



# Layers & Levels Series

## *Introduction*

The following series will gradually explore an idea which has been steadily emerging of late namely that experience, aka 'reality', is never really just one thing, rather many things at once. This is not an especially original or earth-shaking notion, but it keeps coming up because so often people express opinions or make plans as if it were not the case, that reality all happens on one level, that there is one single, definable, perceivable, understandable reality without different layers and levels.

The two terms are essentially interchangeable, BTW, but having two different words in the phrase seems to express the idea better than just saying 'layers' or 'levels' alone. Perhaps 'dimensions' would be a better term, as in 'reality is multi-dimensional'. But 'layers and levels' is how the thought arose, so 'layers and levels' it is. Also, they could more accurately be called 'mandalas', about which have written earlier on the blog, and indeed as the series progresses I might choose to use that word often because it combines both material and non-material aspects of a thing or situation in a way which English words generally don't pull off. That said, since mandala is not a familiar term, it may not suit. Time will tell.

As to the underlying notion: for example, let us say we want to climb over a wall. To do so we might use a ladder, in which case first we find or build a ladder, then place it, and then scale up from the bottom to the top step, then pull it up to the top behind us to place it on the other side and then descend from the top to the bottom step. This operation which is all one thing involves various distinct stages each with its own parameters and logistics which have little to do with the others. Harvesting the wood to build the ladder is different from shaping the wood into the requisite pieces is different from assembly is different from use. Then climbing up, though similar to climbing down, is also quite different, not to mention hauling the ladder up to the top each time to switch sides is an entirely different type of operation from climbing or descending.

So that is a very literal example of how a simple task like climbing over a wall comprises many different layers and levels. Just about anything ever done by anybody is like this. And of course it goes for any thing or organism as well like the human body which has so many inter-relating but separate systems or components such as blood,



lymph, nervous systems, various organs, body, emotions, mental processes etc. Everything is like this.

But there's a little more: all those steps above are in some sense just one layer or level involving the accomplishment of a relatively simple task. Another level might involve WHY you are climbing that wall. Did you get locked out of your house by mistake and need a ladder to get back in? Or are you a burglar trying to gain entrance and steal all the absent owner's stuff. Or are you in a gang and about to wipe out your enemy's sleeping family whilst he is engaged in a street fight with other members of your gang on the other side of town? So that's another layer or level. And then there could be further such: perhaps this gang war is part of a series of important political changes which have caused small town economies to crater and so petty crime has sky-rocketed, mayors are being gunned down in the streets and gangs increasingly rule local communities. Layers and levels.

What I find interesting about this notion is that when people discuss socio-political issues, whether politicians advocating certain policies to attract votes or, once elected, to solve problems, or political philosophers addressing systemic issues recommending how to solve current imbalances by adopting Approach A or Ideology B, too often they tend to oversimplify, perhaps by explaining the ladder procedures without understanding the broader context or vice versa: making grand promises about how to get rid of the gangs and bring back the mayors without explaining how, either tactically or viz the macro context which caused the problem in the first place.

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Years ago in a dream I saw a hand holding a Japanese calligraphy brush creating the above symbol, which have never seen elsewhere. You can't tell in its two-dimensional form, but it starts in the center and then spirals out to the periphery, completes the full circle and then returns back to the starting point, the whole thing creating a vortex that first goes out and then comes back, the whole dynamic a continuous out-and-in flow. I intend to make three-dimensional sphere-shaped sculptures once we have finished building my wife's ceramics studio later this year, but also would love to see it made of glass tubes through which water can be pumped. Incidentally, I suspect this shape will make an excellent Schauberger water revitalizer partly because the dream arose after reading one of his books about the many marvelous properties of water. Also, the three white (space) parts comprise three different levels giving a classic three-in-one aspect to this construction echoing deep archetypal philosophical constructs like the Christian Trinity and the Oriental Three Treasures of Heaven, Earth and Man, or the yogic Mind, Speech and Body - some of which will no doubt soon feature as chapters. In any case, I like it very much; and so it will serve as the visual logo of this series at the top of every page of the pdf documents and on the top of each of the blog posts.