

Global Change by Natural Design

By Peter Merry

This paper aims to explore the connections between evolutionary biology and living systems theory on the one hand, and on the other, a currently emerging initiative called Global Balance which aims to move human civilisation into a more co-operative way of behaving, bringing all parts of the system into balance for a sustainable future. It concludes that the emergence of a global system designed to meet the needs of all, is a natural part of the evolution of the human species. By learning from evolutionary biology, social change agents can create the natural design that will allow human civilisation to develop its next scale of co-operation.

The paper is divided into three main parts. Firstly, we take a short look at the Global Balance project itself, so you can have this in mind as we explore some of the theory around it. We then move on to discover how an understanding of evolutionary systems informs and supports the project. The third section then takes one concrete map of evolutionary human systems, called Integral Spiral Dynamics, and uses it to plot where human evolution is at the moment, and how a project like Global Balance can best contribute to our healthy development.

Global Balance - the Project

Today's world is looking increasingly complex and unpredictable. It can feel worrying; there seems to be less concern for others; freedom, progress and individual rights are being threatened; the planet is under stress; and no-one seems to have the overview that would enable us to design solutions.

The world needs thinking and co-ordinated action that would provide protection for cultural values and traditions, whilst encouraging mutual respect and learning. It would provide opportunities for development and entrepreneurship, safeguarding individual freedoms whilst recognising that we all have a responsibility to the whole. It would create security and stability, whilst stimulating constructive competition and strong leadership. It would make sure people's very basic needs are met, understanding our interdependence, whilst encouraging self-reliance. It would protect the limited resources of the planet we are all part of, whilst ensuring opportunities for the development of all societies, today and tomorrow.

We need to design a system that will support all of these - and it will only succeed if all of those interests are met. To do this, we will need to transcend

single issues, gather wisdom from all sectors of society, and blend them together in a global natural design that meets all our needs. The system will need to ensure that the different actors in the trans-national space capture the beneficial or harmful impact of their actions on other parts of the system, making self-interest reflect group interest. Only in this way can a re-alignment of global interactions happen, providing for the present and emerging needs of all parts of the whole, whilst safeguarding the global ecological space in which we all live.

A major hurdle to be overcome in the implementation of policies that would achieve this, is the current framework of global economic competitiveness. If one nation state or corporation were to attempt to align its policies and actions with human and ecological well-being, the likelihood would be that:

- the nation would lose its competitive advantage over other nations - it would become a more expensive country to operate in, so business would make less profit, and they would probably re-locate somewhere where they can make the most money - creating job losses and unemployment in the original country
- capital markets would similarly react adversely with currency devaluation, inflation and further unemployment being the likely consequences
- the corporation would become less economically competitive in relation to other corporations in their market niche, and would therefore go out of business.

This is simply because the current system does not reward action which benefits others but costs money, and neither can it punish or deter action which is detrimental to the common interest. This framework - the rules of the game, if you like - are the main reason that we need simultaneous implementation of a new set of policies across the world. If they were implemented together, the whole framework would change, and create an "operating environment" which rewarded beneficial action and deterred detrimental action, so that the nation state and corporation which implemented people and planet-friendly policies would not be disadvantaged in any way but would actually increase their competitiveness. So a condition to be met in this project is the transcending of national economic interest as it is currently framed.

This is not a revolutionary step - it is simply the logical extension of the way we currently organise ourselves as human civilisations. Nation states became so successful as entities for the principal reason that national governance (which has always been implemented simultaneously and 'globally', i.e. relating to the entire national territorial space in question) adequately embraced economic activities which were mostly nationally based or at least had allegiance to a particular nation. Economic activities have now escaped the national space and have little or no national allegiance, which is a principal

reason for the deterioration in the powers of the nation state. Secondly, it is the reason why a global and simultaneous system, whilst being vital for our survival, is also simply the logical next step.

Global Balance foresees the following steps:

- Gather people with the experience and insight to explore the design of the new global systems
- Bundle together the policies that would need to be implemented in order for the new systems to operate
- Educate people across the world on the proposed changes, and collect feedback
- Activate supporters world-wide to lobby policy-makers and institutions to adopt the policy package
- When a workable majority of governments and institutions have adopted the package, trigger simultaneous implementation
- Monitor implementation, and support the different parts of the system as they adapt to the changes
- Stimulate the development of new policy that can now be implemented under the changed global framework

This is the challenge that Global Balance has set itself. If we succeed, we will have taken a big step forward in human evolution, and future generations will recognise that. We know it can happen. The expertise and support exists to make it happen. And it looks like evolution is on our side.

Global Balance in Evolution

In this section, we will explore how evolutionary systems thinking supports and informs the Global Balance project. Here we focus on understanding how systems evolve; in the next section we will look at what conditions are necessary for whole-system change to take place.

Ken Wilber identifies what he calls "the twenty tenets" of evolutionary systems, "tendencies" that you find wherever evolution is unfolding (Wilber 1996, 313). In fact, depending on how you break them down there are more or less twenty. Below I have listed nineteen from his work, and then added one from other sources. They provide a good basis from which to start an analysis of evolution and its relationship to the Global Balance project.

Tenet 1

"Reality as a whole is not composed of things or processes, but of holons (wholes that are parts of other wholes)"

Understanding holons allows us to go beyond the systems thinking that sees things only as a web, where all the different parts are interconnected in great breadth, to seeing that the different parts also all have depth - that is to say, they all evolve. In their evolution, they interact with all the different elements in the broad picture, which are also evolving, and influence each others evolution significantly.

The importance of this to the Global Balance project, is the understanding that we cannot simply establish a global system of governance that replaces nation states or lower levels of organisation. In fact it needs to be a system that keeps all the lower holons healthy, as it is itself dependent on their healthy functioning - in the same way that cells are dependent on molecules which are themselves dependent on atoms.

It is only the fact that humans have managed to solve a number of their problems at the lower levels of organisation that is allowing us now to look at global level co-operation. If local communities or nations were to come under too much stress, the tendency would be to regress to those levels, the interest in the global would diminish, and the global holon would disintegrate. Stress which introduces dissonance in the current system can trigger a higher level of organisation, but if other change conditions are not in place, the likelihood is for regression rather than transcendence.

Tenet 2

The following four Tenets are part of one point in Wilber's original, and are intrinsically connected. I am separating them out to clarify the relevance of each of them to Global Balance.

"Holons display the capacity for self-preservation (agency)"

A holon is able to maintain its current level of organisation and existence, its unique identity, as well as being made up of other parts, and being part of a bigger whole. So a molecule has its own individual agency, whilst also being made up of smaller atoms and being part of a bigger cell.

A system of global co-operation must therefore not only include all the other parts of the system, but transcend them to create its own identity and agency, which is more than, and dependent on, the lower parts. The system must contain the feedback loops that ensure that positive impact on the rest of the system of a lower part's behaviour is captured by that part, and likewise for negative impact. This results in the self-interest of the parts reflecting the interest of the global whole. This is what will give the global system its agency.

Tenet 3

"Holons display the capacity for self-adaptation (communion)"

So a holon, as well as having its own identity and agency, is able to adapt to be part of a greater whole and wider context. Molecules are able to adapt to be parts of cells, and to survive in the environment which that creates. If they didn't have this capacity, they would cease to exist, the cells would fall apart, and we'd have a major regression on our hands!

Likewise, nation states, regional trade blocks and competing corporations must have the capacity to live alongside each other as part of a supra-national space - they must be able to adapt to the conditions of that space, and survive in that environment. This is where one of the major problems lies. Nation states, by their nature, are set up to govern the national space. Regional blocks such as the EU are set up to govern in the regional space. However, business and technology currently operate at the global level, the next holonic level, and that puts large amounts of stress on national and regional bodies, which are not configured to operate in that space.

The problems that business is encountering in the global space, are the limitations of the trans-national environment - which include global ecological issues. Corporations are not configured to manage the global environment, and as it comes under increasing stress, they are likely to find their operations at the global level limited by the reduction in natural capital - both in terms of resources to feed into the production process (e.g. fisheries), and carrying capacity of the planet for the output (e.g. CO2 emissions).

This is the challenge that Global Balance is designed to meet - creating the conditions to enable self-adaptation of the current parts for communion at the global level.

Tenet 4

"Holons display the capacity for self-transcendence (eros)"

So a group of molecules can get together to make a cell, including themselves in the new system, but transcending themselves to create a more complex organisational form. Eros is that extra layer of complexity and creativity that makes the whole more than the sum of the parts.

Nation states, regional trade blocks and competing corporations have the capacity to transcend themselves to become part of a more complex and embracing holon at the global level. Multi- and trans-national corporations have already shown how to transcend the national level - the challenge now is to create the system of capture at this supra-national level (and supra-regional, e.g. supra- EU, ASEAN, NAFTA) which will create the new system at the global level necessary to safeguard the health of all the lower parts, and ensure the economic, social and ecological sustainability of trans-national activity. This will require us to tap into our deepest capacities for eros and creativity.

Tenet 5

"Holons display the capacity for self-dissolution (thanatos)"

Put under pressure, a holon can break down into its component parts. I remember the classic chemistry lesson at school where crystals are heated up and they dissolve into liquid, and can't reform until you drop a crystal into the mixture, at which point the solution immediately crystallises again - a good example of a more complex system managing less complex parts.

At societal level, this is the fate that potentially awaits us if we do not get the global level system in place. The supra-national space in which things happen at the moment, the global holon, the first emergence of attempts at adaptive fit at the global level, is likely to break down into its component parts, with increased competition between those parts. If we do not safeguard the regulatory space of national and regional bodies of governance, if we do not preserve the natural capital which trans-national commerce depends on, the supra-national holon will fail to survive, and we will get increasing tensions between nation states and regional blocks, likely to manifest in trade wars, quite possibly backed up by military force as national-level holons fight to safeguard their agency in the inter-national environment.

More intense explosions of agency are probable from holons even lower down the scale of organisation, such as fundamentalist groups driven by their One Truth religion or other exclusivist belief systems. Technology operating at the

global level will be used for less than global interests - unless the global system of capture is designed to take co-operation to the supra-national plane. Self-dissolution is not a pleasant thought, and precisely what Global Balance is attempting to prevent. Thanatos is the death drive - breakdown and dissolution. It is a survival imperative for us to work for eros.

Tenet 6

"Holons emerge"

Out of what is, emerges what will be. The amazing thing about evolution, is precisely the fact that things do evolve! In the in-built drive to survive, lies the power to create greater scales of co-operation. Why? Because it safeguards our own existence. Look at how successful atoms have been in that. In the emergence of molecules, and all the increasingly complex organisms and systems of organisation that are made up of molecules, atoms are securing their existence. It's in all of our interest now to protect the existence of atoms! So more complex and embracing holons emerge of the parts that currently exist.

Global Balance, and other initiatives that are attempting to develop global-level co-operation, are a manifestation of the emergence of the next holon. It has emerged, because we have felt the need for this new scale of co-operation to safeguard our own survival. This creative power exists in us, and we must create the space to allow its expression, as in our eros lies the answer to how we can best develop the global-level system we now need.

Tenet 7

"Holons emerge holarchically"

As a new level of co-operation emerges, it stands on the shoulders of its predecessors. These natural hierarchies are how things are organised - holons composed of parts, and themselves parts of bigger wholes. They are not oppressive hierarchies, where the higher level oppresses the lower level - if they were, they would be committing suicide - e.g. atoms > molecules > cells.

The global system of co-operation will emerge out of the current parts, but will include a level of complexity not existing in the parts themselves. This is what gives it its higher place in the holarchy. It will have to be acknowledged as such, and each of the parts will have to see this system as being in its own interest.

Tenet 8

"Each emergent holon transcends and includes its predecessor(s)"

As a more complex level of organisation evolves, it includes in itself all the parts from which it emerges. So a cell includes the molecules, which include the atoms. At the same time, it transcends all the parts, adding a level of complexity which does not exist in the other parts, and a system for managing

the parts in the interest of the whole - which gives the new system its own agency.

This means that the new global system will have to include all the parts which are stimulating its emergence, such as nation states, regional trade blocks, organisations involved in trans- or inter-national commerce, international institutions etc. They will all have to be part of the system. But at the same time, the system must transcend all of these other parts, adding an extra element which the parts do not have. It will have to include a mechanism to ensure the capture by the parts of the impact of their activities on the other parts of the system. It will have to be seen by the parts as an essential evolution in order to safeguard their own survival. And the thinking that will be needed to produce this system will need to be more complex and embracing than the thinking currently applied to international affairs. As Albert Einstein said: "You can't solve a problem with the same thinking that created it" - a great summary of the need for thinking and systems which transcend the current parts.

Tenet 9

"The lower sets the possibilities of the higher; the higher sets the probabilities of the lower"

This means that the higher levels of organisation are dependent for their existence on the lower levels. If you took away atoms, there would be no molecules, let alone cells. So if you destroy a holon at a certain level, all the higher holons are also destroyed - so the lower sets the possibilities of the higher. On the other hand, the higher the level of organisation, the greater probability there is that the lower levels will survive. So the survival of atoms would be a far safer bet than the survival of the United Nations.

The implications for Global Balance are of the utmost importance. It means that if we do not keep the lower systems healthy - e.g. regional co-operation, nation states, markets, international trade and cultural exchange, local communities, cultural traditions, family space - then the possibility to establish the global holon will be extremely limited. It also means that Global Balance has an excellent argument for these lower parts to support it - its success will greatly enhance the probability of their healthy existence.

Tenet 10

"The number of levels that a holarchy comprises determines whether it is "shallow or deep"; and the number of holons on any given level we shall call its "span"."

The depth of a holon is determined by the number of sub-holons which it is made up of. So cells have more depth than molecules. The span of a holon is determined by the number of holons which exist at its level of complexity. So there will always be more molecules than cells, so molecules have greater span, and cells have greater depth.

Global Balance should therefore result in systems at the global level which are less in number than the current number of parts operating in the inter-national space. It will also need to be managed by a level of thinking that is more complex than the thinking which produced the current international environment.

Tenet 11

"The greater the depth of the holon, the greater its degree of consciousness"

That is to say, the more parts it has transcended and included, the more its awareness of the whole unfolds. So the Global Balance system will have greater consciousness of the impact of all the different parts on each other and their environment, than current inter-national systems do. It will also therefore require people to create and manage it who have access to adequate levels of consciousness.

Tenet 12

"Destroy any holon, and you will destroy all of the holons above and none of the holons below it."

As explored in Tenet 9. Destroy cells, and all of the organisms that are made up of cells will of course be destroyed as well. However, atoms will continue to exist.

So if we try to destroy the various ethno-centric groupings that exist in the world, we are going to prevent the emergence of healthy nations. If we allow the nation state to disappear into oblivion, we can forget about global level co-operation. If we allow bio-diversity to disappear at the rate it currently is, we can forget about the survival of the human species.

Tenet 13

"Holarchies co-evolve"

Holarchies evolve in parallel interaction with each other, in terms of the emerging levels of complexity and embrace. So as individual consciousness evolves, so does the human organism, so do collective group cultural values, and so do collective societal structures and ways of organising our lives - and they all continually interact with and influence each other. If there is a mis-fit between holons in these different areas, it is likely to cause stress, and potentially hinder the further evolution of that level of complexity. So if collective cultural values fail to be reflected in the societal structures, people are likely to be unhappy. Either the societal structures will have to develop to reflect the needs of the culture, or the cultural holon is unlikely to survive, causing deep distress, which will express itself in inter-group conflict and individual illness.

For Global Balance, this is one of the key motivators for the project. In the structures that exist in the world, more specifically in the areas of technology

and economics, the global holon has emerged. In some individuals, equivalent levels of global consciousness have emerged - but only rarely can this level of consciousness be said to be established as the centre of gravity in a whole cultural group with power. What this means is that less-than-global values are using global-level technology to serve their own in-group interests - which is creating negative fall-out for other parts of the system and for the global environment in which this is all being played out. That is why, as explained above, it is essential to develop the system of capture at the global level, to ensure the survival of the global holon, and protect the health of the lower parts of the system.

Whilst working on the global system of capture, it will also be essential for the project to be educating people about this way of thinking, helping to develop evolutionary-systemic modeling capacities where people are ready for it, and supporting initiatives that encourage self-development that meet people where they are, and do not demand that people become something that they are not. Different people and societies are at different places in their development, and therefore have different immediate futures. Those must be properly understood and respected.

Tenet 14

"The micro is in relational exchange with the macro at all levels of its depth"

The lower holons will always be interacting with the higher holons, and vice-versa. What is done at one level will ripple through the other levels. So if something happens to an organism, or it behaves in a certain way, that will impact on the molecules and atoms, and also on the bigger context of which it is a part.

A key principle of healthy living systems is their ability to maintain balance through self-stabilisation. This is achieved through constantly picking up feedback, and responding to it, whilst maintaining the basic structure of the system. Von Bertalanffy called it "fleissgleichgewicht", which translates as flux-equilibrium. So it is a state of balance, but one which is constantly learning and responding.

Whatever is done in the global level system, will impact on all the component parts. What is essential therefore, is adequate modeling tools that can map the impact of global level action. This is what the Integral Spiral Dynamics model (described in the next section) can offer. Likewise, whatever happens in one of the component parts will reverberate at the global level. It is therefore essential that the global system has complex feedback systems, and in-built flexibility, that allows it to respond appropriately to the action of the parts - ensuring capture of both positive and negative impact.

Tenet 15

The next five Tenets are originally part of one point, entitled "Evolution has directionality". I have broken them down to address them individually.

"Evolution's direction increases in complexity"

As one holon transcends and includes its parts, its complexity increases. This is fairly evident, as it now encompasses more parts than the parts that make it up. So a cell is more complex than a molecule.

So the Global Balance system will need to embrace more complex ways of thinking, organising and acting than the current systems of international affairs. There is no doubt in many people's minds that this is urgently needed.

This tenet is backed up by evolutionary biologists, who have added an extra element to the second law of thermo-dynamics. Originally, this law pointed out how energy reduces over time, breaking down into less useful energy along the way, the loss in quality often manifesting in the dispersal of heat. Michael Collins and Sungchal Ji [REFS?] , among others, have pointed out how, parallel to the reduction in energy density since the Big Bang, information density has increased, both logarithmically- since the emergence of the first self-replicating systems in the biosphere about three billion years ago. This increase in information is another way of describing systems as developing increasing complexity.

The labelling of the next stage of human civilisation as the Information Age is a clear sign that increasing information is manifesting as parts of people's realities. Access to all that information is what is pushing the emergence of the global holon, and the Global Balance system will have to be designed to process and respond to as much of the useful information as possible.

Tenet 16

"Evolution's direction increases in differentiation/integration"

A more complex holon is able to differentiate more parts out from each other, whilst at the same time integrating more parts. That is to say, it contains more of the whole system, thus integrating more differentiated parts. So a cell differentiates and integrates both molecules and atoms, whereas molecules can't differentiate themselves.

This is also a key ingredient in the emergence of Global Balance. Nation states are designed for governance at national level, so cannot govern inter-nationally. The thinking that created the current system of international affairs

cannot reflect on itself. Global Balance will need to see a wider picture, integrating more parts than any system has ever done before.

Tenet 17

"Evolution's direction increases organisation/structuration"

The more complex the holon, the more parts it includes, and so the greater the level of organisation it has. The cell is a greater-scale organisation than the molecule.

Global Balance will therefore require a more embracing system of organisation than any of the currently existing structures. It will aim to integrate all the different parts of the system, creating Natural Design which aligns the needs of the different holons whilst protecting the interest of the whole, generating space for the creative energy of eros to flow through the whole system, thus gently inviting the emergence of greater complexity, compassion and embrace. A kind of global acupuncture, if you like.

Tenet 17

"Evolution's direction increases relative autonomy"

The greater depth there is in the holon, the more autonomous it becomes, in that it is less restricted by the higher level holons. So a human being can decide how they are going to move, and the cells in the body have no choice but to follow. (If the cells however are not kept healthy, they can sabotage the higher-level holon, e.g. cancer). Humans are also limited by the bigger systems of which we are a part - so current international transport is generating feedback from the global ecological system, which is letting us know we need to reduce the pollution we are creating from our need for movement and transportation.

The Global Balance system will thus have more autonomy to act than the constituent parts. Given the feedback systems for capture that Global Balance will put in place, nations and corporations will find their actions influenced by that feedback. So what becomes profitable and beneficial for them to do will depend on to what extent it reflects the needs of the system as a whole.

Tenet 19

"Evolution's direction increases telos"

Telos in Greek implies ending, perfection, completeness. So as the complexity and embrace increases, so more of the big picture is included, and more complete the holon becomes - although, as far as we know, you never actually get to the end.

So Global Balance is an attempt to provide a more embracing system for human organisation on planet Earth, within the bigger context of the universe.

I would add one more Tenet, from other evolutionary biologists, and from the work of Clare W Graves and Spiral Dynamics.

Tenet 20

"Evolution spirals between two poles of express-self competition and sacrifice-self co-operation"

If you have a stable holon, which is the most complex in its current holarchical stream, the capture systems are in place, and the parts operate harmoniously within this holon. In order for the holon to develop the next level of complexity, it needs to go through a stage of competition, between the

different manifestations of this holon, where it searches and experiments for the best following level of co-operation. It will have found it when a system is developed that ensures capture between the current parts, making self-interest reflect group interest. This is the search for "adaptive fit".

The competitive stage has been described by Dr. Don Beck as "diversity generation", and the co-operative stage as "conformity enforcement". He compares it to the system which bees have created, where when there is a known source of pollen, the resources in the beehive are shifted to the conformist worker bees, who go back and forth between the flowers and the hive, gathering pollen. But when that source dries up, the hive shifts resources to the diversity-generating explorer bees, who go off all over the place in search of new pollen. When one has found a good source, they return to the hive, and do their famous dance, which points their colleague worker bees in the direction of the new source. Resources are shifted back to the worker bees, and off they go again.

We are currently in the diversity-generation, competitive search for adaptive fit at the global level. Given the planetary conditions we are facing, it is now imperative that a new system of conformity regulation is found quickly to guarantee the unfolding of the global holon in such a way as to align and ensure the well-being of the lower holons in our world.

Conditions for Evolution

Having identified the general patterns in the way things develop, we can explore what conditions make for what kind of change. What is necessary to achieve whole-system change? In terms of change that will move a system to a new holon, there seem to be two major pre-conditions identified in evolutionary biology:

- a system to manage capture, so that self-interest reflects group interest,
- an understanding in all the parts that it is in their interest to co-operate.

Condition 1- Managing Capture

Elizabeth Sahtouris describes how systems move between "juvenile competitive" phases to "mature co-operative" phases (Sahtouris 2002) - from the Earth's first inhabitants, about two billion years ago, when the archebacteria moved out of hostile competition into "huge collaborative communities that evolved into all presently existing biological cells other than bacteria", to today's struggle for global community.

John Stewart (Stewart 2000) describes what he calls a managed system of "capture" that is necessary in order for the collaboration to happen: "Wherever complex co-operation has been able to evolve, it is because co-operators have been able to capture the effects on others of their actions" (36). This means that when one part of the system acts in a certain way, the impact which that action has on others is fed-back to the acting part. So if their action has a negative impact on other parts of the system, it is punished accordingly and appropriately, and likewise if their action has a beneficial impact on other parts of the system, it is rewarded adequately.

For the global holon, that means creating a feedback system that rewards positive impact and punishes negative impact at the global level - e.g. encouraging education and illness prevention, whilst discouraging pollution and poverty generation. This does not mean eliminating all the express-self, diversity generating competition, but rather encouraging it within a re-aligned global system that benefits all parts.

Condition 2 - Self-interest of the Parts

"If evolution is to progress, it must discover ways of building co-operative organisations out of self-interested components - it must learn how to make it in the interests of individuals to co-operate" (Stewart 2000, 30)

Atoms choose to develop into molecules, which choose to develop into cells. It is in their survival interests. It is therefore going to be essential for the Global Balance project to truly meet the needs of *all* the different sub-holons in the current system - regions, nations, tribes, local communities, organisations and institutions of different sorts. It will also be a challenge to show the various sub-structures *how* it is in their interest - for they must be persuaded on a massive scale, before the change can happen.

The guardians of the sub-nation state systems are the nation states and governments themselves. By separating out adoption of the proposed system and simultaneous implementation, the Global Balance project makes sure that enough of the parts have identified their self-interest in the project before it gets implemented. Where the limit lies in terms of how many are enough, can only be a judgement call at the time.

There are likely to be some parts who refuse to co-operate, and a decision will have to be taken at what point it is safe to go ahead and activate the new system without too much instability. The feedback systems will have to be in place to ensure that non-co-operative parts can not free-ride on the others' co-operation. It is essential to protect the more complex, embracing and compassionate forms of organisation from sabotage by pathological

manifestations of earlier systems. That is why we have police forces in democracies - to protect the co-operative element of democracy, and the assumed goodwill, from forces that refuse to play by these more compassionate rules.

An understanding of how evolutionary systems work, and the possible distortions that can occur at different levels of development, should enable us to create the appropriate form of intervention to cure the pathology - re-aligning the part with its own healthy energies. In the meantime, the pathological expression will have to be contained.

A healthy, mature living system (cell, body, community, ecosystem) is dynamically co-operative because every part or member at every level of organisation is empowered to negotiate its self-interest within the whole. There is equitable sharing of resources to insure health at all levels, and the system is aware that any exploitation of some parts by others endangers the whole. Clearly, internal greed and warfare are inimical to the health of mature living systems. (Sahtouris 2002)

A good example of this kind of system at work can be found in Jeffrey Wicken's description (Wicken 1987, 136-7) of the Nitrogen cycle:

While each of the microbes is in business for itself, exploiting energy sources for survival and reproduction, it is the ecosystemic cycle to which they contribute that makes these niches available. ... The selfish interest of Nitrobacter is inseparable from that of the autocatalytic cycle to which it contributes.

A number of other change conditions for human systems are identified by Beck and Cowan (1996), and are relevant here.

Condition 3 - Solutions to Current Problems

The system must have solved the problems which its current coping mechanisms were set up to solve, and now be pushing at that level's limits. If its energy is still being taken up with sorting out its current level problems, it will not have energy over to look to the next level. So if a molecule is still busy organising its atoms to achieve stability in its molecular form, it is not going to have the energy over to shift up to a cell.

Most nations in the industrialised world are now fairly stable as entities. The problems they face are not those of calming the tribes, but rather of coping with trans-national problems. However, there are many parts of the world

where nation-building is still the primary objective, and tribal tensions create instability in the national system. So Global Balance will need to provide the system for stable nations to co-operate at a supra-national level, whilst also ensuring stabilising support for nations currently transcending and including tribal structures.

Condition 4 - Dissonance and Uncertainty

Dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs needs to be present for there to be motivation to change. This is a feeling of disorientation, that your current coping mechanisms are not adequate to the new life conditions you are perceiving around you.

There is no doubt that this feeling is present at multiple levels across the planet at the moment: instability in the global financial system, the threat of unpredictable terrorist attack, the limits of the ecological system, identity being swamped by the increasing information and flow of products across the world, relative perceptions of power, threat and oppression. Identifying the kind of dissonance that is present at the different levels and in the different sectors will be key to the success of the Global Balance project.

Condition 5 - Barriers Identified and Resolved

In order for change to happen, the barriers that are currently preventing it from taking place must be identified and overcome. The barriers could be external structural issues, or internal psychological blocks. Either way, they have to be named and unmasked honestly and openly, before they can be engaged with.

Although many visions exist today of how we would like global society to be organising itself, and how we would like the different parts of the systems to be behaving, there lacks understanding of *how* this could all be made to happen - how to get from here to there. So Global Balance will be identifying what the current legal and political arrangements are at the global level that are preventing the necessary capture of impact from happening. It will also be taking into account the underlying value systems and change states present in societies, cultures and organisations, in order to align policy and message to best meet existing needs.

Condition 6 - Insight and Alternatives

There must be insight into probable underlying causes and into alternative

ways of doing things, in order to release the energy for change. If a system can not understand why things are going wrong, and can see no way forward from where it is, it is unlikely to go anywhere!

This is a key condition that Global Balance is adding to what currently exists. There is plenty of dissonance, but very little coherent understanding of underlying causes, and therefore comprehensive alternative scenarios. With the knowledge of evolutionary systems, Global Balance will be able to design a system that works both with the deeper needs and change dynamics that exist in reality.

Condition 7 - Consolidation and Support

Change creates some confusion, uncertainty and dis-integration to start with, as different sub-systems of the new system re-align themselves at different speeds. It is therefore essential to have support at hand to help the sub-systems find their new fit.

This will be true for the Global Balance system as well, once it is launched. Plenty of resources must be made available during the transition to re-integrate and consolidate the system as a whole. If not enough attention is paid to this, the holon will break down again, creating even more of a mess than it left behind. This is working on a large-scale, so the impact of change, and any subsequent fall-out is also likely to be large-scale. This reinforces the importance of modeling in advance, testing the system as thoroughly as possible, in both computer and human simulations. However, there will always be the unpredictable, and help must be on hand to react quickly to any major disturbances that arise during the change period.

Global Balance must work to ensure that all of the above conditions for change are met. This will give it the greatest chance of success. It still does not ensure the emergence of the global holon, as people and change are ultimately unpredictable, but it will be doing the best we can do, with the knowledge we have so far.

Mapping Human Evolution Today

If we are designing any intervention to help change happen, we need to have answered the question From What, To What?. The previous section gives us the understanding of how systems work in general. In this section, we will look at one particular systems map, which will allow us to name more clearly where

we are in human evolution now, and provide the vision for us to plan adequately for the future. Global Balance will be designed to take us as smoothly as possible from where we are now, to where we are heading.

Stuart Kauffman (1995) noted "We lack a theory of how the elements of our public lives link into webs of elements that act on one another and transform one another". Our current theory of democracy "takes little account of the unfolding, evolving nature of cultures, economies and societies" (299). In the map below, I think we have a theory that meets that deficit.

The map we will be using has been termed Integral Spiral Dynamics. It is a combination of the Integral Thinking of Ken Wilber, and the research into human development carried out by Dr Clare W Graves which has been put into practice under the name Spiral Dynamics. We will start with a look at Spiral Dynamics, and then see how that understanding maps onto the Integral framework.

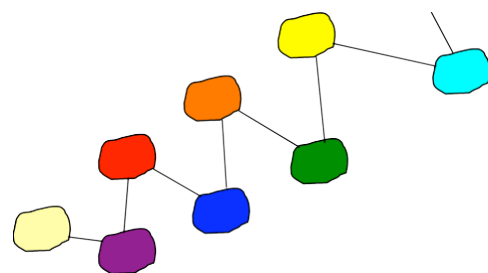
Spiral Dynamics

Spiral Dynamics is a way of thinking about the evolutionary development of people, cultures, organisations and societies. It provides a framework for mapping the evolution of worldviews, analysing the way things are and planning appropriate interventions. It describes what Dr Clare W Graves called "an emergent, cyclical, double-helix model of adult bio-psycho-social development". It is emergent, as it describes evolution in holons, transcending and including. It is cyclical, as the emerging systems oscillate between express-self and sacrifice-self systems, in alternating diversity generating competition in the search for adaptive fit, and conformity regulating co-operation for capture. It is double-helix in the sense that it describes emergence as coming from the interaction between on the one hand Life Conditions — one's perception of the "real" world — and on the other hand the coping mechanisms of the mind — the neurobiological systems and ways of thinking that are necessary to deal with the reality as one perceives it. All of the tenets and conditions in the sections above can be applied to this systems map.

Graves originally assigned letters to the Life Conditions and their parallel mind-sets, e.g. Life Conditions "A" trigger coping mechanism "N". Spiral Dynamics has since given each system a colour. Beck and Cowan decided to call these systems vMemos, for Value Memos - complementary to the current science of memetics, as vMemos are what determine what little surface memes (e.g. politics, religion, architecture, fashion, education) look like.

vMeme	Life Conditions	Mind's Coping Mechanism
Beige (A-N)	A State of nature	N Instinctive : natural instincts and reflexes determine action
Purple (B-O)	B Threatening - mysterious powers and spirits	O Animistic : traditions, rituals ; tribal
Red (C-P)	C Like a jungle: the strong rule, the weak serve; nature is to be controlled	P Egocentric : asserting self for dominance, and power; exploitive; wants needs met now
Blue (D-Q)	D Controlled by a Higher Power that punishes evil and eventually rewards good	Q Absolutistic : order and obedience; higher authority and rules prevail; guilt.
Orange (E-R)	E Full of resources and opportunities to Improve things and bring material wealth.	R Multiplistic : pragmatic, wanting to achieve and be better; tests for best options.
Green (F-S)	F A shared habitat where people can find love and purpose together	S Relativistic : responsive to human needs; pluralist; consensual; emotions.
Yellow (G-T)	G A chaotic organism where change and uncertainty are normal states	T Systemic : functional; integrative; interdependent; flexible; questioning; accepting.
Turquoise (H-U)	H A delicately balanced system of interlocking forces .	U Holistic : experiential; transpersonal; collective consciousness; collaborative; interconnected.

The warm-colours reflect the express-self systems, and the cool colours reflect the sacrifice-self systems. I believe that one whole systemic cycle would include a warm and cool colour - a search for adaptive fit, and an embracing capture. It can also be illustrated like this:



It is important to remember that these are not typologies, but deeper mind coping mechanisms which light up and dim depending on the Life Conditions

that are present. They unfold holonically, transcending and including each other. Most people have a central system which their stable self tends to gravitate around. One cannot skip a level in the process of emergence - in the same way that atoms cannot immediately jump to become parts of cells, without first becoming parts of molecules. When one has access to a certain level, all the lower levels remain present, whereas the more complex levels are not available yet - they are in the attic, waiting to emerge. These are systems in people - not types of people.

Below is a more detailed description of the different systems, including where this system can often be found, what percentage of the global population have their centre of gravity in that system, and how much power it holds in the world. It is adapted from Wilber (2000) and Beck and Cowan (1996).

Beige: Archaic-Instinctual . The level of basic survival; food, water, warmth, sex, and safety have priority. Uses habits and instincts just to survive. Distinct self is barely awakened or sustained. Forms into survival bands to perpetuate life.

Where seen: First human societies, newborn infants, senile elderly, late-stage Alzheimer's victims, mentally ill street people, starving masses, shell shock. Approximately 0.1% of the adult population, 0% power.

Purple: Magical-Animistic . Thinking is animistic; magical spirits, good and bad, swarm the earth leaving blessings, curses, and spells which determine events. Forms into ethnic tribes . Kinship and lineage establish political links.

Where seen: Belief in voodoo-like curses, blood oaths, ancient grudges, good luck charms, family rituals, magical ethnic beliefs and superstitions; strong in Third-World settings, gangs, athletic teams, and corporate "tribes." 10% of the population, 1% of the power.

Red: Power Gods . First emergence of a self distinct from the tribe; powerful, impulsive, egocentric, heroic. Magical-mythic spirits, dragons, beasts, and powerful people. Archetypal gods and goddesses, powerful beings, forces to be reckoned with, both good and bad. Feudal lords protect underlings in exchange for obedience and labor. The basis of feudal empires --power and glory. The world is a jungle full of threats and predators. Conquers and dominates; enjoys self to the fullest without regret or remorse; be here now.

Where seen: The "terrible twos," rebellious youth, frontier mentalities, feudal kingdoms, epic heroes, James Bond villains, gang leaders, soldiers of fortune, New-Age narcissism, wild rock stars, Atila the Hun, Lord of the Flies . 20% of the population, 5% of the power.

Blue: Mythic Order . Life has meaning, direction, and purpose, with outcomes determined by an all-powerful Other or Order. This righteous Order enforces a code of conduct based on absolutist and unvarying principles of "right" and

"wrong." Violating the code or rules has severe, perhaps everlasting repercussions. Following the code yields rewards for the faithful. Basis of ancient nations . Rigid social hierarchies; paternalistic; Law and order; impulsivity controlled through guilt; fundamentalist belief; obedience to the rule of Order; strongly conventional and conformist.

Where seen: Puritan America, Confucian China, Dickensian England, Singapore discipline, totalitarianism, codes of chivalry and honor, charitable good deeds, religious fundamentalism (e.g. Christian and Islamic), Boy and Girl Scouts, "moral majority," patriotism.

40% of the population, 30% of the power.

Orange: Scientific Achievement . At this wave, the self "escapes" from the "herd mentality" of blue, and seeks truth and meaning in individualistic terms, experimental, objective, mechanistic, operational--"scientific" in the typical sense. The world is a rational and well-oiled machine with natural laws that can be learned, mastered, and manipulated for one's own purposes. Highly achievement oriented, often toward materialistic gains. The laws of science rule politics, the economy, and human events. The world is a chess-board on which games are played as winners gain pre-eminence and advantages over losers. Marketplace alliances; manipulate earth's resources for one's strategic gains. Basis of corporate states .

Where seen: The Enlightenment, Wall Street, emerging middle classes around the world, cosmetics industry, trophy hunting, colonialism, the Cold War, fashion industry, materialism, secular humanism, liberal self-interest.

30% of the population, 50% of the power.

Green: The Sensitive Self . Communitarian, human bonding, ecological sensitivity, networking. The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness; feelings and caring supersede cold rationality; cherishing of the earth, Gaia, life. Against hierarchy; Emphasis on dialogue, relationships. Basis of value communities (i.e., freely chosen affiliations based on shared sentiments). Reaches decisions through reconciliation consensus. Refresh spirituality, bring harmony, enrich human potential. Strongly egalitarian, anti-hierarchy, pluralistic values, social construction of reality, diversity, multiculturalism,; this worldview is often called pluralist relativism; shows a greater degree of affective warmth, sensitivity, and caring, for earth and all its inhabitants.

Where seen: Deep ecology, postmodernism, Netherlands idealism, Rogerian counseling, Canadian health care, humanistic psychology, liberation theology, cooperative inquiry, World Council of Churches, Greenpeace, animal rights, ecofeminism, post-colonialism, Foucault/Derrida, politically correct, diversity movements, human rights issues, ecopsychology. 10% of the population, 15% of the power.

Yellow: Integrative . Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies

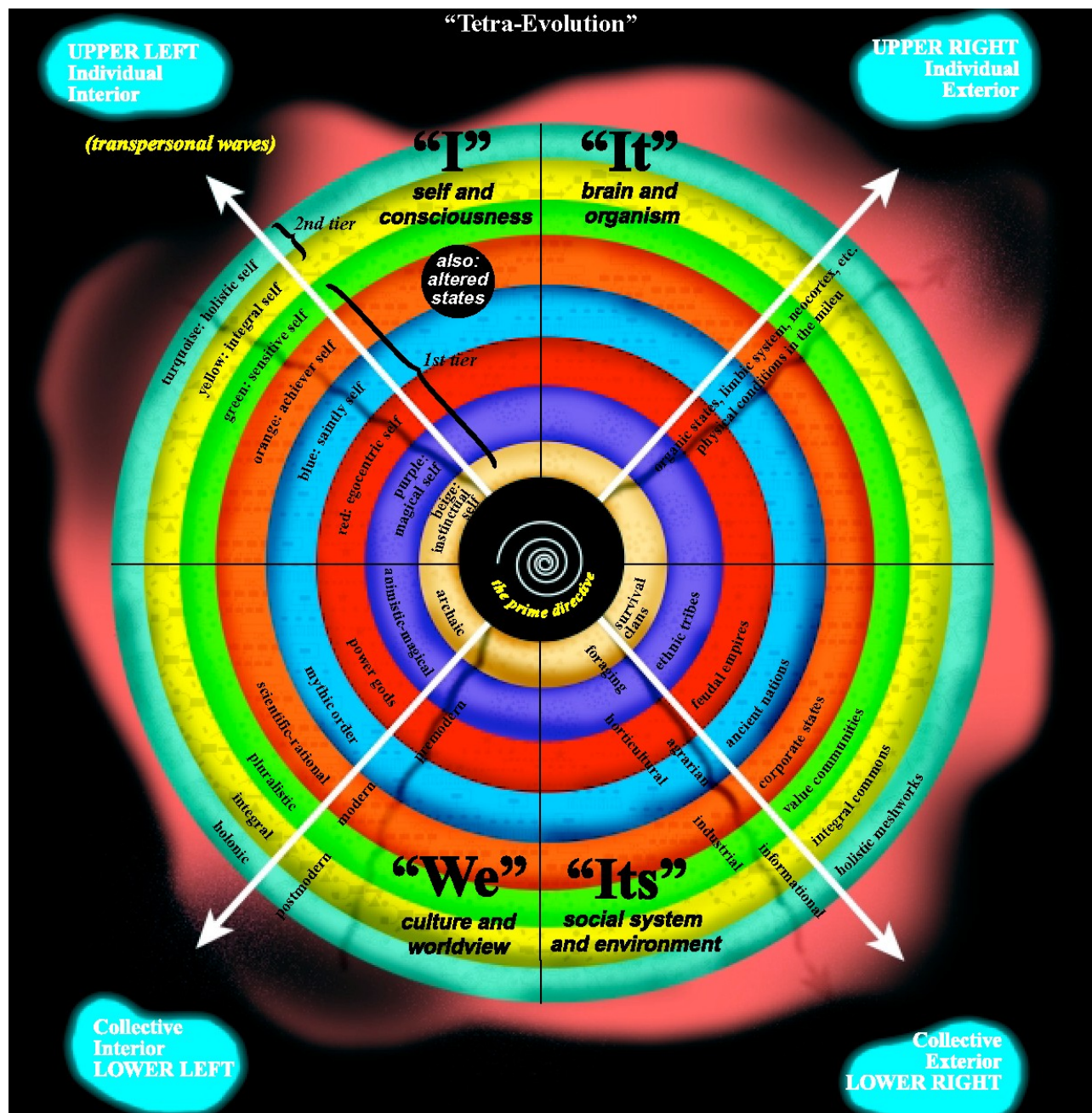
(holarchies), systems, and forms. Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority. Differences and pluralities can be integrated into interdependent, natural flows. Egalitarianism is complemented with natural degrees of ranking and excellence. Knowledge and competency should supersede power, status, or group sensitivity. The prevailing world order is the result of the existence of different levels of reality and the inevitable patterns of movement up and down the dynamic spiral. Good governance facilitates the emergence of entities through the levels of increasing complexity (nested hierarchy).

1% of the population, 5% of the power.

Turquoise: Holistic . Universal holistic system, holons/waves of integrative energies; unites feeling with knowledge; multiple levels interwoven into one conscious system. Universal order, but in a living, conscious fashion, not based on external rules (blue) or group bonds (green). A "grand unification" is possible, in theory and in actuality. Sometimes involves the emergence of a new spirituality as a meshwork of all existence. Turquoise thinking uses the entire Spiral; sees multiple levels of interaction; detects harmonics, the mystical forces, and the pervasive flow-states that permeate any organization. 0.1% of the population, 1% of the power.

Integral Thinking

The recent work of Ken Wilber has helped to see how a map such as Spiral Dynamics connects to all different sectors of life. Essentially, Wilber notes that a holon always has four dimensions - an individual interior (its own level of awareness); an individual exterior (its biological organic composition); a collective interior of group values and awareness which it interacts with; and a collective exterior of systems and structures within which it manifests itself. Holons evolve in each of these four dimensions, or quadrants. So the different levels of Spiral Dynamics can be found in all of the quadrants. When we understand these dimensions and levels, we get an "All-Quadrant, All-Level" map:

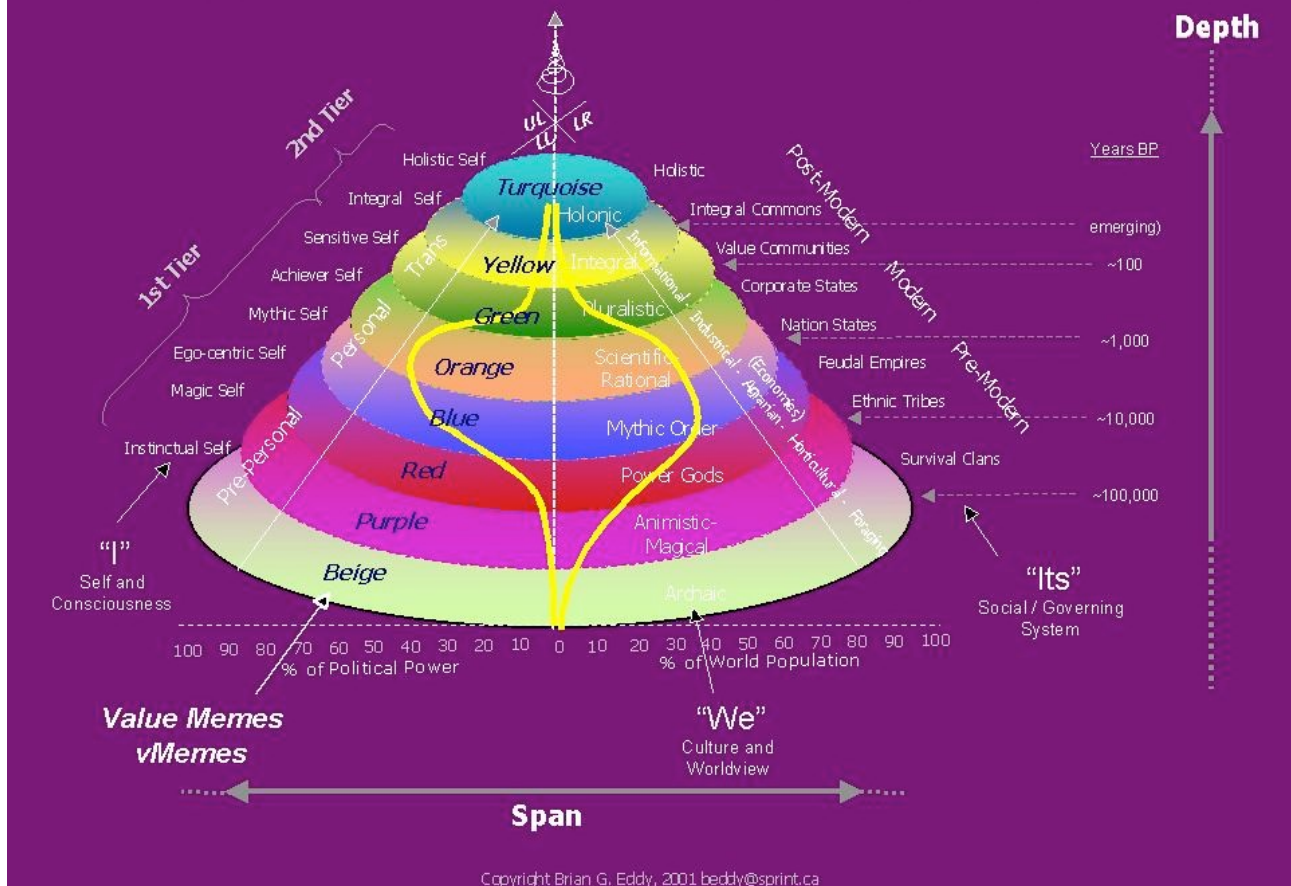


Copyright Don Beck and Ken Wilber

It is essential that holons "tetra-evolve" - that is to say, they evolve in all four of the quadrants. If an emerging holon fails to develop one of the dimensions, it will not survive.

Another way of drawing this map is as follows:

3-D AQAL Model - Human Development



Using these systems maps, we can start to analyse where human evolution is now, what is evolving at the moment, and what systems we need to put in place in order to help the next level of complexity emerge. Before we do that, however, it is worth answering an important question: why is Global Balance focusing on the emergence of the global holon, when there are clearly transitions going on at other levels that need urgent attention?

Why the Global Holon?

The Global Holon is what is emerging at the moment, in response to the heavy stress which the inter-national system is underpin the Lower Right quadrant, and which post-modern values of pluralist relativism are under in the Lower Left. In Spiral Dynamics terms, it is the emergence of Yellow and Turquoise, which go almost hand-in-hand.

The reason for focusing attention on this holon, and not specifically on the

tensions in earlier ones, is that we are reaching a make-or-break point in terms of humanity's ability to transcend and include to this world-centric level, or break-down into ethno-centric competition. More on this later. It is also with the understanding that when you have a more complex system emerge, it helps to bring more harmony to the lower levels. The management from the more complex system has more information, and is therefore better informed about the whole picture, which allows it to make more adequate interventions.

There is also a unique quality to the emerging global holon - the ability to see things in terms of evolutionary systems. This is the eros, or transcending quality of the new holon. The previous system (Green) understood systems of interconnected elements, but could not see the depth of evolution - in rejecting oppressive hierarchies, it often rejected all hierarchies, including the natural ones which allowed its emergence in the first place. The ability to see things holarchically is what enables this holon to see the world in a more complex light, to understand that different cultures and societies are at different places in their development, and thus have different immediate futures - whilst at the same time understanding the need to protect the global physical environment, and the more integral and compassionate system that Global Balance will be putting in place.

It is only by developing the more complex and integral global holon that we will truly be able to meet the evolutionary needs of the lower holons, and thus release their energy for the gentle unfolding into a more compassionate embrace.

What is Evolving Now?

Everything. All the time. There is continual movement and change up and down the spiral in all the quadrants, in individuals and societies all over the world. However, there are also signs of significant stress in the system, and it is these that the Global Balance project will be aiming to respond to.

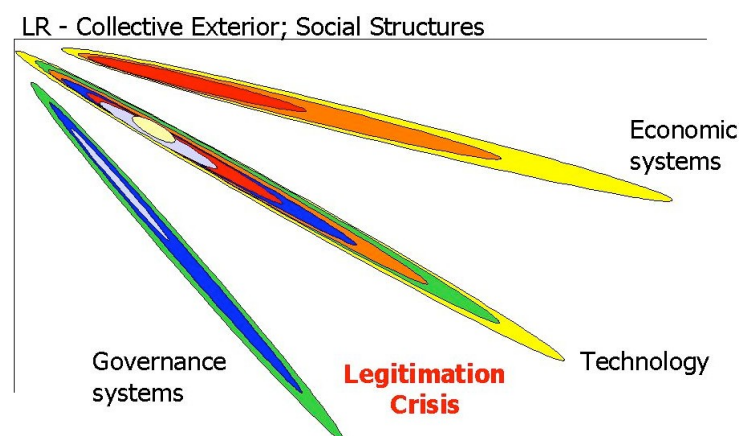
At the global level, we have seen the emergence of supra-national "Yellow" technology. This is being used by all different levels of the system for their own, less-than-global interests, which means a mis-match between worldviews and values on the one hand, and technology on the other. Here are some examples of how this mis-match expresses itself in the spiral:

vMeme	Uses Yellow Supra-national Technology to, for example:
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Red	Get around the law, make as much money as possible for itself regardless of impact on others (e.g. mafia), and to attack enemies of own beliefs (e.g. terrorism)
Blue	enforce its One Truth (e.g. warfare, espionage, internet censorship), and to compete against other groups (e.g. economic protectionism in the national interest)
Orange	win as much for itself as possible - regardless of the fall-out for others and the environment (e.g. Corporations' corruption and pollution)
Green	try and force others to think in the same way, and to change their systems to a one-size collectivist format, which denies others' developing and emerging needs (e.g. radical elements of the Global Justice movement)

So although the technology has developed at the supra-national Yellow level, governance has only got as far as nation-state Blue and inter-national Green. Economic systems come out of the warm colour spectrum, and governance systems come out of the cool colour spectrum, so the next level of governance needs to be supra-national Turquoise.

Kauffman (1995) describes this time as



the particular time in history when population, technology, economics and knowledge spin us together ... I wonder if we really understand very much of what we are creating, of the plausible foundations such a way of being must have to hold us all together with some modicum of tolerance and forgiveness of one another. I wonder if the political structures we have created will continue to serve us. (298)

The answer to the last question is transcend and include. The current structures are good for what they are meant to do, but we will need new structures to deal with the global level, and to help the current structures do their job well.

Different levels are perceiving the problem in different ways, but it is clear that stress and dissonance is wide-spread. These are some of the perceptions of dissonance, linked into the vMeme codes:



Many of the tensions seen in society come out of a holon at one level insisting that its solution is best for a holon at another level. This happens at all of the spiral levels up to and including Green - which is why Clare W Graves described the shift from Green to Yellow as a "momentous leap for humanity", and Spiral Dynamics today talks about the first six systems being First Tier, and the next set, starting with Yellow, being Second Tier.

Examples of First Tier systems imposing their vMeme manifestations on others include:

- IMF / World Bank programmes that insist on Orange systems being put into place in contexts that really require Blue (e.g. Russia being forced to adopt free-market policies, which meant the Blue system had not developed enough of the order / capture system to avoid a regression down to Red. Hence the extremely high levels of corruption and mafia activity.)
- Human Rights organisations' insistence on the adoption of Green thinking and systems where Blue or Orange is next for a country (e.g. China, Singapore and Malaysia)
- Orange materialism and Blue narrow interests suffocating the emergence of Green systems needed at the global level (e.g. USA's refusal to sign the Kyoto protocol to reduce CO2 emissions and climate change)
- Orange systems being introduced into heavy Purple environments, creating enormous mis-match and stress (e.g. the high levels of drug use and alcoholism amongst tribal peoples thrown into the free market economy)

These are symptoms of the current problem. With the unqualified surge of Yellow technology and its exploitation for purely competitive ends, particularly

in the way it creates space for other express-self competitive systems, we are threatened with a cancer-like disease in our system. Stewart (2000) defines cancer as "an example of the breakdown of constraints in multicellular organisations". The protests which often highlight some of the problems like those above, are what EO Wilson calls the "living world's immunological response" (Wilson 2002, 188). We could go a long way to preventing the spread of this cancer through the Natural Design that appropriate global framework systems would make possible.

The impact of the new global system will have to look something like this, in order to meet the needs of the different vMeme holons:



Moving Towards a Global Balance

Project Intent

The guiding aim of Global Balance is to contribute to the development of a world which understands, respects and meets the evolutionary needs of the diverse cultures, societies, eco-systems and civilisations on Earth.

In order to achieve this, the project is developing and helping to implement a framework system operating at the global level which is ensuring that the beneficial or negative impact of an organisation's activity on other parts of the global system, or on the system as a whole, is fed back to that organisation. With this system in place, people and organisations are rewarded for action that benefits others in the system, and are punished for action which is detrimental to the rest of the system. So action which supports people and planet is more profitable than action which damages either.

Phases and Activities

Policies and Implementation for the Global Feedback System

In the first step we develop a set of policies and an implementation strategy that starts us on the path towards an effective global feedback system. To achieve this, we locate, contact and motivate people who are open to this thinking, with specific expert knowledge and international experience (Advisors). They include people with an understanding of international law, policy and institutions (Systems Advisors); people from the private sector (Private Sector Advisors), public sector (Public Sector Advisors), and non-governmental civil society (Civil Society Advisors).

We then gather the Advisors in their own sectoral groups to map out how they see their own reality now and envision how they would like to see things in the future. After that we gather all the Advisors together to synthesise the analysis and visions, and explore common ground. Finally, we create and resource the Core Team of Advisors, with representatives from all sectors, who generate proposals for the policy package and an implementation strategy.

Activating and Co-ordinating a Global Campaign for Global Balance

The next step is to activate a global movement from all sectors and levels of society to support and lobby for the implementation of the Global Balance policy package. The Advisors locate, contact and motivate leaders from all

levels of their own sector, i.e. private, public or civil society (known as Local Leaders). We network up the Local Leaders regionally and globally, together with their communities, around Value Systems, known as Value Memes, or vMemes, in the Spiral Dynamics system (these networks are known as Value Networks). The Value Networks are important so that people can organise around their deeper beliefs and ways of seeing the world, and that people and groups with different active Value Systems do not end up arguing with each other, but rather focus on the same goal in the way that is most appropriate for them. They do not need to have any contact with each other - they are linked through the Advisors who are in touch with the Local Leaders.

Together with the Local Leaders, we then design the message, communication strategy and communication technology for each of the Value Networks. Part of that is to locate, contact and motivate high-profile personalities to rally the Value Networks - clearly these will be different people per network.

The Global Balance HQ co-ordinates the Advisors, Local Leaders and Value Networks. HQ designs and implements an overall strategy which focuses the campaigning of the Value Networks and Local Leaders, applying synthesised pressure at key global events and moments. The campaign and communication system captures feedback and learns to respond with increasing adequacy to requests for information and critique of the project. HQ also scans to read active and emerging Value Systems, at different scales of society, providing data for strategy and communication. This is an on-going process of monitoring with a Vital Signs Monitor, which is also scanning for potential hot-spots and flash-points. The LISA system that the Arlington Institute is developing is a good example of how this could be achieved.

Monitoring and Supporting Implementation and Transition

Key to the success of the project is a system for monitoring the implementation and supporting the transition. This is important because when you stimulate change, there is also a certain amount of disintegration as different sub-systems change at different rates. This creates tension between the sub-systems, and needs to be responded to rapidly in order to help the systems to re-align and find their new place. So the Vital Signs Monitor picks up developments in vMemes and Change States, watching particularly for hot-spots, cutting-edges and flash-points. Responding to this information are teams of people gathered around the Local Leaders, who are deployed rapidly to support institutions and organisations finding the transition difficult, and/or where hot-spots and cutting-edges are identified.

Research, Development and Education

Parallel to all the above, are simulated activities, created in order to continually

research and develop the proposals, as well as to educate people in interactive and experiential learning environments. These include a human and a computer simulation. The human simulation represents the global system as it is currently operating, and creates the opportunity for participants to explore ways of changing the system to achieve better results. So it teaches people about current reality and engages them in the process of exploring change. People are trained to run the simulation, and it is used by organisations all over the world to educate others about the project and elicit ideas for change. The activity is also improved through feedback from trainers running it.

The computer simulation will be for detailed testing of the policy and implementation proposals developed by the Core Team of Advisors. The Core Team are also receiving suggestions that have come out of the human simulation activities. The computer simulation also exists as an on-line "game" in an open source environment, with people trying out different policies and strategies for change at the global systems level - there is a substantial prize on offer for the best suggestion. Players get immediate feedback on the impact of their efforts. All the proposals and their results are fed back to the central system which the Core Team and their researchers have access to. All of this produces a dynamic, open and structured development programme.

Conclusion

So the challenge of the Global Balance project is to develop and implement a Turquoise supra-national system of capture, which ensures that the impact of any action by one part of the global system on any other part, is captured by the actor - be it beneficial or harmful. Levels of benefit or harm will be measured by understanding the evolutionary needs of the different parts of the system.

The need for a response of this kind has been expressed by many different people. Ervin Laszlo calls it the move from *Logos* to *Holos* (Laszlo 2001). Anthony Giddens (Anheier, Glasius & Kaldor 2001), Director of the London School for Economics, calls for "transnational forms of democracy" (8) if we are going to take globalisation seriously. John Keane, Professor of Politics at the University of Westminster, in the same publication, calls for "multi-level government ... on a global scale" (36). I think the form the global system takes may well be very different to representative democracy as we know it at nation-state level - in fact, it will have to be. But what all these people are expressing is dissonance with current structures, and the understanding that we need to act now at the global level.

Joanna Macy (2002) put it this way:

It seems that a holonic shift is necessary for our survival. ... We must learn to think together in an integrated, synergistic fashion, rather than in fragmented and competitive ways. Present modes of collective decision-making appear to be too slow and too corruptible for the immediate, responsive self-guidance that is now required. (6)

The Global Balance project is a manifestation of the next stage in human evolution. Key to that stage is an understanding of evolutionary systems, and action resulting from that understanding. In that way, evolutionary biology and the future of human organisation are inextricably linked. It is no surprise that evolutionary biologists have reacted so positively to the Global Balance ideas, and likewise no surprise that people working on integral global change have found the insights of these evolutionary biologists so important. It is emergence - the same holon popping up in many different sectors of society. This is a clear sign that a new era is approaching - full of potential and opportunity, yet with no certainty or total predictability. It will be up to us to do our best to increase the survival chances of the human species, and many other species on planet Earth. I hope we succeed - life's a lot of fun, after all.

We are awaiting the new global founding Fathers and Mothers who will frame an integral system of governance that will call us to our more encompassing future, that will act as a gentle pacer of transformation for the entire spiral of human development, honouring each and every wave as it unfolds, yet kindly inviting each and all to even greater depth.
(Wilber 2000, 90)

What can I do?

The Global Balance project is at its conception phase. This article is part of its birth. In the meantime, if you would like to be kept in touch, follow and support developments, you can do the following:

- Contact me at peter@engagency.nl with your contact details, if you would just like to be kept informed of our progress or to let us know if there is some way you feel you could help
- Let us know of people you think would be interested or other initiatives that you think are complementary
- Explore and adopt Simultaneous Policy (www.simpol.org)
- Explore and support the work of EarthAction and the e-parliament (www.earthaction.org)
- Check out the ideas behind the World Future Council (www.worldfuturecouncil.org)
- Develop a deeper understanding of evolutionary systems, Spiral Dynamics (www.spiraldynamics.com, www.globalvaluesmonitor.com) and Wilber's Integral thinking and practice (www.integralinstitute.org / <http://wilber.shambhala.com>)
- Carry on doing whatever good work you are already doing

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