

The Sexiest and Loneliest Element of Integral Theory: Subtle Energies

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Subtle energies are at the heart of the Integral trajectory as the drive in evolution (Eros), the causal holding of the Kosmos (Agape), the potential embedded in new Kosmic grooves (morphic potentials and fields), and as the most potent force of horizontal and vertical development humans have access to (through various practices). Subtle energies are arguably, the sexiest element of Integral. Integral Theory's post-metaphysical stance rests on a few pre-given a-priori assumptions; Eros drives form into higher unities, Agape embraces all forms, morphogenetic grooves or fields are enacted through the laying down of morphogenetic potentials. Eros and Agape drives this evolution through deep structures, which inform the unfolding and enactment as Spirit manifests (Wilber 2003a; Esbjörn-Hargens and Wilber 2006). Involution is described as Spirit in-folding and evolution as Spirit unfolding. Through the evolution of form in increasing complexity, Spirit tetra-unfolds as increasing subtlety of energy, corresponding to subtler states, situated in social and cultural contexts. Each holonic moment is understood as inheriting the previous moment through prehensive unification and morphic resonance. This lovely and mind stretching view of Spirit, humanity, evolution, and subtle energy in Integral Theory and Integral Post-Metaphysics (IPM), its central core; has hardly been touched in the integral literature, and according to Nick Hedlund (2010), for good reasons. Also, according to Scott Anderson (2010a), Wilber's Integral approach to subtle energy (2003a) has not been noticed by the researchers or practitioners in the field; thus, the loneliest element of Integral.

Wilber has only written on subtle energies in a few instances in the course of 30+ years. His most comprehensive writings on the subject have been in the context of his recent introduction of Integral Post-Metaphysics (2002a; 2003a). In doing so, he has intricately woven subtle energies into the fabric of IPM in a significant way. It is important not only to critique Wilber's approach, but to draw out this intricate weave more explicitly than he has done.

I begin the chapter with a review of the literature including a description of Wilber's writings on subtle energies in each of his five phases of intellectual development. His current theory can be understood more fully in this context, as many of the ideas have roots in his earlier writings. *Excerpt G: Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Subtle Energies*¹ (2003a) is his most well known and advanced work on the topic. Excerpt G closely followed *Excerpt A* (2002a), where Wilber describes the energetic nature of the involutory givens of IPM.

Wilber's approach to subtle energies can be critiqued in *at least* six ways; 1) it needs to utilize Integral Pluralism, 2) more of the scientific literature on energies is necessary to support the hypotheses and conclusions drawn, the recent works of; 3) William Tiller, and 4) Rupert Sheldrake could be integrated more fully, 5) the discussion should be explicitly linked to the lineage of subtle energies in the West, and 6) the energetic nature of the involutory givens should be made even more apparent. Each critique could be the topic of a chapter or a book. This brief chapter is intended to further enact the Integral groove by raking the top of the Grand Canyon and only touching upon the essential elements.

In my view, those six critiques are essential for the integral approach to subtle energies to develop. Secondary components to the topic such as states, stages, chakras, reincarnation as well as the increasing reliance in the scientific literature on the sciences of complexity and the role of

energies in the self-organization and autopoiesis of living forms (Rubik 2002; Oschman 2004; Jaeken 2009; Brizhik, Del giudice, Popp et al 2009), will not be addressed. Another secondary component is the most common critique so far against Wilber's approach; that subtle energies may not fit in the UR-quadrant (Visser 2003a;2004,2006; Edwards 2003; McFarlane 2007). This critique will be briefly addressed in the literature review. I don't consider it an essential critique because it could be addressed by Integral Pluralism and within a wider discussion of metatheory. All of these secondary components will hopefully be taken up in future writings.

Finally, I suggest several ways to further enact the integral approach to subtle energies through a cultivation of post-metaphysical synchronicity, conducting integral research, and embracing a dynamic typology, such as the 5 energetic intelligences as described by Epstein, Lemberger and myself (2009). This typology provides a very flexible map through which one can use energies and their intelligences in action, transformation, and awakening. This will also begin to expand on Hedlund's suggestions (2010) by further mapping the subtle in terms of subtle energies as a very important aspect of individual spiritual life and a more Integral map.²

Literature Review

One interesting way to approach this literature review is by doing a reconstructive inquiry of Wilber's own definitions of subtle energies, a sort of genealogy of subtle energies within the Wilberian canon. Wilber has categorized his own writings in terms of four phases (the fifth being his current phase) (Wilber 1999a; Reynolds 2006). This is a useful metric through which to understand his few writings over the years on subtle energies. By looking at a history of his writings on the topic, we can better understand his latest "Wilber phase 5" approach to subtle energies. This will be followed briefly by critiques and other literature addressing Wilber's phase

5 theories and models on subtle energies. When appropriate, those critiques will be incorporated into the six primary critiques of the chapter.

Wilber Phases and Subtle Energies

Wilber's phase 1 writings (1977-1979), were characterized by a romantic view of the infant's apparent bliss, with growth as a falling away and return to oneness (Wilber 1999a). In those writings, Wilber wrote of "Energy" as Consciousness, Godhead, Tao, and "Absolute Subjectivity" (1977) based on his reading of Hubert Benoit. The vital Energy is mobilized in each moment and then "disintegrates and dissipates" and is given form and duality by mental images and body/emotion. Wilber also equated this absolute subjectivity with cosmic consciousness and organismic consciousness. This was a classic pre/trans fallacy because the Energy was assumed to be nondual, the mobilization was the daily drop into duality, with the ideal being a return to the pure Energy. Wilber equated prana with the organismic consciousness (1977, pp.145) and reasoned that a repression of prana or life energy or libido was the basis of chakra and kundalini theory (1979). By opening the chakras, one untied the knots of consciousness and brought the individual back to a romanticized oneness. Several elements of his approach to subtle energies in phase 1 provide important insight into his later theories and remain relevant today. If we can ignore the pre/trans conflation, which Wilber himself notices by phase 2 (Wilber 1999a), then these important insights remain; there are physical/energetic correlates to consciousness (especially in terms of chakras), prana is associated with the life force and a body/organismic consciousness, there is a hierarchy to energetics such as, "vibrations, feelings, vital force, and bliss" (1979, pp.424, CW1); and gross, subtle, and causal bodies can be

accessed and developed through practices such as hatha, kundalini, and jnana yoga respectively (1979).

During Wilber's phase 2 writings (1980-1982), he focused more on developmental growth, with God and goodness as something you grow into not away from (1999). In this phase, the pranic-body was a dimension of early physical-emotional development (1980 pp.12-13), which gets repressed as the ego emerges from the body/ego by repressing vitality and deadening the self to the lifeforce. This leads to a dissociation of mind and body or soul and body (1981, pp. 224). Wilber notes this dissociation is not just occurring in the infant but in ancient human development as well. In fact this leaves to modernity the legacy of "a rational ego and the mechanistic body" (1981, pp. 225). Wilber's original account of the evolution of consciousness was developed in accord with kundalini and chakra theory (1981, pp.38).³ Development is described in terms of differentiation, transcendence, and operation, whereby the body's emotional-sexual energies can be directed into "more subtle, complex, and evolved activities" (1980, pp.33). During this phase Wilber begins to develop his theory of involution as well. He also writes about the supersensory awareness of the Centaur (later referred to as vision-logic, body-mind integration level, or integral consciousness), and beyond; where the openness in the waking realm leads to an influx of energies. This openness can transform physiology (1980, pp.55-6). It can also take place through three classes of meditative and yogic practices (pp.82). Wilber also wrote of *makyo*, or the Zen belief that psychic phenomena are distractions from the nondual (1980 pp.84).⁴

Wilber's phase 3 writings (1983-1987), included developmental lines (1999a) and also emphasized structures, states, and realms (2000d). In terms of subtle energies, this was Wilber's

initial foray into quantum physics and morphic resonance (1983; 1984). (Wilber's writings on morphic resonance will be taken up as the fifth critique in the main discussion below.) In this phase, he refers to prana in terms of the emotional-sexual level, the second chakra, bioenergy, and elan vital but also in terms of involution and quantum mechanics. In his distinction between physics and mysticism, Wilber points out that prana is what "matter and the physical energy sea crystallize out of" (1999a, pp.330). Drawing from the spiritual traditions, involution is described in terms of prana creating matter. Mystic oneness is differentiated from gross oneness of energy (such as the quantum). Equating these is considered a category error by confusing levels, similar to the pre/trans fallacy. Wilber even suggests that prana in relation to sentient beings, is the key to how mind collapses the particle/wave (precisely because the quantum emerges from prana and prana emerges from mind). Also during this phase, chakras are viewed as structures of development mostly in terms of consciousness and the realms they are associated with (1983). Psychic phenomenon and siddhis are entertained as possible with the caveat against the pre/trans fallacy or the conflation of quantum with Spirit (1983).

In his book, *Grace and Grit* (1991), based on his and his wife Treya's journal writings during the last days of her life, Wilber describes some of his own phenomenological experiences with subtle energies, as well as his belief that various energy healings (prayer, acupuncture, etc) may sometimes be real, and explained in terms of "downward causation" of higher levels influencing the lower, not in terms of quantum conflation or other pre/trans fallacies (1991). In terms of healing, Wilber offers a strong critique of the new age notions of mind creating illness or reality for that matter, embracing a level-specific approach to healing and curing. Wilber also makes an important development from his phase 1 theory of Energy. Instead of there being just

one Energy that is both prana and Spirit, he successfully incorporates his structural view of development into his understanding of energies. As an example, he writes how level 3 anxiety or bodymind anxiety “is just some lower bodily energy, usually aggression, that you won’t let *come up*.” Inspiration or “your daemon,” is “some higher psychic or subtle energy that you won’t let *come down*.” (1991 pp.240) This more nuanced approach to energies based on level of consciousness has not been advanced in his latest works and is thus an untapped, yet important distinction in a wider Integral theory of subtle energies. In *Grace and Grit* he also writes of Vajryana practices of inner tantras and outer tantras as well as tonglen.

With the development of the quadratic model, and Wilber’s phase 4 writings (1995-2001), Wilber begins to situate energies in terms of bodily correlates, where “subtler bio-energies” can be viewed as “holarchically enveloping the bodymind,” and can be situated in the UR (1995, pp.579). This new correlative interior/exterior approach provided Wilber a new way to describe possible psychic phenomenon including kundalini, although in the early part of Wilber’s phase 4, he wrote more of realms and states than energies and bodies. Thus psychic phenomenon was described as having its referents in the gross/waking state, the psychic being in-between subtle and gross (1995, pp.607). Subtle energies were explicitly defined as “subtler types of bio-energy beyond the four recognized forces of physics” acting as a link between mind and matter/body (1997, pp.73). The main description of subtle energies was still in terms of bioenergy or prana only now it could be viewed in four quadrants; protoemotions (Upper Left), limbic system (Upper Right), magical (Lower Left) and tribal (Lower Right). Wilber also wrote in more detail of his own experiences with subtle energies, especially tantra in his journals

during this period (1999). Other practices suggested during Wilber phase 5 focus on Murphy and Leonard's Integral Transformative Practice (Wilber 2000e; Leonard & Murphy 1995).

It is in this profound phase of Integral's unfolding that the central character of the four quadrants emerges as deeply linked to subtle energies. In the first footnote to the final chapter titled, "The Unpacking of God," from his magnum opus, *Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality* (1995), Wilber describes the "bridges" between the Absolute and phenomena, and the radical insight that all is not two and not one, where bodies of energy or realms can be understood as the energetic support of states and development (1995, pp. 700). Drawn from the wisdom traditions of Tantra, Vedanta, and Vajryana, Wilber links bodies to the UR as support for states and levels in the UL (2000a, 2000b). He even goes so far as to suggest the traditional levels of the auric field; astral, etheric, subtle, and causal, each transcend and include one another. Wilber writes, "Thus each of these subtle energy fields is a holon...and the entire holonic energy spectrum can be easily represented in the Upper-Right quadrant as a standard series of increasingly finer and wider concentric spheres...Each subtle energy holon is the exterior or the Right-Hand component of the corresponding interior or Left-Hand consciousness" (2000c, pp.60). This holarchic understanding of energies is usually attributed to Wilber 5 as described by Excerpt G. From this quote, and the other footnotes referenced above, it is obvious that the seeds of this new perspective on energies were inherent to Wilber 4 and we might even say formative of Wilber 4 and Wilber 5.

With the interior/exterior AQAL matrix of phase 4, Wilber paved the way for phase 5 (2001-present), which is characterized by; Integral Operating System, Integral Post-Metaphysics, Integral Methodological Pluralism, a more fully articulated quadratic conception of bodies,

subtle energies, involution and evolution, and morphogenetic potentials. Eros and Agape as pre-givens was mostly developed in Wilber's phase 5 writings, but the first descriptions are attributed to his phase 4 writings (this will be discussed in the sixth critique below).

Wilber's phase 5 writings in terms of subtle energies were the start of what he refers to as "the naturalistic turn in the AQAL matrix's self-understanding." (2005a, pp.259) This phase will be described throughout the rest of the chapter, however, some essential developments are; an integral theory of subtle energies is central to the argument "from the Great Chain of Being to Postmodernism," matter is the exterior of every level; subtle energies are exterior forms, rather than meta-physical; what ancient sages took to be real was culturally molded (LL), and what they took to be meta-physical was often "intra-physical;" increasing complexification of form in the UR correlates to increasing subtilization of energy; involution/evolution is intricately linked with this subtilization; a taxonomy of subtle energies based on species, genera, and family is possible; and chakras are depicted in terms of 21 chakras (or seven chakras of three bodies each) (2003a; 2003b). Also in this phase, bodies take on a greater importance, even flirting with becoming a 6th element of AQAL (2006b, pp.1).⁵ A phenomenological description of UR energetic *registering* as *phenomenological body-feeling* in terms of, "felt energy" (2007, pp.75) or "bodily energy" (2006b, pp.27) is also described during this period. With Allan Combs, initial attempts are being made to draw out the relationships between states, stages, and bodies (Combs 2002, pp.304; Wilber, 2002b). Wilber has even suggested a matter/energy line (2006b p.30) and has introduced the first typology within his energy writings; masculine/feminine (2006b). There is also an emphasis on the development of the three-body practices in relation to Integral Life Practice (Wilber, 2007; Wilber et al 2008). In terms of personal experience during phase 5, Wilber

mentions his reception of “industrial strength Reiki” in a note to his friends in October 2002, in relation to his own health (2002c). There is also the recent endorsement of Guruji or “Mr. Trivedi” (2010), an obvious attempt by Wilber to embrace a scientifically studied subtle energy phenomenon.

Critiques of Excerpt G

Critiques or even mention of Wilber’s Excerpt G are few. Scott Anderson (2010a) suggests this is mostly due to the way it was published, first online as part of a larger body of work (Excerpt G, which came after Excerpts A-D), and then in peer-review.⁶ Anderson points out several issues with the peer-reviewed edition, the main one being the way it was published. *Explore* journal released it in a section called, “Clinical Articles,” with subheading; “Hypothesis,” and with no abstract. This was a mischaracterization of the content especially according to Anderson because it was totally non-clinical theory rather than clinical hypothesis, and thus directed at the wrong readership. On top of that, Anderson notes, the peer-reviewed version did not make enough changes to introduce readers unfamiliar with Excerpts A-D. Anderson thinks this needlessly isolated an already difficult piece. A few of Anderson’s other insights will be included in the main discussion below.⁶

We can also build on Hedlund’s critique of Wilber’s mapping of the subtle within his wider writings. According to Hedlund (2010), Wilber probably excluded extensive discussions of the subtle for several reasons, most notably, his emphasis on the causal and nondual as well as an attempt at academic acceptance. If the domain of the subtle is not academically accepted, we could certainly see how subtle energies could also go that route. Thankfully due to research on

subtle energy healing modalities, subtle energies are making headway. Anderson recently pointed out this dual challenge and promise (2010b).

A brief discussion at Esalen Institute, headed by Michael Murphy, found that a synoptic view such as Wilber's would be better after science has accumulated much more data on the topics of reincarnation, auras, and chakras (Esalen, 2003). All of the participants had not read the work at the time of the meeting but the general consensus was that a taxonomy of subtle energies while inspiring may be pre-mature.

More substantive critiques of Excerpt G were written by Frank Visser (2003,2004,2006), Thomas McFarlane (2007), and Mark Edwards (2003). Much of these critiques were in the context of wider critiques of Integral Theory in terms of AQAL, holons, quadrants, realms, and post-metaphysics. In general these critiques are important in a broader discussion of critiquing Integral Theory rather than a more focused discussion in terms of the Integral approach to subtle energies. That said, there are some important criticisms and distinctions, which should be taken up and at least two themes common to all three approaches (both of which I disagree with); 1) placing subtle energies in the UR quadrant is a form of reductionism, and 2) an additional quadrant system is needed to account for subtle energies.⁷

Visser and McFarlane both believe that higher levels of quadrants should exist not just for the gross realm but also for higher realms as viewed from higher levels or states of consciousness. McFarlane claims that the UR is "physically reductionistic" and should not represent energies that are beyond time and space because these can only be known by higher states. He is basically saying that because the traditional AQAL map focuses on exteriors in the gross domain in the UR, it can't account for higher level forms such as subtle and causal.

Visser has several essays critiquing *Excerpt G* (2002, 2003a, 2006). He takes issue with Wilber's definition of metaphysics vs. post-metaphysics, siding with realms/planes as ontologically real. He suggests that any measurements of energies in the world will be measuring at best; gross correlates of the subtle, and concludes we should have quadrants for each level/realm (Visser, 2003). In his *Subtle Bodies, Higher Worlds* essay, Visser suggests that behavior would not really fit into the UR nor would bodies unless using clairvoyant vision because the "outside of the individual...as it is usually understood," would not cover subtle energies (Visser, 2004; 2006).

Visser does make a few important points. He critiques Wilber's "phenomenological feeling" placed in the UR and suggests an ontological status for the UL should be included in any discussion of subtle energies from a post-metaphysical perspective. He also suggests that Wilber include a distinction between esoteric and exoteric religion. This would fall more in line with the inclusion of a deeper genealogy of the esoteric traditions within Integral, something I agree is important and which Visser has written on in the past (Visser, 2003b). I address these critiques indirectly in critique 1 on Integral Pluralism and critique 5 on the Western lineage.

Edwards also critiques the whole notion of subtle energies in the UR. Unlike Visser, he believes the UR should be reserved for behavior only (Edwards, 2003). According to Edwards, two more dimensions to the quadrants would be required to adequately address subtle energies; the form/energy dimensions. This would add two new quadratic sets; form/energy/agency/communion and form/energy/interior/exterior. It is an interesting proposition that is not necessary in my view as the UR is certainly large enough for any aspect of

exterior/individual but worth exploring for the sake of nuance. It might be more applicable in the fields of integral action and behavioral change (Epstein et al 2009).

One last critical piece of literature is from Geoffrey Falk's unfortunately titled book, "*Norman Einstein: The Dis-Integration of Ken Wilber* (2007). The chapter titled, *Kosmic Parapsychology* could generously be considered a straw man argument and less generously, a hatchet-job. I will not grace the book with much comment as there are certainly more scholarly ways to critique Wilber. There are at least two obvious take-aways that I conclude from the chapter; 1) Wilber's Excerpt G does not have enough referenced material in terms of empirical scientific data. This leaves a critic like Falk wide open to perform the types of meritless attacks he obviously enjoys such as citing Wilber's use of Hiroshi Motoyama in terms of his chakra research, then citing Motoyama's other more New Agey writings, and finally assuming Wilber must believe those as well (a classic straw man fallacy). 2) Kosmic Address and/or Integral Pluralism must be included in a discussion of the integral approach to subtle energies. Without this, you are left with other such Falkian attacks, like citing any personal fact of Wilber's use of subtle energy practices and distorting it to make baseless claims, even to the point of ridiculing Wilber's interpretation of the wind rattling his house at the moment of his wife's death (I will address this particular critique in a footnote to the *section on synchronicity below*). Situating such analysis through Integral Pluralism is crucial. For these two reasons, Falk's chapter is instructive.

Enacting Excerpt G

There are not many cases in the literature referencing Excerpt G beyond the critiques cited above, a few of my own writings (Epstein & Senzon 2004; Senzon 2007; 2008; Epstein,

Senzon, & Lemberger 2009), and a handful of articles, which draw upon it (Epstein 2004; Cho 2006; Divine 2007, Gidley 2007; Engerbretson and Wardell 2007; Helfrich 2009). My article on subtle energies viewed from four quadrants (2007) was meant as an introductory piece for the Subtle Energies Center at Integral Institute, which has evolved into the Subtle Energy Systems course at JFKU. It is not a critique at all. It is designed to explore the four-quadrant view of subtle energies in more detail. As part of the authoring of that article, I participated in several conference calls with Wilber, in which we discussed many of the issues involved in an AQAL view of subtle energies. I coauthored one paper with Epstein and Lemberger, part of which I will discuss toward the end of this chapter as it enacts *Excerpt G* in a transformative typology (Epstein et al 2009).

Summing up the literature to date gives us some important reasons to explore Wilber's approach and an integral approach to subtle energies in more detail. The rest of the chapter will suggest ways forward.

Essential Critiques

Towards an Integral Pluralism of Subtle Energies

Esbjörn-Hargens has recently refined the Integral concept of Kosmic Address to include Epistemological Pluralism, Methodological Pluralism and Ontological Pluralism, or the who, the how, and the what, tied together by Theoretical Pluralism (2010; Esbjörn-Hargens & Zimmerman 2009). Kosmic Address was developed by Wilber (2006b) as a post-metaphysical injunction. Anything that can be known must be specified according to the perspectives of the perceiver and the perceived. Doing so brings forth the methodology used to know the thing

without relying on metaphysical claims. Esbjörn-Hargens points out that by including epistemology (perspective or *the who*) along with methodology (method or *the how*), ontology (being or *the what*) is brought forth. This use of ontology is implicit in Wilber's Kosmic Address but not made explicit (Esbjörn-Hargens 2010).

Taken in the context of Excerpts A-D, which map out Integral Post-Metaphysics and Integral Methodological Pluralism, it is obvious that Wilber's wider endeavor was to include his approach to subtle energies within a post-metaphysical, epistemologically diverse, methodologically pluralistic framework. This too is not made explicit. By applying Integral Pluralism to the field of subtle energies, a much richer and flexible discourse emerges because there are so many different epistemological frameworks and methodological approaches leading to very different ontological conclusions.

Subtle energies can be understood as a multiple object, "more than one but not many,"⁸ known from many different perspectives through various methods. Developing this further, Esbjörn-Hargens adds distance, which basically gives us a more detailed way to understand any "multiple object" or object known through different epistemological and methodological ways. Distance refers to epistemological distance (such as altitude or worldview), ontological distance (such as increasing complexity of the thing), and methodological distance such as increasingly abstract methods. And thus, the multiple object becomes understood at different distances.

Integral Pluralism can be applied to the field of subtle of energies in very profound ways such as; to bring an Integral view to any attempts to link science and spirituality, and to integrate the various epistemological approaches in the literature. An Integral view is sorely needed as the discipline of subtle energies is newly formed and filled with many different approaches drawing

from new age authors (Dale 2009), healing traditions (Benor 2004; Oschman 2000), scientific research (Schwartz and Simons 2007; Ho 1998; Swanson 2010; Tiller 2007), popular writers (McTaggart 2002; 2007), and theorists (Oschman 2003; Wisneski 2009). In many cases these are mixed approaches blurring the UR-quadrant and UL-quadrant, and generally lacking Zone 2. Part of Wilber's and my own attempts (Wilber 2003a; Senzon 2007, 2008) have been to create a framework where a mutual conversation can take place across perspectives, levels, methods, and quadrants. Integral Pluralism would make this conversation much easier and very clear as methodology, epistemology, and ontology would be at the forefront.

Several leaders in the field have suggested that epistemological frameworks are essential. Charles Tart (2009) describes the different ways that science and spirituality can come to know, especially in terms of psychic phenomenon. He even includes “pathologies of knowing and learning,” in hopes of overcoming extra hurdles. Larry Dossey (1999) has noted the shift from psychosomatic medicine (Era II) to nonlocal/energy medicine (Era III) has to do with a shift from either/or to both/and thinking.⁹ Sheldrake has written about the limits of mechanistic scientific worldviews (1988), and the challenges of widening a view of mind to include fields that surround our bodies and connect us to everything (2003). Tiller writes of different reference frames and also of the Boggle-factor (or how much anomaly a scientist can entertain in an experiment without cognitive dissonance!). Tiller's Duplex Reference frame is different from our every day reference frame as it takes two realities into perspective, the magnetic wave multidimensional (quantum vacuum) and the electric particle space time (our world), hence duplex. The most pluralistic approach to epistemology comes from Gary Schwartz and colleagues in their development of Pepper's World Hypothesis to include nine world hypotheses

including loving openness and even the non-visualizable (Schwartz & Russek 1997; Schwartz and Schloss 2006).

Integral Pluralism would help to integrate all of these attempts while situating various methodologies, epistemologies, and ontologies along a spectrum. This would open a new dialogue about subtle energies as a multiple object.

The Science of Subtle Energies

In *Excerpt G*, Wilber proposes three important concepts about subtle energy bodies, while relying on very few sources; 1) what the wisdom traditions took to be metaphysical was often intra-physical (for example; states of consciousness can be correlated to brain states), 2) rather than being the lowest rung on the ladder of the great chain, matter is the exterior of every rung (for example; there is a matter/energy form in the UR for each state/level in the UL), 3) increasing complexification of form are support structures for increasingly subtle forms of energy, which can be charted according to a taxonomy. All three concepts are essential to Integral Post-Metaphysics. Clarifying each and establishing more sources to support the arguments is important.

The first two concepts, *intrapysics* and *matter as outermost rung*, are essential to the third concept that *energies grow subtler as supporting form grows more complex in evolution*. The first two are part of Wilber's argument to update The Great Chain. Anderson wrote of the first concept as "the step from metaphysics to *intrapysics*" (2010, pp.4). There are however two aspects to intrapysics in regard to the wisdom traditions (Wilber personal communication Feb15, 2005). The first is from the example above, many experiences thought to be metaphysical

can be explained in part as being intricately related to the physical (serotonin, brainwaves, etc).¹⁰ The second aspect of intraphysical relates to bodies of subtle energy holarchically surrounding physical form, being even more “exterior” than matter itself (from the second concept). Subtle energy bodies can then be explained as holonic, surrounding and enveloping each successively more evolutionarily complex structure or form, an insight that was *not* obvious to the wisdom traditions.¹¹

Wilber’s concept of sublization of energies, defined in *Excerpt G*, may be his most important contribution to the field. Positing an increasing sublization of energies as an outgrowth of evolution is groundbreaking in scope. He proposes that the more complex the structure, the more easily it could support evolutionarily emergent bodies of energy. Wilber’s only references to support this is based on the 3rd person research of Harold Saxon Burr, William Tiller, Hiroshi Motoyama, and the 1st person research of Michal Levin as a “respected psychic,” (2005a pp. 260) along with the wisdom traditions (Suzuki 1932, Aurobindo 2001, Plotinus 1992). Does the science of subtle energies support the hypothesis that life is surrounded by emergent energy fields, living systems with emotional capacity surrounded by emotional fields, living systems with complex nervous systems enveloped and surrounded by levels of thought, soul, and causal fields?

Researchers and theorists in the field may or may not embrace Wilber’s theory of sublization of energies. Here is an important case where methodology and epistemology inform ontology. And interpretation (epistemology) as Anderson so aptly puts it is vitally important. He writes,

“Here again, the tricky part may have to do with how observed correlations are interpreted: materialists are demonstrably more than happy to see any such correlations as clear evidence for their reductive position. Perhaps a better formulation would be: *increasing complexity of form is correlated with increasing expression of the subtler potentialities of energy.*” (2010, pp.5)

Anderson’s point is well taken. By including potentials in the definition, then the hypothesis stays firmly linked to the involutory givens of morphogenetic potentials.

Discussing scientific research in terms of subtle energies leads quickly to what Wilber refers to as the debate between strong and weak approaches to subtle energies. Is there a fifth-force (in addition to the four forces of physics) or can we adequately explain subtle energy phenomenon with the known forces (personal communication February 21, 2006). For example, Oschman’s (2001) theory of the connective tissue matrix, which builds upon previous research especially the pioneering work of Mae Won Ho (1998), suggests that there is an evolutionarily more ancient communication system in the body, one that operates along meridians, myelin sheaths, connective tissue channels and biophotonic fields, and may have its own “connective tissue consciousness” (2004). Oschman is not committed to an idea of “subtle energies” as apart from the known forces of physics. Rubik’s (2002) biofield hypothesis is another case in point; she does not rely upon any unknown energies in her hypothesis. Both do leave open the possibility that there may be other energies not yet discovered. On the other end of the spectrum, Tiller defines subtle energies as “all those energies beyond those presently acknowledged in physics” (1999). Wisneski and Anderson write that subtle energies are types of energy that “typically are not detectable by the five senses or current scientific instrumentation (2009,

pp.xxix). Even apart from the strong vs. weak debate, is there evidence for Wilber's hypothesis, or more evidence than he points us to?

According to Wilber, his hypothesis of sublization of energies could be validated if it were shown that just one phasic transition of energetic field could be related to an increasing complexity such as from the biofield to an emotional or thought field. If at least one such emergent level were validated, the possibility for others would remain (personal communication).¹² There are several possibilities to support that level of the inquiry, especially by exploring the research on biofields and emotional fields or thought fields. If these were shown to exist but link to more complex structures than biofields, part of Wilber's hypothesis would be validated.

There is a great deal of literature on fields around living systems. According to Rubik, all molecules and systems in the body generate fields, which taken together can be viewed as a "complex dynamic standing wave." Burr and his colleagues found electromagnetic field changes associated with living systems (1972). Liboff has suggested an electrogenomic field as a vector potential (2004). Rein has characterized the myriad types of fields and energies that are endogenous and exogenous to living systems (2004).

Fields have also been found in relation to thought and emotion. Burr and colleagues (Ravitz 1962) found that the field changes they studied varied with states (hypnotic, sleep, and other somatically induced states). They also found intensifications of the field by emotional thoughts. This led to a dynamic view of the role of energy movement and fields in the organization and functional states of the nervous system (Ravitz 1962). Sheldrake found that mammals such as dogs and cats often "sense" when their human is coming home but this has not

been found with reptiles or birds (1999). He has also documented telepathy in relation to emails (2009a), SMS messages (2009b), telephone calls (2003), and staring (2003). Hunt and colleagues conducted exhaustive research over twenty years combining telemetry instruments to monitor the frequency of the electromagnetic aspects of the human energy field with 1st person observations of psychics (Hunt, 1989; Bruyere 1989). They found specific frequencies and colors related to chakras and levels of auric fields including what Hunt describes as the mind-field, which is organized by emotions (Hunt, 1989). Swanson has synthesized Hunt's research along with his own interpretation of torsion fields as well as the 19th century research of Baron von Reichenbach, to suggest the auric fields can be described in terms of the frequency modulated to the speed with which chi emanates from the body. Each effective distance around the body correlates to frequencies of brain waves and states (2009).

McCraty and colleagues have found emotional states get communicated into the environment and through the whole body by the electromagnetic fields set up by the heart. McCraty and his team have studied these fields in relation to coherence and intuition. They believe that the heart's field reaches beyond space and time, organizes the patterns of energy and information within the body, and acts as an information antenna that reaches into the future by processing intuitional information *before* the brain. They suggest that this field is related not only to the energy around and within the body but the quantum domain as well (McCraty et al 2007).

As Murphy and his colleagues suggest, it may still be premature to determine whether science validates Wilber's hypothesis (Esalen 2003). I believe from some of the references above, we can certainly suggest that Wilber is not far off. Nevertheless a good theory could guide research and create bridges, something Wilber's hypothesis is apt to accomplish.

Involution, Evolution, and Subtle Energies

Any discussion about emotional fields and the quantum domain in relation to involution and subtle energies must include the latest work of Tiller (2007). There are many similarities between the theories of Tiller and Wilber. These should be laid out more clearly to facilitate real integration.

Methodology becomes central to this level of the critique. As we saw from Wilber's phase 3 writings, involution is based on 1st person injunctions from the wisdom traditions. The quantum sea is derived from 3rd person injunctions of mathematics and physics. This leaves the average philosopher of subtle energies (such as me) at a methodological impasse. Wilber and I are both beholden to subtle energies as a multiple object interpreted not only through the lens of involution and the synthetic insight of scientifically minded philosophers, but also philosophical physicists (like Tiller).

Wilber's main point on this topic has not changed since Wilber phase 3. Rather than confusing Spirit with the vast potential of energy in the vacuum of quantum reality, Wilber draws from the traditions to suggest matter and quantum emerge or crystallize out of prana. Prana emerges from mind and mind from soul/Spirit. Wilber writes,

“In other words, the quantum potential is not spirit but prana. More technically, the quantum potential is not spirit-as-spirit, it is not spirit-as-soul, it is not spirit-as-mind, but rather, the quantum potential is spirit-as-prana, which gives rise to spirit-as matter.”

(2005, pp.262)

The big change in Wilber's theory is in terms of evolution and post-metaphysics. Evolution in this model is the emergence of each successive level in time along with complexification of

matter. As each phasic transition of complexity emerges a new level of support is laid down whereby each level of energy can emerge as a body. The etheric level emerges with life. The astral level emerges with emotion. The mental, soul, and causal levels emerge with successively complex nervous system configurations. These may even be more refined as the structure-functions of the neocortex increase in complexity through meditative practices (Wilber, 1995).

Tiller's speculations are quite similar. In fact, according to Tiller, Wilber's hypothesis about the sublization of energies in evolution is a useful metaphor that should be considered (personal communication Nov5, 2010). Based on his research into conditioned spaces, Tiller proposes sublevels to the quantum vacuum structure of reality. In fact, he proposes a unique level of physical reality altogether (Reciprocal Space or R-space), which is linked to consciousness. These sublevels have increasing dimensions relating to magnetic, emotion, mind, and spirit. Our physical reality (Direct Space or D-space) is based on electric particles and is *uncoupled* from the vacuum part of reality, which is comprised of magnetic waves travelling faster than light. Emotion is what *couples* the realities together via altered states, subtle energy anatomy, and anomalous psychoenergetic phenomena. Tiller has proposed the "deltron" as the coupler. Human intention and the development of psychic faculties, increases the population of deltron particles and couples the two realities.

Tiller's speculative multi-dimensional model of reality could be a useful structure upon which Wilber's model of Involution/Evolution could draw from. Wilber's involutory side of reality could be understood in terms of Tiller's Reciprocal-space. Tiller offers a structure through which the evolutionary side and the involutory side from Wilber's model could meet or couple.

Let's just suppose for a moment that Wilber and Tiller are talking about roughly the same thing. If prana emerges from matter (evolutionary side or prana-E), which was crystallized out of prana (involutionary side or prana-I), then there might be a link from prana-I to prana-E. Recall, Wilber wrote of such a link in his phase-3 writings, in terms of the particle (D-space) collapsing into the wave (R-space) based on the physicist's observation. Wilber writes, "Mind could also collapse the vector, but via prana." (1999a, pp.281 CW3) In Wilber's subtilization of energies, prana emerges from matter with the complexity of life and limbic systems; as etheric and astral energies. Astral energies are considered "a powerful emotional energy field – subtler than physical and etheric – that pervades the living organism...running through the acupuncture meridians" (Wilber, 2005a, pp. 260). Thus for Wilber and Tiller, the link through prana is very important. And for both, consciousness development changes reality at its core. Whether that is through increasing deltrons and coupling the realities in a more coherent way or laying down morphogenetic grooves, the principle is the same!

On the flip side, Wilber's model could offer even more depth to Tiller's in terms of an AQAL framework and a deeper ground in nonduality. Tiller writes,

"My working hypothesis is that consciousness is a byproduct, or emergent property, of spirit entering dense matter. Further, it is felt that spirit can only attach to dense matter if new infrastructure has been developed there to which it may attach." (2007, pp.149)

While it seems Tiller agrees that it takes complex forms of matter to express subtle forms of spirit, his notion remains dualistic. Rather than *expressing* Spirit, he writes of *attaching* Spirit and matter. For Wilber, Spirit is the ground, the highest level, *and* the coarse substance of matter that it emerges *through* in evolution.

Morphogenetic Potentials

Expressing Spirit in form is the *Karmic* part of evolution, the inheritance of past forms. Expressing Spirit as potential is the *Creativity* part of evolution, the burst into the novel. This is why Anderson suggested that Wilber revise his hypothesis to include morphogenetic potential as part of the expression. It is after all one of the only pre-givens IPM allows. Central to Integral Post-Metaphysics is the premise; each moment is inherited from the last in the LH by prehensive unification and cultural patterns and in the RH by morphic resonance as the morphogenetic field of one form is inherited by the next. Wilber writes of the RH inheritance,

“That type of objective or exterior inheritance *is not directly prehended by the holon*, unless it takes up a third-person stance to its own existence, and thus it cannot be accounted for by Whiteheadian prehension or concretion (but can be accounted for by Sheldrakian morphic fields and other UR and LR inheritances, including *subtle energy resonances...*)” (2002a, pp.85).”¹³

Sheldrake’s theory plays an important role in IPM. It should also play an important role in an Integral Theory of subtle energies, but it does not, thus far.

Wilber has described Sheldrake’s fields as subtle energy throughout most of his career. In 1984, during Wilber’s phase 3, he strongly endorsed Sheldrake’s theory of morphic resonance. In an article published in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Wilber suggests that Sheldrake’s morphogenetic fields may possess “some sort of very subtle energy, and it is the influence of these subtler energies on the denser ones that constitutes the formative capacity of morphogenetic fields” (pp. 234 CWv.4). As we saw in the quote above, this insight has

developed into an essential element of Integral Post Metaphysics. In *Excerpt A*, Wilber not only writes extensively of morphogenetic fields, but links them, and even at one point equates them with subtle energy fields. He writes, “as we will see in Excerpt G... – where I will further suggest that the various morphic fields *are actually subtle energy fields...*”¹⁴ (2003a. pp.105) In *Excerpt G* however, there is no significant reference to Sheldrake. Explicitly including Sheldrake in the discussion on subtle energies not just in IPM will bolster Wilber’s theory even further.

In both instances of Wilber’s use of Sheldrake (1984; 2003a), he relies on Sheldrake’s seminal writings on morphogenetic fields and morphic fields (1984;1988), but not Sheldrake’s recent application of his theories to telepathy and extended mind. Sheldrake has extended his theory from morphic fields of biological development to social fields, behavior fields, as well as thought fields and mind fields, which may explain things like telepathy and *the sense of being started at*.¹⁵ Mental fields help to shape the brain and extend beyond the brain through intention and attention. Recently Wilber and Sheldrake have been in dialogue (Integral Naked 2008), and their positions are in fact quite similar.¹⁶ Even more congruence between their theories may be found by examining how Sheldrake proposes the mind field to be the “how” of Max Velman’s reflexive monism, or the theory that the “world itself” is “out there” just as the brain perceives it (Velman, 2008).

Morphogenetic fields are at the heart of the Integral stance on evolution, and morphogenetic potentials are at the heart of the Integral stance on involution. Givens and pre-givens are forms or structures. We should incorporate Sheldrake’s theory and research explicitly not only in Integral Post Metaphysics but also in an Integral theory of subtle energies.

Western Esotericism and the Neoplatonic Tradition

There is a long tradition of subtle energies in western esotericism, through luminaries like; Swedenborg, Mesmer, Buffon, Stahl, Bruno, Paracelus, van Helmont, and Bohme (Hanegraaff 1998; Albanese 2007). Such a lineage should be made explicit in the Integral approach to subtle energies because this tradition is central to Integral Theory's Neoplatonic lineage (Wilber 1995; Hanegraaff 1998). The more recent writings in the western esoteric tradition have focused a great deal on energies and bodies, such as Steiner, Leadbetter, Blavatsky, and Bailey as the exemplars (Hanegraaff 1998, Albanese 2007). Visser has been an outspoken proponent of integrating theosophy with Integral (2003), and Gidley has recently drawn parallels between Wilber and Steiner in terms of their writings on evolution (2007). A post-metaphysical interpretation of the claims within these traditions using the AQAL model is an important step to including the best of their insights; without being mired by the metaphysics of planes of existence.

Another important reason to integrate these Western traditions with an Integral approach to subtle energies is to examine the role that subtle energy theory and practice may have played in the evolution of consciousness. Wilber has explicitly defined part of his own intellectual lineage in terms of the Neoplatonic and Idealist traditions and has defined the Integral worldview as an heir to the Western Enlightenment. He has also written extensively on the reactions against the Enlightenment's over-reliance on Reason most notably found in the writings of Hegel, Schelling, Fichte, and Emerson, with roots to the Neoplatonism of Bruno and Augustine. Western esotericism and the Neoplatonic tradition in general played a major role in shaping the Western Enlightenment. It is by including this lineage that we may find more integral ways to understand the role subtle energy theory and practice played in this development.

Many scholars suggest there were several Enlightenments, most notably for this very brief examination; The Radical Enlightenment (Jacobi 1981; Israel 2001), The Counter Enlightenment (Berlin 1998; Hanegraaff 1998), and The Covert Enlightenment (Gabay 2007), as all three were related to subtle energy theory and practice. The Radical Enlightenment, according to Margret Jacobi (1981), was characterized by the pantheists who focused on spirit-in-matter. Jonathan Israel (2001) builds on Jacobi's argument but emphasizes the role of Spinozist philosophy. Isaiah Berlin coined the term "Counter-Enlightenment," to draw attention to the divide between Reason and Natural Law. Interestingly, Alfred Gabay (2007) coined, "The Covert Enlightenment," to emphasize the unique paradigms of Swedenborg and Mesmer, what he referred to as "the alternative reality paradigm," and the "alternative consciousness paradigm." Several scholars have traced the influence of Mesmer and Swedenborg to the 19th century spiritualism in America, which indirectly led to the human potential movement, the new age movement, as well as currents of the humanistic and transpersonal psychology movements, direct predecessors to Integral (Fuller; 1986; Taylor 1999; Hanegraaff 1998; Albanese 2007). Nevertheless, this lineage seems very important to include in any discussion about Integral and subtle energies.

Another way we could apply our topic to this particular lineage and its influence is by more fully examining the way that morphogenetic grooves are laid down. For example, in his classic work, *Mesmer and the End of the Enlightenment in France*, Robert Darnton (1968) shows how Mesmer's work influenced the French Revolution. From an Integral Subtle Energies approach we can ask; was this just through ideas, state changes associated with the Mesmeric trance, or was it related to energetic fields in some way extending throughout the society? For

this topic we are again pointed to Sheldrake's book, *The Presence of the Past*, and his concepts of social fields, history, and rituals. This also brings us to the recent work of Marco Bichof (2007) on the biophysics of social fields. Bichof brings out the similarities of Verdansky's concept of noosphere as a social field theory to Tielhard de Chardin's noosphere as a consciousness field theory. Bichof also relates this to the Integral tradition from the Russian concept of *sobornost*'. By exploring Sheldrake's and Bichof's theories, perhaps we could understand how fields of consciousness in history affect morphogenetic grooves.

Eros and Agape as Force and Field

A critical look at subtle energies in Integral Post-Metaphysics would not be complete without a discussion of Eros and Agape. These two involutory givens (or basic structures of the Kosmos) were first described by Wilber during his phase 4 writings, and is what Gidley describes as, "his major conceptual engagement with the notion of love" (2007, pp.114).¹⁷ Wilber initially defines the concepts of Agape and Eros based on Taylor's *Sources of the Self* (1991), a passage which defines a clear lineage to Plotinus, Plato, and the Neoplatonic tradition through Augustine, Ficino, and Pico.¹⁸

During his phase 4 writings in a section titled, "A Kosmos of Eros and Agape" (1995), the two givens are defined as; reflux and efflux, return to the one and one becoming many, wisdom and compassion, love reaching up and love reaching down. In terms of development, Eros is the pull and expansion to a higher identity and Agape is the integrating embrace; transcendence and inclusion. Agape reaches down to our current level, helping us to more fully embrace the fullness of that level through our response (Eros), "until the source of that Agape is our own developmental level, our own self" (pp.339). And this is the very crux of Wilber's

interpretation of this Western cultural inheritance, that development involves a compassionate pull from one's own 'next level' to which we can respond with wisdom, "and thus expand the circle of our own compassion for more and more beings" (pp.339); a deep vision of growth and development.

In Wilber's journals from this period, he writes of tantric practices involved with circulating energies within the body, a form of individualized involution/evolution. He equates this current of descending and ascending energy with Agape and Eros (1999, pp.114). He even equates this with masculine and feminine union of energies, and not just in meditative practices but in real Tantric sex from the highest traditions! Wilber builds upon this in his phase 5 writings, when he defines the psychosexual line of development as "the entire spectrum of Eros (gross to subtle to causal)" (2006a, pp.35). Yet Eros and Agape are not only described in terms of subtle energies for growth, development, and sex, they are basic structures of the Kosmos.

In his phase 5 writings, Wilber expands on his concepts of Eros and Agape. The Eros of Plotinus is now more fully aligned with the creativity of Whitehead and the self-organization of complexity theory. It is also more fully aligned with Sheldrake's theories and the idea of morphogenic potentials.¹⁹ Wilber refers to a "gradient of transcendental potential (i.e., the morphogenetic field represented by the general pull of gravity or spiritual Eros – or simply the capacity for systems to self-organize...)" (2001, pp.30). The gradient is set up by Involution/Spirit at the Big Bang. Wilber also refers to it as a stretched rubber band (2001), with Eros as the force pulling the two ends as matter and spirit. At the same time, the rubber band is around our necks pulling us home through love!

Finally, the most extensive writings on Eros and Agape come from “Excerpt A: An Integral Age at the Leading Edge” (2002a). It is here, where the idea of Eros as morphogenetic potential, as force behind evolution in every quadrant, in every moment, as the arrow of time, is fully described. Agape can be viewed as the field pulling and holding each level in each quadrant. Both Eros and Agape can herein be understood as the most basic energetic elements of the Kosmos, the evolutionary Yang and Yin, Force and Field. Thus the fullest depiction of the Kosmos is; prehension/cultural memory on the LH and morphic resonance and formative causation on the RH. Morphogenetic potentials are the emergence of creativity added to the form and prehensive unity given at each moment. Eros, Agape, and the potentials are the structure of *that* (2002a). Wilber explains this best in the form of a myth,

“Here is a myth that is sometimes useful in suggesting notions that cannot be grasped dualistically or conceptually in any event: As Spirit throws itself outward (that’s called **involution**) to create this particular universe with this particular Big Bang, it leaves traces or echoes of its Kosmic exhalation. These traces constitute little in the way of actual contents or forms or entities or levels, but rather a vast morphogenetic field that exerts a gentle pull (or **Agape**) toward higher, wider, deeper occasions, a pull that shows up in manifest or actual occasions as the **Eros** in all agency of all holons. ... This vast morphogenetic pull connects the potentials of the lowest holons (materially asleep) with the potentials of the highest (spiritually awakened). The involutory given of this morphogenetic field is a gradient of potentials, not actual, so that Agape works throughout the universe as a love of gentle persuasion, pulling the lower manifest forms of spirit toward higher manifest forms of spirit—a potential gradient that humans, once

they emerged, would often conceptualize as matter to body to mind to soul to spirit.”
(2002a, pp.124)²⁰

In this way, we can view subtle energies as inherent to IPM. What was given in each moment, is Eros as force, which shows up in each quadrant driving evolution through life-force, emotional-force, mental-force, soul-force, and causal-force. Agape is Field. Each level has its own field to embrace and transcend, with the causal field as the ground and each successive field as evolutionary expressions of *that, which is really you looking at you from the vantage point of you witnessing you.*

Enacting Eros as Synchronicity

In the course of writing this chapter, I had a profound synchronicity experience. It occurred during my study of the deeply nondual nature of the quadrants and their relation to bodies as bridges between the nondual and phenomenal world. Upon studying footnote 1 to chapter 14 of SES (1995, pp.700); my consciousness was expanded to witness the unfolding of AQAL in a very deep way, one which did not bring me to my pillow that night until 4am! Just before waking, I had a lucid dream. I won't go into the details but in the dream, I was handed a business card with the word, "Khasing," written on the back. It was obvious to me in the dream it was misspelled. Upon waking and a very brief internet search (about one-minute) for this term, I realized that it referred to the name Khalsang Gyatso, one of Wilber's main sources for the passage that so opened my consciousness hours before. Much like the classic Jungian story of the scarab that showed up knocking on Jung's window just as his patient was describing a dream about that very type of beetle (Jung, 1973); this synchronicity was very meaningful to me as it helped me to more fully enact the depth of the content I am writing about to you.

This experience also helped me to realize how important it is to discuss synchronicity in the context of this chapter. There is something about synchronicity that has field-like qualities, which bring together all four quadrants. Synchronicity has become so common in my life and practice, which is mainly a practice of nondual flow-states that I decided leaving it out would diminish the chapter's authenticity. This becomes even more relevant when coupled to Wilber's recent discussion of the topic (Wilber and Devos, 2007) as well as some further criticisms of his writings on the topic.²¹

In his recent discussion with Corey Devos (Wilber and Devos 2007), Wilber explained synchronicity in terms of IPM, in response to Devos' fascinating insight that synchronicity is somehow a collapsing of your own quadrants. Wilber starts by warning about psychological inflation and delusions of reference as they are barriers to any post metaphysical understanding to synchronicity. He then describes synchronicity in terms of Eros, creativity, and the pull from your own higher next level. Synchronicity can then be defined as coincidence with deep meaning about "a profound depth that is about to occur," that "triggers a powerful meaning and understanding." Since your current reality can be understood by all four quadrant dimensions of you, the next reality, the you at a new and emergent level, is pulling on you through Eros and Agape to express your own creative morphogenetic potentials. Synchronicity is when "reality is shaking you from the top down" when "all four quadrants are emerging at the same time." Eros is the force that pushes the field driving all four quadrants. Synchronicity can then be understood as a basic aspect of reality, noticed in the UL when the emergence in all four-quadrants happens in such a way that a transformation of deep meaning occurs. Wilber emphasizes this is happening in every moment.²²

Energetic Intelligences, Houses of Energy, and Types

One important way that *Excerpt G* has been enacted is through the development of the concept of five *Energetic Intelligences* (EIs) in the context of the paradigm of *Reorganizational Healing*, both developed by Donald Epstein (Epstein et al 2009). EIs are the UL correlate for energetic bodies in the UR, or more specifically, Epstein's metaphor of five *Houses of Energy* (Epstein 2004; Epstein & Senzon 2004). EI's are being utilized in practice as a form of energetic typology designed to assist individuals to become more somatically aware, embody their feeling-states, and use their energies in very deep ways to discover more about their own suffering, polarity, and frustration, transform patterns into dynamic action, and awaken to deeper states. Wilber has written of Epstein's work,

“to be one of the first true Three- Body energetic works—because it appears to adjust not just the gross-physical body (and its energy) but also the subtle body and causal body (and their energies), which helps evoke correlative states in consciousness. This initiates a healing resonance in Body, Mind, and Spirit that is quite profound and that is unique, as I said, in that it does so via a three-energy bodywork. I give it my highest recommendation. (Wise World Seminars 2008)

It is proposed that Epstein's technologies are creating different levels of coherence and setting the horizontal stage for vertical development or higher and reorganized baselines of embodied being (Jonkheere et al 2010, Lemberger 2010). It has been my great honor to help with this enactment.

Conclusions

An Integral Approach to subtle energies is in its infancy. The theories laid out by Wilber across his 30 years and most notably in the last few years, can set the tone for much wider theory of subtle energies, one that post-metaphysically explores ancient concepts and experiences along with empirical science. Hopefully this can set an agenda not only for the development of theory but a very deep Integral Research.

Notes

1. First published on Shambhala.com as *Excerpt G: Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Subtle Energies*, it was then published virtually unchanged in peer-review form in *Explore*. One other version is available of the original as a double-spaced document on kenwilber.com. Part one, *From The Great Chain of Being to Postmodernism in Three Easy Steps*, was published as Appendix I in Wilber's book *Integral Spirituality* (2006).
2. Enacting an integral approach to subtle energies within Integral Theory and within the normative discourse of the integral community is a very exciting way for me to continue my service to the Kosmos. I use this term "normative" in relation to Stein (2010), whereby I am making a value judgment on the importance of subtle energy theory and practice. In my view, based on my experience it is vital to the integral community that subtle energies be brought forward as a central component of Integral as therein lay the most sacred and profound path we may take toward enacting a new groove. I have been experiencing subtle energy related phenomena for over thirty years, studying these topics for over twenty years, practicing a unique form of subtle energy transformation (Network Care) with clients for about 15 years, acting as the director of the Integral Subtle Energies Center at Integral Institute for about seven years, and teaching Subtle Energy Systems at

JFKU's Integral Theory MA program for the last four years. I offer this chapter to further enact the future potentials in all morphogenetic grooves with great honor, humility and with deep love, which drives my fingers to type these words to you. Together we bring forth something new, frothy, edgy, and spectacular.

3. Wilber retains this perspective throughout every phase. I will just note here the similarity between that statement from *Up from Eden* in 1981 and a more nuanced statement in 2000 in his Introduction to volume 8 of his collective works (2000d p.35-36).
4. Hedlund (2010) points out this use focus on *makyo*, which shows up again in Wilber's 1999 journals is actually a limitation of Wilber's inclusiveness of the subtle in his wider writings.
5. While there is another instance of Realms being suggested as a sixth element (2000d) the most advanced articulations of phase 5 reserve the title, "element" for a feature that extends in all quadrants such as states, types, lines, and stages.
6. Anderson's own theory of subtle energies, the synchronic view (2009), he suggests is, "the missing link between AQAL and a science of subtle energies."
7. On this second point, a refreshing paper was posted by Lexi Neale (2009) referencing Excerpt G. The paper was about expanding the AQAL grid to an AQAL cube so as to include gross and subtle realms, states, and bodies. Such wider critiques of AQAL are beyond the scope of this chapter.
8. This quote is from Mol's book, and quoted in Esbjorn-Hargens (2010).
9. Cook-Greuter and Beema suggest this is a shift in altitude from the conscientious to the pluralistic stage (2010).

10. This intraphysical aspect of form can also be supplemented with many support references if Wilber was to make this argument stronger. James Austin's research on Zen and Brain (2009), and Wisneski and Anderson's work on integrative medicine, are two excellent examples to start with. Since the focus of this paper is on energies, I will not go into this aspect of the current critique. We can even say, they can be related to all-four quadrants (something the wisdom traditions could not have realized).
11. Wilber emphasizes the fact that the wisdom traditions had a very detailed understanding of the relationship between bodies and states and stages but conceived of the bodies as meta-physical, apart from matter, not correlated to it through the evolutionary history of form.
12. Much like the fact that acupuncture points and meridians have been validated, leaving open the possibility of other scientific validations from the wisdom and healing traditions.
13. See (pp. 236, CWv.4) On Sheldrake for an earlier description of a similar idea from phase 3.
14. Wilber actually refers to *Excerpt D* here but it is a typo as this was published online before *Excerpts D & G*.
15. Sheldrake's ongoing research into telepathy is a powerful way for you to further enact this new morphogenetic groove. His online experiments are available for individuals, groups, classrooms, and families to participate in. www.Sheldrake.org
16. Of which, I am honored to say, these dialogues were inspired in part from the development of my Subtle Energies course at JFKU!

17. After making this insightful observation, Gidley goes on to write, “Given the linearity of Wilber’s model as discussed in Appendix A, where nondual experience is not possible until all other development has preceded it, one wonders where that might leave Wilber’s theory in relation to heart-mind integration at any of the levels *lower* than the very top of his model. Although he stresses body-mind integration through his *centaur* metaphor, it is unlikely that this is intended to equate with heart-mind.” I do not think this is an accurate depiction of Wilber’s description of development as per state/stages.

18. A lengthy quote from Wilber is in order,

“This general notion – of a multidimensional Kosmos interwoven by Ascending and Descending patterns of Love (Eros and Agape) – would become a dominant theme of all Neoplatonic schools, and exert a profound influence on virtually all currents of subsequent thought, up to (and beyond) the Enlightenment. Through Augustine and Dionysius, it would permeate all of Christianity, in one form or another, from Boethius to Jakob Boehme, from the great Victorine mystics (Hugh and Richard) to Saint Catherine and Dame Julian, from Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross to Tauler and Eckhart. Through Nicholas Cusanus and Giordano Bruno it would help jolt the Middle Ages into the Renaissance. Through Novalis and Schelling, it would be the roots of the Romantic and Idealist Rebellion against the flatland aspects of the Enlightenment. It would find its way into Leibniz and Spinoza and Schopenhauer, and make its way to Emerson and James and Jung. Even Locke would operate within its broad framework, though he would collapse the frame almost beyond recognition. Indeed, when Lovejoy traces the influence of the Great Chain, and refers to it as *“the dominant official philosophy of the greater part of civilized mankind through most of its history,”* the hand of Plotinus lurks, virtually without exception, there in the background.” (1995, p.338)

This quote helps us to emphasize the fourth critique above on the importance of including the lineage of Western Esotericism in any Integral approach to subtle energies as we find here, as such a lineage is the source of Eros and Agape for Wilber. He does emphasize how these two aspects of the Kosmos are also inherent in Buddhist writings and in Aurobindo, but the terminology and hence the cultural memory is from the Western tradition.

19. Connecting threads we saw from his phase 3 writings on Sheldrake and Whitehead. Interestingly, in Excerpt A, Wilber reverses his position in regards to Sheldrake's pre-givens. In his phase 3 writings, Wilber criticized Sheldrake's pre-givens but in his phase 5 writings, after he has articulated his post-metaphysical stance on involution, he makes room for such pre-givens as "prototypes" or "archetypes" (without the baggage of the term).
20. If this myth is added to Wilber's wider theory of involution expressed in Excerpt G, it becomes very similar to Tiller's myth called, "The Out-breathing and In-breathing of the All Concept." (2007, p. 216)
21. Falk (2007) and Lane (1996) both criticize Wilber's writings about the winds rattling the house at the moment of his wife's death. They are obviously implying that Wilber is operating here from a regressive magical consciousness. I don't give their arguments much credence especially with Wilber's latest explanation of synchronicity from a post-metaphysical perspective and also based on my own synchronicity practice.

It would be interesting to compare this to Aurobindo's explanation of winds blowing during one of his own exercises with siddhis or psychic powers. Firstly, he was clear that

siddhis should only be worked with by one who has eliminated Egoism and identified with the infinite. In the exercise, Aurobindo was trying to make a young boy walk over to a pile of mats. It was merely an exercise to see whether he could use these powers on more than ants and birds and the like. The boy was just walking up the street and Aurobindo focused on him. After the boy's visible resistance to less than ideal use of siddhis, the wind kicked up and blew one mat into the road. Aurobindo interpreted this as, "Contributory circumstance created by pressure of Aishwarya on Prakriti [nature]." (Hartz, 2010, pp.11) Aishwarya he wrote should only be used "when there is divine will behind it." (pp.11) It is defined as, "A form of distant mental influence in which will-power is exerted and then left to work itself out." (pp.15)

22. One of my greatest teachers on this topic comes from studying B.J. Palmer, a great integral pioneer from the last century (Senzon 2010). In a short chapter entitled, "How the Law Works," from his book, *The Bigness of the Fellow Within* (1949), Palmer wrote of a story where he listened to his inner wisdom on December 18, 1948, which guided him to take the train instead of the car to the next city. Not only did an ice storm hit, but Palmer got off the train at his destination, saw there were no taxis and wrote, "For a moment my educated mind didn't know what to do. The next moment I said, 'Innate will provide; she always does!'" (1949 pp. 57). A man soon drove up who offered Dr. Palmer a ride. He recognized Palmer from a photo of Palmer hanging on the wall in his chiropractor's office. Palmer not only concluded that Innate worked from him to teach the chiropractor 35 years ago, but because this man was receptive, Innate worked through

him on this day for Palmer. This was just one such story of dozens and probably hundreds for Palmer. He even ran his businesses by listening to little ‘thought flashes,’ but this little coincidence was *the law* for Palmer. It was just the way the Universal Intelligence and the Innate Intelligence worked along with the Educated Intelligence, through living bodies, what we might call Causal-force/energy/field, Soul-force/energy/field, and Mind-force/energy/field, through Bio-force/energy/field. He wrote, “Many will say this was coincidence, accident, luck, just happened. To the majority, it would be that. When “incidents” like this “happen” consistently and persistently, time without end, year after year, under many varied conditions, it becomes a law at work.” (p.57) This has been my experience as well. Synchronicity is just how the universe works.

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