

## Ken Wilber – Inspirations Summary Box

### *Key concepts, claims and elements*

\* **Founder of "Integral Theory"**, Integral Institute and author of over 40 books on the many dimensions of consciousness (Wilber came to be known as the "Einstein of consciousness studies")

\* **Methodology:** Synopsis of a large number of Eastern and Western approaches to explore scientific and spiritual knowledge about the development of consciousness in individuals, as well as its implications for socio-cultural evolution, which are condensed into a **"Theory of Everything"**

\* **Holons, holarchies and holonic development**

Reality is composed of **holons** (entities which are wholes in themselves and at the same time parts of even larger wholes, Koestler). Everything must therefore be considered in its embedding (holonic) context. Healthy development is holonic development, i.e. expanding/growing in complexity while respecting the health of all constitutive parts (holons). Vertical complexity development occurs through processes of transcending and including the (qualities of the) original holon(s).

\* **Wilber's integral AQAL (all quadrants, all levels) model** consists of five dimensions:

- four quadrants of looking at reality (consciousness, behavior, culture and systems)
- vertical complexity development in all four quadrants (drawing on adult development research)
- differentiating multiple lines of development in each person (ditto)
- states of being and existence in all quadrants and their influence on perception and behavior
- types and typologies in all quadrants, helping to understand differences on a horizontal level

\* **A truly integral approach needs to take into account all five dimensions** for understanding whatever phenomenon. How a specific perspective does this determines its "kosmic address" (its location in the AQAL matrix).

\* Every perspective (everyone) has a part of the truth (the big picture). Nobody is smart enough to be wrong all the time. Yet, **higher levels contain more truth** than lower levels.

\* Each stage of development is adequate, but each higher stage is more adequate (Wilber, 2016: 90).

\* In 3 books, Wilber offers more explicit **applications of his Integral Theory to politics:**

- **"Integral Politics"** (2018) shows how to "classify, index and track (...) any political theory (and) all of the major political movements to date (...) using the AQAL matrix".

- **"Wicked & Wise"** (with Alan Watkins, 2015) offers a process for addressing wicked complex challenges with the help of the AQAL matrix and an Integral Coherence model.

- **"Trump and the Post-Truth World"** (2016) proposes an integral, developmentally informed interpretation of the deeper reasons of Donald Trump's election as a US president. According to Wilber, the "Green" socio-political and cultural code, the leading edge in the US and in most western countries, has itself considerably contributed to the rise of "populist" movements, including that of Trump, through its culture of nihilism and narcissism, its lack of a developmental understanding of political dynamics, and its own performative contradictions resulting from both.

**Sources:** Wilber, Ken (2000). *The Collected Works of Ken Wilber*. Shambhala Publications.

**Further reading:** IO 1 chapter 4

