Chapter 4

Transcending the Categories

All there is, is Consciousness.

Ramesh S. Balsekar

We have now reached the climax of this book, completing the thought experiment we described in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’ and which we explicated in the next two chapters. We need to take just one small step, albeit a giant one for humanity, in order to complete the unification of science and spirituality, reason and religion, mathematics and mysticism, psychology and logic, East and West, and indeed all opposites, without which we cannot live fully in Love and Peace.

In essence, what we need to do is show how the concept of the Absolute—the Absolute Whole—can be formed in exactly the same way as all other concepts of the relativistic world of form. This utterly consistent process of reasoning leads to great joy and bliss, which the mystics have described through the ages, thus enabling us to establish God as a scientific concept.

Now to understand what this means, we need to go far beyond the categories, travelling far away from the relativistic world of form. In doing so, we return Home to Wholeness, entering a wonderful world that is hidden from the Western mind, in particular, discovering that none of us have ever actually left Home.

The word *category* derives from Aristotle’s application of Greek *katēgoriā* to the enumeration of all classes of things that can be named, a weakening of the original Greek *katēgorein* ‘to accuse, assert’, from *kata- ‘down, against’, and *agoreuein* ‘to speak in public’, from *agorā* ‘assembly, marketplace’, from PIE base *ger- ‘to gather’. So just as a class, as in *classify*, has a military root, *category* also has a belligerent origin.

In this respect, it is pertinent to note that *egregious*, from the same PIE base via Latin *ē* ‘out of’ and *grege*, ablative of *grex* ‘herd, flock’, originally meant in 1534 ‘very great, remarkable, distinguished, eminent’, literally ‘standing out from the flock’. However, in 1573, *egregious* was sarcastically used to mean ‘remarkable in a bad sense; gross, flagrant, outrageous’ so that
today *egregious* primarily means ‘conspicuously bad or offensive’. We thus see in the evolution of language how society attempts to prevent us reaching out to our fullest potential as human beings, explored further in Subsection ‘The Jonah Syndrome’ in Chapter 13, ‘The Prospects for Humanity’ on page 1106.

After Aristotle formed his ten categories as the basis for reasoning, Immanuel Kant and Charles S. Peirce developed their own sets of categories, as we see on page 169 in Subsection ‘Being, the superclass of all concepts’ in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’. However, in IRL, we have just one primal category, that of *Being*, as the title of that subsection indicates.

But now we need to go beyond even the superclass of *Being*, which includes all categories of being in the world of form. To emphasize this point, the human race is one such category, of which you and I are members. Stars, like our Sun, and galaxies, like our Milky Way, are also categories, as are space and time. And all the religions and their numerous divisions and denominations are also categories. So we are now going to transcend all scientific and religious categories, indeed the taxonomy of taxonomies that is Integral Relational Logic.

But to maintain the consistency of concept formation in IRL, in this chapter, we first form the concept of the Absolute Whole in exactly the same way as we form any other concept. Something quite extraordinary happens when we do so. Our entire world is turned upside down, put the right way up, we could say. We then realize that we are not human beings having a spiritual or even a mystical experience. Rather, we are Divine, Cosmic beings having a human experience.

What this means for human ontogeny and phylogeny we explore further in Volumes Two and Three of this *Wholeness* trilogy. But before that, we look at just a few of the implications of this total revolution of consciousness, beginning with the recognition of the Principle of Unity, as the fundamental design principle of the Universe. This enables us to put time and our identity as human beings into their proper perspective, showing that the only viable way forward for humanity at these momentous times we live in is to change from a conflict-ridden either-or way of thinking to a cooperative both-and way of life, enabling us to live in love, peace, and harmony with each other and our environment for as long as there are human beings living on our beautiful planet Earth.

**The Absolute Whole**

On page 181 in Chapter 2, ‘Building Relationships’, we saw that we form concepts by carefully examining the similarities and differences in the data patterns of our experience. This is the fundamental law of interpretation, by which we turn meaningless data into meaningful information and knowledge. We then saw how domains of attribute values could be associ-
ated with classes, which provide a context for these domains. Any act of interpretation requires a context or environment in which this process can take place.

So what is the overall context in which we can interpret all the data patterns of our experience as a coherent whole? The challenge we face here is that science and religion have two quite different contexts. And until these merge, there can never be Peace on Earth, we can never know whether what we are taught or learn for ourselves is true or not.

This schism between our spiritual and mundane experiences goes back a very long way. For instance, the opening words of the Lord’s Prayer, also called Pater Noster, which Jesus himself taught, are, “Our Father which art in heaven.” This prayer is central to Christianity, as Wikipedia reports: “On Easter Sunday 2007 it was estimated that two billion Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Christians read, recited, or sang the short prayer in hundreds of languages in houses of worship of all shapes and sizes. Although many theological differences and various modes and manners of worship divide Christians, according to Fuller Seminary professor Clayton Schmit ‘there is a sense of solidarity in knowing that Christians around the globe are praying together, … and these words always unite us.’”

But what do these opening words actually mean? Father is one of the words that are used to denote God in the Christian Trinity (God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit). And we are taught as children that heaven is somewhere in outer space, among the stars. But God is supposed to be the Supreme Being having power over all our lives. So, as I first asked as an eight-year-old, why should the Supreme Being reside somewhere in outer space? What is the relationship between God and the physical universe? Can we merge these two concepts so that there is no longer a war going on between science and religion?

Indeed we can. And by doing so, we are in heaven, for heaven figuratively means, ‘a place of supreme bliss’. We are no longer split down the middle, between all the opposites, a division that is encapsulated by the word schizoid, from the Greek word schizein, meaning ‘to split’. We can heal the fragmented, split mind by focusing attention on Wholeness, on the Absolute Whole.

So how can we establish Wholeness as a scientific concept, formed in exactly the same way as all other concepts? Well, we can begin with a few reflections from David Bohm’s Wholeness and the Implicate Order:

In the very early phases of the development of civilization, man’s views were essentially of wholeness rather than of fragmentation. In the East (especially in India) such views still survive, in the sense that philosophy and religion emphasize wholeness and imply the futility of analysis of the world into parts. Why, then, do we not drop our fragmentary Western approach and adopt these Eastern notions which include not only a self-world view that denies division and fragmentation, but also techniques of meditation that lead the whole process of mental operation non-verbally to the sort of quiet state of orderly and smooth flow needed to end fragmentation both in the actual process of thought and in its content?”
However, Bohm, himself, never managed to include the Absolute in his scientific worldview, and neither had I when I first met him in the early 1980s. It was to take over twenty years before the relentless reasoning of Integral Relational Logic led me to the Truth, the Absolute Truth, first conceptually in October 1983 and then experientially. Indeed, it seems that very few thinkers in the West have even considered how the Absolute might fit into the overall scheme of things, indeed how the Absolute could provide the unifying context within which to view the Totality of Existence. The one outstanding exception seems to be G. W. F. Hegel, who opens both the Preface and Introduction to *Phenomenology of Spirit* with a consideration of the Absolute.\(^3\) He then ends the *Phenomenology* with a chapter titled ‘Absolute Knowing’, seeking to find common ground for philosophy and religion.\(^4\)

So by establishing Ineffable, Nondual Wholeness as a scientific concept, we shall develop a *Weltanschauung* that is closer to the East than the fragmented, split worldviews that pervade Western thought. In doing so, we shall go beyond ‘Ultimate Understanding’, the title of Ramesh S. Balsekar’s magnum opus, or ‘Absolute Understanding’, the name of an academy that Vijai Shankar, another pre-eminent Advaita sage, has set up as a channel for his teachings.

Rather, what is needed if we are to intelligently manage our business affairs with full awareness of what is happening to us as a species is *Total Understanding*. The distinction is that in Total Understanding we develop a deep, egoless understanding of the Formless Whole and a broad, transcultural, transdisciplinary understanding of the entire world of form, not just of the former, which is where mystics have traditionally focused their attention, sometimes confusingly calling Wholeness Oneness or Oneness Wholeness.

**Conceptual realization**

As we saw on page 167 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’, the word *being* in IRL denotes the Absolute just like any other being in the relativistic world of form. So the Absolute, the Supreme Being, exists, at least. To deny this is like saying that human beings consist of souls, subatomic particles, atoms, molecules, cells, thoughts, emotions, skills, feelings, and so on, but they do not exist as either an aggregate of these constituents or as a unity.

This aggregate is most often called the Universe, denoting the physical universe, today. But none of us can actually see, hear, touch, taste, or smell the physical universe as a whole; it is a mental construct, formed by extending our experiences of the world about us without paying attention to what is within us. So how can we form the concept of the Universe or Absolute without any preconceptions?

Well, in terms of the meaning triangle, depicted in Figure 1.32 on page 126 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’, the Absolute is the referent, which can be denoted by many signifiers, such as *Absolute*, *Wholeness*, *Oneness*, and *Consciousness*. However, the con-
cept of the Absolute requires no sign to denote it, just like any other concept, but unlike ma-
chines, like computers, which can only operate on signs or symbols. So fairly obviously, we
need to look inwards, extending the self-reflective conceptual modelling methods described
in the first three chapters of this book as far as possible.

The questions we need to ask are: “What attributes does the Absolute possess?” and “Is the
Absolute real?” Well, in order to maintain the logical consistency of IRL, we can only answer
these questions in exactly the same way that we determine the qualities of any other data pat-
tern in the Universe. That is, by carefully examining the similarities and differences between
this data pattern and all others.

Now there is only one Absolute in the Universe. For if there were many, they would not
be Absolute; there would be relationships between the different Absolutes. So we can call the
uninterpreted data pattern that is the meaningless Essence of the Absolute the Datum of the
Universe, using a term from the data processing industry, recognizing that information and
knowledge are data with meaning, as we saw on page 159 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at
the Very Beginning’.

So what do we discover when we look at the relationship between the Datum and all the
other data patterns in the Universe? Well, in conformity with the Principle of Duality, we
must make this comparison in two ways: by viewing the Absolute as a unity, consisting simply
of itself, and as a whole, consisting of both itself and the aggregate of all its parts or subwholes.

When we view the Absolute as a unity we can see that it differs from all of its parts, for the
Datum is the only data pattern that is not limited in some way. When we define a data pattern
relativistically as a subwhole we give it boundaries, we say what it is and what it is not. This
is obvious from the root of the word *define*, which comes from the Latin word *définire*, mean-
ing ‘to limit, end, terminate, bound’.

But because the Datum is beyond the limits of all parts of the Universe, it is not possible
to define it or to give it any qualities whatsoever that belong to the world of form. For if we
were to do so we would be treating the Absolute relativistically, and it would no longer be
Absolute. We can therefore see that the Absolute is, and will forever remain, unknowable, in-
definable and, of course, unanalysable, qualities that can best be described as Transcendent
with respect to all beings in the world of form.

On the other hand, when we view the Absolute as the Totality of Existence, we can see
that the structure of all its parts is exactly the same as the structure of any of its parts. This
situation arises quite simply because the Universe has an underlying unified structure, de-
scribed as an infinitely dimensional network of hierarchical relationships, as we see on page
217 in Chapter 2, ‘Building Relationships’. But as the structure of each part of the Universe
is determined solely from these relationships, we can see that ultimately the Universe consists
of nothing but these relationships. These relationships lie within everything that is; they are
the glue that holds the entire Universe together. We can therefore also say that the Absolute possesses the property of Immanence with respect to all beings in the world of form.

The Absolute thus has the properties of existence, formlessness, transcendence, and immanence, and to use adjectival forms, it is unknowable, indefinable, and unanalysable. It is thus, to all intents and purposes, attributeless. This is as far as reason can take us with a completely open mind, free of all conditioning that leads us to behave more like machines than the Divine, Cosmic beings we truly are. However, this does not yet make the Absolute real, as a scientific concept. To do this, we must actually experience the Absolute open-heartedly; otherwise we are just engaged in philosophical speculation, of little practical utility.

**Experiential realization**

As the Absolute is beyond compare with no attributes, we cannot experience it with our physical senses or understand it with the intellect. We need to go beyond the mind, utilizing our great gift of self-reflective Intelligence, sometimes called the Divine Witness in spiritual circles. Once again, we can do this in one of two ways.

First of all, by meditating, we can look deeply into ourselves, as the mystics have taught, to discover that our true Essence is Stillness and Emptiness, resulting in the exquisite sense of Nondual Love and Peace, which has no opposite. We are now in union with the Divine, in Oneness, in a state of Unity Consciousness, experiencing the radiant light of Consciousness pouring through us. From this perspective, the Divine is Immanent.

Alternatively, we can feel into the Cosmos as an aggregate of all its parts, letting go of all the concepts and forms that constitute the Universe as a whole. We begin this involutionary, dying process by viewing the Universe as a mathematical graph, consisting of nodes and the relationships between them, illustrated in Figure 1.14 on page 76, rather like the web of life of systems theorists. Each of these nodes in the graph is a structure of meaningful relationships between forms, rather like a fractal. We then let all these nodes dissolve into singularities, much simpler and more general than Einstein’s space-time singularities. This leaves us experiencing the Universe simply as a web of relationships, which we can call the Field, again simpler than the single-point field of quantum physicists, or *Akasha*, which some mystics and scientists alike call the ‘æther’ permeating the Universe.

Then, as we sink deeper into ourselves, even these relationships disappear, and we are left with the magnificent feeling of Wholeness or Cosmic Consciousness that is limitless and has no divisions or borders within it. It is a seamless continuum, full with the utmost potential. It is in this state that we feel awash with the vast ocean of Consciousness, that such writers as Romain Rolland (in a letter to Sigmund Freud) and Stanislav Grof describe in their writings. And from this perspective, the Divine is Transcendent.
Another way of looking at this continuum is through the notion of synechism, from Greek *synekhēs* ‘holding together, continuous, unbroken’, from *sun* ‘together, with’ and *ekhein* ‘to have, hold’. In July 1892, Charles S. Peirce coined the term *synechism* from Georg Cantor’s infinitessimals to denote ‘the doctrine that continuity is one of the most important principles in scientific explanation,’ described in more detail on page 121 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’. A year later, Peirce wrote another article, unpublished in his lifetime, in which he suggested that synechism could “play a part in the onement of religion and science”, as indeed it does.

In summary, there are two pairs of dual ways in which we can understand and experience the Absolute, given in this table, an application of the Cross of Duality, depicted in Figure 3.10 on page 238, thus establishing God as a scientific concept:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oneness</th>
<th>Wholeness</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential</td>
<td>Immanent</td>
<td>Transcendent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 4.1: Absolute dualities

This universal model thus unifies psychology and logic, which mathematicians such as Peirce, Frege, and Russell separated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as we see in Subsection ‘Mathematical logic’ in Chapter 9, ‘An Evolutionary Cul-de-Sac’ on page 656. Mathematical logic was to lead to the invention of the stored-program computer, but it cannot tell us anything about what it truly means to be a human being, in contrast to machines, like computers.

In practice, of course, there is no separation between the theoretical and empirical views of the Divine described in this section. Transcendence and Immanence merge in Nonduality, and Unity and Cosmic Consciousness unify in Consciousness. We have thus nearly completed describing IRL. Chapters 2 and 3 have described the coordinating framework for the synthesis of all knowledge, while the Absolute, as Consciousness, provides the Cosmic Context and Gnostic Foundation. All that remains is to reveal the Principle of Unity, which has been secretly guiding us to where we are now.

**The Principle of Unity**

By including the Absolute in an all-inclusive, self-reflective conceptual model of the Universe, as described in the previous section, the Principle of Duality, illustrated in Figure 3.5 on page 230 in Chapter 3, ‘Unifying Opposites’, becomes the Principle of Unity, the basic law and fundamental design principle of the Universe. This universal, irrefutable truth, valid in all possible situations, can be expressed in just seven words:
**Wholeness is the union of all opposites.**

The Principle of Unity can also be expressed in just six mathematical symbols: \( W = A \cup \sim A \) or \( A = A \cup \sim A \), depicted in Figure 1.22 on page 91 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’, where \( W \) means Wholeness, \( A \) any being whatsoever, \( \cup \) union, and \( \sim \) not. Nothing could be simpler. Indeed, this is the simple equation that Einstein was seeking at the heart of his unified field theory, which he fruitlessly spent the last thirty years of his life trying to develop, as a BBC documentary titled ‘Einstein’s Unfinished Symphony’, first broadcast on 20th January 2005, explained. This equation is a natural development of Newton’s \( F = ma \) and Einstein’s \( E = mc^2 \), which lie at the core of their own syntheses. It thus marks the glorious culmination of all scientific inquiry on this planet. For as Michio Kaku said in the programme, if Einstein had been successful in his endeavours, “The theory of everything would have been the Holy Grail of science; it would have been the Philosophers’ Stone. It would have been the crowning achievement of all scientific endeavours ever since humans walked the face of the Earth.”

As Wholeness is the union of all opposites, we can replace \( A \) and \( \sim A \) by Wholeness and Oneness, respectively, depicted in Figure 4.1. In other words, Wholeness is the union of Wholeness and Oneness, a distinction we explore further in later sections. Using Hegel’s logic, if Wholeness is the thesis and Oneness the antithesis, Wholeness is the synthesis. So even when we look at the Absolute, the Principle of Unity is present.

![Figure 4.1: Wholeness, the union of Wholeness and Oneness](image1)

![Figure 4.2: The primacy of Nonduality](image2)

We can also replace \( A \) and \( \sim A \) by Nonduality and duality, respectively, depicted in Figure 4.2. So Nonduality is the union of Nonduality and duality. There is thus a primary-secondary relationship between the Nondual Absolute and the relativistic world of form, with all its contradictory and complementary opposites. This is a result of central importance for the future well-being of humanity, not the least because it marks the beginning of the Cosmogonic Cycle, and hence the Origin of the Universe, of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, and of us, as individuals, as undivided beings.
The meaning of the relationships depicted in these diagrams is not new, for they have intuitively been known by the mystics throughout the ages. For instance, in Saying 11 in The Gospel of Thomas, Jesus said, “On the day when you were one you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?” answering his question in Saying 106: “When you make the two into one, you will become children of humanity.” However, not many are familiar with these sayings, for as we see on page 862 in Chapter 11, ‘The Evolution of the Mind’, in 367 CE, Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria, issued an Easter letter demanding that all the ‘secret writings’, including the Gospel of Thomas, be destroyed.

It is perhaps not surprising that there have been very few both-and thinkers in history, for when we embrace the Principle of Unity in the depths of our beings, our identity as separate beings is totally shattered. We then realize that the True Nature of all beings in a holographic Universe is Wholeness. In ancient times, the most pre-eminent figures who knew this were Lao Tzu and Heraclitus. Both intuitively knew, like Jesus, that the Principle of Unity is the fundamental design principle of the Universe but that it is so well hidden that it is not easy to discover. As Lao Tzu said, “The Tao is the hidden Reservoir of all things,” and “My words are very easy to understand and very easy to practice: But the world cannot understand them nor practice them.” Heraclitus called the Principle of Unity ‘The Hidden Harmony’, the title of a book of Osho’s discourses on this Greek mystic. As Heraclitus said, “Opposition brings concord. Out of discord comes the fairest harmony,” and “Nature loves to hide.”

Osho, himself, was one of the few modern mystics who intuitively knew of the existence of the Principle of Unity, although he did not use this term. Other mystics, with a similar understanding, were J. Krishnamurti and Vimala Thankar, who both emphasized Wholeness as the union of opposites in their teachings. Further investigation is required to discover to what extent the Principle of Unity subconsciously, at least, guides people’s lives today.

The mystical experience

The principle that Wholeness is the union of all opposites tells us that we are all both divine and human, as we explore further in Section ‘Who are we?’ on page 263. As divine beings, we can ‘experience’ the bliss or absolute joy of being in union with the Divine, called ananda in Sanskrit. I put experience in quotes because by being Wholeness, the sense of a separate self disappears completely; there is no experiencer who can be said to be experiencing bliss. But once we have realized this fundamental truth of human existence, bliss never goes away, even when we go through what John of the Cross called the ‘dark night of the soul’, extreme agony as we seek to let go of everything that prevents us from realizing deep inner Peace. So we can be blissfully unhappy as well as blissfully happy.

What then is the mystical experience? What are its characteristics? Well, William James, in his classic work, The Varieties of Religious Experience, attempted to answer this question,
even though he admitted to never having had a mystical experience. As he said, “Whether my
treatment of mystical states will shed more light or darkness, I do not know, for my own con-
stitution shuts me out from their enjoyment almost entirely, and I can speak of them only at
second hand.”

From this second-hand knowledge, James identified four main characteristics of the mys-
tical experience:

1. **Ineffability**: The subject of it immediately says that it defies expression, that no
adequate report of its contents can be given in words.

2. **Noetic quality**: Although so similar to states of feeling, mystical states seem to those
who experience them to be also states of knowledge … and as a rule they carry with
them a curious sense of authority for aftertime.

3. **Transiency**: Mystical states cannot be sustained for long.

4. **Passivity**: The mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes
as if he were grasped and held by a superior power.

In *Mysticism*, F. C. Happold extended James’ four characteristics of the mystical experi-
ence with three more, without mentioning that he was apparently plagiarizing James’ work,
using almost identical words:

5. **Oneness of everything**: All creaturely existence is experienced as a unity, as All in One
and One in All.

6. **Timelessness**: The mystic feels himself to be in a dimension where time is not, where
‘all is always now’.

7. **Egolessness**: The phenomenal *ego* is not the real I.

The one characteristic that I would take issue with here is transiency. Wholeness never
goes away; it is ever present. Neither is Wholeness a state, mystical or otherwise, not an altered
or nonordinary state of consciousness. Neither is Wholeness a pure consciousness event, as
Robert K. C. Forman describes in *The Problem of Pure Consciousness*. Why should there be a
problem with Pure Consciousness? As Wholeness is ineffable, it is actually quite impossible
to say what it is in words. To keep it simple, I usually say that we can *sense* Wholeness, the
exquisite sense of Wholeness.

In recent years, with the great awakening of love, consciousness, and intelligence that we
are witnessing today there has been a wealth of published material on people’s religious, spir-
itual, and mystical experiences, which cannot satisfactorily be explained in terms of either ma-
terialistic science or the theological teachings of the monotheistic religions. For instance, the
Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre in the UK has discovered that 43% of
Americans and 48% of British people have had such experiences. And Charles Tart, another
scientist like Alister Hardy, collects descriptions of scientists’ spiritual experiences, which he publishes in *TASTE—The Archives of Scientists’ Transcendent Experiences*.20

Yet the great tragedy of our times is that over half the population are apparently ignorant of the Divine Ground of Being that we all share. It is therefore not surprising that the world is in such a dreadful mess. It makes no sense to deny the existence and reality of God or to fight holy wars—wars about the Whole—in the name of God. While we all have unique experiences of life in the relativistic world of form, there is one thing that we all share in common: the Absolute, viewed as Wholeness and Oneness, or Consciousness and Love.

Leibniz coined the phrase *philosophia perennis*, ‘love of perennial wisdom’, which Aldous Huxley made famous in his book *The Perennial Philosophy: An Interpretation of the Great Mystics, East and West*, as a generic term for all descriptions of this exquisitely beautiful mystical world. To Huxley, the perennial wisdom is “the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man’s final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being”. It “is immemorial and universal”.21

Some of these earliest writings are contained in *The Upanishads*, a mystical addendum to the ritualistic and hymnal *Vedas*, meaning ‘knowledge, sacred teaching’. These spiritual scriptures were written down during the first millennium BCE, but they were probably handed down by word of mouth for thousands of years before. It is amazing that what the Rishis discovered in the Indus valley millennia ago, we are only discovering for ourselves today in the West. The Sanskrit word *upanishad* derives from *upa* ‘near’, *ni* ‘down’, and *sad* ‘to sit’. So *upanishad* means ‘to sit down near to’, “at the feet of a guru, in order to receive the confidential, secret teaching”, esoteric words not intended for the public. Shankaracharya, the founder of *Advaita* in the eighth century, related *The Upanishads* to *Atmavidya*, ‘knowledge of the Self’, and *Brahmavidya*, ‘knowledge of Brahman’, the eternal, imperishable Absolute.22 We can see this relationship most clearly in the *Katha Upanishad*:

> Knowing the senses to be separate
> From the Self, and the sense experience
> To be fleeting, the wise grieve no more.

> Above the senses is the mind,
> Above the mind is the intellect,
> Above that is the ego, and above the ego
> Is the unmanifested Cause.

> And beyond is Brahman, omnipresent,
> Attributeless. Realizing him one is released
From the cycle of birth and death.\textsuperscript{23}

Similarly, the Mandukya Upanishad, the shortest of all, begins in this way:

\textit{Aum stands for the supreme Reality.  
It is a symbol for what was, what is,  
And what shall be. Aum represents also  
What lies beyond past, present, and future.}

\textit{Brahman is all, and the Self is Brahman.  
This Self has four states of consciousness.}

These states are \textit{vaishvārana} ‘the waking condition’, \textit{taijasa} ‘the dream state’, \textit{prājña} ‘the state of deep sleep’, and \textit{turiya} ‘the fourth’, which is not a state of consciousness, but Consciousness itself, depicted in the familiar symbol of Aum, illustrated in Figure 4.3. The Mandukya Upanishad ends:

\textit{The mantram Aum stands for the supreme state  
Of Turiya, without parts, beyond birth  
And death, symbol of everlasting joy.  
Those who know Aum as the Self become the Self;  
Truly they become the Self.}

These are but a few examples of the many ways that people have attempted to describe their experience of the Absolute Whole over the years. But if people do not experience the Cosmos as Wholeness, like the mystics, no amount of intellectual argument will convince them that the Universe is not the physical universe of mass, space, and time. For instance, atheistic, materialistic scientists—cognitively and experientially cut off from Reality—say that such divine experiences are just superstition, and that science had conquered religion through the ruthless power of mechanistic reasoning.

The logical positivist, A. J. Ayer, highlighted this situation when evaluating the mystical experience in \textit{The Central Questions of Philosophy}. He wrote:

The mystic develops a special faculty which enables him to see what he reports to us, no doubt inadequately, by saying such things as that reality is spiritual, or that time and space are not ultimately real, or that everything is one. But what are we to make of this? The question is not whether mystical experiences are worth having. The verdict of those who have actually had them is very decidedly that they are. The question is whether they yield knowledge; and if so what it is they establish.\textsuperscript{24}

Well, in my experience, mystical consciousness does not yield knowledge that can be expressed in signs and symbols, for the Absolute is Ineffable, impossible to describe in words. In a similar fashion, how can any of us describe a beautiful sunset to someone over the telephone? Rather, what the mystical experience yields is inner knowing, which we can call \textit{gnosis} or \textit{jñāna}, from Greek and Sanskrit, both cognate with \textit{know} itself. And we can know the Absolute with Absolute Certainty, thereby solving the problem that mathematical logicians
struggled with during the twentieth century: how to find certainty in mathematics, a search that we describe in Section ‘The loss of certainty’ in Chapter 9, ‘An Evolutionary Cul-de-Sac’ on page 644.

**Consciousness is all there is**

We can take another approach to understanding the mystical experience through the concept of Consciousness (with a capital *C*), as a synonym for the Supreme Being. For calling Ultimate Reality the Absolute or the Datum of the Universe sounds rather abstract, apparently disconnected from human experience. We can best see the advantage of using *Consciousness* as a signifier for the Absolute because *Consciousness* derives from the Latin *cum* ‘together with’ and *scire* ‘to know’, cognate with *science*. So when we integrate all knowledge into a coherent whole, our individual consciousness expands and deepens to such a degree that it becomes coterminous with Consciousness itself. We then realize that God is everywhere and everywhen, within and embracing everything.

In other words, “All there is, is Consciousness,” as Ramesh S. Balsekar, the Advaita sage, points out in *Consciousness Speaks*. Or putting this the other way: *Consciousness is all there is*. So when we put first things first, obeying the fundamental law of the Universe, we experience the marvellous joy of living freely in Consciousness, denoted in Sanskrit by *Satchidananda*, a compound of *Sat*, ‘Absolute, Eternal, Unchanging Being’, *Chit*, ‘Absolute Consciousness’, and *Ananda*, ‘Bliss, Absolute Joy’. As the mystics of all ages have discovered, this perception and conception leads to great joy and bliss, which Jesus called Heaven and Hindus and Buddhists *Nirvāna*, which means ‘extinction’ (of the sense of a separate self).

To use a metaphor from Nature, realizing a state of Cosmic Consciousness is rather like climbing to the summit of the mountain of all knowledge, from which vantage point we are able to see everything that exists as a coherent whole with no obstructions hindering our vision. And realizing Unity Consciousness arises when we dive to the bottom of the ocean of Consciousness. These opposite points are just mirror images of each other, most dramatically illustrated by the fjords in western Norway. Some of the mountains there are 1000 metres high, plunging into the fjords up to a 1000 metres deep, depicted in Figure 4.4.

But how can something that we cannot see, hear, touch, smell, or taste possibly be real? Well, by forming concepts in the rigorously consistent way described in this book, the conceptual model that arises shows that nothing in the relativistic world of form is real in an absolute sense. For all forms have the property of *anitya* ‘impermanence’. All the data patterns
that have form or structure arise from the Datum, the overall context for everything that exists, and return there at the end of their lifespans. All forms, structures, and relationships are just appearances in or abstractions from Consciousness, called māyā in the East, literally ‘deception, illusion, appearance’. Although there is some debate about the root of maya, the Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary gives mā ‘to measure’. So what can be measured in science and business is not real in Absolute terms. This constant movement in the relativistic world of form is also delightfully called lila or leela in the East, ‘the play of the Divine’.

Only the Absolute, which is a seamless continuum, with no divisions or borders anywhere, is Reality, which we can know with absolute certainty, not in an intellectual way, but gnostically. In the East, this way of knowing is called jñāna-yoga, the path of abstract knowledge, jñāna having the same PIE base as gnosis and knowledge. Furthermore, unifying all opposites in the way described in this book is the ultimate yoga, for yoga is Sanskrit for ‘union’, cognate with the English words yoke, join, and syzygy ‘conjunction’, from Greek suzugia ‘union’, from suzugos ‘paired’, from sun- ‘together’ and zugon ‘yoke’.

By recognizing that Consciousness is all there is, we can resolve the difficulties that those engaged in consciousness studies in recent years have faced. In particular, we can address the hard problem of consciousness studies, first identified by David Chalmers in 1994. How is it that consciousness arises from the brain? Well, this is not a difficult problem to solve; it is impossible. For as we have seen, all forms, including mass, space, and time, arise from Consciousness, as the Datum of the Universe. Western civilization is thus a culture that is upside down, putting second things first.

To help us understand Consciousness as Ultimate Reality, we can metaphorically visualize the Totality of Existence in two ways: as an ocean and as radiant light. The Ocean of Consciousness is like a vast ball of water with an infinite radius. To give this ball some structure, we need to give it a finite radius, the ball then having a surface, representing the materialistic world of our physical senses. The depths are then the Cosmic Psyche, including our minds, while the centre of the ocean is Love, which has no opposite, the Divine Source of Life, of all energy in the Universe. Many have poetically described an oceanic feeling of Oneness with the Cosmos, when the ocean becomes an undivided, seamless continuum, so there is a wealth of evidence supporting this vision. Figure 4.5 shows a prototype of a model of the
Ocean of Consciousness, which shows in my outer world what I can see, feel, and sense in my inner.

How thick then is the physical ‘crust’ on the surface of this vast Ocean of Consciousness? Well, Yehuda Berg tells us, “According to Kabbalah, there is a curtain that divides our reality into two realms, which Kabbalah identifies as the 1 percent and the 99 percent. The 1 percent world encompasses our physical world.” But the 99 percent realm is far more important. It “is the source of all lasting fulfilment. All knowledge, wisdom, and joy dwell in this realm. This is the domain that Kabbalists call Light.”

We do not need to take these figures too literally, for if the Cosmic Psyche were 99% of the Universe by volume, then the thickness of the physical crust would only be about one third of one percent of the radius of the Universe. And if the physical universe and the Cosmic Psyche were of equal size, the thickness of the physical surface would still only be 21%. Nevertheless, we can see that the Cosmic Psyche is the last frontier of scientific exploration, not the outer reaches of the physical universe.

As the Kabbalists experience, Consciousness is also like the Sun, but radiating coherent light, more like a laser beam than the diffuse light of a light bulb, enabling us to view the Universe holographically, illustrated in Figure 4.6. It is this radiant, coherent light that enables us to look into the depths of the psyche. Jesus of Nazareth referred to this light when he said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

But not all can see this brilliant light, for there is a ‘cloud of unknowing’ preventing this light from shining through us all, as an anonymous fourteenth-century English mystic pointed out. This is called avidya ‘ignorance’ in Sanskrit, whose opposite is jñāna or gnosis, deep inner knowing of the Divine. This symbol depicts the coherent light of Consciousness, paradoxically emanating from blackness, reproduced from Energy, Matter & Form: Toward a Science of Consciousness, published by the University of the Trees in 1975.

Now in order to know oneself, we need eyes to do so. The word I use for this purpose is Intelligence, sometimes called the Witness in spiritual circles. The vitally important role of self-reflective Intelligence in our self-inquiries was clearly expressed in these words of the preeminent Christian mystic, Meister Eckhart: “The eye with which I see God is the same as that
with which he sees me.” It is our self-reflective Intelligence, the marvellous gift that we were given some 25,000 years ago, which distinguishes us from the other animals and our machines, such as computers. So Divine Intelligence is the eyesight of Cosmic, Unity Consciousness. This explains why Meister Eckhart saw no distinction between God’s aperspectival view and his own.

Two other important words that denote this divine world are Love and Peace, for God is Love, as mentioned on page 262, when unifying science and mysticism. And in Paul’s epistle to the Philippians, Paul referred to “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding”. For me, being grounded in the Stillness of Nondual Love and Inner Peace is the only way that I can live beyond conflict and suffering.

We can see clearly that Love is our Divine Essence from the word kind, which is the native English word for nature, having a Germanic root, gakundiz ‘natural, innate’. In turn, nature derives from the Latin nasci ‘to be born’. And everything that exists in the relativistic world of form is born from our Divine Source, which is quite natural, not supernatural, as is widely believed today. So kindliness is our true nature, expressed as compassion and charity (agape in Greek) in Buddhism and Christianity, respectively. Despite the fact that “we are the cruellest and most ruthless species that has ever walked the earth”, as Anthony Storr points out in Human Aggression, our innate nature is not evil, as the Christian notion of original sin seems to imply.

Ineffable Truth and Freedom are also to be found in this divine, mystical world. As Jesus said, “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” J. Krishnamurti described the Truth as a ‘pathless land’ when dissolving the organization that wanted to make him a world teacher in 1929. As he said, “you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect. … Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, … cannot be organized; nor should any organization be formed to lead or to coerce people along any particular path.” Any such organization would be a crutch, not liberating.

I must emphasize here that making these changes to the concepts of God and Universe has no effect on Reality. We human beings have been living in the Cosmic Context of Consciousness, grounded in Love, our Divine Essence, ever since we began to form concepts many thousands of years ago. If this were not the case, it would have been quite impossible for us to create all the wonderful works of art, music, poetry, literature, and architecture we have created through the millennia. If we were machines, and nothing but machines, as some scientists apparently still believe, nothing new could ever arise; we would not be able to make the scientific discoveries we have made during the ages, enabling many of us to live in comparative comfort today.
A cosmological perspective

In a similar manner, when Copernicus showed that the Earth circles the Sun, rather than the other way round, as the Aristotelians and Christians believed, nothing changed in the solar system; the Earth continued to move around the Sun, as it had been doing for some 4.5 billion years. Not that Copernicus was able to eliminate all of Ptolemy’s epicycles. It was left to Kepler to do this with his three laws of planetary motion, and to Newton to unify Kepler’s extraterrestrial viewpoint with Galileo’s terrestrial perspective in the Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy.

Similarly, in today’s heliocentric revolution, many in both spiritual and scientific circles are becoming conscious that it is the radiant light of Consciousness that enlightens all our lives. But there are still quite a few ‘epicycles’ hanging around in the form of clouds, which have built up over the years as our cultural conditioning, which prevent us from being fully awake. It is only when we let go of the past completely, integrating all knowledge into a coherent whole, that we can disperse all the clouds that inhibit our vision, that prevent our minds from becoming translucent at the pinnacle of human learning.

In eliminating the epicycles from Copernicus’ cosmology, Kepler showed us what we need to do today to disperse the clouds that inhibit us from liberating intelligence from its mechanistic conditioning. For Kepler began his cosmological studies in 1595 using a similar a priori approach to that which has brought Integral Relational Logic into existence, described on page 932 in Chapter 11, ‘The Evolution of the Mind’. As we see there, he discovered his three laws of planetary motion by unifying geometric and trigonometric astronomy with causal physics, spit by Aristotle, grounded in his own deep mystical experience. But then the scientists separated the results of Kepler’s creativity from their Divine Source, leading to materialistic and mechanistic science, which dominates Western thought today. We have thereby gained much in the form of creature comforts, but at the cost of great spiritual discomfort, far removed from Reality.

The physicist who has done the most to heal the deep wound in the cultural psyche opened ever wider by modern materialistic science is David Bohm, an even more innovative physicist than Einstein, but still barely recognized even by his colleagues.

Bohm used the hologram as a metaphor for the undivided wholeness of both relativity and quantum theories, illustrating a quite new type of order—the implicate order—underlying the explicate, where we see phenomena as beings separate from each other, including each of us as human beings. For hologram derives from Greek olos ‘whole’ and gramma ‘letter of the alphabet’, from graphein ‘to

Figure 4.7: David Bohm
write’. So a hologram or holograph is something that ‘writes the whole’, like collumination, the mindful meditation practice that has brought IRL into existence.

Bohm called the undivided continuum underlying the Universe the holomovement, which he likened to a river, inspired by the process thinking of Heraclitus and A. N. Whitehead. As he said, “On this stream, one may see an ever-changing pattern of vortices, ripples, waves, splashes, etc., which evidently have no independent existence as such. Rather, they are abstracted from the flowing movement, arising and vanishing in the total process of flow.”

The Ocean of Consciousness is a natural nonlinear extension of David Bohm’s notion of the holomovement in the implicate order, which he used to unify the incompatibilities between relativity and quantum theories. These two fundamental theories of physics are incompatible because relativity theory has the attributes of continuity, causality, and locality, while quantum theory has these properties: noncontinuity, noncausality, and nonlocality.

Sadly, however, most physicists, struggling with string theory, still do not recognize this far-reaching synthesis. For instance, Martin Rees wrote in 2004, a quarter of a century after the publication of *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, “Einstein’s theory and the quantum theory cannot be meshed together: both are superb within limits, but at the deepest level they are contradictory. Until there has been a synthesis, we certainly will not be able to tackle the overwhelming question of what happened right at the very beginning.” As he goes on to say, “Interpretations of quantum theory today may be on a ‘primitive level’, analogous to the Babylonian knowledge of eclipses: useful predictions, but no deep understanding.”

Bohm, himself, used the metaphor of a fish swimming in a tank with two television cameras filming it to unify relativity and quantum theories. The television screens would then display opposite characteristics of this single, underlying reality—unified by the Principle of Unity—illustrated in Figure 9.10 on page 696 in Chapter 9, ‘An Evolutionary Cul-de-Sac’.

But what is the fish to make of all this? The Sufi poet Kabir wrote in the fifteenth century, “I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty,” using water as a metaphor for Consciousness. But that is not how astrophysicists understand our Environment, or the Arena in which we live, leaving much to be understood. For instance, Martin Rees has said, “In the twenty-first [century], the challenge will be to understand the arena itself, to probe the deepest nature of space and time,” going on to say, “A fish may be barely aware of the medium in which it swims.” For as Kabir the weaver says in the fish poem, “You do not see that the Real is in your home, and you wander from forest to forest listlessly.”

What all this shows is that the Universe is not the physical universe, as has been believed in the West for thousands of years. In this respect, we can compare the Babylonians and Egyptians with the Rishis in the Indus Valley some five thousand years ago. Both would have marvelled at the wonders of the night sky, unsullied by the light pollution most of us suffer from today. Yet, while the Sumerians looked outwards, the Rishis looked inwards, in deep
meditation, discovering a quite different Universe from that which has encompassed Western thought over the millennia.

So if scientists do not meditate, look into the depths of the Cosmic Psyche, because they a priori deny its existence, then they cannot verify the Truth in their own direct experience. But if they do, they could resolve some of the problems facing quantum physicists and astrophysicists today. For, in order to make sense of their observations, they are beginning to recognize that there is not just one physical universe, but many of them, called ‘parallel universes’. Some also this collection of physical universes the ‘multiverse’.

William James coined the term multiverse in an address that he gave to the Harvard Young Men’s Christian Association in 1895, titled ‘Is Life Worth Living’. Seeking to show that life is only worth living if we recognize that nature, as presented to us by materialistic science, “cannot possibly be its ultimate word to man”, he said, “Visible nature is all plasticity and indifference,—a moral multiverse, as one might call it, and not a moral universe. To such a harlot we owe no allegiance.”

To illustrate the way that the Principle of Unity can unify all these physical universes, Kim Weaver of NASA has said, “In some ways, the physics [of black holes] is very similar to what started the universe.” And just as general relativity indicates that there could be many black holes, not observable directly, Martin Rees has said, “There could have been many big bangs, even an infinity of them. … Whenever a black hole forms, processes deep inside it could perhaps trigger the creation of another universe.”

We can call all these physical universes hyloverses, from Greek ἰλή ‘wood, matter’. In turn, matter derives from Latin māteria, a calque of ἰλή, deriving from PIE base māter ‘mother’ because the woody part was seen as the source of growth, cognate with Sanskrit māyā ‘delusion, appearance, illusion’. So all hyloverses are simply abstractions from the Ocean of Consciousness, which alone is Reality. Matter, including our bodies and brains, is of secondary significance, not primary.

In human terms, we are all just the waves and ripples on the surface of the ocean, having no independent existence, interrelated in the depths and conjoined at the centre, the Ground of Being, which we can simply call Love, our Cosmic Soul or Divine Essence. Amit Goswami similarly regards Consciousness as primary in the popular movie What the Bleep Do We Know!? As he said, the findings of quantum physics tell us that the material world around us is “nothing but possible movements of Consciousness”.

**Unifying science and mysticism**

To summarize this section, here is a one-page essay I wrote in November 2009, in preparation for attending a one-day conference in London titled ‘Infinite Potential: The Legacy of David Bohm’ organized by the Scientific and Medical Network. In the event, this was a rather dis-
appointing event, for while the word *wholeness* was mentioned a few times, *fragmentation*, the fundamental problem facing humanity today, as Bohm pointed out, was conspicuous by its absence. So there is still much work to do to honour his legacy.

By applying the Principle of Unity to all our learning activities, we can see that while ending the long-running war between science and religion is incredibly simple, it is far from easy. For if it were easy, it would have happened long ago. For aren’t Love and Peace what nearly every one of us longs for more than anything else in the world?

As pointed out on page 245, the central problem here is that God and Universe are the incompatible contextual concepts for religion and science, respectively. So if we are ever to live in love, peace, and harmony with each other, we need to establish a Universal Context for all our learning. Many believe such a healing synthesis is impossible. But if we are willing to look afresh at our beliefs, then it is quite easy to discover that which we all share in common, no matter what our cultural background might be. It takes just six steps, along the lines of the pseudo-mathematical proofs that Benedict de Spinoza used in *The Ethics*.

1. John wrote in his first Epistle: “God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him,”44 words that Pope Benedict XVI took as the text for his first encyclical ‘*Caritas Deus Est.*’

2. The Sufi poet Rumi said, “Love is the sea of not-being and there intellect drowns,”46 ‘not-being’ being *Anatman* in Buddhism. So as many people today are discovering in their own direct experience through meditation and other spiritual practices, Love is the immanent Divine Essence that we all share. They can thus say, “I am Love,” if they will.

3. Therefore, from (1) and (2), “God is me,” a statement that is true for all beings in the Universe, not only intelligent human beings.

4. In the collective, we can thus say, “God is the Totality of Existence”. There is not anything in existence that is not God.

5. But the Universe is the Totality of Existence.

6. Therefore, from (4) and (5), “God is the Universe.”

We can thus see that Love is the Divine Essence that we all share and Consciousness is the Cosmic Context for all our lives, no matter where we might live. If everyone on Earth could thus realize this Truth, there would be no more Holy wars—wars about the Whole—or wars between science and religion. All this needs is for the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to say, with the Hindus, for instance, “*Tat tvam asi*” ‘That thou art’, and for the scientists to accept that Ultimate Reality is Consciousness, not the physical universe of our senses.

QED ‘Quite easily done’.
Who are we?

Having unified all opposites, including Eastern mysticism and Western science, we are now in a position to answer the first of the three biggest questions of human existence: “Who are we?” However, one of the major difficulties we have in honestly answering this question arises from the meanings and etymologies of identity and individual. These reflect the way that the divergent powers of evolution have fragmented our minds over the millennia, most noticeably in the religious, scientific, and economic beliefs that we are separate from the Divine, Nature, and each other, leading to seven pillars of unwisdom on which Western civilization is based. Let us look at each of these words in turn to see how we can use the Principle of Unity to unify the True Identity that we all share and our unique identities as individuals.

Our Shared Identity

The word identity has a long, uncertain history. Basically the word derives from the Latin idem ‘same’, so identity essentially means ‘sameness’. Idem derives from the PIE base *i- pronominal stem, also root of Latin is, ea, id ‘he, she, it’ and item ‘also, likewise, in like manner’, from which the English word item is derived. The PIE base also gave rise to Latin iterum ‘again, a second time’, the root of iterate ‘repeat’, and identidem ‘repeatedly, again and again’, from idem et idem, which influenced the formation of identity.

The OED tells us that various suggestions have been offered as to the formation of the word. The need was evidently felt for a noun of condition or quality from idem to express the notion of ‘sameness’, side by side with those of ‘likeness’ and ‘oneness’ expressed by similitās and ūnitās: hence the form of the suffix -ty, which derives from Latin -tās, like beauty and liberty, from *bellitās and libertās, from bellus ‘pretty’ and liber ‘free’, respectively. However, idem had no combining stem, so there are some speculations about how the Late Latin word identitās was formed, giving rise to identity via French identité.

But what does identity mean? Well, the OED gives this second definition: “The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality.” So identity has come to mean that which distinguishes us from other human beings, the plants and other animals, and the rest of the Universe. The primary emphasis is on differences rather than on Sameness—that which we all share—leading to much conflict and suffering.

However, the OED gives this primary definition: “The quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute or essential sameness; oneness.” The second citation the OED gives for this meaning is from Philemon Holland’s translation of Plutarch’s Moralia in 1603: “That the soul
of this universal world is not simple, uniform and uncompounded, but mixed ... of a certain power of Identity and of Diversity.”

Indeed. While we are superficially unique, there is some aspect of our beings that is the same for all of us: the Absolute, which embraces the wondrous diversity of the world of form. Thus our True Identity or Authentic Self is that which we can also call Wholeness, Oneness, Truth, Consciousness, Intelligence, and Love, the Divine Essence we all share. Yet, tragically, many have lost touch with our True Nature, fighting holy wars—wars about the Whole—because their precarious sense of identity and security in life is based on separateness—from which fear and anxiety arise—rather than on Wholeness.

The primary emphasis is on differences rather than on Sameness—that which we all share—leading to much conflict and suffering, not the least the long-running war between science and religion. It is this sense of identity that can be stolen, in what is absurdly called ‘identity theft’ today.

It is vitally important to note here that the Identity that we all share is not an anthropocentric concept. Wholeness embraces and lies within everything that exists. In human terms, we are always Wholeness, no matter what our state of health might be or the level of our consciousness. We cannot return Home to Wholeness because we have never left Home. As the Buddhists say, “You cannot become a Buddha, you already are a Buddha.” Well, not quite. To say that someone is a Buddha, meaning ‘awakened or enlightened one’, is also an anthropocentric notion.

**Individual uniqueness**

Paradoxically, the divisiveness that arises from regarding the relativistic world of form to be more significant than the Formless Absolute is also evident in the word *individual*, which derives from Middle English, ‘single, indivisible’, from Medieval Latin *individuālis*, from Latin *individuus*, from *in*—‘not’ and *dividuus* ‘divisible’, from *dividere* ‘to divide’. Appropriately, the OED gives these first two definitions, both now obsolete: (1) “One in substance or essence; forming an indivisible entity; indivisible.” (2) “That cannot be separated; inseparable”. In contrast, OED’s third definition is “(a) Existing as a separate indivisible entity; numerically one, single, (b) Single, as distinct from others of the same kind; particular, special.” This definition indicates that many individuals are more concerned today with their own egocentric and ethnic needs than with those of humanity as a whole, threatening the very survival of our species.

It is important to distinguish individualism from individuation, the central concept in Jung’s psychology. To Jung, “Individuation is a process of differentiation having for its goal the development of the individual personality,” distinct from the collective norm, but still having a natural esteem for the society in which one lives. The individuation process is one
CHAPTER 4: TRANSCENDING THE CATEGORIES

of healing and integration, where there is an identification with the totality of the personality in wholeness. Its goal is to detach consciousness from factors outside the individual, coming to realize that happiness lies within.\textsuperscript{48} Many today are actively engaged in such psychotherapeutic processes, realizing that we live in a deeply split society,

However, the primary focus today is on individualism, which is even incorporated in the laws that govern our lives. Yes, there are some laws that seek to prevent mutual self-destruction—such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—many laws are designed to assuage people’s fears, which arise from a sense of separation from our Immortal Ground of Being.

Not the least of these are economic laws, which tell us that we must fight and compete with our fellow beings to ensure our health, well-being, and even survival as individuals, thus threatening the very survival of our species. Thankfully, there is a growing awareness that these traditional ways of organizing our lives are no longer viable. As we saw, when we looked at the Circle of Duality on page 234 in Chapter 3, ‘Unifying Opposites’, there is a move today towards more bipartisan politics for the benefit of us all, despite the paranoid opposition of such organizations as the National Rifle Association in the USA.

This situation raises another fundamental issue. Between the Divine Identity that we all share and our unique identities as individuals, we also have cultural identities that we share with others with like minds and social backgrounds. This awareness has recently raised another fundamental issue: in these times of cultural transformation, how can we detach ourselves from our cultural conditioning and find our true identity and purpose as individuals? As often as not, this question is being asked and answered without a clear understanding of the Divine Identity that we all share.

**Unifying our Divine and human identities**

So how can we unify our Divine and human identities? Well, this is a question that has puzzled human beings for thousands of years, perhaps best answered by the Buddhists. So let us look at the way that Buddhism evolved during its first 1,200 years. After Siddhartha Gautama realized his True Nature under the famous Bodhi tree, the initial focus of attention seems to have been on individual awakening or enlightenment, focusing attention on how to end personal suffering. As Thich Nhat Hanh says in *Old Path White Clouds*, his beautiful biography of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Buddha refused to answer metaphysical questions, such as “Is the world finite or infinite?” and “After you die, will you continue to exist or not?” Rather, he said, “I only answer questions that pertain directly to the practice of gaining mastery over one’s mind and body in order to overcome all sorrows and anxieties.”\textsuperscript{49} Central to his teachings were was his three marks of being (*trilakshana*):
1. There is nothing whatsoever that is permanent in the Universe, including our bodies and any groups, from our family, through our cultures, to our species, that we feel we belong to (anitiya).

2. If we do not recognize this fundamental principle of existence, we shall suffer (duhkha).

3. The way to end suffering is to be free of the sense of a separate self, of attachment to the egoic mind (Anatman), leading to Moksha ‘liberation and release from worldly bonds’, Nirvāṇa ‘extinction’, and Kaivalya ‘Solitude, Absolute Consciousness’.

It seems that the Buddha did not see any need for the Absolute, as in the union of Brahman and Atman in the Hindu Upanishads. He simply experienced Anatman ‘Non-self’ or ‘No-mind’, as Shūnyatā ‘Emptiness’. However, in the first century CE, Buddhists realized that this was too narrow an approach. As human beings are social animals, no one could be fully liberated unless the entire community or even species was so awakened. So a second major Buddhist school arose called Mahāyāna ‘Great Vehicle’ in contrast to Hinayāna ‘Small Vehicle’. The Absolute then entered Buddhism as Tathatā, from tathā ‘in that manner, so’, usually translated as ‘Suchness’, the ultimate formless, immutable, changeless nature of all beings.50

Realizing that no one can be fully awakened in isolation, the Mahāyāna Buddhists introduced the notion of Bodhisattva, an ‘enlightenment being’, who takes a vow renouncing full Buddhahood and complete entry into Nirvāṇa ‘extinction’ until all beings are saved, in contrast to Arhat in Hinayāna Buddhism.51

This greater emphasis on Wholeness rather than Oneness led some Buddhist scholars to develop a synthesis of all Buddhist teachings, forming a Chinese Buddhist school that embraces all the others, not one among many. This is variously called Hua Yen, Hua-yen, and Huayan in transliterations from Chinese, meaning ‘Flower Ornament’, ‘Flower-Decoration’, or ‘Garland’ from the Avatamsaka Sūtra, originally written in India in Sanskrit during the first and second centuries. In 1971, Garma C. C. Chang introduced Hwa Yen Buddhism to the West in The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa Yen Buddhism, further developed by Francis H. Cook in 1977 in Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra, beginning his book with this visionary sentence: “Western man may be on the brink of an entirely new understanding of existence.”52

Then, in the 1980s, Thomas Cleary translated all thirty-nine books of Avatamsaka Sūtra from Chinese, for most of the original Sanskrit writings are lost, resulting in a single book of some 1600 pages.53 The first thing that struck me when browsing through these pages is that this is a book of superlatives, as the writers attempted to describe their experiences of union with the Transfinite Cosmos. It is therefore not surprising that the Buddhist scholar D. T. Suzuki described this sutra thus:
As to the *Avatamsaka-sutra*, it is really the consummation of Buddhist thought, Buddhist sentiment, and Buddhist experience. To my mind, no religious literature in the world can ever approach the grandeur of conception, the depth of feeling, and the gigantic scale of composition, as attained by this sutra. Here not only deeply speculative minds find satisfaction, but humble spirits and heavily oppressed hearts, too, will have their burdens lightened. Abstract truths are so concretely, so symbolically represented here that one will finally come to a realization of the truth that even in a particle of dust the whole universe is seen reflected—not this visible universe only, but a vast system of universes, conceivable by the highest minds only.\(^{54}\)

Francis H. Cook compared this grand syncretism of the many different strands of Buddhist thought to someone attempting to tack together the philosophies of Aquinas, Bishop Berkeley, Marx, and Wittgenstein. He thought that the result of such an attempt would be “a mere patchwork, because each philosophy is largely discontinuous with the others, despite certain common presuppositions. However, Hua-yen could achieve a real syncretism because each different philosophical form of Buddhism is only part of the larger whole.” Hua-yen thus “came to serve as the philosophical basis for the other schools of Buddhism more concerned with practice and realization. … As D. T. Suzuki remarked, Hua-yen is the philosophy of Zen and Zen is the practice of Hua-yen,” Hua-yen being called *Kegon* in Japan, where Zen flourished.\(^{55}\)

Considering that Huayan Buddhism is of central importance in the evolution of the mind, it is rather surprising that this school of schools only lasted a couple of centuries in China, Chang giving biographies of just four or five patriarchs: Tu Shun (558–640), Chih Yen (602–668), Fa Tsang (643–712), Ch’êng Kuan (738–840), Tsung Mi (780–841), the last making a smaller contribution.\(^{56}\)

The most important of these was Fa Tsang in Wade-Giles Romanization, Fazang in pinyin since 1982. The central principles of Fazang’s philosophy were *mutual identity* and *mutual causality*, of vital importance in our task of unifying our Divine and human identities. For we are exploring our relationship, as individuals, to the Cosmos, as a whole. The key concepts here are *shih* and *Li*, expounded in yet another scripture called *On the Meditation of Dharma-dhatu*. As Chang defines these concepts, *shih* is the realm of phenomena or events and *Li* is the realm of noumena or principles,\(^{57}\) an unfortunate term that has come from Kant’s intellectual notion of ‘thing-in-itself’, devoid of phenomenal attributes. To clarify this situation, it might be better to relate the Sanskrit terms *samsāra* and *Tathatā* to *shih* and *Li*, although *Essence* might be a more suitable translation of *Li*.

To explain to the Empress Tsê-T’ien what is meant by the terms *Li* and *shih*, Fazang wrote a short *Essay on the Golden Lion*, just seven pages in Chang’s book\(^58\) and even fewer in a limited edition poetic pamphlet written by John Cayley.\(^{59}\) In this essay, Fazang likened these very abstract concepts to the gold of the lion, the formless underlying substance or Emptiness, and the form of the lion. So the lion, as a form, is in complete harmony with the underlying es-
sence, actually representing the whole. But he went further. He said that all the individual elements of the lion, its eyes, hair, and so on also constitute the whole. Furthermore, he used Indra’s Net to illustrate this point. All these elements are interconnected, each reflecting the magnificence of all the others in the net.

Indra’s Net is mentioned several times in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, Indra being the king of the gods in the *Rig Veda*. Alan Watts likened Indra’s Net to a dewy spider’s web, saying, “Imagine a multidimensional spider’s web in the early morning covered with dewdrops. And every dewdrop contains the reflection of all the other dewdrops. And, in each reflected dewdrop, the reflections of all the other dewdrops in that reflection. And so ad infinitum. That is the Buddhist conception of the universe in an image.” And Francis H. Cook encapsulated the essence of Indra’s net in the *Avatamasaka Sūtra* in this way:

Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net which has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out indefinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of the deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each ‘eye’ of the net, and since the net is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars of the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we now arbitrarily select one of these jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.

Hua-yen Buddhism thus has a similar relationship to Zen as IRL has to science and business. For the worldview revealed by IRL is essentially the same as that described by Fazang, who taught “that to exist in any sense at all means to exist in dependence on the other, which is infinite in number.” For Hua-yen conceives of experience primarily in terms of relationships between what people normally think as distinct, separate entities.

We can see the importance of including relationships in a coherent worldview from the word *interesting*, which is the third person singular indicative of Latin *interesse* (used directly as a noun in Middle English) ‘to be between, take part in’, from *inter* ‘between’ and *esse* ‘to be’. So what is interesting, important, and essential is not the interest that banks receive in today’s debt-driven,
divisive economy, or more generally things in themselves, but the *relationships* between entities, a word also derived from *esse*. For meaningful relationships, a generalization of the physicists’ concept of fields, are what makes the world go round. In contrast, reductionist scientists, focused on objects rather than the relationships between them, throw the interesting associations and connections away!

There is thus no separation between any of us, beautifully illustrated by Indra’s Net, which shows through Fazang’s notion of mutual identity that each of us, as individual jewels in the net, are mirrors for all the others at the deepest and broadest reaches of Reality. And in terms of mutual causality, none of us can be said to be fully the cause of our thoughts and behaviour. We all influencing each other, in both obvious, explicit and subtle, implicit ways. For instance, these relationships are what Rupert Sheldrake calls morphogenetic fields and Paul Levy calls nonlocal causality, an idea he got from Mark Comings. So not only are we all the causal Whole, we are also causally interconnected as individuals. So why do we praise or condemn individuals for what society considers good or bad behaviour?

Now the key point about all this is that these scriptures are not speculative philosophy. The sages and mystics are talking directly from the experience of Wholeness, which greatly helps those of us who are realizing Wholeness in our various ways to describe our experiences. Those who are moved to do so can describe Wholeness from a mystical perspective. But as Western science and Eastern mysticism converge, some are using Indra’s Net for their own scientific researches, including Robin Robertson’s *Indra’s Net: Alchemy and Chaos Theory as Models for Transformation* and *Indra’s Pearls: The Vision of Felix Klein* by David Mumford, Caroline Series, and David Wright, emphasizing the fractal nature of this ancient metaphor.

Now, while Indra’s Net is most often compared to a fractal, we can also see it as a hologram, every part of which contains an image of the Whole. Of course, such a worldview is not new, for it is ever present to those with the necessary sensitivity. For instance, this is how William Blake beautifully described such a holographic way at looking at Totality in *Auguries of Innocence*:

*To see a world in a grain of sand,*  
*And a heaven in a wild flower,*  
*Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,*  
*And eternity in an hour.*

Most importantly, this metaphor can help us unify our True Identity with our unique identities as individuals. For what this model means is that each of us, as Wholeness—our Authentic Self—is both the entire Ocean and particular waves and currents on and beneath the surface. Now while the waves and currents rise and fall, the ocean itself never changes. We can thus see that all beings are abstractions from or appearances in Consciousness, in the East called *lila*, the delightful play of the Divine. And when we realize this in the depth and
breadth of being, we become one with the Immortal Ground of Being, recognizing that death is nothing but an illusion. And as the Advaita sages teach, there is no doership, no independent people who can be said to own anything or to have the free will to choose the way they live.

Furthermore, this holographic model of the Universe enables us to unify David Bohm’s theory of the implicate order, the synthesis of relativity and quantum theories, with Indra’s Net in Huayan Buddhism and all other mystical traditions. It is in this delightful way that the long-running war between science and religion can be resolved and we can live peacefully at the end of time. So having answered the question “Who are we?”, let us now explore the answers to the other Big Questions of human existence: “Where do we come from?” and “Where are we going?” Again, this is very simple, for not only is the answer to the first question Wholeness, the answers to the other two questions is also Wholeness.

The two dimensions of time

The cosmology outlined in this chapter might seem a far remove from the practical issues we all need to deal with everyday. However, they are directly relevant, as we show in this final section of Volume One of the Wholeness trilogy.

To see this, we need to remind ourselves that a primary purpose of the thought experiment described in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’ was to test the hypothesis that human beings are machines and nothing but machines with the method of reductio ad absurdum in mathematics. My experience and that of many other mystics shows irrefutably that we humans are not just machines, as many scientists believe today. For when we experience the Divine with Absolute Certainty, all doubts about what it means to be a human being disappear.

What this means is that human beings are the leading edge of evolution, not machines, like computers. Scientists and technologists are not about to build a machine with artificial intelligence, exceeding any level of intelligence that we human beings might aspire to. Technological development cannot drive economic growth for very much longer, requiring us to make radical changes to the work ethic that has served humanity for many thousands of years.

In contrast, here are a few paragraphs from Barack Obama’s vision of America, which he described in his victory speech after being re-elected as President of the USA in November 2012:

*We want our kids to grow up in a country where they have access to the best schools and the best teachers—a country that lives up to its legacy as the global leader in technology and discovery and innovation—with all of the good jobs and new businesses that follow.*

*We want our children to live in an America that isn’t burdened by debt, that isn’t weakened up by inequality, that isn’t threatened by the destructive power of a warming planet.*
We want to pass on a country that’s safe and respected and admired around the world, a nation that is defended by the strongest military on Earth and the best troops this world has ever known—but also a country that moves with confidence beyond this time of war to shape a peace that is built on the promise of freedom and dignity for every human being.

We believe in a generous America, in a compassionate America, in a tolerant America open to the dreams of an immigrant’s daughter who studies in our schools and pledges to our flag—to the young boy on the south side of Chicago who sees a life beyond the nearest street corner—to the furniture worker’s child in North Carolina who wants to become a doctor or a scientist, an engineer or an entrepreneur, a diplomat or even a president.

To see why this vision—admirable as it might be if we ignore the military objectives—is quite impractical and unrealizable at these unprecedentedly changing times we live in, we need to use the Principle of Unity to look more closely at the concept of time. Following an egalitarian approach to concept formation, in IRL we treat the concept of time just like any other concept, as we see on page 142 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’. So time, like everything else in the relativistic world of form, is just an appearance in Consciousness, not real at all.

However, now we need to give time special attention. For time actually feels real to us, as it guides our daily lives, from the past to the future in what we can call the horizontal dimension of time. Traditionally, there have been two basic ways of looking at this dimension of time: cyclic and linear. The cyclic view of time predominated in all cultures during the Great Mother Goddess epoch between about 25,000 and 5,000 years ago—reviewed in Section ‘The origin of the myths’ in Chapter 10, ‘Entering Paradise’ on page 765—because our forebears tended to look at time through direct human experience, most notably in the cycles of day and night, the phases of the moon, women’s menstrual cycles, and the four seasons in the year.

In the East, such a cyclic view prevails, encapsulated in the classic $T’ai-chi-t’u$ symbol, or ‘Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate’, depicted in Figure 3.6 on page 232. The dots in each section indicate the potential of Yin or Yang to become primary when Yang or Yin is predominant. In Taoist philosophy, this cyclic process can continue indefinitely, in infinite time. We can simply illustrate that this cyclic view of time is actually linear with the mathematical sinusoidal curve, which has no limit in either direction, depicted in Figure 4.10.

![Figure 4.10: Cyclic view of time](image)

The cyclic view of time has led to the belief in the continuous reincarnation of an immortal soul in Eastern religions. Surprisingly Buddhists subscribe to this belief even though Ultimate Reality in Buddhism is $Shunyata$ ‘Emptiness’, realized when the delusional sense of a separate
self disappears completely as Anatman, the union of Brahman and Atman in Hinduism. At the dawn of recorded history about 5,000 years ago in the Middle East, a directly linear view of time began to emerge, with a beginning and end. This view has led the monotheistic religions to believe in everlasting life after death. But as we have seen from the mathematics of infinity on page 235 in Chapter 3, ‘Unifying Opposites’, such beliefs are irrational.

This horizontal dimension of time also holds sway in science, not the least since the emergence of the Cartesian-Newtonian mechanistic paradigm. As a result, there is a widespread belief that every effect has a preceding cause. For instance, David Bohm wrote in the opening paragraph of Causality and Chance in Modern Physics, “In nature nothing remains constant. Everything is in a perpetual state of transformation, motion, and change. However, we discover that nothing simply surges up out of nothing without having antecedents that existed before. … Everything comes from other things and gives rise to other things.”

Viewing change in the Universe as a long chain of causes and effects led Aristotle to postulate the existence of an Unmoved Mover, which set the Universe in motion. Thomas Aquinas then took this notion as the basis for his five proofs for the existence of God. However, as we see in Figure 1.45, ‘Mechanical processing’ on page 159 and Figure 2.1, ‘Basic data processing function’ on page 177, machines, like computers, function solely in the horizontal dimension of time, with a past and a present. So if we are to be liberated from our mechanistic conditioning, we can only really do so in the Eternal Now, a notion made famous by Eckhart Tolle’s best-selling The Power of Now, as Figure 4.11 shows.

But what is the relationship between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of time? Well, as Nonduality is the union of Nonduality and duality, illustrated in Figure 4.2, there is also a primary-secondary relationship between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of time. We thus see yet another example where we illogically put second things first, regarding the past and future alone as reality, ignoring the Reality of the Eternal Now. Yet, we are not totally ignorant of this distinction. The word temporal means “of or pertaining to time as the sphere of human life; terrestrial as opposed to heavenly; secular as opposed to sacred; lay as distinguished from clerical”, as we see in the phrase ‘lords temporal and spiritual’, referring to the House of Lords in the UK.

We can see why it is absolutely essential to put first things first at the present time—if I may use that term—when we look at the accelerating rate of evolutionary development in
Section ‘Exponential growth’ in Chapter 6, ‘A Holistic Theory of Evolution’ on page 533. For as we can see on page 564 in that chapter, evolution is currently passing through the most momentous turning point in its fourteen billion-year history. Using the metaphor of a tap, the evolutionary tap is no longer dripping, corresponding to major evolutionary turning points in the past; it is turned full on, streaming out uninhibitedly.

In terms of the four-stage evolutionary model introduced by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in *The Human Phenomenon* and outlined on page 523, we are currently in the transitional period between the mental or noological phase of evolution and the eschatological, spiritual epoch. We can call these two epochs the mental-egoic age (me-epoch) and the age of universal spirituality (us-epoch), to emphasize the change from I to we. For entering the much longed-for Wisdom and Mystical Society, visualized in Chapter 14, ‘The Age of Light’ on page 1131, is not something that can happen in isolation. As Teilhard said,

> The way out for the world, the gates of the future, the entry into the superhuman, will not open ahead to some privileged few, or to a single people, elect among all the peoples. They will yield only to the thrust of all together, in the direction where all can rejoin and complete one another in a spiritual renewal of the Earth.71

Another way of seeing why we need to live primarily in the Eternal Now is through the Cosmogonic Cycle, depicted in Figure 4.12. This is a schematic of the fundamental life-and-death cycle of all structures in the relativistic world of form. They originate in the Formless and return there at the end of their lifespans.

For instance, astronomers estimate that the Sun was formed about 4.57 billion years ago and will turn into a red giant and white dwarf in some 5 to 6 billion years time, illustrated in Figure 13.9 on page 1049. So our solar system with its planets is approximately now about halfway though its life and death cycle, although the Earth is likely to become uninhabitable by human beings far earlier than this. The comparatively stable temperatures we have been experiencing during the past 10,000 years are a very rare phenomenon on Earth, as we see in Figure 13.12 on page 1053 in Chapter 13, ‘The Prospects for Humanity’. We are most probably living in a tiny window of time, when the Earth is habitable by human beings. Indeed, these ten millennia are vast compared to the miniscule window of time when the Earth can support today’s highly advanced technological society, with its bil-
lions of inhabitants having a rapacious appetite for our planet’s finite resources, as we look at further in the penultimate chapter of this book.

As another example of the wide variety of lifespans, the dinosaurs were a superorder of species, which roamed this planet for about 160 million years from the late Triassic period to the end of the Cretaceous period about 65 million years ago. In human terms, the Egyptian civilization lasted about four millennia, the longest of the twenty-odd major civilizations of the patriarchal epoch, illustrated in Figure 6.16, ‘Timeline of major civilizations’ on page 568. And the normal human lifespan is 70–100 years, compared with dogs (10–13 years) and some trees, which can live for a 1,000 years or more. In contrast, roentgenium is an element with a half-life of radioactive decay of 3.6 seconds.

Now, the structures that we human beings hold most dear—our bodies, cultures, and species—are also subject to this life-and-death cycle. And if we do not acknowledge this basic fact of existence, we are bound to suffer, as the Buddha taught. So the only intelligent way for us human beings to live our lives is to consciously recapitulate the Cosmogonic Cycle before our physical deaths, along the manner described by the myths and fairy tales of all cultures at all times, as Joseph Campbell brilliantly described in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, outlined in Subsection ‘Leaving our sick society’ in Chapter 13, ‘The Prospects for Humanity’ on page 1067.

There are essentially two ways of intelligently returning to our Divine Source before our bodies decay and die, depicted in the two bell-shape curves in Figure 4.13. However, the ontogenetic path followed by most people in the West is neither of these, leading to a deeply fragmented mind, accelerating further away from Reality with every day that passes. In contrast, the traditional spiritual path in the East is depicted by the small bell-shape curve in the diagram, illustrating how practitioners can return Home to Oneness, through ‘no-mind’, taking the short-cut to the Divine.

However, this book describes the Middle Way between these traditional Western and Eastern paths, which I first saw when on a meditation retreat in the Altai Mountains in southern Siberia in the summer of 2008. First, we climb to the peak of convergence at the glorious culmination of 25,000 years of human learning and fourteen billion years of evolution as a whole. Then, we turn inwards, like the mystics of all ages, but in an involutionary process whereby the mind becomes translucent, enabling the brilliant light of Consciousness to shine radiantly through.

**Liberating Intelligence from its mechanistic conditioning**

It might seem overly simplistic to depict the psychodynamics of the entire species in a pair of orthogonal lines and a bell-shaped curve. Yet, if we do not understand the basic laws of the
Universe that govern our lives, how can we possibly live in harmony with these laws and thereby live in love and peace with each other and our environment?

So is it possible for us to liberate Intelligence from its mechanistic conditioning and learn to work harmoniously together with a common vision? Well, fairly obviously, the closer we can come to the Middle Way between the two extremes, which we can label ‘materialistic’ and ‘mystical’, the better our children and grandchildren will be able to deal with the immense practical challenges they will face in their lifetimes. To put this into perspective, my twin granddaughters—in Figure 4.14 aged two months—were born in Edinburgh in 2010 and so will reach the age I am at the time of writing in 2080. Conversely, my four grandparents were born between 1874 and 1883. So those of my generation are a link between 200 years of human evolution.
In the past, before the first scientific revolution, the differences in lifestyles between grandparents and grandchildren would not have differed very much for those who lived to three-score years and ten, and so were a link between five generations. However, during the past three or four centuries, the pace of evolutionary change has been accelerating faster and faster, for reasons we explore in the first two chapters of Part II of this trilogy. So the world that my grandchildren and their generation will be living in when they too reach seventy will be utterly different from the world I have been living in since the end of the Second World War.

It is no exaggeration to say that in the next fifty years, they will pass through greater changes than all those that have taken place during the past five thousand. The principal reason for this situation is the invention of the stored-program computer in the late 1940s, as this book is endeavouring to explain. In essence, what these simple diagrams show is that while we believe that we live in the past and future—which is where machines live—in Reality we are actually moving up and down the vertical dimension of time in the Eternal Now.

To add some structure to these simple diagrams, Table 4.2 shows a matrix that I find useful in mapping the Cosmic Psyche, including my own consciousness. It is an empty table because every situation at every moment is different. All we really need to note here is that if we are to become superintelligent, superconscious human beings, we need to move all types of the sub- and unconscious into consciousness as much as possible. Today, many are focusing attention on the personal and to a lesser extent on the collective. However, there is still very little understanding of how we can become free of our cultural conditioning, which this book focuses its attention on.

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<tr>
<th>Conditioning</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
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<td>Conscious</td>
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<td>Subconscious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unconscious</td>
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Table 4.2: Levels and types of mechanistic conditioning

To give some examples of how to use this table from my own experience, I was born in England and so my mother tongue is English, which I can call my conscious cultural conditioning, something that I live with. For this cannot be changed, anymore than the sex of my body or my height. On the other hand, having been brought up and educated in England, as a child I was taught the seven pillars of unwisdom that underlie Western civilization, based on the false belief that we human beings are separate from the Divine, Nature, and each other. And this is something that can be changed. For since I discovered these pillars deep in my unconscious in the 1980s and 90s, I have done my utmost to bring these misconceptions into consciousness so that I could rebuild my life on the seven pillars of wisdom during the early years of this century.
Sadly, however, questioning the beliefs and assumptions that provide people with a precarious sense of security and identity in life feels very threatening to many. So, inevitably, I have needed to spend most of my life, especially since 1980, in almost complete solitude, being told that I am a prophet living many years ahead of my time, of no apparent value to my fellow human beings.

But why should I paradoxically act in this countercultural, anti-social manner, when all I want in life is to live in love and peace with my fellow human beings? Well, I found the answer to this question in my personal unconscious, following the seven-year breakdown and breakthrough I went through between January 1977 and October 1983, when I formed the concept of the Absolute in IRL, as described in Section ‘The Absolute Whole’ on page 244. Like everyone else, my unique experiences from conception and birth have served to form this personal conditioning. So, I’ve also needed to follow a multitude of psychospiritual exercises and cognitive insights in order to bring this mechanistic conditioning into consciousness so that it could be dissolved.

At the other end of the spectrum is the collective unconscious with its archetypes, studied most assiduously by Carl Jung. Jung began to develop his own ideas about the unconscious and other aspects of the psyche when he broke with Sigmund Freud and embarked on a journey of self-exploration in 1912, when he was thirty-seven, vividly described in *The Red Book: Liber Novus*, the largest book I have ever held in my hands at 457 × 307 mm. Jung explains why he left the Freudian school in the opening paragraphs of a paper he wrote in 1918 called ‘The Role of the Unconscious’. As he says, “Freudian theory reduces everything to sexuality, and sketches a picture of the unconscious which makes it appear as a kind of lumber-room where all the repressed and inadmissible infantile wishes and all the later, inadmissible sexual wishes are stored.” Broadening this notion of the *personal unconscious*, Jung added *everything that we have forgotten* to that which has been repressed.

However, as Jung pointed out, the unconscious is much broader than this. It also contains *mythological fantasies*, telling the story of mankind:

The unending myth of death and rebirth, and of the multitudinous figures who weave in and out of this mystery. This unconscious, buried in the structure of the brain and disclosing its living presence only through the medium of creative fantasy, is the *suprapersonal unconscious*. It comes alive in the creative man, it reveals itself in the vision of the artist, in the inspiration of the thinker, in the inner experience of the mystic. … The connection with the suprapersonal or *collective* unconscious means an extension of man beyond himself; it means death for his personal being and a rebirth in a new dimension, as was literally enacted in certain of the ancient mysteries.

This passage applies as much to anyone endeavouring to liberate Intelligence from its mechanistic conditioning as any other creative activity. For doing so leads to the death of the sense of a separate self, revealing everything that is hidden in the depths of the psyche.
Enlightening the shadow

Regarding the process of the transformation of consciousness that humanity is currently engaged in, Jung considered the most significant disturbing archetypes to be the shadow, the anima, and the animus. Let us look at these in turn. For the greatest threat to the health, well-being, and even survival of our species does not come from Economic Collapse, Peak Oil, Global Water Crisis, Species Extinction, or Rapid Climate Change, which John Petersen, founder of the Arlington Institute, is focusing his attention on, as we see page 1057 in Chapter 13, ‘The Prospects for Humanity’. Rather, the greatest danger lies within, in the dark recesses of our minds, which Jung called the ‘shadow’. It is thus of vital importance that we learn to shine the full light of consciousness on the shadow so that we can intelligently deal with challenges facing humanity at the present time.

For Jung, the shadow is the dark aspect of personality formed by those fears and unpleasant emotions which, being rejected by the self or persona of which an individual is conscious, exist in the personal unconscious, a definition given in the OED rather than by Jung himself. We are all familiar with the effects of the shadow, for we see the shadow’s projections in every walk of life, from the war games that politicians play, through the workplace, to our personal relationships. In my experience, even advanced spiritual seekers are often not completely free of the shadow. For, as Chögyam Trungpa pointed out in Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism, spiritual egoism is pandemic.

To see why this is so, we need to extend Jung’s concept of the shadow. For me, I also consider the shadow to be the repository of the psychic structures that define people’s precarious sense of identity and security as separate individuals. As such, it is vitally to protect and defend the shadow as much as possible. For if these structures are destroyed, people can easily go crazy, having no coherent cognitive structures to guide their lives. So any threat to these structures is likely to provoke a fight or flight reaction.

However, rather than seeking the root causes of all the conflict and suffering in the world, many avoid looking into the depths of the psyche. As an acquaintance once said to me when I asked her why she did not look inwards to discover the cause of her unhappiness, “I’m afraid of what I might find out.” And in our personal relationships, there is often a mutual agreement to keep to the superficial, without enlightening the shadow, respecting people’s comfort zones.

To deal with this tricky situation in my own life, I use a model that I learnt from David Wasdell, a polymath who helped me find the root cause of my personal conditioning in 1985. This was a wonderful discovery, the beginning of becoming free of unhappiness by accepting ‘what is’. However, understanding the cause of my malaise, the second of the Buddha’s four noble truths, is just the start. In the event, it has taken many years to apply the cure and remedy, drawing on a multitude of spiritual and psychological therapies.
To understand the basic problem here, Figure 4.15 illustrates how consciousness is split in two, into a conscious and unconscious part, the latter including the subconscious for simplicity. The unconscious is not just personal, it also includes the cultural and collective, an aspect of the fragmented mind that David Bohm attempted to deal with through his proposals for open dialogue in groups of people.

In the initiating proposal for dialogue that he wrote with Donald Factor and Peter Garrett, this states, “In Dialogue, a group of people can explore the individual and collective presuppositions, ideas, beliefs, and feelings that subtly control their interactions.” They even suggested that this questioning way of communicating should come under scrutiny “as a kind of ‘meta-dialogue’, aimed at clarifying the process of Dialogue itself”.76 Lee Nichol then edited a posthumous summary of Bohm’s thoughts on dialogue, saying in his foreword, “Such an inquiry necessarily calls into question deeply held assumptions regarding culture, meaning, and identity.”77

Yes, indeed. For the unconscious shadow contains the seven pillars of unwisdom that give Western civilization its sense of identity: misconceptions of God, Universe, Life, humanity, money, justice, and reason, which arise from the sense of separation. Conversely, the unconscious also contains the seven pillars of wisdom, as a potential for Homo sapiens sapiens to truly live up to its name.

However, it is not easy to bring the seven pillars of wisdom into consciousness, for the shadow side of our psyches is heavily defended, as David Wasdell points out in ‘Foundations of Psycho-Social Analysis’. As he says, there are two basic ways of dealing with this sensitive situation, which he calls ‘collusional’ and ‘maturational’, simply illustrated in Figure 4.16.78

Essentially, what this diagram illustrates is that in a relationship between two individuals, A and B, such as a couple living together, there are some aspects of the psyche that are open or blind to both. But what happens to the other coloured sections is most significant. In a collusional relationship, there is an agreement not to penetrate into any parts of the unconscious that one or either seeks to maintain. So all the coloured sections in this diagram are out-of-bounds, increasing what is unconscious for the couple, even
though each can see those aspects of the unconscious that the other is seeking to hide in a defensive manner.

However, in a psychotherapeutic relationship, such as some spiritual seekers adopt, there is an agreement that each will assist the other in bringing into consciousness that aspect of the unconscious that is open to one, but not the other. In such maturational relationships, it is just the magenta section of this model that is unconscious to both, as they seek to become more and more awakened. Another example of such a relationship is that between a therapist and client, although this is usually one way.

This model can be extended to any group of people sharing a common interest or belief system. For instance, in a therapeutic group, such as that exists in a Buddhist sangha, everyone is helping the entire group to become awakened. However, in a collusional group, there is an agreement among the members to respect all of what any of them might wish to hide. Politics is often based on such a collusional covenant. Sometimes a compromise can be found between arguing parties. But as often as not a settlement cannot be found and war breaks out. Such wars do not necessarily involve guns or physical violence. There is psychological warfare going on throughout the world, both between individuals and groups. We live in a society that is at war with itself, as projections of the unresolved conflicts that we all harbour within ourselves as individuals.

**Becoming androgynous beings**

Another war that has been ongoing for thousands of years is the battle of the sexes, as men in all cultures in the patriarchal epoch have treated women as second-class citizens. As recently as the nineteenth century, common law in England and the USA decreed that a woman had no rights of her own separate from her husband, in a legal doctrine called *couverte*, literally ‘covered’. Charles Dickens brilliantly depicted this absurd situation in *Oliver Twist*. When Mr Bumble is informed “the law supposes that your wife acts under your direction,” Mr Bumble replies, “If the law supposes that … the law is a [sic] ass—a idiot.” Not surprisingly, we have seen three waves of feminist rebellion during the past century and more.

Once again, this is a deep wound in the collective psyche that we urgently need to heal. For if we are unify all opposites in Wholeness, we need to become androgynous beings, transcending identification with the sex of our bodies. In ‘The Syzygy: Anima and Animus’, Jung associated the animus and anima with the paternal Logos and maternal Eros, respectively. These tend to be dominant in men and women, respectively, and usually less developed the other way round. As a man, this is also my experience, Integral Relational Logic having emerged through the action of the Logos. So I’ve needed to bring the anima into consciousness so that it can be unified with the animus.
Jung called this syzygial process ‘individuation’, illustrated by an extensive case study that he conducted in the 1920s and 30s with an American woman aged fifty-five, when she travelled to Europe, having studied psychology for nine years. “She was unmarried, but lived with the unconscious equivalent of a human partner, namely the animus (the personification of everything masculine in a woman), in that characteristic liaison so often met with in women with an academic education.”

‘Miss X’ visited Jung because “she had reached a limit and ‘got stuck’,” which “made it urgently necessary for her to look round for ways that might lead her out of the impasse”. In particular, she felt that her relationship with her Danish mother “left much to be desired”. Finding a hidden talent for painting on a visit to Denmark to investigate her origins, Jung used this ability to guide her therapy, which led her from landscape painting to the painting of mandalas, of which Figure 4.17 is the seventeenth in the series, illustrating an increasing level of aestheticism and skill, as the healing process progressed.

The word *mandala* is Sanskrit for ‘disc, circle’, defined by *Encyclopedia Britannica* thus:

In Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism, a symbolic diagram used in the performance of sacred rites and as an instrument of meditation. The mandala is basically a representation of the universe, a consecrated area that serves as a receptacle for the gods and as a collection point of universal forces. Man (the microcosm), by mentally ‘entering’ the mandala and ‘proceeding’ toward its centre, is by analogy guided through the cosmic processes of disintegration and reintegration.

Tantra in Hinduism and Buddhism is a group of spiritual practices designed to unify opposites in the Absolute Continuum, as the etymology of the word indicates. However, Hindus and Buddhists have treated mandalas is somewhat different ways. In Hinduism, the term *yantra*, meaning ‘tantric symbol of cosmic unity’, is used to denote an abstract, geometric figure representing the Divine Cosmos. For instance, Figure 4.18 is a nineteenth-century yantra “depicting the evolution and involution of the cosmos. The expanding and contracting currents of vibration symbolized by the Sanskrit letters form a web-like image, as the cosmos emanates and returns again to the primordial centre, the One.”
Figure 4.19 depicts a typical Tibetan mandala, characteristically consisting “of an outer enclosure around one or more concentric circles, which in turn surround a square traversed by lines from the centre to the four corners.”

Tibetan mandalas also demonstrate the principle of *anitya* ‘impermanence’. When Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, travels the world, the monks accompanying him often spend a few days creating a most intricate and beautiful mandala out of grains of coloured sand. For instance, when the Dalai Lama visited Stockholm in the 1990s, I was invited by a friend to watch the monks creating one such mandala, about two metres square. At the end of the visit, they threw their incredible creation into the sea, the mandala having been drawn on an island in Stockholm city.

As another example, Figure 4.20 shows a photo of a Chenrezig sand mandala created and exhibited at the House of Commons in London on the occasion of the visit of the Dalai Lama on 21st May 2008. Presumably, this was thrown into the Thames at the end of the visit.

So while the Principle of Unity is not explicitly known as the fundamental design principle of the Universe, its effects in the Cosmogonic Cycle have been well known for millennia. Nevertheless, this basic law of the Cosmos is not unknown in the West. Jung was one of the first to intuitively understand its significance, regarding analytical psychology as “a synthesis of two opposites: a spiritual quest for self-knowledge with a scientific approach to the workings of the psyche.” As mentioned on page 90 in Chapter 1, ‘Starting Afresh at the Very Beginning’, Jung’s endeavours to synthesize opposites was based on his own therapeutic experience. Otherwise, his work would not have had the ring of authenticity about it.

Another depth psychologist who uses mandalas in his therapeutic practice is Stanislav Grof. In Prague, in the spring of 1992, I attended a sensational holotropic breathwork session with him and his wife Christina, at the end of which we were asked to draw a mandala as an expression of our experiences. (I drew the sun of Consciousness to the best of my limited ability.) In my experience, breathwork is a most effective way of bringing the sub- and unconscious into consciousness so that it can be examined within the brilliant light of day. For
myself, rebirthing breathwork was the technique that was given to me to heal my own personal conditioning in the late 1980s. For my Norwegian wife Berit was then a leading rebirther in Sweden.

As we enter the end times of *Homo sapiens sapiens* on Earth, the central question is thus how can we bring this ancient wisdom into society as a whole? Although in academia, the depth psychology of people like Jung and Grof is generally eschewed as contravening the materialistic principles of the so-called natural sciences, many today are finding such psychospiritual practices to be invaluable in their search for happiness, at least, maybe leading, one day to the Bliss of Satchidananda.

**Working harmoniously together with a common vision**

However, such spiritual seekers are generally working within the prevailing culture, much constrained by the first tier in the spectrum of consciousness, even when they are endeavouring to make the transition from the second to the third tier, illustrated in Figure 13.17 on page 1064 in Chapter 13, ‘The Prospects for Humanity’. So to end this first volume of the Wholeness trilogy, let us look briefly at what needs to happen if we are to intelligently transcend the categories before the extinction of our species.

Integral Relational Logic shows us what the Universe is and how it is designed. So, in principle, we could cocreate a vibrant, life-enhancing society living in harmony with the fundamental laws of the Universe. After all, IRL has evolved from the semantic modelling methods that information systems architects use to build the Internet. So this utopian vision is in theory quite practical. Sadly, however, the vast majority of the human race is so deluded, living so far removed from Reality, that it would take a gigantic life-shock to bring our species back to its senses.

The central issue here is that IRL shows that there is a primary-secondary relationship between the Cosmic Psyche and the physical universe and hence that most of our behaviour is caused by nonphysical, psychospiritual energies, whose very existence materialistic science denies. The Cosmic Psyche—the 99% of the Universe that is inaccessible to our physical senses—is the last frontier of human discovery and adventure, requiring us to look inwards if we are ever to liberate intelligence from its mechanistic conditioning. So before we explore these critical issues in more detail in the final chapters of Volume Three, let us spend a moment looking at them here.

In essence, we are all jewels in Indra’s Net, mirroring each other, whether we know this or not. As we see in Subsection ‘Unifying our Divine and human identities’ on page 265, we are all the entire Ocean of Consciousness and also unique waves and currents on and beneath this vast body of water. And, as we saw in the previous subsection, the simplest and most beautiful way of symbolizing this vision of Wholeness, which is who we truly are, is through mandalas,
such as the Harmony Mandala in Figure 4.21 that I found on the Web. Wholeness is not only the answer to the question “Who are we?”, Wholeness is also the answer to the questions, “Where have we come from?” and “Where are we going?”

However, if we are to realize our destiny as a species by working harmoniously together with a common vision, we can only truly do so when we live in pure consciousness. The brilliant reflections of Indra’s Net are hardly possible when our self-reflective mirrors are shattered and covered with the grime of our ancestors. What this means is that we need to bring the unconscious of the entire species into consciousness so that it can be carefully examined in the brilliant light of day. And this naturally involves all of us. No one can be spared from this adventure because they consider opening Pandora’s Box to be too scary, releasing their hidden demons.

What this means is that we need to make some changes to the two bell curves in Figure 4.13, for they are deceptively simple. First, Figure 4.22 provides a more accurate schematic of the ontogenetic path that I have been following during my life, with increasing consciousness and understanding. The first thirty-eight years of my life can best be described as ‘blind evolution’, when I had very little understanding of what was happening to me. All I knew is that what I had been taught in religion, science, and economics as a teenager made very little sense to me.

![Harmony Mandala](image)

**Figure 4.21: Harmony Mandala**

![Apocalyptic way Home to Wholeness](image)

**Figure 4.22: Apocalyptic way Home to Wholeness**

It was not until 11:30 a.m. on Sunday 27th April 1980, that evolution began to become conscious of itself within me, as I describe on page 25 in Part I, ‘Integral Relational Logic’. I was
thus led to start afresh at the very beginning, as described in Chapter 1, being consciously guided by what was to become the Principle of Unity since midsummer that year, revealed in a great apocalyptic revelation, which came from nowhere.

Then just two years later, I realized that I had reached the Omega Point of evolution at the peak of evolutionary convergence, much as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin prophesied. However, this did not mean that I had realized a state of Pure Consciousness. Far from it. In practice, I have needed to work very hard on bringing all types and levels of mechanistic conditioning into consciousness so that I could realize my fullest potential as a Divine, Cosmic being, a healing, awakening, liberating process that is still ongoing. This has led me to see that what I call evolution and involution are quite different from what Aurobindo Ghose, Ken Wilber, and other evolutionaries mean by these words, explored further on page 754 in Part III, ‘Our Evolutionary Story’.

This brings us to the modification that we need to make to the small bell-curve in Figure 4.13. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell describes how the spiritual journey traditionally consists of three major stages: Departure, Initiation, and Return, outlined in Table 13.4, “The stages and steps of the monomyth,” on page 1071. Not all mystics embark on the Return stage, for having reached Apotheosis in the bliss of Nirvana, why should they return to live in a grievously sick society?

However, not all mystics take this approach. Some return as spiritual teachers, acting as pristine mirrors for others who seek to come into union with the Divine in Oneness. However, in recent years, a group of people calling themselves ‘evolutionaries’ are taking another approach, depicted in Figure 4.23.

![Formless Immortal Ground of Being](image)

**Figure 4.23: Evolutionary enlightenment**

In effect, having demolished the first pillar of unwisdom on which Western civilization is based, they are engaged in a revolution in culture and consciousness. A couple of the leaders
of this cultural revolution are Andrew Cohen, founder of EnlightenNext, and Barbara Marx Hubbard, founder of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution and leader of Agents for Conscious Evolution (ACE).

However, while their evolutionary endeavours are consciously emerging from the Formless Immortal Ground of Being, it is by no means clear that these evolutionaries know where they are going. Yes, they are working towards social convergence, much as Teilhard prophesied. However, in general, they are not completely free of the other six pillars of unwisdom that underlie Western thought and organizations.

What these are and how we could collectively rebuild society on the seven pillars of wisdom, we explore in much more detail in Parts II and III of this Wholeness trilogy. In the meantime, let us end this edition of Volume One and see what might unfold later in 2013. My intention is to seek ways of unifying Figures 4.22 and 4.23. For I do not see any other way creating sufficient synergy to counteract the outward, divergent thrust of Western civilization, depicted in Figure 4.13.