

# “Such a Body We Must Create:” New Theses on Integral Micropolitics

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**Abstract:** This essay proposes a rigorously postmetaphysical integral praxis, defines what this means and how such an intervention may be premised, and demonstrates throughout some methodological and practical advantages this approach may have over extant metaphysically-oriented integral theories. Beginning with an interpretation of post-Hegelian historical and dialectical materialisms informed by the Buddhist dialectical tradition of Madhyamika, a series of coordinated and interrelated theses address problems proper to fields such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, semiotics, historiography, and subaltern studies. The claimed purpose of this project is to coordinate subjective (psychological, spiritual) and objective (social, political, economic) transformational imperatives into a coherent, non-ontological “counterproject.” It takes as its aim the production of a radically democratized, responsible, and sane subjective and objective space, where responsibility is characterized as critical clarity, competence, creative consciousness, and compassion.

**Keywords:** Buddhism, causality, consciousness, counterproject, Deleuze, dialectics, ecocriticism, integral praxis, Krishnamurti, Marx, Nagarjuna, nonduality, postmetaphysical, radical democracy, responsibility, semiotics, Spiral Dynamics, subjectivity, transformation, Wilber

## Table of Contents

HYPERLINKS

Introduction: How to use this Text .....	5
Thesis One.....	10
Thesis Two.....	16
Thesis Three.....	25
Thesis Four.....	33
Thesis Five .....	39
Interim Summary .....	43
Thesis Six.....	44
Thesis Seven .....	50
Thesis Eight.....	58
Conclusion: Integrating the Counterproject.....	62
References .....	64



*As capitalism hides or simply manages its crises in its millennial dream of global unification and integration, the task remains to keep hammering away at an alternative analysis of the totality and its contradictions.*<sup>1</sup>

*Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanely?*<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction: How to use this Text

In the present inquiry I propose two related interventions, one into integral theory and culture, and another implementing the theoretical positions I take into praxis in the world at large, with the theory intended to make transformative praxis possible, and the conditions of praxis intended to make the theory useful and responsible for building a life worth living for all. I argue eight separate theses (listed below), which either follow from each other logically, or recontextualize extant integral models into the framework I construct, or both. Holding all eight together is the conviction that humanity is confronting an apparently fragmented but in reality integrated set of problems, many of them violent—social, ecological, economic, legal, political, subjective—that are best addressed by an integrated set of solutions, such that transformation of the holy, horrible mess we inhabit into a sane, nonviolent, and democratic order becomes possible. This is, obviously, a utopian ambition.

I mean something very specific by *integral theory*. Broadly speaking, the *integral* part of integral theory seeks to address the problem of *everything* (Wilber, 2000b),<sup>3</sup> and to propose means of transforming it: first to grasp this puzzling, preposterous world for what it is, with our confused and problematic selves, in order to then help solve the problem, thus giving two interventions. I begin with the observation that the psyche, the socius, and the cosmos, as we conventionally experience them, are problematic, even pathological, but I also hypothesize that these things are not necessarily what they may seem to be to us, and thus that the problem need not be so problematic (or necessarily so to *this* degree).

*Theory* is *systematic* applied conceptual work, a method one uses to accomplish practical, tactical matters. The purpose of any theory, inclusive of integral theory, is to *make* and *coordinate the use* of effective tools (concepts) for addressing actual problems.<sup>4</sup> As those of us who may have worked with our hands know, effective tools are made with a specific kind of precision—a helpful tool is crafted, even repurposed, in response to the contours and textures of the problem addressed in the given job site and the systematic design strategy of the architects.

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<sup>1</sup> Smith (1997, p. 11)

<sup>2</sup> Said (1978, p. 45)

<sup>3</sup> As a cultural matter, integral theory is in this sense one heir of a project initiated by early-modern pedagogues such as Pierre de la Ramee (Petrus Ramus, 1515-1572) and Jan Amos Komensky (Comenius, 1592-1670)—that of organizing many discrete problems into a schematic, spatial *theory of everything*. Ong (2004) offers a now-classic analysis of this project.

<sup>4</sup> This claim is informed by Deleuze & Guattari (1994), where philosophy is defined as the practice of making concepts.

Here, concepts are precise tools used in the day-to-day labor of a theoretical *project*.<sup>5</sup> I repurpose several of them—totality, articulation, coherence, flicker, novelty, surprise—in an analogous way in this essay. This work is intended as an essay in the etymological sense of an attempt, a test, a trial, and an inquiry. It is not a treatise, nor a manifesto, nor a loyalty oath, nor a “life starter kit.” For this reason, I invite the reader to consider taking up further points of inquiry as suggested by any one line of thinking presented here. The problem at hand, the integral problem, demands this kind of conceptual precision,<sup>6</sup> actually a greater and more scientifically rigorous precision than I personally am capable of. As such, these are *new* values, new to integral theory. New values are necessarily exotic, in that they present themselves as they are relative to their new context—unfamiliar, perhaps unwelcome, perhaps uncomfortable or uncomfoting. To adopt a Nietzschean trope, they are unfit for easy consumption. The usefully new is like this. At first it is puzzling and exotic, beyond the reader’s horizon,<sup>7</sup> but through a respectful approach and repeated exposure it becomes familiar and useful in the way a handtool does when one has mastered its use. A handtool is impersonal. It does not care about its user’s hopes or fears; mercilessly, it carries on with its task of hammering or cutting, regardless. Theory generally and new values specifically are like this also: philosophizing with a hammer,<sup>8</sup> cutting through spiritual materialism (Trungpa, 1987), making the Body without Organs with a “very fine file” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 160), as appropriate.<sup>9</sup> Unlike theology, theory is not a consolation (see Thesis Seven).

Uncompromisingly novel interventions have been challenging in just this way, historically. Consider the riot that greeted the debut of Igor Stravinsky’s prophetic-voiced *Rite of Spring*, most meaningful in the context of all ballet that had come before it, or the difficulty James Joyce’s *Ulysses* must have presented to a reader accustomed to the much less demanding narratives of Walter Scott or Charles Dickens.<sup>10</sup> This is not to imply that my work is analogous

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<sup>5</sup> To more fully elaborate this analogy: if concepts are analogous to tools, then method and theory are analogous *not* to an ad hoc collection of tools or a “toolbox” but to a total design strategy, inclusive of architectural concepts, structural engineering, materials science, project management, finance, and strategic planning.

<sup>6</sup> Weber (1978) presents this simply as a pragmatic problem: “The most precise formulation cannot always be reconciled with a form which can readily be popularized” (p. 3).

<sup>7</sup> This is a core problem addressed in philosophical hermeneutics as a scene of potential transformation. Gadamer (2004) summarizes it as follows:

The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth. (p. 302)

<sup>8</sup> This refers specifically to Nietzsche’s late literary and rhetorical practices as in *The Twilight of the Idols*, not simply smashing things indiscriminately for the reactionary thrill of indiscriminately smashing the values of others.

<sup>9</sup> I find non-metaphysical and non-theological conceptual tools more appropriate to the integral task than metaphysical and theological ones. This should not be confused with an *anti*-theological position. By analogy, a surgeon’s justifiable workaday preference for a scalpel rather than a hatchet ought not to be confused with a blindness to the virtues of hatchets or animosity toward them or a crusade against them.

<sup>10</sup> These examples, while concise and convenient, imply an unfortunate kind of high-art heroic-genius romanticism that is foreign to this project. In reality, art is produced by networks of people, including novel interventions in the field of culture such as Stravinsky’s and Joyce’s. Becker (1978) analyzes this in detail.

in significance to Stravinsky's or Joyce's, or that the oeuvre of any integral theorist (Aurobindo, Gebser, Krishnamurti, Wilber) is analogous in importance to that produced by Dickens, Scott, or Tchaikovsky. Rather, *Ulysses* and *The Rite of Spring* are examples of how the novel appears first as an *unacceptable* or impenetrable surprise, but then over time transforms its milieu—again, a double intervention. The present inquiry aspires to such a transformation in integral practice (see Thesis Eight). I humbly ask my readers' indulgence with the stiffly-worded passages, on the promise that, insofar as I have been successful, the effort one invests in parsing a given thesis ought to be rewarded in kind with conceptual, and therefore practical and transformational, clarity. I have also suggested ways in which these theses relate to and recontextualize each other parenthetically, giving some texture and space for the reader to work with imaginatively. The structural and stylistic features of this text are intentional and purposive. As a practical matter, I invite newcomers to explore this essay in order to become acquainted with it, at least for a first exposure. Because major points and many minor motifs are cross-referenced to other relevant material in the essay, one can follow threads and skip around at a self-directed pace, as desired. In fairness to the work, however, if one intends to really understand any one part of this proposal, one will need to work through *all* of it systematically, because it expresses a systematic strategy. This is an *integral* theory, after all. One must be responsible for the totality (see Thesis Two).

Three recent interventions in integral theory make an opening for the present work. First, my (incomplete) attempt to flesh out the political ambivalence of certain core integral positions and to frame a program for a critical integral theory<sup>11</sup> on post-Marxist grounds (Anderson, 2006); second, Bonnitta Roy's (2006) reintroduction into integral discourse of a model of time, space, and the production of subjectivity that is much more amenable to empirical, material analysis than the Providential view favored by Wilber (following Aurobindo) and a subject of critique in my own work,<sup>12</sup> in that Roy reads things in the world first as processes rather than as statics or as

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<sup>11</sup> This "doubled" explication of critical social theory into the cuts-both-ways of a Buddhist dialectic (emptiness of subject and object, co-causality) has been suggested before in many contexts. For example, Hakamaya Noriaki has proposed that authentic Buddhism, to be distinguished in his view from most actual Buddhist practice, is nothing more nor less than criticism of this type. Specifically, Hakamaya identifies the practice of Buddhist dialectics, not only as a historically significant intervention into traditional Indian idealism analogous to that of critical philosophy into European theology, but functionally equivalent to European dialectics, to critical method (Hubbard & Swanson, 1997, p. 58). The specific topic Hakamaya singles out for critique in Japanese Buddhist culture are broadly similar to those I have targeted in the work of certain canonical integralists, including "the realist affirmation of the topical as the self-evident original ground" and the contemporary reconstruction and reestablishment of "indigenous" (read: Orientalist) "modes of thought" (Hubbard & Swanson, 1997, pp. 63-66), both of which I take to be rather obvious ideological gestures. To this extent at least, the present inquiry is sympathetic to Hakamaya's project. Finally, Ken Wilber has long incorporated the diction of Buddhist dialectics into his project, but in a way I find problematic (see Thesis Five).

<sup>12</sup> Hegel (1902) asserts that Providence "manifests" in time in the variable form of historical manifestations (p. 14), where historical manifestations include human consciousness developing according to an *a priori* plan. Aurobindo Ghose (1949) employs this definition as well: "a pre-determined evolution from inconscience to superconscience, the development of arising order of beings with a culminating transition from the life of the Ignorance to a life in the Knowledge" (p. 742). And also like Hegel, Aurobindo characterizes this evolution as Providential, and worded very carefully in the passive voice to allow a measure of plausible deniability. "Even in the Inconscient there seems to be at least an urge of inherent necessity producing the evolution of forms and in the forms a developing

inevitably; and Gary Hampson's (2007) endorsement of the dialectic as a postformal operation and reconsideration of the postmodern in an integral context. Taken together, one finds *dialectical materialism*,<sup>13</sup> the postmetaphysical (and in my presentation of it *nonontological*) method of Marxist and post-Marxist praxis,<sup>14</sup> and the primary theoretical framework of the present inquiry, which I attempt to pursue to its logical conclusion.<sup>15</sup>

The trajectory of my argument is as follows:

**Thesis One:** Any “thing” as such is a coherent product in time of multiple causalities and co-causalities: a double articulation and a work-in-progress, a *coherence*.

**Thesis Two:** This co-causal articulation is a totality. Due to specific causes, totalities may be stratified and therefore characterized by internal or external conflict. This conflict is also co-conditional.

**Thesis Three:** The coherence arises, persists, and decomposes in time; it can change in time mechanically, consciously by accumulating developments to a stable regime, or consciously by transforming said regime. Transformation may be necessary to produce responsible results. Theory can help (if responsible) or hinder (if not) any transformation.

**Thesis Four:** Responsible intervention can produce real transformation in the totality. The first intervention is to recognize the nature of a given situation; the second is to maintain relationship with it over time. Responsibility is characterized by critical clarity, competence, consciousness, and compassion.

Consciousness,” Aurobindo (1949) posits, “and it may well be held that this urge is the evolutionary will of a secret Conscious Being and its push of progressive manifestation the evidence of an innate intention” (p. 742). Aurobindo's engagement with Hindu traditions notwithstanding, his presentation of evolution has its intellectual roots in the Providential theology of Hegel.

<sup>13</sup> Dialectical materialism is, properly speaking, a way to apprehend the material and social world, while historical materialism is a nineteenth-century method for understanding history and political economy. In this essay I use the term “dialectical materialism” in a less rigorous way than is conventional, and subsume into it the methodological function of historical materialism. To be very precise about it, however, I would insist on calling this method dialectical *immaterialism* (Anderson, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> I would like to emphasize that this is an experiment in Marxist historical method, rather than an affirmation of Marx's or any one Marxist's findings. For instance, Marx's badly-informed Victorian-era prophecies on the future development of capitalism, demonstrably false today, are recognized as such and rejected.

<sup>15</sup> Exposing both the subject and the object to the kind of analysis I propose in these Theses One, Two, Five and Six effectively leads the Marxist dialectic to the same end as the Madhyamika of Nagarjuna, also a dialectical tradition: dependent origination or co-causality (Sanskrit: pratityasamutpada), whose core text is most accessibly translated by Stephen Bachelor (2000). My interpretation in this regard has been strongly influenced by Hookham (1991) and Trungpa (1987), as well as my own earnest and active if negligible practice of Mahayana Buddhism. This recontextualization of the social to the subjective (form into emptiness) is the obverse of the projects Jones (1989) and Hattam (2004) have proposed, where Buddhist dialectics are redeployed into a coherent social theory (emptiness into form). The points of contact between Marxism and Madhyamika I tentatively touch on here need much development in future integral scholarship.

**Thesis Five:** Where duality (form) is an aggregate of co-conditioned products-in-process, nonduality (emptiness) is immanent, unconditioned. Recognizing and remembering this are the subjective valences of the first and second interventions, respectively.

**Thesis Six:** Coherences are best understood when read responsibly, each in their own specificity and with reference to their own histories (as form), not exclusively or absolutely by any developmental or classificatory scheme of values (which are also coherences with histories).

**Thesis Seven:** New values may be made, emergent cultural forms do arise, but “New Ages” do not “emerge” mechanically or Providentially. New regimes, like new values, are responsibly made.

**Thesis Eight:** The current regime produces unacceptable results. If a “New Age” is to be made, transformative practice must be radically democratized, and resist commodification.

Insofar as this is a rigorously *nonontological* project, it is a *postmetaphysical*<sup>16</sup> project, indigenous to the tradition of American pragmatism as much as a post-Heideggerian suspicion toward any metaphysics of presence. By nonontological I mean that nothing, not any one thing, is posited as ultimately real or unreal, or the product of a reality or an unreality, only as temporary, contingent, provisional, and unsatisfying. While I do propose a theory that addresses problems traditionally appropriate to metaphysics in all eight theses, my intention in presenting them in the way I do is to avoid participating in the reactionary movement against critical practice Jurgen Habermas (1994) diagnoses as a problematic “*renewal of metaphysics*” (p. 28).<sup>17</sup> Instead, I offer what I hope may become a useful contribution to what Richard Rorty (2006) has described as a *postmetaphysical culture*<sup>18</sup> in which common ground is sought and found in the

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<sup>16</sup> This proposal moves from different premises than the curiously metaphysical “postmetaphysical” view posited in Wilber (2006) and related commodities and promotional materials marketed by Wilber’s Integral Institute.

<sup>17</sup> In his well-circulated comments on the matter, Habermas (1994) observes that this kind of thinking manifests, Ramus-like, on the “subcultural” fringes, and produces thoughts that oscillate amidst a surreal corona of *closed worldviews* that are put together by shabby speculation from bits of scientific theory. Ironically, New Age movements fill the need for the lost One and Whole by abstractly invoking the authority of a scientific system that is becoming ever more opaque. (p. 28-29)

That Habermas abuts this renewal of metaphysics against a seemingly authoritative if Baroque system of thinking, predicated on (in his view) pseudo-scientific speculation, with some relationship to New Age or human-potential culture and a concern for unities and wholes, and with some profile by the early 1990s, all suggests he is referring to a specific but unnamed philosophical project that bears all these characteristics. Guessing which one (if one exists beyond the obscure German titles he references) is beyond the scope of the present inquiry.

<sup>18</sup> Expressing a position developed in Rorty (1989), Rorty (2006) defines such a “poeticized” culture as one in which the imperative that is common to religion and metaphysics—to find an ahistorical, transcultural matrix for one’s thinking, something into which everything can fit, independent of one’s time and place—has dried up and blown away. It would be a culture in which people thought of human beings as creating their own life-world, rather than as being responsible to God or ‘the nature of reality,’ which tells them what kind it is. (p. 46)

The present inquiry aspires to this challenge.

field of appropriate values and responsible cooperative action rather than in mutual adherence to an ideology or an ontology (see Thesis Seven).

Finally, I am mindful that some of the analysis I offer here may seem unacceptable to many in the integral community, particularly those invested in positions I take to task for being in my view inappropriate to the transformative project. Spiral Dynamics, in its original iteration (Beck & Cowan, 1996), is most directly critiqued. This may be due to my own acknowledged limitations as a thinker, to the real problems I claim to have found in the theory, both, or neither. Regardless, I welcome good-faith criticism and the occasional differences in approach that arise when theoretical problems are worked out in a public forum. I do not pretend to have the final answers or an absolutely comprehensive view, nor do I insist on a contrived consensus in matters social, conceptual, or contemplative; this is not a “master map” analogous to Prof. Hazelton’s<sup>19</sup> in Wilber’s novel *Boomeritis* (Wilber 2003),<sup>20</sup> nor is it intended to become one, although I have attempted to account for ideologies (conservative, liberal, theological) that I find incomplete or provisional, and to work in an interdisciplinary way to the limits of my ability. Nor do I propose the reduction of all integral inquiry to the monotonous epic voice of one map, as Hazelton does, whether Aurobindo’s or Gebser’s<sup>21</sup> or Wilber’s or mine. Instead, I submit that one task of integral theory is to align common interests without eliding meaningful differences such that diverse and dispersed transformational projects can work in a coordinated fashion as a *counterproject*<sup>22</sup> to those forces and flows that produce social and psychological fragmentation, disharmony, and violence—in short, to make the dialogic space *meaningful, sustainable democracy* possible.

## Thesis One

*Any “thing” as such is a coherent product in time of multiple causalities and co-causalities: a double articulation and a work in process, a coherence.*

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<sup>19</sup> When asked if she or her colleagues at IC promote the teachings of a particular school, Hazelton replies in the negative. “The idea,” she replies, “is to take all of the known maps of the human mind—East, West, ancient, modern—and create a master map, a comprehensive map of the human mind, using all of them to fill in the gaps in any of them” (Wilber, 2003, p. 115). Hazelton does not seem to be aware that the master map she is constructing, “this integral map,” *is a school*, specifically the school she is creating by deciding what is “best” in any given cultural tradition or mind-model, and therefore a unique discursive position.

<sup>20</sup> *Boomeritis* is a rather unique text. There is almost no trace of irony in it—unusual for a novel. Following Bakhtin (1981), one might argue it has more in common with epic than novel, given its monologot voice.

<sup>21</sup> In this essay I classify Gebser as a Hegelian, but it should be understood that Gebser is not precisely a Hegelian in the Providential way Aurobindo seems to be. Gebser does posit a spiritualized (but atemporal) origin, metaphysically real, that manifests through human practice in a near-future new reality, which is taken to proven the reality of said origin. Thus, Gebser assumes the origin he seeks to prove, a tendency Marx diagnoses in Hegelian thinking in the *1844 Manuscripts* and Althusser explicates (see Thesis Two)—even in the face of Gebser’s own strong words against Hegel (Gebser, 2004, pp. 41-42).

<sup>22</sup> Schweickart (2003) elaborates this concept in full.

A *coherence* is something that is coherent *as* something recognizable as itself,<sup>23</sup> complete or whole in itself (see Thesis Two), that may include some or all of its own interpretation (see Theses Three and Six). It is a thing one can identify conventionally—the pen in my hand I can and do recognize as a coherent pen in a coherent hand, rather than as a meaningless or unfamiliar shape, or as a mass of matter indistinct from the mass of matter I call my hand or the one I call the page.

The coherence is also an articulation, a causally-produced moment, an aspect of a process or more properly a set of synchronous processes,<sup>24</sup> the product and production of a curiously double fold of multiple causal forces. Stuart Hall (1996) notes first that “these things,” the features of an articulation, “require to be linked because, though connected, they are not the same” (p. 38)—we have to read coherence *into* a set of phenomena, as Merleau-Ponty (2003) discusses in his example of a spot of color against a field of a contrasting color (p. 5); perception makes coherence out of it.<sup>25</sup> I may not know which atoms belong to this pen and which belong to my hand, but my eye knows from past experience where the hand stops and the pen starts.<sup>26</sup> Double articulation: experience, memory (subjectivity), and a present situation (objectivity). To anticipate my argument a bit, this act of perception and making-coherent is typically holographic in nature (see Thesis Three). Hall (1996) gives some characteristics of a coherence.

The unity which they form is thus not that of an identity, where one structure perfectly recapitulates or reproduces or even ‘expresses’ another; or where each is reducible to the other; or where each is defined by the same determinations or has exactly the same conditions of existence; or where each develops according to the effectivity of the same conditions of existence; or even where each develops according to the effectivity of the same contradiction [...]. The unity formed by this combination or articulation is always, necessarily, a ‘complex structure,’ a structure in which things are related, as much through their differences as through their similarities. This requires that the mechanisms which connect dissimilar features must be shown—since *no ‘necessary correspondence’ or expressive homology can be assumed as given*. It also means—since the combination is a structure (an articulated combination) and not a random association—that there will be structured relations between its parts, i.e., relations of dominance and subordination.” (Hall, 1996, p. 38, emphasis added)

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<sup>23</sup> Wilber (2000a) uses the word “coherence” to characterize the “holon;” Ziporyn’s (2004) use of “coherence” as an analytical category for aspects of a given *getstalt* expresses the “holon” in a more elegant and fruitful way, without implying the kinds of hierarchic structures or ontological views Wilber posits that I do not, so I adopt it here.

<sup>24</sup> Lukacs’s (1971) repeated insistence that all apparent things are actually but moments in and of processes is in my view a necessary conclusion of dialectical thought.

<sup>25</sup> For Merleau-Ponty (2003), this is problematic in a way that anticipates my discussion of stupidity in Thesis Four: “We make perception out of things perceived. And since perceived things themselves are obviously accessible only through perception, we end by understanding neither” (p. 5).

<sup>26</sup> This aspect of the mechanical, even arbitrary *overdetermination* (see Thesis Two) of form relative to the smooth space of nonduality or, in practical terms, undifferentiated matter, is indebted to the very detailed analysis presented in Deleuze (1995).



Thus, the articulation is a way to think of any coherence as a Gramscian “historical bloc,” a coherent moment of form induced by a complex and contradictory<sup>27</sup> matrix of causalities,<sup>28</sup> real ones—on one side race, gender, class, geographic conditions, cultural values, pathologies, and strata of development, and on another side, the perception (mass-perception) of others that makes such an articulation coherent *as* something.<sup>29</sup> Is this shape in my hand a tool, or is it a threat? A parasite, a friend? Part of me or foreign to me?

This is co-causality or dependent origination, analogous though not identical to the same concept in traditional Buddhist dialectics. A concrete example: when I walk down the street, a casual observer of conventional capacity may first notice my light skin, my masculinity, my age, my build, the slight limp with which I move, the line of beads around my left wrist, the cat dander on my sweater—any or none of these—and will immediately, without volition, see the moving form of my person not as a random, ramshackle set of odd parts and bad luck, or a projection of shape into nonduality, of nonduality (see Thesis Five), but will connect these points into a constellation and construct them into a recognizable assemblage such as a man, a white man, a middle-aged white man, likely of working-class origin (if I foolishly open my mouth to speak or show my hands), and perhaps a cult member—not a Wilberian philosopher-sage, not a wizard of the dynamic spiral, not a steppin’ razor, not a street fighting man.<sup>30</sup> *This is automatic*<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> For example, Hampson (2007) observes that Wilber is dyspeptically dismissive of multiculturalism (p. 163), a cultural moment that makes real integral inquiry possible in the first place—as a properly contextualized, respectful, and intelligent appreciation of world values and traditions (see Thesis Seven), akin to respect for human dignity (and appropriately, it is the third commitment made by the California Institute of Integral Studies in its mission statement). Aurobindo Ghose’s remarkable capacity to hold *Paradise Lost* and the *Mahabharata* in his mind at once is nothing other than a multicultural gesture, an integral gesture; but this contradiction in Wilber’s work, between monoculture and multiculture, is but one example of a contradiction in an articulation (the articulation “Wilber’s work,” numbered as it is in consecutive waves). I would like to suggest that as coherences spiral into increasing complexity, the odds increase that contradictions, inner tensions, will arise, and that these tensions can be wedged open productively by critique into *new* coherences.

<sup>28</sup> Following David Hume, relations of cause and effect are to be understood here as interpretations or plausible assumptions. For instance: I recognize the cup of coffee in my hand to have the characteristic of warmth. I can posit a causal history of this characteristic through the on-off binaries of the electric power grid in my hometown, through the buzzing transmission of electrical current across the Columbia Plateau to the spinning turbines of the Bonneville Dam, made to spin by the kinetic energy of the flow of the Columbia River, which is drawn to the ocean from the mountains by the force of gravity and other forces. All these are taken as *plausible interpretations*, nothing more, for the purposes of this analysis—inclusive of causalities that one may experience as ironclad necessity (necessity being another plausible interpretation for a phenomenon).

<sup>29</sup> In conventional metaphysics after Aristotle, so-called categories of understanding (adapted in different ways by Kant and Durkheim among many others) exist already and serve to make coherent to a subject what an object’s nature is. For instance, space, as a category, allows one to delimit a thing by its position in space relative to other positions (left or right, up or down, larger or smaller); time, as a category, allows one to delimit a coherence by its duration. By contrast to this approach, I do not posit the metaphysical reality of any category, only the causal loops that produce consensus, inclusive of the consensus of coherence.

<sup>30</sup> This analysis emphasizes the formation of objects of sight and surveillance, but can also be extrapolated on principle to accounts of the other four senses as well as objects of the mind (ideas), and the emotions (mood, affect, perception). In fact, objects of the senses tend to coincide: as I watch my pen move across

(see Thesis Four); these autonomisms are the “mind-forg’d manacles” William Blake raged and despaired at in early capitalist theo-imperial London. I may or may not be conscious of the meaning I am making in concert with others as I perform my life, or in control of that meaning (it is more likely I am controlled by it), but if pressed I cannot deny this shared meaning.<sup>32</sup>

Anderson-out-for-a-walk and under surveillance by the local so-and-so is precisely an articulation in this double sense, dependent on the causes that produced the assemblage I identify with as my own set of problems and promises, as well as the perceptive capacity of said so-and-so, which is also a production of a similar set of forces, an articulation itself.<sup>33</sup> In this sense, a coherence (the pen in my hand, Anderson-on-walkabout) actually is *co-created* dialectically, in something of a double articulation between conditioned consciousness (subject) and the conditions of objective *conditions* (in the language of nonduality: the observer is of the observed, subject and object are both are temporary formal knots of the same space). This correspondence, as Hall observes, is not necessary as such, nor necessarily holographic. I argue that it is *conventionally* such, but I would also like to emphasize that it is *not necessary* to view Anderson-out-for-a-walk as an anonymous working-class white guy, or the neighborhood eccentric, or whatever at all—reduced to its components the contingent aggregate Anderson-on-walkabout is nothing at all, nothing remains, not even a “real” nothing or void—and this is so for any articulation (see Thesis Five). It is not necessary to take these things—any *things*, any *coherences* anything “self-evident”—for granted.

This “not necessarily” makes intervention and transformation possible, from the top or the bottom of the molar structure (the “superholon” in Wilber’s diction). The charismatic gesture, of which Krishnamurti’s project may be an example *par excellence* (see Thesis Eight), works so comprehensively because it ruptures both ends of the articulation, subject and object. It abandons the (personal) past; it cannot be *read*, which renders any *consensus* past irrelevant to the transformative moment. Not nonexistent, but transformed in (or out of) significance. This is a form of exposure to the new in the always-familiar, which is precisely the uncanny position of nonduality relative to every coherent formation (see Thesis Five).

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the page and I hear the scratching of the paper and feel some friction in the fingers of my right hand, I unconsciously triangulate all three into one coherence, the hand-pen-paper assemblage. That is, objects of the eye, the ear, and touch become one object, my pen doing its work.

<sup>31</sup> Hartigan (2005) gives a detailed analysis of the psychology and sociology of race in the United States, specifically with regard to whiteness and its strata of articulation. My treatment of the phenomenology and semiotics of race in this example is indebted both to Hartigan’s analysis and my own experiences as “white trash” in America.

<sup>32</sup> Weber (1978) approaches this concept of the co-constitution of phenomena in his definition of social action. He posits that a causal explanation of social action is possible, that action can only be regarded as such “insofar as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to his behavior—be it overt or covert, omission or acquiescence,” and that such action is “‘social’ insofar as its subjective meaning takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course” (p. 4). In short, Weber posits social action as a causal loop: genres of social behavior make action coherent to subjects; subjects behave meaningfully when they act generically, thus reifying and reproducing those genres. This insight informs Theses One and Eight.

<sup>33</sup> One can test this with a simple thought experiment: replace any of the terms I used to identify my appearance to the world (race, gender, age, or class), and consider how one’s subjective response to this character of Anderson-on-walkabout may change as these terms change.

This presentation of any coherence as an articulation of sociohistorical forces<sup>34</sup> may lead to the misunderstanding that I am promoting a version of what Wilber (2000a) diagnoses as “sociocentrism” (p. 243), the mistake of reductively reading all gestalts through the values of the given context in which one has arisen. However, I am not proposing any kind of “centrism,” but instead promoting two safeguards against this species of what Mill (1998) called *the tyranny of the majority*. The first is an insistence on dialectical and material analysis, which demonstrates all values to be contingent on specific contextual forces for their arising and maintenance, their characteristic mutability over time, and their typical relationship to the will-to-power of any dominant stratum. Approached in a different vocabulary, Foucault (1971) famously demonstrates that no conventional set of values is necessarily the sanest approach to formal reality, or even a necessarily sane approach at all. Although not a category for analysis or a dialectical position, nonduality is the second safeguard against sociocentrism, because it reveals first that all social forms—all forms without exception—are in and of a space that has no center or circumference, that by the logic of nonduality “centrism” is a fallacy, in the last analysis untenable. Seeing how one is placed in a given discursive, subjective, everyday-life position (*Eureka!*), one is able then to work toward an active recontextualization of one’s subjectivity, which amounts to a total revolution of all existing values for the sake of all beings without exception when pushed to its necessary conclusion, a commitment I call becoming-responsible (see Theses Four, Six, and Eight).

The purpose of reading any given coherence as an articulation of multiple causalities, a historical bloc, is first to observe directly how the (apparently) absolute, naturalized values of that moment are in fact contingent on nothing absolute at all, but only the push and pull of manifold, provisional, and temporary contradictions and make-believe<sup>35</sup> absolutisms that produce fragmented everyday consciousness. This is what I call the *first intervention*, which corresponds to the miracle of the “observer” and the “observed” mutually recognizing one another as being of the same stuff, which begins a novel dialectical movement between conditions and consciousness—qualitatively different from a mechanical, automatic process. The *second intervention* is to constantly, rigorously produce new values through postformal critique, through the “gay science” of creative praxis. That is the transformative, conscious valence of the double articulation (see Thesis Five), which, in concert with unconscious or mechanical dependent originations, produces the totality of all *formal* and *postformal* moments in this world.

So far I have examined only how individual coherent subjects relate to individual coherent objects, cooperatively conditioning each other by force of inertial—mechanical energy—or volitional consciousness, or a point on a spectrum between these two poles (mechanical and

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<sup>34</sup> That a cognate position to my own can be found in Wilber’s work and in Spiral Dynamics—that “value systems, worldviews, and mindsets” are “each the product of its times and conditions” (Beck & Cowan, 1996, p. 29)—suggests that this view should have some purchase among even the most conservative of integral thinkers.

<sup>35</sup> By *make-believe* I intend to express both the conventional meaning, imaginative play appropriate to children, and also any means by which people are made to believe demonstrably false narratives—in the family, in the workplace, in civil society. Children are introduced to this second process also, early and often, in North America; for instance, many households encourage the belief that an obese Coca-Cola spokesmodel with a herd of flying ruminants delivers Christmas toys that were manufactured by cherubic elves, rather than by living people.

volitional). In Anderson (2007) I consider some ways in which will-to-power and desire flow through masses of subjects and draw some conclusions on the political use to which these flows can be put, either for conservative or transformational purposes, and how values are made.<sup>36</sup> All this begs the question of how subjects live and are made coherent in relation to groups of other subjects, and in relation to larger coherences such as the state,<sup>37</sup> corporate bodies, institutions, military hierarchies, and affiliations of religious sentiment or cultural appreciation, all of which are also coherences<sup>38</sup> (taken up in Thesis Two).

Further, two significant consequences follow from my position on co-causality. First, it follows that a being or reality having characteristics such as permanence and immutability can never be *proven* satisfactorily, only assumed or asserted Miltonically. Second, values, because they are contingent objects (not a permanent, immutable body of Law, as in Kafka), can only be projected onto *other* objects by subjects (flowing through *masses* of intertwined subject-object formations). For instance, the sound “nay” means “no” in English but “yes” in Korean. This demonstrates that neither negation nor affirmation as evaluative functions inhere ultimately in the sound “nay,” but only as one set of consensus values in Seoul, and another in London (or both in many North American cities, where both languages are spoken). Neither being nor values are necessary or quantifiable, but can be experienced, understood, and evaluated qualitatively.<sup>39</sup> It hurts when I stub my toe, even when I know my body and its pain to be unreal in any metaphysical sense, and unfailingly impermanent.

Subjects reproduce these consensus values in themselves and among others. We reproduce in flows and chains of flows: perhaps ideology (per Althusser), perhaps the culture machine (per Horkheimer and Adorno), perhaps power relations (per Foucault), perhaps a political

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<sup>36</sup> The reciprocities Simmel (2004) posits between subject and object, for instance, deserve a close examination in the context I establish here, as in his distinction between desire and value as the subjective relation to objects and the objective relation to objects, respectively (p. 75). I intend to begin this inquiry in forthcoming work on ecocriticism.

<sup>37</sup> One may object, fairly I think, that my account of co-causality in Thesis One through the production of a coherent thing out for a walk, my person, may mislead insofar as it seems to be personal, a matter of and for an individual subject, a consumer or producer. I would like to emphasize that since all coherences are totalities, this account may be used to unpack any object, even as it may strain the imagination to experiment with this metaphor on different degrees of scale: Chile and Iraq nationalizing their natural resources while under surveillance of other nation-states under late capital, for instance.

<sup>38</sup> As a thought experiment, observe the individual and mass behavior (particularly facial gestures and expressions) of enraptured sports fans, megachurch parishioners, fans at rock concerts, and worked-up delegates at political conventions, and reflect: do these ebbs and flows of affect differ in form or function in each context? In each of these instances, a context is made, a space, in which something specific can happen. Is it the same thing each time, or are there meaningful variations, or might these be wholly unrelated phenomena?

<sup>39</sup> Simmel (2004), a thoroughgoing Kantian, reaches similar conclusions on being and value but with a methodological difference—he chooses to posit certain values and certain a certain kind of being *a priori* (pp. 61-63). My decision not to do so, of course, reflects a valuation on my part: a methodological preference for the multivalent, dialogic space of rigorous empirical practice rather than the monologic voice of the metaphysical or theological (see Thesis Seven), corresponding generally to the Bakhtinian novel and epic registers, respectively (Bakhtin, 1981). This is a value judgment I have intentionally made, not an occult law of the cosmos I claim to justify.

unconscious (per Jameson, whose interpretation I favor), but in any sense, the subject reproduces a set of coherent forms forward in time. If so, one may ask what political action can be taken by a subject that is distinct from mechanical reproduction. If intelligent, intentional action is to be taken by a subject, rather than mimetic or mechanical action, it must begin with a conscious, responsible, and sustained rejection of those forces (see Thesis Four). This is *micropolitics* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987);<sup>40</sup> it is immanent and immediate, local, even under the skin and in the subtexts and textures of breakfast-table conversation, where the force of patterns of ownership and control are felt, seen, tasted, and put to bed beside one's children each night. This is everyday life.

## Thesis Two

*The co-causal articulation is a totality. Due to specific causes totalities may be stratified and therefore characterized by internal or external conflict, internal or external control. This conflict is also co-conditional.*

In Anderson (2006) I framed my critique of integral theory as I understood it then, as Ziporyn (2004) framed his own inquiry in *Being and Ambiguity*: to a reading culture long suspicious of totalizing and all-inclusive teleologies and schema, any totality, such as the “whole” of holistic thinking, appears initially to be a relic of a time when books set out to answer all questions, as Spinoza and Leibnitz did in the seventeenth century (see Thesis Seven). The danger I saw then was in reductivity—in *totalizing* a partial view into a universal one, which can only be an ideological maneuver. This led me at the time to effectively reject totalities as analytic tools, a position I intend to reverse now. A brief survey of Marxist method shows that it is possible to think the totality without necessarily being reductive or totalizing about it<sup>41</sup> and, further, that the totality can be a useful concept for unpacking the form and function of virtually anything coherent as *something* in the context of its arising, persisting, and inevitable destruction so long as one takes careful precaution against totalization, satisfying my earlier concern about the use and abuse of totalities in integral thinking. This precaution turns out to be the dialectic, implemented in a particular way.

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<sup>40</sup> I am preparing a proposal for an integral macropolitics, considering relations of subordination and transformation on the scale of nation and state, as a companion to this essay.

<sup>41</sup> My implementation of Marxism and post-Marxism in the present work, like my appropriation of crypto-Marxism elsewhere (Anderson 2006, 2007), assumes that the holism some Marxists identify is cognate to the holism of integral theory, and functionally equivalent. From this it follows that Marxist inquiry, when properly undertaken, can be seen as already integral, or latently integral, depending on the context. The Marxist totality of social relations, as Burkett (1999) insists, is holistic in nature, as is any coherent praxis:

Ultimately, a holistic *and* relational approach is dictated by the human requirements of a viable and humanly progressive co-evolution of society and nature [...] A holistic perspective, one that breaks down artificial barriers between natural and social sciences *and* between all science and the subaltern members of society, is absolutely essential for such development. (p. 20)

The rest of this section explores one way to read any coherence as a totality in relation to other totalities, beginning with an interpretation of Marx's attempt to frame the problem and working through contributions to Marxist method such as Althusser (1977) and Williams (1977). Most significant here is the way in which a coherence can be understood locally as a set of relationships among others in time, a possibility raised in Thesis One, an understanding that has some consequences for how one may theorize a global transformation.

Marx deploys the totality of social relations formally as a regime of social organization in world history, and in practice as a coherent whole of human practices given to a specific time and place—that is, holistically. Marx<sup>42</sup> analyzes these regimes of organized production as discrete phases of historical development in his essay “Wage Labor and Capital:”

*Thus the social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production, change, are transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, the productive forces. The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development, a society with a peculiar, distinctive character. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois society are such totalities of production relations, each of which at the same time denotes a special stage of development in the history of mankind. (p. 207)*

That Marx uses the form of the means of production as the social feature on which he parses the segments of historical time (the *regime*<sup>43</sup> of *private property*)<sup>44</sup> proves to be a significant point of departure for Marx from his predecessors methodologically. In practice, in his writings on history and culture, Marx employs the totality as a coherent whole composed of subordinate processes—in a trope Marx himself employs, a *body*. In this sense of a subject finding a coherent whole in an objective historical moment composed of discrete data points—making order out of an anarchy of material—and where that subject is taken in turn as such a coherent whole that is historically contingent (see Thesis One), Marx's totality can be described as holistic (Burkett, 1999).

In the 1844 *Manuscripts*, Marx describes a dialectic between conditions and consciousness, such that “the *social* character is the general character of the whole movement: *just as* society itself produces *man as man*, so is society *produced* by him” (p. 85). Experiential realities are

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<sup>42</sup> The citations to Marx in this section refer to Marx & Engels (1978). I include the titles of the essays anthologized in this volume for the sake of readerly clarity in the main text.

<sup>43</sup> The concepts of “regime” and “production” are developed in a more nuanced and detailed manner in Anderson (2007). For present purposes, the conventional meanings of each term suffice.

<sup>44</sup> It should be remembered here that throughout Marx's oeuvre “private property” denotes only the private, limited ownership and control of the social forces of production, not one's personal effects or intellectual property (Miliband, 1989). The purpose of overcoming private property is to overcome the separation it creates between those who can direct their productive activity and those who have no practical choice but to do as they are told—full, democratic enfranchisement in all aspects of experience for everyone, the Wilberian “integral embrace” in the social field. Brown (1988), LaClau & Mouffe (2001), and Schweickart (2002) discuss this aspect of Marxist theory as the democratization of the socioeconomic.

*productions*, inclusive of the means of both consuming and producing. Specifically, this apparent but not strictly necessary homology of the individual and society is a consequence of a necessary social activity, production of the conditions of continued social and biological existence (see Thesis One). The subject, for the young Marx, is homologous to the socius: “Man, much as he may therefore be a particular individual (and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual, and a real individual social being), is just as much the totality—the ideal totality—the subjective existence of thought and experienced society present for itself” (p. 86). Both terms, subject and socius, dependently co-determine each other, in a constitutive this-that, that-this causality (see Thesis One). This is significant; following this, one finds that control over one or both of these terms (socius or subject) leads to control over the totality, as much as it can be controlled (Thesis Eight experiments with this possibility).<sup>45</sup> In *The German Ideology*, Marx explains how one of these terms is determined, and how this conditions the other: “As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production” (p. 150). Here, capital chooses first to determine social relations, and thereby determines the nature of individuals, which serves to reproduce the totality on the terms of the dominant, regardless of the objective self-interest of the subjectified—a partial view is literally totalized into the whole.

In “The Jewish Question” (1843), Marx frames the totality of social conditions as such a contradiction of interests (again, in the subject and the polity), beginning with a critique of idealist (theological-Hegelian and materialistic-Feuerbachian) historiography: “History has for long enough been resolved into superstition; but we now resolve superstition into history” (p. 31). But as the state-socius determination suggests—it is not only or at all most significantly historians or Hegelians who mystify the conditions of everyday life. The way everyday people do it, for the reasons they do it, whether they have any control over it or not, is much more significant from the perspective of the totality. “Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all his own divinity and all his religious *bonds*,” Marx observes, “so the state is the intermediary to which man confides all his non-divinity and all his *human freedom*” (p. 32). While the Savior and the state are clearly terms in conflict here, Marx emphasizes that both are determinate formations “infused with an unreal universality” (p. 34)—in the language of this essay, totalized and reductive—that are ideological ballasts or counterweights to the realities of everyday life for one as a producer under the commodity regime, in which one is degraded “to the role of a mere means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers” (p. 34). In this instance the contradiction within the subject, reflecting that of the society (or the subject-socius assemblage)<sup>46</sup> lies between the state’s function as guarantor of human freedom expressed as the interest of the dominant class, which transforms the state into an instrument of its own will-to-

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<sup>45</sup> It should be noted that from this simplistic broad-brush framing of the conditions of subjectivity emerges multiple streams of Marxist scholarship, and not all in agreement with each other.

<sup>46</sup> While I do posit an unnecessary relationship of homology between the subject and its socius, I also follow the mainstream of “Western” Marxist and post-Marxist scholarship that finds a co-causal, co-constitutive, dialectical relationship between them. Working from theoretical positions developed by Gramsci and Lotman, Steedman (2006) proposes a nuanced interpretation of “the microstructures through which hegemony is constructed as identity” (p. 152), a process that constitutes the totality of social relations, emphasizing the role of memory in contemporary ideological processes, which expresses very well what I am proposing in this context.

power and will-to-profit on one side, and the abstract human freedom for all subjects regardless of class literally prescribed by the state under liberal democracy on the other. For instance, religious practice or affiliation, for Marx, is a “*universal right of man*” (p. 41), regardless of the ideological work of the specific religious institutions, doctrines, and traditions, the explication of which he devotes much of his energy. “The contradiction in which the adherent of a particular religion finds himself in relation to his citizenship,” according to Marx, “is only *one aspect* of the universal *secular contradiction between the political state and civil society*” (p. 39). Here, the contradiction is articulated between the interest (will-to-power) of a subject, in the context of religious practice or heritage, or as economic self-interest (class interest), opposed to the state and the status quo. Like a food web, a totality (a coherence) is typically characterized by a conflict of interests in its context and its constitution under capital, not an inherently utopian or “holarchic” order.<sup>47</sup>

Marx shows this conflict between liberty as freedom of conscience and one’s declension into a position *vis a vis* the state to be itself a contradiction, where “the right to liberty ceases to be a right as soon as it comes into conflict with political life”—sadly, China’s oppression of Tibetan Buddhists is but one of many conspicuous examples of such in attempts at Marxist praxis alone (or more properly, Marxist in name)—whereas “in theory political life is no more than the guarantee of the rights of man” and therefore should “be suspended as soon as it comes into contradiction with its *end*, these rights of man” (p. 44). For Marx, the specific matter of religion is a *survival*—a functional fossil from an earlier socioeconomic order—and but a specific case of the tension he explores between private initiative and political contingency. To anticipate a later point in this thesis, Raymond Williams’ observation that one can transform one’s devotions into a functionally oppositional practice, specifically renouncing one’s will-to-capital and instead working for the benefit of the totality (p. 122), a position Williams simply proposes without elaborating, should be taken in this context.

For Marx, universal individual rights are a consequence of a political emancipation that came with the transition from a feudal to a bourgeois regime—the dissolution of the crystallized civil order into a mass of “independent *individuals* whose relations are regulated by *law*” (p. 46). Collective or organizational interest under the feudal system, the interest of the guild or the clergy, becomes the interest of the individual burgher, the individual worker. Marx’s solution to the contradiction between the law-bound rights of the individual and the power of the bourgeois state to guarantee those rights while, simultaneously, violating them in pursuit of the interest of the empowered, is to redefine the interest (will-to-power) of the individual, which Marx calls here *human emancipation*—“when the real, individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen” (p. 46). This is the moment when the subject becomes *political* in the sense Marx does not articulate in this early essay: that of becoming organized, building bodies such as feudal guilds, those with like interests into a viable *political* force, just as they are already a viable *productive* force. Worded differently, the task of human emancipation is to build a coherent body out of a muddle of microorganisms in competition with one another so that each

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<sup>47</sup> The view that coherences are conventionally pathological and contradictory, and under capital pathological and contradictory in a particular way, should be contrasted with Wilber’s (2000a) view that holons are by nature orderly, of order, in order (natural holarchy)—a distinction to be fleshed out in future work—and compared to the Noble Truth of Suffering in traditional Buddhism.



microorganism may pursue its own fulfillment, which finally coincides with the fulfillment of each other organism. I call this process *radical democracy* (see Theses Seven and Eight).

In a more theoretically developed and historically-oriented document, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx analyzes the forces of a historical moment when they prove formative of such a body, mid-nineteenth century France, where proposing that “[m]en make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given, and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living” (p. 595). The totality is not a structure newly born with each phase of historical development; as suggested with the case of religion and human rights, any given moment is a mass of mobilized accretions, products of history with contemporary functions and ideological deployments. Marx demonstrates this principle in his analysis of the social and political forces that led to the *coup d’etat* of Louis Bonaparte in December of 1851.

After it is itself transformed into an instrument of the bourgeoisie, the French state succeeds in transforming the legal structure of France into the very image of the means of commodity production—in Marx’s terms “the motley pattern of conflicting medieval plenary powers” are transformed “into the regulated plan of a state authority, whose work is divided and centralised as in a factory” (p. 606). But not all has changed. Some forms and memes remain from the feudal past (survivals), which prove to be of use to the empowered class. For instance, “[h]istorical tradition gave rise to the faith of the French peasants in the miracle that a man named Napoleon would bring all the glory back to them” (p. 608), without regard to the fact that *this* Napoleon had simply fashioned himself as such—*make-believe*. Power changes what it must and uses what it can of the detritus of history available to it. Complicity of interest makes a meme such as this coincidence of names and a concocted genealogy available and of use to power. In this instance, playing along with the charade or forcing oneself to believe until one *does* believe appeals to the peasant who wants to “consolidate” his “small holding” or enlarge it, not to reach past it (p. 609)—will-to-capital, which does *not* integrate the interests of said peasants with the interests of like peasants, “homologous multitudes,” who are instead like potatoes lumped into a bag (as in the lumpenproletariat), forming an arbitrary unit not organized, only in proximity to each other. But people are not always or only potatoes:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that divide their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes, and put them in hostile contrast to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no unity, no national union and no political organization, they do not form a class (p. 608).

The very forces that determine the totality’s conflict-structure can, if determined in a very thoroughgoing way—*overdetermined*, in fact totalized—<sup>48</sup> lead to the organization of an

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<sup>48</sup> This presentation of overdetermination is meant to be introductory and is admittedly simplistic in its structural, rather than processual, presentation. Foucault (1978) offers a correction for this in his program for analyzing power, discourse, and exteriority (pp. 94-96), methodologically and conceptually comparable to the program for ethico-political or “integral” history Gramsci (2000) posits (pp. 193-195).

oppositional class. Marx uses the logic of homology to suggest that unintended consequences such as this may be explicable, a strategy later developed most notably by Althusser (1977).

To this end, Marx uses established, traditional rhetorical and literary tropes—residuals also—in which the subject-socius causal formation is expressed as a homology, the most conspicuous of which is the body politic trope, as old as Thucydides, Plato, and the Hebrew Bible—the bourgeoisie suffered defeat “in its mind and in its body,” meaning literally its culture, law, and administration, and its military (p. 605)—and an analogy also common to Renaissance and Enlightenment allegory and psychomachia, that of a house to a psyche.<sup>49</sup> Millions of French peasants live in miserable hovels with no more than three openings—“And windows are to a house what the five senses are to the head” (p. 611), meaning that a head with one opening only (the disenfranchised French) is badly incapacitated for perception, rendered ignorant, literally and figuratively blinded and deafened. Put simplistically, as the subject, so the socius and vice versa, a principle Marx articulates here through a recursive causal logic, by which the French burghers “imposed the state of siege; the state of siege has been imposed on it. It supplanted the juries by military commissions; its juries are supplanted by military commissions” (p. 663). As in the case of class formation, the empowered are in the last analysis doing this to themselves as they do it to everyone, a process Marx presents with skill rhetorically but without precision methodologically in this case. Where Marx leaves off, in near-obfuscation, Althusser picks up.

Specifically, Althusser begins his treatment of the totality of social relations where Marx begins “The Jewish Question,” with a demystification of history and the dialectic. According to Althusser (1977), the Hegelian dialectic is primarily *mimetic*—mechanical, repetitive—rather than intelligent, creative, or productive (see Thesis Three).<sup>50</sup> That is, the theological speculations to which purpose Hegel set his project represent not an obfuscation or misapplication of dialectical method but “*the mystified form of the dialectic itself*” (p. 93), because Hegel organizes the totality of concrete determinations of a given polity into a coherent whole in such a way that it can be “*reflected in a unique internal principle, which is the truth of all those concrete determinations*” (p. 102), in such a way that ideologically occludes an empirical basis for investigation—ideology posing as metaphysics posing as reason. This internal principle is a “*spiritual principle, which can never definitely be anything but the most abstract form of that epoch’s consciousness of itself: its religious or philosophical consciousness, that is, its own ideology*” (Althusser, 1977, p. 103). The characteristically Hegelian gesture, then, is to fashion a representation of a totality into a programmatic Providential and metaphysical marionette, which moves dialectically not in response to conditions or verifiable positions but according to an ideological and at bottom political, thus “egoistic,” agenda: “arbitrary decisions” (p. 104) made to *resemble* a rigorous dialectic here, but elsewhere made to appear as Providence,<sup>51</sup> as Spirit.

<sup>49</sup> Anderson (2003) gives a brief cultural history of this trope as an expression of transformational holism. The allegoric tradition may be yet another cultural matrix from which holism as we know it now in the Anglophone tradition arose.

<sup>50</sup> It is worth remembering in this context that, according to Habermas (1994), recognizably postmetaphysical thinking arises in history as an intervention into Hegel’s positions and practices by the generation of Marx, Feuerbach, and Bruno Bauer (p. 39).

<sup>51</sup> I provisionally claim that Wilber’s holarchy is one such Hegelian organizational principle (a spatial one), and that Aurobindian evolution is another (of chronology). Wilber’s specific debt to Hegelian thinkers (Aurobindo, Gebser, Teilhard) and Hegel himself remains an open question for future inquiry,

Hegel's intervention is the philosophical complement to Bonaparte's political one as Marx presents it in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*—it “produces actual anarchy in the name of order” (p. 617) (see Thesis Seven).

As Marx did, Althusser posits a totality of social relations constituted, under capital, by a contradiction of class interests, where “the Capital-Labour contradiction is never simple, but always specified by the historically concrete forms in which it is exercised” (p. 106). This specificity of articulation is *contingent on* and homologously *expressed as* local causalities—the inertia of traditional conjugal and familial relations, the state, cultural traditions, longstanding prosaic strategies for mitigating the difficulties posed by the need to eat and to sleep in a given place and time, all canalized into concrete forms. Meaning: a moment of racism in a workplace, for instance, articulates the writ-large contradiction of the social totality—a conflict of interests—by means of race and in terms of race, and in this sense is not only determined by one stream of causality but *overdetermined* by multiple causalities, the complex of race and class, and local and global histories (see Thesis One). Further, local *overdetermined* causalities must be understood in relation to the pushes and pulls of the global, which engage with local formations on specific, also historically determined terms (Althusser, 1970, p. 106). That is, a racialized moment of conflict in an Oregon lumber mill is not wholly coherent without the frame of the contingencies of the contemporary world timber economy and the local conditions of everyday life. It is not only personal, nor only racist, nor only local.

A Hegelian, for the purposes of Althusser's argument, would look to subdue a given formation regardless of its determination from its contextualized historical specificity into Spirit—the outcome of this dialectic is assumed before the start, literally taken on faith, such that in a vulgar but real way the contradictions of race relations among late-capitalist producers are made out to be a gesture of Providence, specifically a Hegelian's providential pen (see Thesis Seven). Not so for the Marxist working in good faith. Althusser recognizes that the specific overdetermination of social relations in Russia, for instance, made revolution possible under Lenin, but conditions in the overdetermined totality of Wilhelm's Germany *prevented* the same (p. 106). Methodologically, this means it is indeed possible to think a totality without doing necessary violence to any specific contingency, but it is also possible to botch it, to see a New Age dawning where there is none, or to ideologically foreclose a transformation that might be possible (see Thesis Seven). The terms of open-ended empirical inquiry if rigorously applied prevent this, which is why Althusser emphasizes that in Marxist method “the material life of men explains their history; their consciousness, their ideologies are then merely the phenomena of their material life” (p. 107), regardless of the gender-specific language of Althusser's presentation.

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as is the applicability of this critique of Hegel to post-Hegelian integralists such as Wilber and his claimed sources (see Anderson, 2006). In many instances, this question will produce complex answer, due to the complexity of some integral projects. For instance, the real contribution of Sean Kelly's integration of Hegelian dialectics and Jungian archetypes on the ground of complex holism in my view is the very useful concept of complex holism Kelly himself puts forward (Kelly, 1993)—which is to say, while Kelly's complex holism as “*dynamic complementarity*” (p. 106) may have arisen from his reflections on Hegel and Jung, its applicability may extend beyond the problems that may inhere in Hegelian and Jungian thinking, demand comparison to the ecological Marxist holism Burkett (1999) proposes, and may in part and in metaphysical diction anticipate my argument in Thesis One.

It is possible to read Althusser's assertion that consciousness is merely a function of everyday life reductively, so that subjectivity becomes but an epiphenomenon of economic exchange, which amounts to proposing that *all* coherences reduce to epiphenomena of macroeconomic processes—an oversimplification to be sure. To assume so would be to forget that the totality is, as Althusser puts it, "never simple," and instead posit that "material life, the economy—a simple principle which in turn becomes the sole principle of the universal intelligibility of all the determinations of a historical people" (p. 108)—an agnostic but still recognizably totalizing and reductive gesture. The real question is how a determinate social formation, in its totality, has been and continues to be produced (Althusser, 1970, p. 110) and *reproduced*. As I suggested in the example of the lumber mill, this is an empirical, historical question—how is this conflicted and contradictory mode of production articulated in the meat world of causality and prosaica? This is an appropriate response to the challenge of overdetermination, in which anything that is coherent as something is so because it is a product with a limited shelf life, specifically a *something* produced by a complex of determinate causalities, strong among them the will-to-power of those in control of economic (and, concomitantly, political and cultural) production.

Williams (1977) explicates this point as a double entendre: "*no one mode of production and therefore no dominant social order and therefore no dominant culture ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention*" (p. 125). Williams identifies formations—the *emergent*—within the totality and of the totality in excess of the dominant that are not only irreducible or not directly reducible to the economic base but in some contexts *reverse* the base-superstructure direction of causation that a reductive reading of Marxist theory might insist on. This double meaning expresses simple opposition, dissent, miracles, surprises—and the inexhaustible novelty of ideology's strategic or occasionally accidental mobilization, reterritorialization of memes new and old. For Williams *residual* formations (translators of Marx and Althusser call these survivals) are accretions of anachronistic causalities that have, like invasive species from the territory of the past in the new habitat of the present, evolved to articulate a particular determinate force, dominant or not, as mutations *within* the coherent body, functionally like the emergent or not at all. Williams cites the ambivalent function of religious orthodoxies in liberal democracies as an example—perhaps dominant or complicit here, perhaps oppositional or revolutionary there (p. 122), a position to be distinguished from the religious consciousness that is the ideological social self-fashioning that Althusser diagnoses at the *omphalos* of the Hegelian dialectic, the literal and metaphoric priest who for Marx becomes "only the anointed bloodhound of the earthly police" (p. 613), a critique extended to psychoanalysis in Deleuze and Guattari (1983).

Methodologically, the relevant distinction is between forcing reality to match a reductive and ideological schema, either idealistic (straw-man Hegelian) or economic (straw-man Marxist)—or doing actual inquiry, drawing deductive conclusions from demonstrable premises, preferably in collaboration with others to help prevent errors and overstatements, systematically (see Introduction), which is the Marxist method of historical materialism in its purest form. This amounts to setting theory or method into a dialectical relationship with material realities, and following the inquiry through empirically, not ideologically (see Introduction). The *Aha!* moment this process obtains begins a long and productive transformation in the subject and the object.

That said, one may object that this method, as more explicitly materialist in orientation rather than explicitly holistic or idealistic, may be inappropriate at best to the integral project. Litfin (2003) raises three objections to Marx's method in her argument in favor of a Hegelian-idealistic integral interpretation of history and politics. The first two, "Marx's theory of dialectical materialism is internally inconsistent and ultimately falls back upon the same assumptions as evolutionary idealism" (Litfin, 2003, p. 43) are both predicated on the same error. Litfin confuses Marx's *method* for interpreting phenomena, historical materialism, with his *interpretation* of phenomena, analogous to mistaking the craft of carpentry with a finished piece of woodwork. Absent this distinction, Marx's writings likely would betray a constitutive contradiction between "inert" matter and a progressive, conscious dialectical method—conscious because it aspires to be scientific and subjective,<sup>52</sup> not conscious because it is implicitly Hegelian,<sup>53</sup> as Litfin assumes it must be. Since Marx does persist in distinguishing his object of inquiry (matter and the forces of social history) from his method of inquiry (dialectical materialism and historical materialism), evident from the very fact he develops different concepts for both,<sup>54</sup> the contradiction Litfin attributes to Marx should be attributed to Litfin's interpretation of Marx. This shows that Litfin's first two objections against Marx and Marxism are unfounded. It is unclear which of Marx's texts Litfin refers to, or what credible Marxist scholarship she has consulted in her analysis, which is a significant context for her third objection, that Marx "erroneously universalizes" his critique of societies under capitalism and their structure "to all societies throughout history" (Litfin, 2003, p. 43). This claim is unsubstantiated; Litfin does not cite one instance where Marx makes this mistake (likely because there are no instances of it in Marx's oeuvre, even in his discussions of precapitalist societies), nor does she cite any evidence supporting her claim that Marxist practice is predicated on the same "worldview" as industrial capital (Litfin, 2003, p. 43) and therefore part of the problem rather than a potential part of the solution, as I propose, nor does she show how this objection even if it were coherent might be warranted, that is, germane to the question of historical materialism as a developing method for understanding and transforming the contemporary, global-capitalistic totality. Litfin's arguments for evolutionary idealism in favor of historical materialism as a method for understanding the political and transforming it are incoherent.

This thesis proposes: if something is coherent as something, that coherence can be understood as a totality (a nation-state, a city, a household), and also in relation to other totalities, which do the work of making things coherent to subjects under capital—not just determining, but

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<sup>52</sup> This is also the significance of the popularized Marxist meme of class consciousness, which is an understanding of one's objective situation, without make-believe, such that the totality becomes coherent to a subject, as do one's place and function in that totality. This coming-to-consciousness has more in common with empiricism than with any form of idealism.

<sup>53</sup> If Litfin is correct on this point and Marx is indeed the idealist-by-accident she claims him to be, then her objection to historical materialism would seem incoherent in an altogether different way: Litfin's claim, if correct, would recuperate Marx precisely as a figure of the evolutionary idealism she promotes, which would make her actual rejection of Marx counterstrategic.

<sup>54</sup> This comment of mine contains an entry-level mistake about Marx. Shortly before publication of this essay, the editor of *Integral Review* offered me a chance to revise my error away, but I have chosen to keep it at his suggestion, even to make it more conspicuous by noting it here as a kind of teachable moment: at the instant I find (perhaps legitimate) fault in someone else's treatment of Marx, I produce a mistake of my own. This recalls a familiar lesson on motes, beams, hypocrisy, and responsibility (Matthew 7:5). I trust the reader to find my error and refuse to repeat it.

overdetermining that coherence, which serves to reproduce that totality as constituted in any given moment (its regime) into the future, an insight that informs the rest of this proposal. I do not posit this process as the evolution of conscious Spirit through phenomenal forms, or anything analogous to that, although I do not on principle rule such a thing out as a theological possibility. I do find that both kinds of global phenomena that Litfin (2003) attributes to emergent Spirit, the explosive power of the transformations capitalism has brought to our world and efforts to transform the capital regime into something more socially just and ecologically sustainable, can more plausibly and with less conceptual elaboration be attributed to the contingencies of capital as it has developed since the industrial revolution and the personal needs of everyday people living together—and that an integral response to those global transformations begins not necessarily with Spirit but with everyday people taking a certain kind of responsibility (see Thesis Four).

### Thesis Three

*The coherence arises, persists, and decomposes in time; it can change in time mechanically, or consciously by accumulating developments to a stable regime, or consciously by transforming said regime. Transformation may be necessary to produce responsible results. Theory can help (if responsible) or hinder (if not) any transformation.*

Yuri Lotman observes that changes over time in a semiosphere can manifest in a continuous, predictable fashion—or in a surprising, unpredictable gesture Lotman calls *explosion* (Deltcheva & Vlasov, 1996). For Lotman, the latter tends to open spaces where the uncontrived and novel can develop. I will call changes over time that are predictable, even planned or cultivated, *developments*, and changes that are not predictable and amount to ruptures *transformations*. While developmental models of stages and degrees are useful predictive measures for a multitude of purposes, broadly speaking any one of them is necessarily inadequate to the task of predicting the outcome of any transformative intervention. As Sorel (1961) demonstrates in his critique of early Marxist scholarship,<sup>55</sup>

it must not be expected that the revolutionary movement can ever follow a pre-determined direction, that it can be conducted according to a master plan like the conquest of a country, that it can be scientifically studied other than in its own development. Everything about it is unpredictable. (p. 253)

Because the mainstream of integral thinking so far has emphasized the developmental aspects of change<sup>56</sup> over different scales of time— Gidley's (2007) macrohistory and synthesis of

<sup>55</sup> Mandel (1977), working from Trotskyite presuppositions, proposes a similar distinction to Sorel's but in softer terms: "The (quantitative) changes which constantly occur in the given mode of production, through adaptation, integration of reforms and self-defense (evolution), are distinguished from those (qualitative) changes which, by sudden leaps, produce a different structure, a new mode of production (revolution)" (p. 18).

<sup>56</sup> For instance, Wilber (2000a) claims that "something novel and emergent" arises due to a dialectical process of transcendence through coupling and recoupling of extant forms (p. 50), a mechanical process

multiple developmental models is one particularly useful example—I will continue here to explore some ways in which transformation differs from development to flesh out how both modes work, with an eye toward making space for the practice of new values by means of transformative intervention<sup>57</sup> (see Theses Four and Five).

Development is necessary to maintaining any sane social or psychological order (literacy, health, labor), as well as helping to establish the possibility for real intervention. One must become competent before one can accomplish effective critique, for instance, and this becoming-competent is a developmental process<sup>58</sup> (see Thesis Four). But development can and often does also function to maintain a pathological psychosocial regime as well. I begin distinguishing development from transformation with the perhaps counterintuitive position of economist Michel Aglietta (2000) that it is development or evolution that maintains the food-web conflictual structure of the totality.<sup>59</sup> According to Aglietta, “[s]tructural forms evolve with the material transformations of the mode of production. This capacity for evolution is precisely what ensures social cohesion under the domination of an antagonistic relation of production” (p. 189). Development is *an accumulation of means for holding the totality together as it is, under the regime at hand*. It is increased depth, capacity, productivity, force, or the “potential” for increase of any of these, or the accumulation of means to induce an increase. In the case of development as it is understood in contemporary popular discourse on economics, under a regime of accumulation and consumer power, development is a social means of ensuring growth in a productive capacity through legitimized consumption—in short, it is the rise and expansion of a consumer class (Aglietta, 2000, pp. 71-72). One of the subjective developments of the wage relation, the “fragmented consciousness” that is said to characterize modernity, is not only an epiphenomenon of fragmented work roles, as Marx suggests in his early writings; like these work roles, this fragmentation of consciousness is a functional part of the social order under capital (Aglietta, 2000, p. 154), as internally conflicted subjects seek out in the realm of consumption some relief or resolution within themselves, leading to transactions that feed capital back into the machine as productive labor and as commodity consumption. In short, conflicted beings in a conflicted world engage in “retail therapy,” some of which could hypothetically offer actual therapeutic benefit (see Thesis Eight). For the regime of capital, this represented a positive development, a way to increase accumulation, even though it is hardly in the best interest of those plugged into this desiring-machinery. Following this one can see that consumption is

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of accumulated variation and complexity. For present purposes, I call the kind of mechanical change Wilber describes *development*, and the kind of intentional and creative intervention I prescribe *transformation*.

<sup>57</sup> Some integral thinkers, Wilber most conspicuously, have consistently expressed strong reservations about the value or possibility of transformations as ruptures (Wilber 2003). The present essay differs on this point but not without qualification.

<sup>58</sup> For instance, the brilliant, demanding pedagogies of Ilych (1973) and Friere (1993) could both be regarded as developmental plans designed to bring about significant and desirable transformations subjectively and socially. My point is not that development is somehow “bad”—on the contrary, it is invaluable—but that it can be useful to any regime—it is *ambivalent* in this sense—and it is limited in scope.

<sup>59</sup> Modern history shows that most large-scale transformations go horribly wrong sooner or later as well, due to a complex of irresponsibility, outside intrusion, and logistical problems. My larger point for the purpose of this inquiry is that transformation offers a specific opportunity to accomplish something that development cannot approach, if and only if handled with care.

predicated on a desire to consume, that desire is manufactured or “machined” in the Deleuze-Guattarian patois, and that subjects under capital are made to desire the social and subjective order *as it is*, not as it could be (Jameson, 1981; Braidotti, 2006; Anderson, 2007). *As it could be*, in my view, ought to be the purpose of integral praxis—to produce work that benefits the whole, from bottom to top. And that, in my view, demands a transformation, but not just any transformation.

Products—explicitly representational or not—arise in space and time due to causes and conditions, which are legible to a greater or lesser extent in the form, function, and characteristics of the product, as are the imputed desires and needs of the intended consumer. This means that any given product, including any and all materials we might think of as integral, such as the present inquiry or Wilber’s *Integral Life Starter Kit* for instance, has a specific relationship with its mode and moment of production. Mary Ellen Pitts’s (1990) holographic paradigm is perhaps the first experiment to think a properly integral hermeneutics through. Pitts reads texts and cultural artifacts as partial or complete refractions of experienced realities. Because the mind (for Pitts) apprehends its context or horizon holographically, it produces materials, “flickers,” that are related to world-stuff on a holographic principle (p. 83), where the refraction reproduces in a distorted way the whole moment of its production.<sup>60</sup> The contours of that distortion, I suggest, may reveal something useful about a mind of a given moment of production, as will the product, the text or “flicker” (see Thesis Six). Following this, what I call “flickering” is a mechanical process, mechanical in both the Gurdjieffian and Deleuzian senses: as with the subjective aspect of a coherence’s co-creation, it happens unconsciously, automatically (see Thesis One); it may reflect an uncritical or automatic identification of the maker’s interests with the regime in control of the given formation. I posit that *flickering is legible in coherences in the way things are coherent and made coherent*.<sup>61</sup>

But products are not always born only of mechanistic, Malthusian, or Machiavellian modes of causation. Some—cultural products most explicitly but not absolutely nor exclusively—are also *productions of consciousness*, of compassion, articulated with greater or lesser competence. What I call *mimicry*<sup>62</sup> includes conscious, intentional behaviors designed to ingratiate one with a given regime. Consider here any formalities of dress, dining, greeting, and forming the body, and the consequences of their abrogation. As I hope to show, some products and intellectual trends

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<sup>60</sup> In semiotics, a flicker can be compared to a cultural unit in Umberto Eco’s system (Eco, 1976, pp. 71-72); Eco’s comments on semantic units in the Qur’an and their history as understood in Europe are also instructive (p. 145, note 10). Also, flickering is a phenomenon related to the “expression substance” or physical, formal substrate in Louis Hjelmslev’s theory of linguistics (see Hjelmslev, 1961), which allows any coherent form on principle to be understood as a kind of signal from the past to the present that may be decoded.

<sup>61</sup> Flickers are coherent as such, automatically, to those prepared to recognize them by rote experience or conscious training, such that a set of symptoms may be immediately coherent as expressions of a specific illness to an experienced healer, or as a linguist may recognize one’s geographic and class origins by the inflections of one’s speech (see Thesis One).

<sup>62</sup> I am using this specifically in the sense Bhabha develops in his analysis of Fanon’s (1960) interventions into the psychology of the postcolonial situation; William Blake’s fragmentary epic *The Four Zoas* dramatizes a broadly analogous critique of mimicry under empire two centuries prior, and in recognizably holographic terms, presenting what must be among the first integral macropolitical theories responsive to industrial capital.



are nothing more than metaphorically using the correct fork at the correct time at the dining table of Empire, proving one is worthy to speak for (socially sanctioned) Eternal and Timeless Values.<sup>63</sup> This theorist, by investing in a given product or ideology or “ism,” identifies his or her interests as primary, and seeks promotion of them by means of integrating them with those of the regime through this strategic investment—like the petty farmers Marx described in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* (see Thesis Two) or like the *homo academicus* reproducing in his scholarship the values of his position and his aspirations in the academic institution (Bourdieu, 1988). Since developmental models are committed to keeping the regime at hand intact by improving it by change over time, there is a danger of mimicry, intentional or otherwise, in the potential ideological investments in and of developmental practices.

By contrast to mimicry, *critique* is conscious, intentional behavior designed to reflect the reality of a given moment or regime back to the socius, in order to provoke structural change in it. Critique is a transformational practice, if put forward properly, in that it dissociates one from a regime, destroys or overthrows a regime, or de/reterritorializes a former regime to form a new one on new terms. At bottom, critique is *the happy practice of creating new values for the benefit of all and everything*.

One can see how various discrete moments in the development of what we now think of as integral praxis may have arisen as interventionary or mimetic responses to real phases of social, political, and economic order, rather than evolutionary stages of development building one on the other. As it happens, global capital has evolved in specific places and times with changes in available resources and other constraints; it is not as if one day early in the Twentieth Century the world’s values became “modernist” in a homogenous fashion, or later, arbitrarily and universally cut it out and became “postmodernist” instead by the methods or whims of this or that thinker, as one may be led to conclude from a survey of the history of ideas such as Wilber (1981) or Wilber (2000a)<sup>64</sup> (see Thesis Seven). By contrast, I submit that integral praxis of the sort I am advancing is a coherent *oppositional* tactic, as Gidley suggests,<sup>65</sup> in a dance with *hegemony, into subjectivity*, which is to say in *everyday life*. It is theory, to be certain, but theory for the sake of compassionate action. It is a species of the *emergent* (see Thesis Two) that assumes different strategies as it advances in concert with specific historical contingencies and with greater or lesser success depending on the instance (some as simple *flickers*, others as intentional *mimicries* or *critiques*) by people who had nothing or not much in common with each other—no knowledge of each other in most cases—*except* a shared subaltern if not always or

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<sup>63</sup> What I call *theory in bad faith* has as its program, according to Nizan (1971) (skillfully employing another “consumption” metaphor): “to gain universal acceptance for the established order by making it palatable, by conferring upon it a certain nobility, and by furnishing rationalizations for its every aspect” (p. 91).

<sup>64</sup> In a more recent better-developed instance, Mastustik (2007) gives a production history of his integral critical theory as a series of interventions by great minds into theory as such Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and Freud (implicitly Feuerbach, the common denominator between them), the Frankfurt School, Habermas, and Wilber.

<sup>65</sup> For instance, Gidley (2007) reads Teilhard’s work and its legacy as a potential “counterbalance to the hegemonic excesses of globalization” (p. 190). One example of what may fairly be described as a Teilhard-inspired oppositional project would be Fox & Swimme (1982), which includes an admirable celebratory call for compassion (pp. 29-30).

exclusively oppositional relationship with the expression of Empire through immediate contingencies, not always immediately recognizable *as* such. I submit that coherently integral practices arise dialectically in concert with world-historical expressions of capitalism,<sup>66</sup> such as the familiar imperial, Fordist, and neo-Fordist (integrated global capitalist) articulations of political economy as experienced in North America and Britain, either in sympathy with or opposition to the impositions of the private-property regime or ambivalently Janus-faced between either position, and often slightly *later* than most of the antecedent transformations in political economy, as if in response to those transformations—much as one may observe in military history that technological advances in weaponry generally but not always *predate* advances in armor and defensive provision.

*Imperialism.* Rosa Luxemburg demonstrated early in the Twentieth Century that, under empire, the world became consumed without margins, nondual in an unusual sense, under a global regime. The task of capital in this phase was to integrate control over its imperial members socially and subjectively. Thus, post-Hegelian and positivist synthesis is explored (Aurobindo, Gebser<sup>67</sup>), but on the terms of Spirit rather than the literal cannon.<sup>68</sup> The critical question is whether this attempt is an ideological cipher or mimicry for European force, as I suggest it is in important ways for Aurobindo (Anderson, 2006), or if it is a redoubling of spiritual and intellectual force against this hegemony, as I think it usually is in the tradition of Marxist and post-Marxist critique. This question remains a live one; my intention here is only to frame it for further inquiry in order to show that what we call integral critique at the time of capital's explicitly imperial period responded directly in form and content to the conditions of an imperial regime. This still very much matters because imperialism carries on, if in different forms and by different means than it was implemented during the Scramble for Africa (see Chile, 1973 or Iraq, 2003), and the residual forms of the early integral response (such as Aurobindo's Providential theory of evolution) remain in the writings of key integralists as functioning ideologies or residuals.

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<sup>66</sup> Capitalism is understood here not as a set of values or a static structure but as a dynamic kind of regime best described as a very large and aggregated machine that, with some intelligence but with or without responsibility, functions by constantly breaking down and consuming bits of itself as fuel and as raw materials (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983)—in short, reinventing itself in fits and starts (see Thesis Seven).

<sup>67</sup> I find the origin of integral theory as an intellectual movement in Aurobindo's post-Hegelian positivism (Anderson, 2006); Hampson (2007), in a useful counterbalance to my position, cites Gebser's positivist, post-Hegelian synthetic work as the foundational gesture of integral theory. Both positions have merit, and broadly speaking, do not contradict, insofar as both Aurobindo and Gebser were working from largely the same intellectual milieu the Hegelian and post-Hegelian idealism Wilber (2000a) praises as a "lost opportunity" (pp. 523-537) and in the context of Empire's transformations. Such is the ambivalence of the post-colonial situation.

<sup>68</sup> Integral praxis has arisen under the aegis of private property, as a response to it—in some cases critical and oppositional, in some apparently so but not actually, in others still positively and explicitly supportive of the regime at hand. Since this is the case, if integralists are to have a complete understanding of our collective project, we need to develop the theoretic tools for understanding how our ideas circulate as commodities and as flecks of ideology—that is, by whom and how our work is deployed, under what terms, and under whose control. The Marxist tradition provides means for explicating all this ready-made and, in my view, already postformal if not always already-integral or responsible. Toward this end, one of the implicit purposes of the present inquiry is the continued patriation of Marxist and post-Marxist inquiry into integral discourse that I began in Anderson (2006).

*Fordism.* Because of the temporal regime of Taylorist and, later, Fordist modes of production, which “adapted to the restriction of the working day by sharply increasing the intensity of labor and systematically compressing wasted time” leaving positively no rest from the inevitable rhythms of the assembly line (Aglietta, 2000, p. 158), it is no accident that at this period Krishnamurti’s observation that time is man’s psychological enemy could gain significant traction—this reflects the lived experience of people in their work, and offers a strategy for addressing the dissatisfactions of that life experience. It is here and at this time that, in popular culture under this regime, a variety of strategies for fulfilling one’s *human* potential (as opposed to the mimetic, mechanical potential fulfilled at work) arise *as commodities* at a spectrum of price-points, beginning with Paul Twitchell’s correspondence courses in the middle 1960s<sup>69</sup> and ending with weekend retreats led by Werner Erhard or at a Shambhala Center or at Esalen Institute, along with a multiplicity of other supplemental comforts such as books, audio recordings, and the “Zen alarm clock.” “Zen,” as Unno (2004) observes, at this time became and remains still a marketing buzzword for at-home comfort, serenity, and sound design sensibility. This is both a function and an aspect of the contingencies of consumerism. According to Aglietta, “[i]ndividual commodity consumption [...] permits the most effective recuperation from physical and nervous fatigue in a compact space of time within the day, and at a single place, the home” (p. 159). As in the case of integral praxis under (or for or against) an imperialistic regime, here the critical question is whether this broad set of practices serves in the end to unplug one from the assemblage of desiring machines, freeing the subject from it and making transformation possible, or if the function is simply as a palliative, as an affective strategy for *just getting by*, inadvertently leaving the problematic conflictual order intact<sup>70</sup> or, worse, even stronger for one’s complicity with it.

*Global Finance or “Neo-Fordism.”* Fully-integrated, trans-national, and *vertical* supply and production chains, deep organizations cross-subordinated within each other and oriented around and through “global cities” rather than state boundaries,<sup>71</sup> such that states become divisions of capital, local regulatory bodies of a global process—one may now call global capital under this regime Integral Reality as Baudrillard (2005) does, or Integrated Global Capital as Guattari (2000) does. Aglietta calls it neo-Fordism: “a totally integrated system in which production

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<sup>69</sup> My only claim regarding Twitchell is that his production and distribution of spiritual lessons to be used at home fits the pattern of consumption of goods for relaxation at home during this period in history in North America. This distinguishes Twitchell’s prophetic claims (and those of his contemporaries, inclusive of Jane Roberts, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, and Claude Vorilhon [Rael]) from those of antecedent American figures such as Joseph Smith, John Ballou Newbrough, and Guy Ballard, who wrote in response to a fundamentally different social order. I am not at present entering the debate regarding Twitchell’s later literary practices or his motivations as initiated by the intervention of David Lane, who is also a public critic of Wilber. Diem (1995) surveys this matter a value-neutral way, inclusive of Twitchell’s relationships with mid-century American culture and with his sources in Radhasoami and Scientology as well as Lane’s analyses. Marman (2007) attempts a rebuttal of Lane’s position in the form of a personal narrative that is very sympathetic to Twitchell’s organization and his project, and is thematic rather than critical methodologically.

<sup>70</sup> My position on this question is that some produce good transformational results, others produce good developmental results, and others produce no good results at all, and *all* are commodities. Pointing out the commodity nature of a practice or product is intended neither as disparagement nor endorsement here, simply a historical reality.

<sup>71</sup> See especially Sassen (1990), although Deleuze and Guattari (1983) anticipate this development.

operations properly so called, as well as the measurement and handling of information, react upon one another as elements in a single process, conceived in advance and organized in its totality” (p. 124).<sup>72</sup> As will be seen, it corresponds to a kind of neo-colonialism (see Thesis Seven). In the conspicuous case of Wal-Mart, a “superholon” localized in Bentonville, Arkansas subordinates factory subholons in China and distribution to North America much as a brain controls the voluntary organs of the body and manages its involuntary flows (Fishman, 2006). In short, Wilber’s *ontological model*, his description of fundamental reality, expresses this social and political order very precisely: seamless, top-down order where all totalities are subordinated to other totalities, but not imagined as parts of those totalities. Nation-states are thus understood as wholes, subordinated to global capital but not as *parts* of it per se; similarly, corporations are integral wholes, not parts of nation-states; citizens are autonomous wholes, not parts of corporations or nation-states; but all are subordinated to a “superholon” and interested with each other in *holarchy* (Wilber, 2000a).<sup>73</sup> Pedagogy is transformed under this regime, so that the university effectively becomes a public corporation, serving corporate interests, while the dominant site of and model for learning becomes the corporate training seminar, where inquiry is jettisoned in favor of “solutions.” A field appropriate to problem-posing and open questions, per the scientific method, is foreclosed by ready-made *commodities* or “learning modules” (see Thesis Eight).<sup>74</sup> Other business of the state, such as the monopoly on legitimized violence, also becomes privatized, through mercenary agencies prosecuting acts of war abroad (Blackwater and other “private security firms”) and private interests contracting the management of prisons, while the state’s business turns to the interests of capital, securing “national interests” such as access to (other people’s) natural resources abroad through state violence.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> I assume that the financial crisis of October 2008, occurring as I make final revisions to this essay, can only be properly interpreted in terms of global interconnectivity and integration.

<sup>73</sup> Wilber (2000a) distinguishes social, environmental, or collective holons from holons as such by the feature of objective self-consciousness (p. 72), which at first glance seems to complicate my point that Wilber’s ontology is a reflection of its social moment. This distinction is incoherent in application, however. Wilber suggests that a stone and the totality of being (Kosmos) are both holons, and therefore are both characterized by subjective self-consciousness (the latter of which is Spirit). However, collective holons for Wilber, lack this unitary self-consciousness, meaning that aggregates such as nation-states and corporations do not participate in holarchy so much as provide a context for the evolution of individual holons. Wilber gives no rationale for his decision to subjectivize and spiritualize a stone but not a socius, and the aggregate of all aggregates but not the middle-management of aggregated coherences—and for this reason I call this distinction incoherent. My claim that Wilber’s metaphysical view of reality seems to flicker our present-tense means of economic and political reproduction stands regardless of the distance from the social Wilber attempts to produce by positing this individual-collective holonic distinction.

<sup>74</sup> Wilber (2003) is a remarkable artifact of this transformation. In *Boomeritis*, students at the I.C. (or rather the audience of the seminar performance) privately complain about the perceived difficulty of themes presented to them, but choose to retake the coursework over and over, groaning at predictable moments, like automated laughter during a sit-com or a film score; like machines, they groan on cue, cheer on cue, and inevitably know what comes next (presumably through repeat exposure to the same show). Paragraphs appear to be silently copied and pasted from Beck & Cowan (1996). Wilber’s narration of simplistic, repetitive, performative, and commodified *content delivery* should be contrasted against the actual *pedagogy* Friere (1993) proposes.

<sup>75</sup> Armando Uribe (1975) gives a detailed, often first-person account of how American financial, academic, military, and commercial interests literally acted as one, *as an integrated system*, in the undermining and eventual overthrow of Chile’s attempt at radical democracy under Salvador Allende. Thirty years later, in the case of Iraq, Empire is still ideologically articulated in Orwellian jingoisms such

*Internested holarchy.* The transition from Fordism to neo-Fordism corresponds precisely to the leap from the first to the second tier of vMememes in Spiral Dynamics, where both global integrated capital (a “single dynamic organism”) and Wilber’s oeuvre represent turquoise, a step *past* the yellow or “integrative” vMeme (Beck & Cowan, 1996, p. 47) which describes Wal-Mart’s business model and Halliburton’s since at least 2003—that is, Wilber’s model and Spiral Dynamics both represent the outcomes of subjective transformations and ontological processes through a description of contemporary socioeconomic phenomena, “flickering” those processes in a different context (see Thesis Seven). What Spiral Dynamics takes to be a paradigm shift in values, Aglietta shows to be a near-Darwinian (or near-Malthusian) adaptation in self-reproduction of a macro-organism to an alteration in resources and capacities (see Thesis Seven). This is evolution of a sort, but not Providential or Aurobindian evolution (see Theses Six and Seven). In a related context, Wilber’s AQAL scheme is arguably the most comprehensive measure for assuring one has a coherent place in the most coherent whole imaginable, arising precisely when anxiety about one’s place in corporate culture intensifies under this regime, including diminished job security and declining real wages arises under global finance (Aglietta, 2000, pp. 406, 422). As before, the critical question for Spiral Dynamics and AQAL is whether or not the theory supports practice that is reductive or mimetic on the one hand, or transformative and interventionary on the other, is ambivalently both, or is neither.

What change is introduced in each case? The most important may be the contribution of Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* that people living their lives—productive or not, spiritually engaged or not—*make ideas*, and not necessarily or always vice versa<sup>76</sup> (see Thesis Seven). A new paradigm on its own and for its own sake changes little in life, and may in fact serve to counteract meaningful change (Anderson, 2006) (see Thesis Seven). You have to change your life, which means you have to change the structure of lives lived together in cooperation, including the terms of that cooperation and the means of controlling that structure (see Theses Four and Eight). That is, other useful results notwithstanding, one could argue that no integral paradigm to date has brought about a socially significant and sustainable transformation in any regime of values—not yet.

It can be done if theorists are willing to be responsible for that change in a specific sense, a merciless commitment that opens the theorist to exposure to reaction and to a relentless, inescapable investment of time and labor,<sup>77</sup> to the death.

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as “spreading democracy” and “enduring freedom,” but acted out through a seamlessly integrated body of governmental and corporate organs (Halliburton, Bechtel, Blackwater)—an apparatus of capture (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)—working toward a common interest, accumulating capital by controlling resources and access to resources. This is the capital-regime Aglietta calls “Neo-Fordism” but is more popularly known as integrated global capital.

<sup>76</sup> Marx expresses this differently in the third thesis on Feuerbach: “The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that it is essential to educate the educator himself.”

<sup>77</sup> e.e. cummings narrates a dramatic, arguably hyperbolic, example of this risk in his poem “I sing of olaf glad and big.” The first intervention, which made Olaf a conscientious objector then conscripted into the army, is presumed as backstory. The reader is led through the discipline of Olaf’s second intervention, which amounts to an unstinting commitment. Olaf persists in his practice of the Big No (see Theses Four and Seven) through the extraordinary and hypocritical violence that leads to his death; patiently, even

## Thesis Four

*Responsible intervention can produce real transformation in the totality. The first intervention is to recognize the nature of a given situation; the second is to maintain relationship with it over time. Responsibility is characterized by critical clarity, competence, consciousness, and compassion.*

There are two transitions in any successful attempt to make something, according to Blake's (1996) Gurdjieffian analysis. "In the one," Blake asserts, "the action of making is set free from the laws of the mechanical world from which it starts. In the other, it is made an integral part of the purposeful world in which it ends" (p. 57). Much follows from these observations on production and productivity. In *The Encyclopedia of Stupidity*, which is in the last analysis an inquiry into intelligence and intelligent action, van Boxsel (2003) describes the accrued development of a culture in the same way that Blake describes the production of something useful. Culture, intelligence, and theory are "but the result of a series of more or less unsuccessful attempts to come to grips with stupidity" (van Boxsel, 2003, p. 23), where stupidity is defined first as "automatic responses" (p. 37) and second as "the talent for acting unwittingly against your own interests" (p. 29). This is the obverse of the dialectic of conditions and consciousness posited earlier, where knowledge is made (see Thesis One);<sup>78</sup> here, accurate and useful knowledge is shown to be dialectically occluded, on one side by an inscrutable object and on the other side by an incompetent subject, both reifying each other into a repetitive, mechanical, and at best boring pattern.<sup>79</sup>

In order to accomplish anything novel, to transform something old into something new, one must work against the constraints of the mechanical regime-world, which subjects one to reification both as stupidity and as lack of control—*automatic responses*—to bring forth a contribution to a purposeful world for which one can be responsible, in which one really works to advance one's best interests, which at bottom coincide with those of the socius in which one is embedded and the sum total of animated life. The subject is transformed from a *produced* articulation, bound to "repeat the same dull round over again,"<sup>80</sup> subordinated to the control of another regime, to a *self-directed* articulation, with a degree of real (not compelled or coerced) control over itself and its activities.

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unannoyed, he absorbs countless blows from the bureaucratized and self-imitating mass—"kindred intellects"—while taking as his constant mantra, "there is some shit i will not eat."

<sup>78</sup> Merleau-Ponty (2003) presents this rather poetically: "It is true that we carry with us, in the shape of our body, an ever-present principle of absent-mindedness and bewilderment" (p. 31).

<sup>79</sup> Svendsen (2005) offers a useful analysis of the relationship between the recurrence of boredom and the perceived need for self-realization as a condition of modernity.

<sup>80</sup> William Blake (1982), "There is No Natural Religion [B]." Blake anticipates Nietzsche's speculations on the eternal recurrence of the same here, but in a way that connotes not only a mathematically infinite boredom but more directly a manifold of infinite *bindings*, affectively in Blake (as in his poem "London") and also in later attempts to represent said recurrence by means of arithmetic, which Borges (1999, pp. 14-122) and Ouspensky (2001, pp. 329-340) attempt to perform. This interpretation of eternal recurrence contrasts with Kelly (2008), which reterritorializes Nietzsche's position into a Hegelian framework.

The category of automatic responses includes every way in which a subject behaves mechanically, predictably, without awareness, volition, or intention. Some responses of this type are useful, such as the automatic capacity to recognize letters of the alphabet without thinking each one through in fluent reading; others, such as the persistent unconscious association of negative stereotypes such as incompetence with female persons arising automatically in the presence of a woman or a girl, are clearly not helpful but are in fact *stupid* (see Thesis One). Marcuse (1969)<sup>81</sup> identifies “an automatism of immediate experience, but a socially engineered experience which militates against the liberation of sensibility” (p. 39), a *specific* response to a *specific* set of contingencies that has become automatic under what is popularly referred to as consumer culture. According to Marcuse this is a “deep-rooted, ‘organic’ adaptation of the people to a terrible but profitably functioning society,” and in this adaptation “lie the limits of democratic persuasion and evolution. On the overcoming of these limits depends the establishment of democracy” (p. 17). Establishing authentic democracy on the basis of liberated subjectivity (see Thesis Eight) is a project that must face the push of the inertia of these automated responses, however—a heavy burden.

As with any coherence, the mass, the multitude, represents both the symptom of this problem and its solution. According to Marcuse, “radical change depends on a mass basis, but every step in the struggle for radical change isolates the opposition from the masses and provokes intensified repression” (p. 68), at least initially. This leads to significant discomfort and disadvantage for the one who fully commits to transformational practice. Such a one becomes-minoritarian<sup>82</sup> as he or she becomes-responsible. The repression Marcuse speaks of is one causal aspect of becoming this kind of minority. It is because the mass experiences itself as plugged in or even accountable to the mainstream, literally going with the flow without purpose or intention,<sup>83</sup> “just like everybody,” while responsibility requires the conscious work of making critical distinctions (Ortega y Gasset, 1964, p. 15), and in my view actively unplugs one from the complex of desiring machines that keeps this version of the totality in place (Anderson, 2007). This is an act of responsibility in that one is claiming the kinetic stream one *can* claim as one’s own and directing it toward aims that benefit not only Bentonville but all beings. By contrast, under this regime the masses are encouraged to behave, think, and emote like spoiled children, and become “only concerned with their own well-being, and at the same time they remain alien to the cause of that well-being” (Ortega y Gasset, 1964, p. 60)—and, thus ignorant of history and the Gurdjieffian terror of their own out-of-control situation, see no need for change. It is true, “[t]he mass-man regards himself as perfect” (Ortega y Gasset, 1964, p. 69), and there is a specific reason for this podsnappery. It is an expression of the hopeless, hapless logic of incompetence, where incompetent people have no understanding of what constitutes well-crafted work, and therefore see no qualitative difference between their own blighted output and that which is useful, elegant, and helpful. Incompetence, then, leads one to misunderstand one’s place

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<sup>81</sup> This is a particularly useful text for an integral approach, as Marcuse synthesizes in it the critiques and themes he presents in his more detailed engagements, such as *One Dimensional Man* and *Eros and Civilization*.

<sup>82</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1986) develop this concept, asserting: “There is nothing that is major or revolutionary except the minor” (p. 26).

<sup>83</sup> Roy (2006) and, in response, Anderson (2007) offer distinct but related views on how this causal flow that produces subject by moment is articulated, the former ontologically-oriented.

in the world as it is and as it could be,<sup>84</sup> and to become dissatisfied with it but on grounds of resentment against perceived slight rather than compassion for the sufferings of others, and self-righteously indignant with those who have the capacity to be of real help (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). Van Boxsel describes this phenomenon as “the bigoted righteousness of the masses” (p. 19) and, coupled with the ideological workings of the consumer-capital regime, produce in the masses

that diffused aggressiveness which, unless steered to hate and fight the alleged national enemy, hits upon any suitable target [...]. This is the aggressiveness of those with the mutilated experience, with the false consciousness and the false needs, the victims of repression who, for their living, depend on the repressive society and repress the alternative. (Marcuse, 1969, pp. 50-51)

This is tragically stupid in the Aristotelian sense because the alternative of ending this cycle of repression, responsible transformation, is ultimately in their interest and represents an act of compassion if implemented consciously and with competence as an end of a regime that runs on violence, synthetic and real, and antidepressants. Just as becoming-competent can serve a pathological regime by holding a conflicted totality together (see Thesis Two), so can remaining-*incompetent* do the same. A transformational project must, then, address both *incompetence* and *uncritical competence*, colloquially known as “idiot compassion” and “enabling.”

While he does not advocate it, Ortega y Gasset correctly distinguishes this kind of transformation from an evolutionary development: “Revolution is not the uprising against pre-existing order, but the setting up of a new order contradictory to the old one” (p. 57). There is no need to do violence to the old regime in principle, nor are “stupid people” the problem. The specific problem is not even stupidity as such, which can be learned from and ameliorated, but the processes that make people stupid and keep them happily so, if synthetically happy, and sometimes violently so, and the incentives built in for making others stupid—for keeping these processes in place. An authentic solution, as I show later, is to institute spaces that allow people to become happy, productive, and responsible (see Thesis Eight).

One of these stupefying processes, uncritical competence *par excellance*, appears to be very intelligent. What I call *theory in bad faith* is one ideological means of making people stupid per van Boxsel’s second definition of stupidity, *working against one’s own interests* while thinking—being led to think, to feel—that one is on the side of morality, on right side of history, by identifying one’s interests with the make-believe Providence of a pathological regime rather than the wellbeing of the totality. My intention in developing this concept at present is no more than to give some symptoms of a pathology for readers to identify in the work of theorists generally, and integral theorists in particular (inclusive of my own work), to be cut through and composted. One conspicuous and relatively contemporary instance of theory in bad faith would be Fukuyama’s (1992) declaration that the world has come to the “end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of western liberal

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<sup>84</sup> Of the seven traits of the Hasnamuss or reprobate fool that Gurdjieff (1999) proposes, the last and most unbearable is most directly relevant to the Nietzschean critique Ortega y Gasset offers: “The striving to be not what one is” (p. 406).



democracy as the final form of human government” (p. 3)—meaning that our work in the world is over, for the New Age of unfettered capital is begun<sup>85</sup> (see Thesis Seven).

For Nizan (1971), among the first to examine the problem posed by positions such as Fukuyama’s, this is the critical question: is a particular theory of use to those who oppress, or to those who seek to transform oppression into justice? This distinction in practice corresponds to that between Sein (being) and Schein (appearance):

When the philosophers discuss Mind and Ideas, Ethics and the Sovereign Good, Reason and Justice, but not the experiences, the misfortunes, the events, the ‘daily grind’ of which life consists, those who fall victim to these misfortunes, who bear the weight of these events, who undergo these experiences, who endure this daily grind—in a word, those who must endure this life—find this style of philosophizing arrogant and repugnant. (p. 14)

For Nizan, big-Being questions addressed uncritically (in this case by the positivists he critiques) can occlude real problems and by this means help prevent meaningful inquiry into apparent matters in the world of sensation and causation (see Thesis Two). Nizan’s solution is to become a theorist responsible for the subaltern, on behalf of and for the benefit of the oppressed and deluded masses, one who “will not be a dispenser of illuminations or an artificer of myths or a wizard” (p. 139) or indulge in make-believe.

Aglietta (2000) explains how this connection Nizan posits between positivist spiritual speculation and, in the last analysis, the expression of capital’s imperatives through violence was implemented historically:

The ideological institutions of capitalism absorbed intellectuals originating from all social strata; bourgeois representations of the world were constructed without resistance; the juridical principles of the state took on a sacred and eternal character. Any questioning of free enterprise was perceived as a threat to the integrity of the nation. (p. 74)

Fanon (1965) extrapolates Nizan’s critique of European idealists into the postcolonial field, presenting an intervention of his own that remains relevant (my use of “mimicry” in the present inquiry finds its origin in Fanon’s groundbreaking work). Fanon advises the subaltern to

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<sup>85</sup> Wilber (2000a) endorses this view insofar as the “*mutual recognition*” Wilber and Fukuyama assume to be inherent in liberal democracy is an “omega point that pulls history and communication toward the free emergence of that mutual recognition. Short of that emergence, history is a brutalization of one self or group of selves trying to triumph over, dominate, or subjugate others” (p. 321), as regularly occurs within liberal democracy and as one liberal democracy relates to others (as in U.S. intervention in Chile on 11 September, 1973 and immediately after). The coincidence of the putative End of History with the Final Theory, both of which answer all questions or at least frame all possible questions, in the millenarian language Wilber adopts from Teilhard, is an implicit point of critique in Thesis Seven. It should be noted that Fukuyama has since complicated but not withdrawn his support for the project of spreading this history-ending democratic form through the bomb-and-tank evangelism by which it is implemented (Fukuyama, 2006).

waste no time in sterile litanies and nauseating mimicry. Leave this Europe where *they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them*, at the corner of every one of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe. For centuries they have stifled almost the whole of humanity in the name of so-called spiritual experience. Look at them today swaying between atomic and spiritual disintegration. (p. 311, emphasis added)

While it is not literally true that *every* Northern urban streetcorner is a murder scene<sup>86</sup> (suburban violence-by-proxy of American right-wing radio culture notwithstanding), Fanon does show that the “sacred” character of imperial institutions as produced by European intellectuals and theologians in the period of high imperialism is something needful to intervene in if the subaltern is to find political or human emancipation, even today. If one is to lead a free life, one must first find the means to authentic freedom, not a political agenda *pretending* to apolitical Freedom or the End of History. Taking Aglietta’s observation together with Fanon’s on this theme, I propose that that *theory in bad faith served to hold European polities together in the service of capital as well as promoting an imperial program—“the integrity of the nation”* against “spiritual *disintegration*.”<sup>87</sup>

An *integral* solution must, in *good* faith, intervene in the totality in a way that addresses both problems concretely, that of pathological automatic response and the means of production of consciousness turned to the production of stupidity. I propose two interventions. *The first is a recognition of the need to change with the resolution to carry it forward; the second is an ongoing transformation; taken together, both interventions amount to becoming responsible in a particular way:* “Understanding the first type of stupidity,” that of being shot through with distorted ideas and mechanical responses, leads

to insight, is evolutionary, contributes to our development. Seeing through the stupidity of our thinking on the other hand is revolutionary. Its consequence is madness or redemption: thought is liberated from its confining laws and the road thrown open to the creation of new forms of thought *ex nihilo*. (M. van Boxsel, 2003, p. 44)

When one becomes responsible, one becomes *capable* of producing new values, if not necessarily *competent* at producing new values.

The first intervention is an act of critical compassion. “*You have to respect everybody. You cannot make a random judgment on that at all [...]. That is the Big No. You can’t act on your desires alone*” (Trungpa, 1999, p. 136). Resolving to refuse a small benefit, one’s own alone, for the sake of the comprehensive one<sup>88</sup> is a discipline Marcuse (1969) calls the Great Refusal, which amounts to saying the Big No to “the liberties of [an] exploitative order—a liberation which must precede the construction of a free society, one which necessitates an historical break

<sup>86</sup> It also is true that many Northern streetcorners are sites of resistance to violence and the means-to-violence, as a careful analysis of the events in Seattle on 30 November, 1999 will reveal.

<sup>87</sup> The question of whether this kind of “holding the world together” is a viable criterion for integral leadership is taken up in forthcoming work.

<sup>88</sup> Thus, the Big No is to be understood not as a unitary or archetypal “soul of revolt” but as multiple, local, and contextual (Foucault, 1978, p. 96). It is motivated not by the pursuit of pleasure, which is (per Foucault) a bottom-up function of power rather than a means of resistance, but by critical compassion.

with the past and the present” (p. viii). In everyday language, one may say: *I get it now, and no, I'm not doing this anymore. I'm going hungry.*<sup>89</sup>

The discipline of responsibly keeping this commitment in a thoroughgoing fashion is the second intervention,<sup>90</sup> in which *responsibility leads to making space for new values, which leads to the production of new values* in place of the old mimetic machinery. The work of making space<sup>91</sup> in which this can happen is collaborative in that new values emerges “only in *the collective practice of creating an environment*: level by level, step by step—in the material and intellectual production, an environment in which the nonaggressive, erotic, receptive faculties of man, in harmony with the consciousness of freedom” (Marcuse, 1969, p. 31). Even the radical antinomianism of revolutionary desire, as will be seen, is social in nature (see Thesis Eight).

Domesticating the production of values is a critical step in democratizing subjectivity. Leo Strauss (1973), the intellectual forefather of American neoconservatism, accurately frames this problem from the perspective of the subject-at-large:

What is called freedom of thought in a large number of cases amounts to—and even for all practical purposes consists of—the ability to choose between two or more different views presented by a small minority of people who are public speakers or writers. (p. 23)

If anything like the Habermasian public sphere exists now, it is effectively rigged, much as the game of brand preference is for any kind of commodity. Whether one chooses cigarette X or cigarette Y, one chooses cancer rather than any kind of fulfillment; if democracy as it is known in any given Western state is the final-perfect form of government, then the scope of one's choices is effectively foreclosed. I propose instead that everyone attempt to take up the discipline of making new values, and that those who master this practice first must go further and make space for others to learn how.

Transformational practice demands one take responsibility for what one can be responsible for. If a comprehensive transformation is to occur, one must be able to take *real* responsibility for two factors, the means of production and reproduction of established society, and subjectivity, political consciousness (Marcuse, 1969, p. 56). Ortega y Gasset (1993) takes responsibility of this kind to be “the Herculean task of genuine aristocracies” (p. 21); by contrast I take this to be the task first of a critical vanguard working from the bottom up—working,

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<sup>89</sup> In theological language, one might say that the first intervention corresponds to the “turn” of one's intentions to the divine in recognition of the divine that Buber (1958) describes.

<sup>90</sup> According to Marcuse (1969), “radical change in consciousness is the beginning, the first step in changing social existence: emergence of the new Subject” (p. 53), suggesting that the emergence of this new subjectivity is the task of the second intervention.

<sup>91</sup> Even Puritan England and Anglo-America, the chronotope *par excellence* for a repressive spiritual holarchy, offers at least two well-defined examples in which an agent attempts to make space for new values. One is Thomas Middleton's attempt to craft a theatrical space in which a nonviolent masculinity can be explored and celebrated (Taylor, 2007), a pinnacle of the broader social experiments imagined during the stage explosion of early modern England; another is Roger Williams's crafting of a social scene in which “soul libertie” or radical antinomianism might be possible in what is now the U.S. state of Rhode Island (Field, 2006).

precisely in Ortega y Gasset's formulation of effortful servitude and discipline (p. 63), or in Gurdjieff's famous summary of his own practice, conscious labors and intentional sufferings. This is *real* responsibility, or becoming-responsible.<sup>92</sup> Becoming-responsible is a practice that includes both interventions and takes many forms. One can see from this discussion of transformation and intervention that a responsible vanguard or agent must have at minimum the following four characteristics:

*Becoming-critical.* One is able to read one's moment clearly, without misunderstanding.

*Becoming-competent.* One is able to take self-directed action toward an intelligent (critical, conscious, compassionate) aim with increasing skill; one is willing to learn.

*Becoming-conscious.* One is able to intentionally disabuse oneself of mechanically-acquired habits and attitudes that lead to misunderstanding, incompetence, and incomplete or distorted compassion, and take action that is creative (novel) rather than merely recreative or repetitive.

*Becoming-compassionate.* One is able to select aims and actions not for the sake of one's regime-investment or personal narrative but for the benefit of one's community and, ultimately, all of animated nature diversely framed. This demands critical intelligence, life competence, and disciplined consciousness.

## Thesis Five

*Where duality (form) is an aggregate of co-conditioned products-in-process, nonduality (emptiness) is immanent, unconditioned. Recognizing and remembering this are the subjective valences of the first and second interventions, respectively.*

Lucio Colletti's (1973) summary view of the subject-as-articulation (in the diction of Thesis Two) opens the question of how a dialectical-materialist theory may relate to typical theological positions in uncompromisingly postmetaphysical language:

The historical subject is neither Idea, World Spirit, Vico's Providence, nor a transcendental subject. Nor is the subject conceived as Evolution, Struggle for Existence, Societal Instinct, Race, etc. Against these generic abstractions, all equally fruitless, Marx produces a new concept of the subject as a historical-natural entity, as a *species* or collectivity of empirical formations. (p. 14)

Per Colletti, a dialectical-materialist theory of the subject roundly rejects theological interpretations of time and consciousness in time in favor of historical materialism. While at first glance this may seem reductive, it does have certain methodological advantages (see Thesis

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<sup>92</sup> It may be tempting for some readers to identify the "great unifying enterprise" Ortega y Gasset calls for to bring Europe together spiritually and socially as an integral project, but since I am by no means interested in the necessary hegemony of the global North over the totality of the planet, as Ortega y Gasset is, I do not advocate this interpretation.

Seven), and does not foreclose a productive account of intentional living or nonduality. Toward this end, I have posited that first we are, like everything else immediately perceptible and coherent as something, products of aggregated causes and conditions that arise, persist, and decompose (see Thesis One). In the Buddhist formulation, *form is emptiness*. But we are also, like everything else is, forms in and of nonduality. *Emptiness is form*.

This position differs from the main in integral scholarship. That is, I do not posit a Nonduality in the form of an emanational monism of the type Roy (2006) or Gidley (2007) promote in a premise such as “we are all children of the cosmos on our way home,” or Wilber’s (1977) longstanding position that evolution is an “unfolding of Spirit.” Instead, I hold to the position, one that both Roy and Wilber also posit that the nondual is *right here. Now*. Go home and you run *to* it, *away* from it, *in* it, *as* it. It is not to be attained through transcendence, because whatever could be transcended was it already, regardless of volitional actions or, just as reasonably, woeful negligence of a Divine Absolute or Kafka-esque cosmic bureaucracy (see Thesis Seven). The comparison is imperfect, but it is suggestive to say that the nondual is affectively like the Deleuze-Guattarian Body without Organs, which is “what remains when you take everything away. What you take away is precisely the phantasy, and signifiacances and subjectifications as a whole” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 151). End the cycles of make-believe—the co-created subjective-objective process of make-believe, of reification—and this opening becomes possible. This is neither strictly “personal” nor “political,” but both and neither (see Theses One and Two). This position, while a minority view among integral theorists, is neither (or no longer) limited strictly to the Buddhist tradition nor absent from the integral canon, which is a collection of attempts at new values in history (see Thesis Three).

While the description I have attempted to make so far does correspond in important ways to the dialectical method of the Buddhist master Nagarjuna, as I have suggested it differs from Wilber’s use of Nagarjuna’s diction (or more properly, the word choice of Nagarjuna’s contemporary Anglophone translators). Wilber (2000a) posits capital-E Emptiness or nonduality as having the characteristic of *causality*,<sup>93</sup> described as “Godhead” and “Self-Realization” (pp. 316-317); as something that “embraces the Kosmos” (p. 524). Interestingly, Wilber correctly recognizes that the dialectic of Nagarjuna reveals “all categories of thought” to be “totally self-contradictory” and untenable (p. 528), a method that traditionally applies to theological and metaphysical positions Wilber takes, inclusive of “the I-I,” the “Godhead,” the “Source,” the “Goal,” even the “Emptiness” Wilber posits as aspects of ultimate emptiness rather than as provisional, samsaric coherences (Wilber, 2000a). Theodor Adorno (1994), his occasional comments on Buddhism that reveal some misunderstanding of it notwithstanding,<sup>94</sup> precisely articulates this distinction: “Dialectics is the self-consciousness of the objective context of

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<sup>93</sup> Wilber’s habit of attributing causality, which is provisional and by definition dual (subject-object) to nonduality in Buddhist language can be traced in Wilber (1981) as well, where Wilber also posits a “causal Dharmakaya”—a contradiction in terms roughly analogous to “limited infinitude,” “violent peace,” or “stupid omniscience.” Absent this mis-attribution, however, the shotgun wedding Wilber officiates between Nagarjuna’s emptiness and Hegel’s Providence disintegrates into irreconcilable differences.

<sup>94</sup> Morton (2007) explicates Adorno’s misunderstandings of Buddhist thinking as well as the corrupted Buddhist sources Hegel used and the consequent logic of Buddhism’s placement in Hegel’s scheme of world-historical development.

delusion; it does not mean to have escaped from that context” (p. 406). My point is that the Buddhist-informed critical practice of making new values that are explicitly provisional and without metaphysical pretense I propose here, which is identical in function with some aspects of dialectical materialism (see Theses One and Two), differs from earlier integral proposals such as Wilber’s in ways that may be productive.

In order to make new values, one must understand how values have been made, which is fundamentally a historical (material, formal—of matter, of forms) analysis (see Thesis Three). One difficulty with Krishnamurti’s method, for instance, is its resistance to history, to time. I find this to be a limitation in Krishnamurti’s otherwise sound nontheistic presentation of (and perhaps approach to) nonduality,<sup>95</sup> which can be mended in a particular way by enlarging the scale of his intervention beyond the personal,<sup>96</sup> by predicating it on critical compassion. Interestingly, the great dialectician Georg Lukacs (1971) advocates a similar transformation as Krishnamurti’s, in strikingly similar diction, but on a different scale, directly evoking the scale-homology logic of holism (micro- and macrocosms largely operating by the same rules). Where Lukacs the practical Marxist is materialistic, concerned with conditions, Krishnamurti the practical mystic is concerned with nothing at all, has no motivation, no place and no context. *The integral task in this case is to think of time in a way that admits the nondual*, with which Krishnamurti is primarily concerned, without compromise or distortion, and *while enabling a rigorous and transformative historicity*, as Lukacs proposes. In my view the former is the best legacy of Buddhist dialectics,<sup>97</sup> while the latter is the best of the post-Hegelian dialectical (postformal) tradition. The dialectic, in short, is *already* integral;<sup>98</sup> the post-dialectical maxim

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<sup>95</sup> In “The Core of Krishnamurti’s Teaching,” Krishnamurti (1996) proposes that “Time is the psychological enemy of man,” insofar as “Thought is time” and “Thought is born of experience, of knowledge,” which are of the past (p. 257). A duality is posited here, between the residues and crystallized forms that have arisen in time and are coherent now, and—*now*, which Krishnamurti priveleges as “insight without any shadow of the past” (p. 257). That insight into the spatial aspect of nonduality is significant as a first intervention, but Krishnamurti does not always admit the possibility of time also participating functionally in nonduality. The forms produced (articulated) by time here are themselves of the nature of space as well; everyday reality, from the clouds in the sky to the clouds in the sky of the mind, is a momentary form or “flicker” that is, ultimately, nondual—neither real nor not-real, neither “truth” nor “falsehood.” Krishnamurti remembers that form is emptiness (nonduality) but forgets that emptiness is also form.

<sup>96</sup> Krishnamurti’s presentation of the observer recognizing itself as observed can be readily misread as the perfect subjective position or meditative posture for the bourgeois “mass man” that Ortega y Gasset diagnoses, if one assumes the task is *only* personal, *only* subjective, a matter of personal choice analogous to brand preference (see Thesis Four). A careless approach to Krishnamurti would suggest that one simply needs to recognize his or her face in the mirror each morning as oneself, as *mine*, as “I am that”—an attitude that serves only to reify the subject-object gestalt, not undermine it. Krishnamurti’s nondualism assumes it is *not personal*—that whatever is observed, without exception, is of the same nature as that which is observing, which means that *that* has the characteristics of awareness and all-pervadedness—Truth beyond concepts, in Krishnamurti’s diction.

<sup>97</sup> Trungpa (1987) presents a rigorous but accessible presentation of this view, particularly in the final chapter; Trungpa’s analysis informs my reading of Krishnamurti in the present inquiry.

<sup>98</sup> By explicating nonduality or ultimate “depth” as already explicit or merely latent in critical theory at least since Deleuze and Cixous (Anderson, 2006) or Derrida (Hampson, 2007), and less directly in Marx, Gramsci, and Lukacs, I show that one whipping boy of Wilber’s (2000a) polemic—the “postmodern

that depth exposes itself as another surface, is a *kensho*, an opening into transformation by recognition of emptiness (a first intervention). From this, I propose an account of nonduality that is intended to be neither reductively materialistic nor reductively idealistic.<sup>99</sup>

“Truth is a pathless land.” Truth, as a cipher for nondual reality, is uncontrived, unconditioned and wholly unstriated, like space.<sup>100</sup> No formalities—processes or coherences—produce, induce, or cause its presence, or lead one there in the sense of crossing a coordinated space to a destination (“pathless”). The observer always already *is* that space, is of it: *form is emptiness*. The challenge is to remember this, to recognize it in all contexts, and this is a process, a function of immanence and a dialectic between conditions and consciousness. This process of *digesting* nonduality cannot be described structurally, where “structurally” implies a synthesis of affect and content—the content of becoming is infinitely variable. Certain formal characteristics, however, suggest the availability of becoming and can generate a context in which becoming can happen. These recontextualizations are miracles—not products of any evolutionary process but acts of total creativity in a local, immanent, and very specific sense (see Thesis Eight for specific characteristics of total creativity). This is the *Eureka!* moment that triggers a transformation; this creative recontextualization is the meaning of the observer seeing itself as the observed, concrete recognition of the nondual in the immanent, the first intervention.

But conditions have an often-overwhelming inertia of their own, occluding any unexceptional possibility for recognition of the nondual. Provisional, conventional subjectivity is a fragmented, contradictory factory of crazy-making machinery; the socius is precisely the same. As Lukacs observes, capitalism makes ordinary working subjects into timebound, functional *commodities*. What happens when the observer (the worker or class of workers, depending on the scale under consideration) recognizes itself as the observed, that is, sees itself in its conditions? “When the worker knows himself as a commodity,” Lukacs argues, “his knowledge is practical. That is to say, this knowledge brings about an objective structural change in the object of knowledge” (Lukacs, 1971, p. 169), which is none other than the subject or the structure of that knowledge. *The observer is the observed. Eureka!* However, as Lukacs warns, “the fact that this commodity is able to become aware of its existence as a commodity does not suffice to eliminate the problem” (p. 173)—a twofold problem, the actual production of commodity-consciousness in the first place, still working on everyone around, and the need for a maintained, sustained recognition and active transformation of the means of production of subjectivity. This is yet another way to articulate the integral project: *the task of reintegrating fragmentary consciousness, personally and politically* (both at once since each is a form of the other by

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poststructuralist” enemies of “depth” and the sacred—may very well be integral thinkers already, and seen as such if read competently.

<sup>99</sup> This differs from Mastustik’s (2007) introduction of an axis of spiritual expression into critical discourse, which suggests a spirituality that is not integrated immediately, already, with actual life as it is lived, together with others. I do not necessarily reject this position, I simply do not endorse it here at present. Instead, I find the function of the spiritual axis Mastustik develops already present in the transformative miracle (Anderson, 2006), a gesture that intervenes in the social, the political, the spiritual—all or any at once. While it can remind a subject *of* the nondual (first intervention), the miracle is *not* a differentiated path to the nondual—conscious effort is (second intervention).

<sup>100</sup> The “plane of immanence” and “smooth space” Deleuze and Guattari (1987) propose are useful metaphors in this context.

holographic logic), *for the sake of a free and responsible life for all*. This task, in Lukacs's words, is to become the "identical subject-object of history whose praxis will change reality" (p. 197). This addresses precisely the subject-object structure that produces and reproduces coherences. Lukacs and Krishnamurti are describing holographically-related practices, one primarily concerned with liberating the macrosocial scale (Lukacs) and the other with liberating the subjective or the spiritual (Krishnamurti), but each in language comprehensible to *either* scale.

In short, while miracles can happen and new values can arise out of the repetitive and contradictory muck of the everyday—the first intervention—much work remains to be done, and for Lukacs, "[t]his reform of consciousness," which I am calling the second intervention, "is the revolutionary process itself" (Lukacs, 1971, p. 259). This participation in the working realization of freedom is not, in Krishnamurti's terms, a *choice*; "It is man's pretense that because he has choice he is free" (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 257). Lukacs calls Krishnamurtian choice "individual freedom," such as the "freedom" to choose brand X or brand Y but not the choice *not* to trade my labor-time or labor-produce for cash that I then trade for an opportunity to choose between X and Y, if I have enough. Because "in contemporary bourgeois society individual freedom can only corrupt and be corrupting because it is a case of unilateral privilege based on the unfreedom of others, this desire"—the desire for authentic freedom, say—"must entail the renunciation of individual freedom," as Lukacs argues (1971, p. 315).

Hattam (2004) calls this praxis awakening-struggle, which entails a total commitment to the pathological molecular (micro) for the sake of the pathological molar (macro); Mastustik (2007) calls it "redemptive critique" (p. 228). This is the Gurdjieffian "intentional suffering" of disengaging one's personal investments and pleasures for the sake of *something else*, a project that is not personal in the same way that brand preference, for instance, seems to be. It is a process in time and of time, and for this reason it turns inquiry to the task of *reading* time, of reading coherences as formations *in* time—the responsibility for *critique*.

## Interim Summary

To sum up the first five theses in broad strokes, any coherence and the total field of possible and extant coherences—all and everything—have four characteristics.<sup>101</sup> First, a coherence is a temporary and impermanent confluence of causes and conditions, designated conventionally as a "this" or a "that," but only conventionally and not ultimately and not in any "reality" posited as permanent or substantive. Second, a coherence is *problematic*. It is not really what it seems to be or presents itself as, and it is inherently unsatisfying, just as conventional subjectivity is unsatisfied so long as it is "unrealized." Third, because it is impermanent, temporary, a snapshot of a process analogous to a flash of lightning, it does not exist ultimately, but only provisionally or conventionally. This is not to suggest, however, that something exists ultimately, even though all coherences do resolve into nonduality, like moments of lightning animating one sky. This is the fourth characteristic of a coherence: nonduality as the common space (so to speak) of all coherences is not posited as something that exists, nor posited as something that does not exist; it is neither affirmed nor denied. It is neither nothing nor something. Famously, it does not lend

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<sup>101</sup> These four features correspond to the Four Seals of Existence in traditional Mahayana Buddhism.



itself to a precise formulation in provisional terms such as these, because it lacks formal characteristics (inclusive of the lack of formal characteristic *as* a formal characteristic).<sup>102</sup> It does present itself affectively, however, through particular kinds of interventions.

The following theses, then, seek to explore how the positions I have taken so far work in comparison with some previous contributions to integral theory in order to better understand both the present inquiry and earlier proposals.

## Thesis Six

*Coherences are best understood when read responsibly, each in their own specificity and with reference to their own histories (as form), not exclusively or absolutely by any developmental or classificatory scheme of values (which are also coherences with histories).*

Coherences are produced and reproduced, and must be read as such. As I suggested earlier, some are simply reproduced mechanically, the way glaciers form fjords, cats make kittens, and the kinetic energy of habitual patterns control one's actions; others are *intentionally* crafted with greater or lesser competence. I call the former *flickers*, following Pitts (1990) (see Thesis Three). All flickers are articulations, in that they are causally-induced formations made coherent, in this case made coherent by causally-induced distortions. So, to express the flicker more precisely in the cumbersome logic of holism, it can be formulated as *a distorted articulation of an articulation, legible in that same articulation*. In practical terms, this expresses the everyday observation that things are recognizably products of their time and place, inclusive of things such as ideas, ideologies, and metaphysical aspirations. To explicate this peculiar instance of co-causality, I offer some examples of holographic flickers and interpreting them back to the bigger coherence from which they arose and which they articulate (are articulations of), in summary form:

I read American football as a send-up or mimicry of the American imperative to *take their land* (manifest destiny) under the guise of evolutionary providence (Anderson, 2007); as Barthes (1972) reads the anxious desires of the French imperial project in an image of an African man saluting the French tricolor; as Hampson (2007) reads Wilber's boomeritis not as a transhistorical or nonlocal phenomenon, but a precise response to the contingencies of American life at a particular time for a particular class of (nominally privileged white) folks; as one may interpret certain theologies in the revelations of Joseph Smith as mechanical reflections of nineteenth-century anxieties about race in antebellum America;<sup>103</sup> as I have suggested elsewhere,

<sup>102</sup> I would like to emphasize that this view is neither nihilistic nor eternalistic. Not nihilistic because nothing in particular is posited as a really existing object of negation, then negated; not eternalistic, because nothing in particular is posited as an ultimate existent, then affirmed and reified (even conventionally as Spirit or Absolute).

<sup>103</sup> In chapter 7, verse 22 of "The Book of Moses," part of a collection of Mormon scripture called *The Pearl of Great Price*, the reader learns that "the seed of Cain were black" (Smith, 1920, p. 29). This is one source of much theology in the Latter Day Saint movement against the ordination of men of African

the impulse to *integrate* fragmented consciousness arises precisely at the moment when imperial capitalism produced the identity crises attendant on an unstable, enforced Empire (Anderson, 2006), and further, that specific moments in what may be called the history of integral practice may be reasonably read either as conscious responses to or mechanical flickers of the socioeconomic order dominant at that moment (see Thesis Three). In each case, flickers are seen as products of causalities, coherent by the degree to which one may be embedded in the appropriate cultural matrix, or disengaged from it. The reverse and equally valid proposition, that each is made coherent as something by the perceptive means (also a product of causes and contingencies) of a given coherence or set of coherences, can be seen in the traditional fable of the coiled rope that a fearful man immediately recognizes not for what it is, but as a coiled viper, or a redemptive allegory the anonymous streetcorner evangel might see in an any-given-Sunday televised football broadcast.

Like any ordinary coherent formation, Spiral Dynamics is an articulation, a “flicker” that *reproduces* something of its causal means of production, of the *moment* of its production,<sup>104</sup> a product of its time (see Thesis One)—but as a system of ideas, it may reproduce or mimic certain ideological formations, or actively critique or renounce irresponsible interest by means of regime-affiliation (see Thesis Three). Spiral Dynamics is, according to the publisher’s front matter, concerned with the task of managing successful organizations (Beck & Cowan, 1996, p. 3). Two characteristics of successful organizations in this context include development<sup>105</sup> (in this case, profitability) and pleasure in will-to-power—pleasure in winning over others in competition (as in the application of Spiral Dynamics for professional sports and in corporate fitness), and both are explicitly promoted by the Spiral Dynamics project.

Through Luxemburg’s (2003) analysis of the history of accumulated capital, one can read the development spiral as a cipher for development-as-profitability writ large,<sup>106</sup> the increasing complexity and depth of global imperial power by force: “accumulation of capital, once it has started, automatically leads farther and farther beyond itself. The circle has become a spiral which winds itself higher and higher as if compelled by a natural law in the guise of mathematical terms” (p. 89). The “guise of mathematical terms” Luxemburg mentions here

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descent and interracial relationships for church members prior to the church’s rescission of that prophetic policy in 1978.

<sup>104</sup> Hampson’s genealogy of Wilber’s adaptations of the spiral/vMeme topoi points to an important limit on this homology’s breadth-of-scope *vis a vis* Wilber’s project—because Wilber flattens the spiral into a spectrum at a certain point (Hampson, 2007, p. 122), his application of the Spiral Dynamics diction represents a distinct articulation from the Beck-Cowan formulation. Hampson does not explicitly opine if Wilber’s innovation is an advance on Beck-Cowan Spiral Dynamics, or a reduction of it.

<sup>105</sup> As in Aglietta’s analysis of the coherent totality, Beck and Cowan frame the developmental spiral as a cipher for accumulation: “A spiral vortex best depicts this emergence of human systems as they evolve through levels of increasing complexity. Each upward turn of the spiral marks the awakening of a more elaborated version on top of what already exists” (Beck & Cowan, 1996, p. 29). Complexity is accumulated, depth and transcendence are accumulated, and the whole is developed (“elaborated”) by this trope.

<sup>106</sup> Lenin (1967) traces the history of capitalism’s development in stages such that the system of free enterprise in early English production gives rise to monopolies, which divide the world under the banner of Empire until the whole planet became striated, all lands claimed for the purposes of capital. Lenin concludes that “imperialism *is* the monopoly stage of capitalism” (p. 745, emphasis added).

specifically mask what is for her the history of imperial conquest, which she demonstrates to be the real source of accumulated capital—meaning that capitalism has been global and imperial virtually from the start, and disguising itself as a form of knowledge, economics.<sup>107</sup>

From this observation, I propose as a hypothesis that Spiral Dynamics in fact arose in a capitalist moment—a statement of verifiable historical fact—and that it reproduces a set of values that *mimic* the spiraling functional structures of capitalist production and accumulating capital. It is not in the first instance an intervention or a postformal recontextualization of these valences of mimicry, although it may very well be so relative to certain of the ideologies of the academic disciplines it is most explicitly addressed to. As one might expect, this articulation “flickers” or radiates from itself more about itself than its mode of production. Foucault (1978) suggests that the developmental spiral is a measure of pleasure in dominance or sadism-in-power, through scopophilia and surveillance: “[t]he pleasure that comes from exercising a power [...] These attractions, these evasions, these circular incitements have traced around bodies and sexes, not boundaries not to be crossed, but *perpetual spirals of power and pleasure* (p. 45, emphasis added). This addresses the shrill, expansive, and denunciatory fascination in the private lives and practices of gays and lesbians demonstrated by the religious right-wing in the U.S., the political contingency that has come to dominate American political and social life with particular intensity through the Bush-Cheney fiasco.<sup>108</sup> In both instances, the spiral of development is a holographic flicker that repeats the contours of the larger historical moment—the accumulation of capital under the prevailing economic regime, and analogously the (implicitly sadistic) scopophilic discursive mechanisms that continue to regulate sexuality in Euro-American contexts, particularly in Texas, where male homosexuality was still functionally illegal due to enforced anti-sodomy legislation,<sup>109</sup> before, during, and after the writing (in Texas) of the book *Spiral Dynamics*. This does not mean that Spiral Dynamics *consciously* mimics the libidinal agenda of the most powerful political and economic contingency present at its inception, or that Spiral Dynamics represents an explicitly homophobic ideology, as it does mimic the accumulation model of global finance. It simply means that this legacy is legible in the text, and readers seeking critique should be aware of it, whether the theory presented as Spiral Dynamics seems to be aware or not. Spiral Dynamics expresses the will-to-power of the social order that produced it (see Theses Three and Seven). Because it does not offer a critique of that social order, only some tactics for advancing it, I call it a flicker of that regime, a specific kind of artifact of it. It is not a transformational project, but rather a developmental and accumulative one.

Some aspects of this analysis will be instantly recognizable, coherent, and resonant for those of us in the United States who have endured the grief, shame, and outrage that have come with living under the dull-round shadow of the crypto-fascistic regime that has overtaken our beautiful country, especially since 2001—an affective experience I describe as *dead time*, where

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<sup>107</sup> Luxemburg presents a recognizably “postmodern” critique of academic practice in this analysis, and just after the first World War.

<sup>108</sup> Phillips (2006) describes this intersection of theocratic hegemony and global capital.

<sup>109</sup> Texas’s anti-sodomy law was finally deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in June, 2003.

black becomes the color, and none the number<sup>110</sup> (Anderson 2003)—but may seem obscure to those who have not. One may say that the provisional analysis of Spiral Dynamics I attempt here either flickers my own interaction with the “noetic field” generated by this regime; alternately, it may represent a conscious intervention into that regime. In either case, my claim regarding Spiral Dynamics must be qualified, because it suffers from lacking a rigorous historical analysis of the complex of causal pushes and pulls that brought the articulated coherence called Spiral Dynamics into existence, if not the forces that adapted Spiral Dynamics to the task of classifying and quantifying the development of coherences. Further, it would be as reductive for me to assert that Spiral Dynamics is *only* a mimicry of the values of a certain regime as it is for Wilber (2003) to assume all baby-boomers tend to manifest the same “vMeme” at the same time, for instance. . This tendency to reduce complex phenomena into discrete, simplistic categories is parodied to great effect in R. Kelly’s (2001) film *Donnie Darko*, in which self-help guru Tim Cunningham (played by Patrick Swayze) reduces the all-and-everything of human experience to the make-believe poles of Fear and Love—and sells videotapes and practice materials so that *anyone* willing and able to pay can learn how too.<sup>111</sup> With this qualification, I claim in Thesis Seven that Spiral Dynamics is a manifestation of this tendency to reduce complexity and specificity to a generic, transhistorical and universalized taxonomy, with its mode of production under erasure, a metaphysical practice Marx and Althusser attribute to Hegelian method (see Theses Two and Three).

There are alternatives, but not uncomplicated ones. History shows that categories such as race, gender, class, and sexuality are problematic at best as analytic categories. Even so, they connote phenomena that affect the daily lives of every coherence alive on this planet, and for this reason, an integral analysis must consider them responsibly. The vMememes of Spiral Dynamics and their attendant trajectory of development are also *means of making knowledge about subjects*, just as race and gender are (see Thesis One). For example, Beck and Cowan (1996) offer this list of sites where the blue vMeme manifests:

Rev. Billy Graham, Frank Capra’s *It’s a Wonderful Life*, Puritan America, Confucian China, Hassidic Judaism, Dickensian England, Singapore discipline, codes of chivalry and honor, charitable good deeds, the Salvation Army, Islamic fundamentalism, Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon, Boy and Girl Scouts, patriotism. (p. 46)

The only clear conclusion to be drawn from this muddle of stereotypes is that Beck and Cowan (and, later, Wilber) use this vMeme to read subjects,<sup>112</sup> as coded and “tiered” expressions of value, just as in everyday life we read one another in terms of gender, race, class, geographic origin, sexuality—mechanically, repetitively, unconsciously and uncritically (see Theses One and Four). Like race or gender, concepts such as vMememes may be useful theoretic tools insofar

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<sup>110</sup> Bob Dylan’s 1963 recording “It’s a Hard Rain’s a-Gonna Fall” has contributed materially to this portion of the analysis.

<sup>111</sup> If Cunningham had taken any coherent theoretical positions, then his work certainly would have been recognizable as theory in bad faith; if his work had been coherently spiritual in nature, it certainly would be fair to characterize it as spiritual materialism.

<sup>112</sup> To their credit, Beck and Cowan (1996) recognize this practice as an error—“vMEMES can be so dominant that they seem like archetypes and are easily misinterpreted as ‘types’ of people” (p. 32). This recognition does not prevent this error from arising in their work or in Wilber’s work, however.

that they produce verifiable, useful (read: transformative) knowledge, and utterly useless, even counterproductive, if they discursively or ideologically subjectify; occlude the production of verifiable, useful knowledge;<sup>113</sup> or encourage (fail to *discourage*) spiritual materialism, Trungpa's term for the misappropriation of the trappings of transformative praxis in the interest of mass-man ego,<sup>114</sup> the spiritual cognate to theory in bad faith (see Theses Four and Five), and *anything* but postmetaphysical practice.

There is a *danger* of overhasty metaphysical diagnosis—analogue to the risk of spiritual materialism on the one hand or racism, sexism, homophobia that can distort human encounters, often disastrously, on the other—*inherent* in the tiers of vMememes in Spiral Dynamics and later adaptations of it. This is precisely the problem Marx and Althusser identify in Hegel's practice (see Thesis Two), of assuming a solution to a given problem (in this case through a rubric of preexisting values) before any question about that problem in its context has been posed.<sup>115</sup> One looks for the values one has and finds them, and in the process, determines the outcome of one's inquiry before beginning it, even *containing* the object of inquiry—much as one who may wish to prove the geological veracity of a particular Biblical account of creation by seeking evidence that the planet's fossil record is less than six thousand years old, inverting the scientific method, may inquire. This can be amended by relying instead on the responsible but sometimes tedious and time-intensive process of reading micro-scale specific coherences as articulations of discrete sets of microhistories, as Gidley (2007) attempts to do macrohistorically.

Gender is one moment where Wilber has been willing to uncritically reify a complex set of phenomena into an absolute, timeless Idea or "truism," in this instance shortly before his full-scale adoption of the vMememes of Spiral Dynamics; this shows him to be amenable to a critical tool that can also be used as a means of *containing* critique at the point in his project when he begins to incorporate Spiral Dynamics into it. According to Wilber (2000a), most strands of

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<sup>113</sup> Hampson's (2007) work on the postmodern and integral theory represents a genuine advance on Wilber's work, but in one instance, he makes a minor error that is relevant in this context as an example of the distortion Pitts describes, which may be analogous to the "guise" of quantifiable reality Luxemburg observes in economic theory. Hampson assumes that capitalism is simply an articulation or a set of values (orange vMeme, "modernism") (p. 110), rather than what it has been and continues to be: a way in which societies can organize to produce useful and useless stuff, as well as the means of its own continued existence (through reified or commodity-consciousness, among other means), in which ever-increasing *development*—accumulation, profitability—is the value held above all. Because it is a reproducer of value-as-ideology, more than it is the expression of a discrete set of values, capitalism is an integral problem, a total one, and a verifiable fact of contemporary life. In my view it is reductive to dismiss it strictly as an expression of a "modern" vMeme, and thereby exclude it from a discussion of the postmodern and by extension the contemporary condition. In my opinion, this is an example of a case where this critical tool, the vMeme, inhibits the production of useful knowledge.

<sup>114</sup> In his speech to the Order of the Star, Krishnamurti directly accuses his followers of a specific manifestation of spiritual materialism, that of make-believing one's place in a developmental model to serve one's ego: "You are accustomed to being told how far you have advanced, what is your spiritual status. How childish! [...] You are not serious in these things" (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 6).

<sup>115</sup> Marx summarizes his critique of Hegel in these terms:

He assumes in the form of fact, of an event, what he is supposed to deduce [...]. Theology in the same way explains the origin of evil by the fall of man: that is, it assumes as a fact, in historical form, what has to be explained. (p. 71)

feminism (treating specifically essentialist, second-wave feminisms) have failed to produce acceptable results because “the very attempt to liberate women disempowers them by definition [...]. Women do not have to take back their power because they never gave it away” (p. 598). This is because, according to Wilber, women thousands of years ago helped build patriarchy in response to the contingencies of prehistoric life—assuming in the process that women today can reasonably be held responsible for the decisions made by prehistoric women, or had some say in the matter during prehistory. Further, Wilber assumes that the mental act of recognizing one’s own genuine oppression on gender lines (in my view a first intervention), thereby reasserting one’s power, amounts to giving away one’s power in the form of rejecting the inheritance of a patriarchy that was according to Wilber of some use thousands of years ago. As before, no woman or man alive today was alive at the moment gendering began, obviously; to posit the *non sequitur* causality Wilber proposes, then, demands recourse to an alternative, back-to-the-future view of time, where the women of the present in a sense participate in the patriarchy of prehistory, *ala* Wilma Flintstone, that women today are essentially the same as women have always been, that the power ancient women may have had is the same power contemporary women are free to accept or reject. Wilber does not account for how women or men are positioned—articulated—*now*, and then from the imminent specifics of that condition propose an intervention, as critical practice demands; instead, he proposes a rather preposterous kind of transcendent-historical make-believe in order to dismiss the everyday reality of the continued disempowerment of women that affects persons of both genders, while affirming separate spheres of masculine and feminine values, as second-wave essentialist feminists have done (Wilber, 2000a, p. 759). Wilber is clearly working in this instance to contain the scope of feminist critique by attempting to make critical feminists (as opposed to essentialists, for whom the prehistorical theme is of more significance) collectively appear as irrelevant, counterproductive agents of disempowerment.

If one’s project is in part dedicated to containing the scope of active critique by reducing the outcome of that critique to a preestablished set of values (timeless “feminine power” in this case), as Wilber’s seems to have been in the case of gender critique as of Wilber (2000a), then one may find a classificatory scheme of values such as Spiral Dynamics useful, because it is useful for *managing outcomes*, foreclosing surprises, and blunting intervention.

I submit, instead, that the integral project can only benefit from a rigorous, compassionate consideration of historical feminist analysis and an active inquiry into gender as a social and subjective factor—and that such an inquiry has transformative power—even if the findings of any or all such projects wholly invalidates the total of the present inquiry. The striking and explicitly feminist work of Helene Cixous, for instance, may or may not be a manifestation of the “Mean Green Meme,” which is not a coherent analytical category at all;<sup>116</sup> it is, certainly, a

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<sup>116</sup> The holographic treatment of the dynamic spiral I have offered so far, while hardly foolproof empirically, is more coherent analytically than the hodgepodge polemic catch-all that is the “mean green meme” in the applied Spiral Dynamics of Wilber’s integral model. As Hampson (2007) so precisely (and politely) demonstrates, the mean green meme is incoherent as an analytic category, but its use in polemic is demonstrable and demonstrably conservative (p. 163). Conservatism, as a position committed by definition to the maintenance of the status quo, is the logical alternative to any transformational model, which looks for ways to make constructive change, and insofar as integral praxis is transformational, the mean green meme’s use in integral praxis is incoherent and—creepy, like the sadistic but implicitly

concrete response to a real crisis in time and space, produced by multiple waves of causality and contingency, and should be analyzed as such, just as any gendered or “raced” or “classed” position is. Because Cixous’s work is characterized by frequent moments of artful postformal expression, the nature of the distortions in the holographic “flicker” of its moment of production may actually be another form of lucidity rather than opacity, in the sense that they open up critical lines of inquiry into said moment, as well as the moment in which it is consumed—the other end of the process of articulation, which could be described as the “flicker” of reading, of integrating the postformal, critical energy of a remarkable text into one’s own horizon (see Introduction). In this way, reading properly a well-constructed text can itself make new values possible beyond the scope of the values presented explicitly in said text. *This is what theory is for*. Further, interventionary awareness or lucidity that characterizes postformal praxis actively (consciously) *recontextualizes* the gestalt in which it arises, and by this feature can be distinguished from any other product or artifact of culture which typically reproduces values and structures. This is far preferable to the alternative of assuming one’s values about gender or the metaphysics of the New Age or the age and source of the planet have some reality that is stable transculturally and in all contexts, and form a valid preemption of open inquiry (see Thesis Seven).

## Thesis Seven

*New values may be made, emergent cultural forms do arise, but “New Ages” do not “emerge” mechanically or Providentially. New regimes, like new values, are responsibly made.*

*Capitalism reproduces itself by transforming itself, and this transformation is mainly in the improvement of exploitation.* (Marcuse, 1969, p. 13) (see Thesis Three)

Metaphysical propositions or topics are products of specific moments in time and in space—co-conditional and, of themselves and in relation to others, total (see Theses One, Two, and Five). This means, for instance, that Aristotle’s propositions regarding the First Mover or the Substance reflect the circumstances from which they arose—Aristotle’s Athens—as well as the circumstances that have transmitted those propositions to the present. The First Mover has been reinvented, recontextualized countless times. The critical question is not what the First Mover may have meant to Aristotle or his student Alexander or to Avicenna or Aquinas, or what it may mean now to Anderson or Wilber—all contingent and nondeterminant in the last analysis—but instead what *purpose* that concept can execute, what job it can perform (see Introduction). To answer this question, I classify propositions broadly as theological or theoretical, by this characteristic of *presumed timelessness*. If a proposition, which is demonstrably a coherent thing and therefore anything but immutable, claims to be timeless or is contextualized in such a way as to lead a reader to assume it is universal, then I classify that proposition as theological or metaphysical.

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spiritual Law of *The Trial*. It leaves Hampson (2007) “none the wiser, though a tad more fearful” (p. 163). As a critical tool, it rather evokes another spiral entirely, this one the emblem on the impressive belly of Ubu Roi, father of the science of pataphysics, and the *leitmotiv* of Baudrillard’s (2005) critique of Kafkaesque “Integral Reality.”

There is a dialectical, developmental relationship between theory and practice (see Thesis One). Theory makes practice intelligent, while the contingencies of practice—actual material conditions—inform theory. To produce theory, then, is to produce a systematic set of concepts with a definite relationship to material conditions and to a definite methodological agenda (here, comprehensive “inner” and “outer” transformation) and, therefore, to produce concepts that are explicitly contingent because they are necessarily *not* universal or transhistorical, any more than any other coherence such as a hammer or a cutting tool is metaphysically “real.” Theory, therefore, must venture to be honest about its capacities and humble in its claims.<sup>117</sup> By contrast, *theology* is traditionally taken to be a practice of explicating doctrines that are assumed to be universal and transhistorical, and that therefore transcend the material and the contingent, even as theology is understood at its roots as an epiphenomenon of natural philosophy (an interesting context for Aurobindo’s decision to express his theology in the patois of nineteenth-century natural and social science: evolution, races).<sup>118</sup> Where theory aspires to an accurate reflection and response to material conditions, theology makes effective myths. The meaningful point of contrast here lies in practice. Where for theory meaningful practice is to change the world into a saner space, for theology meaningful practice implies an increasingly developed adherence to a *premade* doctrine and, concomitantly, implementation of a doctrine *into* the material world, thereby effecting a transformation of the world by inspiration outside of the world.<sup>119</sup> Theory implies co-causality (theory-to-practice, practice-to-theory); theology, a one-way, top-down causality of transformation (Word-to-the-world). This reflects a difference in the means of production of concepts. Theory as I propose it here is a democratized production of values,

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<sup>117</sup> This is one condition of a postmetaphysical culture as well; see Rorty (1989, 2006), and Habermas (1994). In fairness, the extent to which Wilber’s work (itself a work-in-progress) is at any one moment consistently and without compromise critical, theoretical, or postmetaphysical must remain an open one, as an analysis of even a representative selection of the positions Wilber has taken would exceed the scope of any essay not committed wholly to an exegetical treatment, given the scale of Wilber’s production. The doctrines I identify with Wilber in this work as metaphysical or theological have at some point been endorsed or expressed by Wilber, even if he may have since distanced himself from any one of these doctrines fully or by degrees, at one time or for all time.

<sup>118</sup> Augustine (1998) rejects theologies derived from cultural (“mythical”) or civil life, emphasizing instead a theology derived from natural, of-the-world principles, such that theology following Augustine—the whole of European theology and its consequences—is natural philosophy spiritualized, or given cosmic, eternal significance. Theology is at its roots quite literally the Miltonic assertion of eternal Providence into material science and the justification of what a given regime takes to be the ways of God to the men subject to that regime.

<sup>119</sup> Hobbes’s (1996) proposal for the establishment of a Christian commonwealth represents one of many explicit instances of this, where theology is openly described as a means of force, a means of subjective and social control. The ideological task of making these social controls into doctrines of natural science, presenting them as cosmic physical laws from above rather than as social forces, forecloses any appeal to the supernatural in the form of prophecy or dream-vision for moral or spiritual authority from below. Hobbes recognizes and addresses this threat in his hypothetical commonwealth, observing that “he that pretends to teach men the way of so great a felicity,” that is, one who claims to speak on behalf of Spirit, “pretends to govern them” (p. 288). Hobbes, then, establishes theological means to control, curb, and cage this threat to its own government, and the age of prophecy is declared closed. The relevance of vision and prophecy as a charismatic gesture is an unspoken subtext of Thesis Eight. Readers familiar with prophecy as a literary conceit will not be surprised to see that both natural-theological and prophetic gestures can and do arise in the writings of the same poet or thinker (Spenser, Milton, Blake, Yeats, Aurobindo), even in the same sentence, in dynamic tension.



insofar as it is a collaborative and dialogic practice, while theology can be understood as a private-property regime of production of values (see Thesis Two), insofar as the production of theology is limited to those who have appropriate institutional or traditional validity or have fashioned for themselves an independent tradition to represent, as in the case of charismatic religion. As I show in Thesis Eight, this issue of *access to means of production and distribution of values* is significant for the future of integral theory.

Either method, theory or theology, can be appropriate to a given situation. There is much good in competent, compassionate criticism. As I have suggested, some of what passes as criticism is clearly incompetent and lacking in compassion, and is therefore irresponsible and unacceptable (see Thesis Four), and in the last analysis, not even criticism. Similarly, much theological work is of real qualitative value, and as streams of cultural and practical transmission, must be valued. Appropriate valuation in the sense of critical consciousness is also a form of responsibility. That said, there is some measure of madness in theological projects; some are hopelessly irresponsible, and most are a mixed blessing. Theology as such is not necessarily a problem or a solution to a problem. My point in this instance is that when theology is asked to perform as if it were criticism, difficulties arise (see Theses Two, Three, and Six), counterproductive and unneeded ones. Specifically, the incorporation of certain theological positions into integral theory has caused a particular methodological problem<sup>120</sup> I have alluded to already regarding Wilber's misrepresentation of nonduality relative to dialectical practice, as well as his proposal for a "master map," attributed to Hazelton in Wilber (2003) (see Introduction), taken up more recently in slightly different diction in Wilber (2006) and elsewhere.

This "master map" process of adjudicating the "best" and "worst" of internally coherent but mutually contradicting claims even of various progressive-evolutionary postcolonial religious dispensations—those of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha,<sup>121</sup> or of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,<sup>122</sup> or of Meher Baba, to give a representative sampling—enacts or makes possible a kind of epistemic violence that exceeds any mandate for critical practice. On one side, through an intensity of commitment to one's teacher and tradition, one may make extraordinary, unverifiable, and in the end irresponsible theological claims at the expense of other traditions passing as criticism—*theology, working as ideology, in theoretical drag.*<sup>123</sup> On the other side, through a conscious or

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<sup>120</sup> As with so much else in integral theory, this is anticipated in the work of Aurobindo Ghose. Like Milton, Aurobindo is a world-class poet and mythmaker, and a theologian to be taken seriously (and not only by the faithful); also like Milton, Aurobindo is a problematic political and cultural critic.

<sup>121</sup> In the instances of the Baha'i Faith and the Ahmadiyya movement especially, one may instead begin to understand the similarities and differences between dispensations first by reference to the relationship of the faithful to the transformations brought about by the colonial process, and second by the minoritarian position of adherents in a postcolonial situation in Asia and in diaspora. Apart from a conflicted position *vis a vis* mainstream Islam (Shia and Sunni respectively), these are the most explicit common denominators between the two movements.

<sup>122</sup> Situated in and from the Ahmadiyya tradition, Ahmed (1998) is worth close consideration for those committed to an evolutionary-consciousness position such as the ones posited by Hegel, Aurobindo, and Wilber.

<sup>123</sup> Claims of this type, exemplified perhaps by Bakhtin's (1984) hyperbolic enthusiasm for the religious conservative Dostoevsky and Wilber's public endorsements of Franklin Jones (Da Free John, Adi Da) and, later, Andrew Cohen, along with books and publications by both (Cohen publishes "the *only*

unconscious bias for or against a particular teacher or tradition, one may attempt through theological gestures (or simply through vehement and repeated assertion) to *foreclose* a particular dispensation from responsible, contextualized critique.<sup>124</sup> Theory is inadequate to the task of resolving differences in theology, much less to the *reduction* of said differences to another, master theology,<sup>125</sup> just as it is incapable of determining which of these men (or none among them) may have been God in the flesh, a position no theorist can take without becoming a theologian, an ideologist, or both at once in the process.<sup>126</sup>

No *single* theology, master map, or God-is-on-our-side gesture has proven to be up to the task I propose of organizing a set of disparate social and spiritual movements, many of them theological in orientation, predicated on innumerable cultural traditions. History shows that adherence does not guarantee alliance, nor does simple adherence bring the subjective and objective developments needed for a comprehensive transformation to be carried out. For instance, if one seeks to draw together the participatory action of good-faith leaders from many religious and cultural traditions, and many intellectual disciplines, with a theoretical project, one immediately introduces a problem with establishing this theory on a metaphysical or theological proposition. One example: that there is such a thing as reality and that this reality “is not composed of things or processes,” but is composed of holons (Wilber, 2000a, p. 41), which have their being in something of a divinized hierarchy in the form of a Great Chain that is also presented as real, as in the “ontology of consciousness” Litfin (2003) posits in her proposal for

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magazine asking the hard questions, slaughtering the sacred cows, and dealing with the Truth no matter what” [Wilber, 2002, p. xvii, emphasis added]), suggest that *only* this or that method, *only* this or that text or periodical or ashram, *only* this or that guru can yield desirable results—a difficult claim to verify. Insisting on the exclusivity of Dostoevsky, for instance, begs the question: why *only* Dostoevsky and not, say, Joyce? Bakhtin shows a willingness to address this question, but never wholly resolves it, and in fairness, could not have read *Ulysses* at the time of writing his book on Dostoevsky. Analogously, one may ask of Wilber’s work: why an uncategorical endorsement of the claims of Franklin Jones at the expense of those of Shiv Dayal Singh, or Baha’u’llah, or Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, or Meher Baba, or any other, or not at all?

<sup>124</sup> To give one example, Wilber (2001) claims it is “slander” to point out the racist overtones in Aurobindo’s writings (p. ix). But as I show in Anderson (2006), Aurobindo’s writings are more complex than Wilber seems willing to admit on the subject of race; it is not unfair to Aurobindo to insist he was among other things a product of his time, and that flickers of this time are legible in his work. By analogy, one can find moments of explicit racism in the writings of Mark Twain, even as Twain’s project was broadly and intensely anti-racist—and to say so amounts to critical honesty about Twain, not a slander to his legacy.

<sup>125</sup> I recognize that a reader applying a hermeneutic of suspicion to this passage may object to my uneasiness about theological work as an expression of my own adherence to an explicitly non-theological (not anti-theological) spiritual tradition, Mahayana Buddhism. If the reader finds that my claims are unwarranted or otherwise problematic, and that a bias of this sort may be behind this problem, I invite that reader to demonstrate both the hypothetical failure of my reasoning and any imputed bias causing the same.

<sup>126</sup> This distinction can be made by diagnosing the relationship of a given theological gesture to the regime at hand. If it is one of mimetic and mechanical or conscious identification, it can be said to be ideological. This analysis develops from the first positive task of schizoanalysis, to find out what the desiring machines are doing (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 322).

an integral macropolitics (pp. 55-56).<sup>127</sup> This is an affirmative, ontological position, and this differentiates the coherence as propose it (see Thesis One) from the Wilberian holon: the coherence refers to a moment in a set of overdetermining processes, but is not affirmed as real or unreal; thus, it is not a litmus test of faith, only a tool at hand for anyone to use with no presumed ultimate significance or ultimate being (or non-being) as such.

What I am proposing instead amounts to a rigorously pluralistic, secular approach that invites the contributions of multiple traditions without affirming the Ultimate Reality of one over the rest by responsibly refraining from taking metaphysical positions relative to the integral project and instead insisting on the verifiable, the deductive—arguably another valence of the Big No, as I will show—the best inheritance of the tradition of antinomianism established on the North American continent by the Puritan theologian and proto-integralist Roger Williams in the middle of the seventeenth century. Further, this non-theological presentation of nonduality coincides with a radical skepticism: neither affirming nor denying the ultimate existence or nonexistence even of a category called “nondual,” or of this pen in my hand (see Thesis One), therefore allowing room for all theological claim to circulate freely without favoring or excluding any, such that any responsible transformative practice regardless of its traditional origin may be of benefit according to its capacity in concert with all others, not to mention space for the creation of new values. (Of course, anyone’s irresponsibility in this regard is an invitation for criticism.) Taken together with the minoritarianism I propose in Thesis Eight, the *restraint* and skepticism inherent in this proposal express my overriding aspiration for a radically democratic and ecologically sustainable social order. This is the “New Age” worth working for, worth *making*.

As it happens, “the New Age” is another such metaphysical doctrine in much integral thought and culture about time and historicity, that the recent past and present (and perhaps near future) represent the opening of a new paradigm, world view, world order, or “omega point,” a view expressed in different words and deployed in different ways (and to differing degrees) by Aurobindo, Teilhard, Gebser, and Wilber, and in *Spiral Dynamics*. The past has produced many such moments of apparent transformation coupled with millenarian aspiration that have come to naught; the events of 1848 in Europe demand consideration here, as a cursory example of how European post-Hegelian proto-integralists, Marx and Engels most obviously, saw a new age dawning as only more elaborate and comprehensive oppression emerged, some of it undertaken in the name of their project.

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<sup>127</sup> A thought experiment: imagine a gathering of representatives of many spiritual traditions, for ecumenical and peacemaking purposes. Before any dialogue has begun, before any bread is broken or coffee poured, the host of the gathering (following Litfin) proposes that all participants affirm a particular theological or ontological point—perhaps the emergence of a New Age of consciousness through evolving cosmic forms, or Kantian categories, or Hegelian World-Spirit, or Jungian archetypes, or the salvific power of X or Y guru’s grace—*first*. What happens? Such a gesture leaves little room for dialogue or space for the miracles that can arise under responsible leadership. At the same time, such a conversation would also be impossible without certain nontheological values in place, such as generous hospitality, a willingness to consider multiple positions at once and in context and to take them seriously, a recognition of all partial and provisional views as such even when they claim to be complete and universal, and a utopian aspiration to work collaboratively for the mutual benefit of all participants, for instance.

In Wilber (2003), Hazelton also presents the intervention of Spirit unto cosmic evolution as an inevitability. After presenting a segment on the Spiral Dynamics developmental model, Hazelton declares, “[n]o wonder thinkers from Hegel to Teilhard de Chardin to Aurobindo have concluded that this evolutionary unfolding is heading *straight toward Spirit*” (p. 110, emphasis added). I call this moment a theological doctrine rather than a theoretical position because there is no demonstrable or inferable basis for *plausible* causality in this instance, only the Spiral Dynamics model of developing consciousness that, at a certain point, arbitrarily becomes spiritualized. Theologically, this does not present a problem; one simply accepts the doctrine of that developing consciousness becomes spiritualized at a particular moment and honestly, humbly, strives to participate in its unfolding. But theoretically this move can and in my view should be dismissed as a logical fallacy (*non sequitur*), and recognized as a metaphysical rather than a postmetaphysical gesture. Approaching the issue in another way, one can posit Spirit theologically—it is not demonstrable materially but may be useful therapeutically—as an article of faith or doctrine; as a subjective experience or affect, which is by conventional means impossible to verify; or as ideology, as the Hegelian method seems to do (see Thesis Two). In the case of the first two, how can one demonstrate that a particular phenomenon is plausibly caused by the intervention of an undemonstrable, transhistorical, Providential Spirit, and not something else? And given the third possibility, that of ideology posing as a spiritualized doctrine, does emerging Spirit have enough explanatory power to justify the risk of producing theory in bad faith, that is, does a doctrine of Providence explain and transform everyday life well enough to overcome its own obfuscation and ideological impact?

If so, I leave those premises for metaphysicians to work out; this is a postmetaphysical theory. It works whether or not Spirit, for instance, exists or not, because it does not posit the *necessary* existence of Spirit, God, or cosmic consciousness. I accept that these things may exist, or may not. Since Godhead is hardly verifiable, building a theory that requires the necessary existence of God or a cognate to God could expose said theory to invalidation in the event this or that God is (or has been) proven *not* to exist, or to exist but on very different terms than the ones that may have been posited by the given doctrine. Because this is theory, with a definite relation to material life and practice, it must be accountable to such contingencies. Instead, I have proposed a postmetaphysical expression of nonduality that can be articulated wholly by means of the dialectic (though not posited as existing or non-existent) (see Thesis Five), and suggested ways in which subjective transformation is possible if not necessarily inevitable. This is not a fully elaborated Theory of Everything, but the *groundwork* for a more fully transformational theory—theory in the limited sense I have proposed so far.

By contrast, in Beck and Cowan (1996) adhere to what I am calling the New Age doctrine, citing the revolutions in post-Soviet Eastern Europe as signs that, in the mid-1990s, *appeared* to augur the opening of a new world order (p. 27) to them as it did to Fukuyama (1992). But what new order emerged in the new republics of the former Soviet bloc? The old order did, in the form of capital, of “free market” capitalism. This moment of transformation did not *produce* new values, it *reproduced* a pattern visible at the turn of the last century (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Lenin, 1967; Žižek, 1993), and as Schweikart (2002) observes, this amounted to a catastrophe economically, socially, and psychologically for many in Russia and in Bulgaria, for instance (pp. xvi-xvii). In another instance of the New Age doctrine in Spiral Dynamics that, in hindsight, appears an unfortunate choice of examples, Halliburton—now, scandalously, a privatized arm of

the Pentagon, most conspicuously in its relationship to Vice President Cheney and concomitantly in its role in Iraq, and new headquarters in Dubai—is cited as an example of a cycling from blue to orange that (skipping green, tellingly) could become yellow and “open vast new markets” (Beck & Cowan, 1996, p. 155), as it *did* in Iraq, beginning in March, 2003—by state-authorized and state-*authored* force. My questions about this ascription of “new age” significance to present-moment contingencies, in Spiral Dynamics and beyond, and well beyond the scope of the present inquiry, include: Is this practice coherent and productive or incoherent and reductive, how does it work, under what conditions did it arise, who does it serve (and how), and what are the stakes? (see Thesis Three). One can reasonably hypothesize an ideologically-inflected deployment of the New Age doctrine in this case, that the iterations by which capital transforms itself to remain in control of global resources are taken to be Theilhardian “omega points” of developmental, even spiritual, significance in some integral treatments (see Thesis Three).

Often what looks like a new regime is actually no such thing. For example, new states emerged in Africa in the putatively post-imperial period of the mid-twentieth century, but the regime of control in these postcolonial contexts remained largely intact. There was simply a change in strategy, an adaptation that reproduced the old system and concomitant set of values, rather than an authentic transformation. Kwame Nkrumah (1966), who led Ghana through its birth, argues exactly this:

Faced with the militant peoples of the ex-colonial territories [...], imperialism simply switches tactics. Without a qualm it dispenses with its flags, and even with some of its more hated expatriate officials. This means, so it claims, that it is ‘giving’ independence to its former subjects, to be followed by ‘aid’ for their development. Under cover of such phrases, however, it devises innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly achieved by naked colonialism. It is this sum total of these modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about ‘freedom,’ which has come to be known as *neo-colonialism*. (p. 239)

Nkrumah, after attempting to implement authentic independence from global capital by developing Ghana’s economy in a way that would reduce the new nation’s dependence on trade with its former colonial master, Atlantic capital, was ousted in 1966 in a CIA-backed coup while in Vietnam. Nkrumah’s analysis shows that inauthentic development, even retrogression, is celebrated as if it were a revolution in values, which is of course an ideological function; his political life is but one example of how authentic change is typically resisted, disrupted, or aborted, while the resistance to change is articulated as if it were an introduction of “freedom” or “development.” *Diplomacy in bad faith*.

To assume that from the present order will Providentially *emerge* an enlightened, liberated one is to ignore the historical precedent of the current “holarchic” order, from which no escape is permitted. This, however, does not completely foreclose the possibility that a segment of this order can be transformed into a field for new values. Ho Chi Minh (2007) observed prophetically (his comments were first made in 1963) that “History has proved that when a people are of one mind and united in the struggle for independence and freedom,” both independence and freedom are inevitable (p. 196). Explicating this, one sees that a total, uncompromising commitment to a single project, for the purposes of this inquiry a *responsible* one, can produce a unique

transformation. Largely by this means, Ho's Vietnam was able to accomplish what Nkrumah's Ghana was not—after a very long and exceptionally destructive attempt to disrupt and destroy it (destructive for all involved),<sup>128</sup> known in North America as the Vietnam War. My only point regarding Ho at present is that transformation is possible even under these circumstances, that a new regime of values can be made, but it happens only with intense commitment, against real resistance from those who perceive their real interests to be threatened (see Thesis One on the formation of subjectivity and Anderson [2007]), and with favorable circumstances. *Si, se puede*—it can be done.<sup>129</sup>

This act of making values must be distinguished from the kinds of shifts in practice that produce changes in *forms* of *expressed values* such as in Spiral Dynamics, where Beck and Cowan characterize Halliburton's leap from strictly local oilrigging in Oklahoma to a "diversified ORANGE conglomerate" as a functional transition in value identification or articulation (p. 154). But in this instance, the values of the operation are the same before and after—the pursuit of profit, growth, at the expense of the earth's crust—while the means or apparatus of capture (of capital) differ. In this and other cases, the shift in Spiral Dynamics from one color to another indicates not a change in values or of means of production, but of means of expressing the same regime of values. Orange for the management of assembly line labor and consumer capitalism; yellow for integrated global capital and neo-colonialism (see Thesis Six); no change in the regime of accumulation, no change in *values*, only a change in attack commensurate to a change in circumstances. I have already claimed that this "momentous leap" in tiers of value imagined in Spiral Dynamics is little more than a mechanical flicker of capital's reinvention of itself in terms of global finance (see Thesis Three); the significance of this claim should now be clear: *This is unacceptable* (see Thesis Eight).

From all this, one may ask: what is a "new paradigm" *for*? A theoretical project is of use as a part of a systematic plan for action that can be implemented by responsible people for transformative purposes, can help people become responsible in the first place, and motivate them to responsible (rather than personal) action. On their own, new paradigms as collections of topics on themes about "reality" typically change little or nothing, and (with some very significant exceptions) are epiphenomena of broader political-economic (objective) with concomitant ideological (subjective) activity (see Theses One, Two, and Three)—recalling that coherences mechanically arise in a back-and-forth of patterned conditions and reified consciousness, but that responsible intervention, the exception to the rule, remains possible and sometimes happens. To give a historical example, the early scientists of seventeenth-century Europe did not produce our fragmented *Weltanschauung*, so much as they helped express the social and psychological fragmentation brought about by the advent of capitalism, coincident with the Reformation, and in some cases, reified it (as in Weber's analysis of the mythical Protestant work ethic). However, the social and economic transformations of the seventeenth century—expressed in enclosure in England and in extended warfare throughout Europe—did make science and the terms of its inquiry possible, and inflected the form and function of their

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<sup>128</sup> Specifically, the Vietnamese were able to achieve a degree of self-direction from the regime of capital. That said, Communist Vietnam is no example of a radically democratic, sustainable, integral polity, whereas socialist Chile (1970-73) may have more to offer as an example.

<sup>129</sup> In the U.S., this is the motto of the United Farm Workers, implemented under the inspired leadership of Cesar Chavez.

findings in particular ways. The open question remains the use we make today of their methods and findings, as developed by those who have followed.

## Thesis Eight

*The current regime produces unacceptable results. If a “new age” is to emerge, transformational practice must be radically democratized, and resist commodification.*

**Provisional Thesis:** *The labor of making new values through revolutionary desire is one readily-available and responsible practice of this kind that can help produce a radical democracy.*

The proposition throughout Wilber’s later work that one must change the “insides” of subjects in order to change the “outside” expression of our species-being or the “superholon” of social relations assumes a monodirectional (theological) causality from subjectivity “out” to sociality (see Thesis Seven). But just as subjects make their social world, so are subjects formed out of the contingencies of living in a world among others—from sociality “in” to subjectivity (see Theses One and Two). It is reductive to imagine this process as limited to one side of the dialectic only. Therefore I posit: *to fully liberate the subject one must fully liberate the socius, and vice versa—and this liberation is ultimately desirable and in the ultimate (if not always apparent) best interest of everyone involved in the totality of social relations without exception* (see Thesis Five). This means that all beings without exception have a stake in this project of complete liberation, including those who cannot necessarily speak—plants and animals domesticated and wild, for instance—and those who paradoxically can speak but have no voice under the current regime, the subaltern,<sup>130</sup> since all beings without exception participate in co-causality.<sup>131</sup> Kurt Vonnegut (1973) demonstrates the ridiculousness of the current order by presenting the situation on Earth for what it is, something pathological that must be explained in order to be understood by a reasonable being unfamiliar with it:

Most other countries didn’t have doodley-squat. Many of them weren’t even inhabitable anymore. They had too many people and not enough space. They had sold everything that was any good, and there wasn’t anything to eat anymore, and still the people went on fucking all the time. *Fucking* was how babies were made. [...] A lot of people on the wrecked planet were *Communists*. They had a theory that what was left of the planet

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<sup>130</sup> This sympathy with the disempowered and the imperative to take conscious responsibility for one’s self-presentation and actions, making them novel, singular, and minor, as a means of revolutionizing one’s person as a kind of self-realization and for the ultimate benefit of the totality, ought not to imply an affiliation with the libertarian doctrine of self-ownership, such as that presented by Nozick (1974), criticized here (see Theses Four and Five) in summary form as “personal choice” or brand preference to be renounced. Cohen’s (1995) analysis of Nozick’s libertarianism broadly supports the position I take, and also informs my emphasis on “making space” for transformative action (see Theses Three, Four, and Five).

<sup>131</sup> This is not a transhistorical claim so much as an observation that all beings known to history have participated in history on terms not always of their own choice.

should be shared more or less equally among all the people, who hadn't asked to come to a wrecked planet in the first place. Meanwhile, more babies were arriving all the time—kicking and screaming, yelling for milk. In some places people would actually try to eat mud or suck on gravel while babies were being born just a few feet away. And so on. (pp. 12-13)

It remains that the world is divided and controlled inequitably, unsustainably. Some find fulfillment, others find overindulgence and overconsumption, while the majority finds—something else. The violence, physical and epistemic, that subjects under this regime inflict on themselves and others, directly or vicariously, is simply unacceptable, which is to say that *the regime producing this situation is unacceptable*. The responsible thing to do is to change it, but change it responsibly.

Revolutionary desire is one way to intervene with new values, perhaps the most comprehensive intervention of novel values. For the purpose of demonstration I present it here in contrast to the familiar integral schemes for organizing and reifying *old* values, and as an example of transformational practice that quite explicitly includes all four traits of becoming-responsible (see Thesis Four), not because I find it the most immediately practicable (as I do not find it so). It works by charismatic logic; it exploits the dialectic of leading and transforming the totality proposed in Thesis Two.

According to Weber (1978), in the case of the charismatic “[w]hat alone is important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority” (p. 242). The state of being subject to an object is the fulcrum of this particular machine. Given the pushes and pulls of causality posited in Thesis One, all subjects encountering the face<sup>132</sup> of the charismatic as an object are in fact subject to him or her as an object insofar as they are able to recognize<sup>133</sup> the non-bureaucratic<sup>134</sup> alterity and novelty of the charismatic’s actions and self-presentation,<sup>135</sup> Through this kind of performance, one disrupts the mechanical, dull-round mechanisms that produce predictable and predictably unsatisfactory results. In the example of myself walking about my neighborhood under the watchful eye of the locals (see Thesis One), my wholly uncharismatic presence as an object elicits automatic, automatized responses among those subjects objectifying me. If I were instead to perform charismatically, my actions would in a sense revolutionize those subjects, making them to a greater or a lesser extent (some not at all) subject to my performance. I would literally be using the form of my person as a tool to intervene in the mindstreams of those around me, if I were competent to do it (see Introduction). And of particular interest here, this practice has a history among integral thinkers.

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<sup>132</sup> The allusion here is to the existential ethics Levinas (1969) presents, a point of exploration beyond the scope of the present inquiry but well worth pursuing in this context.

<sup>133</sup> According to Weber, it is “recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma” (p. 242). Following Ziporyn (2004), I submit that this recognition is analogous to getting a joke or being surprised by something wholly new and unexpected—recognizing the novelty of it.

<sup>134</sup> This is non-bureaucratic insofar as charismatic logic, pursued to its root, permits “no such thing as appointment or dismissal, no career, no promotion [...] There is no hierarchy” (Weber, 1978, p. 243).

<sup>135</sup> “Within the sphere of its claims,” Weber (1978) posits, “charismatic authority repudiates the past, and is in this sense a specifically revolutionary force” (p. 244).



Ziporyn (2004) gives four characteristics of the actions of one practicing revolutionary desire, a charismatic: *inexplicability*, *absolute confidence*, *sacrifice*, and *meaninglessness*. Krishnamurti's gesture of dissolution<sup>136</sup> of the Order of the Star and by extension his long career feature all four.

The charismatic act is *inexplicable*, it “makes no sense in terms of any existing context” (Ziporyn, 2004, p. 413)—as with Lotman's explosion, it cannot be predicted. The field of possible meanings of that act, therefore, are infinite; the act is suggestive of those potential meanings, but not reducible to any of them. Krishnamurti acknowledges to his followers that his action is for them utterly irreducible to any expectation they have been encouraged to hold, like the punchline to a painfully funny joke, to borrow Ziporyn's analogy:

For eighteen years you have organized, you have looked for someone who would give a new delight to your hearts and minds, who would transform your whole life, who would give you a new understanding; for someone who would raise you to a new plane of life, who would give you a new encouragement, who would set you free—and now look what is happening! (p. 4, emphasis added)

*Surprise!*<sup>137</sup>

*Absolute confidence*, is total commitment to whatever meme the charismatic is in a given moment identifying with, but pushing hysterically “toward even more ungraspable values” (Ziporyn, 2004, p. 413). This logic reads: “What I am doing right now is, *by definition*, right, even if it means anything else I or anyone else has done is wrong” (Ziporyn, 2004, p. 414) as well as the self-reifying fool (see Thesis Four). Krishnamurti is unequivocal throughout the speech, committed “absolutely” and “without reservation” to his intended new project, and in fact he remained committed to it to the end of his lifetime.

Through *sacrifice*, which “distinguishes the charismatic revolutionary from the mere street loony or opportunist backstabber” (Ziporyn, 2004, p. 414), the charismatic demonstrates “practical indifference” to all established values, contingencies, and expectations, such as means to food, shelter, normative sexuality, filiation, affiliation, power, money, personal safety, or the law. It is, in short, complete self-exposure, total fearlessness, a merciless practice that cannot be contrived.<sup>138</sup> Krishnamurti acknowledges this through the report of a conversation he had had with a journalist, who regarded his decision as precisely this kind of sacrifice, asking Krishnamurti, “What will you do afterwards, how will you live?” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 3).

The new project of the charismatic must be *meaningless*, that is, “devoid of any identifiable content” (Ziporyn, 2004, p. 415), either semantically empty (means *nothing*, therefore potentially

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<sup>136</sup> I explore the possibility of integral praxis actively engaging with a form of *disintegration* in Anderson (2007).

<sup>137</sup> This is a creative act, a contramimetic act, and as such does not *reproduce* or mimic any set of values or forms.

<sup>138</sup> Simmel (2004) explores this phenomenon, the need for value to be sacrificed in order for new value to be made, in relation to money: “Sacrifice is not only the condition of specific values, but the condition of value as such” (p. 85).

anything or everything) or hopelessly overcoded (means everything, therefore nothing specific). Finding “the uniqueness of the individual” in nonduality, which hardly obeys the logic of localized (unique) subjectivity (individual); not taking students, but insisting his listeners try to understand him (follow his reasoning) and deciding that having five committed followers would satisfy him; mistrustful of organizations but calling for a specific kind of organization, a “body”<sup>139</sup>—really, to state outright and earnestly that the Ultimate Answer to the Ultimate Question of life, the universe, and everything is 42 is much more unambiguously significant than the kind of qualified/unqualified creed/ant creed Krishnamurti presents. And this creative act is of real benefit insofar as it matures the assemblage of beings it was designed to reterritorialize—it may very well have been a conscious, competent act of critique, of compassion.

In short, Krishnamurti’s speech to the Order of the Star bears all four characteristics of an act produced by revolutionary desire. Inexplicably, he is a guru telling thousands of his devotees to run from gurus, with total and unwavering commitment, throwing a perfectly good career as a savior of humanity under the train of the present for the sake of a tautology, a koan, a mostly-disinterested *Verfremdungseffekt* that has proven, counterintuitively, to be very productive of insights useful to the integral project. I have suggested that Krishnamurti’s example of revolutionary desire bears all four characteristics of becoming- responsible I proposed earlier. Two consequences follow from this for the practice of critique.

First, Krishnamurti’s insistence on the new and the immanent over the crystallized accretions of formality, as contextualized here, demand a rigorous historicity—to produce the wholly inexplicable, one must master *what has been* explicable; to make a clean break, one must know all the bends. Second, the initial prescription for transformation Krishnamurti presents through self-recognition, a recursive recontextualization, is an opening or *first intervention* through which a radical transformational process (*second intervention*) can develop (see Thesis Four).

Revolutionary desire, then, serves the aim of producing a radically democratic regime by undermining three aspects of the affective machinery that keeps the current *undemocratic* consumer regime in place. First, it necessarily assumes within it the practice of sacrificing petty or in Marx’s diction “egoistic” interests for the sake of a larger project; second, it overcodes the machinery that makes subjects *subject* to a regime rather than a self-adopted and self-directed project by becoming-incomprehensible to said regime, introducing the possibility not of a singular new form but of new forms and their production generally; and third, following from the second, it inoculates the socius against the (stupid) fear of human emancipation among the

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<sup>139</sup> In another example of the body as a scale-invariant trope (micro-macrocosmos expressed at once), in “Sailing to Byzantium,” W. B. Yeats vows to take as a future body “such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make [...] To keep a drowsy Emperor awake”. That sleepyheaded Sun King is none other than the “rough beast” of redemption, with the “gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,” that emerges from the Spiritus Mundi in “The Second Coming”—that the beautiful, reproduced body Yeats desires to be is but an ornament to the wrong kind of meaningless recreation of values (spiritual materialism, theory in bad faith). Neither Ziporyn nor Krishnamurti advocate complicity with total annihilation, which is cognate to total irresponsibility; the body to be built is relational, contextual, and therefore predicated on compassionate engagement rather than pitiless power for its own blank-eyed sake. A point of departure for future inquiry: the “body” Krishnamurti calls for may be functionally analogous to the Deleuze-Guattarian Body without Organs (see Anderson, 2006, 2007).

masses that Marcuse diagnoses under the current regime by making arbitrary boundaries (race and gender for instance) more and more porous and their transgression more and more normative and desirable for everyone (see Thesis Four), which frees up energy for the active work of transforming the world.<sup>140</sup>

The danger, as with any emergent cultural form or transformational practice, is the absorption of a *denatured* form of revolutionary desire into the commodity-regime, producing reterritorialized subjects who own mock-transformational costumes, props, and recordings of the philosopher-sage Jim Cunningham, rather than agents of change. It is true that integral practice arose historically under a series of commodity-regimes (see Thesis Three), but this does not mean that our work *must* be amenable to the desires and contingencies of the marketplace, or reinscribe the values expressed in the *terms* of that exchange—to insist on an exclusive, private-property regime (see Thesis Two) under which only those who own the means of production of values may produce and reproduce values (see Thesis Seven). Our first commitment must be to responsible transformation, an aim that may or may not coincide with the agendas of those who distribute and market memes for money, persons who may benefit from some transformations but not all. Instead, let us make concepts that are useful to everyday problems in the way kitchen tools enable the miracle of a nourishing meal in the hands of a methodical cook, in such a way that transformation can become possible, and disseminate these concepts freely *as a gift* (Lingis, 2000), as a pedagogy rather than a product.<sup>141</sup> *Integral Review*, the P2P Foundation, and the corner Infoshop do this already; let us learn from their efforts and support what is best in them. In short, *integral practice must remain open-source and in free circulation.*

How the transformation of a stratified totality into a radical democracy as proposed in different ways by the Budapest School (Brown, 1988), Laclau and Mouffe (2000), and Schweickart (2002), and briefly implemented by Salvador Allende and Unidad Popular in Chile, might be possible, and what role integral practice might play in that transformation, is the subject of forthcoming work.

## Conclusion: Integrating the Counterproject

To read a coherence is to read two sets of histories in concert with each other. To read them integrally is, at best, a transformative dialectical process that makes real integral praxis, uncompromising creativity, possible. Rosi Braidotti (2006) frames this project as follows:

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<sup>140</sup> Weber's (1978) analysis supports this speculation as well. According to Weber, charisma *may* effect a subjective or *internal* reorientation born out of suffering, conflicts, or enthusiasm. It may then result in a radical alteration of the central attitudes and directions of action with a completely new orientation of all attitudes toward the different problems of the 'world.' (p. 245) Here, also, the anti-transformational arguments Hobbes makes against prophecy are relevant to an understanding of what makes a charismatic gesture transformative (see Thesis Seven).

<sup>141</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1994) argue:

If the three ages of the concept are the encyclopedia, pedagogy, and commercial professional training, only the second can safeguard us from falling from the heights of the first into the disaster of the third—an absolute disaster for thought whatever its benefits might be, of course, from the viewpoint of universal capitalism. (p. 12)

The emphasis falls on a cognitive brand of empathy, or intense affinity: it is the capacity for compassion, which combines the power of understanding with the force to endure in sympathy with a people, all of humanity, the planet and civilization as a whole. It is an extra-personal and a trans-personal capacity, which should be driven away from any universalism and grounded instead in the radical immanence of a sense of belonging to and being accountable for a community, a people and a territory (p. 206).

*Praxis* is becoming-responsible, becoming-critical, becoming-compassionate. Creative recontextualization and revolutionary desire assume an intimacy with local history that is, in a sense, a relationship of uncompromising affection, the desire to be of help. *Such a body we must build*—a culture of beings conscious enough, caring enough, to do this properly rather than pathologically in a coordinated way. This coordination is what makes an integral theory indispensable to a comprehensive, transformative project. The current regime fragments the *socius* and the *subject*; the integral task is to unify, to recognize common interest and greater benefit than “going with the flow” and to strive without fail toward it. Our conscious response to current conditions must functionally integrate the points-of-articulation at which opposition to this pathological regime are positioned so that the spectrum of interests represented in what Schweickart calls “the counterproject”<sup>142</sup> can recognize (first intervention) they have much more in common than simple subalterity:

The counterproject will see itself as a dialectical synthesis of the great anti-capitalist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries *and* the other emancipatory movements of these centuries, especially the ongoing gender revolution, the struggle for racial equality, the fight against homophobia, the mobilizations against nuclear madness, and the efforts to halt ecological devastation. All of these struggles will be seen as part of a larger project, the counterproject, the huge, global effort to put an end to structural oppression and to ensure each and every human being a fair chance and self-realization and happiness. (pp. 5-6)

The present inquiry is intended to help make a responsible, nonviolent, and sustainable counterproject—Radical Democracy—possible.

I also hope to have made some contribution to the ongoing conversation regarding the present and future of integral theory,<sup>143</sup> which has, as I have shown, demonstrated an ambivalent position *vis a vis* transformative practice—in some instances oppositional, in some intentionally or unintentionally reactionary, and all three sometimes in the same book. If an integral theory is to contribute to the writ-large transformational project I have endorsed, this theoretical ambivalence must be resolved. These theses are intended to begin clarifying one approach to resolving it. There are surely others, and surely there are many points of critique available in an early project

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<sup>142</sup> LaClau and Mouffe (2000) establish this position.

<sup>143</sup> On August 7-10, 2008, Wilber’s Integral Institute (I.I.) sponsored a conference entitled *Integral Theory in Action: Serving Self, Other, and Kosmos*, hosted by John F. Kennedy University, which offers graduate degrees in integral thinking developed and taught by I.I. members. The title of one panel at this conference, “Does Integral = Ken Wilber?,” suggests that the future of integral theory and Wilber’s role in it is presently an open question, the answer to which must depend in some measure on the future developments of Wilber’s project.

such as this one, which remains quite incomplete by the standards of many integralists; a student of Wilber or Allan Combs might object, appropriately, that I make no mention of “states” or “stages” among other important distinctions until this very moment; topics such as these are appropriate subjects for future inquiry. Finally, these theses offer some interesting consequences for integral theory’s status as an independent form of intellectual inquiry, as I hope to have shown that it is possible to think integrally, to “practice integral,” without reference to and outside the context of any of the currently established canons of integral thought,<sup>144</sup> that under some circumstances, one may get better results—more precise, more rigorous, more elegant, more effective—in this way, that critical theory is an example of such a circumstance, and that in its kernel, critical theory has always been at least latently if not explicitly integral in program if not always in practice—an unsurprising observation given the shared heritage of both in Hegel and in response to Hegel.

That said, in the field of theory, there remains much, much work to be done. To that end, I would like to suggest some of the many issues that very much need to be tackled in a critical integral way: What is race? Gender? The family? The nation? Sexuality? Labor? Nature and culture? These are all *local* sites, among many others, where *global* transformation can advance an integral agenda.

*For Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche—twenty years too late*

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<sup>144</sup> The present inquiry is thoroughly integral—it embraces everything, or aspires to—but not one premise in it is exclusively warranted by or predicated on the work of any one “integral thinker.” The integral canon is as yet very loosely defined regardless.

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