya darshana of Kapila, and these non-Buddhist systems were effective for achieving this aim, Shakyamuni, rather than teaching a wholly new spiritual system in the first promulgation of the doctrine, corresponding to the Hinayana, would have referred his shravaka followers to the *Yogasutras* of Patañjali and the works by Kapila; however, on the contrary, he rejected the tenets of all Brahmanic traditions, denouncing the pseudo-realizations of many of these by making it clear that absorptions of the two higher spheres of conditioned experience (the *arupyaadhatu* and

the *rupadhatu*) were within samsara, and in his Hinayana teachings he did not even teach any form of physical Yoga.

However, most important to this discussion is the fact that the conceptions of the dharmakaya in the higher Buddhist vehicles, including the Mahayana, the Vajrayana vehicles of the path of Transformation, and the Atiyoga path of Spontaneous Liberation—which are the ones that posit the three kayas of Buddhahood and use the terms dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya—are in sharp contrast with Wilber's. To begin with, it has been shown that in no Buddhist system is the realization of the dharmakaya said to involve the dissolution of the sensory continuum into pure light or darkness, and that in the practice of Tekchö—first of the two stages of the Menngagde or Upadeshavarga series of Dzogchen teachings—the realization of the dharmakaya consists in the reGnition of the stuff of which the thought present at a given time is made, which instantly results in that thought's spontaneous liberation without this obliterating the sensory continuum. It has also been shown that the only instances of realization of the dharmakaya in which only indistinct light is manifest, are the reGnition of the true condition of the clear light in the first of the bardos or intermediate states between death and rebirth, and the reGnition of the true condition of the second clear light that shines forth after falling asleep. And it has also been shown that the higher Buddhist paths, vehicles, and schools—including the Madhyamika schools of the Mahayana, the inner Tantras of the path of Transformation and Dzogchen Atiyoga—do neither pursue nor attribute special value to states of nirodha. At this point it must be added that no higher Buddhist teaching whatsoever identifies the dharmakaya with the nirodhasamapatti which according to Walsh (1998, p. 41) Wilber associated with his ninth fulcrum—with which Wilber associated the dharmakaya—and which is a state of sustained deep mental absorption that follows the attainment of nirodha in the sense of the *temporary cessation of the four mental skandhas*. Quite on the contrary, as the words of Shakyamuni Buddha in the excerpt from the *Vajrasamadhisutra* of the Mahayana quoted in the regular text of this paper make it clear, the Greater Vehicle views nirodhasamapatti as a deviation from the Path of Awakening leading to the highest of the realms of formlessness, which is the one involving neither perception nor lack of it

(*naivasamjñanasamjñayatana*; Tib. *dushe me dushe memin kyeche* [*'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched*]) and which is the peak of samsara (Skt. *bhavagra*).

In fact, nirodhasamapatti is an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, and as shown elsewhere in this paper, when subsequently to the manifestation of base-of-all the delusory valuation of the threefold thought structure gives rise to the subject-object duality, the subject takes the ensuing pseudo-totality as object (the arising of the mental subject cleaves the undivided experiential totality that the base-of-all is, and though the ensuing object, being undivided, still seems to be a totality, it is no longer totality insofar as it excludes the mental subject), giving rise to a samsaric formless absorption. Outside the Hinayana, the only Buddhist school that posits states of nirodha as unconditioned and uncompounded (*asamskrita*) phenomena is the Yogachara philosophical School of the Mahayana; however, the realization this school pursues does not at all consist in any deep absorption or samadhi excluding sense data—which is not surprising insofar as this school is based on Mahayana Sutras (specifically, in those of the Third Promulgation), according to which Awakening involves a complete, panoramic, nondual awareness (of) the senses, as well as what is generally translated as “omniscience” (Skt. *sarwakarajñata*; Tib. *nampa tamche khyenpa* [*rnam pa thams chad mkhyen pa*]; Capriles, 2004, 2007a Vol. II). (The Yogacharas posit three types of nirodha or cessation, which are: [1] *pratisamkhyanirodha* or cessation [*nirodha*] of passions [*klesha*] by the power of perfect discrimination; [2] *apratisamkhyanirodha* or cessation of passions without the intervention of perfect discrimination; and [3] *samjñavedananirodha*, which is a state wherein *samjña* or recognition in terms of concepts and *vedana* or mental sensation are inactive [Capriles, 2004].) Moreover, the Mahayana Third Promulgation literature, in particular, places a special emphasis on the fact that dwelling in absorptions or samadhis in which one is cut from the senses is a major pitfall: this is the reason why in the *Vimalakirti Nirdesha Sutra* various male bodhisattvas strove to awaken a young female bodhisattva from absorption (until finally a young and handsome though as yet inexperienced male bodhisattva succeeds in so doing), and why the *Samadhiraja Sutra* repeatedly warned against dwelling in absorptions in general. As the following

passages of the *Sutra of Hui Neng* show, the same is the case with Ch'an / Zen Buddhism:

People under delusion believe obstinately in *dharmalakshana* (entities with collections of characteristics) and so they are stubborn in having their own way of interpreting the 'samadhi of specific mode,' which they define as 'sitting quietly and continuously without letting any idea arise in the mind.' Such an interpretation would rank us with inanimate objects, and is a stumbling block to the right Path which must be kept open. Should we free our mind from attachment to all 'things,' the Path [would] become clear; otherwise, we [would] put ourselves under restraint. If that interpretation, 'sitting quietly and continuously, etc.' were correct, [what would be the reason] why [as told in the Vimalakirti Nirdesha Sutra] on one occasion Shariputra was reprimanded by Vimalakirti for sitting quietly in the woods?

Learned audience, some teachers of meditation instruct their disciples to keep a watch on their mind for tranquility, so that it will cease from activity. Henceforth the disciples give up all exertion of mind. Ignorant persons become insane from having too much confidence in such instruction. Such cases are not rare, and it is a great mistake to teach others to do this...

To keep our mind free from defilement under all circumstances is called *wu-nien* (non-conceptuality). Our mind should stand aloof from circumstances, and on no account should we allow them to influence the function of our mind. But it is a great mistake to suppress our mind from all thinking; for even if we succeed in getting rid of all thoughts, and die immediately thereafter, still we shall be reincarnated elsewhere. Mark this, treaders of the Path. It is bad enough for a man to commit blunders from not knowing the meaning of the *dharma*, but how much worse would it be to encourage others to follow suit? Being deluded, he Sees not, and in addition he blasphemes the Buddhist Canon. Therefore we take *wu-nien* (non-conceptuality) as our object. (Wong-Mou-Lam, 1969, pp. 43-45; terminology had been modified in order to align it with that used in this paper)

If one ponders on Wilber's fulcra in the context of the variety of the ten oxherding pictures of Ch'an or Zen Buddhism in which the eighth is "person and ox both forgotten" (vergezzen), it will be clear that Wilber believed his ninth fulcrum to correspond to the eighth picture (Wilber's ninth fulcrum does not correspond to the ninth oxherding picture, partly because the sequence in his own series is arbitrary, partly because his fulcra begin at birth and embrace the whole process of ontogenesis, whereas the ten oxherding pictures begin at the point when an individual begins to do spiritual practice with the aim of attaining Awakening). It was previously noted that in the Inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation the series of realization is said to start with the nirmanakaya, continue with the sambhogakaya, go on with the dharmakaya, and finally result in the swabhavikaya that they view as full Awakening—and that Wilber believed his ninth fulcrum to be the dharmakaya. Thus in terms of both Ch'an / Zen and the Tantras of the path of Transformation Wilber's series of fulcra requires at least one more fulcrum after the ninth. However, the fact that Wilber defined his tenth fulcrum as not being really a separate fulcrum or level, but the reality of *all* states or Suchness of all states, implies that, just as the sixth fulcrum in the 1982 levels, his tenth fulcrum corresponds to what the Dzogchen teachings call Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, yet it is presented as Dzogchen-*qua*-Summit. Nevertheless, Wilber claimed that in this fulcrum one has dis-identified with the second and third phases of the ninth fulcrum, and hence—once more as in the case of the sixth fulcrum in the 1982 classification—it must necessarily be a specific, discrete state rather than being the true condition of all states. One could believe this contradiction to lie in the description only, and conclude that the fulcrum in question is one in which the true condition of all states is directly realized, but this simply could not be the case insofar as the direct realization in question necessarily involves the collapse of the subject-object duality that is the second of the veils that conceal this condition, whereas, as will be shown below, Wilber claimed that in this fulcrum the duality in question continues to be manifest. Furthermore, Wilber (1996) said of this supposedly fulcrumless fulcrum:

The "experience" of this nondual Suchness is similar to the nature unity experience we earlier discussed, except now this unity is

experienced not just with gross Form out there, but also with the subtle Forms in here. In Buddhist terms, this is not just the Nirmanakaya—gross or nature mysticism; and not just the Sambhogakaya—subtle or deity mysticism; and not just the Dharmakaya—causal or formless mysticism. It is the Svabhavikaya—the integration of all three of them. It is beyond nature mysticism, beyond deity mysticism, and beyond formless mysticism—it is the reality or the Suchness of each, and thus integrates each in its embrace. It embraces the entire spectrum of consciousness—transcends all, includes all. (p. 227)

In the above passage, Wilber subsumed form mysticism in the nirmanakaya (gross form) and the sambhogakaya (subtle form), failing to distinguish these kayas from higher, mystic yet samsaric conditions of the form realm (or of that of sensuality: if the subject becomes absorbed in the experience of a form as object, regardless of whether the form in question is gross / tangible or subtle / intangible, the ensuing experience pertains to the realm of form; if the subject reacts emotionally to it or derives sensual pleasure from it, the ensuing experience pertains to the realm of sensuality; however, it is very common that experiences with subtle form take one to the realm of form [cf. the warnings by Kyeme Dechen (*skye med bde chen*) and the first Karma Thinle (*kar ma phrin las pa*) against falling into the realm of form in the practice of visualization, yet believing the experience to be an instance of the sambhogakaya, in Guenther, 1973] and experiences with sensual pleasure derived from gross form take us to the realm of sensuality), and subsumes formless mysticism into the dharmakaya, failing to distinguish this kaya both from mystic yet samsaric conditions of the formless realm, and from equally mystic yet neither samsaric nor nirvanic conditions of the neutral base-of-all. At any rate, Wilber wrongly viewed the fruit of what he called nondual mysticism as consisting in his tenth fulcrum, and what he called dualistic mysticism as reaching to his ninth fulcrum only and thus having this ninth fulcrum as its fruit—thus reducing a wide spectrum of very different paths to only two possibilities, one of which is a contradictory mixture of a discrete state with the true condition of all states, and the other a compound of different states. He described these two supposed fruits as follows (Wilber began

by referring to a “second meaning of emptiness,” and so one must keep in mind that in a previous quotation Wilber asserted emptiness to have two meanings, and explained what in his view was the first meaning, attributing it to the ninth fulcrum, which he called “causal”):

The second meaning is that Emptiness is not merely a particular state among other states, but rather the reality or suchness or condition of *all* states. Not a particular state apart from other states, but the reality or condition of all states, high or low, sacred or profane, ordinary or extraordinary... (Wilber, 1996, p. 227)

There are two rather different schools about this “Enlightened” state, corresponding to the two rather different meanings of “Emptiness” that we discussed.

The first takes as its paradigm the causal or unmanifest state of absorption (*nirvikalpa, nirodh*). That is a very distinct, very discrete, very identifiable state. And so if you equate Enlightenment with that state of cessation, then you can very distinctly say whether a person is “fully Enlightened” or not.

Generally, as in the Theravadin Buddhist tradition and in the Samkhya yogic schools, whenever you enter this state of unmanifest absorption, it burns certain lingering afflictions and sources of ignorance. Each time you fully enter this state, more of these afflictions are burned away. And after a certain number and type of these entrances—often four—you have burned away everything there is to burn, and so you can enter this state at will, and remain there permanently. You can enter nirvana permanently, and samsara ceases to arise in your case. The entire world of Form ceases to arise.

But the Nondual traditions do not have that as their goal. They will often use that state, and often master it. But more important, these schools—such as Vedanta Hinduism and Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism—are more interested in pointing out the Nondual state of Suchness, which is not a discrete state of awareness but the ground or empty condition of *all states*. So

they are not so much interested in finding an Emptiness divorced from the world of Form (or samsara), but rather an Emptiness that embraces all Form even as Form continues to arise. For them, nirvana and samsara, Emptiness and Form, are not two... (Wilber, 1996, pp. 236-237)

Here it is imperative to interrupt Wilber in order to note that he has identified samsara with the world of form, which is a mistake, for all Buddhist schools accept the canonical division of samsara into three spheres, which are that of sensuality, that of form and that of formlessness—so that formlessness may as well be within samsara (though one must keep in mind that in this case the term refers to the absence of a figure-ground division)—and the higher Buddhist systems, in particular, contrast Awakening to samsara yet make it clear that Awakening does not involve the dissolution of the sensory continuum (if their sensory continuum dissolved, Buddhas would not be able to teach or even to go on living). Wilber continued:

Dualisms—between subject and object, inside and outside, Left and Right—will still arise, and are *supposed* to arise. Those dualities are the very mechanisms of manifestation. Spirit—the pure immediate Suchness of reality—manifests as a subject and an object, and in both singular and plural forms—in other words, Spirit manifests as all four quadrants. And we aren't supposed to simply evaporate those quadrants—they are the radiant glory of Spirit's manifestation.

But we are supposed to see through them to their Source, their Suchness. And a quick glimpse won't do it. This One Taste has to permeate all levels, all quadrants, all manifestation. (Wilber, 1996, p. 236)

Thus Wilber reduced the wide spectrum of spiritual traditions to only two of them: (1) ones which he defined as dualistic and which regard the Fruit of the Path as a state of nirodha or cessation free from the subject-object duality, and (2) ones which he categorized as nondualistic, among which he listed Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism (the latter, one may assume, including the Path of Transformation and the Path of spontaneous liberation of Dzogchen *Atiyoga*), which seek a *supposedly Awake condition in which the subject-object duality continues to arise, but in which the dualistic experience in question seems to*

*be somehow impregnated by the single taste of the true essence of all reality.*

According to Wilber, the primordial state that is fully realized in the tenth fulcrum—full, irreversible Awakening, corresponding to the swabhavikaya—is a condition in which there is neither subject nor object, neither interior nor exterior, neither left nor right, which is prior to the arising of the subject and the object, and which continues to be the ultimate reality in spite of their arising. Whereas on the one hand Wilber (1996) wrote that in this fulcrum the sense that one is a sort of seer or witness or self vanishes altogether, precisely because awareness is no longer split into a seeing subject and a seen object out there (p. 228), on the other hand he said that the dualistic condition is pointed out from the dualistic condition, so that one becomes familiar with it. This, however, need not be a problem, for one could assume he meant that when the original nondual condition is pointed out from the dualistic condition, the latter dissolves, so that the sense that one is a sort of seer or witness or self vanishes altogether. The problem lies in the fact that Wilber claimed that in this fulcrum the subject-object and other dualities will always “*continue to arise*” (p. 231; italics in original)—only that they are relative truths, not absolute or primordial truth itself (pp. 231-232): the problem of dualism “is not solved, but rather dissolved, in the primordial state, which otherwise *leaves the dualisms just as they are*, possessing a certain conventional or relative reality, real enough in their own domains, but not absolute” (p. 232; italics in original). To begin with, this outright contradicts his claim that in this tenth fulcrum the sense that one is a sort of seer or witness or self vanishes altogether, precisely because awareness is no longer split into a seeing subject and a seen object out there. Furthermore, also in ordinary samsara the subject-object and other dualities that, according to Wilber, continue to arise in his tenth fulcrum, manifested as relative truths rather than being absolute or primordial truth itself; since Wilber implied the supposed swabhavikaya of his tenth fulcrum to be different from the ordinary adult human samsaric condition, one must interpret his words as meaning that although the mental subject and the object (and all other dualities) continue to arise, *now they are realized* to be relative and conventional rather than absolute—so that the third sense of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the threefold Dzogchen classification adopted here has been removed, but not so the other two senses of the terms.

As has been noted, in the Tantras of the Path of Transformation the swabhavikaya is the fourth and final stage in the sequence of realization having the nirmanakaya as its first stage, having the sambhogakaya as its second stage, and having the dharmakaya as its third stage. Yet the above has demonstrated the “fulcrum-10” Wilber views as full Awakening and identifies as the swabhavikaya, not even to reach the condition the gradual Mahayana views as the eleventh level (*bhumi* or *sa*) / fifth path, in which the dualism of subject and object is supposed to no longer arise, for, as shown below, only nondual gnoses manifest—and surely a condition like this is simply out of the question in Wilber’s system. In fact, as will be shown below, the way Wilber described the swabhavikaya / full Awakening seems to match the gradual Mahayana view of the post-Contemplation state or *jethob* (*rjes thob*; Skt. *prishthalabdha*) as it manifests in the fourth path and in all levels until the tenth, thus falling short of the full Awakening of the gradual Mahayana. This is fully evidenced by the description of the tenth fulcrum that Roger Walsh (1998) presented in a piece of writing that Wilber (1998) himself asserted to be one of the best expositions of his own ideas so far:

Finally, at the nondual culmination (fulcrum-10), phenomena reappear but are immediately and spontaneously recognized as projections, expressions, or manifestations of consciousness and as none other than consciousness. This is the Hindu *sahaj-samadhi* and the Mahayana Buddhist’s ‘form is emptiness.’

Needless to say, these advanced contemplative experiences can be very hard for most of us to conceive. To my mind the best metaphor for *sahaj-samadhi* is lucid dreaming, dreaming in which we know we are dreaming. Such lucidity has been described by yogis for millennia, denied by psychologists for decades, but now is well validated by laboratory studies. Here what initially appeared to be an objective, solid, independent world impinging on a physical body on which one’s life depends is recognized as a subjective, dependent projection of mind. And with that recognition the dreamer becomes lucid, the apparent victim of experience becomes its creator, and the suffering and anxiety that seemed so overwhelming are recognized

as illusory. Such is said to be the mind-boggling central recognition of both lucid dreaming and awakening to the nondual. (Walsh, 1998, pp. 41-42)

As has been shown, the direct awareness of all phenomena as conventional, relative, apparition-like, insubstantial expressions or manifestations of absolute or ultimate truth—or, in Dzogchen terminology, of primordial, nondual awareness—is the distinguishing feature of the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas in which relative reality has been reestablished after its dissolution in the direct realization of the absolute condition beyond the subject-object duality, and therefore this kind of awareness may not be predicated of the final stage of the Path, which is Buddhahood, in which the relative—and hence the subject-object duality—arises no more and only the absolute remains (which, however, does not mean *either* that the *sensa* usually interpreted as reflecting an objective world cease to manifest, *or* that one ceases to spontaneously respond to the sufferings of beings with the healing actionless activities that are the natural function of nonreferential compassion: what it means is that, since Buddhas are free from the delusory valuation-absolutization of the threefold thought-structure [Tib. *khor sum* (*’khor gsum*)] and hence from the subject-object duality, whatever they do is an instance of what is called “action and fruit [of action] devoid of the concept of the three spheres” [*’khor gsum rnam par mi rtoḡ pa’i las dang ’bras bu*]: from their own standpoint they are beyond activity—and yet sentient beings, if they are devout Buddhists and are able to recognize the Buddhas as such, see the latter as carrying out countless activities in their behalf). In fact, in the gradual Mahayana the realization of the absolute truth that, as the Madhyamaka school emphasizes, is beyond the subject-object duality, but which *is not at all* a condition of *nirodha* or cessation like the *nirodhasamapatti* of the Hinayana or, far less, like the *samadhi* of the Yoga Darshana, initially manifests at the moment of attaining the third path (Skt. *marga*; Tib. *lam* [*lam*]), called the “path of Seeing” (Skt. *darshana marga*; Tib. *thong lam* [*mthong lam*]), and the corresponding first level (Skt. *bhumi*; Tib. *sa* [*sa*]), called the “joyous level” (Skt. *pramudita bhumi*; Tib. *rabtu gawa sa* [*rab tu dga’ ba sa*]), and henceforth continues to manifest in the Contemplation state throughout the fourth path, which is called “path of Contemplation” (Skt.

*bhavana marga*; Tib. *gom lam* or *gompai lam* [*sgom lam* or *sgom pa'i lam*]), and which comprises levels two through ten. As noted, in these Paths and levels, the realization in question is always followed by the re-installation of samsaric delusion and therefore of the subject-object duality, which gives rise to the “post-Contemplation state” (Skt. *prishthalabdha*; Tib. *jethob* [*rjes thob*]) under discussion, in which the delusion in question does not fully involve the third of the senses of avidya and marigpa in the Dzogchen classification adopted here, and there is awareness of the apparitional character of all phenomena. This awareness of apparitionality results from the filtering down, into the dualistic post-Contemplation state, of the realization of the true nature of all phenomena by nondual awareness while in the Contemplation state, which somehow impregnates the dualistic state of post-Contemplation with the “taste” of the single essence of reality. Therefore it is clear that the awareness in question can only derive from the manifestation, over and over again, of the Contemplation state in which there is no subject-object duality, and by no means could it result from pointing out nondual Suchness from the state in which this nondual Suchness is totally concealed by the subject-object duality: the duality in question has to dissolve, for so long as there is a frog at the bottom of a deep well, no matter how much you point to him the limitless sky, he will continue to take it for a small luminous blue circle surrounded by dark walls. It is also clear that this dissolution of the subject-object duality *does not* give rise to a condition of nirodha or cessation like the nirodhasamapatti of the Hinayana or, far less, like the samadhi of the Yoga Darshana, which from the standpoint of the Dzogchen teachings are instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana is manifest and as such simply do not neutralize to any degree one’s karma for samsara and do not at all help one to become established in nirvana. Finally, at the time of attaining the fifth path, which is the path of no-more-learning (Skt. *ashaikshamarga*; Tib. *milobpai lam* [*mi slob pa'i lam*]) that in Tibetan Buddhism was as a rule identified with the eleventh level (called “all-pervading light:” Skt. *samantaprabha bhumi*; Tib. *kuntu ö sa* [*kun tu 'od sa*]), the state of absolute truth involving all-embracing, absolutely free awareness beyond the subject-object duality consolidates in such a way that the delusive subject-object duality never manifests again, and hence there is no post-Contemplation state: since there is no frog

to whom the limitless, all-embracing sky may be concealed, and no well to conceal it from him, there is unrestricted freedom. Even the Madhyamaka-Prasangika philosophical school, which rejects the view according to which the dualistic consciousness that manifests in samsara manifests in primordial awareness as nondual awareness (of) consciousness of object, agrees that *in the Fruit corresponding to Buddhahood, rather than a dualistic consciousness, what is at work is nondual gnoses involving neither a mental subject nor an object.* (According to Paul Williams [1998], Je Tsongkhapa’s reinterpretation of Prasangika, according to which the subject-object duality is manifest in the Contemplation state of the higher bodhisattva, agreed that in the Fruit of Buddhahood rather than dualistic knowledge based on the subject-object duality what is at work is nondual gnoses. However, in discussing Ju Mipham Ngawang Namgyal’s writings, John W. Pettit [1999, p. 129] wrote: “Mipham also maintains that Buddhas have no dualistic perceptions, while Gelug commentators find this position to be incompatible with buddhas’ omniscience, specifically, with their awareness of the experiences of sentient beings.” Though I am far from being a “Tsongkhapologist” who has studied in detail all of Je Tsongkhapa’s works, what I gather is that Tsongkhapa accepts that nondual gnoses are at work in Buddhas, yet does not make it clear that in Buddhahood only nondual gnoses obtain, in this way leaving the road open for the interpretation according to which the only way in which a Buddha could be aware of the experiences of sentient beings would be by having dualistic cognitions just as the latter do—something that does not really follow from the assertion of the Buddhas’ awareness of dualistic experiences, for it is clear that the awareness in question is a nondual awareness of dualistic experiences that is not sullied by the blemish represented by these experiences.)

To take the post-Contemplation state of those bodhisattvas in the third and fourth Mahayana paths for final Buddhahood—i.e., for the fifth and final path / eleventh level of the Mahayana—would simply block the way to the condition in question. Furthermore, the experience of post-Contemplation in the third and fourth paths, which as noted lies within the relative realm, may not be said to be “the very Essence of all levels, of all states, of all conditions”—which, as has been shown, is how Wilber defined his tenth fulcrum, which he misnamed “nondual.”

With regard to Walsh's illustration of this last fulcrum with the experience of lucid dreaming, it must be noted that this dreaming is not even an element of the Dzogchen Path, in which the practice for sleep is that of the natural light, which consists in reGnizing the true condition of the second of the clear lights that manifests after falling asleep, and then continuing in this luminosity without dreaming. In Dzogchen Atiyoga, lucid dreaming is a secondary practice borrowed from the Inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation, to be applied when one does not manage to reGnize the shining forth of the clear light and hence cannot apply the practice of natural light, or when, having reGnized it, one does not manage to remain in the ensuing condition and begins to dream. This is so because the reGnition of the clear light, like the Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas and full Buddhahood, and unlike the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas and lucid dreaming, is nondual in the *qua*-Path and *qua*-Fruit sense of being utterly free from the illusory subject-object duality (this, in its turn, being so because this reGnition dissolves avidya in all of the senses the term has in the Dzogchen teachings).

As noted, according to Wilber, in his ninth fulcrum one discovers the source of what different Brahmanic traditions have called "the disinterested witness" or sakshin to be pure emptiness. Since as shown above Wilber believed the subject-object duality to continue to manifest in the tenth fulcrum that he misidentified as Buddhahood, and, according to all of the traditions featuring the concept, the witness or sakshin is separate and different from its object, he claimed that the witness or sakshin continues to manifest in this condition. This is one of the paramount distortions in Wilber's system, for as has been shown, the truly nondualistic Buddhist systems (which in the Mahayana comprise the canonical sources of the Second and Third Promulgations, the Madhyamaka school created by Nagarjuna and Aryadeva, and the Mahamadhyamaka and Prasangika branches of this school, and in the Vajrayana consist in the Inner Tantras of the Path of transformation and the Tantras of the Path of spontaneous liberation of Dzogchen Ati) make it clear that *in Buddhahood only nondual gnoses obtain, and hence the condition in question is utterly free from the subject-object duality*—which disqualifies Wilber's conception of the Fruit of nondual systems.

It has also been shown that Wilber's conception of realization in dualistic systems and of the penultimate stage of realization in nondual Buddhist systems does not apply to the penultimate stage in any of the latter systems, for the realization of the dharmakaya in the Mahayana is not at all the same as the nirodhasamapatti or the other conditions involving nirodha of the Hinayana, or, even less so, as the cessation in samadhi that is the fruit of Patañjali's Yoga Darshana (which, as noted, in its turn is not at all the same as the ultimate realization of the Hinayana), and no truly nondual Buddhist system does reduce the dharmakaya to nirodha or cessation.

That the manifestations of nirvana on the Path and as the Fruit are free from the subject-object duality should be self-evident insofar as the duality in question results from the delusory valuation-absolutization of the supersubtle "threefold thought-structure." In fact, subject and object being mutually relative, absolute truth (which by definition cannot be relative) could not be the object of any mind or conventional attention, and therefore has to manifest in the patency of primordial gnosis (Skt. *jñāna*; Tib. *yeshe* [*ye shes*]) beyond the subject-object duality. A series of quotations demonstrating this are found in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), and even though the order of those quotations was changed and some new quotations were later added (Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II, version 1.9), it is not worthwhile to repeat them here.

To recapitulate, the Mahayana and the Vajrayana—the latter including Dzogchen Ati—agree with Wilber's assertion that nondual traditions, (1) point out the empty, nondual substrate of *all states*, and (2) posit the nonduality of samsara and nirvana. However, with regard to (1) Wilber's assertion that nondual traditions point out the empty, nondual substrate of *all states*, as noted above and ratified by a series of citations, the canonical sources of the Second and Third Promulgations (with the possible exception of the Samdhinirmochanasutra), the Madhyamaka philosophical school as originally created by Nagarjuna and Aryadeva and the posteriorly arisen Prasangika and Mahamadhyamaka branches of this school (in the context of the Mahayana), just as the Inner Tantras of the Path of transformation and the Dzogchen Atiyoga Tantras of the Path of spontaneous liberation (in the context of the Vajrayana), explicitly assert this pointing out the



empty, nondual substrate of all conditions to *entail the dissolution of the subject-object duality*, yet *not to give rise to a condition of nirodha or cessation*. With regard to the first of these assertions, it happens that the duality in question is the second layer (in the classification favored by Longchen Rabjampa) or a core element of the second layer (in the classification adopted in my recent works, including this series of papers) of the three-tiered delusion which conceals the nondual, nonplural, empty and spontaneously perfect Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that in a passage cited above Wilber called “empty substratum,” and which makes one perceive the latter in a deluded, inverted way; therefore, Dzogchen-*qua*-Base in its true condition simply cannot become an object: it *can only be realized in the spontaneously, unconditionedly occurring primordial gnosis* (rangjung yeshe [rang byung ye shes]) *in which the subject-object duality does not manifest*. This is the reason why all higher Buddhist systems coincide in asserting the Contemplation state of higher bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas and so on—or, in Dzogchen Atiyoga, the condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path—and the condition of Buddhahood—or, in Dzogchen Atiyoga, the condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit—to be utterly free from the subject-object duality. With regard to the second of the assertions in question, it happens that as a rule states of nirodha or cessation—including the nirodhasamapatti of the Hinayana and the passive samadhi or absorption that Patañjali’s Yoga Darshana posits as the fruit of its path—involve what the two main threefold Dzogchen classifications of avidya or marigpa view as the first layer of the delusion in question, which is the unawareness or concealment of the true condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that prevents the manifestation of nirvana: this is the reason why the Dzogchen teachings view all such conditions as instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all in which neither samsara nor nirvana are manifest, and why, as demonstrated above, in none of the Buddhist schools or vehicles that Wilber defined as nondual does this dissolution of subject and object occur in a state of nirodha or cessation. In fact, as made clear in this paper, *in the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions under discussion the Path has the long-term function of irreversibly consolidating the spontaneously, unconditionedly occurring primordial gnosis free from the subject-object duality*—and, in the case of Dzogchen, it actually does so in a relatively short time.

With regard to (2) Wilber’s assertion that nondual traditions posit the nonduality of samsara and nirvana, our author is incorrect in claiming that the absence of a duality between samsara and nirvana implies that Awakening involves the subject-object duality: the most basic of dualities, foundation of all other dualities, rather than that of samsara and nirvana, is that of subject and object, and the quotations in the preceding paragraphs (as presented in Capriles, 2006a) have demonstrated both the Mahayana and the Vajrayana (including Dzogchen Atiyoga) to explain the Fruit called Buddhahood as being radically different from all samsaric conditions, one most important reason for this being that the former is free from the duality in question, whereas all of the latter have it as their pivot. In fact, though samsaric beings on the Path cannot pinpoint the condition that is manifest at a given moment as being the absolute truth of the Mahayana and of the Tantric path of Transformation, for this delusorily valued-absolutized judgment would put an end to it, the absolute truth in question—*both as it manifests in the Contemplation state of higher bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas, and so forth, and as it manifests in full, irreversible Buddhahood*—is free from the subject-object duality and involves the perfect patency of the true condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, as such being utterly different from samsaric conditions—and yet as noted repeatedly is not a condition of nirodha or cessation. Thus the negation of the duality of samsara and nirvana, rather than being the objective expression of how things really are in conventional truth (which, as the very etymology of the terms makes it clear [cf. the explanation by Gendün Chöphel repeatedly quoted in the notes], is the deluded pseudotruth of samsara), is a skillful means for helping those who are treading the Path of Awakening achieve the transition from samsara to nirvana. If one has not listened to the teachings of a Path of Awakening, one is not aware of being in samsara and that all the hindrances, problems and sufferings of human existence are the drawbacks of samsara, or that there is a nirvana that is the solution to these drawbacks; therefore, if one is to have a possibility of surpassing samsara together with the drawbacks inherent in it, one needs to learn about these two conditions, so that one may aspire to nirvana and work towards it. However, this gives rise to a strong thirst for nirvana (the *vibhava trishna* that is third type of trishna taught in the explanation

of the Four Noble Truths) and aversion to samsara which, insofar as they result from the delusory valuation of the concepts of samsara and nirvana and thereby of the difference between the conditions these concepts stand for, and insofar as they involve samsaric emotionality and dualism, sustain samsara and block the way to nirvana. In fact, when the higher Buddhist vehicles assert the nonduality of samsara and nirvana, they are expressing in terms of relative truth the perspective of the nondual absolute truth that is realized in nirvana, in which no duality of samsara and nirvana is perceived, and they are doing so as a skillful means for helping the transition from samsara to nirvana; therefore, this does not imply that, as Wilber asserted, Awakening is a condition involving the illusory subject-object duality—which would imply that it is *not* a condition radically different from samsara. It would be a most unfortunate mistake to take the skillful means in question to mean that one must conserve the subject-object duality that manifests only in samsara, and that while thus remaining in samsara one will obtain the realizations of the truly nondual traditions. What one would achieve by these means would be the *illusion of having attained nonduality* and having thereby become better than the rest of the beings in samsara and even than those who are truly established in nirvana—which not only would prevent the realization that one is in samsara and hence from aspiring to nirvana, but would fill the individual with conceit, self-satisfaction, and other of the worst samsaric vices, thus not only keeping the individual within samsara, but greatly worsening that person's samsara.

After the evidence provided above, there can be no doubt that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit *do not at all involve the subject-object duality*. The above quoted excerpt from Longchenpa further clarifies that this implies that Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit are free from intention and deliberate action (which follows from the former insofar as the subject-object duality is the condition of possibility of these), and makes the point that the conditions in question *do not entail habitual patterns*. However, as stated again and again, this does not mean that they are states of nirodha or cessation: it has been shown that the Mahayana's Vajrasamadhishutra makes it clear that nirodhasamapatti, which the Hinayana regards as an instance of nirvana, actually lies on the way to the absorptions or realms of the highest samsaric

sphere; that the Vimalakirti Nirdeśha Sutra shows that those dwelling in unmanifest absorptions must be awakened from them; that the Samadhirajasutra warns against dwelling in absorptions that may take us to the formless realms; and that the Sutra of Hui Neng warns against dwelling in states of thoughtlessness and categorically states that, should we come to dwell in them, after death we would “be reborn elsewhere.” Moreover, as also stated again and again, the Dzogchen teachings are most explicit with regard to the fact that states of plain nirodha are instances of the neutral condition of the base-of-all that, like Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit, are free from the illusion of duality, but that unlike these conditions involve the *ignorance* of the true condition of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base that is the first sense of avidya or marigpa in the Dzogchen teachings, as well the halting of the unhindered, free motility of Awareness—and that as such, from the standpoint of these teachings, though they are not instances of samsara, they are not instances of nirvana either. This is why the teachings in question compare dwelling in such conditions to cutting one's own neck: *the occurrence of these states does not neutralize karma to any extent* (and thus it would be absurd to believe that entering these states four—or even infinite—times, would free anyone from samsara), and, what is worse, while one dwells in them one's life passes without one having the possibility of applying practices leading to Awakening or to somehow advance on the true Path—and hence spending a long time in those conditions would amount to squandering one's precious human birth.

In fact, the Dzogchen teachings make it clear that Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is not a mere voidness: although primordial purity or katak (*ka dag*), which is voidness, is one of its aspects, the other aspect is self-accomplishment, spontaneous perfection or lhundrub (*lhun grub*), which involves a myriad of perfect, self-accomplished manifestations with a consummate functionality (a more detailed definition of the terms katak and lhundrub, as well as a more complete explanation of the reasons why Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit *do not* entail cessation or nirodha, are provided in Capriles (2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2004, work in progress 1, and work in progress 2). Since Dzogchen-*qua*-Path and Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit are no more than the patency of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, it is not surprising that these teachings are even more

explicit than the rest of higher Buddhist teachings in emphasizing the fact that in the two conditions in question, rather than there being unawareness of *sensa* or an arresting of *Gnitiveness*, as in plain states of *nirodha*, the absence of the veil and straightjacket of delusorily valued-absolutized thought results in the complete patency of our true condition, a total freedom of awareness, and an unlimited awareness (of) and a perfect responsiveness (with regard to) occurrences in the sensory continuum. And insofar as *Dzogchen-qua-Path* and *Dzogchen-qua-Fruit* are *not* produced or achieved, *nor* are they cultivated in meditative absorption, unlike states of plain *nirodha* or cessation (which can only manifest as a result of production, achievement and cultivation) they are genuinely uncaused, unproduced, unconditioned, and unborn, and as such do not reinforce habitual patterns.

In order to clarify the meaning of nonduality in truly nondual traditions and thus prevent confusions, it is mandatory to understand the meaning of nonduality with regard to *Dzogchen-qua-Base*, *Dzogchen-qua-Path*, and *Dzogchen-qua-Fruit*. Since *Dzogchen-qua-Base* is in itself free from duality or plurality, from its standpoint *all* realms of experience and all experiences are nondual. However, when *avidya* or *marigpa* manifests in the first meaning the terms have in the two main *Dzogchen* classifications, the neutral condition of the base-of-all manifests, and one becomes unaware of our true condition. And when *avidya* or *marigpa* manifests in the second and third meaning the terms have in the two main *Dzogchen* classifications, the illusion of duality and plurality conceals the nonduality and nonplurality of the true condition of phenomena. This gives rise to the need to tread the Path in order to surpass that unawareness of our true condition and that illusion in the realization of the nondual, nonplural, true condition of *Dzogchen-qua-Base*. Since *Dzogchen-qua-Path* is the unconcealment of the nondual *Self-qua-Base*, and in all *Dzogchen* divisions of *avidya* or *marigpa* the unawareness of our true condition involved in the neutral base-of-all and therefore in conditions of *nirodha* is the first layer of the three-tiered veil that is to fall in this unconcealment, *Dzogchen-qua-Path* excludes all conditions of *nirodha* and, as noted, involves full responsiveness regarding occurrences in the sensory continuum and the utter freedom and unhindered motility of primordial, nondual Awareness. Since in the classification

favored by Longchen Rabjam the illusory subject-object duality is the second layer of the three-tiered veil that is to fall in this unconcealment and in the division adopted in this paper it is a pivotal element of this second layer, *Dzogchen-qua-Path* involves a temporary dissolution of the duality in question. Finally, *Dzogchen-qua-Fruit* is the condition in which the unawareness of our true condition that manifests in conditions of *nirodha* and underlies all samsaric conditions, and the illusory subject-object duality that is the pivot of *samsara*, no longer arise to conceal the nondual *Dzogchen-qua-Base* and hinder its perfect functionality: the patency of the nonduality and nonplurality of the latter has become uninterrupted, responsiveness with regard to the occurrences in the sensory continuum has become consummate, and the perfect, unhindered freedom of Awareness can no longer be arrested.

All of the above shows that it would be absurd to posit (as Wilber has done) the same stages or fulcra for the Paths that lead to nondual Awakening and those that lead to plain cessation / *nirodha*, reducing the difference between them to the existence of a further stage or fulcrum in those that lead to nondual Awakening: these two types of path are so radically different that the structure and function of one of them can have hardly anything in common with that of the other. Furthermore, in the nondual Buddhist traditions that have been considered here—which consider plain *nirodha* as a serious deviation to be avoided yet assert the need to realize the true, nondual condition of all entities in a Gnosis free from the subject-object duality—it does *not* suffice with realizing this condition a small number of times for one to be able to dwell in it uninterruptedly. In fact, the gradual Mahayana claims one has to spend countless years and lifetimes alternating between the Contemplation state that is beyond the subject-object and inside-outside dualities, and the post-Contemplation state that involves these dualities, before finally attaining Buddhahood—which according to some texts occurs after three immeasurable aeons (Skt. *kalpa*; Tib. *kalpa* [*kal pa* or *bskal pa*]). Though in the *Upadeshavarga* series of *Dzogchen* teachings the most thorough Awakening possible may be attained in a single lifetime, in order to achieve this aim one has to practice *Tekchö* for years, and then one has to practice *Thögel* for a further period: the subject-object duality and delusion in general have to liberate themselves spontaneously countless times in

optimal conditions for the propensities for delusion to manifest to be neutralized or burned out, so that no matter what forms may manifest, the subject-object duality arises no more and the nonduality of the Base is no longer concealed. As has been shown, this is the Fruit of the practices of Thögel and the Yangthik, in which the subject arises and liberates itself spontaneously again and again while the forms of rölpa energy are manifest and without the latter disappearing, until the propensity for the former to manifest and for the latter to be taken as object is totally neutralized or burned out.

To sum up, Wilber intended his seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth fulcra to be a progression of levels of realization following the sequence the inner Buddhist Tantras of the Path of Transformation posit for the successive realization of the kayas, in which the first to be realized is the nirmanakaya, the second is the sambhogakaya, the third is the dharmakaya, and the fourth is the swabhavikaya. However, as shown above, his fulcra do not correspond to what these Tantras refer to by these names, for: (1) His seventh fulcrum is a spontaneous experience of oneness with nature, which may consist in a manifestation of the neutral condition of the base-of-all followed by an experience of the formless realms located at the top of samsara, but which in terms of these Tantras in no case would it be a manifestation of the nirmanakaya. (2) He reduced his eighth fulcrum to the occurrence of non-ordinary strata of perception and subtle non-Jungian archetypes, without making it clear that for manifestations of the intangible, self-luminous visions of the intermediate state of dharmata or chönyi bardo to be instances of the sambhogakaya, the true condition of the rölpa energy of which they are manifestations has to be reGnized, as a result of which the mental subject that seems to be at a distance from them instantly disappears and the visions remain in the condition the Dzogchen teachings refer to as the “condition of the mirror.” (3) His ninth fulcrum may *either* be a variety of the neutral condition of the base-of-all involving nirodha, a samsaric formless realm, or the confusion of these two on occasions when the former is immediately followed by the latter. (4) Finally, his tenth fulcrum is a condition in which the subject-object duality, thought and knowledge continue to arise, but rather than being taken for absolutes, they are realized to be merely relative or conventional—as occurs in the post-Contemplation state of higher bodhisattvas, yogis and so on, but not

in Buddhahood, in which the subject-object duality arises no more, and only nondual gnoses obtain.

Finally, as has been shown, in the Upadeshavarga or Menngagde series of Ati Dzogpa Chenpo—which, as noted above, Wilber has studied with at least one of the most important Masters of our time—the three kayas are realized in a sequence that is contrary to the one Wilber posits, and they simply do not correspond to what the inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation call by the same names.

The above are the changes in question. Other changes were done to version 1.9 of Capriles (2007a, vol. II) in order to amend the misrepresentation of Wilber’s system that it would not have been easy to reproduce here as they were scattered through the book in question.

2. Wilber asserted his position to lie above the dichotomies in question, yet throughout his whole work he systematically argued in favor of the “ascending path” and disparaged the advocates of the “descending” one. He wrote:

The great dualism of all dualisms, I have suggested, is between ‘this world’ and an ‘other world.’ It has infected our spirituality, our philosophy, our science; it runs as equally through the repressive Ascenders who wish only the ‘other world’ or eternal release, as through the shadow-hugging Descenders, proper troglodytes each and all, who want salvation solely in the passing glories of ‘this world.’ It slices through every Age of Enlightenment with its upward-yearning Reason and every Romantic reaction that seeks instead to explore every downward-turning darkness and depth. It governs where we seek our salvation, and which ‘world’ we will ignore or destroy in order to get it... And they are both right. Or, we might say, they are both half right and half wrong.” (Wilber, 1995, pp. 345-346)

However, though Wilber presented himself as being above the debate, as noted in the paragraph or the regular text to which the reference mark for this note was affixed, and as shown in the discussion of his system in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and elsewhere (Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II), he has been one of the most rabid advocates of the ascending path in the sense of viewing it as the building of successive structures, one over the other—which is the reason why Washburn called his paradigm

“structural-hierarchical.” And since, as shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) and many other works of mine (Capriles, 1994, 2000b, 2000c, 2003, 2007a, etc.), Vajrayana Buddhism in general and Dzogchen in particular, the Bön tradition, Shaivism, Taoism, Zurvanism, and so on share the view of human spiritual and social evolution as a process of degeneration, he is disparagingly calling the founding Masters, and all Masters in the lineages of these traditions, by the epithet “troglodytes,” which he intends as an insult—even though from the standpoint of the view of human spiritual and social evolution as degeneration, that the traditions in question share, it would be a praise.

3 Wilber (1996) wrote:

The Ascending path is purely transcendental and otherworldly. It is usually puritanical, ascetic, yogic, and it tends to devalue or even deny the body, the senses, sexuality, the Earth, the flesh. It seeks its salvation in a kingdom not of this world; it sees manifestation or samsara as evil or illusory; it seeks to get off the wheel entirely. And, in fact, for the Ascenders, any sort of Descent tends to be viewed as illusory or even evil. The Ascending path glorifies the One, not the Many; Emptiness, not Form; Heaven, not Earth.

The Descending path counsels just the opposite. It is this-worldly to the core, and it glorifies the Many, not the One. It celebrates the Earth, the body, and the senses, and often sexuality. It even identifies Spirit with the sensory world, with Gaia, with manifestation, and sees in every sunrise, every moonrise, all the Spirit a person could ever want. It is purely immanent and despises anything transcendental. In fact, for the Descenders, any form of Ascent is viewed as evil. (pp. 10-11)

This dichotomous classification of worldviews is extremely reductionistic; very few worldviews fit into one or the other of these extremes, for most combine elements Wilber saw as belonging to one of them with elements Wilber saw as pertaining to the other. In fact, Wilber’s classification of paths into “Ascending” and “Descending” makes very little sense. However, the worst is that Wilber’s concept of nondual paths does not fit true nondual Paths, for as shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a) he asserted nondual paths to point to the true condition of reality, without

this pointing resulting in the dissolution of the subject-object duality that, in terms of the threefold Dzogchen classification of *avidya / marigpa* favored by Longchen Rabjampa (cf. Longchenpa, 1976, p. 24, and Cornu, 2001, p. 62), constitutes the second layer of the veil that prevents the realization of this true condition of reality. In fact, the nonduality of nondual Paths lies in the fact that they lead to the nonconceptual realization of what Buddhism calls the unproduced / unconditioned, which is the true condition of reality when not filtered-through / structured-in-terms-of the Procrustean bed of concepts (which are all defined by contrast with the contraries); since the subject-object duality arises as the result of the delusory valuation-absolutization of the supersubtle concept called the threefold thought-structure, it is part of the veil that has to fall for the true condition of reality to be properly realized—and definitive, irreversible Awakening involves the irreversible fall of the subject-object duality.

4. Expression attributed to Madame de Pompadour, or alternatively to French King Louis XV, meaning “after me the Deluge” and indicating an attitude of total unconcern with whatever may happen after one’s own existence. By extension, it may be applied to an attitude of unconcern with the fate of others, not only in the future, but in the present as well.

5. In Pali literature, and in particular in the *Udaana*, one finds terms such as *ajata*, rendered as unborn; *abhuta*, translated as unbecome; *akata*, rendered as unmade; and *asankhata*, translated as uncompounded or unconditioned: they were used mainly in the rejection of the Hindu attribution of these qualities to the Self (Skt. *atman*; Pali, *atta*), as it would have been legitimate to predicate them only of *nirvana*. In the Mahayana, the concept of *abhuta* was replaced by the one expressed by the Sanskrit terms *anutpada* and *anutpatti*, which, just as the term *asamskrita*, which rendered the Pali *asankhata*, was predicated of all dharmas. The same applies to the Skt. *ajata*, which like the same term in Pali literally means “without birth,” and to *animitta*, which is also rendered as unconditioned: both were predicated of all dharmas. And the same applies to the opposites of these terms as well—i.e., to the various terms expressing the absence of cessation—which were also predicated of all dharmas. At any rate, in the Mahayana all of these terms directly imply the concept of *swabhava shunyata*.

6. Reproduced in Capriles (1977, 1986, 2000a, 2000c, 2007a, Vol. II).

7. As stated in a previous note, in the Pali Canon the term *abhuta* was used to express something that some Hindu extremists illegitimately predicated of the Self (Skt. *atman*; Pali, *atta*), but which it would have been legitimate to predicate only of *nirvana*. Therefore it is in the Mahayana that *anutpada* and *anutpatti* are predicated of whatever originates from the conjunction of causes and conditions, or from interdependent arisings.
8. Buddhism negates *atman* or self and asserts *anatman* (Pali, *anatta*) or nonself. However, Wilber does not refer to a truly existing self, but to a *sense of self* and the operations whereby this sense of self is produced and sustained.
9. Cf. note 1, above, and version 1.9 of Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II, in both of which this subject is discussed in detail.
10. As noted elsewhere in this paper, the arising of the mental subject cleaves the undivided experiential totality that the base-of-all is, and though the ensuing object, being undivided, still seems to be a totality, it is no longer totality insofar as it excludes the mental subject.
11. As shown in *Beyond Mind II* (Capriles, 2006a), according to the Buddhist teachings the wheel of *samsara* has a three-tiered structure: the lowest compartment is the *kama loka* or *kamadhatu*, meaning realm or sphere of sensuality, and comprising the realms / psychological states of (1) purgatories (transient hells), (2) *pretas* (hungry ghosts or *Tantaluses*), (3) animals, (4) humans, and (5) asuras (titans, demigods, or antigods), as well as the lowest region of the realm / psychological state of (6) *devas* or *suras* (gods). The middle compartment is the *rupa loka* or *rupadhatu*, meaning realm or sphere of form, which involves the contemplation of forms and includes all states of concentration on a form or figure, and which constitutes the middle compartment of the realm / psychological state of the *devas* or *suras* (gods). And the highest compartment is the *arupyadhatu* or *arupa loka*, meaning formless sphere or realm, which involves all kinds of contemplation in which the subject-object duality persists, but which involve the obliteration of the figure-ground distinction, so that one seems to contemplate an infinitude, with which one identifies—and which is the highest region of the realm / psychological state of the *devas* or *suras* (gods). (In the highest realm of the *arupyadhatu* or *arupa loka*, called “peak of experience” [Skt. *bhavagra*], one identifies with the impossibility of conceptualizing one’s attainment, and takes this for the realization of the nonconceptual true condition of reality. Cf. Capriles, *Beyond Mind II* [2006a] and Capriles [1986, 2000b, 2003, 20007a vol. II].)
12. *Nirvana* may not be characterized as transient. The point here is that though the true condition of ourselves and of the whole of reality that becomes fully unconcealed in *nirvana* is not impermanent and is beyond change, due to *karma* adventitious obscurations will at some point manifest that will again conceal it. This is why the unconcealment in question has to occur again and again, each and every time neutralizing those adventitious obscurations to some extent, until they no longer arise to conceal that condition and hence Buddhahood is attained.
13. In Capriles [2006a, 2007a, Vol. II], it was noted that the progression *nirmanakaya-sambhogakaya-dharmakaya-svabhavikaya* is characteristic of the inner Tantras of the Path of Transformation, whereas the Path of Spontaneous liberation of Dzogchen *atiyoga* involves instead a sequence *dharmakaya-sambhogakaya-nirmanakaya*—where these names do not at all refer to the same conditions as in the Tantras of Transformation. Likewise, I showed Wilber’s descriptions of the seventh, eighth and ninth fulcra not to fit the conditions of the *nirmanakaya*, the *sambhogakaya* and the *dharmakaya*, respectively, as they are understood in the Path of Transformation.
14. On three consecutive occasions he tried to redistribute the wealth of his country, giving rise to an ever more irate and radical reaction on the part of the nobility, until finally they got his mother, who was jealous of the other wives of his father (whom, as was customary in Tibet, Mune Tsampo had inherited upon the latter’s death—his mother being the only of his father’s wives he would not inherit because of their immediate kinship), to kill him.
15. Both the great scholar Gendün Chöphel and my teacher, the great Dzogchen Master Dudjom Yeshe Dorje, were imprisoned on trumped up charges—the former in Tibet before the Chinese invasion, the latter in India. However, behind the false accusations against them there were political and spiritual reasons—as was also the case with other incarcerations in the twentieth century (including that of Lama Tapgyal and various other ones).
16. The practice of *Chö* (*gcod*) depends on the arising of visions of fearsome demons and elementals attacking and intending to devour the practitioner, and

without these visions and the ensuing dread it would not yield its fruit. In fact, it is when, terrorized by the visions and tortured by the excruciatingly painful mental sensation (Skt. *vedana*; Tib. *tsorwa [tshor ba]*) in her or his own heart, the practitioner looks into his inner dimension to seek for the seemingly separate mental subject who dreads the visions (and, feeling separate from the mental sensation, deems it unbearable and rejects it), that the illusion of duality and delusorily valued-absolutized thought in general spontaneously liberates itself in the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path (cf. Capriles, 2000a, 2000b Part III).

The practices of Thögel and the Yangthik depend on the occurrence of visions of luminous spheres (*thig le*), which in the long run activate the propensities subsumed under the Tibetan term *zbedang (zbe sdang)*, which transform the delusive perception of the visions as objects lying in an external dimension into extreme conflict—which in its turn automatically results in the spontaneous liberation of the illusory subject-object duality and delusorily valued-absolutized thought in general (cf. Capriles, 2000b Part II, 2007a, Vol. II).

Thus what all of these practices have in common is that, on the one hand, they make it impossible for the illusions of duality, of the self-existence of phenomena, and of the ultimate importance of the individual and her or his experiences, to go on unnoticed, and on the other they create the conditions in which they are more likely to liberate themselves spontaneously and in which this spontaneous liberation has greater power for neutralizing karma. Therefore, they force the spontaneous liberation of delusory experiences as soon as they manifest, each and every time they do so, and the continued repetition of this while the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness is so high and conflict is so extreme, in very short time neutralizes the propensities for the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought and hence for the illusion of duality to manifest. This is why the practices in question are deemed to be the most direct, and in this sense the “highest” Buddhist practices.

17. Wilber has acknowledged that the spiritual process may involve some difficult passages, and in Wilber (1998) he stressed the fact that in his model every fulcrum possesses a signature death-rebirth struggle, which in his view is most dramatic and characteristic in the centaur/existential level he posited. In Capriles

(2006a, 2007a vol. II) I showed the greatest and most dangerous crises on the spiritual Path to occur in passages that do not correspond to this level in Wilber’s system, and in general showed how Wilber’s succession of fulcra contradict all Buddhist maps of the Path. At any rate, Wilber nowhere emphasized the importance of NOSC in the breakthroughs that are determinant on the Path.

18. What is often called a “psychotomimetic experience” is an experience induced by so-called psychedelics that exhibits the characteristic marks of a psychosis, but which comes to an end when the drug’s effect runs out. I prefer to speak of a psychotic episode confined to the duration of the drug’s effect, which in some cases may extend itself beyond the lapse in question, becoming a fully-fledged psychosis.
19. I will not refer to cases like that of the Hopi girl discussed by R. Coles that was mentioned by Sean Kelly (1998a, p. 128, note 1; 1998b, p. 379), or to the rest of the evidence adduced by Kelly, because although such evidence may contradict Wilber’s views, it is quite possible that the cases will not fit my definition of supreme spirituality: this is why I will limit myself to testimonies taken from the Dzogchen tradition. With regard to Wilber’s (1998) amplified *lamrim (lam rim)* view, consider his words on the subject (Wilber, 1998, p. 333):

The question then becomes: [Do] people have to pass through these stages (postconventional, centauric, integrated, etc.) in order to make genuine spiritual progress?

Once again, you see, it depends upon the meaning of *spiritual*. If we define spirituality as postformal and post-postconventional, the answer is yes, definitively. But if we define *spiritual* as being a separate line of development, the answer is no, definitely not. In this case, spiritual development is occurring alongside or behind or parallel to those other lines of development, and thus it may race ahead of, of lag behind, those other lines.

But that simply pushed the question back: Does stable postconventional spiritual development depend upon passing from its preconventional wave to its conventional wave to its postconventional wave? And I believe the answer, backed by the preponderance of evidence, is most definitively “yes.”

To say the same thing using other terms, the spiritual line moves from a *prepersonal* wave (archaic, food, safety, pre-conventional) to a *personal* wave (from belongingness and conventional concern to post-conventional/global) to a *transpersonal* wave (post-post-conventional, psychic, subtle, causal, bodhisattvic). In short, the spiritual stream runs through subconscious to conscious to superconscious waves, by whatever name.

These spiritual stages, I believe, are transitional stages (stages in the “soft” sense); of course, the self-system can still be “all over the place.” This is not a rigid and mechanical clunk-and-grind view, as I said. At the same time, it does show, on the long haul, a general unfolding through the expanding waves of consciousness, with developments in the spiritual stream depending upon previously established competences in the stream itself. (p. 333)

The thorough inaccuracy of this view becomes even more apparent in the context of phylogenesis, which is one that I have not discussed in any of the papers of the Beyond Mind series (Capriles, 2000a, 2006a, and the present one), and which will be discussed in depth in the definitive version of Capriles (2007a, Vol. III); in the meantime the reader may consult the provisional version of the work in question, as well as Taylor (2003, 2005). However, in Beyond Mind II (Capriles, 2006a) it was made clear that according to the Dzogchen teachings the root Tantra of the Dzogchen Menngagde (*man ngag sde*) or *Upadeshavarga*, the *Drataljur Chenpoi Gyü* (*sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*; Skt., *Shabda maha prasamga mula tantra*), was taught in the primordial age corresponding to the very beginning of our species, and that Dzogchen was very widespread at the time, when according to Wilber's view humans were unconscious and could by no means access the transpersonal realms in any stable way, let alone attain Awakening: according to Wilber, at that stage *the religion of people was food* (Wilber, 1998, p. 336)—that is, the ultimate concern of human beings was procuring food!

20. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (unpublished ms.) has stated:

Another very interesting story is that of tertön Mingyur Dorje (*mi 'gyur rdo rje*)... He was a true Tulku (*sprul sku*), even though he was not

recognized as such as an infant and had not been appointed as the abbot of a monastery. Consider his story.

There was a very important Kagyüpa Master called Araga Karma Chagmai (*a ra ga kar ma chags med*, or *kar ma chags med ra ga a sya* [Karma Chagme Raga Asya]: 1613-1678), who was also a Dzogchen Master and a *tertön* (*gter ston*) or Treasure Revealer recognized as an emanation of Ma Rinchen Chok (*rma rin chen mchog*, one of the 25 direct disciples of Guru Padmasambhava), and who spent most of his life in mountain retreat (he was the author / compiler of a noted *richö* [*ri chos*] or text on mountain retreat that the Karma Kagyu, Drikung Kagyu and Nyingma traditions classify among the definitive texts on the subject). While in retreat, one night in a dream he had the indication that not far from his retreat place a baby had been born to a simple family, who was the Tulku of a former Master of the Nyingmapa (*rnying ma pa*) monastery of Khatok (*kab thog*) that despite not being so famous was a great practitioner who had achieved stable rigpa. A few days afterwards Araga sent one of his disciples to find out whether a baby had actually been born in that family, and the reply was in the affirmative. Since Araga was not one of the Masters who habitually recognize Tulkus, instead of making a formal recognition he talked to the infant's parents, asking them whether they agreed to send the child to him when he arrived at the age of eight and he no longer needed to be near his mother. Since that family, like everyone else in that region, had great faith in Araga, their reply was in the affirmative, and the Master helped them financially until the child attained the age at which he would move with him.

The Master asked his disciples to take care of the child, teaching him how to read and transmitting to him the knowledge deemed elementary in Tibet at the time. When he was eight or nine years old, the Master gave him teachings, transmissions and initiations in order to Awaken him. And, in fact, when he was ten years old he Awakened and started recounting the visions he began to have both while awake and in dreams, featuring Guru Padmasambhava and many Awake Ones with whom he had contact. Initially Araga had recognized the child, invited him and taught him, but now the child became his teacher. Between the ages of eleven and thirteen, the child dictated thirteen volumes of *namchö* (*nam chos: nam mkha'i chos*)



*terma* (*gter ma*) teachings, which are extant with all their transmissions. How could anyone doubt that the child was a Tulku when he had manifested such impressive signs, which had marveled everyone? Tulkus must be like this; if someone is the Tulku of a great Master, he or she must have this capacity to remember his or her previous learning and Awaken easily.

21. The great *tertön* Jigme Lingpa (*'jigs med gling pa*: 1730-1798) is possibly the most famous example in the last centuries of an individual who, without having done systematic or institutional studies, as a result of his supreme Dzogchen practice achieved one of the highest levels of learning among Tibetan Masters of all times—to the extent of having been granted the title *kunkhyen* (*kun mkhyen*) or “all-knowing.”
22. However, it would not be altogether impossible, as demonstrated by the case of Pang Gen Mipham Gönpö, whom Vairotsana the translator met when Pang Mipham was eighty-five years old, after which he gave him teachings on the *Dorje Zampa* (*rdo rje zam pa*) or “Vajra Bridge” of the *Longde* (*klong sde*) series of *Dzogpa Chenpo* (*rdzogs pa chen po*)—so called because the practice was a bridge between the normal physical condition and the rainbow body or *jalü* [*'ja' lus*]). Because of Mipham Gönpö's advanced age, he could not sit in meditation posture, and so he used a meditation belt and support stick in order to sit up straight and remain motionless. However, by applying the practice in question, the old man attained *jalü* (*'ja' lus*), the rainbow body, at the age of 110 years old. Of all of Vairotsana's many disciples, Mipham Gönpö, Yudra Nyingpo, Nyag Jñanakumara, and Sherab Dölma from Li, became his four chief disciples.
23. Each of them is a *more thorough unconcealment* of the *trikaya-qua-Base* because from one perspective the *dharmakaya* is the realization of the essence or *ngowo* (*ngo bo*) aspect of the Base, which is voidness; the *sambhogakaya* is the realization of the nature or *rangzhin* (*rang bzhin*) aspect of the Base, which is clarity and which is realized in its inseparability from the essence or *ngowo* aspect; and the *nirmanakaya* is the realization of the energy or *thukje* (*thugs rje*) aspect of the Base, which is the disposition to manifest and the continuous process of manifestation, which is realized in its inseparability from the other two aspects. Thus the end result of the process is the total unconcealment of the whole *trikaya*.

On the other hand, each of them is a different dimension because the *dharmakaya* is the correct apprehension of the *dang* (*gdangs*) form of manifestation of energy, the *sambhogakaya* is the correct apprehension of the *rölpa* (*rol pa*) form of manifestation of energy, and the *nirmanakaya* is the correct apprehension of the *tsel* (*rtsal*) form of manifestation of energy. However, as noted above, each of these successive dimensions embraces the preceding ones, for in the realization of the *sambhogakaya* that of *dharmakaya* is perfectly manifest, and in that of the *nirmanakaya* those of the *sambhogakaya* and *dharmakaya* are included.

24. In 1960, Jung (1972) wrote:

I had to abandon the idea of the supraordinate position of the ego... I saw that everything, all paths I had been following, all steps I had taken, were leading back to a single point — namely, to the mid-point. It became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the centre. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the centre, to individuation.

... I knew that in finding the mandala as an expression of the self I had attained what was for me the ultimate.

This point is also clearly made in other works (Jung, 1968, 1964, 1928). It is related to the difference between Self and ego (Jung, 1975, 1964). Of course, Jung is not speaking of the ultimate in the Buddhist sense of the term.

25. I decided not to discuss David M. Levin in this paper because the view of the Ground as Being, which is at the core of Levine (1985) and which he took from Heidegger and from Herbert V. Guenther's (1984) misinterpretation of the Dzogchen concept of *zhi* (*gzhi*) as corresponding to Heidegger's being (*das Sein*), was refuted in Capriles (2007a, Vol. I). In its turn, the prediction that a new paradigm going beyond ocularcentrism would characterize our postmodern future (Levin 1993a, 1993b), was discussed in the draft of the upcoming second revised and updated edition of Capriles (1994) with regard to a proposal similar to Levin's put forward by Ernesto Mayz-Vallenilla (1990)—which I may include in the final version of Capriles 2007a, Vol. III. For a provisional discussion in Spanish of the new paradigm that according to Ernesto Mayz-Vallenilla should go beyond ocularcentrism, cf. the URL [http://www.webdelprofesor.ula.ve/humanidades/elicap/en/uploads/Biblioteca/isefilosofia\\_de\\_la\\_historia.pdf](http://www.webdelprofesor.ula.ve/humanidades/elicap/en/uploads/Biblioteca/isefilosofia_de_la_historia.pdf)

26. Norman O. Brown (1959/1968) viewed sublimation as being largely a bogus category and as being, rather than a substitute for repression, a continuation of it by different means, and proposed a “radical desublimation” that would involve a return to the wisdom of the polymorphously perverse body, a rejection of goal-oriented culture in favor of living in the moment, and the replacement of the dread of death that paradoxically turns life itself into a living death for an acceptance of death as part of life. His views were clearly descending and may be very validly made the object of Wilber’s critique of descending systems, yet I find them far more interesting than Wilber’s.
27. Also cited in Daniels (2004, p. 76). The fact that I refer to Daniels’ work does not imply I admit that people may bestow on their own selves the titles traditions confer on their most extraordinary representatives; such titles have traditionally been bestowed by official representatives of the tradition to which the honored individual belongs.
28. This is the translation Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente (1999) chose for the Tibetan term *kunje gyälpo* (*kun byed rgyal po*), literally meaning “All-creating King,” which is used in the *Semde* series of Dzogchen teachings for designating the source and true condition of all phenomena, and which gives its name to the fundamental Tantra of this series of teachings (*kun byed rgyal po’i rgyud*; Oddiyana language, *sarwadharmamahashantibodhichittakularaja*). I believe Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente dismissed the literal translation of the Tibetan term because it could be taken to refer to God as Creator.
29. Washburn did not list all of these functions, but he discussed some of them. For example, in the section “Ego Development” of Chapter Four, “Ego Development and Dualism in Latency,” in Washburn (1994), he discussed functions such as synthesis, self-reflection, knowledge of one’s own initiative and active volition, devoting various pages to each of them. In the book in question Washburn also discussed gender differences in the development of “independence and ego functions” (Chapter Ten: Gender and Transcendence”).
30. I assume the root of Washburn’s concept of the mental ego to lie in Wilber’s (1981, 1996d) work, and the root of Wilber’s concept of the mental ego to lie in the phenomenological ego-psychology of Paul Federn (1926/1952). However, Washburn’s concept seems to have its own features, just as does Wilber’s.
31. It would be a truism—which as noted in Capriles (2007a, Vol. I) Wittgenstein dared to state—to say that insofar as one cannot see into the exterior of one’s own experience, denying that there is something out there is just as illegitimate as asserting that there is. Therefore it would be equally illegitimate to claim that, (a) there is a dimensional world, or a nondimensional *Ding an Sich*, or a contradictorily dimensional implicate order (cf. my critique of Bohm’s understanding of dimensionality in what he calls the implicate order in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. III), or a transcendent spirit (as asserted by both Wilber and David Bohm—for the latter posits an explicate order that is within the bounds of our experience, an implicate order inferred from physical experiments and that as such is conjectured on the basis of scientific *experience*, and a Spirit that is beyond the implicate order itself), or (b) to claim there is nothing beyond our experience (as did Berkeley [except with regard to God], post-Kantian German idealists, and Hegel in his “solution” to the Kantian problem of the *Ding-an-Sich*).
- Therefore, it is prudent to respect the phenomenological *epoché* and, in agreement with Washburn, abstain from considering anything that is not one’s own experience. However, it is well-known that according to Einstein’s Field Theory the universe is an energy continuum, and so even if one assumed the existence of an objective universe external to our experience, from the standpoint of Field Theory—and even more clearly so from the standpoint of subsequent theories such as Superunification, recognition physics and the holonomic theory of David Bohm—both our own selves and the whole of the universe would be what I am calling the Self *qua* Base. And what is far more important, it is legitimate to see our experience as a continuum, for it would be absurd to think that aspects of our experience may be inherently external to other aspects of the same experience, or that some phenomena within it may be inherently separate from other phenomena within it, when it is clear that our figure / ground minds single out segments of a continuum of *sensa* for their perception as separate entities, and single out segments within what was previously singled out as an entity and regard them as being entities as well. Furthermore, it could even be claimed that insofar as all that we can know is our own experience, the so called “discoveries” of

contemporary physics refer to our own experience, and hence that what Einstein's Field Theory and other physical "discoveries" show to be a continuum is our own experience—even though, for the reasons that were discussed elsewhere (Capriles, 1994, 2007a, Vol. III, 2007c), one is not allowed to assume the sciences to discover objective truths—and even less so could it be assumed the physics of our time to have discovered a final truth that will never be refuted in the future. Finally, the refutations by means of *reductio ad absurdum* produced by Madhyamikas could prove that no aspect of our experience may be legitimately said to be inherently separate from other aspects.

In conclusion, the fact that one keeps the phenomenological *epoché* does not in any way imply, as Washburn seems to believe, that one is not allowed to assert one's experience of what is normally viewed as an external world to be part of the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base: the whole of our experience, including the experience of what is viewed as external, is beyond any doubt part of the Supreme Source / Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. However, this posits a new problem: is there a different Base for each individual, or is there a single universal Base for all individuals? In the Dzogchen teachings the Base or *zhi* (*gzhi*) is at the same time individual and universal, insofar as the Base is the *Trikaya* of Buddha, and the *Trikaya* comprises the *dharmakaya*, which is universal and common to all beings, and the *rupakaya* (i.e. the combination of the *sambhogakaya* and the *nirmanakaya*), which is different for each different being (a fact that involves the same ambiguity as human experience insofar as the latter is universal in that human experience is always human experience, but is individual in that each individual experiences only her or his experience and cannot experience anyone else's experience).

32. Elusion is Laing's (1961) term for what Sartre (1980) called bad faith: a self-deceit that plays the same role as Freud's repression, but which does not have its source either outside the ego or outside the conscious. For a comparison of the Sartrean and the Freudian model of elusion / repression, and an exposition of my own model, cf. Capriles (2007a Vol. II, Chapter V, section "The Metaexistential View: The Paradise of Truth, the Hell of Delusion, and the Perennially Frustrating Elusion of the Hell of Delusion [Featuring a Discussion of the Concept of the "Unconscious"]", pp. 314-341 of the version of November 2007).

33. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre (1980) illustrated the link in question with the example of a man who, as he is unselfconsciously looking through a keyhole, suddenly realizes he is being watched. He instantly "feels touched in the heart by the Other's look," whereupon a *link of being* is established, via the sensation experienced in the heart, between *being-for-Self* (i.e. the being of the mental subject) and the shameful entity the Other is perceiving as object. This is at the root of that which Sartre called *being-for-others*—the bare, most basic experience of which is for Sartre the experience of hell he called "shame."

34. As shown in various works of mine, and in particular in Capriles (2007a), the mental continuum of those beings who have not reGnized their true nature has always involved the ignorance of this nature that is the first sense of *avidya* or *marigpa* in all Dzogchen classifications. Then at some point the subject-object duality arises. Then on the occasion of being punished as infants the mental subject establishes what Sartre (1980) called a *link of being* with the monster the punisher perceives as being the individual referred to by one's name, *becoming* that monster. And then in order to elude the pain of being the monster in question one builds a self-image and thus comes to develop a roughly Freudian ego, turning the monster into what Susan Isaacs (1943/1989) called an *unconscious phantasy*. Thus the illusion of estrangement from Dzogchen-*qua*-Base is prior to the *ego* both in the chronological and the ontologically-metaphenomenological senses of the term.

35. The conception of *ego qua* sense of self is comprehended in Freud's operational conception of the ego in the second topic, for ego functions are responsible for producing and maintaining the sense of self. Thus the ego of the second topic also involves illusion and delusion as I have defined these terms.

36. As shown in a previous note, Washburn did not list all of these functions, but he discussed some of them. In the section "Ego Development" of Chapter Four, "Ego Development and Dualism in Latency," in Washburn (1994), he discussed synthesis, self-reflection, knowledge of one's own initiative and active volition, devoting various pages to each of them. In his discussion of synthesis, Washburn included the development of an identity project, and one can see that this involves the mental subject's identification with a self-image, modeled

on the basis of the superego (perseverance) and the “ego-ideal” (aspiration). The fact that the subject-object duality is a precondition of self-reflection as discussed by Washburn is self-evident insofar as self-reflection consists in taking as object those elements of one’s own mental activity that can be objectified (in his view self-reflection switches from empty and self-assured reflection of the mental ego over itself and becomes reflection of the mental ego over itself as embodied in an ongoing identity project, and it helps create the object of reflection). That the subject-object duality is a prerequisite of knowledge of one’s own initiative is a point that would require too long a discussion, but the reader can confirm it by reading Washburn’s consideration of the problem. Active volition, in its turn, involves assuming a compromise with a particular vital course, involving a compromise with new possibilities and one that either reaffirms or reneges on it—all of which requires the subject-object duality insofar as it has to do with self-identity.

(With regard to Washburn’s use of the term “ego-ideal,” it must be noted that Freud used two different terms: *Ichideal*, which is the one which, following the established usage, in Capriles [2007a vol. II] I rendered as “ego-ideal,” and *Idealich*, which literally means “ideal ego.” Jacques Lacan [1975], in particular, maintained that the two terms designate two totally different functions: “The *Ich-Ideal*, the ego-ideal, is the other *qua* speaker, the other insofar as he has a symbolic, sublimated relationship with the ego, which in our dynamic dealing is at once similar and different from the imaginary libido.” On the other hand, according to Lacan [1960], the ideal ego [*Ideal-Ich*] would be an essentially narcissistic formation that is built up during what he called the stage of the mirror, and accordingly would belong to the register of the imaginary and become an “aspiration” or a “dream.” I am not at all convinced Freud consciously established this difference between terms—which Laplanche and Pontalis [1967] outright denied—but if so then what Washburn referred to, rather than the ego-ideal, would be the ideal ego (cf. also Roudinesco & Plon, 1997).

37. This follows from the fact that Washburn was writing from the standpoint of psychoanalysis, in which there is discussion regarding the origin and mutations of the ego, and he used the term ego to refer to a series of different functional structures, yet spoke of all of them as “the ego,” asserting the

latter to be inherent in the human psyche and not to dissolve at any stage of life and under any circumstances (even if one follows a spiritual Path like those of the higher forms of Buddhism to its end).

38. The term ego has been used by philosophers and psychologists in very different senses. In both philosophy and psychology the term has been used to refer to the person, to consciousness, and to personal identity, and has been understood in psychological, epistemological, and metaphysical senses—often mixed with each other. In a psychological sense, the term has often been used to refer to a substance underlying all of its manifestations, but the existence of such substance has been thoroughly refuted by Buddhism (as well as by the various thinkers discussed in Capriles [2007a, Vol. II]). In an epistemological sense, it may refer either to a knowing substance or to the series of knowing acts (real [“empiric” in Kantian terminology], potential [“transcendental” in Kantian terminology], or both). In a metaphysical sense, it has been used to refer to a substance that is deemed to be more fundamental than all psychological and epistemological entities—namely the soul, which has also been negated by Buddhism and which could hardly be that which at different stages of life becomes the various functional structures considered by Washburn.

In all the senses listed above, in those it has in psychoanalysis, in that of the mental subject that constantly *becomes* this or that object (and which in particular *becomes* a given individual’s perception of others’ perception of the entity indicated by that individual’s name—the concrete reference of which is the body), in that of the switching identification in adult experience that causes an individual to feel at one time that she or he is someone in the head moving the body and at other times that he or she is the body others see as him or her, and in all other senses of the term, the ego is a spurious product of the interaction of the three senses of *avidya* in both of the classifications found in the Dzogchen teachings, a delusion produced by the drive the illusory entity Sartre (1980) called *being-for-Self* manifests to *become* what the same author called *being-for-others* and then form a self-image, an illusion produced by the interaction of the five *skandhas*, or a provisional functional structure—yet in all cases it is an illusion that provisionally dissolves in the Contemplation state of superior

bodhisattvas and so on, and definitively dissolves when Buddhahood is attained.

39. I object to this integration being called *tertiary process*: if primary and secondary process have ceased to be two, what remains is a single process rather than a third one; if they continue to be two but they work in a perfectly integrated way, then there is no third process that may be so called.
40. These positive feedback loops are of the kind discussed in Bateson (1972) and then in Capriles (1977, 1986, 1994, 2000a, 2000b, 2007a, Vol. II, etc.).
41. Furthermore, in Washburn (1994), section “Ego Development” of Chapter Four, “Ego Development and Dualism in Latency,” in the context of a discussion of knowledge of one’s initiative and active volition, while considering Klaus Riegel’s (1973) and Michael Basseches’ (1980, 1984a, 1984b, 1989) dialectical model of postformal cognition, after noting that dialectical thinking was originally formulated by Hegel in the nineteenth century, Washburn explained dialectic in clearly Hegelian terms. Since he does not offer alternative explanations of dialectic elsewhere, I assume that whenever Washburn spoke of dialectic without making it clear that he had in mind operations of thought rather than developmental changes in reality, he has in mind Hegel’s model of dialectic.
42. Even though Marxism in general rejected Hegel’s concept of nature and in general of the physical universe as a projection of Mind that was not different from Mind, which as such obliterated the map-territory distinction and implied that the dynamic of nature and in general of the physical universe was ruled by the secondary process / operational thinking logic that rules discursive thought, and hence that the occurrences in nature and reality in general are selfcontradictory and can only be described dialectically in terms of contradictions (for example, for something to move, at a given time it would have to be and not to be in the same place), by speaking of a dialectic of nature in spite of the fact that dialectic is supposed to be the movement of Mind and hence of thought, Engels (1998/2001) unwittingly reproduced the Hegelian outlook. With regard to the *Aufhebung* or sublation, whereas in Hegel this negation is what allows the movement of *Geist* (spirit, usually rendered as Mind) to give rise to evolution in the sense of gradual perfecting, Marx viewed it as the manner of development of material conditions—and although he shared

Hegel’s inverted view of the development of society as a process of gradual perfecting (which, however, involves repeated “qualitative leaps” after periods of quantitative accumulation, and which also involves increasing injustice, at least until the transition from capitalism to socialism), he did not fall into exactly the same error as Engels insofar as the material conditions in question are those produced by human beings who *in his view* function in terms of the laws of dialectic.

43. In Washburn (1994), Chapter Four, section “Ego Development,” subsection “Ego Development and Dualism in Latency,” in the context of the discussion of knowledge of one’s own initiative and active volition, while considering Klaus Riegel’s (1973) and Michael Basseches’ (1980, 1984a, 1984b, 1989) dialectical model of postformal cognition, Washburn implicitly accepted Hegel’s *Aufhebung* or sublation as an existing occurrence insofar as he wrote that dialectical thinking moves in the direction of an increasing unification and inclusion, and that each phase transcends, subsumes, and integrates formerly independent or fragmented theoretical structures—just as, for example, Newtonian physics are subsumed in relativistic physics. However, the scientific example Washburn gave is not pertinent, for in this and similar cases no negation different from logical negation comes into play; what happens is simply that *logical negation* is applied to some aspects of the older theory but not to other aspects. The processes I call “phenomenological” are those involving the succession of states of being *rather than* the succession of concepts or systems of thought built on the basis of secondary process / operational thinking logic; in processes of this kind, the only negation involved that is different from logical negation is the one I call phenomenological negation, which is the one that comes into play in Sartre’s (1980) *bad faith* and that Laing (1961) explained in terms of a spiral of pretences, and which increases fragmentation and falsehood. (The phenomenological double negation that occurs in Sartre’s *bad faith* and that Laing illustrated with a spiral of pretences was contrasted with Hegel’s *Aufhebung* or sublation in others of my works [Capriles, 2007a, Vols. II, III; for less complete explanations cf. Capriles, 1992, 1994].)

Though Washburn’s explanation of dialectic development could apply to Marx’s understanding of it just as much as to Hegel’s or Engels’, by applying dialectic to evolutionary changes occurring in the

psyche of an individual he is clearly understanding sublation in particular and dialectic in general in Hegel's sense of the term.

44. The *Madhyamaka Prasangika* school of Buddhist philosophy insists that if one asserts the emptiness of the I but not so that of phenomena other than human beings (including the five skandhas or aggregates that interact for producing the illusion of egohood), one will be unable to truly realize the emptiness of the I: in order to realize the voidness of the I one has to realize the voidness of the five skandhas or aggregates, none of which is an I, and which interact for producing the illusion of an I. This is quite logical, for without realization of the emptiness of the skandhas, it would be just too easy to conceive the I as the collection self-existent skandhas, and hence as a self-existing I *qua* collection of elements.
45. For example, the idea of a metaphysical ego in the sense of a substance underlying all of its changes does not have a referent, even illusory, for such an ego simply does not exist, and one cannot speak of the arising or dissolution of what does not exist. On the other hand, the ego in the sense of the mistaken belief in an ego, or in the early Freudian sense of self, or in the late Freudian sense in which it designates a set of functional structures that nonetheless include the sense of self they contribute to produce, have a referent, for they refer to something that manifests in experience, even though it does so as an effect of delusion.
46. According to some *Bönpo* (*bon po*) sources Tönpa Shenrab Miwoche (*ston pa gshen rab mi bo che*) lived around 16,000 BCE. However, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu finds far more credible the Bönpo sources that give us 1,800 BCE (or 1,856 for greater precision), which he has assumed to be the correct date. Even though I have no elements for judging which date is the correct one, I adopted this Master's view in this regard because I have corroborated that he is right in so many interpretations in which he differs from other Masters and researchers. (Some Buddhist sources refer to the eighth century CE, but this simply does not seem credible, appearing to be a concoction intended to negate the existence of pre-Buddhist Dzogchen teachings.)
47. Heidegger used the term in a sense very different from that of *zhi* (*gzhi*) in the Dzogchen teachings, even though there is a relationship between the two that I will not discuss here (I dedicated many pages to the discussion of *zhi* and being in Capriles

[2007a, Vol. I]). For Levin's usage of the term "Ground" (*Grund*) in Heidegger's sense, cf., Levin (1985, pp. 281-319). At any rate, Levin did not make the distinction between Ground in the sense of *zhi* (*gzhi*) in the Dzogchen sense of the term (i.e., what I am calling Base or Dzogchen-*qua*-Base) and Ground in the sense of Heidegger's *Grund*, and hence he incurred in the error of identifying *zhi* (*gzhi*) with being (*das Sein*) in Heidegger's sense denounced in Capriles (2007a, Vol. I) and other shorter works of mine.

It must be noted that one of the authors who took from Guenther the translation of *zhi* (*gzhi*) as Ground was his disciple Kennard Lipman, who was an acquaintance of David Levin.

48. The identification of the Base or *zhi* (*gzhi*) with *thigle* (*thig le*), which is the Tibetan term that translates both the Sanskrit term *kundalini* and the Sanskrit term *bindu*, would not be mistaken, for the Base is Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, and *thigle* is one of the synonyms of Dzogchen. However, the term *thigle* that is used as a synonym of Dzogchen does not refer to something that is located in one particular location in the body, but to the true condition of the totality of reality, which includes this totality: in this case the term means sphere, and is used because spheres have no angles, which represent conceptual limits—and the true condition of reality cannot be thought precisely insofar as it lacks *differentia specifica* and *genus proximum*, which amounts to its having no limits. It may also be taken to refer to the fact that the whole of reality is pure energy. However, in no case does the term refer to the region of the body where the source of kundalini energy is supposed to be located.
49. I believe that by asserting Freud's conception of the id to be preegoic or subegoic Washburn meant that it responds to the manifestation of drives and tendencies in infants and children in civilized societies, which exhibit wayward characteristics. However, Washburn admitted drives to be distorted by repression, which is precisely the point I am making—and admitted that in the process of integration, in the long run they come to manifest in a wholly different manner, which is beneficial to both self and others.
50. Freud used the word *Trieb* (which had precedents in Nietzsche, and, according to Roudinesco & Plon [1997], p. 883, also in the psychiatric theories of Karl Wilhelm Ideler [1795-1860] and Heinrich Wilhelm Neumann [1814-1884]), which implied

the concept of a thrust, to refer to the drives or urges proper to humans, and reserved the work *Instinkt* for what he regarded as our “animal components.” In his monumental translation of the complete works of Sigmund Freud called *Standard Edition* or *SE* (Freud, 1953-1974), British psychoanalyst James Strachey overlooked the linguistic distinctions Freud himself made, seemingly in order to be faithful to the Freudian idea of an articulation between psychoanalysis and biology. However, by so doing he made Freud’s work less sophisticated and vulnerable to criticisms that it did not really deserve.

For his part, Jung only used the term *Instinkt*, making no difference between thrusts in general and thrusts that depend on “animal components.”

51. Furthermore, though Washburn maintained an *epoché* with regard to the possibility that the Ground may be a dynamic reality existing independently from the psyche (Washburn, 1995, pp. 130-131; 1996a [Spanish ed.], p. 195), and although in his discussion of the problems of adolescence he admitted that the “soul” cannot be directly known, he seemed to posit a soul when he claimed that spirit is something that necessarily expresses itself within the bounds of the soul. Since Washburn is not naïve in this sense, I assume he used “soul” as a translation of *psyche* rather than in the Judeo-Christian sense of the word.
52. Though it was Laing’s disciple, David E. Cooper, who coined the term antipsychiatry, which Laing never applied to his own system, when I use the term in an ample sense I include Laing under the label—a custom that, according to Adrian Laing (1996), David Cooper (1968) instituted in his Introduction to *The Dialectics of Liberation*, but which I have observed in other works as well (e.g., in Boyers & Orrill, 1971). I also include under the label those who were influenced by the Scottish psychiatrist: Aaron Esterson, Joseph Berke, Morton Schaszman, Leon Redler, Noel Cobb, James Low, Jungian Psychologist John W. Perry (whose Diabasis had a striking success with psychotics), Ross V. Speck, Andrew Feldmár, Douglas C. Smith, David Small, Mina Semyon, M. Guy Thompson, Steven J. Ticktin, Ljiljana Filipovic, Steven Gans, Peter R. Breggin, Kevin F. McCready, and so on. And I include under the label even akin thinkers or therapists having a different filiation—some of whom influenced Laing and some of whom were probably influenced by him—such as Gregory Bateson, Michel Foucault, Thomas Szasz, Kazimierz Dabrowski, Jay Haley,

Bert Kaplan, Franco Basaglia, and so on. I could include Stan and Christina Grof as well, and also Michael Washburn, but since these three identify themselves as transpersonal theorists I will include them in this latter category.

53. “Integral” philosopher-psychologist Ken Wilber (1977) has referred to supreme sanity as “liberation,” the Sanskrit equivalents of which (*moksha*; *mukti*) are used in various Hindu traditions to indicate whichever condition they deem to represent the undeluded condition beyond *samsara*. In the context of the Buddhist *Sutrayana* the Tibetan equivalents of “liberation” (*tharpa* [*thar pa*]; *drölwa* [*grol ba*]) are applied to the *Hinayana* Buddhist’s individual liberation from suffering (though in the Tantras they are also used to indicate a type of Path leading to a more thorough realization, and in Dzogchen spontaneous liberation or *rangdröl* is spontaneous *drölwa*). The Tibetan equivalent of “Awakening” (*changchub* [*byang chub*], corresponding to the Sanskrit *bodhi*, the Chinese *p’u-t’i*, the Japanese *bodai*, etc.), in its turn, indicates the realizations of the *Mahayana*, the *Vajrayana* and the *Ati[yogatantra]yana*, involving what is often rendered as “omniscience” (Skt. *sarwakarajñata*; Tib. *tamche khyenpanyi* [*thams cad mkhyen pa nyid*])—but which, rather than being a type of ESP, is a more complete form of realization, involving panoramic awareness and special capabilities allowing the individual to effectively help others go beyond *samsara*.
54. According to the teachings of Dzogchen *Ati*, there are three types of thoughts: (a) “coarse,” (b) “subtle,” and (c) “super-subtle.” (a) The ones called “coarse thoughts” correspond to the *mental images* that Indian Buddhist philosopher Dharmakirti called *samanyalakshana* (Tib. *chitsen* [*spyi mtshan*]) or “general collections of characteristics,” which are similar to what Scottish philosopher David Hume called “ideas” (a concept he took from both Locke and Berkeley, but which he modified in order to make it suit his own worldview), which are mental phenomena of *dang* (*gdangs*) energy that in Hume’s view reproduce the impressions of *particular* phenomena of *tsel* (*rtsal*) energy (of course Hume did not use the concepts of *dang* and *tsel* energy; the association between Hume’s view and these concepts was made by the author of this paper: cf. Capriles, 2007a, Vol. I); these include both the thoughts used in discursive thinking (Greek *dianoia*), which are copies of impressions of hearing

consisting in the pronunciation of words which, insofar as they are “pronounced” in our minds, are temporal, and the configurations or patterns of sight (often in combination with one or more of the other senses), which are copies of impressions received through sight (often in combination with other senses)—which are spatial. (b) The ones called “subtle thoughts” are those involved in intuition (comparable to the intelligible intuition the Greeks called *noein*, except in that contrarily to Plato’s belief, and probably Parmenides’, it never occurs without the support of either a mental image or *aisthesis* / sensory perception), in that which Descartes called “intuitive concepts” (but which, contrarily to the view of Descartes, rather than being a source of indubitable truth, if taken to be true give rise to delusion)—which, rather than being sequentially pronounced by our imagination, are *instantaneous, mute comprehensions of essence* that, in the *recognition* (in the sense in which authors such as H. H. Price [1975] used the term) of sensory collections of characteristics (Skt. *lakshana*; Tib. *tsempai* [*mtshan dpe*]), regardless of whether the latter are what Hume called impressions or what he called ideas—interpret and experience them in terms of universals (which, however, are neither absolute truths nor sources of truth; on the contrary, when one takes them for the absolute truth of entities, delusion ensues; furthermore, in the same way as what Hume called impressions and what he termed ideas, they are phenomena that exist only insofar as they appear in the human mind, and that even while they appear are empty of self-existence or substance: universals are *comprehensions of essence*, yet both themselves and the essences they understand are empty of self-existence or substance, and hence *universalia sunt realia sed rursus non sunt vera*—they are real in the etymological sense of the term insofar as they are involved in *rere* or thinking and in that they understand the essence of *res* or things, yet they are neither absolute truths, nor source of absolute truth understood as an absolutely perfect *adaequatio* with particular entities that would exclude the equally valid, equally partial *adaequatio* of the opposite concept with the same particular essent [cf. Capriles, 2007a, Vol. I]). (c) The paradigmatic expression of those called “super-subtle” is the threefold directional thought structure that, as shown in Capriles (2003, 2004, 2006a, 2007a, Vol. I), consists in the notion of an experience, something experienced, and an experiencer, or of an action, something done and

a doer of action. When the vibratory activity at the root of the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought sustains the “discursive thoughts”—which as has been shown are a type of (a) coarse thoughts—that follow each other in reasoning, as well as the subtle thoughts that come into play again and again in the course of the reasoning, one takes them to be either the absolute truth, or something absolutely false, with regard to that which the thoughts interpret. When the activity in question sustains (b) the subtle / intuitive thoughts coming into play in sensory perception, one confuses these thoughts with the territory they interpret (which in the realms of sensuality and form is a singled-out segment of the sensory continuum) and take the latter to be an entity-in-itself. When this activity sustains (c) the *threefold thought-structure*, the result is the manifestation of the *threefold directional apparitional structure*, which comprises the delusive subject-object duality, condition of possibility of dualistic knowledge and action—which by the same token appears to be part of an absolutely true, objective reality, so that one feels oneself to be a mental subject or soul at a distance from an objectively existent “physical universe” (it was this that led Descartes to take no notice of the fact that the mental subject and its objects were simply projections of delusorily valued thought, and posit them as elements of a *given*, objective, self-existent reality). It must be noted that when it is said that one is being affected by a passion, what has actually happened is that the delusory valuation-absolutization of thought has become more intense, and this has intensified the sensation in the center of the chest associated with the vibratory function at the root of delusion and with the tensions it induces, by the same token increasing the strength of thoughts and hence their power to lead one unreflectingly into action.

55. These three senses are: (i) *avidya* or *marigpa* (*ma rig pa*) *qua* the beclouding of primordial awareness, or, which is the same, *qua* beclouding of the self-recognition of the true nature of all reality; (ii) *avidya* or *marigpa* *qua* the basic delusion consisting in taking the dependent / insubstantial as being independent / substantial / self-existent, the relative as being absolute, what lacks value and importance as having inherent value and importance, the impermanent as permanent, the unsatisfactory as capable of providing satisfaction and so on; and (iii) *avidya* or *marigpa* *qua* the inability, so long as (ii)



is active, to realize that one is under delusion. The combination of these three senses may be said to make up the delusion that, in terms of the *Mahayana* interpretation expressed in the *Prajñāparamita sūtras* (Second Promulgation), constitutes avidya or marigpa. Although the term *lethe* used by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus means “concealment” and therefore strictly speaking corresponds to the first of these three senses of the term avidya or marigpa, I believe Heraclitus may have used the term to convey the complete meaning of the Buddhist term as explained here—and hence throughout Capriles (2007a) I employ it as a synonym for avidya or marigpa, subsuming the three senses the term has in the Dzogchen teachings.

There is another threefold classification of avidya / marigpa in the Dzogchen teachings, favored by Longchen Rabjampa, who in general chose Third Dharmachakra terminology in his explanations of Dzogchen; for a brief description cf. note 99 to this paper, and for a longer one cf. Capriles (2007a, Vols. I, II),

56. Among the four *dharmadhatus* of the *Avatamsakasūtra*, the first (Chinese *shih*) involves awareness of particular phenomena as such. The second (Chinese *li*) involves awareness (of) the *dharmata* or true nature of all phenomena. The third (Chinese *li-shih-wu-ai*) involves (a) awareness of the *dharmata* in the perception of each phenomenon as the phenomenon it is in the relative plane, and (b) in the awareness (of) the *dharmata*, awareness that this nature involves all phenomena. And the fourth (Chinese *shih-shih-wu-ai*) involves awareness of the fact that all phenomena and the whole universe are contained in each phenomenon.

The wisdoms of quality and quantity, for their part, are mainly concerned with awareness (of) the fourth *dharmadhatu* of the *Avatamsakasūtra* and the manifestation, in a realized individual, of the wondrous functionality of this fourth *dharmadhatu*—which are achieved as a result of the fusion of *tsel* (*rtsal*) energy with *rölpa* (*rolpa*) energy (and hence of *sambhogakaya* and *nirmanakaya*) at some stage of the development of the fourth vision of *Thögel* (*thod rgal*), upon which the *nirmanakaya* acquires for the realized individual the characteristics and functionality proper to the *sambhogakaya*. As has been noted, the *sambhogakaya* is one of the three aspects of dimensions of Buddhahood acknowledged by the *Mahayana* and higher vehicles; its wisdoms of quality (*ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes*) and quantity

(*ji bsnyed pa'i mkhyen pa'i ye shes*) are illustrated by the simile of a mirror, which has a limitless reflexive capacity: it can reflect anything, whatever their qualities (such as form, color, size, etc.): if one puts a small mirror very near a flea it will perfectly reflect it even though it is quite small, and if one puts it at a sufficient distance from Mount Kailash it will perfectly reflect it, despite its immensity. Likewise, a mirror can reflect any quantity of things: if in a toilet or in a very small room there is a person, the next will have to wait until the first one exits in order to get in; contrariwise, a mirror may seem full when it is reflecting one person, but if the mirror is brought farther away, without getting bigger it will nevertheless reflect ten people, and if it is moved even farther away, while maintaining the same size it will be able to contain the reflections of an ever-increasing number of people, beyond any limit. In the *Buddhavatamsaka sūtra* the wisdom of quantity is illustrated by the assertion in according to which in a single atom hundreds of Buddhas can manifest simultaneously, and in general both wisdoms are illustrated by many assertions and similes of this Sūtra, as well as of the *Saddharmapundarika sūtra*, the *Ghanavyūha sūtra* and other related canonical sources.

The truly, fully holistic condition consists in the manifestation of the wisdoms of quality and quantity involving the full awareness and wondrous functionality of the third and fourth *dharmadhatus* of the *Avatamsaka sūtra*.

57. The “energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness” is what Tantric bioenergetics refer to by the Sanskrit term *kundalini* and the Tibetan word *thig le*, and which is explained in terms of an energy flow going through a “central channel” into the superior centers associated with the brain. (In the modern West, there have been attempts to explain the same phenomena in terms of the brain’s biochemistry.)

In its pristine condition, primordial awareness is all pervading and panoramic, and as such it cannot exclude part of the continuum of sense data, turning it into ground. In fact, the condition of possibility of what *Gestalttheorie* calls figure-ground minds, which single out for perception a segment of the continuum of what appears as object and turn into ground the rest of the continuum, is the *diminution of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness* and the concomitant *reduction of the scope awareness* that occur in the course of phylogeny as

civilization develops and in the course of ontogenesis in civilized human groups as socialization takes place. This gives rise to a *selective* consciousness with ever less permeable limits and makes normal civilized adults *unable* to abstain from singling out segments of the continuum of sense data and thereby leaving the rest of the continuum outside the boundaries of consciousness. Therefore, rather than being a function of primordial awareness, the turning of most of the continuum of what appears as object into ground is a function of the *diminution of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness*.

Tantric bioenergetics explains this by saying that the reprimands and punishments used for making infants adapt to society induce muscular contractions, which give rise to “knots” strangling the central channel and thereby reducing the flow of energy entering the higher focal points of experience, and by implication the brain—which reduces the scope of conscious awareness, allowing normal adult experience to involve the split into figure and ground, as well as permitting a great deal of the operations for the managing of self-identity that Sartre (1943, 1980) explained in terms of the concept of bad faith (which make up his existentialist alternative to Freud’s concept of repression by the pre-conscious aspect of the unconscious). Then the regular discharge of energy in ejaculation (in the man) or in both ejaculation and menstruation (in the woman) helps keep the *energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness* relatively low.

However, so far Western science has failed to corroborate this interpretation, and hence it would be prudent to set it aside for the time being, except as a metaphor.

58. As noted in Capriles (2007a, Vol. I), if a host of attractive nymphs caressed my naked body with goose feathers all over, since the type of sensation that results from this action is of the kind human beings tend to accept, and since I find attractive the individuals who induce it and thus also tend to accept them, as a result of my acceptance I would experience pleasure and so I would ascend in the wheel of *samsara*. However, if the nymphs went on with their activity uninterrupted for hours and days, at a certain point I would mentally yell, “stop it!”—whereby I would start to reject the experience, and hence I would begin to experience it as a torture and be taken to the bottom of *samsara*—just as would have happened if a type of sensation of the

kind human beings tend to reject had been inflicted on me. On the other hand, masochists can enjoy sensations that are generally deemed painful, and the fact that this may have resulted from the association of erotic stimulation and physical punishment in early infancy does not contradict the fact that it is the acceptance of those sensations that allows the masochist to experience them as pleasure. Likewise, if a neutral sensation persists for too long, at some point I understand it as boring and thus reject it, whereby it becomes unpleasant.

59. Maslow showed wisdom in warning that for such “peak experiences” to be truly valuable they would have to arise in the context of the application of a self-consistent method; I would add that only ancient Wisdom traditions have truly self-consistent methods making it possible to use experiences in order to move from *samsara* to Awakening: the experience must be used as an impressive reflection in a mirror, which allows discovery of the reflecting nature of the mirror.

Furthermore, upon learning that many of his readers were resorting to all kinds of means for obtaining “peak experiences” outside the context of a self-consistent method, Maslow switched the emphasis from the concept in question to that of “plateau experiences,” which was also used by the Indian author U. A. Asrani, and which Maslow illustrated with the image of “a mother seeing a child play” (quite similar to the Dzogchen image of old man seeing children play). Cleary and Shapiro (1996) stated:

Indeed, his journals (Maslow [1979]) reveal that by 1969, Maslow became convinced that the emotionality and excitability inherent in peak experiences may have been overvalued. He went on to say that having a glimpse of transcendent states through a peak experience was not the only way or even the best way to acquire and sustain higher transcendent experiences (Krippner [1972]; Maslow [1970]). Although he believed these glimpses might occasionally be useful, Maslow also arrived at the conclusion that an inordinate emphasis on such glimpses was a hindrance (Maslow [1971, 1979])... [furthermore, he] expressed considerable ire in several of his journal entries (Maslow [1979]) that his concept of peak experience had been misused to justify indulging in experientialism for its own sake... Maslow

came to feel that appreciation of ordinary experience was not only an essential component of, but that it served as a trigger to, higher states of consciousness such as the plateau experience (Krippner [1972]; Maslow [1970]). (p. 218)

Though the concept of “plateau experience” may to some extent serve as an antidote to overvaluation of peak experiences and attachment to the emotionality and excitability that typify the samsaric varieties of these experiences, it does not solve the root problem I am concerned with, which is the failure to discriminate between experiences of samsara, absorptions of the neutral base-of-all, and instances of *nirvana* of the kind that I have been referring to as Dzogchen-*qua*-Path. The main advantage of switching the emphasis from the concept of “peak experiences” to that of “plateau experiences”—even though this term still conveys the idea of a “high”—seems to be that it would discourage the avid search for explosive instants that characterized the hippies and which produced many unwanted effects, and *might* be conducive to the discovery of the Tao / Buddha-nature (or however we call the ultimate) in ordinary experience. However, this would be possible only in those who have had access to the meta-experience of nirvana that I am calling Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, which is the very kernel of the Path, and which the practice of Dzogchen has the function of stabilizing.

60. The tone of Tony Sutich’s mission statement for the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* clearly reflected the attitude of the pioneers of transpersonal psychology (Scotton, Chinen, & Battista, 1996, p.10):

The *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* is concerned with the publication of theoretical and applied research, original contributions, empirical papers, articles and studies in meta-needs, ultimate values, unitive consciousness, peak experience, ecstasy, mystical experience, B-values, essence, bliss, awe, wonder, self-actualization, ultimate meaning, transcendence of the self, spirit, sacralization of everyday life, oneness, cosmic awareness, cosmic play, individual and species wide synergy, maximal interpersonal encounter, transcendental phenomena, maximal sensory awareness, responsiveness and expression; and related concepts, experiences and activities.

With regard to the above mission statement, it must be clear that ultimate values are also values and as such are within samsara, that experiences of unitive consciousness are also in general within samsara, that awe and wonder are instances of the neutral base-of-all followed by samsaric conceptualization, and that also interpersonal encounter and maximal sensory awareness are within samsara (the rest being more difficult to categorize). However, all of the experiences or values mentioned in the statement are most legitimate objects of study, not only of transpersonal psychology, but of metatranspersonal psychology as well—in which case the most important task is to distinguish nirvanic from samsaric and from neither-samsaric-nor-nirvanic occurrences.

NOTE: The “B” in the term “B-values” stands for the word “Being.” Maslow’s List of B-Values is to be found in Maslow, 1962, p. 83.

61. Significantly, Maslow (1970) wrote:

The very beginning, the intrinsic core, the essence, the universal nucleus of every known high religion (unless Confucianism is also called a religion) has been the private, lonely, personal illumination, revelation, or ecstasy of some acutely sensitive prophet or seer. The high religions call themselves revealed religions and each of them tends to rest its validity, its function, and its right to exist on the codification and the communication of this original mystic experience or revelation from the lonely prophet to the mass of human beings in general.

But it has recently begun to appear that these ‘revelations’ or mystical illuminations can be subsumed under the head of the ‘peak-experiences’ [1] or ‘ecstasies’ or ‘transcendent’ experiences which are now being eagerly investigated by many psychologists. That is to say, it is very likely, indeed almost certain, that these older reports, phrased in terms of supernatural revelation, were, in fact, perfectly natural, human peak-experiences of the kind that can easily be examined today, which, however, were phrased in terms of whichever conceptual, cultural, and linguistic framework the particular seer had available in his time (Laski).

In a word, we can study today what happened in the past and was then explainable in supernatural terms only. By

so doing, we are enabled to examine religion in all its facets and in all its meanings in a way that makes it a part of science rather than something outside and exclusive of it.

Also this kind of study leads us to another very plausible hypothesis: to the extent that all mystical or peak-experiences are the same in their essence and have always been the same, all religions are the same in their essence and always have been the same. They should, therefore, come to agree in principle on teaching that which is common to all of them, i.e., whatever it is that peak-experiences teach in common (whatever is different about these illuminations can fairly be taken to be localisms both in time and space, and are, therefore, peripheral, expendable, not essential). This something common, this something which is left over after we peel away all the localisms, all the accidents of particular languages or particular philosophies, all the ethnocentric phrasings, all those elements which are not common, we may call the 'core-religious experience' or the 'transcendent experience....' (pp. 19-20 in 1994 Penguin-Arkana edition)

...To summarize, it looks quite probable that the peak-experience may be the model of the religious revelation or the religious illumination or conversion which has played so great a role in the history of religions. But, because peak-experiences are in the natural world and because we can research with them and investigate them, and because our knowledge of such experiences is growing and may be confidently expected to grow in the future, we may now fairly hope to understand more about the big revelations, conversions, and illuminations upon which the high religions were founded.

(Not only this, but I may add a new possibility for scientific investigation of transcendence. In the last few years it has become quite clear that certain drugs called 'psychedelic,' especially LSD and psilocybin, give us some possibility of control in this realm of peak-experiences. It looks as if these drugs often produce peak-experiences in the right people under the right circumstances, so that perhaps we needn't wait for them to occur by good fortune. Perhaps we

can actually produce a private personal peak-experience under observation and whenever we wish under religious or non-religious circumstances. We may then be able to study in its moment of birth the experience of illumination or revelation. Even more important, it may be that these drugs, and perhaps also hypnosis, could be used to produce a peak-experience, with core-religious revelation, in non-peakers, thus bridging the chasm between these two separated halves of mankind.) (pp. 26-27 in 1994 Penguin-Arkana edition)

Elsewhere Maslow (1962) described peak-experiences in psychoanalytic jargon as:

a fusion of ego, id, super-ego and ego ideal, of conscious, preconscious and unconscious, of primary and secondary processes, a synthesizing of pleasure principle with reality principle, a healthy regression without fear in the service of the greatest maturity, a true integration of the person at all levels. (p. 106)

62. I see no reason whatsoever for qualifying the divisive and fragmentary perspective of consciousness as "matter oriented." In fact, pre-Socratic philosophers viewed matter as an undivided continuum, and even post-Socratic dualistic Greek philosophers such as Plato (who, as is known, had dualistic, anti-somatic Orphic roots) and Aristotle were aware that in itself matter was free from limits or divisions. The same applies to twentieth and twenty-first century physics, which has viewed matter as a continuum ever since Einstein developed his Field Theory—and then, when the supposed inherent dimensionality of the given was questioned by recognition physics and holonomic physical theories, the undividedness of matter was appreciated from an even deeper perspective. Furthermore, though otherworldly spirituality contrasts the spiritual with the material, and what Mircea Eliade called antisomatic spirituality deems the latter to be evil or a source of evil, neither of these assumptions are shared by nondual spirituality—whereas Tantra and Dzogchen go so far as to use somatic impulses as a Path of Awakening. In fact, I think Grof's choice of the term *hylotropic* for providing a contrast to the term *holotropic* was most infelicitous.
63. However, the Greek term *hyle* originally meant, "living wood," whereas the Latin term *materia*, sharing the same root as the English word "matter,"

originally meant, “cut (and hence dead) wood.” The point is that the Greeks originally viewed the universe and hence matter as being somehow alive, which is not how present day *hylotropic* consciousness views it.

64. According to Grof, in this mode of consciousness the same space can be simultaneously occupied by many objects; the past and future are always available and can be brought experientially into the present moment; one can experience oneself in several places at the same time; it is possible to experience simultaneously more than one temporal framework.
65. In *Pramanasamuchchaya* 1:11d Acharya Dignaga stated that whenever one has a memory of the aspect of blue, one also has the memory of *having been conscious of* this aspect—from which it has been inferred that, when the perception of the aspect of blue that is remembered took place, it was accompanied by an awareness (of) being conscious of seeing this aspect. This is precisely the thesis of Dignaga’s main direct disciple, Dharmakirti: that for perception to be possible there has to be awareness (of) the fact that one is perceiving. In fact, as I have noted elsewhere (Capriles, 2004, 2007a, Vol. II), the condition of possibility of *self-conscious* remembrance is that a *reflexive* mnemonic imprint be established (which depends on the cerebral cortex, organ of reflexiveness, and which may be contrasted with unselfconscious forms of memory such as that of lower organisms that lack a cerebral cortex, that of fetuses whose cerebral cortex is not fully formed, and that of neonates whose cerebral cortex is not completely myelinated), and this can only occur when there is a delusorily valued *perception, thought* or *action*—which, insofar as it goes along with the delusory valuation-absolutization of the underlying threefold thought structure, involves nondual, nonthetic, nonpositional awareness (of) a dual, thetic, positional consciousness of an object that is understood in terms of a concept (for a discussion of memory in Buddhahood, cf. Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II). When the base-of-all or *kunzhi* (*kun gzhi*; Skt. *alaya*) manifests as a neutral condition (*lungmaten* [*kun gzhi lung ma bstan*]), there is unconsciousness, not in the sense of lack of awareness, but in that of manifestation of a stunned condition involving the first type of *avidya / marigpa* posited in the Dzogchen classification adopted in this paper and lacking reflexive awareness (of) being conscious of something and hence involving no *knowledge*—in

which therefore no reflexive mnemonic imprints are established. This condition manifests for a very brief instant between each coarse thought of the discursive kind and the next, and although it may be said to be unconscious in the sense just defined, its occurrence, rather than making one lose track of the relationship between the thoughts in question and fall into a stunned condition, has the twofold function of separating each thought from the preceding one (according to how long it manifests, in writing it will be represented by an empty space, a comma, a semicolon, or a period), and of establishing the connection between thoughts that makes mental discourse possible. Therefore, what the Dzogchen teachings call the neutral condition of the base-of-all, which is an immediate phenomenal reality, may be regarded as the *phenomenal unconscious* that performs the functions that the *Yogacharas* ascribe to the metaphysical abstraction they call *alaya vijñana* (Tib. *kunzhi namshe* [*kun gzhi rnam shes*]) and that the modern West often attributes to the partly analogous metaphysical abstraction called “the unconscious”—such as that of establishing connections of which one is not consciously aware, which I have illustrated by the case of the object of infatuation or worry spontaneously presenting itself after one comes out of a swoon or awakens from sleep (Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II).

66. Except to instances of *nirvana* occurring in “Nonordinary States of Consciousness” (NOSCs).
67. Had Grof’s definition of holotropic consciousness asserted it to be limitless, nonconceptual awareness, the oxymoron would be perfect. Since Grof spoke of identification with an area of consciousness lacking definite limits, the oxymoron is not as clear or direct.
68. According to Grof, traumatic events, breathwork, or other powerful life experiences can serve to release these energies in ways that can be channeled into constructive pathways. In particular, LSD can bring up these events and allow unconscious material to be brought up and dealt with.
69. Unfortunately, those who have not had experiences of the spontaneous liberation of thought may take the absence of coarse, discursive thoughts characteristic of the absorptions in question to be the spontaneous liberation of thought. This is one of the reasons why the relation with a genuine Master holding a genuine lineage is indispensable: among many other things, such a Master will help one discriminate between the experiences of pseudototality conditioned by

subtle and/or supersubtle thoughts pertaining to *samsara*, the experience of the base-of-all where neither *samsara* nor *nirvana* is manifest, and genuine instances of *nirvana*.

70. Different manifestations of luminosity occur in the practices of Dzogchen and in spontaneous processes outside the context of a Wisdom-tradition, including that of death – intermediate state or bardo between death and rebirth – rebirth (for a brief explanation of these, see Capriles, 2000a). However, only when their true condition is reGnized are they manifestations of realization.
71. The *Mandukya Upanishad* described this state in negative terms as “a neither subjective nor objective experience [involving] neither consciousness nor unconsciousness [and] neither sensory knowledge, nor relative knowledge, nor derived knowledge.”
72. Following the *Mandukya Upanishad*, also Shankaracharya posited four states of experience, which were: (1) that of awake experience; (2) that of dream; (3) that of dreamless, deep sleep; and (4) that of *turiya ananda*—the last of which, following the Upanishads, he viewed as the absolute reality and supreme level, and which, as required by the logic he borrowed from the *Madhyamikas*, he categorized as being beyond conceptualization—that is, to be “unthinkable.” This shows that, though he borrowed the dialectic of the *Madhyamikas*, he applied it to the results of a practice based on Vedic methods and categories, which as such diverges radically from the *Madhyamika* practices and categories: Shankara applied categories inspired by the genuine realization of nonduality in instances of *nirvana*, to experiences that do not seem to correspond to this realization, giving rise to confusion concerning nonduality (in this case *qua* Path or Fruit, or what is the same, *qua* *nirvana*). An analysis of Shankara’s methods, carried out on the basis of a theoretical and practical understanding of genuine Buddhist practices from Dzogchen to *Madhyamaka*, shows the former to be conducive to the maintenance of dualism and of *samsara*, or, in the best of cases, to the achievement of absorptions of the neutral base-of-all wherein neither *samsara* nor *nirvana* are active.
73. I do not accept this label, for the unaltered state is the one that manifests in the primordial *yoga (atiyoga)* of Dzogchen and makes the *dharmakaya* patent. In fact, the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term *yoga* is *naljor (rnal ’byor)*, a compound of the terms *nalma (rnal ma)* and *yorwa (’byor ba)*. The former

means *unaltered condition* [of something], whereas the latter means *to contract, to take or to adhere to*. Therefore, the compound term has the meaning of “acquiring (one’s own) unaltered condition and adhering to it.” However, since one cannot acquire what was always one’s own condition, the true meaning of the compound term is “discovering one’s original unaltered condition, [and temporarily] not losing awareness (of) it.”

Given the above, the condition of masked insanity which is our deluded normality is an altered condition, and so it would be absurd to use the term “altered stated” to refer to the alterations of this state—which may involve, among many other states, the one in which our original unaltered condition is discovered for a limited period, and the one in which awareness of this condition is continuous.

74. Jim Bray (1998) wrote:

The legitimacy of BPM I and IV can be questioned on the grounds that [BPM] I is before the beginning, the timeless state of Original Embedment, and [BPM] IV is after the end. If we are concerning ourselves with the process of differentiation, we are concerned with the onset of Disembedment / Separation and the progress to the Egoic Stage, where the nonegoic is repressed and the mental-ego is stable. This seems to be the process reflected in both physical birth and in the Heroic and Creation myths. The process of reintegration leading to the Transegoic Stage does not seem to be a smooth continuation of this, but more like a recapitulation; the latency and middle-mental-egoic periods look very much like an interlude rather than a real part of this action. It could be said that BPM I precedes the process we are interested in, and [BPM] IV commences an interlude that precedes another; indeed, the symmetry of [BPMs] I and IV lead me to question their separation, since the differentiation and reintegration processes seem to have a circular or spiral quality. (n.p.)

75. Dwelling in a BPM, no matter which, is never in itself or by itself conducive to Awakening or liberation from *samsara*; contrariwise, in many cases it is altogether pathological. For example, being stuck in a BPM 2 or 3 is a most painful experience that, besides, may result in psychiatrization.

However, the same BPMs may be most useful for someone having received the oral instructions and the blessings of the lineage, and having the capacity to apply those instructions in anguish and turmoil. In the case of BPM 2, such an individual can use it as a springboard for reGnizing Dzogchen-*qua*-Base—as in the transition from the bottom of Hell to Purgatory in the symbolism of the *Divine Comedy*, which in the context of Dzogchen practice results in a most clear and useful reGnition of the Base which contrasts in a most striking manner with the immediately preceding samsaric condition, and which results in an instance of spontaneous liberation of delusorily-valued thoughts of such power and intensity as to give rise to a significant capacity of spontaneous liberation. In the ensuing process, represented as Purgatory, BPMs 3 may be employed just in the same way.

Nonetheless, in some cases the experience of a BPM can itself be useful on the Path; for example, BPMs 1 and 4, even though in no case whatsoever are they instances of *nirvana*, and the moment they become experiences that may be reflexively remembered they are already transitory, conditioned, spurious states belonging to *samsara*, may in themselves be helpful for developing faith in the possibility of going beyond the usual narrow state of mind. However, since the faith arisen from the manifestation of BPMs 1 and 4 is based on delusion, it is only useful until entering the Path in the truest sense of the expression, which occurs upon the initial manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path; thereafter, incapacity to distinguish between *nirvana*, *samsara* and the neutral base-of-all would obliterate the useful effects of the previous manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base and by the same stroke would block the Path to Awakening. If this occurred, the only way such faith could have long-term positive results would be if Dzogchen-*qua*-Path manifested again, the individual learned how to tell this occurrence from the neutral base-of-all and from experiences of the samsaric formless sphere, and received the instructions and blessing that would allow her or him to reGnize the true condition of all samsaric experiences so that they liberate themselves spontaneously.

The problem lies in being stuck in one so-called BPM, which occurs when an inner or outer obstacle (i.e. an obstacle manifesting as a result of occurrences in the practitioner's mind that have not been triggered by an immediately preceding

“external” occurrence, or an obstacle manifesting as a result of occurrences in the practitioner's mind that have been triggered by an immediately preceding “external” occurrence, respectively) blocks the process death – intermediate state or bardo between death and rebirth (or human constant) – rebirth. As has been seen, even when this process manifests spontaneously outside the context of a wisdom tradition, if it is not blocked (which would cause the individual to turn round in the circles of what Laing [1967] implied to be false madness by calling it, “a gross travesty, a mockery, a grotesque caricature of what the natural healing of that estranged integration we call sanity may be”), this process may be decidedly therapeutic if is allowed to follow its natural course toward a breakthrough or series of breakthroughs leading beyond conflict (these breakthroughs being somehow analogous to the one Grof represented as the transition from BPM 3 to BPM 4). However, if it manifests spontaneously outside the context of a wisdom tradition, the process in question will not have the potentiality to lead beyond *samsara*, for a process not involving the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path is not a Path leading to the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit: the only way the process may be ultimately liberating and conducive to Awakening is if and only if it is undertaken in the framework of a wisdom-tradition based on the principle of spontaneous liberation (for this is the only principle allowing the conditions “between death and rebirth” to be conducive to Awakening and liberation from *samsara*). Grofian therapy cannot turn any BPM into the Path, for even if a Grofian facilitator insists on the need to let go of all BPMs, this will be of little help insofar as such facilitators lack the blessings of a genuine lineage and the knowledge of the traditional instructions which are indispensable for the manifestation of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path to occur and result in the spontaneous liberation of whichever BPM is manifest.

76. In Lochouarn (1993) it was shown that, on the basis of the study of a very large quantity of European and North-African human fossils from the Paleolithic and the Neolithic, paleopathology has established that in those eras human beings did not die from traumatism caused by other human beings, and that, on the contrary, whenever possible, wounds and traumata caused by the attack of animals or by accidents were cured with the help of other individuals. In the following years paleopathological

research was done throughout the whole world, having as its object a very high number of ancient corpses, and the findings were roughly the same; for a wide summary of this research cf. van der Dennen (1995). Summaries of the subsequent results of this research are also found in DeMeo (1998) and Taylor (2003, 2005).

77. The princes were Edward V of England and his brother, Richard of Shrewsbury, First Duke of York.
78. The paper being cited originally read “has preserved important shamanic elements,” which I changed into “contains important shamanic elements” because the previous wording may be wrongly understood to imply that metashamanic teachings truly leading to Awakening, such as those transmitted by current Tibetan spiritual systems, are a development based on pre-existent shamanic systems. As noted in the regular text of this paper, Sufi Master Idries Shah (1964) asserted the opposite of this: what is known as shamanism is a degeneration of the genuinely liberating approach I have called “metashamanic.” Shah’s account fits the Tibetan-Indian-Persian-Greek-Roman vision of human evolution and history discussed in Capriles (1986, 1994, 2007a, Vol. III), which posits temporal processes called aeons (Sanskrit: *kalpa*; Tib. *kalpa* [*kal pa* or *bskal pa*]), divided into eras of growing degeneration, as well as the Taoist conception of human evolution and history as a process of growing degeneration—and, in particular, it fits the Dzogchen account of the twelve primordial masters or *Tönpa chunyi* (*ston pa bcu gnyis*) (cf. Namkhai Norbu & Clemente, 1999), for the fact that each and every time that the metashamanic teachings leading to Awakening are lost a new *Tönpa* arises to re-introduce them in the world, implies that the spurious teachings arise when the pre-existing true teachings disappear, and therefore that the latter are older than the former.
79. Besides, in *samsara* the priority is to keep alive. So throughout one’s life (and not only in the practice of *Chö* [*gcod*]), practice should be applied as though one’s life depended on it—as though letting delusion to go on for a minute would cause a heavy, sharp blade to strike one’s neck.
80. In order to account for the manifestation of gods, demons, spirits, elementals and other “apparitions,” a Jungian explanation based on concepts such as the collective unconscious and synchronicity may seem quite plausible. However, the Dzogchen teachings traditionally have offered a more sophisticated and yet simpler explanation of such phenomena, based on the nonexistence of a division between an inside and an outside of the individual. Cf. the upcoming third volume of my *Buddhism and Dzogchen* (the first volume being Capriles, 2003—the definitive, corrected version of which will soon be available in print).
81. During initiation, Yanomami shamans invite the entities called hekuras into the would-be shaman’s chest so that they will establish their residence therein—which should make the new shaman particularly susceptible to their influence (cf. Lizot, 1992, pp. 119-141).
82. If memory does not betray me, this assertion was made in Castañeda (1971); otherwise it was made in one of his two following books, but at any rate it was not made in the first of his books.
83. I do not recall the source for this information, but I tend to believe it was one of the works by Gordon Wasson—perhaps Wasson, Sabina, Cowan, Cowan, and Rhodes, 1974.
84. Allegedly some types of antipsychiatric therapy involved increasing the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness in order to radicalize psychoses in appropriate environments so that they would become self-healing processes catalyzed by positive feedback loops resulting in radical breakthroughs, rather than continuing to be what R. D. Laing (1967) referred to as “the mockery we see in mental institutions.” This might as well be another legitimate use of such increases.
85. This is a vaguely defined process of seeking “the center, the Self, the Atman,” which according to the Grofs is evidenced by dreams, fantasies, and visions of fantastic battles, polarity struggles or lessons, happenings of fantastic, mythological proportion wherein one may be instrumental as a mover of the cosmos or righter of wrongs, in which later on the psychic “sacred marriage” of internal opposites may be portrayed as an actual (dream) wedding. There may be dreams of an ideal world, and, according to the Grofs, dreams or fantasies where the number four predominates.
86. I believe John Lilly’s (1972) experience with the guides—which he believed to be inherently true and took pride in—in the sensory deprivation tank under the effect of LSD to have been an instance of this kind of deviation: in genuine Awakening traditions sensory deprivation and the like are undertaken with the exclusive aim of producing experiences that then must be recognized as



illusory, and the true condition of which must be reGnized—and if one fails to achieve this the result is likely to be the generation of a psychosis. In particular, on the Dzogchen Path practices of *Thögel* are only taught to those having a great capacity of spontaneous liberation and the capacity not to be either frightened by the apparition of demons or elated by the apparition of deities.

87. Keep in mind that “metaphoric” is one of the characteristics of primary process, which may become patent in psychoses, but also that a metaphoric perception of reality may be a protection against a confrontation in which the victim would in all cases lose.

Just to give an example of what I mean, consider the case of “Jane” reported in Laing & Esterson (1971, pp. 14-16). At the age of 17 she was absorbed in a continuous tennis match, as a result of which she was diagnosed as suffering from “early schizophrenia simplex.” She was seen as assuming the identity of all the elements of tennis: the crowd, the players, the court, *and especially the ball*—which all had taken to be a delusion having nothing to do with reality. However, on investigating her family life, it became apparent that she was trapped within a series of family games in which she was the tennis ball hit back and forth between her parents (and often also the court where the match was played). Mother would turn to Jane and say, “Tell your father to pass the salt.” Father would turn to Jane and say, “Tell her to get it herself.” According to Laing, after three months of therapy she saw the connections between tennis and her family; two years later she left the family, and “has been active in the world for ten years.”

Another example of this is David Cooper’s assertion that *paranoia* is always the perception of a persecutory reality, though the identity of the persecutors may be misplaced: for example, the individual may believe to be persecuted by aliens, when in fact the persecutors are his or her family, and so on. In this regard, research by Lemert (1962) is most relevant.

88. Some trends of phenomenological and existential psychology—and in particular some of those that have been influenced by Eastern philosophy and psychology, such as the ones developed by R. D. Laing and D. E. Cooper—establish sanity or mental health to lie in the absence of delusion rather than in the adaptation to a deluded and delusive society, and define delusion in a way similar to my own

(except in that they do not make the distinction between relative sanity and absolute sanity I make in this paper and in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II).

However, according to existentialism authenticity lies in the non-elusion of Hell by means of the self-deceit Sartre called bad faith. The criterion I use here (explained in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. I), may be regarded as metaexistential insofar as it does not identify sanity with living in Hell, but proposes that one go through Hell—as Dante in the *Divine Comedy*—so as to become established in the *Akanishta* Heaven (Tib. *Ogmin Tukpo Köpa Zhing* [*og min stug po bkod pa’i zhing*): the pure dimension of Awakening, the natural expression of the Awake condition, the *dharmadhatu* garden of the Primordial Buddha, which bears the suffix *ghanavyuha* [Tib. *stug po bkod pa*] or “richly adorned” insofar as it spontaneously gives rise to the “offerings and adornments” of complete enjoyment, and which has not been created or produced and therefore will not dissolve or be destroyed), consisting in Dzogchen-*qua*-Fruit, which represents the irreversible unconcealment of the true non-dual, non-pluralistic, and non-conceptual nature of reality, and hence the ultimate consolidation of true sanity I call absolute sanity, in which there is no parting from *nirvana* and which involves total freedom from delusive experiences—from the spurious paradises of the three spheres of the god realm (of sensuality, of form and or formlessness) down to the conflictive, pain-ridden hells. (The term “metaexistential” was originally defined in Capriles, 1997b].)

89. It has been alleged that the project of modernity, rather than aiming to give rise to a technological Eden, was intended to allow the ruling class to increase its exploitation of the rest of human society, and that the ideal of the technological Eden was no more than a façade or a pretext. However, even if this were correct in the case of *some* of the promoters of the project in question, it could not be correct in the case of *all* of them—and in any case, since the powerful and their descendents would be destroyed together with the rest of society, the project’s effects would indicate delusion was at its root.
90. Because so-called “pesticides” kill all living organisms rather than killing only those considered “pests,” they have been called “biocides.” However, this term is redundant insofar as only living organisms can be killed; therefore, it would be better to call them “omnicides.” However, since the

last term would be incomprehensible to readers I kept the term “pesticides.”

91. It is not easy to assess the authenticity or unauthenticity of the *Prajñāparamitashastra*. Unlike the texts conforming the *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* (Skt. *Yuktikaya*; Tib. *Rigtsog [rigs tshogs]* or *Uma rigtsog [dbu ma rigs tshogs]*) universally attributed to Nagarjuna, this text posits some autonomous theses and syllogisms, and some of its views seem to some extent similar to those of the *Madhyamika Swatantrikas*. However, the text in question makes it very clear that whenever Awake individuals posit something, they do so without what Chandrakirti called “own-mind:” they do not believe what they say, but say it as an expedient means for leading beings of specific capacities to Awakening. This is a view rejected by the *Swatantrikas* and admitted both by the *Prasangikas* (though not so by Tsongkhapa in his reinterpretation of *Prasangika* thought) and the adherents of the Inner, Subtle Madhyamaka (Tib. *Nang trawai uma [nang phra ba’i dbu ma]*), and in particular by the *Mahamadhyamikas*. Therefore, the *Shastra* was not concocted by late followers of the *Madhyamika Swatantrika* subschool.

Nevertheless, just as Nagarjuna’s *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* is seen as the source of *SwabhavaShunyataMadhyamaka* or *UmaRangtongpa (dbu ma rangtong pa)*, and as Nagarjuna’s *Collection of Eulogies* (Skt. *Stavakaya*; Tib. *Tötsog [bstod tshogs]*) and in particular the *Eulogy to the Expanse of the True Condition* (Skt. *Dharmadhatustava*; Tib. *Chöjing Töpa [chos dbyings bstod pa]*) is seen as the source of the Inner, Subtle Madhyamaka (Tib. *Nang trawai uma [nang phra ba’i dbu ma]*), *Parashunya Madhyamaka* or *Uma Zhentongpa (dbu ma gzhan stong pa)*, in case the *Prajñāparamitashastra* were actually a work by Nagarjuna, it could perhaps be seen as an original source, both of the *Madhyamaka Swatantrika* developed by posterior *Madhyamikas*, and—insofar as it combines autonomous theses and syllogisms with the view that no thesis should be clung to, and that Awake Ones posit theses without own-mind, merely as other-directed assertions that may be useful to treaders of the Path—of the Inner, Subtle Madhyamaka (and in particular of *Mahamadhyamaka*).

Hui-neng’s method of interrelated opposites (described in Capriles, 2004 and others of my works), which is at the root of many intellectual skillful means of Ch’an and Zen Buddhism, insofar as it

is based on the understanding that Buddhas have no own-mind and all they say are other-directed assertions having the function of leading being to Awakening, would be based, among other sources, both in the *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* and in the *Prajñāparamitashastra*.

92. The quotation is from *Sutra of the Nucleus of the Tathagata* (Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa’i snying po’i mdo*; Skt. *Tathagatagarbha sutra*). The parts in parentheses are those I modified in order to make the text more comprehensible in the context in which it is being used.
93. As indicated in the quotation below, these terms were coined by Alan Watts (1959).
94. One of the first authors to deal with this law was Lao-tzu (1999) in his *Tao-Te-Ching*. I myself dealt with it in Capriles (1990a [restricted circulation book]); later on the parts of the book involving no instructions that should be kept restricted were refined into Capriles (2001).
95. The quotation is from Vimalamitra (discovered as a *terma [gter ma]* by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (‘*jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang po*) [1820-1892]): *klong lnga’i yi ge dum bu gsum pa (man ngag thams cad kyi rgyal po klong lnga’i yi ge dum bu gsum pa)*, p. 6, 6.
96. The original Buddhist version of the story was told in the *Bodhisattvayogacharyachatuhshatakatika* (Tib. *dbu ma bzhi brgya pa’i ’grel pa*, or *byang chub sems dpa’i rnal ’byor spyod pa gzhi brgya pa’i rgya cher ’grel pa*) by Chandrakirti: a Commentary to Aryadeva’s *Chatuhshataka* (Tib. *bzhi brgya pa*).
97. R. D. Laing (1967) wrote:

From the alienated starting point of our pseudo-sanity, everything is equivocal. Our sanity is not ‘true’ sanity. Their madness is not ‘true’ madness. The madness of our patients is an artifact of the destruction wreaked on them by us, and by them on themselves. Let no one suppose that we meet ‘true’ madness any more than we are truly sane. The madness that we encounter in ‘patients’ is a gross travesty, a mockery, a grotesque caricature of what the natural healing of that estranged integration we call sanity may be. True sanity entails in one way or another the dissolution of the normal ego, that false self competently adjusted to our alienated social reality: the emergence of the ‘inner’ archetypal mediators of divine power, and through this death a rebirth, and

the eventual re-establishment of a new kind of ego functioning, the ego now being the servant of the divine, no longer its betrayer.

98. I am aware of the views of James Low because we met in Nepal, when he was studying Dzogchen under Chime Rigdzin Rinpoche, and I know that he continues to follow the Dzogchen Path. I assume that Noel Cobb (mentioned in Barnes & Berke, 1972) still holds the views that led him to study with Khamtrul Rinpoche, but I have been unable to corroborate this.
99. The best way to grasp the difference between the three senses of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the classification favored by Longchen Rabjampa and the three senses of these terms in the classification adopted here is by considering the arising of *samsara* after the shining forth of what the Dzogchen teachings call *ngowo shi* (*ngo bo'i gshis*)—which, when its true condition is reGnized, is the *dharmakaya*.

At the time of this shining forth, the beclouding element of stupefaction (Tib. *mongcha* [*rmongs cha*]) that has always been flowing with the continuum of those beings who have never realized the true condition and that is the core of the first type of *avidya* or *marigpa* in all Dzogchen classifications—the one that prevents the reGnition of our true condition and that precedes the process of origination of *samsara*, which in the threefold Dzogchen division adopted here is called innate beclouding of primordial, nondual awareness (Tib. *lhenkye marigpa* [*lhan skyes ma rig pa*] or *lhenchik kyepai marigpa* [*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*]), and which in the alternative threefold Dzogchen classification favored by Longchen Rabjampa is referred to by the hardly translatable term *gyu dagnyi chikpai marigpa* (*rgyu bdag nyid gcig pa'i ma rig pa*; cf. Longchenpa, 1976, p. 24, and Cornu, 2001, p. 62)—in ordinary individuals always prevents the reGnition of the true condition of that which shone forth, which would have made the *dharmakaya* patent, giving rise to an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all (in which there is no *nirvana* insofar as this type of *avidya* is manifest, yet there is no *samsara* insofar as the other types of *avidya* are not active).

If, immediately after failing to reGnize the sudden shining forth in question and thus failing to realize it to be the (expression of the) Base, the delusory valuation-absolutization of the supersubtle threefold thought structure gives rise to the subject-object duality, and hence one takes that shining forth for an external reality, this is the second type

of *avidya* or *marigpa* according to the threefold classification favored by Longchenpa—which called it spontaneous illusion or *lhenchik kyepai marigpa* (*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*, which is the term the other classification uses to refer to the first type of *avidya*; cf. Longchenpa, 1975a, p. 51; 1976, pp. 24 and 122 note 10, and Cornu, 2001, p. 62)—and the one that marks the beginning of the development of *samsara*. This gives rise to the illusory distance between the perceiver and the perceived necessary for the perceiver to subsequently cling to the perceived, giving rise to the grasper and the grasped at the root of grasping at appearances. In fact, it is after this that there manifests the delusiveness (Skt. *klishatmanas*; Tib. *nyön yi* [*nyon yid*])—the propensity for which is inherent in the base-of-all-carrying-propensities (*bagchagkyi kunzhi* [*bag chags kyi kun gzhi*])—that, on the basis of the delusory valuation-absolutization of subtle (intuitive) thoughts, conceives the base-of-all-carrying-propensities as an independently existing “I” that rules over the *skandhas*, thus giving rise to the basic disturbing attitude referred to by the Sanskrit term *ahamkara* and the Tibetan *ngadzin* (*nga 'dzin*) that I render as self-grasping (but that as has been seen involves self-affirmation and self-preoccupation), which conceives an *I* or *me* as the experiencer, would-be controller and somehow owner of what is cognized. This will give rise to the third type of *avidya* in the threefold classification espoused by Longchenpa, which is termed *kuntu tagpai marigpa* (*kun tu brtags pa'i ma rig pa*; cf. Longchenpa, 1976, pp. 24 and 123 note 11, and Cornu, 2001, p. 62) or imaginative delusion, and which as the term suggests is related to the third truth of *Mahamadhyamaka* (for an explanation of the three truths of *Mahamadhyamaka*, cf. Capriles, 2004, last chapter; Longchenpa favored the explanation of Dzogchen with Third Promulgation terminology, interpreted in a way that is more similar to that of *Mahamadhyamaka* than to those of the *Yogachara* school of philosophy or of the *Madhyamaka Swatantrika Yogachara* subschools). This type of *avidya* involves the singling out of objects within the continuum that appeared as object the very moment spontaneous illusion (*lhenchik kyepai marigpa* as understood in the threefold classification favored by Longchen Rabjampa) arose in the immediately preceding stage—thus presupposing the operationality of a figure-ground mind with it divisive, hermetic focus of awareness—and the perception of these objects in terms of delusorily

valued-absolutized subtle (intuitive) thoughts (thus involving the confusion of the digital, fragmentary maps of thought with the analog, holistic territory of the given that such maps are incapable of matching)—which produces the illusion of there being a plethora of entities existing inherently, independently and disconnectedly. Since the idea of an “I” has been superimposed on the illusory subject associated with dualistic consciousness, a compelling drive arises to confirm its existence and gratify its acquisitiveness by means of contacts with the seemingly self-existing, apparently external entities perceived at this stage.

With the above, the illusion that constitutes the second type of avidya in the division adopted here becomes complete; insofar as a low energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness and the mechanisms of repression / elusion allow one to ignore (*mishepa* [*mi shes pa*]) this illusion to be no more than an illusion, we are under the power of the third type of avidya in the classification adopted here—and, as we thus become totally deluded, samsara consolidates.

100. In Capriles (2007a [Vol. II]) masked insanity was equated with normality. Though the formless realms are not instances of normality, they are also instances of masked insanity insofar as, just like normality, they involve delusion, yet seem to feature an undistorted perception. Moreover, they are worse than normality insofar as they involve a more perfect elusion of the defects of delusion, and in most cases are taken to constitute the surpassing of delusion in Awakening or *nirvana*.
101. Were this Grof’s view, it would preclude the attainment of full Awakening and would fail to correspond to what I call absolute sanity—yet I would not object to his view so emphatically, for it would lead to a condition far saner than the prevailing deluded normality. However, since he did not distinguish among the various kinds of holotropic states and offered no means for obtaining instances of Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, his system precludes attaining this saner condition.
102. In Capriles (2007a, Vol. II) I explain the shadow as being what Susan Isaacs (1943/1989) called *unconscious phantasy*, rather than being “the remnant of the animal drives of our ancestors,” as Jung believed it to be (which would be absurd in the light of the findings of paleopathology referred to in a previous note, according to which before 4,500 BCE—or before 12,000 BCE in a few sites

in the Nile valley and Australia—there was no violence between human beings).

The phantasy in question is first installed in the infant on the occasion of being forced to *become* the shameful object the original other and/or other significant others perceive as her or him on the occasion of inhibiting courses of action and/or dispensing punishments, and subsequently continues to be developed throughout the individual’s lifetime each and every time others, whether “external” or internalized, express scorn with regard to those of his or her actions they deem reprehensible (I am not referring only to morally reprehensible actions, but also to whichever courses of behavior, reactions, or lack of reactions that may give rise to gibes, jeers, and aggressions, inducing shame)—which means that the original other, acting on the basis of the superego she or he absorbed through the reactions of others to her or his own behavior, is the original sculptor of the shadow, and that with the passing of time other significant others continue to sculpt it on the basis of the superego they absorbed from others. Since the shadow subsumes the guilt for the evil actions of human beings, it grows and intensifies from generation to generation, incorporating the evil actions carried out by each generation; therefore, when the original other and the other significant others perceive an infant as the phantasy monster which is their own shadow, thereby inducing him or her to *become* that phantasy monster, they mediate to him or her the shadow as it has grown and intensified up to their own generation, turning the product of the phylogensis of evil into the phenomenal basis of the ontogenesis of evil. When members of the new generation, to a considerable extent because of the shadow and its dynamic, carry out evil actions, these are assimilated into the phylogensis of evil—so that evil may be said to intensify itself by means of a positive feedback loop between phylogensis and ontogenesis (which is related to the positive feedback loop occurring between the processes associated with the two brain hemispheres discussed in Capriles [1994, 2007a, Vols. II & III]).

There is no space here to discuss how I understand the sense of the term *unconscious* in Isaacs’ *unconscious phantasy*.

103. Daniels (2004) claimed that, in Wilber’s view, at the end ego and consciousness are supposed to dissolve in realization of egolessness; however,

Wilber is against the dissolution of consciousness, for he asserted the subject as seemingly different from its objects, *qua sakshin*, to persist in realization (cf. Capriles, 2006a, 2007a, Vol. II)

104. As shown in note 1, Wilber has been ambiguous as to whether or not the subject-object duality dissolves in this pointing out. Firstly, he suggested the subject-object duality dissolves in fulcrum-9—yet his descriptions of this fulcrum give to understand that it does not. Secondly, in his description of fulcrum-10 he noted that nondual traditions point out the nondual Base from the dualistic condition, rather than making dualism dissolve so that the condition in question may be directly realized. At any rate, his writings have been utterly unambiguous in asserting fulcrum-10 to involve the subject-object duality.

As has been shown, the element of stupefaction or *mongcha* (*rmongs cha*) that has always been flowing with the continuum of those beings who have never realized the true condition, which is responsible for the ignorance of the true condition of reality that manifests in the neutral condition of the base-of-all and throughout *samsara*, is the lower layer of *avidya* or *marigpa* in both classifications of *avidya* or *marigpa* posited by the Dzogchen teachings. As shown above in note 99, in its turn the subject-object duality that arises as a result of the delusory valuation-absolutization of the threefold thought structure is the second layer of *avidya* or *marigpa* in the classification favored by Longchenpa, and is *part of* the second layer in the classification adopted here and in Capriles (2007a).

For a Master's "pointing out" Dzogchen-*qua*-Base to set an individual on the Path of Awakening in the truest sense of the term, it must dissolve in the individual the beclouding element of stupefaction called *mongcha* and the subject-object duality that, as noted, are the lower layers of the three tier delusion that conceals the true condition in question.

105. In the Path of Transformation the three elements that must be received from the Master in order to follow the Path are *wang* (*dbang*), *lung* (*lung*) and *tri* (*khrid*); though this may be said to apply to the Dzogchen *Atiyoga* as well, in the latter Path the most essential elements that must be received from the Master are Direct Introduction and secret oral instruction (Skt. *upadesha*; Tib. *menngag* [*man ngag*]).

However, there are many requisites an individual must fulfill in order to receive the necessary elements from the Master, including possessing the psychological state of the human realm, having faith and devotion, possessing a given spiritual capacity, and so on. In particular, the Dzogchen teachings list five capacities an individual must possess in order to practice Dzogchen: participation, diligence, present awareness, actual practice, and *prajña* (for an explanation of these, cf. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu [2000, pp. 134, 140]).

106. As noted in the regular text, the binary character of Washburn's classification causes the author to classify the practices of visualization of the Inner Tantras of the Vajrayana, on the one hand, and the *koan* (Chin. *kung-an*) study of Ch'an or Zen, on the other, as pertaining to the same type of meditation as... the *raja yoga* of Patañjali, and to class together in the opposite camp the practice of sitting meditation of Ch'an or Zen and the *vipassana* taught by the Burmese Theravada—even though the practice of Patañjali's *raja yoga* is based on the view of subject and object as inherently different substances constituting a duality that by no means can be eradicated, and ultimately leads to fleeing the senses into a blank concentration, whereas the rest of the meditations mentioned are supposed to lead to the realization of the nonduality of awareness and appearances. In fact, Washburn admitted the paradigm of CM (concentrative meditation) to be Patañjali's *raja yoga*, which is intended to stabilize a condition in which Purusha (consciousness) remains aloof before the movements of Prakriti (sensory experience), regards the duality between these two principles as being impossible to overcome, and sustains the subject-object duality until, if the ultimate aim of the practice is attained, the practitioner establishes him or herself in an instance of the neutral condition of the base-of-all that is cut from sensory experience and that does not involve the subject-object duality. Contrariwise, the aim of practices of visualization such as those taught in the Inner Buddhist Tantras of the Way of Transformation is ultimately to lead the practitioner beyond absorptions and into the senses, for the visualizations employed are dynamic, and after the generation or creation stage (Skt. *utpattikrama*; Tib. *kyerim* [*bskyed rim*]) in which one has developed the visualization of oneself as the deity and of one's dimension as the *mandala* of the deity, one must

practice the perfection or completion stage (Skt., *sampannakrama*; Tib., *dzogrim* [*rdzogs rim*]), in which, while maintaining the visualization, most powerful sensory experiences are induced, such as for example those of total pleasure—which may be attained either through the solo practice of heat or *tummo* (*gtum mo*) that constitutes the method of the higher doors, or through the union with a consort that constitutes the method of the lower doors, but which in any case must be experienced as indivisible from emptiness. Furthermore, in these practices the coincidence of the clarity of visualization with the just mentioned pleasure and voidness are to be used for reGnizing the Gnitiveness in which—like in a mirror—they manifest, and thus discover Dzogchen-*qua*-Base in the state called Mahamudra or Dzogchen (the latter term in this case referring to the result of the Path of Transformation rather than indicating the Base, Path, and Fruit of the Path of Spontaneous Liberation). In its turn, the *koan* (Ch. *kung an*) study of Ch’an and Zen—which is most emphasized by the Lin-chi / Rinzai subschool—is not at all intended to produce states of concentration; on the contrary, it has the function of triggering sequences of derealization that under the right conditions may become the doorway to a temporary unveiling of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base in *satori* (Chin. *wu*). As noted in the regular text, Washburn’s binary schema is so inappropriate as a criterion for distinguishing types of meditation that it causes him to list both Tantric visualization and koan study alongside the raja yoga of Patañjali’s as instances of CM.

Like all types of meditation, the two kinds in Washburn’s division—with the exception of sub-varieties such as koan study and Tantric Buddhist visualization—are initially based on the subject-object duality, yet unlike the types of meditation I favor, in the absence of accompanying skillful means they are likely to maintain the duality in question—or, should they lead beyond it, to result in one or another variety of the neutral condition of the base-of-all. In particular, a meditation like the *shikantaza* of *zazen* in Soto Zen, in those cases in which it leads actually beyond the subject-object duality, is likely to result in a variety of the neutral condition of the base-of-all involving the continuum of the senses—which is likely to be taken for the *dharmakaya*, insofar as Soto Zen claims that being seated in *shikantaza* is *the very state of Buddha*. (Hence, as Roshi Shenryu Suzuki

[1980] noted, in Japan, where younger brothers are deemed to be more acute than elder brothers, what the Japanese call *mokusho Zen*, which is the way of the Soto School and which rather than seeking a sudden breakthrough emphasizes *shikantaza* and asserts it to be the very state of Buddha, is referred to as the path of the elder brother, whereas Rinzai Zen, which emphasizes koan study, *mondo*, and *dokusan* [literally “to go alone to a high one,” this term refers to the meeting of a Zen student with his teacher alone in the Master’s room, which Soto Zen gave up since the middle of Meiji times], is said to be the path of the younger brother.) In its turn, Patañjali’s raja yoga, in those cases in which it leads beyond the subject-object duality, results in the variety of the neutral condition of the base-of-all that excludes the sensory continuum, and in which one is “at the same time asleep and fully awake”—which, insofar as the *Yoga darshana* of Patañjali views this state as the ultimate realization, practitioners of the system in question mistake for liberation.

Although Washburn takes as the paradigm of CM the raja yoga practices of Patañjali’s *Yoga darshana*, the initial stages of the practices of *samadhi* existing within Buddhism as applied in different Tibetan schools, and even the initial stages of the practice in the Dzogchen *Semde* (*sems sde*) according to the tradition of *Kham* (*khams*), involve varieties of this kind of meditation. However, the aim of such Buddhist practices is roughly the same as that of the practices of visualization of the Tantras of the Way of Transformation and of koan study in Ch’an or Zen Buddhism—that is, to lead beyond absorptions while maintaining openness to the senses, and ultimately to the realization of the true condition of reality—and as such is diametrically opposed to that of the raja yoga of Patañjali, which, as we have seen, is based in a *darshana* that sees Purusha and Prakriti as two self-existing substances making up an ineradicable duality, and is aimed at the stabilization of a condition in which the former remains aloof before the movements of the latter. For example, in the first stages of the practice of the *Semde* in the tradition of *Kham* (*khams*), once a *samadhi* is attained, concentration must be released so as to attain a condition of mental calm (Skt. *shamatha*; Pali, *samatha*; Tib. *zhinai* [*zhi-gnas*]; Chinese *chih*; Jpn. *shi*; Viet. *tam*) proper to the type of meditation Washburn called RM (receptive meditation), and once this

condition is attained, one must apply instructions directing the individual to discover the Gnitiveness in which, like in a mirror, the experiences of the practice are occurring—which may allow one’s perspective to switch from the dualistic awareness of the experience (which the Semde teachings call “the state of the reflected”) to the reGnition (of) the nondual self-awareness that the Dzogchen teachings call *rig pa* (which the same teachings call “the condition of the mirror”). (In fact, since the Dzogchen teachings are the most ancient spiritual teachings of the Indo-Tibetan region, and since pre-Indo-European Indian religion was Shaivism, which had as its source the teachings of Shenrab Miwoche in the region of Kailash around 1,800 BC [according to some Bönpos, around 16,000 BC], one must assume that Dzogchen was common in India before Patañjali created his Yoga darshana; therefore, his system might have arisen as the result of the institutionalization of a deviation in practitioners of the initial concentrations of the Dzogchen Semde presently conserved in the Kham [*kham*s] tradition [provided this system existed in the original Semde teachings, long before the time of Aro Yeshe Jungnai], who incurred in the error of taking states without thought that result from these concentrations as the aim of the practice. If this were so, then the *hatha yoga* of Patañjali would be a modification of the *yantra yoga* of Dzogchen that, by voiding the latter of its dynamic character, turned into a means for stopping the mind and obtaining conditions of the neutral base-of-all.)

In the case of the practices that Washburn classified as RM, it is true that they may in the long run activate a potentially therapeutic “descending” self-healing process, and that this process, if undertaken in the right framework, may be conducive to *nirvana* or Awakening (according to the type of RM and the type of Path involved). However, for this to occur, it would be most helpful to have received the secret oral instructions that may result in the reGnition (of) the nondual self-awareness that the Dzogchen teachings call *rigpa* (*rig pa*) and thus lead one, as in the case just considered, from what the Semde teachings call “the state of the reflected” to what they call “the state of the mirror.” This principle was illustrated at length and in depth in several of my works (Capriles, 2000a, 2000b, and more thoroughly in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. II, in the discussions of the *Divine Comedy*, the *mandala* and so on).

107. An example of self-defeating meditation is the practice in the Dzogchen *Semde* in which the individual is asked not to let even a single thought through into the mind during one or three days, which makes the traffic of thoughts reach a paroxysm, and then he or she is asked not to allow any space between thoughts to manifest for the same length of time, and as a result the practitioner for the first time clearly notices the spaces between thoughts, which may become very long.
108. Not all meditations that slow down vibratory rates in order to induce states of mental calm do so because they wrongly take these states for realization. In fact, there are methods that slow down vibratory rates as well, yet use the resulting states as reflections in a mirror to be employed for reGnizing the mirror’s true condition, as happens in the Dzogchen *Semde*.
109. In fact, in the Path of Transformation and the Path of Purification of the Buddhist Tantras many practices combine *mönlam*s (*smon lam*) with *mantra* recitation, visualization and so on, in such a way that each gives the other power, achieving an effect that is likely to be more powerful than that of mere praying. At any rate, all of these practices address a power that does not reside in the ego, and hence their principle is the one that Washburn ascribed to prayer.
110. Also Pure Land Buddhism specifically addresses a power that does not reside in the ego, applying a combination of means that include the recitation of the sacred name of *Amitabha* that in Japanese is called *nembutsu*. In Suzuki (1972b, pp. 146-148), one reads:

One of the first Zen masters who introduced the idea of the *nembutsu* (recitation of the sacred name of Amitabha) was Yang-ming Yen-che-u (died 975 CE). He attached great importance to the Zen yogis devoting themselves to the practice of *nembutsu*, to the extent of declaring that among those who followed Zen without *nembutsu* nine out of ten would miss the final goal, whereas those who practiced the *nembutsu* would achieve realization all without exception; but the best are those, he used to say, who practice Zen and the *nembutsu*, for they are like a tiger with two horns...

[In his turn,] K’ung-ku King-lung, teaching at the beginning of the fifteenth century... said:

Those who practice Zen devote themselves exclusively to it, thinking that they are striving to achieve calm and nothing else; concerning the invocation of the name of Buddha in order to be reborn in the Pure Land, worshipping him and reciting the sutras morning and evening, they practice none of this. Regarding these faithful, it may be said that they have Zen but no *nembutsu*. However, in truth these Zen disciples are not of the good kind; they are only good at preaching the exercise of *kô-an*, they are like staffs, stones or bricks. When they are affected by this kind of mental illness, they cannot be saved, except perhaps one among ten. Zen is a living spirit; it is like a gourd floating on water, which upon being touched dances wonderfully. It is also said that one should pay homage to the living spirit of the masters rather than to their dead words....”

Suzuki (1972b) commented:

There is something lame in this interpretation, but the fact cannot be denied that the *nembutsu*, at that time, was sapping the doorways of Zen, and we are going to see that in the psychology of *nembutsu* there is a factor that could easily ally itself with the exercise of *kô-an* in its mechanical phase. For, despite his attitude towards the *nembutsu*, which he considered like some kind of practice for the *shravaka*, K'ung-ku kept on insisting it was as effective as the *kô-an* in the realization of the true way of Buddha. (p. 148)

111. Furthermore, even if one had spiritual experiences, or even a *satori*, as the result of a practice having faith as its pivot, afterwards one could use the occurrences thus obtained as a confirmation of the dualistic, substantialistic belief in an external power (such as a God, a Buddha, a saint or whatever) and an ego or self. The illusion of an ego or self could also be sustained by the act of prayer itself, insofar as it involves the appearance, inherent in the three tiered *avidya* or *marigpa* that conceals Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, that the ego is a source of action separate from the Supreme Source (when in truth all human acts are the latter's play): even if this illusion dissolves in Dzogchen-*qua*-Path, after delusion is

reestablished it is unlikely that the individual may have a clear understanding of the fact that, rather than the ultimate source of action, the ego is an empty appearance.

112. The especial realizations resulting in extraordinary modes of death are: (1) the rainbow body (Tib. *jalü* ['*ja' lus*]); (2) the body of atoms (Tib. *lü düil thren du deng* [*lus rdul phran du denges*]); and (3) the body of light (Tib. *ökyiku* ['*od kyi sku*] or *öpfung* ['*od phung*]).

(1) The rainbow body (*jalü* ['*ja' lus*]) is a level of realization entailing one of the modes of dissolution of the physical body after death, which results from the “mode of death of the dakinis (Tib. *khandro* [*mbha' 'gro*])” and which in the past was attained by many practitioners of the “Vajra Bridge” or *Dorje Zampa* (*rdo rje zam pa*) of the Longde (*klong sde*) series of Dzogchen teachings who, through the practice of this system, attained the fourth vision of Dzogchen; it has not been attained for many centuries, as the exacerbation of delusion has made the methods of the Longde incapable of bearing such fruit in our time. This realization should not be confused with the so-called “rainbow body” resulting from specific Tantric practices of the Path of Transformation, which is not at all equivalent.

(2) The body of atoms (*lü düil thren du deng* [*lus rdul phran du denges*]), which results from the “mode of death of the vidyadharas (*rigdzins* [*rig 'dzin*]),” is reputedly attained as a result of the practice of the first stage of the Menngagde (*man ngag sde*) series of Dzogchen teachings, which is that of *Tekchö* (*kbregs chod*)—and especially of the Menngagde *terma* (*gter ma*) or treasure teachings of the *Nyingthik* (*snying thig*). If, through the practice of this system, the fourth vision of Dzogchen is attained, after death the body will dissolve into subtle atoms, and one will be said to have attained the body of atoms. Since no one has attained this realization in a very long time, I believe we may assume that in our time it is no longer an effective possibility.

(3) The body of light (*öpfung* [*od phung*] or *ökiku* ['*od kyi sku*]), which results from the mode of death called “self-consuming like a fire” and which is obtained as a result of developing the fourth vision (called *chöze londe* [*chos zad blo 'das*]) in the practice of the second stage of the Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings, which is that of *Thögel* (*thod rgal*), and of the Menngagde *terma* (*gter ma*) or treasure teachings of the *Yangthik* (*yang thig*,



which contain the essence of the Nyingthik and place the emphasis on Thögel). This body is often called in the same way as (1): the rainbow body (Tib. *jalü* ['ja' lus]).

Since in our time the only of these special modes of death that continues to manifest is the one listed as (3), this is the one that the contemporary practitioner has the possibility of attaining (in the regular text I spoke of having the possibility of attaining one of the three because I was speaking in abstract, timeless terms, and I wanted to indicate that there were three special modes of death). These three modes of death will be considered in further detail in Capriles (work in progress 1).

Finally, the realization resulting in deathlessness is the one called *phowa chenpo* (*pho ba chen po*), resulting in the *phowa chenpo ku* (*pho ba chen po'i sku*), sometimes called *jalü phowa chenpo* ('ja' lus *pho ba chen po*), which is the ultimate Fruit of Thögel, second stage of the Menngagde series of Dzogchen teachings, and of the terma teachings of the Yangthik (*yang thig*), which are practiced after those of the Nyingthik (*snying thig*). The body of light of the total transference, which is attained without going through the process of death when all Buddha-activities have been completed, and which ensues from the mode of ending life called "invisible like space," results from developing to its limit the fourth vision of the practice of Thögel or the Yangthik, called *chöze londe* (*chos zad blo 'das*), and is also known as Vajra Body or *dorjeku* (*rdo rje'i sku*)—which is how the teachings call the bodies of Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra presently manifest. This body involves an active function in that those who attain it may manifest as visions to those who are most advanced on the Dzogchen Path and give them the teachings they themselves and contemporary fellow practitioners require. The last practitioner who is known to have attained this realization is Jetsun Senge Wangchuk, who lived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE.

113. I retranslate into English Washburn's (1995) words in the (1996a) Spanish Edition:

Upon being reintegrated, the two poles of the psyche retain their distinct natures as the opposite poles of a bipolar psyche. Upon so doing, however, they cease being alienated the one from the other, as they were during the mental-egoic period. Nor are they in collision, as they were during

regression in the service of transcendence. They are not even in a relationship of interactive cooperation, as they were during regeneration in the spirit. Instead, the two poles are here completely married to each other, acting as a single life....

This fusion of opposites includes not only the two psychic poles, but also all of their characteristic functions and potentials. Thus, not only the ego unites with the Ground creating an all-embracing coincidence of opposites, but also the mind unites with the body, thought with feeling, operational cognition with creative imagination, and developed personality with instinct, creating minor coincidences of opposites. In each of these unions, a completely harmonious duality is forged—a complementary yin-yang duality—and each of these harmonious dualities is in itself a facet of the more essential harmonious duality constituted by the fully integrated psyche. (pp. 310-311)

114. Though Kant's concept of the categorical imperative is supposed to be at the root of Freud's conception of the superego, the Oedipal complex and the moral of psychoanalysis (Roudinesco & Plon, 1997; Fine, 1987; Rodrigué, 1996, Laplanche & Pontalis, 1967; Gay, 1989; Jones, 1979; Vals, 1995; Gregory; Bloch, Postel et al., 1996; Assoun, 1982a), and Kant's concept of moral consciousness is supposed to be at the root of the homonymous Freudian concept, Marta Gerez-Ambertin (1993, p. 39) and Ramón Sanz-Ferramola (2001) have asserted that Freud modified the Kantian sense of these concepts, whereas Paul-Laurent Assoun (1982b) has asserted that Freud understood them in terms of Schopenhauer's non-Kantian understanding of the concepts in question (cf. Ramón Sanz-Ferramola, 2001).
115. For example, the empty trances occurring in the second period of regression in the service of transcendence described in Washburn (1995, p. 184).
116. I have in mind, in particular, the theories of Melanie Klein, Susan Isaacs, and Donald W. Winnicott. Also some specifications by the American Otto Fenichel would be worth incorporating into the system in question.
117. By the way, Stan Grof (1998, p. 92) claimed that Tibetans view uterine life as a bardo; however,

none of the six bardos listed in the regular text immediately preceding the reference mark for this note, which are those universally accepted by Tibetans whenever they classify bardos into six (other classifications list three or four bardos according to the criterion used), may be said to correspond to uterine life (Grof gave Evans-Wentz's [1928] version of the *Bardo Thödrol* as the reference [1960 edition]; I have no access to the Evans-Wentz version as I write this, but it is well known that the book in question is an important pioneering work that, precisely for this reason, contains mistaken assertions—as Evans-Wentz often interpreted Tibetan teachings in terms of the views of Western Theosophy or of Hindu doctrines).

However, Grof is correct in that there are many descriptions of birth and perinatal life in Tibetan texts, which compare birth to being crushed between two mountains and so on (cf., e.g. Gampopa, 1998).

118. If one fails to reGnize the true condition of the clear light in the *chikhai bardo* (*'chi kha'i bar do*), the neutral condition of the base-of-all manifests, and if then one perceives this shining forth as occurring in an external dimension, active *samsara* begins to develop from the base-of-all; however, if the reGnition in question takes place, the luminosity in question is the *dharmakaya* itself. In the same way, if one takes the contents of thought to be inherently true or false and to be ultimately important and so on, they are the source of *samsara*; however, if one looks thoughts directly in the face and reGnizes their true condition, one discovers them to be the *dharmakaya* and they spontaneously liberate themselves in the patency of the *dharmakaya*.
119. Also Stan Grof's (1998, p. 90) critique of Wilber's view of this involution is incorrect, for his objection was that Wilber's explanation of this involution was "culture-specific" insofar as he used a Tibetan view to explain a universal process. However, what if a universal process is correctly interpreted by a tradition located in a particular area and incorrectly interpreted by traditions located in other areas? And, furthermore, is it not more "culture-specific" to extrapolate to the whole of humankind the psychological processes and structures that Freud and other Western psychologists inferred from the observation of their Western patients? Or is it that the discoveries of Western scientists are Truth and those of Eastern mystics are culture-specific illusions? Postmodern thinking will not allow

either generalization; however, it could as well be that Postmodern thinking will have to face that some culture-specific views are universal—at least as rough maps that cannot perfectly coincide with the territory, which is how the Dzogchen teachings have always seen their own maps.

120. Gendün Chöphel wrote:  
 'Relative' is the word ancient scholars used for translating the Sanskrit *samvriti*, which means 'obscuration to correctness' or 'thoroughly confused'. Because one is 'deluded about the meaning', we must also understand 'relative truth' as 'deluded [pseudo-]truth.'" (in Capriles, 2007a, vol. I, p. 137; from Chöphel, 2005, p. 148, and Capriles, 2005, p. 29)
121. Socrates' death sentence would be more comprehensible if the true Socrates were that of the Cynics—a kind of anarchist agitator—rather than that Plato's.
122. Previously to the radical psychic transformation that, in the ample region James DeMeo (1998) called Saharasia, gave rise to sexual repression, domination over women and children, and war (Taylor, 2005; Capriles, 2007a, Vol. III), the peoples of Eurasia and Northern Africa had an antisomatism-free spirituality that used the body's natural impulses as means for Communion (not in the sense that Gilligan [1982], Tannen [1990], Wilber [1995, 1998], and so on give the term, but in that of "dissolution of the illusory boundaries separating people, in the unconcealment of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base"—which I believe was its original meaning). The Saharasian peoples—including the Kurgans or Proto-Indo-Europeans and the Semites (Eisler, 1987 [to be balanced by objections in Radford-Ruether, 1992]; Gimbutas, 1991; Ceruti & Bocchi, 1993)—began systematically plundering their neighbors, and then went on to conquering them. As conquerors, they established a vertical, oppressive relationship with the conquered, in which they were at the top and the latter at the bottom, and they had to keep those at the bottom, whom they logically distrusted, tightly under control. It was probably as the structure of this relationship was internalized, that Saharasians—including Indo-Europeans and Semites—developed the need to oppress and keep tightly under control the impulses of the organism, women, and children (the latter two because they were Other with

regard to themselves and it was easy to associate both of them with nature—to which the impulses in question belong), and that they came to view those impulses as not-to-be-trusted and (as a result of the dynamic of the shadow that led them to project the latter on those they preyed upon, and of the superimposition of their relationship with the latter on their relationship with the impulses under discussion) as being outright evil (furthermore, it is likely that in the association of the erotic impulse to evil an important element may have been the conquerors' raping of the conquered women after the slaughtering of men). (It must be noted that I outright disagree with DeMeo's ecological-geographical determinism, according to which it is the desertification of highly populated regions that gives rise to war, sexual repression, and the oppression of women and children, as well as with many of his late-Reich-inspired views—even though I admit desertification, whether or not occasioned by the human beings themselves, may help determine which human groups are first to develop these vices in the process of degeneration produced by the gradual development of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or *marigpa* as the aeon or cosmic time cycle [Skt. *kalpa*; Tib. *kalpa* (*kal pa* or *bskal pa*)] unfolds.)

Thus it is easy to see why in Eurasia and Northern Africa antisomatic, sexually repressive spiritual traditions have a Saharasian origin—and in particular why I assume the Orphic tradition to have a Kurgan / Proto-Indo-European origin.

123. Despite the mythological links between Orpheus and Dionysus and the fact that some hymns to Dionysus have been thought to be of Orphic origin, it has been widely substantiated that the Orphic and Dionysian traditions held contrary, struggling worldviews. In fact, as Kerényi (1998, pp. 165-166) has made clear, Orpheus seemed to reject the dark Dionysus in favor of the clear god, “Apollo and sun in the same person,” whom he adored. Furthermore, there is an important Orphic myth according to which it was the female Thracian bacchantes known as *bassarai* who, in one of their Dionysian orgies, tore Orpheus into pieces as he (because of his dislike of the dark Dionysus, and his anti-somatic and female-despising ideology?) refused to join their ritual and grant them his favors. At any rate, the philosophies derived from Orphism were diametrically opposed to those developed by the thinkers who expressed in philosophical terms the

views of the genuine Dionysian tradition, or who received influences from it—among whom I rank Heraclitus, the main Skeptic Schools, some of the Sophists, and the Cynics (and, though only in what regards philosophy of history and socio-political views, the Stoics, who polemicized so much with the Sceptics). In fact, fragments DK 40, DK 129 and DK 81 of Heraclitus' book show the extent to which the Ephesian berated the dogmatic system of Pythagoras—whom he called “chief captain of cheaters” and whose learning he called “deceitful erudition and evil art.” It is well known that the Skeptic philosopher Sextus Empiricus also directed his book against the Pythagoreans—which may be inferred even from its title, *Adversus mathematicos*.

124. The Dionysian roots of the systems of Heraclitus, the Sceptics, various of the so-called sophists, probably also Socrates (of whom as we have seen the Cynics give an account in sharp contrast with Plato's, who in his dialogues seemingly put his own views in the mouth of Socrates), the Cynics (Anthistenes was a disciple of both Gorgias and Socrates) and, at least in what respects their views of spiritual and social evolution, the Stoics, will be discussed at greater length in Capriles (work in progress 3). The same applies to the alleged derivation from the teachings Shenrab Miwoche taught at the foot of Mount Kailash (abode of Lord Shiva to the Shaivas), probably around 1,800 BCE, of spiritual systems such as Shaivism, Zurvanism, Taoism (cf. Capriles, 2009 for a detailed discussion of this), the cult of Osiris, the Dionysian mysteries, the Ismaili doctrines, and the doctrines some Sufi traditions received from the barmakis of Nova Bihara and from the Ismailis, among others—which is very briefly discussed in the following note (cf. also notes to Capriles, 2007a [Vol. I] and Capriles, 1999b, 2000b).

125. In Daniélou (1979/1992) a great deal of evidence is provided that substantiates the identity of Indian Shaivism, the Greek Dionysian tradition, and the Egyptian cult of Osiris. It is universally known that the Shaivas see Mount Kailash as the abode of the Lord Shiva, and it was at the foot of Mount Kailash and near the lake of Manasarovar that the *Tönpa* (*ston pa*) or Primordial Revealer Shenrab Miwoche taught the Dzogchen teachings of the Bön tradition known as *Dzogpa Chenpo Zhang-Zhung Nyengyü* (*rdzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan brgyud*), as well as a host of other teachings, seemingly including some forms of Tantrism. In

Tucci (1980) the author discussed the relationship between the terminology used in Shaivism and that employed in the Dzogchen teachings, and reported on the spiritual groups that consistently made pilgrimages to Mount Kailash, and which viewed this mountain as their most sacred place—among whom he mentioned, beside Tibetan Bönpos and Buddhists, the Indian Shaivas, and the followers of two Persian systems: the Zurvanists (followers of the pre-Zoroastrian Persian religion), and in Islamic times, the Ismailis. In Capriles (2009), I pointed out some of the striking coincidences in the symbolisms of Taoism and Dzogchen, speculated on the evolution of what I deem to be the main Taoist Systems, provided a bibliography of works that have asserted the identity and common roots of Taoism and Bön—the latter being the pre-Buddhist spiritual system of the Himalayas that, as just noted, comprised all the teachings of Shenrab Miwoche—and discussed the possible evolution of the main forms of Taoism from the Dzogchen teachings of Shenrab. In fact, the ancient Bönpo sources cited in Namkhai Norbu (1997, 2004), suggested that Bön, Shaivism, and all of the traditions listed in this note had their roots in these teachings, for among Shenrab's disciples there were sages from India, China, Persia, and other nearby regions that brought their Masters' teachings to their own countries, establishing them there. This will be discussed at greater length in Capriles (work in progress 3; cf. notes to Capriles, 2000b, 2000c, 2003, 2007a, Vol. I).

126. Since the Pythagoreans disparaged the body, basis of the human reality, to which humans are confined so long as they are alive, their ideology doomed human beings to insurmountable conflict, while favoring the development of what Gregory Bateson (1968, 1972) called *conscious purpose against nature*. Moreover, the Pythagorean ideology, like those of most Orphic-derived dualistic, anti-somatic, oppressive systems, associated the female with evil and the male with goodness—and produced a long list of contraries in which the curve, the circle, the limitless, and movement were associated with evil, whereas the straight line, the square, the limited and stillness were associated to goodness. The association with evil of the female—one of the two basic aspects of human life, as well as the *anima* aspect and one of the two main somatic energies of male human beings—was a recipe for insurmountable conflict. Like the rest of the traditions that despised

the corporeal material universe, the Pythagoreans disparaged and opposed the physiological energies that constitute the very vehicle of realization. By viewing the corporeal, apparently material world as evil, they disparaged the *wisdom* that corporeal reality is (as shown in Capriles, 2007a, Vol. I, Chapter 1, according to the Dzogchen teachings, the reality in question is the *tse* [rtsal] mode of manifestation of the energy of *thukje* [thugs rje] aspect of the Base, and those teachings refer to the three aspects of the Base as three *wisdoms*). Their negative view of movement (in which a similitude with the *Samkhya darshana* of Kapila and the related *Yoga darshana* of Patañjali may be observed) was also a source of insurmountable conflict, for movement is inherent in being alive. Furthermore, Pythagorean rejection of the limitless (Greek, *apeiron*; Skt. *aditi*) amounted to rejection of the single true condition of all entities that was to be realized in the pan-Eurasian traditions of which the Dionysian mysteries were the Greek expression. Since in higher forms of Buddhism the circle, which has no corners (which represent limits, which in their turn represent concepts, for insofar as these always exclude something they establish limits), represents the absence of limitations of the *dharmakaya*, their rejection of the circle expresses just the same attitude as their rejection of the limitless. To conclude, as the Manichean ideology makes it evident, to view the corporeal, material reality as evil, ultimately may even be thought to justify the destruction of the world—which the Pythagorean sorcerer's apprentices set in motion by beginning to build the technological Golem that, as shown elsewhere (Capriles, 1994, 2007a, Vol. III), has grown beyond viability in the current ecological crisis and, unless dismantled as a result of the *reductio ad absurdum* of the delusion that gave rise to it, will destroy the fabric of human society and possibly the biological existence of our species. (To conclude, it must be noted that the Pythagorean dualism was moral—they deemed the soul to be good and the body to be evil—but not ontological, for supposedly they deemed the soul to be material.)

127. It is well known that mathematics are incorporeal: mathematical operations are abstract and, although they are according to Plato instances of *dianoia*, they depend on subtle / intuitive thoughts, which I relate to the *noein* that philosophers whose views derived from the Orphic tradition valued

so much. A mathematical point, as different from a physical one, is incorporeal in that it does not occupy any space; a mathematical line, as different from a physical one, has length but no thickness, and so on. With regard to music, from a physical standpoint it may be seen as vibrations of corporeal air, or of the corporeal eardrum, and so on—yet this does not apply in any way to *our experience* of music, which has hardly anything to do with all of this and reflects harmonies that in their turn may be viewed as being as incorporeal as mathematics. Furthermore, musical instruments give one or another note according to mathematical measurements, and this may have been seen as the index of the relationship between harmonies and mathematics and between mathematics and music.

128. It was Kant who introduced into Western philosophy the idea of evil as an active force rather than as the mere absence of the good.
129. As stated in a note to Capriles (2007a Vol. 1), according to Diogenes Laërtius (Hicks, 1972-1979, Vol. 2, IX, 21), Parmenides was a disciple of Pythagorean philosopher Ameinias. Though present day scholarship has disqualified this allegation, Plato (*Sophist* [1993], 242 C-D) claimed that Parmenides was a disciple of Xenophon—who in his fr. 7 narrated an episode of the life of Pythagoras and who, together with the latter, was berated in Heraclitus' fr. DK 40. In his turn, John Burnet (1892/1964) referred to the cosmogony of Parmenides as “a sketch of Pythagorean cosmology.” Emile Bréhier (1931-1938/1988, Vol. 1, p. 68) noted that the cosmogony of Parmenides was different from that of the Ionians insofar as it incorporated theogonic myths such as those described by Hesiod (also berated by Heraclitus in fr. DK 40) and those upheld by the Orphics; insofar as it regarded Love as the first god (*Symposium* [Plato, 1995, 195C]; and especially insofar as, rather than viewing the *arche* or Principle to be a single primordial constituent of reality, it asserted it to be a pair of opposites (day and night, or light and darkness). Bréhier concluded that all this referred to Hesiodic fantasy (Hesiod is also berated by Heraclitus) rather than Ionic thought—and, more significantly, he stressed the fact that positing a pair of opposites as the *arche* is characteristic of Pythagorean dualism. Moreover, despite Parmenides' assimilation of the Ionian structure of the heavens, the latter are to him (as in some

Platonic myths) the place of transit of the souls, where necessity (*anangke*) lay, distributing their portions (Aecius, *Synagoge ton areschonton* [*Aetii Placita*], II, 7, 1). Even if there had been no direct Pythagorean influence on Parmenides, it is a fact that the latter denied any truth to the corporeal, physical world that the Pythagoreans deemed despicable; he valued thought, which he deemed to be the only reality (and which is the source of limits, valued by the Pythagoreans), and he insisted in the unreality of movement (disparaged by the Pythagoreans)—hence the objects of the refutations developed by his disciple Zeno of Elea. By denying any existence to what common sense regards as the physical world and asserting thought to be the only truth, Parmenides turned the very root of human deceit, which is thought (when delusorily valued-absolutized), into the only true reality, developing a theory that contradicted his own experience and practice, insofar as, like the rest of human beings, he surely experienced material phenomena as real, and surely avoided venomous snakes, speeding carts, and so on. The denial of any degree of truth to corporeal reality may be seen as a more sophisticated instance of the anti-somatic attitude proper of both Orphics and Pythagoreans, which, as noted, leads directly to the ecological Armageddon. The harsh words Parmenides (Gallop, 1984) directed toward those to whom “being and nonbeing seem to be the same and not the same” (fr. 6; verses 7-9) show his antagonism to the sayings of Heraclitus and other nondualists (and as such are reminiscent of Kohung's attacks on Chuang-tzu [Creel, 1970; Watts 1975; Ware 1981]). And, in fact, a self-declared monism that asserts the existence and unity of thought and the nonexistence of a physical world (as a reality different from it), is a subtle dualism insofar as it refers to the physical world as one would refer to something existing and absolutely other with regard to thought (which, as has been seen, is how in their everyday lives the Eleatics experienced it and dealt with it), in order to deny its existence intellectually and then assert a reality different from it as the only truth.

It could be thought that the Eleatic ideology may have been akin to the *Mayavada* philosophy developed by the Hindu author Gaudapada, inspired by *Yogachara* Buddhist philosophy. However, Parmenides (Gallop, 1984) did not assert the only truth to be *jñana* or gnosis (in spite of the

similarity between the terms *jñana* and *noein*, the latter term means “intellectual intuition,” which corresponds to “subtle thoughts” as understood in the Dzogchen teachings, yet fancied to be independent from both mental images and sensory data), which by definition cannot be expressed by thought (even though it may be said to be the basic “constituent” and dynamic of thought), but affirmed that the only truth is *thought*, identified thought with being, insisted that *the impossibility that something be thought proves its nonexistence*, and [in fr. 8, 34-36] asserted that, “it is the same to think and to think that [the content of thought] *is*, because without being, in what is expressed you could not find thought.” The claim that *the impossibility that something be thought proves its nonexistence* may seem to suggest the claim that the possibility that something be thought, together with the fact that it is actually thought, proves its existence—which is a position often attributed to Parmenides, and which, insofar as the contents of thought are manifold, implies the existence of multiplicity. How can someone who makes an assertion that clearly implies the existence of multiplicity be positing a monism in which the only true reality is thought = being? The only explanation I can think of is that, since according to him the only true reality was thought = being, and the manifold contents of thought were manifestations of thought, these contents shared the being that was one with thought. However, still his system would clearly breach the principle of noncontradiction, of the excluded middle, or of the excluded third, for he asserted the sole existence (in the ordinary sense of the term) of the single principle that in his system thought = being is, and at the same time asserted the existence (in the ordinary sense of the term) of the manifold contents of thought. One might try to solve the contradiction by concluding that in his view the single being = thought was the absolute reality, the manifold contents of thought were some kind of relative reality, and the physical world was simply nonexistent. However, in the extant fragments of the book there is no mention of an absolute reality and a relative reality, not are there indications in them that he may have been positing a view like the one just described; therefore, I acknowledge my powerlessness to arrive at a clear, noncontradictory conclusion with regard to the true import of his system.

130. It is not known whether Parmenides viewed thought as lying in the soul or mind, or outside the soul or mind; however, since common sense views them as lying in the soul or mind, one must assume that in the absence of a negation of this assumption a thinker likely agrees with it.
131. In some dialogues Plato explained physical entities as partaking of the form of *eidos*, whereas in others he explained them as imitating those forms. However, such fine distinctions cannot be accounted for in a short discussion of the rudiments of Plato’s thought.
132. Keep in mind that the Greeks viewed evil as the mere lack of goodness, and ugliness as the mere lack of beauty, and so forth: it was Kant who, for the first time, conceived evil as an active force rather than as the mere absence of goodness.
133. Also Protagoras and Gorgias might have been showing the relativity and ultimate nonexistence (voidness) of the relative as a means to lead people to the realization of the absolute. According to Diogenes Laërtius, Protagoras held that “... concerning any matter (*pragma*), there are two contrasting discourses (*logoi*),” and considered both to be equally valid (Hicks, 1972-1979). In turn, in his treatise *On Nonbeing*, Gorgias of Leontini held that no assertion or conceptual position with regard to reality could be in any way true. Most scholars take this to mean Gorgias and Protagoras held mutually contradictory positions; however, highest Madhyamika philosophy would agree to the statements of both and yet deny the absoluteness of either, for it is precisely insofar as no conceptual position can be *absolutely* true with regard to any given object, that mutually contradictory conceptual positions can be both valid and *relatively* true with regard to it. And, in fact, it is not unlikely that Gorgias may have been saying precisely that no conceptual position can be *absolutely* true with regard to any given object, and that Protagoras may have been saying precisely that mutually contradictory conceptual positions can be both *relatively* valid with regard to any give object—in which case both of them would have been expressing the very same view.

Furthermore, Gorgias was one of the two main teachers of Anthistenes (the other one being Socrates), who is widely regarded as the teacher of Diogenes of Sinope and therefore as founder or forefather of the Cynic school—which, as shown in Capriles (1999b, 2007a, Vol. I), might have

been a Dionysian school with methods of spiritual liberation similar to those of some Tantrics, Shaivas, and Dzogchenpas who were often regarded as “extremist” in the East.

134. Whenever questioned, Chu-ti would raise his finger and remain in the condition beyond thought. He used this method so consistently that, when he was about to die, he told the assembled monks of his monastery, “I attained T’ien Lung’s one-finger Ch’an and have used it all my life without exhausting it. Do you want to understand?” Then he raised his finger and died. (Cleary & Cleary, 1977, Vol. I, p. 125.)
135. The Orphic mysteries (such as those held at Eleusis) were to the Orphics the means to purify the soul and endow it with a mystic “seal” that would be recognizable after death, so that it would be allowed to dwell with the gods rather than suffer the fate of the uninitiated and be plunged into the mud (Plato, *Phaedo* [1980], 69E), where the initiated would force them to eternally fill sieves with water by means of other sieves (Plato, *Gorgias* [1973], 493B).
136. Many Pythagoreans adopted the ancient vision of spiritual and social evolution as a process of progressive degeneration beginning with a perfect Golden Age, without even feeling compelled to modify it (Capriles, 1994)—as Plato, on the other hand, did. Furthermore, after the degenerative vision in question was lost in Greece, it was Hesiod—berated by Heraclitus and thus probably an Orphic—who reintroduced it into Greece.
137. The Cynics, in their turn, may have received it from Anthistenes, who would have received it either from Gorgias or from Socrates. The links between Heraclitus and Gorgias or Socrates are unknown.
138. The Golden Age corresponds to the “preceding age” in which human beings were born from the earth rather than as a result of sexual contact, insofar as the age in question was the perfect age in which each provided for all needs by effortlessly taking the fruits of trees and of a whole generous vegetation, so that they spent their time devoted to philosophy, there were no savages, animals did not devour each other, there were no wars or quarrels, all lived nude in the open without beds (for the grass was so soft), there was no constitution, and no possession over women and children insofar as all were born from the earth (since time was reverted, rather than dying and being buried, people were born by being unearthed [upon which they would not remember their previous lives]). The mode of birth attributed

to the perfect age is asexual because of the Orphic contempt toward the body and its functions. And the claim that there was no possession over women and children because all were born from the earth implies that when all are not born from the earth such possession is justified and unavoidable.

Then, when time reverted upon the inversion of the rotation of the world, at the beginning all beings followed the divine commands, but then degeneration ensued: the divergence from the ancient degenerative myths lies in the role of an “organizing god” and in the fact that in this case degeneration resulted from the influence of the corporeal principles and the wayward character of their primitive nature: whereas the god taught them how to live a harmonious life, their former constitution gave rise to all evils and inequities. And the more they revolted against the commands of the god, the more their primitive turbulence flourished—until finally the organizing god, in face of the tempest that threatened to send all beings into the bottomless ocean of dissimilarity, would invert the rotation of the planet once more, restoring the age of perfection.

Thus the myth corresponds to the ancient ones in that there is an initial age of perfection, then a progressive degeneration, and finally a restoration of perfection; however, it contradicts the ancient myths insofar as in this one degeneration is due to contamination by the body and the corporeal, and in that the change of eras is the result of the action of a god.

139. Identity or father-son relationship?
140. Aldous Huxley (1956) discussed this in the noted essay *Heaven and Hell*; I discussed it more at length in Capriles (2000c). However, neither of us distinguished between inducing what I call the aesthetic *epoché* or “suspension of aesthetic judgment,” which may result in the neutral condition of the base-of-all, and the spontaneous liberation of judgment concomitant with the manifestation of the *dharmakaya* (I did not enter into sophisticated discrimination of spiritual conditions because the book in question was intended for my University students of Asian art, to whom the distinction under consideration is not directly relevant).
141. It is also worth noting that the views of Plato’s discussed here are those found in his written works, and that according to some scholars (e.g., Copleston, 1993) the works in question convey

his exoteric doctrines, Plato having as well a corpus of *agrafa dogmata* or unwritten doctrines that supposedly conveyed his esoteric, innermost teachings. However, even if there had been such *agrafa dogmata*, an Orphic's doctrines, no matter how esoteric, could by no means coincide with the perfectly nondual *dharma* as represented by the Dzogchen teachings, or even by *Madhyamika* philosophy.

142. The Bönpos in the Himalayas and the Stoics in Greece coincided in asserting that in the Golden Age there were no divisions between human beings: the *Logos* spontaneously guided and operated all affairs without the interference of the ego, and therefore human beings were all free and equal among themselves and were not divided by national borders or by distinctions of social class, wealth, or ancestry. There were no such institutions as private property, the individual family, slavery, servitude, or the State in which a few prevail over the majority. The goods of nature were enjoyed in common by all human beings, who lacked any sense of possessiveness and naturally achieved the common benefit of all beings and of the totality of the ecosphere, abandoned to the natural flow of the *Logos* beyond any kind of government or control. Since Greece and Tibet are geographically so distant from each other, and because of the coincidences between most extant texts of different Kailash-originated traditions in this regard, one may take for granted that this was the original conception of the Golden Age, Era of Perfection, or Age of Truth in all Kailash-originated traditions, and that those later Indian casteist systems that claimed that in the Primordial Age the Brahmin cast prevailed, misrepresented the original conception of the Age in question to fit what they viewed as the interests of their own group (for an infelicitous example of this deformation, cf. Biès, 1985).

Bön asserts the introduction of private property by the males in spite of the protests of the females, to have given rise to struggles that could only be suppressed when, finally, all recognized a Sovereign. Though the first Sovereign was of divine origin, after a short while he became corrupt and abused power—which resulted in a system of privileges that later on gave rise to political, social, and economic stratification (Reynolds, 1989). In claiming that the first divisions were economic and that these gave rise to political divisions, the Bönpos agree with Marxism and differ from anarchism, which claims

that the first divisions between human beings were political—namely between rulers and the ruled—and that this later gave rise to social differences (Sahlins [1972, 1974] illustrated this with his field observations of the development of Polynesian monarchies). At any rate, it is an established fact that primal societies of the Paleolithic did not exhibit any type or degree of stratification (even hunter-gatherers and early horticulturalists of our time fail to exhibit a clear stratification) and that political power, private property, and the separate family arose and developed interdependently as a result of the progressive “Fall” of our species (for a survey of works confirming this, cf. Taylor, 2003, 2005).

In classical China, Confucianism (and, previously to that, the worldview of Heaven and Earth) was associated with the Imperial State and the court's nobility, whereas the original Taoism I call “Taoism of Unorigination,” which includes Lao-tzu, Chuang-tzu, Lieh-tzu, and the Huainan Masters, was associated with the primitive commune and the “lowly” people, and preached ecological harmony and social and political equality, in many ways like later, Western anarchists (this is evident in most of the early Taoist works, and especially in the *Tao-Te-Ching* and the *Chuang-tzu* [in the latter text, cf. the parable of horses, among many other significant passages], but it is the *Huainanzi* [Cleary, 1990] that emphasizes this the most, having it as a leitmotif, and that may be regarded as a striking manifesto of political anarchism, social and economic egalitarianism, end ecological awareness). Thus it is not surprising that the historian of anarchism Max Nettlau [1979] should have viewed early Taoists, together with Cynics and Stoics, as representatives of what he called “the prehistory of anarchism,” and that several sinologists since James Legge should have associated Taoism with anarchism (Ames, 1983; Bender, 1983; Hall, 1978, 1983; Hall & Ames, 1995). In the course of Chinese history, Taoists implemented successive egalitarian revolts, which were repeatedly defeated by imperial forces (paradoxically, one of these revolts was crushed by forces commanded by the Confucian general Ko-hung, who was one of the originators of the distortion of Taoism that circumscribed itself to striving for long life and immortality, and who bitterly criticized Chuan-tzu for “asserting death and life to be the same”).

In Dionysian Bacchanalia men and women of all social positions mixed freely, and, as shown, for



example, in Eisler (1987), in Minoic times, when the Dionysian religion prevailed, and in general in what she called the “old (pre-Indo-European) Europe,” there were no marked social differences (a state of affairs she described by speaking of a wide middle class that virtually included the whole of society).

In Tibet, it has been seen that the Bönpos posited a primitive communism at the beginning of the time cycle. Yet the old religion was not alone in upholding egalitarian values. In the ninth century CE King Mune Tsampo was killed by his mother in complicity with his country’s nobility because of his attempts to implement the social doctrines of his Buddhist teachers: on three consecutive occasions he attempted to redistribute the wealth of his country’s citizens, giving rise to ever more irate and radical reactions on the part of the nobility, until finally they got his mother, who was jealous of the other widows of Mune Tsampo’s father (whom, as was customary in Tibet, Mune Tsampo had inherited upon the latter’s death—his mother being the only of his father’s wives he would not inherit because of their immediate kinship), to kill her kingly son. In the course of history, there were repeated revolts against the monastic feudalism implemented by the monastic schools. And in Bhutan the present dynasty put a ceiling of 30 acres to land property, and the king cannot be distinguished from the common folk by dress or adornments. However, in the case of Buddhism, egalitarianism is not circumscribed to Kailash-related traditions: the *Aggañña Sutta* presents private property as the occasion for the arising of stealing, beggary and violence; the *Dighanikaya’s Cakkavattisihananda-sutta* asserts poverty to be at the root of perversion and crime; Nagarjuna posited a welfare state; and what is nowadays called “engaged Buddhism” was a most important force in Shri Lanka, Vietnam, Myanmar, and India (with Dr. Ambedkar’s ex-dalits), and in our time is becoming an important force worldwide (among many other works, cf. Capriles, in press).

The Indian Tantrics were to a great extent exterminated by the Vaishnavas because they endangered the cast system, reintroducing the Bacchanalia, where all casts, and even dalits, freely mixed, and they always did their best to equalize economic and social inequalities.

Among the Ismailis, the Carmathians, *de facto* founded by Hamdan Qarmat when he began preaching in 877-878 CE, upheld radically

egalitarian ideals and practices (Bausani, 1988), and practiced a mysticism based on Communion. They inspired and carried out the rebellion of the Zanj African slaves that took place in the region that nowadays is the state of Kuwait. In their apogee they endangered the Abbasid Empire, and a Carmathian chief went so far as to conquer Mecca in 930 CE. Though later on they were defeated, they retained power in Bahrain for some time. Though the Ismaili Fatimide dynasty in Egypt did not implement egalitarian doctrines, the Carmathians, whom they supported, freely worked on their behalf.

The Knights Templar allegedly received their mystical doctrines from Ismaili chief Hassan Ibn el-Sabbah in el Alamud. Alan Butler (2000) believed that the most important figure in Templarism may have been Saint Bernard of Clairvaux—who produced a wonderful mystic theology of communion strikingly similar to the philosophy of the mystical traditions having their roots in Kailash, and who established the guidelines for building gothic cathedrals—noting that past researchers generally failed to credit St. Bernard with the pivotal role he played in the planning, formation, and promotion of the infant Templar Order, and casting doubts as to whether there may have been an “intention” to create an Order of the Templar prior to the life of St. Bernard himself. André de Montbard, one of the first Templar Knights, was his maternal uncle, and he may also have been related to the Counts of Champagne, who themselves appear to have been pivotal in the formation of the Templar Order. At any rate, it was St. Bernard who wrote the first Rules of the Order in question. I mention this because the traditions imported into Europe by the Knights Templar seem to have played a pivotal role in the arising of the free cities of the High Middle Age, which exhibited some kind of direct democracy (the cities were self-ruled through a counsel integrated by the federation of guilds and the federation of neighborhood councils) and an extremely high degree of socioeconomic equality (apprentices earned the same as the masters of their professions who instructed them), and in which the standards of living were higher than in any twentieth or twenty-first century society.

143. According to Plato’s *Republic*, the human soul has three parts: a rational part that seeks after truth and is responsible for our philosophical inclinations; a spirited part that desires honor and is responsible

for the feelings of anger and indignation, and an appetitive part that lusts after all sorts of things and especially of money (insofar as the latter may be used to fulfill any other base desire). The just individual can be defined in analogy with the just society: just as in the former the rational part of the soul rules, the spirited part of the soul supports this rule, and the appetitive part of the soul submits and follows wherever reason leads, in society the philosopher must rule, the guardians must support this rule and defend the city against its potential enemies, and the producers must submit and follow whatever the king philosophers dictate. And in both levels this is the meaning of justice: whereas in a just individual the entire soul aims at fulfilling the desires of the rational part, in the just society the entire community aims at fulfilling whatever the rulers will. So justice consists in each part of the individual and society playing the part that is supposed to be natural to it.

144. Plato distinguished between *dianoia*, which is the discursive thought proper to mathematics and which does not recognize its premises to be mere hypotheses, and *noesis* or dialectical thought, which on the contrary treats its premises as literally hypothetical—i.e., it treats hypotheses as concepts that have been expounded but which must be dealt with as mere steps to the encounter with the First Principle—(*Rep.* 511b) and which in his view arrives at the “pure intuition” free from *aisthesis* called *noein*, the object of which is experienced as the absolute truth that is not hypothetical and that is the First Principle. Having reached this principle, understanding descends again to a conclusion, “without resorting in any way to something visible, but proceeding by means of *eidos* to their conclusions, which are *eidos* as well” (*Rep.* 511c). To Plato *noesis* or true understanding, which is the highest type of thought, makes intelligible, by means of the First Principle, the objects of mathematic thought—i.e., of *dianoia*—which, as studied in mathematics, are not really or truly understood (Cf. Annas, 1981 [Spanish], pp. 248, 250)).
145. Plotinus may have taken this view from Heraclitus’ fragment DK 206, which reads (adapted from various translations): “Things as a whole are whole and nonwhole, identical and not identical, harmonic and nonharmonic; the one is born from the whole and from the one all things are born.”
146. The error of positing the One as the absolute is the same one Indian philosopher Shankaracharya

committed in the transition from the eighth to the ninth century CE. For some time the *Adwaya Madhyamaka* philosophy of Buddhist sage Nagarjuna—who opposed Hindu casteism—had defeated all Hindu systems in debates and controversies. Shankara was one of the theorists of orthodox Brahmanism who strived to devise doctrines sophisticated enough as to give his religion a chance of resisting Nagarjuna’s philosophy and thus maintain the caste system, which was endangered by the ascent of Buddhism. His *Advaita Vedanta* resulted from divesting *Madhyamaka* philosophy of all that could contradict the dogmas at the root of the Upanishads and Vedanta, which required the assertion of the One (i.e., of Brahman-Atman). However, the assertion of the One was a conceptual position or thesis (*paksha*) just as valid as its opposite (*pratipaksha*) and which, therefore, could be easily refuted. On the contrary, Nagarjuna’s *Adwaya Madhyamaka* did not assert anything, but limited itself to refuting by means of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasanga*) whatever position were adopted by opponents. Unlike Shankara, Nagarjuna was aware that in order to discover the absolute it was necessary to dissolve the subject-object duality and, in general, all instances of understanding in terms of delusorily valued-absolutized thoughts.

Also the spiritual practices described by Shankara fail to correspond to Nagarjuna’s approach, for none of them involves the means that could provide an opportunity for the unconcealment of the true condition of the essence or *ngowo* (*ngo bo*) aspect of Dzogchen-*qua*-Base, which is the constituent of the thoughts that color our perception or that chain themselves in trains of thought, and which, when unconcealed, is the *dharmakaya*. On the contrary, many of them only seem to reinforce dualism and delusion.

147. The One is the first hypostasis, the transcendent absolute; when it begins to think, it does so in and as the second hypostasis, which is the *nous* or Intelligence. The soul or *psyche* is the third hypostasis, in which and through which the spatio-temporal universe begins to be produced, and which can have this function because it limits with the material world that it creates (Plotinus, IV 8, in Cappelletti, 2000, p. 251).
148. My definitive criticism of Plotinus is to be found in Capriles (work in progress 3); there is a less elaborate one in Capriles (1994, 2007a, Vol. II).

149. Michael Zimmerman (1998, p. 202) objected that this does not apply to the pioneer theorist of deep ecology / ecosophy Arne Naess, insofar as Naess distinguished between the phenomenal realm, which the Norwegian thinker called spatio-temporal “span,” and what the same thinker called non-spatio-temporal “depth” or “emptiness”—and which, one may infer, Zimmerman viewed as a transcendent spirit. However, at first sight the latter, rather than seeming to be a transcendent spirit, seems to correspond to Kant’s *Ding-an-Sich* or *Thing-in-Itself*, which is the *given*—as different from the phenomena that according to Kant arise when the human psyche structures the *given* for experience in terms of the *a priori* forms of sensibility. Rather than referring to what Naess called non-spatio-temporal “depth” or “emptiness” by the term *Ding-an-Sich*, Zimmerman called it *the noumenal domain*—which etymologically means “the realm of what is thought.” Since it is not clear whether Kant took the noumenon and the *Ding-an-Sich* to be exactly the same truth or gave each term a subtly different nuance, and since the former involves the rather bewildering reference to thought, I use the term *Ding-an-Sich*. It is true that the term noumenon, because of its etymology, might be taken to have something to do with “spirit,” but in order to assert it to be transcendent one would have to redefine the term transcendent as “that which is beyond the phenomena of our experience” (rather than being beyond the supposedly physical reality, which is how most people understand the term).
150. In *Khuddaka Nikaya*, III: *Udaana*, VI, 4-5 (“The various sects,” 1 and 2), the fourteen *avyakrta* questions or *avyakrtavastuni* are divided into four sets, the first one containing the four questions concerning the “origin of the universe,” which are: (1) is the world eternal?; is it not eternal?; is it both eternal and not eternal?; is it neither eternal nor not eternal? The remaining three sets of questions are the following: (2) is the world infinite?; is it not infinite?; is it both infinite and not infinite?; is it neither infinite nor not infinite?; (3) are the animating principle and the body identical?; are the animating principle and the body different?; (4) does the *Tathagata* exist after death?; does the *Tathagata* not exist after death?; does the *Tathagata* both exist after death and not exist after death?; does the *Tathagata* neither exist after death nor not exist after death? As can be seen, this discourse of Buddha Shakyamuni prefigures

the structure of Madhyamika refutations, which bring it to subtler philosophical subjects. (These occur in several places in the *Nikayas*: twice in *Majjhima* I [sutta 72], once in *Samyutta*, III and once in *Samyutta*, IV; once in *Digha* 9 [*Pottapada Sutta*] and once in *Digha* 29 [*Pasadika Sutta*]. In his turn, Nagarjuna dealt with them in the *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, XXVII, and in *Dharmasamgraha*.)

151. Cf. the preceding note.

152. In Dudjom Rinpoche (1991, vol. I, p. 219), one reads:

The dependent is without essence in respect to creation, because creation from the four alternative limits do not exist: Things are not created from themselves because that which was created and creation itself consist of instantaneous time moments, which renders them mutually exclusive substances. Nor are things created from something else, because on analysis the specific characteristics of that something else are not [found to] exist. Then, things are not created from both [themselves and other causes], because [themselves and other causes] are mutually exclusive substances. And, [finally], without a cause, creation is impossible...whatever is apparitional and so forth instantly appears inasmuch as it is dependently originated, in the manner of a dream or an illusion. Such is said in the *Sarvabuddhaviśayavataṛajñanalokalamkarasūtra*:

Mañjushri, dreams appear but do not exist. Similarly all things, too, appear but do not exist.

Down to:

They are illusory, like a mirage, a castle in the sky, the moon in water, a reflected image and an emanation.

The above refutation is based on the view of time as a succession of instantaneous moments (which are not self-existent), according to which the illusion of there being a continuity of substances and actions would be similar to illusion of there being a continuity of substances and action in a movie picture, which results from the succession of still individual pictures in the film (with the difference that yogis have always insisted that the successive time moments have no duration whatsoever). Contrarily to the opinion of some dialecticians and

scholars, this view of time is not an abstract theory of reality that the *Yogacharas* borrowed from the theoretical schools of the *Hinayana*, but is based on yogic experience. In turn, the rejection of this view by the *Madhyamika Prasangikas* is based on logical reasoning.

In case anyone would like to see the negation of production or creation confirmed by scriptural authority, the *Anavataptanagarajaparipricchasastra* (*klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo*) reads:

Whatever is produced from conditions is not produced; it does not have a nature of production.

Whatever depends on conditions is said to be empty; one who knows emptiness is [rightly] mindful.

153. In Namkhai Norbu (1999, p. 93), One reads:

In the Dzogchen teachings, it is considered that the primordial state, which is beyond time, and beyond creation and destruction, is the fundamentally pure Base of all existence, both at the universal and at the individual levels. It is the inherent nature of the primordial state to manifest as light, which in turn manifests as the five colors, [which are] the essences of the elements. The essences of the elements interact (as explained in the Bön cosmology) to produce the elements themselves, which make up both the individual's body and the whole material dimension. The universe is thus understood as the spontaneously arisen play of the energy of the primordial state, and may be enjoyed as such by an individual who remains integrated with his or her essential inherent condition, in the all-liberating, self-perfected state, the state of Dzogchen.

154. Does the timeless Base or Dzogchen-*qua*-Base both antedate and outlast manifestation? Insofar as this question presupposes time, it is senseless to make it with regard to what from its own perspective is timeless.

The Dzogchen view of the Base as being from its own perspective timeless is in accordance with seeming implications of *Madhyamika* philosophy, and of the thinking of Buddhist Master Ashvagoshā, according to which space and time, rather than being self-existent, depend upon perception, for then it could be assumed that in the absence of perception and hence of life, and therefore

previously to manifestation, there is no space and no time. According to Kant, space and time are *a priori* forms of sensibility, and so if one assumed this to be correct one could assume that they cannot exist before sensibility, and therefore before the origin of life. According to superunification theory, dimensions, including time, “expanded” with the (supposed) big bang, and hence one may assume before the (supposed) big bang there was no explicate dimensionality. The same might be the case with the holonomic theory of David Bohm and in general with what John Wheeler called *recognition physics*, according to which at the dimensional level of Planck's constant there is no explicate dimensionality. And so on.

Do the above systems imply that, even from a relative perspective, one is not entitled to speak of a “before” and an “after” manifestation, and perhaps even that one cannot speak of a manifestation (for so long as there are space and time there is the manifest, and hence one may not speak of its manifestation)? There is no doubt that from the perspective of the absolute there is no manifestation and hence no before or after manifestation; however, whether there are such things from the relative perspective is something that—as may be inferred from Shakyamuni's negation to discuss the origin of the world and so on, both in the Pali Canon and in the Sanskrit *Mahayana* Canon—Sutric Buddhism would refuse to answer.

155. Although the *Charvaka* or *Lokayata* was an Indian materialistic philosophical school, as a rule manuals of Buddhist philosophy refer by the Tibetan translation of these terms—*gyangphenpa* (*rgyan 'phen pa*)—in a generic way to a class of view that comprises various systems that deny the existence of anything transcendent, that deny the existence of a soul, that deny causation and the law of cause and effect, that deny that any view may be established, and so on. Among the subsystems they include in this category are those of the *phelpa* (*phyal ba*), of the *gyangphenpa* (*rgyan 'phen pa*) in the narrow sense of the term, and of the *murthugpa* (*mur thug pa*) or nihilists. Since the discussion of the views referred to by these terms is beyond the scope of this work, the reader is referred to: Karmay (1988), Baroetto (1990), Dowman (1992), Dudjom Rinpoche (1991), and Namkhai Norbu (1999 / 2001).

156. He referred to them as *causal* mystics or mystics who attained the *causal* realm. However, since he believed what he called the *causal* to be the

*dharmakaya*, what he asserted is that they are dharmakaya yogis.

157. I am not advocating for a return to the time prior to the development of science and technology, but for a redimensioning and restructuring of these roughly as conceived by Marcuse (1972, p. 61). However, I agree with Marcuse (1964, ch. 6: “From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination”) that science is ideological insofar as it has built into its concepts and methods an interest in instrumental action—that is, in the technical manipulation and control of nature—and hence it is necessarily committed to an exploitative view of nature and human beings, rather than neutrally and accurately reflecting an objective reality. In fact, as shown in Capriles (2007a vol. III), and in Capriles (1986, 1990b, 1994, 2007a, 2007c), the development of science and technology was a direct consequence of the development of the basic human delusion the Buddha called *avidya* and Heraclitus called *lethe*, and then science and technology catalyzed this development, exacerbating it, and thus led to the current ecological crisis—which represents the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion that makes its eradication possible. In this light, the development of science and technology has a positive side, which is that of making possible the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion and hence the latter’s eradication at a global level, which in its turn would make possible the beginning of a new Golden Age or of a Millennium like the one prophesized in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, the *Book of Ismailis* (Under the direction of Brice Parain, 1972, p. 281) and John’s *Apocalypse*. This is discussed in greater detail elsewhere (Capriles, 1994, 2007a, Vol. III).
158. If the Path one has followed is based on a single principle, and on the basis of one’s experience of that Path one tries to understand other Paths which combine different principles including the principle on which the Path one followed is based, one will correctly understand those aspects of the Paths in question that are based on the principle of the Path one has followed, but not necessarily other aspects of those Paths. However, if one has obtained realization through the vehicle that the *Samten Migdrön (bsamgtan mig sgron)* calls the “primordial ancestor of all vehicles” (i.e., the Dzogchen *Atiyoga*), one will understand the principles of all Paths and vehicles.
159. Among the different tryptamines, psilocybin, psilocin, DMT and 5-MeO-DMT (the latter two

being the principal psychoactive principles of the Amazonian snuff called *yopo*, which contains N,N-DMT as well, and which induces particularly powerful visions) are very well known CREV. Because of their short-lived psychoactive effects when smoked or snuffed (in the case of *yopo* snuff, Amazonian Indians mix it with lime, which they obtain from burning locally found seashells, for otherwise it will not be psychoactive—and the same applies to all substances in this category when taken nasally), DMT, 5-MeO-DMT, DET, and DPT are very often classed together.

Synthetic tryptamines AMT (*alpha*-methyltryptamine), 5-MeO-AMT (5-methoxy-*alpha*-methyltryptamine), 5-MeO-MiPT (N-isopropyl-5-methoxy-N-methyl-tryptamine) and Foxy / Foxy Methoxy / 5-MeO-DIPT (*alpha*-methyl-tryptamine) are universally classed as psychedelic as well. Most if not all of these drugs have a stimulant amphetamine-like effect as well, and—especially in the case of the latter two—they are deemed to be erotic enhancers (Foxy was widely used as such in the US before its prohibition in 2001, and just as it happened with the rest of these synthetic tryptamines, street dealers often made it pass for ecstasy, in many cases producing a fearful reaction on those who did not expect the typical effects of CREV).

The tryptamine bufotenine (5-OH-DMT)—found in the defensive exudations of the parotid gland of *Bufo* toads, in the seeds of the trees *Anadenanthera colubrina* and *Anadenanthera peregrina*, in several species of *Amanita* mushrooms (including *Amanita muscaria*, *Amanita citrina* and *Amanita porphyria*), in the latex of the takini tree (*Brosimum acutifolium*), and in the seeds of *Mucuna pruriens*—is not unanimously classed as a psychedelic: though some claim in some cases it has proven to have so-called psychedelic effects, most contemporary researchers deny this altogether. However, as shown in another endnote, some of the species containing this substance have reportedly been used as aphrodisiacs in different parts of the world.

160. This description of the effects of PCP (phencyclidine), DXM / DM (dextromethorphan), ketamine, and similar general anesthetics, as well as the fact that they are toxic (PCP and DXM / DM being *extremely* so) and addictive (DXM / DM, which is chemically related to codeine, is, like the latter, considered to be physically addictive; in their

turn, PCP and ketamine produce psychological dependence to the extent that they induce a feeling of detachment with regard to problems and to the one affected by these problems, that they have a numbing effect on the mind, and that they provoke feelings of strength, power, and invulnerability), may suggest a similarity of these general anesthetics with those, far less dramatic, of infamous opiates. However, perhaps with the exception of DXM / DM, which as just noted is chemically related to the opiate codeine, one is not entitled to class these drugs in the same category as opiates, for their effects are significantly different from those of the latter. Moreover, whereas opiates are not deemed to have any psychotherapeutic potential, ketamine has been reported to have a therapeutic potential in the field of thanatology, in the treatment of alcoholism, and in that of psychiatric disorders (cf. Kolp, Young, Friedman, Krupitsky, Jansen, & O'Connor, 2007, among many other works, some of which are cited by these authors).

It is because of their powerful *tendency* to dissolve the ego boundaries and induce depersonalization, and because of the drastic alterations of perception they induce, that unlike opiates they are unanimously classed as psychedelics. This tendency is described by Kolp, Young, Friedman, Krupitsky, Jansen & O'Connor (2007, p. 4) as follows:

(Ketamine) frequently induces in sub-anesthetic doses feelings of ego dissolution and loss of identity, emotionally intense visions, visits to mythological realms of consciousness, vivid dreams and memories of possible past incarnations, experience of the psychological death and rebirth of the ego, and feelings of cosmic unity with humanity, nature, the universe, and God.

According to Marcia Moore (Moore & Alltounian, 1978), ketamine's "psychedelic" power to dissolve the ego boundaries and induce depersonalization goes much farther than that of CREV, having the potential to entirely evaporate the observer and all sorts of concepts. However, this is not an advantage of ketamine over CREV, for a chemically-induced dissolution of the observer and in general of all concepts will result in a state of the neutral base-of-all in which neither *samsara* nor *nirvana* are active, and as shown in this paper the Dzogchen teachings compare spending time in such state with "cutting one's own head" insofar as no karma is neutralized while one is in that state and

so spending time in it amounts to squandering our precious human existence. In fact, it could be said that the general anesthetics under consideration are the base-of-all (*kunzhi* [*kun gzhi*]) drugs *par excellence*.

Furthermore, my impression is that the illegal use of this kind of so-called psychedelics (i.e., their use outside a genuinely effective and legally approved therapeutic context) may be even more dangerous than that of CREV, and therefore that warnings against this use will never be too many or too strong (incidentally, Marcia Moore—the author just quoted—died after going into the forest in the winter and injecting all the ketamine she could find).

161. Ayahuasca is prepared by boiling sections of a vine from the *Banisteriopsis* genus, which in most cases is *Banisteriopsis caapi* (Rivier & Lindgren, 1972). This vine contains harmala alkaloids, mostly harmine but also some harmaline, which in themselves can induce mild "psychedelic" states, but which by the same token provoke nausea. Usually another plant is added to the brew "to make visions more intense:" *Psychotria viridis*, a plant that contains DMT and 5-MeO-DMT. Although the content of tryptamines of the DMT family in ayahuasca is sometimes thought to derive solely from the additives, according to Peter Stafford (1978/1983/1992, p. 342) the leaves and stems of one *Banisteriopsis* species—namely the one called *Banisteriopsis rusbyana*—"have a large amount of *N,N*-DMT, 5-methoxy-*N,N*-DMT, 5-hydroxy-*N,N*-DMT (i.e., bufotenine, which according to Stafford is no longer considered psychoactive) and *N-beta*-methyltetrahydro-*beta*-carboline." At any rate, DMT is inactive when taken orally because in the stomach it is attacked by an enzyme called monoamine oxydase, which hacks the molecule apart, and therefore for it to be active when taken in this way it must be accompanied by MAO-inhibitors such as the *beta*-carbolines present in the various so-called psychedelic species of *Banisteriopsis* (Stafford, 1978/1983/1992, p. 324). (Some use the term *yagé* to refer to the beverage made by pressing sections of the raw vines of any of the so-called psychedelic species of *Banisteriopsis* and the term *ayahuasca* to refer to the beverage made by boiling the vine together with additives containing psychoactive substances of the DMT family; in a section of the book just quoted, Stafford [1978/1983/1992, p. 332-357] uses ayahuasca for the plant and *yagé* for the beverage produced by boiling the vine together with

additives containing psychoactive substances of the DMT family; I do not know which of the two, if any, is the correct usage of the terms.)

As to the substances mentioned above, in 1847 the German chemist J. Fritsch isolated harmine from the seeds of Syrian rue (*Peganum harmala*), which consensus would eventually establish as the major *beta*-carboline alkaloid of the Banisteriopsis species (McKenna, 1998). In 1905 Zerda and Bayón reportedly isolated from an unvouchered botanical material they called “yajé” (i.e., yagé), the alkaloid they called telepathine (quoted in Perrot and Hamet, 1927) in response to the reported telepathic effects of harmala alkaloids. In 1923, an alkaloid was again isolated from unvouchered botanical materials by the Colombian chemist Cárdenas Fischer (1923), who again called it telepathine. Nowadays this alkaloid is assumed to be harmaline.

The vividness and continuity of the visions induced by ayahuasca is great, even when no additives containing tryptamines of the DMT family are put into the drink. Claudio Naranjo (1973) was startled by the fact that, when taken by city-dwellers who had never been in the jungle, harmaline often induced visions of jungle animals just like those reported by native ayahuasca users in the Amazon; likewise, Terence McKenna [1990] reported having given the drug to Eskimos who had never seen either snakes or big cats and claimed that they described visions of both). Harmala alkaloids (whether or not mixed with substances containing tryptamines of the DMT family) are also regarded as aphrodisiac.

As to the non-psychotomimetic character of these substances, which I called into question in the regular text, it is a fact that some people have reported frightening episodes with them. In my view, they are to be avoided, like the rest of so-called psychedelics, because of the significant dangers inherent in their use.

162. It was Claudio Naranjo (1973) who classified substances including MDA and MMDA, STP and harmaline as non-psychotomimetic psychedelics. Nevertheless, these drugs are supposed to “expand consciousness,” and in general consciousness expanders are potentially “psychotomimetic”—and in fact as noted in the regular text users have reported so-called psychotomimetic effects from some if not all of these drugs. At any rate, from the standpoint of the system expounded in this series of papers and in Capriles (2007a), in the case

of so-called psychedelic substances, not having a “psychotomimetic” potential should not be seen as being in itself better than having such potential: the so-called psychotomimetic effect of CREV, in spite of the danger inherent in it, is the one that, in the most unlikely, yet most fortunate cases, could have the most radical liberating potential (however, I have seen no such cases in this lifetime even though I have known, directly and indirectly, a great quantity of users of these substances; therefore, I must warn once more that the dangers of so-called psychedelics is so great that experimenting with them is to be strictly avoided).

163. The occurrence of states of deep unconsciousness that external observers could even mistake for physical death, together with a lack of so-called psychedelic effects, is generally reported when the mushroom is eaten fresh and raw rather than dried—either by the sun or over a fire (it has been asserted that the reason for this is that drying them in either way turns the slightly poisonous ibotenic acid they contain into the so-called psychedelic substance muscimol). However, also when the mushroom is eaten dry or cooked, users very often report an initial episode of sleep, in this case featuring extremely vivid dreams (Stafford, 1978/1983/1992, pp. 379-382). A peculiarity of these fungi is that most of its psychoactive principles are rapidly eliminated through the urine, and so paleo-Siberian shamans can pass it to others by making them drink their urine, and the latter can do the same with others, in such a way that a single dose can induce the effects of the drug in many people

Finally, it must be noted that the active principles and hence the effects of *amanita pantherina* are very similar to those of *amanita muscaria*; however, users other than Siberian shamans have often mistaken some of the more poisonous types of *amanita* with the one they intended to take (this being the reason why manuals warn users not to eat mushrooms that are totally white).

164. Also Westerners have reported intense erotic effects; for example, Clark Heinrich (2002, p. 17) wrote:

The elation and euphoria, if they are attained, can amplify to the point of what can best be described as bliss. I would use the term “ecstasy” except that its real meaning is “standing outside,” that is, being beside oneself. The bliss experienced with fly agaric *is* oneself; the body is fully involved. It is as if every pore of the body

were a sexual organ in orgasm, and I am not overstating things.

If the mushroom alone can induce such powerful erotic-like feelings, Asian reports claiming that it enhances the sensations experienced in intercourse are likely to be true. Fly agaric contains bufotenine, and even though this substance is nowadays deemed by most researchers not to be psychoactive, as referred in the next endnote, the poison of those species of *Bufo* toads not containing the noted CREV, 5-MeO-DMT, yet containing bufotenine, has been said to be used as an aphrodisiac in different parts of the world, whereas the seeds of *Mucuna pruriens*, which also contain the substance in question, are an ingredient of various Ayurvedic aphrodisiacs (even of industrial ones such as the trademark medicine *Tentex Forte* of Himalaya Drugs [Bangalore, Karnataka, India]).

165. The only *Bufo* toad yielding exudations with a demonstrated so-called psychedelic effect is *Bufo alvarius*, found solely in the Sonora desert in Mexico, for they contain the powerful CREV, 5-MeO-DMT; however, there are reports claiming that the poisonous exudations of the parotid gland of different species of *Bufo* toads—all of which contain bufotenine—have been used as an aphrodisiac or enhancer of erotic pleasure both in parts of Asia and the West Indies (these toads are “milked” by stimulating the adjacencies of the gland in question, which causes the poison to be exudated as a defense).
166. *Bhang* is the leaves of male and female *Cannabis sativa* plants, which is most often used in infusion (the traditional way to take it, which religious Brahmins do every Thursday, consists in washing it, then mixing it with black pepper and a pinch of salt and grinding it into a soft paste, and then swallowing it with water, after which a milk beverage often containing almonds, pistachios, saffron, and a sweetener is drunk; for the celebration of *holi*, or as a *Kama Sutra* recipe for enhancing lovemaking, *bhanga* paste is cooked in *ghee* [clarified butter] so that the latter absorbs its active principles, and the resulting substance is used in the elaboration of the traditional Indian sweet called *bhanga ladu*; finally, *bhanga* is often sold to tourists as the beverage called *bhanga lassi*, prepared by shaking up *bhanga* paste with milk curd, water, and sugar). *Ganja* is marijuana, whereas *charras* is the Indian variety of what nowadays the West knows as *hashish*, and *hashish* is the variety of the same drug produced in Muslim

countries from Morocco through Afghanistan (as different from the *hashish* used by some Europeans before the twentieth century, which was a sweet to be eaten rather than smoking stuff, and which may have been either something similar to *bhanga ladu* or to the brownie-like *hashish fudge* obtained from the recipe offered in the famed 1954 *Alice B. Toklas Cook Book*).

167. Some sub-species of *Datura* (including those bearing thorn apples) are among the sacred plants Shaivas associate with the god Shiva—and indeed Shaiva yogis use them in order to induce visions that are to be recognized as mere visions, so as to develop a capacity to recognize the insubstantiality of all phenomena. The reason why they believe these substances may be used to this end is that unprepared individuals are as a rule unable to recognize the visions of *Datura* as intangible hallucinations different from the seemingly “material” reality of our common world, or as not being self-existing elementals, spirits or demons; therefore, it is held that if someone learns to recognize them as apparitions, in the long run he or she will develop a feeling of apparitionality with regard to ordinary reality as well, and by the same token will become immune to the influence of elementals, spirits and demons.

It is the above-mentioned difficulty to recognize *Datura* visions for what they are that makes the use of these plants extremely dangerous: among the unprepared Westerners that have used them I have had notice of, a very high proportion turned psychotic; likewise, in India there are stories of yogis who consumed these plants and subsequently saw a path on solid ground rather than the ravine that non-drugged individuals perceived instead, and when they began walking on the path they were seeing, other human beings saw them fall into the ravine and lose their lives.

At any rate, the aim of *Datura*-ingesting Shaiva yogis—independently of whether or not it may be attained by the means they used—is similar to that of Tantric practices such as illusory body and dream yoga and different from that of Dzogchen, in that it consists in the attainment of a condition roughly like the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, yogis, siddhas, mahasiddhas and so on—which as such is very similar to Ken Wilber’s and Stan Grof’s conception of the fruit of their respective systems. Though *Vajrayana* Buddhism values this condition, it views



- it as a relative condition rather than as the absolute, ultimate Fruit, and *at any rate employs radically different means for achieving it. In fact, one should by no means consume these plants or their derivatives.*
168. Peter Stafford (1978/1983/1992, p. 385-388) and other experts on so-called psychedelics classed *Daturas* and *Belladonna* as such (even though Stafford, rather than devoting a chapter of his book to these plants, briefly discussed them in a chapter called “Contrasting Profiles”—which suggests he realized they were somehow different from the substances he classed into all of the nine categories he discussed in the other chapters of his book). However, nowadays most researchers seem to exclude plants of this class from the category under consideration.
169. Here “deltic” represents expansion by the shape of the capital form of the Greek letter *delta*, so that the term would mean “consciousness (psyche) expander (deltic).” I used this term in India in the mid 1970s.
170. Cf. note 57 to this paper.
171. In fact, after the stages of dissolution and death, a sequence of experiences manifests that is analogous to the one considered in my discussion of the effect of CREV (cf. below in the regular text). Firstly the “clear light” of *dang* (*gdangs*) energy shines forth in the *chikhai bardo* (*’chi ka’i bar do*) in an instance of the base-of-all (Skt. *alaya*; Tib. *kun gzhi*); if this experience is taken as object, an experience of the formless realms (Skt. *arupadhatu* or *arupa loka*; Tib. *gzugs med kyi khams*) ensues. Then non-Jungian archetypal forms of *rölpa* (*rol pa*) energy manifest in the *chönyi bardo* (*chos nyid bar do*) in an instance of the consciousness of the base-of-all (Skt. *alaya vijñāna*; Tib. *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*); if these forms are taken as object, an experience of the form realm (Skt. *rupadhatu* or *rupa loka*; Tib. *gzugs khams*) manifests. Subsequently one reacts with passions to experiences of the *sidpa bardo* (*srid pa bar do*) in an instance of the defilement consciousness (Skt. *klišta mano vijñāna*; Tib. *nyon mongs gyi rnam par shes pa*); as one reifies these experiences and clings to them, an experience of the realm of sensuality (Skt. *kamadhatu* or *kama loka*; Tib. *’dod pa’i khams*) occurs.
172. In this regard, cf. note 65 to this paper.
173. According to Buddhism, the sixth sense is the one that perceives thought, and according to the Buddhist epistemologist Dharmakīrti also in this sphere there is a moment of bare sensation before recognition occurs and gives rise to perception. For a more extensive discussion of this Cf. Capriles (2004, 2007a, Vols. I, II).
174. This concept was explained in Capriles (2000b, 2003, 2007a): *tönpas* (*ston pa*) or Primordial Revealers are to be distinguished from *tertöns* (*gter ston*) or Revealers, in that the former arise at a time when the lineal transmission of the teachings of Awakening in general and the Dzogchen teachings in particular has died out, and thus they reintroduce a whole system of teachings where there was none, whereas the latter arise when the lineal transmission is still alive, yet it has become necessary to reintroduce specific teachings that have been lost and which are appropriate for the time at which they are introduced. After each *tönpa* manifests, many *tertöns* may arise and reintroduce specific teachings. Furthermore, whereas *tönpas* do not need teachings from the lineal transmission to attain full Awakening, *tertöns* do need them in order to obtain full Awakening.
175. The feeling tone (Skt. *vedana*; Tib. *tsorwa* [*tshor ba*]) is the sensation in the center of the chest at the level of the heart that accompanies every perception.
176. As has been noted, the increase in the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness manifests as an increase in the scope of the focus of conscious awareness, but also as a permeabilization of the latter’s limits. This may be compared to a balloon being inflated: the bigger the balloon, the thinner and more transparent the rubber becomes, so that at some point one can see right through it. However, in the case of our consciousness, the causal action of inflating it cannot make it blow out—that is, to disappear together with the veil that dims or conceals Dzogchen-*qua*-Base. In general, for this to be possible the transmission and teachings of a Master of a genuine wisdom tradition are indispensable—and at any rate the balloon’s explosion is beyond causality.
177. If the psychotic episode comes to an end when the effects of the drug subside, as shown in note 18 to this paper, it will be called a “psychotomimetic experience.” Since the character of the episode will be the same whether or not it is confined to the duration of the drug’s effects, instead of saying that certain drugs may have psychotomimetic effects, I deem it more correct to say they may unleash a psychotic episode that may be confined to the duration of the drug’s effect, but that in some cases may extend itself beyond the lapse in question, becoming a fully-fledged psychosis. However, throughout this paper

I have used the term “psychotomimetic” because it was unpractical to try to devise and use a more precise terminology.

178. In note before last and elsewhere in this series of papers, as well as in Capriles (2007a, Vol. II), I compared this effect with the thinning of the rubber of a balloon as the latter is filled up.
179. Since so-called psychedelics having a dissociative, anesthetic, mind-numbing, and heroic effect such as PCP, ketamine and DXM / DM, when taken in anesthetic doses, sedate the so-called “mental” sensation experienced in the center of the chest, the positive feedback loop in question cannot manifest just as it does under CREV. However, it can manifest when these drugs are taken in sufficiently small doses, so long as these are potently psychoactive. At any rate, even when these substances are taken in anesthetic doses, if experiences of psychotic derealization occur under their effect, and these prolong themselves beyond the manifest effects of the drug, since at this point the so-called “mental” sensation is no longer sedated, the positive feedback loop is as likely to occur just as it may do under CREV.
180. I believe Alan Watts was perhaps the most important of the early diffusers of Eastern Wisdom traditions in the West, insofar as he had a great capacity to make relatively abstruse doctrines comprehensible to the average reader. Though now I could point out a series of defects in his explanations, I believe that at the time they were written they had one of the most beneficial effects among those produced by writers of the same period (Chan-Chen-Chi’s *The Practice of Zen* is subtler than Watts’ books on *Zen*, but Watts produced a far wider corpus of works than did Chan-Chen-Chi, and indisputably had the greatest and very likely the most beneficial influence on members of my generation).

It must also be noted that I believe that, with some specific exceptions, the preexistence of the works by Watts made a great deal of the work by Wilber and some other transpersonalists redundant. Furthermore, Wilber’s works are far less correct and show far less understanding of the dynamic of genuine Paths of Awakening than Watts’.

Finally, it is a fact that Jung, then Blofeld and Huxley, and finally Bateson, realized that the ecological crisis had spiritual roots, but Watts showed very clearly that the deepest root of ecological crisis was the *avidya* of Buddhism (though I fail to remember whether or not he used this terminology).

181. Something similar applies to most other writers who

described their experiences with CREV, including Aldous Huxley (1954, 1956) and the rest. Although Watts wrote that he was reporting on levels that went deeper than those described by Huxley, I do not have the impression that this is the case. On the contrary, in Huxley (1962), it is stated that CREV can take one to Heaven, to Hell, or give one the possibility to go *beyond both conditions*—which seems to go farther than the insights in Watts (1962).

There is a long list of works on the effects of CREV, but this is not the place to pass judgment on them all.

182. Such assertions lent momentum to the psychedelic hedonism and experientialism that characterized the hippies in the 1960s and which, in spite of having inspired some to seek for genuine spiritual Paths, also had the extremely negative effects listed toward the end of the regular text of this Appendix.

### About the Author

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