



VOORDRACHT



LEVENSBESCHOUWING

(Re)connecting dualities

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Afbeelding: www.mygodpictures.com/category/goddess-gaia



Introduction

In this presentation the theme Gaya and Culture is looked at from an evolutionary perspective and placed in the context of a duality that is inherently interconnected. It is argued that present day emphasis on technology and economy in Western culture may have caused a trend towards radical distinctions between economy and ecology, between culture and nature and between other dualities that actually exist by the grace of each other. Reconnecting these dualities is a challenging task to be fulfilled in the 21st century. It is a precondition for a sustainable development of human society on our planet. The planetary dimension of the sustainable development issues can be illustrated by a great number of international initiatives that emerged in recent decades in order to interconnect individual, local, national activities with global effects, (see illustration 1)

Interconnectedness

The evolutionary process in the course of the cosmic Creation, called cosmogenesis by Teilhard de Chardin, implies that everything in creation is interconnected, evolving from the same source. The organic evolutionary process led to the innumerable manifestations of and on our planet in the course of billions of years. The binding element in all these manifestations can be summarized in the concept of the integrity of creation. In the course of time, after the planet earth came into existence some supposedly 4.5 billion years ago, the inorganic geosphere gave birth to an organic biosphere and this eventually led to a spiritual manifestation of the noosphere (see illustration 2).

This whole creation is what we call Gaya and the spiritual dimension is linked to what we call culture. So Gaya and culture are closely connected, and in continuous flux in the ongoing evolutionary process. In the noosphere the self-reflexive consciousness of human beings liberates itself from exclusively genetic propagation. The cultural evolution is running at a much faster rate than the genetic evolution, because cultural inheritance does not have to be transmitted through cumbersome genetic processes. The "explosion" in the noosphere is very apparent in today's communication revolution. Whilst all of this presents a fascinating phase in creation, the co-creational capabilities of the human species has also led to intellectual and spiritual concepts of creation that resulted in distorted perceptions of nature and culture, causing a harmful loss of coherence.

Emerging dichotomies

The first signs of emerging dichotomies can be traced back to the transformations from prehistoric civilisations to new organisations of human society. There was a shift from horticulture to agriculture, from Goddess as Creation to God as Creator, from matrifocal communities and villages to male dominated communities

and dynasties; and there was the discovery of copper and later iron ore to make metals for tools and weapons, and there was the invention of alphabetic letters instead of symbols and images, to name a few significant trends. All of this and more led to a radicalisation of male versus female, both in mythologies, religions and the organisation of society. Friederich Engels called this in his *The History of Civilisation* "the world historic defeat of the female". The shift from one Goddess to one God symbolizes this trend (see illustration 3).

This trend was legitimized by the invention of creation stories, from the oldest Semerian, Babylonian, Greek and later Judean origins, leading to the world's great religions. These creation stories all contributed to the persistent hierarchical notion of the superiority of God over man, male over female, and culture over nature. Thus, dichotomies in dualisms were created that affected also the original unity of Gaya and culture.

Compartmental models

With the arrival of philosophy and science, confronting mythologies and religions, the organic mystery of creation was gradually replaced by a mechanistic theory of the world that added rational compartmental thinking to the emerging dichotomies. So now, not only male and female were separated, but also body and soul, mind and heart, reason and intuition, heaven and earth, life and death, ecology and economy. This compartmental thinking has contributed to phenomenal inventions in fields of science, engineering, agriculture, medicine and communication, to name a few. However, we now start to discover that these innovative products of the human mind have a down-side that was not anticipated. The essence of this backlash is that it was a misconception that one can compartmentalise the natural world of which the human is an inseparable part and that one can not split dualisms into radical distinctions. This concept is in conflict with the reality of the integrity of creation, where everything is interconnected. We had overlooked the key principles in dualities (see illustration 4).

The role of business

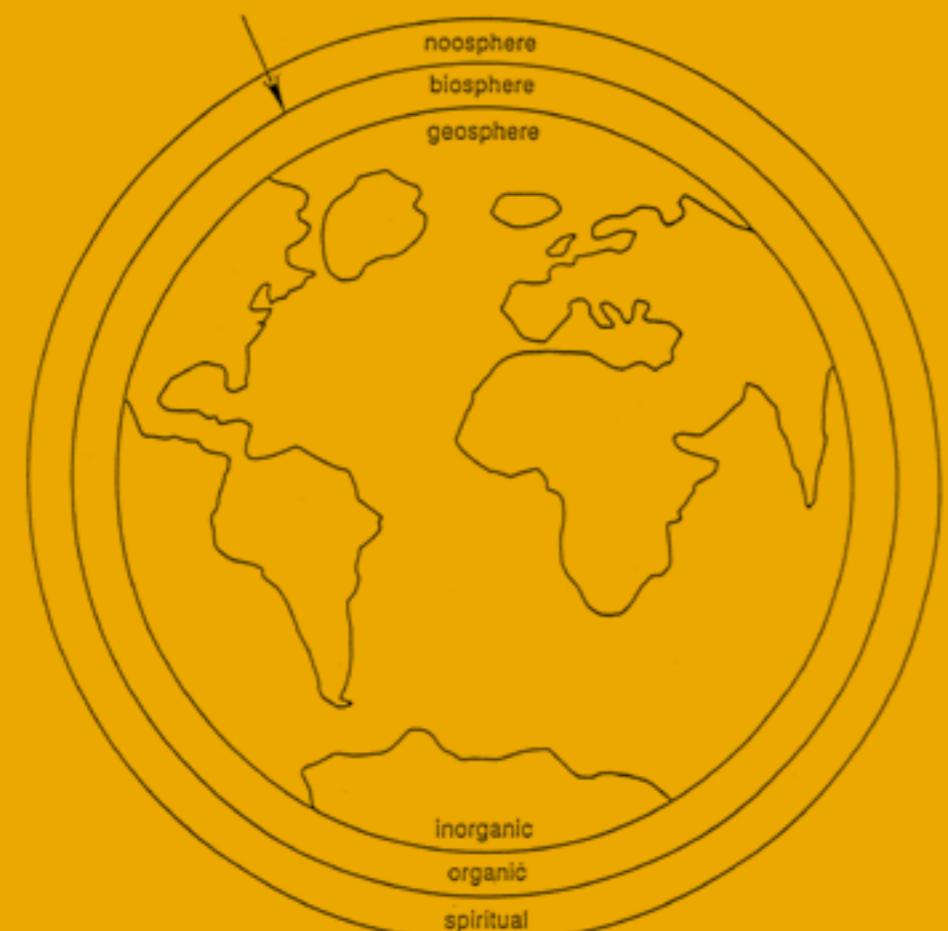
What can we do with this analysis in our daily work in society, and especially those that work in the world of business and commerce, where philosophy and evolution have little room in the struggle for economic survival in a competitive world. A helpful tool is to try to understand and recognize if and where dichotomies have entered the thinking in the world of business.

In illustration 5 I try to identify the dualistic choices in some of the fundamental building blocks of the mechanistic worldview on which many assumptions in the world of science, but also of technology and economy, are based. The illustration shows that all the assumptions mentioned under (traditional) science are in contradiction to what we know today are the rules of the game in nature. In this article there is no

EXAMPLES OF PLANETARY ISSUES

- OZON LAYER HOLES (Montreal)
- GLOBAL WARMING (Kyoto)
- WATER SCARCITY (The Hague)
- FOOD SECURITY (Rome)
- POVERTY (Micro Summit)
- GENDER (Peking)

Border line: humankind



1. Model of the layers of the earth system

4000 BCE	3000 BCE	1500 BCE	500 BCE
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one Goddess	Goddess	goddesses	gods	one God
		goddesses	gods	goddesses

KEY PRINCIPLES IN DUALITIES

- COMPLEMENTARY DUALITIES EXIST BY THE GRACE OF EACH OTHER
- WHEN IN COOPERATION THEY ARE PRODUCTIVE
- WHEN IN CONFLICT THEY BECOME DESTRUCTIVE

DUALITIES IN SCIENCE AND NATURE

<u>TRADITIONAL SCIENCE</u>	<u>NATURE</u>
LINEAR	NON-LINEAR
SIMPLE	COMPLEX
REVERSIBLE	NON-REVERSIBLE
IN EQUILIBRIUM	NOT IN EQUILIBRIUM
CLOSED SYSTEM	OPEN SYSTEM
PREDICTABLE	UNPREDICTABLE
COMPARTMENTAL	INTERCONNECTED

DUALITIES IN ENGINEERING AND NATURE

<u>ENGINEERING</u>	<u>NATURE</u>
DEAD MATERIAL	LIVING MATERIAL
SCIENCE BASED TECHNOLOGIES	NATURE BASED TECHNOLOGIES
CREATOR BY INVENTION	CREATION IN EVOLUTION
ECONOMICS	ECOLOGY
INTELLECT	INSTINCT

DUALITIES IN BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENT

<u>BUSINESS</u>	<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>
MARKET	SOCIETY
TECHNOLOGY	NATURE
ECONOMIC SURVIVAL	ECOLOGICAL SURVIVAL
EMPLOYEES	INDIVIDUALS
MASCULINE CULTURE	FEMININE CULTURE
WORK	LIFE

THREE LEVELS:

- "SOFT" LEVEL: MALE / FEMALE
HEAD / HEART
WORK /LIFE
- "HARD" LEVEL: SCIENCE / NATURE
ENGINEERING / NATURE
ECONOMY / ECOLOGY
- "HIGHER LEVEL" LOCAL / GLOBAL

place for elaboration on the background of these assumptions and rules, but being trained as a chemical engineer, I know that most of the inventions of the 20th century were based on the assumptions of traditional science. Very few engineers from my generation were ever confronted with the laws (or better the habits) of natural systems, although the word for physics in Dutch is "natuurkunde", "knowledge of nature". The concept of natural ecosystems did not appear in the engineering curricula. Another useful analysis is to review some primary assumptions in this world of engineering, on prevailing values, habits and priorities as opposed to those in nature. This is shown in illustration 6.

The assumptions in traditional science and engineering are also reflected in the traditional views in the business world. Illustration 7 shows a number of issues that the business world focuses on and how they are opposed to the focus in the social and natural environment.

The purpose of these illustrations is to raise awareness of these opposite dualisms. They are at the core of the clashes that we experience today, now that the critical mass of the human intervention in natural processes is becoming apparent in the world of today. These clashes occur at the local, national, regional, continental and planetary level.

Illustration 1, at the beginning of this article shows how they have reached and are addressed at the planetary level.

(Re)connecting

The challenge of this century is if we can make the necessary reconnections in order to restore the links between the opposite, but complementary forces that are at play in the relationship between culture and nature, between ecology and economy, between human needs and the integrity of natural ecosystems. Awareness is the starting point for fundamental changes in attitudes, at the individual level, at the corporate level and at the political level. Today, the corporate world is wakening up to their interconnection with the social and natural environment and the fact that corporate survival is directly connected to the survival of this environment.

In order to be successful, reconnecting the opposite but interdependent dualisms, the solution does not primarily lie, it seems to me, in developing new technical and economic models to integrate economy and ecology, what I would call the "hard" level. This is an absolute necessity, but it needs to be preceded or paralleled by a fundamental change in attitude at the individual level, what I would call the "soft" level. And it has to be complemented with a higher level of abstraction, the "planetary" level. See illustration 8.

At the individual level, a level usually ignored or shunned because it is the "soft" area, the cultural inheritance of dualistic opposites has to be addressed, because this will condition a mind set to new economic and ecological models. If individuals can get rid of preconceived ideas about male superiority, open themselves up to listening to their heart, and find a natural balance between work and life, this will eventually cause a big difference in corporate culture. And lastly, individual and corporate attitudes to restore lost connections need a planetary dimension too. The planetary effect of individual and corporate activities has today political and humanitarian consequences of an ever-increasing magnitude. The issues in illustration 1 cannot be resolved by individuals, communities, corporations or politicians alone. Here the connection is of a different order and requires a planetary leadership for which we seem hardly prepared yet.

Gaya and culture are two manifestations of the same origin. Rediscovering this origin is a mission worth fighting for.