RELIGION AND FORESRTRY

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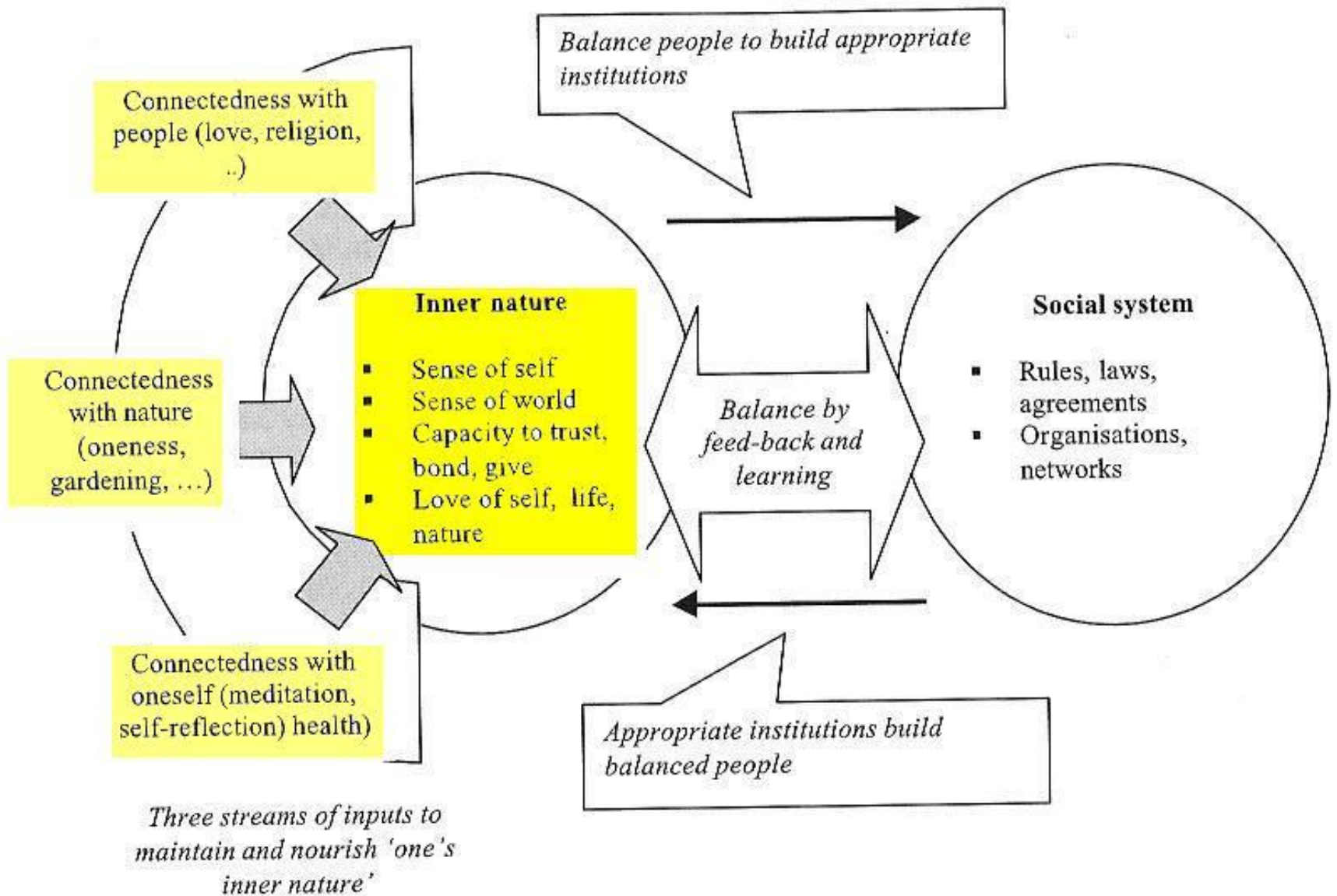& Masters student Interreligious Spirituality,
University of Nijmegen

Spiritual Inspiration of Stakeholders in Forest Management

- Gap between techno-scientific-social side and religions & spiritual side

- Overview of research done on 'techno-side' of gap;

- Research on 'reli-side': in Conference, Religion and Ecology Forum, and other work

- Bridging the gap

Why are religion and spirituality important in forest management?

- From Community & Social Forestry to Adaptive Management, complex learning systems and multi-stakeholder forest management;

- International forestry agenda involves stakeholders from many sides -> complexity

- Demand to solve ethical dilemmas is increasing

One's inner nature, its streams of inputs and its relation to social systems
in the SEAN-ERA model for environmental strategy (J.J. Kessler, 2003)

PROBLEM:

- No direct (linear) relation between religious attitudes and behaviour

What has been done already?

1. Nature visions and forest values

– Basic attitudes and visions of nature

– Spiritual or transcendent experiences of trees, forests and wilderness;

– Non-formal sources of spiritual experience of nature ('ecospirituality');

– Values attributed to forest, nature or biodiversity

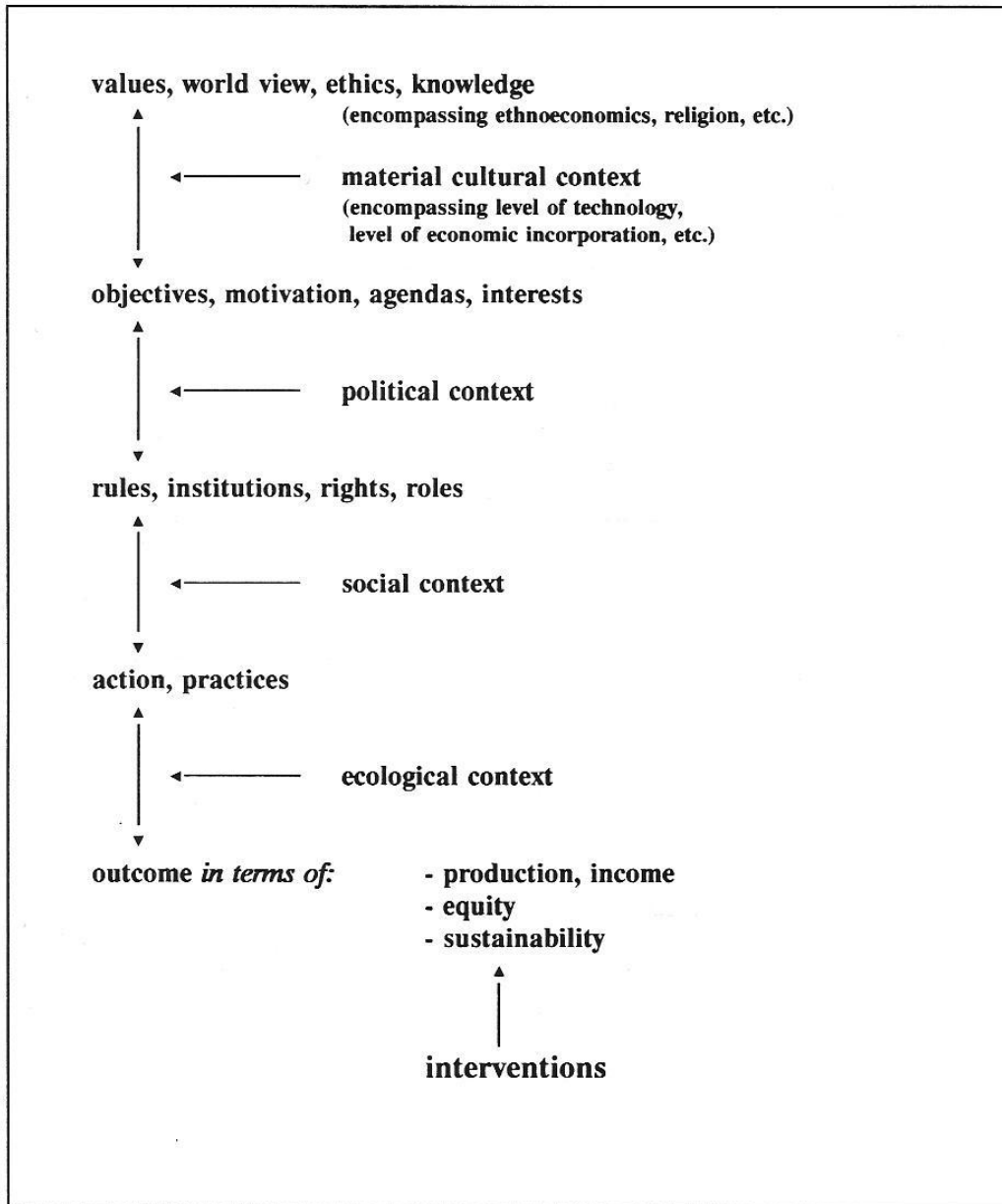# What has been done already?

2. Forests, field cases:

– Forest protection activism;

– Religious trees and forests;

– Cosmovision & transcendental guidance to resource management

3. Philosophical approaches: Forests as a source of inspiration

Three Frameworks to bridge the gap

- Laurent Umans (humid tropical forests of Asia)

- Richard Bawden (systems)

- Ken Wilber (philosophy)

Model for the relation between worldviews and action

values, world view, ethics, knowledge
(encompassing ethnoeconomics, religion, etc.)

material cultural context
(encompassing level of technology,
level of economic incorporation, etc.)

objectives, motivation, agendas, interests

political context

rules, institutions, rights, roles

social context

action, practices

ecological context

outcome *in terms of:*
- production, income
- equity
- sustainability

interventions

Umans (1993)

Worldviews (Umans, 1993)

world view	disposable	giving	reciprocating	prohibiting
ethics	hit & run hoarding	opportunistic	conservative	protectionist
economic relations	exchange	give	reciprocate / return	abstain
objective	profit	subsistence	manipulation or cultivation	preservation
rules	open access unsatiable market	entry & exit rules boundary rules	partitioning rules	cultural taboos
action	"mining"	foraging	cultivating	conservating
outcome	probably unsustainable probably inequitable	conditionally sustainable probably equitable	probably sustainable conditionally equitable	sustainable
policy interventions	reducing mobility, providing alternative livelihood strategies, agroforestry	adapting worldview, securing right-to-live-in, prevent incorporation, building institutions, strengthening communal structures	strengthening institutions, empowerment of women & poor, regulate incorporation	respect for culture

Richard Bawden: inspirational learning

- Systems development specialist

- Hawkesbury Agricultural College, Australia;

- Critical Learning Systems (CLS):
  - to address ethical dilemmas besides social, technical & ecological problems;
  - based on 3 concepts:
    - problem-based learning
    - systems thinking
    - action research
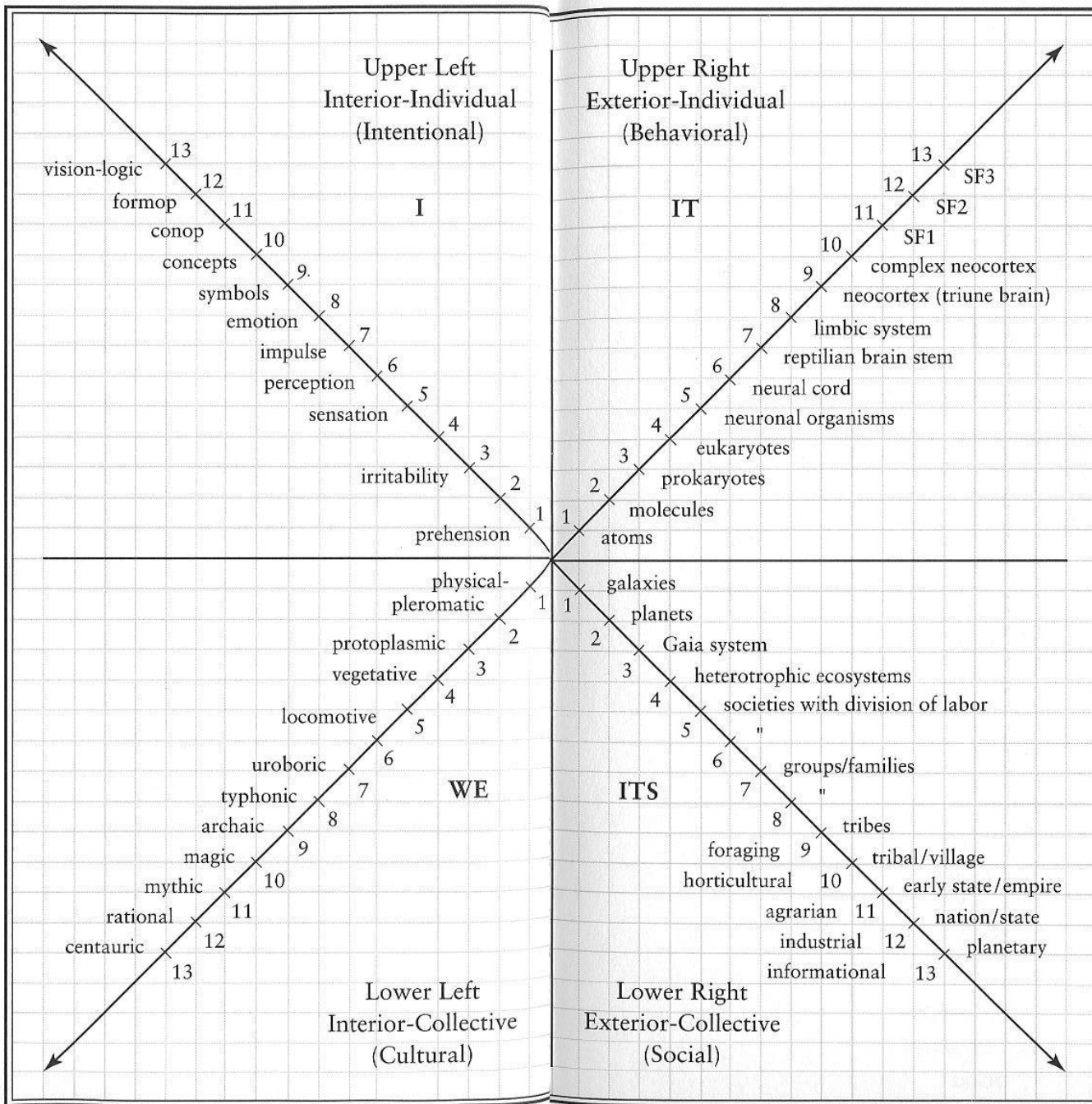 - 3 levels of learning;
  - 2 subsystems;

CLS levels of learning

i. about the *matter at hand* (forest, people, management system);

ii. about the *process* through which the matter at hand is being learned;

iii. about the epistemological and ontological *assumptions* that frame what is being learned at (i) and (ii).

CLS: 2 subsystems

- Experiential learning:

  – allows sensual, concrete experiences to be transformed to conceptual understandings

     → *cognitive concepts*

- Inspirational learning:

  – allows spiritual insights to be accessed

     → *normative insights*

- Systemic interaction → *meaning*

     → *meaningful action*

How to make inspirational learning clear?

- may comprise:
    - (i) disengagement;
    - (ii) focussing;
    - (iii) accepting;
    - (iv) applying
- possibly 2 paths:
    - 'narrative path'
        - establishing a coherence of actions and events over time
    - 'scientific path'
        - material and observational data

Upper Left — Interior-Individual (Intentional) — **I**

- 13 vision-logic
- 12 formop
- 11 conop
- 10 concepts
- 9. symbols
- 8 emotion
- 7 impulse
- 6 perception
- 5 sensation
- 4
- 3 irritability
- 2
- 1 prehension

Upper Right — Exterior-Individual (Behavioral) — **IT**

- 13 SF3
- 12 SF2
- 11 SF1
- 10 complex neocortex
- 9 neocortex (triune brain)
- 8 limbic system
- 7 reptilian brain stem
- 6 neural cord
- 5 neuronal organisms
- 4 eukaryotes
- 3 prokaryotes
- 2 molecules
- 1 atoms

Lower Left — Interior-Collective (Cultural) — **WE**

- 1 physical-pleromatic
- 2 protoplasmic
- 3 vegetative
- 4 locomotive
- 5 uroboric
- 6 typhonic
- 7 archaic
- 8 magic
- 9 mythic
- 10 rational
- 11 centauric
- 12
- 13

Lower Right — Exterior-Collective (Social) — **ITS**

- 1 galaxies
- 2 planets
- 3 Gaia system
- 4 heterotrophic ecosystems
- 5 societies with division of labor
- 6 "
- 7 groups/families
- 8 "
- 9 tribes
- foraging — tribal/village
- horticultural — early state/empire
- agrarian — nation/state
- industrial — planetary
- informational

Ken Wilber:

Four Quadrants of the Universe

Ken Wilber:
Four Quadrants of the Universe

- 3 kinds of knowledge:
    - subjective/personal;
    - inter-subjective / inter-personal;
    - trans-personal
- Method of Scientific Enquiry:
    1. Instrumental injunction: "if you want to know this, do this";
    2. Direct apprehension;
    3. Communal confirmation (or rejection)

Conclusion

- Inspirational Learning as a concept to bridge the gap between multi-stakeholder forest management and religion

Central Research Question

- Assuming we can interpret multiple stakeholders forest management as a critical learning process, then in what respect is inspirational learning in this process vital to successful forest management?