"Sweet Science"
A Proposal for Integral Macropolitics

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Abstract: This treatise proposes the practice of becoming-responsible as a basis for integral micropolitics, defined as taking active responsibility for the well-being of the totality of living beings without exception, for the sake of that well-being alone. After reviewing two extant integral models for political action and interaction, demonstrating some of the limitations inherent in them, some ways are outlined in which the characteristic features of becoming-responsible—including critical clarity, compassion, competence, and consciousness—can be expressed in the realm of public concern; first, theoretically, drawing on a model proposed by poet and artist William Blake, and second, also historically, reflecting on an experiment in radical democracy in Chile (1970-1973), such that both examples critique and advance the claims and methods of mainstream integral theory as well as the alternative approach elaborated in this essay.

Keywords: Allende, Blake, Chile, democracy, integral praxis, integral theory, micropolitics, mimesis, politics, power, public sphere, responsibility, socialism, The Four Zoas, well being, Wilber.

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Introduction

> The fact of enormous suffering does not warrant revenge or legitimate violence, but must be mobilized in the service of a politics that seeks to diminish suffering universally, that seeks to recognize the sanctity of life, of all lives (Butler, 2004, p. 104).

Problem Definition

In relating to others, it is better to be just than unjust. Socrates makes this argument throughout the *Republic*, and it is perhaps his most convincing one. But beings, classes, nations, corporations, and institutions profit and develop materially and socially by injustice to others in the *present* (in terms of labor alone, Marx demonstrates this mathematically in the first volume of *Capital*) and to others in the *future* (insofar as present profitable practices risk and exploit the existence of our species and others into the future), on the basis of division rather than integration, democratic control, or any sort of responsibility for the needs of the totality. *Politics, at bottom, becomes an ethical problem of relating to others of all species in good faith (at present and for the future.)*[2] A responsible approach to this is the problem I intend to explore in the present essay—how best to approach the practice of living among other beings and aggregates of beings such that an unjust order may be transformed and a just order may arise, delineating a proper *object* of responsibility for integral practice which has, thus far, tended to emphasize *subjective* states and lines of development (as self-realization or self-transcendence): practice for the sake of a public good, a concern for the integral wellbeing of an other and others.

Claim

My claim is that the conscious practice of taking responsibility for the well being of others, *for the sake of that well being alone*, gives a coherent and productive foundation for an integral approach to politics as an ethical problem in the public domain, and addresses an interconnected

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[2] In this regard, the present inquiry should be understood as a form of ecocriticism—not as a rhetorical or aesthetic project (Bate, 2000; Garrard, 2004), but as a critical program for the welfare of life-systems in perpetuity.

set of problems in mainstream integral models,[3] the demonstrable existence of irresponsibility in and of "higher powers," and worse, an implicit justification for an order that allows that irresponsibility to persist (a problem detailed in Anderson, 2006). Plato anticipates this as well, of course: Socrates' concern for the education of future generations, for instance, betrays a desire to take responsibility for a collective future by intervening in the present, transforming or developing that moment, through collective storytelling and spectacle-making (institutional and otherwise),[4] and assuming the probable arising of irresponsibility (necessitating a pedagogy, which is precisely a plan for mitigating irresponsibility, by helping others become-responsible).

Definitions

I begin with the traditional definition of political theory as that body of thought cognate to ethics concerned with the public good, of relating to others in and of collectives and institutions responsibly.[5] *Micropolitics* is the practice of becoming-responsible for an object, understanding the object for what it may be on the terms of its arising, persisting, and decomposing, and coming to appreciate and care for that object for the sake of its well being, be it oneself or another living being, a community or a world—in its totality.[6] I have proposed four characteristics for becoming-responsible in this context: becoming-critical, becoming-compassionate, becoming-competent, and becoming-conscious (Anderson, 2008). For the purposes of *macropolitics* or politics as such, a subject is tasked with responsibility for the development and potential transformation of *an object of public concern* such as a "public" as such (as a tyrant, an oligarch, or in a participatory way as a citizen in a democracy)—or is excluded from that responsibility, becoming a responsibility of another, "handing over" by virtue of life circumstance any control over the terms of one's future, or the future of one's community

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[3] For the purpose of this essay, I define "mainstream integral models" as those proposed by Ken Wilber or his followers, or any of Wilber's claimed theoretical antecedents, including Hegel, Aurobindo, or Gebser. This is not intended to be a comprehensive or exclusive category, but a provisional and expedient one. I do not claim to analyze these authors exhaustively, given the scope of this work.

[4] Plato's pedagogy is either problematic or in part satirical. Following the structure of Socrates's argument: because God is the author of good things but not bad things, children must be raised with a certain kind of faith or else the direct and observable presence of evil in what they have been instructed to see as a divinely ordered world may disturb them, complicating their development and disrupting the State (pp. 623-630). Jameson (1974) by contrast explicates Marx toward a utopian transformation of consciousness by means of engaging with the difficulties of life rather than a rejection or avoidance or enforced denial of them (p. 116).

[5] The concepts public, public sphere, and "counterpublic" are both necessary and vexed: necessary because any notion of political action is predicated on interpersonal communication outside the home or the workplace, positing (explicitly or not) a mediated space in which communication can occur; vexed because a public so defined has hardly been a homogenous reality at any time or place (Habermas, 1989; Ranciere, 1995; Berlant, 1997; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001;Warner, 2002; Butler, 2004; Fraser, 2009)— bracketing the yet more vexed questions of the kinds of subjects such a public may demand, exclude, or make possible, the mediation of discourses through institutions and private technologies, and the relationship of a public to the state form (and by homology the subject to citizenship). This essay may prompt such questions for future integral work, but it hardly seeks to resolve them.

[6] This principle is developed in detail in Gampopa (1981), Shantideva (1997), and Chagdud (2003)—the practice of *bodhicitta*. I explore the phenomenological, hermeneutic, and semiotic implications of being in a world among others in D.G. Anderson, 2008.

or nation in relation to others. Because this is an unjust relation—some, by accident of birth or life chances, have control over the lives of others who themselves have no control over the terms by which they must live—I assume it is better to ensure that all who are capable of becoming-responsible for themselves and for others find the opportunity to do so, which is to say, I assume the present regime of "uneven geographical development" (Harvey, 2000) to be unsatisfactory and in need of transformation. Specifically, I do not object to "hierarchy" as such or differentiation as such, nor do I assume unity or totality to be necessarily oppressive; I do have reason to object to the terms and conditions of the present order, the kinds and qualities of hierarchy and differentiation prevalent and possible now.

What does it mean for a subject or a collective to take responsibility for the transformation of an objective situation like this one? Recorded history shows again and again that simply *having* or *taking* responsibility is not the same as becoming-responsible as defined above. It is possible to be responsible for another *and* to exploit that other, behaving irresponsibly toward that other. It happens all the time, it happens a lot, and it happens over and over, repetitively, even—significantly—mimetically. Many, in positions of relative responsibility, are uncritical and incompetent; the regime keeping them in place is predicated on a lack of compassion and consciousness, as I have suggested (Anderson, 2008; compare section *Holarchy and Macropolitical Praxis*). The coincidence of becoming-responsible (a practice), with being responsible (the fate of having a position of responsibility for others), can be called *politics in good faith*, in which the subject is motivated to act or refrain from acting for the sake of the object, at present and for the future, to be helpful and to prevent harm. This is conscious, creative, self-critical work; it is authentic leadership (see section *Politics in Good Faith*). It is an upstream swim.[7]

But two other valences are possible. The first can be regarded as politics in bad faith, which Clausewitz calls "hostile intentions," and can be understood as will-to-power, the diagnosis of which may be Nietzsche's most useful conceptual contribution to an understanding of the condition of modernity. This is the exploitation of a divided order such as the one I describe above, in which a "higher" force directs the transformation of a "lower" one, which lacks agency, while the resources of the "lower" fuel the uncritical and mechanical sword-waving and self-indulgence of the higher. Clausewitz (1993) characterizes this kind of intervention precisely as "an act of force to compel or enemy to do our will" (p. 83). The second valence, to be distinguished from this structured relation of dominance and exploitation, is the infamous Hobbesean state of war, in which no one is responsible for anything, violence characterizes all transactions, growth and culture are impossible, and chaos wins the day. This last possibility will remain in the background of this inquiry.

Politics in good faith is earnestly to be wished for, to be worked for—a just sociopolitical order that makes an integral and non-parasitic development of the totality possible and actively encourages that development too. Politics in bad faith or a hopeless state of conflictual free-for-all are to be avoided. To advance this end, I present the following proposal.

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[7] Since present circumstances are best understood as a product of multiple histories moving on the power of causation in time (Anderson, 2008), transformative leadership must work against this kinetic energy, or at least redirect it.

Plan for this Inquiry

These are ambitious intentions, appropriate to more than one book-length treatment. It would be impossible to deduce any of them exhaustively even in the generous space allowed for this essay. Further, the archive I have assembled in order to illustrate my point is an admittedly eccentric one; I have drawn from sources representative or emblematic of the problem at hand, ones that carry a certain kind of rhetorical force.[8] Even so, this is a long essay, but a principled (and not self-indulgent) one.[9] The imperative to show and suggest with appropriate nuance if not always demonstrate the logic behind the claims I make and significant points of departure for further inquiry[10] justifies the length. This seems a responsible compromise and appropriate to a provisional inquiry, a beginning: to make the broad strokes and the skeleton of the rest available for consideration, to evoke and when necessary provoke further thought. To facilitate reading through and around this essay, I have included numbered section headings which are cross-referenced where useful, and pointed back to the companion piece to the present inquiry (Anderson, 2008) at regular intervals.

The trajectory of this argument corresponds in a suggestive but imperfect way to the pedagogic sequence of the Four Noble Truths in traditional Buddhism: first defining a problem, then identifying its nature, proposing that the problem is not insoluble or inevitable or somehow a good (that an alternative way is possible and desirable), and pointing toward a practical method to address the problem. As an intervention, it begins with an analysis of two metaphysical models for integral politics—Karen Litfin's (2003) Wilber-inspired proposal for Aurobindian *evolutionary idealism* as a means for understanding the present sociopolitical order and as an imperative for transforming that order, and Wilber's (2000b) definition of the holon in holarchy, which I show to be *inherently* political, even in its ideological[11] disavowal of political significance. These metaphysical models, at least as Litfin and Wilber present them, prove untrustworthy. This leads to a proposal for an alternative model which is simultaneously integral and responsible as defined in (0.3), which I develop from a juxtaposition of two unlikely postmetaphysical moments: William Blake's prophetic epic *The Four Zoas,*[12] which develops a detailed conceptual and imaginative foundation for a responsible integral macropolitics, and the

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[8] Here I follow the archival and rhetorical examples of Berlant (1997), Agamben (1998), Warner (2002), Sedgwick (2003), and Butler (2004).

[9] This follows from Gurdjieff's (1999) aphorism, "'If you go on a spree then go the whole hog including the postage'" (p. 35).

[10] I have drilled down into certain arguments in some detail to point toward questions that will be productive of future inquiry. For instance, in the course of my treatment of *The Four Zoas*, I identify in passing a foundational problem in Wilber's means of knowledge-production, and suggest that a postmetaphysical interpersonal ethics of alterity (as distinct from the ethical aspects of political theory proper) rather than identity or sovereign command may be developed from Blake's vision.

[11] Teasing apart the precise relationship between the terms *ideology*, *spectacle*, and *make-believe* in the present inquiry constitutes a point of departure for future inquiry.

[12] Blake published his work himself, on copper plates; the manuscript presents remarkable difficulties for any reader, and relies heavily on the work of editorial interpretation. Due to the peculiar nature of Blake's early printing habits, all citations to this text refer first to the plate number and the line of the poem as collated and resequenced in the Erdman edition (1982), so that line three of page two will be cited as (2.3). This practice allows for easier comparison to other editions of Blake's work. Also, citations to *Paradise Lost* refer to the book and the verse line, also for ease of comparison.

Popular Unity period of Chilean history (1970-1973), which gives a historical example with direct consequences both for the macropolitics I explicate from *The Four Zoas* and the metaphysical models I offer up for criticism.

The Four Zoas uses visionary space to imagine clearly how the inter- and intra-personal politics of Empire works—interventionary politics *par excellance*—and points toward a politics of responsible action. Then the inquiry moves from an imaginative and conceptual space into a material, historical field, Chile moving toward radical democracy. I find this experiment on principle if not in all details a responsible intervention, along the lines the proposal for a macropolitics of responsibility in *The Four Zoas* suggests. Further, the coup staged on 11 Sept 1973 by a "higher power" to reintegrate Chilean resources and resource management into a larger, deeper, and more complex regime was by the measure I construct from one of Blake's visions an irresponsible, undemocratic, counter-integral act of war, of "hostile intentions" as Clausewitz defines them—politics in bad faith. By contrast, following Wilber's prescription, one is compelled to claim that this coup was a moment of self-transcendence for Chile, insofar as it was reintegrated into the "superholon" of global capital and drawn forward in evolutionary terms toward the "telos" of that regime (a term of spiritual significance for Wilber). In this regard, Wilber's doctrine "flickers" or mechanically reproduces in its ontology the divisive and parasitic social and political order of which it is an artifact: late capital (or globalization or neoliberalism [Harvey, 2000]) and its "postmodern" cultural logic (Jameson, 1991). Wilber's evolutionary idealism is, *for the purposes of understanding and expressing politics,* an exercise in make-believe with potentially dangerous consequences, regardless of the theological and therapeutic value Wilber's model and the "orienting generalizations" on which it is premised surely has for those who choose to believe in it (a value I do not wish to dismiss or denigrate, only to recontextualize).

For the sake of argument, I assume that social institutions and social formations (the state form, the family, the corporation, and so forth) can be understood abstractly as though they are unitary and homogenous, as Wilber does—but not without some reservation. It suffices at present to suggest that the ambivalence on the nature of the state form and other social institutions in the present work and in Anderson (2008) is attributable in no small part to real contradictions in and of the state form under neoliberalism. Harvey (2000) summarizes one of these, on the state in relation to others and to "globalization" as an economic and political activity, with particular relevance to my argument on the homology between the structure of Wilber's ontology and political conditions under neoliberalism:

> The preservation and extension of state power is crucial to the functioning of free markets. If free markets, as is their wont, undermine state powers, then they destroy the conditions of their own functioning. Conversely, if state power is vital to the functioning of markets, then the preservation of that power requires the perversion of freely functioning markets. This is, as Polyani outlines, the central contradiction that lies at the heart of neoliberal political economy. It explains […] why the great eras of globalization and freer international trade have been those where a single power (such as Britain in the late nineteenth century or the United States after 1945) was in a position to guarantee the political, institutional, and military conditions for market freedoms to prevail. (Harvey, 2000, pp. 180-181)

Berlant (1997) considers this contradictory relation of "above" and "below" from another perspective, that of the absence of any meaningful public sphere as defined against private interests: personal matters not obviously of public concern such as the details of sexual practices, desire, and affect become contested, intensely, and made irrationally political and publicized under neoliberalism (pp. 1-24). The subject, like the state in Harvey's analysis, is for Berlant an irreducible but functioning contradiction. Thus, the state, the subject, and the specific nature of diverse and changing social and political institutions will remain a convenient (if marked for future analysis) fiction of homogeneity and coherence in this essay. That said, I will distinguish for practical purposes between two sorts of social aggregates or formations: on the one side are mechanical formations, products of history such as a given state or corporation; this is to be distinguished from what I will call intentional communities, which are organized responsibly; the discussion that follows in major sections *Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics* and *An Experiment in Radical Democracy* assumes it is possible to transform an aggregation of the former kind into one of the latter through a certain kind of practice. Hershock (1996, 2000) develops this distinction in mythopoetic terms appropriate to this context. A dialectic prevails: a social agent methodically cultivates virtuosity, a kind of creative competence. Defined in contrast to the practice of "absorption into a featureless or universal consciousness along the lines of Indian yoga," virtuosity functions "as a practical method for attaining improvisational excellence—a virtuosic ability to respond to any contingency or demand" (Hershock, 1996, p. 160). Part of this is to consciously transform one's behavior and intentions toward others, forming through one's self-performance "dramatic affinities among patterns of narrative movement" or "reciprocally meaningful confluence" (Hershock, 2000, p. 94), working in counterpoint or contradistinction to prevalent modes and mores rather than in imitation of them (developed at length in section *Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics*). These dramatic affinities themselves become a condition for cultivating virtuosity, as in "liberating conduct or concern with others, not in the privacy of meditative absorption" (Hershock, 2000, p. 97). This is not a Promethean or a consumerist project: it is about coordinated, collaborative work.

In the interest of full disclosure, I should also describe my own position. I am an American of working class origin, male, and of European descent. As such, I have surely benefited from the injustices I describe in this proposal socially and materially; I have also suffered from them. This can also be said for my nation, the United States of America, which has both materially benefited and suffered from the injustices it has participated in, but which also has remarkable history of disciplined efforts toward transforming those injustices, many of them successful in unexpected ways. This essay aspires to be another such moment of Americana of the latter kind.

Metaphysical Macropolitical Doctrines

Evolutionary Idealism

Evolutionary Idealism: Introduction

Karen Litfin's (2003) proposal for an integral approach to global relations and macropolitical action represents an early and untested contribution, and is therefore most fairly understood as speculative—that is, intended to open a field for inquiry rather than to present a wholly authoritative, unproblematic project. Litfin's evolutionary ontology attempts to make space (in

my view useful, even necessary space) for transformative practice inclusive of spiritual disciplines in political theory, descriptive and prescriptive. This is a valuable contribution. The present analysis of Litfin's ontological model is designed to keep this space intact, in fact to predicate authentic transformation on the disciplined practice of becoming-responsible rather than the invocation of a long-discredited idealistic historiography appropriate to one aspiring to the position of a Hegel or a Dilthey—or in a different respect, an Engels (De Certeau, 1988).

The Claim of Evolutionary Idealism

Litfin finds the present global political order problematic, and attempts to diagnose a cause for this. She claims that "the global problematique is rooted in a mode of consciousness that is becoming increasingly recognized as dysfunctional" (p. 31); this mode of consciousness is taken to include cultural manifestations such as secularism (p. 30), "deconstructive postmodernism" (p. 31), reason (p. 36), and the scientific method (p. 37)—leaving faith, pathos, and emphatic declamation as legitimized means of knowing and knowledge-production[13] (see section *Mechanics of Make-Believe*). Litfin attributes the problems of late capital inclusive of the characteristic maldistribution of wealth between the global north and the global south (Smith, 1997) and the catastrophic ecological consequences of unmitigated capitalistic development (Burkett, 1999) to this worldview[14] (p. 31), which in her view is not a precarious existential situation for trillions of vulnerable life-forms (Agamben, 1998; Butler, 2004), but a monologic story now in the throes of a crisis of legitimacy (p. 30).

Litfin's solution to the problem of a dysfunctional paradigm she diagnoses, and therefore her proposal for resolving the global political-economic and environmental catastrophes she identifies, is to tell a new story.[15]

> Recognizing that the old story is out of synch with the world we now inhabit, we turn our attention to our individual and collective (un)conscious in order to decipher that story and move towards a new one that will entail new practices (p. 33).

Litfin calls this position *evolutionary idealism*, which she defines as "an integral view of the world as the unfolding of Spirit" (p. 32) and as "an integral worldview that understands the universe as a revelation or manifestation of consciousness, Spirit, or intelligence" (p. 33)—a position explicitly indebted to Aurobindo and Wilber, and an expression of Wilber's specific

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[13] In terms of conventional public discourses, Litfin's approach is appropriate to theology and metaphysics. I recognize that there may be postconventional means of verification for a truth claim, but Litfin does not discuss these substantively in the context of her proposal for an integral macropolitics.

[14] Litfin's approach in this regard is not unique. For instance, Tarnas (2006) takes a similar position, arguing that astrological forces affect human consciousness in ways that then produce or determine workaday experiences.

[15] The totalitarian overtones of Litfin's proposal, in which the multitudes are to be reeducated (indeed to introspectively reeducate themselves) into the Correct Story, are surely unintentional; it would be unwarranted to attribute an explicitly totalitarian agenda to Litfin's project on these grounds.

Hindu-Hegelian synthetic theology, but attributed broadly (if incorrectly) to world culture generally.[16]

Arguments for Evolutionary Idealism

Litfin makes three arguments in favor of Spirit's reality and utility as a concept for the purposes of understanding and transforming global politics. Her first is that "much of both pre-modern Western thought and non-Western thought has accepted Spirit as the fundamental reality" (p. 41). For the present, the implausible claim that much of pre-modern Western thought and (depending on how one understands her meaning) *all* of non-Western thought (a remarkably diverse category of cultures and concepts) uniformly posits Spirit in the manner Litfin and Wilber do can be bracketed and left aside, because even if one assumes it for the moment to be so, it does not constitute a warranted and supported argument *vis a vis* contemporary politics; it merely recontextualizes (arguably marginalizes) Spirit into a large-scale historical or anthropological *artifact* of a premodern, superstitious past–or as an exotic, Orientalized *other*. Put another way: masses of people have affirmed and accepted the reality of many things that seem unacceptable at present; correspondence of contemporary concepts to practices of ancient cultures presents some difficulty methodologically for this reason. For instance, one may argue that many cultures in the past and in the "mystical" East have practiced slavery and believed in the benefits of slavery, and practiced misogyny and believed in the value of misogyny, and for this reason, contemporary problems can should be solved by the reinscription of slavery and misogyny into world culture. I very much doubt that Litfin intends to marginalize the core of her ontology, the reality of Spirit, in the manner that her first argument in favor of that ontology leads if pursued to its conclusion. This argument is best discarded.

Litfin's second argument in favor of Spirit: Hegel seems to have put his faith in it (p. 41-42). I suggest some ways in which this argument is immediately problematic in Anderson (2008); Marx's comment that for Hegel "*sense*, *religion*, state-power, etc., are *spiritual* entities" regardless of the objective actions taken by those powers or their means of subsistence (p. 111) anticipates several decades of scholarship on Hegel in this regard. In brief, neither of Litfin's first two arguments overcomes one major argument against Spirit as Litfin herself deploys it: if one accepts the claim that all contexts, including the present, are expressions of a Spirit that knows better than we do (Litfin, 2003, p. 41), then the crisis of the present should be understood in the first place as a consequence of that Spirit's demonstrable and necessary *incompetence* and *irresponsibility*—in Wilber's terms, because the "higher" holarchy has the greatest freedom to act, that higher holon, Spirit, must have the greatest freedom to act for the good of those holons under its aegis, which it has clearly *not* done, as the problematique of the present as Litfin

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[16] Following Wilber, Litfin claims "the modern West became the first major civilization in human history to deny substantial reality to the Great Chain of Being" (p. 36). This is an unsubstantiated claim, and easily refuted with one of many historical examples, one being Theravada Buddhism. If one holds to Litfin's claim, one must then claim that Theravada does not represent a major civilization. A more productive approach may be to identify in history specific cultural artifacts that may have proposed a Great Chain of Being analogous in some detail to the one Wilber (2000b) posits. Finally, there is some danger in identifying evolutionary idealism with all spiritual traditions generally—it may lead one to conclude that criticism of evolutionary idealism amounts to attacking all spiritual traditions without exception, or spirituality as such.

diagnoses it proves. Spirit as Litfin proposes it is (in Wilberese) the *telos* of a *pathological superholon*[17] (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*). This argument, also, is best disregarded.

All this points to two problems with Litfin's third argument in favor of Spirit: "The appeal of evolutionary idealism will then depend upon its internal coherence" (p. 50). First, internal coherence is useful—I aspire to it myself—but it does not alone verify a truth claim.[18] The example of the Flying Spaghetti Monster (Henderson, 2006) shows that a motivated individual with no special qualifications can improvise an internally coherent model for the intelligent design of the Cosmos[19]—no one confuses the Flying Spaghetti Monster with a verifiable existant, or accepts Henderson's explicitly satirical claim regarding the cause of global warming as science,[20] but both positions are acceptable theologically and perhaps useful to some for that purpose (on principle at least, even in a ridiculous case such as Flying Spaghetti Monsterism). Second, evolutionary idealism as Litfin presents it is not coherent internally, as I have suggested already. To give another example, Litfin claims that reason has overcome superstition in the West (p. 37), which compromises her later claim that Western culture is predicated on a superstitious cult of scientific materialism (p. 37), not reason.

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[17] The logical necessity of an incompetent Spirit for one seeking to accommodate Wilber's metaphysical position while also accounting for the Terror of the present Situation (Gurdjieff, 1999, pp. 1184-1238) is not a problem unless and until one insists on trusting this incompetent Spirit or attempts to make it responsible for matters of public or personal concern. Wilber tends to do this. For instance, in one of the informal writings of his that he has chosen to make public Wilber asserts that "enlightened awareness […] alone knows how to proceed" with a method for addressing ecological problems, where enlightened awareness is equated with "One Taste" which is characterized as "Spirit itself" (Wilber, 2000a, p. 212).

[18] One may argue (fairly I think) that insisting on a description of reality that is free of internal contradiction assumes a *reality* that is without contradiction or explicably by reason without contradiction, or is even particularly "real." I assume instead that an argument in favor or against a particular view ought to be reasonable—that logically coherent arguments are qualitatively superior to thinly reasoned ones—and that one's premises ought to respond to the empirical contours of the object of one's analysis, such that a contradictory object will be presented as contradictory or at least paradoxical. My objection to these metaphysical models for macropolitics (those of Litfin and Wilber) is not the contradictions latent in their ontologies; experiences are contradictory, complex, paradoxical. Rather, I object that these contradictions are not explicit *as* contradictions, and that the arguments given in support of them are themselves contradictory and more than occasionally implausible.

[19] Litfin's description of Spirit connotes precisely this theology (Forrest & Gross, 2004) in that Spirit is posited as "an animating intelligence [that] underlies the development of not only life forms, but of all creation" (Litfin, 2003, p. 41).

[20] Henderson (2006) includes an elaborate riff exploiting a logical fallacy inherent in some arguments in favor of the teaching of "intelligent design" theory in American public schools in place of more trustworthy science curricula, specifically the assumption of necessary causality between two phenomena when only correspondence and no plausible causality can be demonstrated—suggesting that because there are fewer pirates on the high seas at present than in the nineteenth century, the decline in pirate population must be a cause of climate change in the diction of a corporation producing and selling commodities of conviction called the "Enlightenment Institute" (pp. 126-164)—a mashup of Wilber's Integral Institute and Andrew Cohen's *What Is Enlightenment?* magazine. Tarnas (2006) presents an argument related to the one Henderson (2006) critiques.

Evolutionary idealism is a coherent theological position and very likely a useful one for those who are committed to it, but as Litfin's argument elaborates it from subjective spiritual or mythopoetic speculation to objective macropolitics, concerned with lives lived among others in material conditions, her arguments for evolutionary idealism crumble into incoherence. This incoherence is compounded into a preposterous totalitarianism in Litfin's description of political praxis.

Praxis According to Evolutionary Idealism

Litfin's proposal for transforming the present sociopolitical order by invoking a "new story" is not without difficulty. One can argue that it is narrative of a particular kind that holds nations together in the first place (Anderson, 1991), often through *forgetting* significant details as much as remembering others (Renan, 1993), an insight that informs Great Books education as practiced in North America (Adler, 1956; Hutchins, 1954; A. Bloom, 1987)—a cultural matrix from which American neoconservatism arose at the University of Chicago (with the introduction of Leo Strauss's political science). *Story* is how power enforces certain values, sometimes through the figure of authors imagined as epic geniuses or timeless sages, as H. Bloom (1994) and Wilber (2000b) tend to present them (Foucault, 1977; Guillory, 1993; Eagleton, 1984; Michael, 2000). As Renan argues, in order to impose a story for the purpose of consensus consumption, the regime must ask that socius to forget or ignore certain things—to forget national embarrassments, humiliations, and mistakes. For instance, theological traditions often ask adherents to forget certain kinds of scientific evidence that invalidates particular theological tenets.[21] Readers of the *9/11 Commission Report* (2004) may or may not notice the total absence of any analysis of American foreign policy since the second World War, remarkable for a document committed to explicating an attack from abroad by motivated actors, but this is forgotten, arguably in the interest of reassuring a vulnerable national sensibility already convinced of the official story, that the terrorist attack was an assault on American *values* rather than American *power*. Apropos of "story," Garcia Marquez (1995) shows how this kind of forgetting can work in the global south—after the banana company (through its subsidiary, the state[22]) massacres thousands of striking workers, only Jose Arcadio (Segundo) Buendia and a random child caught in the moment are able to testify to the historical event. The others forget as if by magic, insisting on the veracity of the official story:

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[21] Members of the LDS Church, for instance, must put their faith in the historical existence of ancient North American tribes such as the Nephites, Lamanites, Jaredites, and Mulekites, as recorded in the *Book of Mormon* (Smith, 1841) despite the lack of any archaeological or historical evidence to support their claimed existence. *This is wholly unproblematic as an article of faith*, as a metaphysical or theological position. Only when mistaken for scientific theory does this point of theology become contestable, and contested.

[22] The *9/11 Commission Report* (2004) claims that "the American homeland is the planet" (p. 517). This is at first blush a gesture of rote imperialism, but in a subtle way also expresses the subordination of the state to the regime or "telos" or "attractor" of global capital. Since the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, the U.S. has been the capitol of global capital as it were, and its champion-in-chief—its main military exponent. The doctrine presented in the *9/11 Report* suggests, among other things, that the purpose of the American state is to defend, protect, and promote the strategic interests of capital *anywhere*, because defending these interests maintains the U.S.'s position in holarchy as evolving toward the protocols of the telos of global capital (to express my point in Wilber's diction—see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*).

"You must have been dreaming," the officers insisted. "Nothing has happened in Macondo, nothing has ever happened, and nothing will ever happen. This is a happy town." In this way they were finally able to wipe out the union leaders. (Marquez, 1995, p. 310).

The cost of Jose Arcadio Segundo's adherence to empirical fact is his necessary withdrawal from civil society and into a kind of mysticism. My point is that stories of the type Litfin attributes the world's problems to are not simple; they are institutionally and ideologically enforced (and as often theological and cultural as materialistic or scientific, contra Litfin's characterization of the present ideological moment); they are contested; they are not at all uniformly distributed, nor readily replaced.

Effectively, to impose a "better story" is to reinvent a web of nation and subject and global interconnection, inclusive of educational infrastructure (see section *An Experiment in Radical Democracy - Introduction*). It is not a matter of Providence so much as a matter of power, politics, and responsibility. As I have suggested (Anderson, 2008), some have control over the terms of their lives and some do not. The challenge is to democratize this. Further, as I show in (section *Holarchy and Macropolitical Praxis*) it is not at all clear that the new story Litfin proposes, insofar as it reterritorializes Wilber's evolutionary ontology into global politics, is in fact a new story at all. I agree with Litfin that the ideologies spun by capital are typically counterproductive, an argument as old as the Frankfurt School but perhaps positioned most creatively as presented by Debord (1995). However, I propose instead not to disseminate the content of a new narrative or a set of themes or a new paradigm, but (following *The Four Zoas*) to make possible the recovery of cultural memory from the top to the bottom of any stratified socius—democratizing the production of values and personal autonomy in a responsible way (Anderson, 2008). E.P. Thompson (1963), P. Anderson (1979), Ginsburg (1980), Braudel (1981, 1982, 1984), Shapin & Schaffer (1989), Buck-Morss (1991), LeGoff & Nora (1985), Gilroy (1993), Roach (1996), de Certeau (1998), Linebaugh & Rediker (2000), and Zinn (1995) represent divergent and sometimes conflicting approaches to this task,[23] the last recalling a bloody three-year war fought by American soldiers for control of the Phillipinnes and its resources, wholly forgotten in the mainstream narrative of American self-identification (pp. 305-306). Responsible historiography has the advantage of exposing the problems of accrued and contradictory ideologies for what they are, make-believe,[24] rather than risking a top-down propagandism passing as personally-meaningful "re-storying."[25]

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[23] This selection of scholarship is not intended as a rhetorical gesture of canon-formation of the kind so characteristic of Wilber's rhetorical strategy ("from Aristotle to Spinoza, from Leibnitz to Whitehead, from Aurobindo to Radhakrishnan" [Wilber, 2000b, p. 116]), but as a practical syllabus for those motivated to address the question of how changes occur in historical time in integral and critical (not idealistic) terms.

[24] Karasu (1994) evokes the sense of this concept of make-believe precisely:

People are increasingly satisfied to believe whatever they want to, or whatever they wish for; perhaps they are scarcely aware that they've left off reasoning, reflecting, attempting to see things as they really are. By the time they become aware, darkness will have set in (p. 11).

This context should be contrasted against the role of "attractors" in Wilber's metaphysics (section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*).

It is worth noting, finally, that Litfin reproduces Wilber's problematic post-Dilthey tendency to attribute broad social transformations to "worldviews" produced by conspicuous intellectuals.[26] For instance, Litfin claims that modernity has "architects," inclusive of "Descartes, Newton, and Locke" (p. 36)—that the predilections and methods of a shortlist of great men have produced the present complex of contemporary forms of consciousness, an implausible but familiar theory of determination (Foucault, 1977). Similarly, Wilber (2000b) argues that because early scientists chose as their object of analysis "the dumbest holons in existence," such as stones, reality as understood *in an everyday way, by everyday people*, has been reduced "to a flat and faded landscape *defined* by a *minimum* of creativity and a *maximum* of predictive power" (p. 56)—with Newton's analyses of matter as well as his arguably more systematic exegesis of Biblical prophecy (another kind of "predictive power") the unspoken subtext of Wilber's claim. This invites one to ask: are the findings and methods of individual seventeenth-century scientists, working on the edges of their culture's normative values (rather than representing them in an integral way), truly responsible for the contingencies of contemporary consciousness, in which people behave mechanically, view their worlds mechanically, and experience their lives with minimal creativity and maximal predictability? I suggest that another explanation may be more plausible: our social world, our work lives and political lives, have become structured such that minimal creativity is possible, that outcomes are maximally predictable—and further, that the regime or "attractor" in Wilber's diction of the prevalent social order works to reify and reinforce this mode of consciousness (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*), beginning with an unplanned social experiment born in England in the eighteenth century. This was the transition from seasonally-variable agricultural work and urban, industrial capitalism, first coincident with the arising of early science—a process that, in Gurdjieffian terms, derails healthy human development in order to make machines of people for the purposes of labor power for the accumulation of capital[27] or for consumption that drives the same (Marcuse, 1964). In short, I suggest that if one wants to understand the conditions and determinants of the day-to-day consciousness of people and the conditions of possibility for their future life chances, one would do better to look to their day-to-day lives (at work, in the family, in committed relationships) rather than to European and postcolonial intellectual history, which is useful for other purposes, particularly the practice of becoming-critical.

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[25] This is the political significance of the opposition I assume throughout this essay between material history and degenerated or misapplied forms of mythopoetic speculation: responsible history reserves the right to be self-critical, which is to say, the right to being wrong and corrected.

[26] Ferguson (1990) gives a useful history of the arising of the concept of the "worldview" as a means for understanding historical transformations, as an expression of the psychological and social needs of a particular time and place but imagined as universal, as inherent, archetypal determinants of consciousness and its forms. Tarnas (1991) should also be understood in this context.

[27] In the *Manuscripts* of 1844, Marx (in the context of his discussion of alienation from humanity and nature) argues:

> [t]he savage and the animal have at least the need to hunt, to roam, etc.—the need of companionship. Machine labor is simplified in order to make a worker out of the human being still in the making, the completely immature human being, the child—whilst the worker has become a neglected child (p. 95).

Holons and Holarchy

Introduction

The "new story" Litfin proposes, the one she claims is identical in some regards to all ancient traditions, is Ken Wilber's ontology, which finds its first detailed elaboration in *Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality* (2000b). This section will recount the plot, so to speak, of Wilber's presentation of this ontology, in order to understand in some detail what the consequences of this ontology of *holons* (things) in and as *holarchy* (organization of things, structured relations in and among things) might be if used to interpret global politics, as Litfin has attempted. A challenge arises immediately, because Wilber expressly disavows reading social collectives such as nation-states, corporations, or ethnic groups in the same way as other putatively self-conscious phenomena[28] (for Wilber the category of the singularly self-conscious includes compounded or aggregated things such as atoms, rocks, and the cosmos at large) (Wilber, 2000b, pp. 72-73). I have argued elsewhere that this is a self-contradictory objection on Wilber's part (Anderson, 2008); further, I will show presently that Wilber himself identifies social or aggregated units as holons regardless of his advice against doing so, and further, that holons and holarchy as Wilber describes them represent with some accuracy global political phenomena, inclusive of relations of dominance, subordination, and actual injustice among global powers.[29] Litfin is very much justified in elaborating from Wilber such a politics. On these grounds I will retell Wilber's ontology *as it expresses these political units* in order to demonstrate the political significance of this ontology,[30] which coincide with the particular social regime (or in Wilber's terms, the "telos") it expresses, integrated global capital (Guattari, 2000). My purpose is not to explicate the flaws in Wilber's logic or demonstrate his misreadings of particular texts; such exegesis has been taken up elsewhere;[31] it is instead to suggest ways in which Wilber's holarchy flickers or mechanically reproduces in the field of metaphysics and spiritual aspiration the social and political structures of late capital, which are not integral at all.[32] Further, because Wilber's holonography reproduces the present political order and forecloses any legitimized means of transforming its problematic

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[28] This does not prevent Wilber from assuming a kind of singular self-consciousness on the part of social collectives or units of analysis such as academic disciplines, generations, or social movements insofar as they express categories of value according to his adaptation of the vMemes of Spiral Dynamics (Wilber, 2003a; Wilber, 2003b).

[29] Harvey (2000), a geographer, observes that "[h]uman beings have typically produced a nested hierarchy of spatial scales within which to organize their activities and understand their world," concerning "[h]ouseholds, communities and nations" as "obvious examples" (75). Holarchy as interested hierarchal relations should be understood as a means of social organization in the first instance.

[30] Further, Mastustik (2007) argues for contextualizing Wilber as a critical social theorist in the tradition of Marx and the Frankfurt School. If Wilberian theory is to be regarded as wholly integral, a "theory of everything," it should account responsibly for social and political phenomena—and should be held accountable for the social and political consequences of its positions, if Mastustik's project is to be pursued.

[31] To cite an early example, Helmeniak (1998) offers a detailed treatment of the category errors, logical fallacies, and implausible claims in Wilber's foundational work, from a position much more sympathetic to Wilber's project than mine (pp. 213-292).

[32] W.I. Thompson (1998) points to this critique of Wilber (particularly in regard to mimesis and the near-totalitarian hyperbole of Wilber's authorial self-fashioning as expressed in the politics of his cosmology) (pp. 12-13), but does not develop it in a thoroughgoing way.

terms of exchange, the unevenness of its development (as I will show), one may plausibly claim that it is not a transformative model but a conservative one in the last analysis, where conservatism is understood as an attempt to maintain the status quo for its own sake.

Retelling the Epic of the Superholon

Wilber (2000b) gives a series of characteristics that specify what holons[33] are, how they behave, and how they relate to each other. This foundational moment in Wilber's project is rehearsed in some detail to show its assumptions, functions, and consequences.

The first is the most basic: "*Reality as a whole is not composed of things or processes, but of holons*" (p. 43). Holons evolve relative to one another in a hierarchic fashion (itself evolving) that Wilber calls *holarchy*, such that all holons are both wholes as they are but also parts of a larger order. My hand is a whole hand, as it is; but it is also part of my arm, part of my body, and part of my work; my thumb is a whole thumb, but it is also part of my hand; each are both wholes and parts of other wholes. That is the logic of the holon as Wilber presents it, and to that extent, the holon is a remarkably useful and flexible concept.[34] Wilber argues, convincingly in my view, that it is reductive to see any given holon (a thumb, a hand, a body) as *either* a whole or a part; at any time, a holon is both a whole and a part (p. 43). This tendency toward reductivity and incompetence is a characteristic Wilber uses to distinguish "dominator" or pathological holarchies from "natural" ones; a dominator holarchy is a regime that "occurs precisely wherever any holon is established, not as a whole/part, but as a whole, period" (p. 45). This distinction proves to be problematic.

Holons, according to Wilber, are capable of at least four things: "*self-preservation, self-adaptation, self-transcendence, and self-dissolution*" (p. 48). The first two of these can be understood as agency or autonomy, on one side, and communion or interaction on another; taken together, one finds that holons are self-interested social actors, interacting with others for their own reasons. The second two, self-transcendence and self-dissolution, imply a potential for development and growth in opposition to decline and decay. In short, the holon lives an ordinary, mortal life among other holons. Wilber extends the third capacity listed here, that of self-transcendence or creativity, into another characteristic: "*Holons emerge*" in the context of other holons that, to a greater or lesser degree, condition or even determine that holon's trajectories (p. 54)—one might say its *life chances*. According to Wilber, "determinism arises only as a limiting case where a holon's capacity for self-transcendence approaches zero, or when its own self-transcendence hands the locus of indeterminacy to a higher holon" (p. 55). This begs at least two questions: Under what circumstances might a holon's capacity for self-transcendence approach zero? And under what circumstances does something or someone capable of self-transcendence pay out to an external agent or a higher power its own potential for future development, its "locus of indeterminacy"? Under a foreign invasion or occupation, a nation-state indeed becomes subject to the self-interested determination of a "higher" power, a possibility Wilber explores next.

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[33] As a historical matter, the holon as a unit of organization is analogous to the scale holism (homology of microcosm and macrocosm) discussed at length in Plato's *Timaeus*.

[34] I express this function of the holon as a concept for explaining a given thing through the concepts *coherence*, *articulation*, and *totality* in Anderson (2008).

This kind of imperialism, and the potential for pathology or domination inherent in it, gives some significance of the fourth characteristic Wilber assigns the holon, that each one emerges "*holarchically*" (p. 56). This is because, according to Wilber, "[e]ach deeper or higher holon embraces its junior predecessors and then adds its own new and more encompassing pattern or wholeness" (p. 56). Thinking politically, two consequential interpretations follow from this. First, one must deduce from Wilber's premises that an imperial holon must be more integral, more whole, more complex, and arguably closer to Spirit than the holons it absorbs into itself, insofar as it reterritorializes those holons into a "more encompassing pattern," a deeper structure. Second, one must conclude that disengagement from a superholon is a counter-evolutionary, counter-novelty, and counter-integral gesture, insofar as the disengaging holon becomes of itself less deep and less complex. A *coup d'etat* or a hostile corporate takeover could be interpreted as a self-transcendent, evolutionary, even spiritual event, then, if it serves to accumulate depth and complexity, to hold the totality together; a postcolonial drive for democratic home rule would be the opposite (see section *An Experiment in Radical Democracy*). This returns Wilber to his distinction between pathological and "normal" holarchies. In the case of the former, "one holon usurps its position in the totality" (p. 58), a part claims to be a whole, reducing the rest of the whole to a part of itself;[35] by contrast, the latter regime expresses "the natural interrelations between holons that are always both parts and wholes in horizontal and vertical relationships" (p. 58). Litfin's "problematique" arises here as the pressing question *par excellence* of global politics: is capital as it has imposed itself on totality of the planet[36] a "higher," normal, natural holarchy or a pathological but normalized, naturalized, even spiritualized holarchy? Wilber moves to address this relationship between higher and lower, and the transcendence of the lower by the higher, by reference to Hegel.

Litfin's invocation of Hegel may have its roots in Wilber's explicitly Hegelian (and implicitly theological) interpretation of holarchic time, as expressed in the fifth characteristic of the holon: "*Each emergent holon transcends but includes its predecessors,*" or, worded differently, the emergent holon "*preserves* the previous holons themselves but *negates* their separateness" (p. 59)—the agency that had characterized each holon becomes at best subject to the agency of another holon[37] volitionally as in the case of the masochist's contract,[38] or at worst, is wholly

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[35] As Urizen does early in *The Four Zoas*—see section *Mechanics of Make-Believe*.

[36] See Lenin (1967), Luxemburg (2003), and Aglietta (2000).

[37] This poem is the epigraph to an essay by Franklin Jones (cited as Da Free John, Da Avabhasa, or Adi Da in Wilber's writings), "The First Word," which is reproduced in many of Jones's publications as an introduction: "Do Not Misunderstand Me—/I Am Not "Within" you, but you Are In Me,/and I Am Not a Mere "Man" in the "Middle" of Mankind,/ but All of Mankind is Surrounded, and Pervaded,/and Blessed By Me" (Da, 2004). This is, clearly, a theological statement. Its expression of the guru-disciple relationship is a theological antecedent of the superholon-subholon, higher-lower relationship Wilber posits in his ontology (immediately recognizable if one substitutes "higher" for "I" and "Me," and "lower" for "you" in Jones's poem), where any holon's development or self-transcendence is here reterritorialized into a top-down Providential mechanism, insofar as "[t]he higher embraces the lower, as it were, so that all development is envelopment" (Wilber, 2000b, p. 59). That is: Wilber's ontology, and by extension the rest of his theoretical project, repeats or mimics this theological gesture, the devotional foundation of the religion of Adidam. I do not intend to affirm or negate the theological validity of Jones's claim; rather, I intend to suggest that, true to its New Age roots (Ross, 1991), *some of what Wilber presents as scientific theory* should best be characterized as *an expression of a specific theology or desire* instead.

negated, handed over to a "higher" power regardless of the nature or intention of that power. The subaltern does not speak or act for him or herself (Spivak, 1988). Tellingly, Wilber's example in this instance is a sociopolitical one: the Kingdom/Republic of Hawaii slowly becoming integrated[39] into the United States (p. 60). For "lower" holons such as Hawaii, the Navajo Nation, the Philippines, Chile, Iraq—are the terms of Empire "communion" for the sake of development as Wilber suggests it must be in all possible realities (p. 60), or rather simple defeat, surrender of agency for no mutual gain, be a historical possibility in some cases, or some mix of both with costs and benefits evenly or unevenly distributed in the totality? Wilber attempts to mitigate this problem with a rhetorical strategy Blake parodies extensively (see section *Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics*), *doublespeak*: "the new and senior pattern or wholeness"—an oxymoron read literally—"can to some degree limit the indeterminacy (organize the freedom)"—two more oxymorons—"of its junior holons" (p. 60). This means *might*, expressed as *height*, makes *right*. The meaning of "right" here is fulfilled below in Wilber's discussion of "attractors," having to do with the ultimate significance of evolutionary change in Wilberian doctrine.

First, however, Wilber develops the properly political aspects of his Kosmic theory of right. The sixth characteristic of the holon and the significance of limiting the indeterminacy as Wilber invokes it has much to do with natural resources—physical ones, such as petroleum and minerals, but also human labor power and creative productivity in work: "*The lower sets the possibilities of the higher; the higher sets the probabilities for the lower*" (p. 61). Consider petroleum: the industrial North, a deep superholon aggregated of many levels or layers of subordinate microholons, is limited by the pace and volume of oil it can extract from those subordinate petroleum states and contracts in Asia and Africa ("lower" and subordinated holons), the global South generally; the terms of that extraction, the laws ("probabilities") are established for the petrostates by the "higher" superholon (Karl, 1997). Wilber claims, "even though the higher level 'goes beyond' a lower level," within a holon that is among other things a whole that contains as parts other wholes that are organized as levels, "it does not *violate* the laws or patterns of the lower level" (p. 61). This is a debatable truth claim because, as the fifth characteristic pointed out, the laws of lower-level subordinates are "organized," under capital literally established in the first place, by the "higher," as in the case of the so-called Seven Sisters (Samson, 1975), sometimes by explicit violence if implicit violence fails (Kinzer, 2003).

The next two characteristics are concerned with depth (seven), and the accumulation of depth (eight). As suggested earlier, a deep holon has more levels, while a shallower one has fewer levels: "it is not merely population *size* that establishes order of richness (or order of qualitative emergence), but rather *depth*" (Wilber, 2000b, p. 64). And depth has qualitative value for Wilber, insofar as "*[e]ach successive level of evolution produces GREATER depth and LESS span*" (p. 64, emphasis in the original). This is the evolutionary idealism Litfin invokes, in which the deeper holarchy demonstrates its evolutionary and therefore spiritual superiority by that very

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[38] The masochist effects a transformation in himself by first establishing a program, and then negotiating that program's execution. For this reason, masochism may be a useful site for considering power differentials as they relate to transformational dynamics, self-fulfillment, and justice (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 149-166; Deleuze, 1991).

[39] The historical analysis of this event Kinzer (2007) presents confirms my interpretation of the imperialistic implications of Wilber's metaphysics.

depth—as though the deeper holon inhabits a different kind of evolutionary time, relegating the colonized holons in a permanent past relative to the empowered or "higher" ones—hardly a responsible form of knowledge-production (Fabian, 1983). This establishes the criterion for distinguishing the "rightful place" of one holon among others in holarchy—its depth, its level. The natural place of a holon is where the higher power or "telos" of its moment in evolution has put it, precisely where it is (a circular argument). Further, this position evokes Wilber's earlier suggestion that an imperial holarchy is by definition more advanced developmentally by evidence of its greater depth, differentiation, and complexity. In Wilber's words: "*The greater the depth of a holon, the greater its degree of consciousness*" (p. 65). But Empires are fragile and fraught to the degree they are *profound*. As Wilber observes, "[t]he greater the depth of a holon, the more precarious is its existence, since its existence depends also on the existence of a whole series of holons internal to it" (p. 64)—thus the documented ruthlessness of the superholon in securing from its subordinates the resources it believes it needs to ensure its survival and continued hegemony, which it also believes it needs.[40] Global capital, the deepest mundane superholon at present, is by degrees more conscious (and implicitly closer to Spirit) than any one of its subsidiaries by this model. For the purposes of the global South, global finance must be God; as for me, my employer must be my guru, as a leader in a higher level of an institutional hierarchy that subordinates me, organizes my freedom, and profits from my labors, regardless of Heaven's "heights" or the "depths" of my soul (Wilber, 2000b, p. 66)—a thought experiment Wilber will later entertain, in discussing the twelfth characteristic of the holon.

Wilber next offers a diagnostic for determining the relative depth of a holon within a holarchy for the ninth characteristic: "*Destroy any type of holon, and you will destroy all of the holons above it and none of the holons below it*" (p. 69). This recalls one of the better developed propositions of Marxism, by which meaningful democracy (in the sense of full enfranchisement across all contexts) in the form of socialism is only possible after the full development of industrial capitalism (Rader, 1979, pp. 120-129); following this, if one were to remove the possibility of capitalist development, one thereby makes impossible the development of radical democracy, thus proving on Wilber's terms either that a flattened, egalitarian socialist order must also be a deeper, more differentiated, and more evolved regime than late capital, the problematic of the present—or that Wilber's diagnostic is fallible. Perhaps more significantly, Wilber's model of evolution assumes a sequenced, single-voiced or "epic" teleology (Bakhtin, 1981) that seems to elide the possibility of coincident development on multiple lines in different contexts without reference to the One of Godhead, generally preferring the "higher" One to the "lower" multiplicity (both of which being necessarily nondual—see Anderson, 2008 and section *Time and Telling*), such that the lower holons on which the higher One or ones subsist become relatively less meaningful; "the more fundamental a holon is, the less significant it is" (Wilber, 2000b, p. 70). Following this, and recalling Wilber's earlier example of the absorption of the Kingdom/Republic of Hawaii into the United States (and into global finance), Wilber would need to claim that native Hawaiian lifeways and other resources must be less significant than American macroculture (presumably the spectacle [Debord, 1995], since Hawaiian folkways were not integrated wholesale into all regions of American economic activity or folklife

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[40] The School of the Americas and Operation Condor are two integrated, conspicuous, and well-documented examples of this (Lopez & Stohl, 1984; Gareau, 2004; Gill, 2004; Kornbluh, 2004; McSherry, 2005; Dinges, 2005).

uniformly) and needs (perceived or real) of the early and middle twentieth century (arguably as early as 1893), a difficult claim to justify qualitatively.

The tenth characteristic, "*Holarchies coevolve*" (p. 71), is significant methodologically for Wilber, because "the 'unit' of evolution is not an isolated holon (individual molecule or plant or animal) but a holon plus its inseparable environment" (p. 71). Regimes evolve; the by-stages of historical evolution of capitalism summarized by reference to corresponding stages in integral theory in Anderson (2008) is a conspicuous example. Manufacturing practices may migrate from Michigan to Manchuria or Mexico, but in any of those sites, the class differential (some control and direct the labor of others, buying that labor from them with wages, where subsistence can only be *purchased*) and the profit motive are reproduced. Wilber accounts for the possibility for formal circumstances to change, while structured relations of dominance persist not in spite of those changes but *by means* of those changes (which serve to keep the status quo intact) (Aglietta, 2000)—and Wilber's accounting of this tendency in capital becomes part of his model of reality at this moment. A trait of capitalism, a historically contingent and unnecessary regime, is given ontological significance by Wilber's holism. The eleventh characteristic of the holon reifies this class separation that capital both reproduces and depends upon: "*The micro is in relational exchange with the macro at all levels of its depth*" (p. 73). This means that global regimes produce local formations, which in turn reify global regimes, in part through the consciousness of those subject to this causal loop;[41] "as holons evolve, each layer of depth continues to exist in (and depend upon) a network of relationships with other holons at the same level of structural organization" (Wilber, 2000b, p. 74). Wilber presents here a broadened purview for on an old claim, that of class consciousness. According to Lukacs (1967), "class consciousness consists in the fact of the appropriate and rational reactions 'imputed' […] to a particular typical position in the process of production" (p. 51), which is to say, one's consciousness is conditioned by work and work among others in the same position or "level" relative to the superholon that subordinates them (in this instance, that of capital). Lukacs observes, however, that this is not always obvious; one of the functions of ideology is to transform a subject's understanding of social phenomena that are wholly contrived into naturalized, normal, even spiritualized *realities*; in Lukacs's (1967) words, "[t]he division of society into estates or castes means in effect that conceptually and organizationally these 'natural' forms are established without their economic basis ever becoming conscious" (p. 57), because if this basis were to come to consciousness, the "pull to pattern" Wilber identifies with ideology (to anticipate the story) would risk disintegration. Presently, this is increasingly articulated as a multitude against Empire (Hardt & Negri, 2004) constituted by beings with little in common culturally or historically except a subaltern position in the "depth" of holarchy—the same "level," as Wilber expresses it.

Wilber concludes his narrative of evolutionary idealism on the topic of spirituality, unambiguously inscribing the ontology he builds into the Providential scheme suggested by the Hegelian speculation latent in his sixth characteristic of the holon. Wilber claims that "Evolution has directionality" (p. 74), which implies increases in "complexity" (p. 74), "differentiation/integration" (p. 75), "organization/structuration" (p. 78), "relative autonomy" for

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[41] As Marx expresses this position in the *Manuscripts* of 1844, "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).

the superholon, such that "the greater the depth of a holon, the greater its relative autonomy" (p. 78), and "telos" (p. 81), a concept Wilber develops at length: "the end point of the system," its deep structure,[42] "tends to 'pull' the holon's actualization (or development) in that direction" (p. 81). These "attractors" or end points are "examples of the regimes or organizing forces of social holons and their inherent teleological pull to pattern" (p. 82). "Regime," "telos," and "organizing forces" are *ideologies* (Anderson, 2008), or the "political unconscious" of a given social order (Jameson, 1982). Wilber speculates that "God may indeed be an all-embracing chaotic Attractor" (p. 85)—which is to say, God may well be the political unconscious, the regime, the *ideology* of that order. Wilber's speculative God, in this instance of consumer capital, is functionally a comprehensive marketing and human resource management strategy. Turned around: Wilber's view of God and Kosmos in this instance is in his own terms a code (attractor, regime) that expresses this ideology, and arguably serves that regime which in Wilber's view holds the holarchy together in an embrace[43] (the nature and value of which is explored in sections *Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics* and *An Experiment in Radical Democracy*). This means *there are no "pathological holons" except in resistance to the ideologies, regimes, "attractors"* (any one of which or the aggregate of all *might* be God) *that keep the superholon whole, intact, and functioning*. Because depth is good, and increasing depth is good, the dissolution of depth any hypothetical withdrawal from the superholon implies is by definition a counterdevelopmental, counterproductive, counterintegral gesture in Wilber's terms. Here, I think Wilber is fundamentally wrong, dangerously so.

Holarchy and Macropolitical Praxis

Wilberian holarchy is inherently political insofar as it is concerned with the relations among beings who are subordinated to others, such that those higher in the bureaucratic order, the superholon and its telos, are necessarily responsible for the development and well-being of the lower, while the lower is in possession if not control of resources needed to maintain the order by which the higher is higher and the lower, lower. That is: the superholon becomes responsible for those subject to it, and uses the resources of the totality (its labor, its creativity, its resources necessary for continued existence) for its own purposes, the accumulation of capital, or complexity, or depth, in this sense planting its banner in the dirt to claim the whole for itself as part of the whole. The empowered subject makes objects of less-powerful subjects—a perverse object of responsibility—rather than relating to other subjects as coherent others in their own terms.

Parenthetically, Wilber's most explicit public comments on interventionary politics—his unfortunate[44] post at the Ken Wilber Online website, "The War in Iraq" (2003b)—does nothing

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[42] Wilber's adaptation of tree-diagram Chomskian linguistics—surface structures and deep structures (p. 68)—should be contrasted against Deleuze and Guattari (1987) on the rhizome (pp. 3-25), which directly critiques Chomsky on this point.

[43] The imperative here is to offer one's volition upward to a more evolved, deeper organ, which then takes responsibility for one's transformation and self-transcendence. By contrast, I follow Shantideva (1997) and Chagdud (2003) in proposing that one's volition should be intentionally devoted in all directions toward the recognition of the needs of others.

[44] This document is riddled with non sequiturs, ad hominems, unwarranted evidence, contradictory terminology, misattributions, and shrill rhetoric. Its claims are advanced exclusively by forceful

to contradict this analysis, although here Wilber works from different premises, specifically his muddled and contradictory iteration of Spiral Dynamics. Wilber assigns to a "second-tier" value system on which a utopian "World Federation" would be established, the task of preventing "any first-tier memes from dominating, attacking, or exploiting any other populations," equating "memes" and "populations" (which are quantitatively and qualitatively different things) in the process. Parenthetically, according to Spiral Dynamics this imperative to prevent bullying and allow all subordinated voices to be heard would be read as a manifestation of the "green" vMeme, not the "yellow" one Wilber assumes it to be.[45] Wilber then claims that all "orange or higher" political structures (where "orange" is ambiguously defined either as capitalism proper or as the value system of capitalism) anticipate this and are already functionally "second-tier" themselves. This means that the hegemonic order of the global north, which Wilber catalogues by name—"Germany, France, America, Britain, Japan"—integrated global capital, the "orange" value system, is already "yellow" or integral.[46] This confirms the previous interpretation of Wilber's holarchy in that structures claimed as relatively more evolved or "higher" are actually spiritualized expressions of contemporary global power dynamics, as of the second Bush administration—that Wilber's metaphysics are in one sense a representation of contemporary social and political relations mapped onto subjective and objective *space*.

It also corresponds to another trend in Wilber's writings: when he does endorse a coherent political position, it tends to be a neoliberal, pro-interventionist (or anti-anti-interventionist), even reactionary, position. Berlant (1997) offers a political context for the non sequitur expostulation against the "hypocrisy" of American protestors against the Vietnam war, inclusive

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declamation and emotive appeal (see sections *The Claim of Evolutionary Idealism* and *Mechanics of Make-Believe*). For this reason, I will refrain from critiquing it as if it were a serious work of scholarship, only as an artifact that confirms findings already established in Wilber (2000b). To give but one example: Wilber claims that Tony Blair cannot be accused of "defending his oil interests" as a rationale for his unquestioning support of Nixonian intervention in Iraq because the U.K. is a net exporter of petroleum— forgetting or ignoring the longstanding investment of British capital by profitable British firms in Iraq, beginning with the very creation of the Iraqi state by the British for the purpose of these oil rights under the British Mandate for Mesopotamia, after the division of the former Ottoman Empire by northern powers (Samson, 1975) that was disrupted by Saddam Hussein's nationalization (but not socialization) of the oil industry. Wilber's historical claims on Blair are thoroughly discredited by the 2002 Downing Street memos (Danner, 2006).

[45] Wilber's application of Spiral Dynamics replaces arguments and proposals for and against different values or methods which are qualitatively heterogenous with a color-coded, systematized rubric of value systems or "vMemes," which are qualitatively homogenous. This move leads Wilber to equate all work in humanities disciplines as "green" or "boomeritis," inclusive of rigorous analysis of the type Jurgen Habermas practices (to emphasize a Wilberian favorite) and the uncritical speculation on popular culture Wilber parodies as self-indulgent gabbing about unimportant things (Wilber, 2003a). If both are green, then both are "first-tier," and therefore one is not more or less useful or valuable than the other by the logic of Wilber's adaptation of the Spiral—clearly an untenable position.

[46] It follows from this that Allende's move away from "orange" patterns of domination, which according to Wilber are somehow "yellow" patterns of integration, toward local control and a flattened, democratized social space, could be interpreted as an instance of the domination of "blue" nationalism over international "orange" property claims, justifying an "orange" intervention to "curb" this project (see section *The Endgame; Or, Limiting the Indeterminacy*)—just as Bush's actions serve to curb "red" terrorism, according to Wilber (2003b).

of bourgeois dilettantes who joined in for their own reasons, aired in Wilber (2003a, pp. 60-61) with no rebuttal):

> The antiwar, antiracist, and feminist agitations of the sixties denounced the hollow promises of the political pseudopublic sphere; then, a reactionary response grew dominant, which claimed that, in valuing national criticism over patriotic identification, and difference over assimilation, sixties radicals had damaged and abandoned the core of U.S. society. (Berlant, 1997, p. 3)

Wilber's sentiments, voiced by Fuentes (an instructor at the fictional Integral Center), identify him wholly with that reactionary response.

To return to holarchy, the practice of any regime may be critical, compassionate, competent, and conscious—it may be responsible—but it is not *necessarily* so (and even if it is irresponsible, it is still spiritualized for Wilber, it is still maybe-God). My retelling of Wilber's holarchic story suggests some ways in which it may be abused by an irresponsible regime, insofar as it is an accurate, spiritualized representation of what Litfin (2003) accurately diagnoses as a problematic political order (Anderson, 2008). The evolutionary-idealist picture Wilber paints and Litfin evokes may be a valid one on theological grounds; it may be useful therapeutically in some contexts; it has a certain appeal aesthetically. It is not unproblematic, however, and its problems (particularly as regards social and political applications) are such that an altogether different theoretical approach from it (Anderson, 2008) is in my view a more efficient and plausible beginning than the alternative of reconsidering or revising the evolutionary-idealist position to account for those problems.

Worded differently, this analysis of Wilber's ontology is only concerned with its practical application as social and political theory. I make no claims regarding its validity or veracity as a specific theology, however, a theology that claims to coincide with some trends in contemporary science. Wilberian metaphysics is not unique in this sense, either; the theology of Joseph Smith Jr., for instance, was consonant with certain emerging trends in the social sciences of his moment, such as Ethan Smith's *The View of the Hebrews* (1823). I do not wish to dismiss *belief* in evolutionary idealism.[47] Rather, my purpose here is to demonstrate the value of a rigorously postmetaphysical integral project, open to a spectrum of doctrines and metaphysics but not predicated on any one of them, for the purposes of social and political action (Anderson, 2008) relative to the problematic, divisive, and unjust social order implicit in *this* particular theology.[48] Toward this end, I explicate a more conspicuous postmetaphysical project, Blake's vision *The*

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[47] In the diction of Wilber's comments on Iraq, I want to propose that an authentically integral space is one in which no theological project is permitted to dominate any other one—and that an authentically integral theory will, by necessity, be nontheological, in order to accommodate all possible theologies (Anderson, 2008).

[48] If all major spiritual traditions affirmed Spirit in the way Wilber does, as Litfin (2003) argues, then this critique of Wilber's theology would be directed to all major spiritual traditions—it would, in effect, be an argument against theology as such. This is not the case. Since I reject the claim that they do, I also do not claim that this critique of Wilber's theology has any necessary implication for any theology other than Wilber's.

Four Zoas, that is explicitly informed by and articulated in the language of dissenting Protestant theology (see section *Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics*).

Conclusion to Metaphysical Macropolitics

In sum, when Litfin (2003) proposes to replace the current pathological story with a more comprehensive, meaningful, and constructive one, she effectively reproduces the old order in a bigger, more absolute context. The task remains to identify some means for introducing a legitimately new course of action. I find that an old source may have something new to offer for an integral theory of political action: Blake's masterpiece, *The Four Zoas*, which proposes a wholly different view of political responsibility from Wilber's evolutionary idealism, in which the multitude becomes-responsible for the totality as an act of goodwill to an other taken seriously as an equal, not as an imperialistic act of envelopment and disenfranchisement. The subaltern sings, slavery of all kinds is abolished, and ordinary beings find responsible, "virtuosic" ways to organize their own freedom in *The Four Zoas*.

Imagining a Postmetaphysical Macropolitics

"Just as philosophy begins with doubt,
so also a life that may be called human begins with irony."[49]

Introduction to *The Four Zoas*

Before proceeding, a qualification: the question of Blake's politics (or rather, the coherence of the political gestures identified with the author William Blake) represents a longstanding division in Blake scholarship. This can be summarized in a rough-and-ready way on one side by Damon's (1965) compaction of the Blakean complexity to a Jungian personal metaphysics, historically favored by readers seeking to recover a *private*, transcendent mysticism from Blake's writings (symptomatically from the static nationalism of *Jerusalem* the epic and "Jerusalem" the lyric) and on the other side by Erdman (1969) and on more explicitly normative grounds by Thompson (1993), recuperating Blake not as a God-and-country introspectivist but as a "prophet against Empire" aspiring to a *public* intervention. Neither position represents the totality of Blake's oeuvre without serious qualification or outright contradiction, like the angels and devils mistaking their limited points of view with an absolute or complete narrative of right (though Blake typically sides with the "Satanic" position) in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. I find both approaches wanting and the enterprise of constructing a unified and unproblematic author-function unwarranted, counterproductive, and cultish (Foucault, 1977). I propose instead to read *The Four Zoas* not as the timeless expression of an Important Author's good judgment

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[49] This is Kierkegaard's main claim in *The Concept of Irony* (1989), an important contribution to the development of Rorty's concept of a postmetaphysical culture, a concept Wilber has consistently claimed as his own (Anderson, 2008). Arguing directly against an aspect of Clark's (1991) analysis (in her comparative study of Blake and Kierkegaard), I find there are ways in which Blake can be understood to be concerned with questions of "community or human 'solidarity'" (p. 109), but I agree with Clark that such a solidarity is not in the last instance premised in the traditional way on identity or adherence in *The Four Zoas*.

(necessarily eschewing at the same time any self-aggrandizing pretense to be, myself, a Respectable Expert on said Important Author), but as an artifact of a particular time and place when democratic alternatives to nascent capital were lived realities. Linebaugh & Rediker (2000, pp. 344-351) locate the text in a period of Blake's career when he publicly identified and interacted with active republican and anti-slavery causes, calling for the freedom and enfranchisement of all (and not only the English, as his later work implies). It is not implausible to suggest that Blake's most involved work of this period included in it a still-relevant critique of a social order predicated on impressments and slavery, and a vision for an alternative emerging from that critique. My claims on *The Four Zoas* are not intended to be last-word authoritative or to account for all of Blake's writings—I do not seek to ventriloquize Blake or any other now-fetishized sage of the canon, or to recuperate an "integral" canon—but they are suggestive of a properly integral political vision itself largely unencumbered by the desire for authoritative final answers from singular Great Minds.

In contrast to Wilber's idealism, Blake's transformational project as presented in *The Four Zoas* is primarily temporal rather than spatial or structural. It proceeds in three discrete steps. First, a static, pathological hierarchy kept in place by make-believe and mimicry[50] motivated by unchecked and irresponsible will-to-power is established, and the nature of that pathology is explicated psychologically and domestically; then, the poem introduces a surprise that disrupts this hierarchy and temporarily makes of it a smooth, organless state, after which a new set of values is introduced.[51] This proves to be a bottom-up, rather than a top-down, transformation.[52] Since this is not a conventional way to read *The Four Zoas*, each of these steps is recreated in detail below with references to the Wilberian gestures discussed above in section *Metaphysical Macropolitical Doctrines*.

Time and Telling

The Four Zoas is a paradox: a Big Book,[53] an integral project, on the limitations of Big Books and a fully-elaborated all-quadrants, all-lines integral theory.[54] The poem earnestly courts

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[50] In this section, the concepts of mimicry and make-believe imply but do not develop a comparative study of cognate concepts in Lacanian psychoanalysis (*Wiederholungszwang*), Gurdjieffian practice, Benjamin's critical theory (among others) and Blake's political and aesthetic vision. Such a detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this paper but a fruitful point of departure for future work.

[51] This contrasts Wilber's (2000b) emphasis that increasing grade, depth, and complexity is a positive development, a symptom of spiritual growth for individuals and societies (p. 78).

[52] For Wilber, transformation is how a holon acquires more levels, which "produces greater depth, and less span" than before (p. 68). I call such a process development in Anderson (2008). Transformation as I explicate it in Blake should be contrasted against Wilber's view of transformation, rather than compared to it.

[53] According to Wilkie & Johnson (1978), *The Four Zoas* is "one of the most encyclopedic works of the last three centuries, a deeply considered critique of public values" (vii).

[54] While critics such as Bakhtin (1981) assume that individual epics aspire to a kind of unity, according to Quint (1993) the genre of the modern epic inclusive of *The Four Zoas* is discontinuous. This discontinuity proves to complicate Blake's project, because the genre of the dissenting modern epic has nearly as long a history as the Virgilian epic does. Quint traces the history of two epic traditions apparently but not actually in dialogue with one another in the west: that of the "winners," identifying their own interests with that of imperial power (The *Aeneid* and its successors), and that of the "losers," which functions

comparison to *Paradise Lost* by its frequent and explicit allusions, showing a concern for being received in the context of epic and in contradistinction to Milton's imperialistic theology (Evans, 1996). Many of the poem's nonparodic features mark it most conclusively as such: it more-than-encyclopedic scope, its exoticism, and its unity of form, manifested by means of an elaborate and symmetrical ring composition. Ault (1987) has mapped in close detail the symmetrical and pseudo-symmetrical patterns of mirrorings, repetitions, and embeddings by which Blake structured the poem. According to Ault, each Night constitutes a ring composition, as does the entire poem; further, the first three Nights taken together mirror the last three taken together, constituting a point of contact with the wholeness/partness condition of the holon as Wilber describes it. More interestingly, patterns of repetition (with difference), a familiar Kierkegaardian theme, give a feeling of mechanical, top-down inevitability to the events of the poem, against the current of which more responsible or virtuosic actions must swim. In this sense, an arbitrary hierarchy is reproduced as a set of relations across time as well as space.

Characters throughout *The Four Zoas* lament a lost golden world, an absolute past of pleasure and peace. According to Ahania, "liberty was justice & eternal science was mercy" (39.11) in this prelapsarian time. *Paradise Lost* is primarily concerned with this beginning of history as a theological matter, promising from the start a moment when "one greater Man/Restore us, and regain the blissful seat" (1.4-5) but never showing precisely how this promise can be fulfilled. That paradise is also lost for most of *The Four Zoas* is obvious in that something has intervened in the lifeworld of the poem's characters, dividing them from each other and the fruits of their labors and intentions; much more unique (also in contrast to *Paradise Lost*) is Blake's narration of the End of History, which brings about a return to this state of affairs by special means (see sections *One Way to Stop Pretending and Start Transforming the Whole (Damned) Thing* and *Kindness and/as Revolutionary Praxis*). If *Paradise Lost* promises to assert Providence through the grand narrative of Christendom, *The Four Zoas* is intended to provide an even more complete version of that teleology, including the intervention of a pathological social order and a redemptive end to its naturalized, repetitive patterns of use and abuse that characterize everyday life under that regime—in short, to show how Providence is asserted politically (a first intervention). This end leads to an instance of improbable logic: *Blake's epic is still more absolute in its repudiation of absolutism than Milton's presumptively encyclopedic epic* because it seems that much more complete, even as Blake disregards the singular metaphysics of God as exclusive character or monotonous voice. Paradoxically, in terms of determination and causality, *the text not needing to posit a personal God becomes more inclusive of the subaltern, of time,*

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satirically in relationship to both the politics and the structure of the Virgilian epic (The *Pharsalia* of Lucan, for example). Virgil founded the literary and political conventions of the written epic. According to Quint, "The *Aeneid* had, in fact, decisively transformed epic for posterity into both a genre that was committed to imitating and attempting to 'overgo' its earlier versions and a genre that was overtly political: Virgil's epic is tied to a specific national history, to the idea of world domination, to a monarchial system" (p. 8). By contrast, "paths of resistance to epic triumphalism assume a common shape: in opposition to a linear teleology that disguises power as reason and universalizes imperial conquest as the imposition of unity upon the flow of history, the dissenting narrative becomes deliberately disconnected and aimless" (Quint, 1993, pp. 40-41), as if to show that history is not going anywhere in particular, regardless of what the empowered say in authorizing their own position.

and of possibilities for real transformation than the metaphysical one claiming to justify His existence and to describe the practical application of His Being.[55]

Paradise Lost presents an exotic, mythopoetic world in its concern with space and time beyond mundane comprehension; presumably, none of Milton's readers can *really* know the actual breakfast conversation of Adam and Eve. Similarly, *The Four Zoas*' opening introduces the reader into a necessarily exotic world relative to mundane human existence: "Four Mighty Ones are in every Man […] The Universal Man" (3.4-6). This verse, heavily glossed with references to the Gospel of John, insists that the figures of the following action, the titular four Zoas—Urizen, Tharmas, Urthona, and Luvah—are actually present in the reader (assuming in the process that all readers are literally men, and that all readers will identify themselves with its model of the subject, the Universal Man), and in fact present an accurate map of the reader's person and potential. Traditionally, this poetic and rhetorical technique is called *psychomachia;* it is not without significant precedent in English print culture (Anderson, 2003).

One means Blake employs to encourage his audience to identify with the psychomachia is to tie it to national identity, a strategy used for explicitly nationalistic, even paranoid, ends by Phineas Fletcher in *The Purple Island* (Anderson, 2003). The Purple Island topos works on the principle that what is true psychologically and physiologically for an individual consciousness stands without fail for religious and cosmological truth, and also holds for the body (and mind) politic. This is holistic in its nature. Blake adopts a similar allegoric logic in *The Four Zoas*. The Universal Man, Albion the Giant, is identified without equivocation as England early in the poem (an expedient nationalism crushed in the poem's revolutionary finale), as evidenced by the names of his circulatory organs: "Groans ran along Tyburns brook and along the River of Oxford" (25.7). And as in *The Purple Island*, the peak of the political structure of the poem's subjective space is found in the brain, "Where Urizen & all his Hosts hang their immortal lamps" (11.17). The world of the poem is further made exotic by the behavior of the landscape, which does not abide by conventional physics. It is sympathetic rather than static, changing in one instance from a space resplendent with flowers and "rivers of delight" as Los and Enitharmon pass through happily, into a series of "dismal vales" and "iron mountains" as they return racked with guilt (61-62). The irony of Blake moving Milton's exotic into psychomachic space lies in the same assumption that all readers will recognize the elements of the action within themselves and their culture, allegorically;[56] that which is most foreign to experience—a time before the beginning of time—becomes an aspect of that which is most near, the stuff of one's body, being, and becoming, an intimation of nonduality (Anderson, 2008).

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[55] *The Four Zoas* relies on a different theory of determination from Paradise Lost and from Wilber and Litfin. The agent of transformation is not Spirit or God—it is a human recognition of error and a contrary resolve toward compassion-in-action among active subjects (a basic virtuosity). I do not claim Blake excludes his dissenting Protestant God from the poem or from politics; I do claim that the role of said Godhead in political theory differs from an idealistic position in this respect. The total vision of *The Four Zoas* is theological to the core if idiosyncratically so.

[56] Buck-Morss (1991), working from premises in Walter Benjamin's critical theory, examines this kind of allegoric thinking as a form of critical practice analogous to waking from a dream (with some relevance to the practice of lucid dreaming): one must recognize the dream as a dream before waking from it (or in it) and acting on it (or in it) meaningfully.

Mechanics of Make-Believe

Instead of asserting absolute authority, the Miltonic mandate to justify the ways of God to anyone, Blake relentlessly represents the mimetic consequences of that gesture of discursive and ideological power, describing an impenetrable, preposterous, turtles-in-all-directions field of subordination and domination, a great bureaucratic chain of *bindings*. This is the first state from which the poem's transformative model begins, the problematic of the present. The problem is not a mythopoetic fall of man, but a perverse and divisive social experiment.

Initiating the action of the poem, Urizen the usurper establishes a certain pattern of behavior that is congenial to his own idea of empire, and the rest imitate him (or enact a Great Refusal of doing so) in ways suggesting both assent and dissent at once. The characters of the poem mimic Urizen's self-fashioning because they are constituted to do so as Urizen's subjects. His power and his means reproduce as others imitate his power and means. But no imitation is perfect; each instance represents a duplication with a difference, and that difference, when observed, makes the act of mimicry explicit (Bhabha, 1994). This bears an important relationship with Blake's preoccupation with demonstration and doubt, and Blake's parody of Urizenic denial of material conditions and affirmation of self-serving Cosmic-scale make-believe.[57] The figure of Urizen, the specific form of his self-fashioning, embodies many forms of absolutism recognizable to an eighteenth-century audience—that of the monarch, the rationalist, and the epic poet—all conflated in the figure of the seemingly divine sage of the sun, as if each assertion of power represents a legitimately unlimited imperial stake. Blake is invoking a convention of epic established by Torquato Tasso, where "rationality" becomes "embodied by the teleological epic plot" (Quint, 1993, p. 38). The epic hero and the epic poem are made representatives of normative rationality; Urizen embodies this. Imitating Urizen, the others produce occasionally dissenting behaviors that show how Urizen's are constituted by contrast with them.

Urizen behaves as one would expect a colonial power to behave, by now-familiar mimetic means, disrupted by transformational surprise.[58] According to Bhabha (1994), "[t]he success of colonial appropriation depends on a proliferation of inappropriate objects that ensure its strategic failure"—a slave mimicking a master must remain a slave, the fact of which disrupts said mimicry—"so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace" (p. 86). The menace is the

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[57] Blake's merciless parody of the political, authorial, and implicitly commercial uses of claiming to be God (or of God, or uniquely knowing God) does not foreclose the possibility that someone may in fact have been God, or be God, or become God—a possibility Blake's theology in fact depends on. It also depends in every case on the assumption that for such a performance, there will be a ready set of followers.

[58] In a related context, Ziporyn (2003) offers a suggestive recontextualization of alterity: Revolutionary desire is "the only true revolutionary ethics," in that it is "the desire for the *wholly other*. This is the desire for *everything without exception*, including oneself, including the rules, including the parameters making the field of experience possible, to be *otherwise*" (Ziporyn, 2003, p. 410). This is the precise counterpoint to mimicry. As will be seen, Enitharmon's diabolical abandonment of all known values in a moment of impiety, behaving with kindness and in a sense creativity rather than mimicry, is such a moment. It is a miracle. Every being is participating in this; for Ziporyn (2003), it is up to each holon to accomplish this, or to be led through "potentially disastrous" consequences in the form of a pathological regime (p. 416). In language that echoes Deleuze-Guattarian desiring-production: "every moment of experience is inescapably a revolution, setting up a new standard of value" (Ziporyn, 2003, p. 417).

threat to order, to the coherence of regime, presented with the assumption that any subordinate element could become the master *fully* and without qualification or accountability (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*). As such, "[m]imicry *repeats* rather than *re-presents*" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 88). And a knowing, parodic take on this repetition informs Blake's rhetorical, poetic, and thematic strategies.[59] Irony induces a practical skepticism, minimal doubt; this doubt discredits the *mechanical* kind of belief needed to maintain the absoluteness of the absolute, making space for virtuosic action. Blake pursues this line of thinking to its logical end, long before Richard Rorty began to propose the basis of a postmetaphysical culture in precisely this kind of humane irony (Anderson, 2008).

As a Sun King, Urizen's self-promoting rhetoric conflates political and supernatural power: "I will walk forth thro those wide fields of endless Eternity/A God & not a Man a Conqueror in triumphant glory/And all the Sons of Everlasting shall bow down at my feet" (95.22-24). His bad-faith claim to be God authorizes the absolutism of his politics and by implicit fiat his role in that political structure, which manifests in the form of a maritime empire, under which "slaves in myriads in ship loads burden the hoarse sounding deep/Rattling with chains the Universal Empire groans" (95.29-30). This empire, in its literal universality, subsumes everything, and by this logic it can presumably reach any corner of any space and claim that space for itself because all of everything is always already part of itself. Blake's knowing use of Virgilian epic conventions establishes Urizen's character very efficiently. Urizen's epithet, typically, is Prince of Light; that Blake bestows upon him a ridiculous number of additional epithets is telling of his skeptical and mocking attitude toward Urizen's hyperbolic epicness and philosopher-sage acumen and Importance—of the pomposity of his claim to be God, king, and knower of everything at once. One such is "the great Work master" (24.5), which corresponds to Urizen's behavior insofar as he masters the work of others while others do not affect his; he orders a bower built "for heavens darling in the grizly deep" (24.7), invoking Satan's role as project manager of Pandemonium's construction in Book One of *Paradise Lost*, where presumed or performed imperial power is mimetic of God's putatively real power in heaven. After landing at the burning lake, Satan rises up giving commands, and those around him follow as if the performance had been scripted; banners rise from nothingness, trumpets sound, a war machine is prepared, and a cherub "forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled/Th' imperial ensign" (1.525-570). Beelzebub complains that God may "over hell extend/His empire, and with iron scepter rule/Us here, as with those in heav'n" (2.326-329); Milton explains that the "sword of Michael," having smitten them, induces in them "no less desire/To found this nether empire[…]/In emulation opposite to heav'n" (2.294-298). The experience of political defeat subjectifies[60] the

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[59] Blake exaggerates in Urizen the kind of hero Alexander Pope presents in his translation of the *Iliad*. Pope (1967) takes pains to represent Menelaus, the cuckolded King, as a dignified figure to be taken seriously; "his Character is compos'd of Qualities which give him no uneasy Superiority over others while he wants their Assistance, and mingled with such as make him amiable enough to obtain it" (p. 206). Pope does not elaborate or demonstrate Menelaus' goodness; to assert it is enough. Pope recognizes that interpreting a monarch's actions ironically, as he accuses Chapman of having done, as "a Character of Ridicule and Simplicity" (p. 206) is to introduce skepticism of an assumed absolute into a text predicated on the inviolability of such an assumption. Pope is not willing to doubt his assumption that kings inherently practice politics in good faith.

[60] Foucault (1983) discusses the kinds of processes by which Urizen and his imitators produce their roles in terms of subjectivity constructed by means of power imbalances. In his late essay "The Subject and

defeated ones in such a way that they intensely desire to construct for themselves a political order both in opposition to and imitation of that which defeated them, a resentful recipe.[61]

Blake directly invokes this pattern in the behavior of the Zoas toward each other, each one imitating Urizen's power through building projects and violence as they take turns being God and king. Urizen, the Prince of Light, is revealed to be a version of Milton's Satan rather than Milton's God, as he pretends to be (as Satan does). Curiously, Satan is himself a subaltern in that he is imitating (rather than being) God; Urizen, the parodied figure of the emperor, is a direct imitation of the most comprehensive loser the European imagination has produced, the endlessly resilient and resentful devil. Blake reminds the reader of this through juxtaposition of Urizen's shape-shifting body and geographic location and his ideas about himself. Even when in the form of a dragon-tailed Satanic beast in the abyss, Urizen ironically keeps his epithets intact in the face of their falsehood: "the King of Light outstretched in fury/Lashes his tail in the wild deep his Eyelids like the Sun" (106.41-42). The mind of Urizen is, indeed, its own place. With this elaborate set of allusions, Blake suggests that one means by which empire is authorized may only be a performance of conventional make-believe gestures, and a blatantly incompetent one.

Pointing out the potential unreality of a *Weltanschauung* assumed to be concrete is fundamentally an act of dissent by means of doubt, or skepticism. Urizen moves against the potential for dissent by effacing the power of skepticism. He assigns to the rhetoric of science certainty, and claims *this* science for himself; to this end "schools [are] Erected forming Instruments/To measure out the course of heaven" (28.20-21), which heavens are soon arbitrarily "squared by a line" (30.10), suggesting regimented bureaucracy and the inadequacy of phenomenal reality to reflect Urizen's performed splendor, and a pedagogy that bends science to doctrine and ideology, reducing knowledge to story and spectacle (Debord, 1995). Urizen wants nothing in his performance to disturb the suspension of disbelief, not even the existence of material reality, as if observing the world of phenomena and drawing conclusions from it could undermine his project of absolute dominion. Blake parodies here the methods of absolutism by drawing it to its logical conclusion, and shows the twisting of scientific means and vocabulary to

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Power," power becomes a "form" but also as a "technique" as it conditions the individual and individual behavior:

> power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects (p. 212).

Rhetoric and performance are used here as tools in the service of power, crafting cells in a body politic to behave in predictable ways useful to power. For Foucault, the identities thus manufactured are useful to the empowered as real-time dramaturgy, which conditions or subjugates members of its audience, who then reenact that drama, continuing the process of subjectification. Representing a story authorized as history is a re-representation of an earlier performance to an audience suspended of its disbelief. To be authoritative, it must be familiar, bearing (repeating, reifying) familiar features.

[61] Nietzsche, among the first to explicitly analyze resentment as a condition of modernity, frames it much as Blake does implicitly, as an internal conflict corresponding to a concrete social situation:

> Certain human beings have such a great need to exercise their force and lust to rule that, lacking other objects, or because they have always failed elsewhere, they finally have recourse to tyrannizing certain parts of their own nature, as it were sections or stages of themselves (Nietzsche, 1992, p. 151).

accomplish the rhetorical ends of power, repeatedly invoking paradoxes illustrative of skepticism's potential power over discourse. Blake asks, "Is not the wound of the sword Sweet & the broken bone delightful" (92.36). One must take it on faith alone that war wounds are pleasant, and contradict the personally verifiable experience of pain. Again, reason and the scientific method are excluded as legitimate means of knowing (see section *The Claim of Evolutionary Idealism*). The kind of faith that by necessity contradicts experience of everyday phenomena makes Urizen's absolutism and the violence that follows from it possible. In this sense, Blake's equation of rationalism, the epic genre, the tropes of the Important Canonical Writer, and religious hegemony is not only in response to Milton and the history of epic, but also contemporary religious expression.[62]

Urizen's turn as an epic poet invokes tangentially Milton's own biography—an old man pushed from a position of political power into an obscurity allowing him to write Very Important Books—but more importantly, the use to which absolute epic rhetoric can be put: maintaining empire and the status quo of the empowered class. Urizen is closely tied to the books he writes, as if the books signify his being, and his presence or brand-image guarantees the validity of the books. Urizen the travels with his books, constantly arranging them about himself like a pieces of a self-conscious costume (77.19, 78.13); he answers Orc's questioning of him with the command, "Read my books explore my constellations" (79.20) and, hilariously, claims to be God again straightaway (79.23). Urizen assumes an overdrawn image of the *vates*, an icon: "Hair white as snow coverd him in flaky locks terrific/Overspreading his limbs. in pride he wanderd weeping/Clothed in aged venerableness" (73.28-30). His arms and legs covered over with his terrific hair, Urizen the icon becomes so hyperbolically overdrawn as to be useless for work; he is reduced to a legacy, a piece of rhetoric for the eyes, a preposterous spectacle of a man presenting himself to be Very Spiritual (or at least more spiritual than the others) in order to promote himself politically. Further, this costume seems intended to give some credibility needed to the bizarre and implausible claims he makes about his own knowledge. Urizen narrates in his "books of iron & brass" his reminiscences of "The enormous wonders of the Abysses" (70.3-4). Like Milton himself, Urizen claims knowledge of that which is beyond ordinary apprehension, and his books—like patterns of belief—seem supernaturally sturdy across expanses of time and space. Urizen dies and awakes from death during his descent into a

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[62] Rosso (1993) situates *The Four Zoas* in "a distinct tradition of Anglican apologetic poetry" that includes poems by Edward Young, William Cowper, James Thomson, and Alexander Pope (p. 48-49). When Blake's project of illustrating Young's *Night Thoughts* collapsed, "Blake salvaged the work by co-opting proofs from his *Night Thoughts* designs," and directly "inserted his own text into the blank space reserved for Young's poem" (p. 49). While he does seem to be sending up *Night Thoughts* specifically, Blake is more concerned with targeting the more robust epic tradition, as evidenced by his nearly obsessive parody and praise of Milton. Rosso puts this intertextuality in the context of eighteenth-century English religious history: "The liberal wing of the Anglican establishment consolidates its power between 1680 and 1720, when the concepts of mechanical science make their way into the common language of philosophers, preachers, literary journalists, and coffeehouse wits" and many poets (p. 51) working under the anxiety of Milton's influence. As with Urizen and his followers, only the vocabulary and not the method of science is embraced. Ironically, scientific language, predicated on doubt and experiment, becomes a means of erasing doubt. By Newtonic theology, "The Creation becomes a model for a stable polity, as God is manifest not only through the laws, order, and harmony of nature, but, by analogy, through the law of right reason within" (Rosso, 1993, p. 52). The sound of Urizen's name—voiced as "your reason"—suggests Blake's view of this development.

Miltonic hell repeatedly, and as his body rots and falls away, "the books remaind still unconsumd" (71.35-38); according to Blake, "such a journey none but iron pens/Can write And adamantine leaves receive" (71.41-42). Blake compares the creation of these seemingly static and eternal documents with the act of government—Urizen often seats himself "in a dark rift" in order to "regulate his books" (72.6)—implying that the persistence of political forms is tied not only to the adamantine pretensions of epic conventions and positivist, metaphysical expostulation, but more importantly to implicit belief in the discourse of self-serving political figures such as Urizen who use the pretense of timelessness embedded in such gestures to maintain and enlarge their field of power.

In making of himself this spectacle of the Great Man of Great Books, Urizen is *doing politics*. Specifically, Urizen's self-fashioning presents the intersubsumption *not* of knowledge and power as in the familiar Foucaultian formulation, but of power ("I am God") guaranteed by threats and acts of violence *integrated with a simulacrum of the production of knowledge* ("read my books")—a belief system in scientific drag, passing as reason, and promoting itself as more than merely authoritative but also profound, timeless, important and canonical by means of this performance. From here, a characteristic feature of Wilberian practices of knowledge production and dissemination can be marked if not at present analyzed in comparison to Urizen's. Wilber's claims about his person and his spiritual status, as in Wilber (2000a)—the veracity of which I will not contest or defend—serve to supplement or guarantee the validity of his claims to knowledge about Spirit, which predicates his claims about all other things, as in Wilber (2000b). The latter claims then give sense, context, and meaning to the former.[63] Thus, Wilber's oeuvre is in some ways predicated on the same deferred, circular logic of self-fashioning as Urizen's.

Ironically, Urizen does not write until he is removed from power, as if his writing is intended to recover his position of actual dominance, but the patterns of his behavior continue as the other Zoas carry on their imitation of and of his self-fashioning. The content of Urizen's books is strikingly explicit. Urizen reads from his book of brass on power and its means, explaining his use of discourse in maintaining his position of privilege. The excess of unintentional pathos in Urizen's rhetoric further indicates his tendency toward hyperbole and exaggeration; his conscious use of contradiction seems strategic and Satanic (the mind making a heaven of hell) at once. Urizen's matter-of-factness is revealing:

Compell the poor to live upon a Crust of bread by soft mild arts
Smile when they frown frown when they smile & when a man looks pale
With labour & abstinence say he looks healthy & happy
And when his children sicken let them die there are enough
Born even too many & our Earth will be overrun
Without these arts If you would make the poor live with temper
With pomp give every crust of bread you give with gracious cunning
Magnify small gifts reduce the man to want a gift & then give with pomp
Say he smiles if you hear him sigh If pale say he is ruddy
Preach temperance   say he is overgorgd & drowns with his wit

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[63] This circularity can be represented schematically as follows: Writer claims X is true; writer claims Y is true. X is premised in part on Y, Y is premised in part on X, and both depend on and reify a certain rhetorical position of the writer as a coherent, homogenous figure of authority.

In strong drink tho you know that bread & water are all
He can afford Flatter his wife pity his children till we can
Reduce all to our will as spaniels are taught with art (80.9-21)

Urizen continually repeats himself, as if he is trying to convince someone—even himself—of the rightness of his violence and oppression, even if denying and obfuscating material conditions through personally-meaningful storymaking is necessary (one imagines his books repetitively cover largely the same material). The strategy he describes here, of rejecting verifiable *Schein* for the sake of a doctrine, a performed *Sein*, seems directed at *creating subjects who only believe and do not doubt*, and who are willing to work for the sake of the one in the role of the absolute; in Wilber's patois, allowing the senior holon to organize their freedom on the promise of metaphysical development (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*). Urizen's repetitiveness foregrounds the offensiveness of his program. It shows Urizen does not unintentionally, incidentally, or accidentally mistreat those over whom he has power; nor is it a momentary lapse in judgment; he does so again and again. This suggests that repetition is a strategy for making Urizen's social policy normative, naturalized. Urizen constantly and repetitively discourses to a captive audience;[64] his voice is omnipresent from "the temple of the Sun his books of iron & brass/And silver & gold he consecrated reading incessantly/To myriads of perturbed spirits thro the universe" (102.23-25). *Not* listening to this same dull round, disengaging from it, is not possible insofar as it is not yet imaginable. However, that Urizen's captive audience is privately disturbed by his rhetoric implies that dissent is already present and, following this, that any seeming act of faith among Urizen's subjects is also a motivated or interested performance of conviction

Micropolitics of Mimicry

Blake also presents some of the consequences of these broader sociopolitical patterns in the everyday, domestic, and private lives of the Zoas—giving readers an alternative context to the epic sweep of nation that proves useful to the integral project.

Recalling the holographic logic of the Zoas (see section *Mechanics of Make-Believe*), one sees that the patterns of behavior Urizen and the others repeat over and over are both subjective and objective—a psychological and sociopolitical map. Blake exploits Urizen's monstrosity and performativity to illustrate the excesses of empire. Urizen establishes a pattern of violence as the other Zoas mimic his behavior; this process proves to be a means of subjectification and of revealing the limits of its own power. Benjamin (1986), developing a Weberian argument but also in some respects anticipating Agamben's (1998) claims regarding sovereign power and "divine violence," posits that legitimized states assume to themselves a monopoly on violence, which becomes the means of production and maintenance of law, of normalcy (p. 300). Following this and returning to Los, one can suggest that acts of violence performed by those opposed to the regime in power (bracketing the question of the "rightness" of oppositional violence) make explicit the rhetorical and performative nature of that assumption of monopoly;

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[64] This recalls the pedagogy Wilber (2003a) presents, in which students at the IC attend the same repetitive lectures again and again until the "second tier" occurs to them, such that the crowd knows all the arguments and becomes angry or joyful as if by a script or mechanical reproduction. Their stupidity constitutes the laugh-track to the novel's vapid and inconsequential plot.

empire is not so absolute that it can prevent someone from harming another by his own volition, regardless of the norms generated by state violence. The Others, such as Blake's hero Urthona/Los, can inflict cruelty on *someone* to assert their equal ability to be cruel—or, to reintroduce the political allegory of the bureaucratic relationship between Milton's God and His creation, the ability to exercise arbitrary power, power for the sake of power, and play at being God. This is what it means to be the same but not quite the same (Bhabha, 1994).

Accordingly, in *The Four Zoas*, the initial exercise or claim of power is immediately followed by violence of a strikingly domestic and personal nature. After Luvah seizes Urizen's horses, leading to Urizen's claim of absolute political and religious power, Los (so often a heroic figure for Blake) reacts with unexpected violence against his partner and lover, Enitharmon: "Los smote her upon the Earth twas long ere she revivd" (11.3). This conjunction of pompous rhetoric and domestic violence is one way in which Blake illustrates both the unexpected and dangerous consequences of discursive and mimetic power (and later, how those consequences become a site of responsibility). When Urizen declares himself "God from Eternity to Eternity" (12.8), Los, the prophet against Urizen's empire, sits resentfully "plotting Revenge" (12.9), and produces immediate, conscious mimicry of Urizen's behavior: "If you are such Lo! I am also such" (12.19). Urizen's own violence against Ahania comes after she gives him her vision of Luvah's ascendance, in an attempt to alert him to this potential danger to his position: "his strong right hand came forth/To cast Ahania to the Earth he siezd her by the hair/And threw her from the steps of ice that froze around his throne" (43.2-4)—another arbitrary exercise of power, the mimetic precedent to Los's act of violence against Enitharmon. Admiring without a second thought Urizen's success in transforming Ahania into nonexistence, Tharmas imitates this act by giving his companion Enion the same treatment, even taking on in the process Urizen's characteristic "voice of Thunder" (45.27). Los claims in Urizenic double-speak that "Our God is Urizen the King […]/We have no other God but he" and that "Los remains God over all" (48.15-18) after bringing about Urizen's fall. The awkward and unsatisfying position of Los, the artisan become King-for-a-day, is that his revenge on Urizen is precisely his *becoming* Urizen, *from which Los begins to learn that this mimetic cycle of violence is counterproductive.*

This lesson is reinforced immediately: Tharmas responds to Los' rise with his own variation on a peculiar strategy; rather than harming Enion, "he rap'd bright Enitharmon" (49.4). The consequence of this disgusting act—Los' dissolution into the Spectre of Urthona, emblematic of his alienation from himself and Enitharmon—proves Los' identification with Enitharmon through his grief and despair, and his inability to be like Urizen, distinguishable from his female counterpart, as Tharmas is. Los, now proven *not* to be omnipotent God but only what he always was, a fallible man, cannot pretend to be Urizen for the sake of playing the Sun King role, but the opportunity to develop an alternative to the cycle of mimicry and violence around him, which remain intact, presents itself. According to Tharmas, "Los, thou art Urthona & Tharmas/Is God" (51.14-15). Los the prophet remains discontented regardless of the personality of the absolute, "Raging against Tharmas his God" (53.25) instead of Urizen. Los works for Tharmas now on Urizen's terms, by Urizen's means, and with the same tools, such as the "Ruind Furnaces," as Urizen, in the process himself of torturing Enitharmon publicly (53.8) as if again to prove his identity as Los by his separateness from Enitharmon. Luvah, born as Orc, gets his turn at playing a rhetorically legitimized Sun King godhead by means of a bizarre parody of Christ's birth: "The Enormous Demons woke & howld around the newborn king/Crying Luvah King of Love thou art

the king of rage & death" (58.21-22). Los binds him to a rock to the accompaniment of Enitharmon's cries (60.28-30), jealous of Orc/Luvah's supernatural claim to power, based on a story (as Blake suggests) that seems as arbitrary as Urizen's patterned claim to be God and king. As it turns out, Luvah finally takes his turn at playing God under very different circumstances late in the poem (see section *Kindness and/as Revolutionary Praxis*), mitigating the implication that Christ's story might be just another story, which is potentially offensive to Blake's project.

These fallacious demonstrations and rhetorical disputes against demonstrable fact among the Zoas have a juvenile and arbitrary feel to them, up to the moment change begins to take hold. Upon gaining power Tharmas muses, "is this to be A God for rather would I be a Man/To Know sweet Science & to do with simple companions" (51.29-30). Despite his long involvement in mimicking Urizen, Tharmas candidly recognizes the misery of this roleplay as Los does, and longs for what proves to be a restoration of a lost golden age posited simply as that state prevailing in the absence of the present nationalistic, imperial, and capital-accumulative regime. Blake's representation of political struggle (in public and private contexts) as a kind of mimetic roleplay shows the arbitrary and therefore alterable nature of claims and means to power.

One Way to Stop Pretending and Start Transforming the Whole (Damned) Thing

Finding means for ending such patterns, beginning with undermining the ridiculous claims that help hold them in place through means of knowledge other than pathos and blind trust of present authority, becomes a means for transforming unjust relations by ending the politics of privatized will-to-power. But those in control of these means recognize this possibility and move to foreclose it. Urizen structures the world of his intended subjects through a curse: "they may worship terrors & obey the violent" (68.26). The ones to be obeyed, even worshipped, are defined by their violence. Specifically, Urizen circumscribes himself, his own role and consciousness of it, as he makes his subjects literally into themselves. This works also by means of patterning.

Just as Milton's Satan constructs hell as an imitation heaven, Urizen attempts to reconstruct the space of Albion's members and faculties—the Universal Empire, after all, is reducible to one man by holographic logic—into a new, less divine space:

> he began to dig form[ing] of gold silver & iron
> And brass vast instruments to measure out the immense & fix
> The whole into another world better suited to obey
> His will where none should dare oppose his will himself being King
> Of All & all futurity bound in his vast chain (73.16-20).

Urizen seeks to erase dissent by erasing all doubt, creating thereby mechanical, automatic, and perfect faith—a notion Milton's God disavows—in a perverse Great Chain of Being. In *Paradise Lost*, God prefers obedience freely given. He could have constructed Adam in such a fashion that his obedience was assured, if it pleased Him to do so; "I made him just and right," God explains, "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (3.98-99). Unlike Milton's God, Urizen is not interested in obedience for its own sake; to him, faith and loyalty are useful to

achieve an end rather than inherently good virtues. In this way Urizen's imitation of the command to piety parodies Urizen and his clamoring after power and performing in its costume, rather than the Miltonic Godhead, who is posited as power necessarily regardless of any relationships He may be involved in. In short, Urizen himself mimics the traditional Protestant God *imperfectly*, but this God is a silent referent in the world of the poem, given that Jehovah does not appear as a character in *The Four Zoas*. In the causal position God the Father occupies in *Paradise Lost*, *The Four Zoas* offers repeated instances of rhetoric, violence, and industry— social patterns as determinants. The reader is led to expect a break in the pattern not only because such patterns are explicitly mutable, but also because even Urizen seems to anticipate such a break.

But Urizen is not interested in anything breaking from patterns of his own (mimetic) making. The Work Master, he plans, organizes, and regulates building projects of great magnitude. The altar alone of Urizen's hall represents the "labour of ten thousand Slaves" and the lives of "One thousand Men of wondrous power" (30.39-40). Work, the power to make another work for oneself, the product built, and the subjectivity of the worker are all conflated with and against each other in mimicry. Los and Tharmas each take turns undertaking large-scale construction and manufacturing projects in imitation of Urizen's. Regardless of the personality in the role of the Sun King, the act of manufacturing manufactures the kind of consciousness that Urizen desires among his subjects:

> We behold with wonder Enitharmons Looms & Los's Forges
> And the Spindles of Tirzah & Rahab and the Mills of Satan & Beelzeboul
> In Golgonooza Los's anvils stand & his Furnaces rage
> Ten thousand demons labour at the forges Creating Continually
> The times & spaces of Mortal Life the Sun the Moon the Stars
> In periods of Pulsative furor beating into wedges & bars
> Then drawing into wires the terrific Passions and Affections
> Of Spectrous dead (113.1-8).

The experience of work under these conditions creates in the worker a sense of time and space, measuring the peristalsis and circulation of the body by the rhythms of the factory. This transformation of a consciousness into a machine by these means becomes a kind of death.[65]

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[65] Blake anticipates here and elsewhere much of Benjamin's compelling argument in "Theses on the Philosophy of History." Benjamin (1969) observes that the "struggling, oppressed class is itself the depository of historical knowledge" (p. 260), rather than the oratory singular, Urizenic figures. Blake demonstrates this in juxtaposing the physical transformation of the Zoas working under and for Urizen with Urizen's rhetoric of denial and contradiction. Here, the workers experience time in a way Benjamin characterizes as "empty" and "homogenous." For Benjamin, what is called progress is but a series of catastrophes, empty of any ameliorative progression—going nowhere. Empty, homogenous time can be opened into its own ceasing, at any moment. This "conception of the present as the 'time of now' which is shot through with chips of Messianic time," or the force of redemption (pp. 262-63), is analogous to the everyday, prosaic apocalypse Los and Enitharmon bring about one day when they stop acting (and reacting) according to pattern, but instead establish a new one.

This is true also for the Zoas, starting from the poem's beginning, where Blake explores subjectification also in the domestic context, in terms that are echoed later in the factory scenes. Tharmas asks Enion, "Why wild thou Examine every little fibre of my soul/Spreading them out before the Sun like Stalks of flax to dry" (4.29-30). Urizen, the Sun King, is present in every interaction; Tharmas feels exposed to *Urizen's* sun-like sight by means of Enion's eyes. Tharmas' being is drawn out like the wedges and bars of the mill. Enion first dissects Tharmas, then weaves him together again: "in gnawing pain drawn out by her lovd fingers every nerve/She counted. every vein & lacteal threading them among/Her woof of terror" (5.16-18), domesticated subjectification. Enion reconstructs Tharmas' being by following the patterns of Urizen's architecture. In the jargon of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Enion first deterritorializes then reterritorializes Tharmas from his former state into paranoia. Blake's narration of this act, including Tharmas' agonized cries, reveals Blake's disgust with this process and the regime behind it.

Blake's ironic approach to absolute assertions can be understood as a kind of scientific doubt. Moments of materialism in place of rhetoric become moments of real productivity. Just as absolute certainty in the rightness of empire makes abuses such as slavery a ready means of upholding empire and slavery as right, the claim of absolute power introduces uncertainty into the rhetorical field; its logic is self-defeating. Declaring sovereignty without end implies the existence of ends. This claim exists because it is *not* a self-apparent fact; if so, the endlessness of sovereignty would not be claimed. For Blake, this lack of evidence produces doubt among those affected by the claim. Skepticism becomes a condition of dissent, and tied with irony, a *means* of dissent. Once Urizen has claimed absolute imperial domain, irony becomes effective because uncertainty (the opposite of absolute certainty) arises. According to Luvah, speaking from within Urizen's work machine, "Urizen who was Faith & certainty is changd to Doubt" (27.15). Blake parodies Urizen's reduction of phenomena to the controlling vocabulary of geometry, producing three sets of worlds with illogical lists of characteristics: some worlds "triangular right angled course maintain. others obtuse/Acute Scalene, in simple paths. but others move/In intricate ways biquadrate. Trapeziums Rhombs Rhomboids/Paralellograms" (33.31-35). A triangular course leads nowhere but back upon itself, and an angle cannot be both acute and obtuse at once. This suggests a kind of arbitrariness in the means by which Urizen sets out to conquest the material world, and to control the contingencies of demonstration and testimony. Los and Enitharmon attempt to revive Orc (62-63) because of this uncertainty. Their failure to undo their actions and their ensuing resolve to productive and nonviolent action demonstrates the relationship Blake posits in epic and system-making between certainty and oppression in many forms, and develops the opposing relationship between uncertainty and responsibility or virtuosity. Doubt becomes an interpersonal virtue, a basis for relations of care for another.[66] Immediately following this moment of domestic sorrow is a scene of mistaken certainty—Urizen, still calling himself King, reminisces over lost moments in the past when he could behave like himself, a king (63-65), not recognizing or admitting that the reason why he cannot do so is that another has taken his role. In spite of his presumed supernatural means of knowing, Urizen the *vates* consistently proves to be mistaken. Urizen "thought himself the Sole author/Of all his wandering Experiments" (80.51-

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[66] Explicating the precise nature of alterity in Blake's ethics in this poem (as distinct from the ethical and virtuosic aspects of his political understanding) is beyond the scope of this essay, but it can be pointed to in this post-revolutionary observation—"Man liveth not by Self alone but in his brothers face" (113.25)—in comparison to the nonviolence of alterity proposed in Butler (2004).

81.1). This is not so, as Orc points out that he had taken some of Urizen's "light," and that much stood outside Urizen's "bounds of Science in the Grey obscure" (80.39-42). As practical science depends on publicly verifiable and replicable results, it follows that it must be at odds with the cult of unitary and singular epic vision such as Urizen claims for himself.

While it is true that Urizen is not actually God, the period between the eternity of the past and that of the future is occupied with Urizenic patterns of domination and violence. While Urizen acts as though he were God between the eternities, he recognizes that his tenure is limited to that period of linear time. The daughters of Beulah write "the Eternal Promise" on everything they construct, "their tombs & pillars & on every Urn/These words If ye will believe your B[r]other shall rise again" (87.5-6). Here, as they work at building Urizenic structures, they efface them with an artifact of a different sort of faith from the kind Urizen relies upon. In this instance of effacement, Blake narrates active *disbelief* in the permanence of the status quo in order to invoke a transformation, and predicates productive practice on uncertainty rather than make-believe. As Hershock (2000) suggests, this virtuosity is an active, creative act, not an ascetic or transcendental one. It is a practice of becoming-responsible.

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton signals the coming of the fall with a recognition that he must "change/ Those notes to tragic" (9.5-6). Milton's poem ceases to be an epic at that moment. Blake reverses the fall into a Urizenic regime by introducing redemption into *The Four Zoas* in such a way that its epic features vanish. The Zoas stop playing at being God-men, making complete Blake's exclusion of the Miltonic Godhead as a political agent in this poem,[67] and of any legitimized sovereignty of any being over any other.

Kindness and/as Revolutionary Praxis

In contrast to Wilber's evolutionary holism, in *The Four Zoas*, responsibility for meaningful transformation is taken up by the subordinated for the sake of the totality (inclusive of those who have, in the past, behaved irresponsibly), not offered from the "lower" to the "higher" by grace or bureaucracy.

A *domestic* and local transformation, initiated by Los and Enitharmon, utterly ruptures the top-down, heirarchic Urizenic pattern of imitated violence. Los and Enitharmon recognize the errors of their past actions and identifications, resolve to behave responsibly, and withdraw their children from warfare; the family cooperates in building and decorating the city Golgonooza (97-98) for their own use and enjoyment.[68] This leads to a fantastic (and bizarre) inversion of the political and rhetorical order of the poem up to this moment. When Los refrains from harming

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[67] This is consistent with Blake's theology as expressed in his fragments and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, which is critical of Milton's representation of God as a Urizenic force: "All dieties reside in the human breast" (plate 11). It may be that the Zoas' struggles with one another is a kind of allegory of God pulling Himself together in one being, the archetypal Albion the Giant. Because Blake wishes to recuperate Milton as an ally, he argues that Milton unconsciously sought to undermine his own God by identifying with Satan, the opposer of God's works.

[68] This sequence of actions corresponds to the beginning of mainstream Christian practice: one repents one's mistakes, one carries forth with the resolve to sin no more. This is one way in which Blake's explicit religious views penetrate into his political program.

Enitharmon and clamoring against Urizen, Luvah, or Tharmas for the right to claim absolute dominion over everything and everyone, enacting a Great Refusal, peace and productivity arise, and he finds that *he must care for Urizen as one of his own children*, and *does*: "Startled was Los he found his Enemy Urizen now/In his hands. he wonderd that he felt love & not hate/His whole soul loved him he beheld him an infant" (98.64-66). *Los has become-responsible*. Even though this moment barely lasts a complete verse paragraph, it suggests that the means of peace are available to the parties involved in this dispute within Albion's body politic; the scene of domestic peace casts a deeply satiric light on the rest of the actions in the poem that have made such peace less possible for no reason comprehensible in the context of the poem's radically unfamiliar space. Smooth, destratified social space—radical democracy—proves to be more integrative, and experientially favorable to (and formally more transparent than) a baroque hierarchy of the type Urizen imposes from the stage of the philosopher-sage.

The turn-taking among the Zoas for the role of God is not yet complete, however;[69] the symmetry of the poem's structure, ironically, demands that the fourth Zoa, Luvah/Orc, finally play the part of the Sun King. The changed conditions demonstrate, however, that the end is near. When "fierce Orc in wrath & fury rises into the heavens/A King of wrath & fury" (111.15-16)—Urizenic repetition ironically invoked—the pattern of local violence is definitively disrupted, in that "Urthona gave his strength/Into the youthful prophet for the Love of Enitharmon" (111.31-32). Los/Urthona's effort and his motivation in this case is a sign of the transformation underway because, earlier, Los had prevented his son Orc's ascendance, jealous of the story surrounding him that authorized his turn at playing God. Luvah as Orc, however, continues to imitate Urizen against Urizen, even as his behavior is infinitely softer. Instead of conscripting armies of laborers and working them often to death as Urizen had, Luvah begins his role as architect by building a simple home for himself and Vala at her suggestion (127.29-30), also reflecting the domestic, democratic revolution of kindness Los and Enitharmon had begun.

Blake unambiguously defines this transformation and that of Urizen in apocalyptic terms. The last Night is entitled "Night the Ninth Being The Last Judgment." Blake asserts that his text is not only allusively and structurally apocalyptic but is literally of the same substance as the Biblical Apocalypse, declaring that "John saw these things Reveald in Heaven/On Patmos Isle" (115.4-5). Los decisively begins this event by seizing the "Sun" and demolishing "the heavens across from immense to immense" (117.8-9); the parallel to Urizen's claim of being God from eternity to eternity is explicit. As Wilkie and Johnson (1978) show, Los advances the transformation further by destroying Urizen's books (pp. 212-213). Symbolically Los' striking at the sun does not obliterate phenomenal reality—the world of forms—as much as the totality of social strata, including the role of the Sun King, the field in which he operates, and the mechanisms holding him in place; "slaves are set at liberty" while "the thrones of Kings are shaken they have lost their robes and crowns" (117.15-23). The props and costumes by which these monarchs iconify themselves evaporate, as if performance as such has fallen away. Significantly, Urizen loses his status as an iconic *vates*, at this moment. The Giant Albion, the figure analogous in scale to the Wilberian superholon, awakes, and not understanding what is happening within him, laments that moment when "shall the Man of future times become as in

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[69] In Buddhist terms, it is as if the Zoas have purified some of their past karma but not yet exhausted it, so that it manifests in a modified form rather than as a mechanical reproduction of it (Gampopa, 1981, pp. 74-90).

days of old" (120.5). He cries out for Urizen, first by his epithets—"great opposer of change" and "dread form of certainty"—but Urizen does not respond (120.14-25), at which point Albion himself behaves like the Urizen of old, vowing to "sieze" his "crown and scepter," to "regulate all my members" (120.35). Urizen's rejection of his own absolutism leads to an implicit transformation of the macrocosm, Albion. Urizen encourages Los to do what he has already done, to precipitate the apocalyptic transformation—"Rend down this fabric as a wall ruind & family extinct"—and renounces any regulation or control over anyone: "Urizen no longer curbs your rage" (121.25-26). Urizen ceases to play at being a Milton or a Leibnitz; his venerableness falls away with his hair and robes, "he shook his aged mantles off/Into the fires" (120.29-30), arising youthful. But the structural symmetry and kinetic (karmic) energy of the poem have not yet been exhausted, with the consequence that the end of history has not been completed. When Urizen becomes fully what Kierkegaard (1989) might call fully human after casting off his Milton costume, Ahania dies of excess joy (121.37), the opposite process of the earlier patterned violence, but giving the same end (and suggestive of a bawdy Shakespearean pun). This surprise, the transformation, is not a "symmetry break," which is taken to be a leap or momentary discontinuity in an otherwise continuous evolution (Wilber, 2000b, pp. 50-51), where evolution is understood as a teleological—even divinely-sanctioned—process. By contrast, the Blake of *The Four Zoas* is a *revolutionary*, not an evolutionary integral thinker; he proposes a transformational, not developmental, model for action against a totality of contingent social and political formations.

Urizen finally declares with joy that "Times are Ended" (131.31), and with time slavery and empire have also ended, indicating that the posited absolute past has returned; "their ancient golden age renewd" itself (126.29). A very strange moment arises in response to this, when "an African Black from the little Earth of Sotha" sings a song (echoing Blake's "Jerusalem") of his own composition, recognizing a lost Paradise before him:

Aha Aha how came I here so soon in my sweet native land
How came I here Methinks I am as I was in my youth
When in my fathers house I sat & heard his chearing voice
Methinks I see his flocks & herds & feel my limbs renewd
And Lo my Brethren in their tents & their little ones around them (134.35-135.3)

How is it that the body of England can be a direct replication of an African village—specifically, a village in an Albion-like place (or being, since this is still psychomachia, still holographic in representation) that is suddenly and happily identified with part of Africa by an African native as his own? Conventionally, an element of the microcosm Sotha is understood as foreign to Albion's green and pleasant land, but that he feels at home in it suggests a hospitable dissolution of the divisions and exploitations of empire, nationalism, and slavery, as if beyond the psychomachia conventional subjectivity falls away and minds literally run into one another, also implying absolute democracy and authentic communion of the African singer's experience with that of Albion's Zoas. Everywhere is home, anywhere is here—this presents a decentered logic approaching nonduality. Blake's singer experiences with them the same change in being. After being ignored and remaining silent for the entirety of the poem's action (Spivak, 1988), after this apocalyptic transformation, the subaltern *sings*.

The poem closes with this claim: "The war of swords departed now/The dark religions are departed & sweet Science reigns" (139.9-10). Direct apprehension of phenomena is used as a means of showing what emblems and ideas had been bent to do—"The tender maggot emblem of Immortality" (136.32)—to misrepresent reality while claiming to do the opposite, in short, to obfuscate and lie. Skepticism, science, reason, and irony properly applied rectify the real limitations, make-believe, and ideological work of idealism as epic or as Final Philosophy. After the revolution that is, literally, an act of love, violence and limits between minds have fallen away, suggesting that all vestiges of subjectification and mimetic performance have evaporated. The ending of *The Four Zoas* is actually an annihilation of empire, the total destruction (not reform) of the pathological regime. In contrast to the image of reterritorialized, domesticated Bibles of 19th century English missionaries in India (Bhabha,1994, p. 92), after the revolution no trace of Urizen's missionary activity or his repetitive literary output can be seen.

Albion the Giant has become a radical democratic Utopia, a Body without Organs. Blake concludes that once a certain kind of doubt is introduced, an ideal community can arise. Observations of it are possible, but no story can be told in or from this community, because time imagined as progress does not exist. By contrast, where Wilber promotes evolution of consciousness, Blake prescribes a radical intervention, working virtuosically with the discourses available to him—the mythmaking of vernacular Protestantism and epic poetry—by means of skepticism toward the claims and the knowledge-production of these discourses.

Politics in Good Faith

Blake presents a responsible transformational model in *The Four Zoas*. Becoming-responsible for present purposes has four characteristics: critical clarity, competence, consciousness, and compassion (Anderson, 2008). Blake considers each one in the course of *The Four Zoas*, by reversal: first rejecting a prevailing ideology and then proposing in its place a more productive strategy.

Critical clarity. Blake establishes a pathological pattern of subordination and abuse predicated on (and expressed as) aesthetic normativity and good-sense metaphysical doctrine, pushed to its sociopolitical conclusion: playing at being God through make-believe and violence, epistemic and physical. Then, Blake encourages a critical response of doubt, scientific skepticism, and Socratic irony (a postmetaphysical response), typified by Tharmas's observation that playing make-believe is inherently unsatisfying. This intervention leads to a second one, that which transforms the totality.[70]

Competence. Urizen's performance of capability ("read my books!") in a costume that renders him incapable of doing practical work is contrasted against the domestic labors and artisanic craft of Urthona (Los and Enitharmon), who proves to be capable of making useful and beautiful things—and taking responsibility for the impersonal welfare of beings as if they are his own children (competence in critical action and competence in compassion).

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[70] I explicate this doubled structure of first and second interventions in Anderson (2008).

Consciousness. Mimetic, mechanical, unconscious stupidity expressed as thinly costumed will-to-power (as in Urizen's books) is counterposed by situationally aware, intelligent, and capable action (Urthona), as suggested by the capacity for taking competent action and quantifiable through Urthona's in-the-moment creativity.

Compassion. Blake recontextualizes the brutal selfishness of Urizen and Los's moments of violence against Enitharmon and others with Enitharmon's impersonal, egalitarian kindness as well as Los's taking responsibility for a vulnerable and childlike Urizen, by no means a configuration of his own will-to-power.

An Experiment in Radical Democracy

[A]ll our sympathy lies with the wanderers, the gypsies, and heretics, rather than with the totalitarian murderers who try to fix them in place, number them, control them, and finally exterminate them. We wander because no nation, no ideology, no culture, no religion, no philosophy holds our loyalty or pins us down in time and place. We are cut loose. We drift. (Wilson, 1993, p. 156)

Introduction

I have proposed that Marxist and post-Marxist theory may offer a useful methodology for integral praxis in some respects (Anderson, 2008). One acknowledged problem with this position: Marxist revolutions have, by and large, turned out badly by degrees. Popular Unity, under Salvador Allende,[71] attempted to overcome this problem, broadly speaking as Buddhist social theorist Ken Jones (1989) diagnoses it:

Where it has fully established itself, revolutionary socialism's intellectual elites have only been able to consolidate their power through an oppressive collectivism. These inert bureaucratic societies have no resemblance to what Marx envisaged, with their massive hierarchies of power, their harsh restriction on political and religious liberty, their

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[71] Uribe (1975) offers an incomparable and candid first-hand narrative of the events from the perspective of a well-placed and well-informed Chilean diplomat, neither a socialist nor a conservative but a member of the Christian left; the so-called "Church Report" (1975) gives an equally valuable account from the perspective of the CIA. Henfrey and Sorj (1977) present the street-view perspective of everyday Chileans during this period; Castro (1972) shows what kinds of specifically Marxist inquiry were developing among workers and students in Chile; Morris (1973) gives a historical and topical overview of the moment informed by the author's experiences in Chile under Popular Unity; Cooper (2002) and Dorfman, Aguilera, and Fredes (2006) give a retrospective view from the bottom strata of the socius looking up, during and immediately after the Popular Unity period. Debray (1972) includes a series of interviews with Allende early in his presidency, affording some insight into his agenda; Cockraft (2000) anthologizes many of Allende's speeches, addresses, and letters on various occasions and subjects. Sigmund (1993) and Haslam (2005) both offer mature, sober, and critical histories of the period and its aftermath, the former emphasizing internal Chilean politics and the latter more concerned with U.S. intervention. Moss (1974) in my view gives an irredeemably flawed reading of the historical evidence, but one that counterposes the others cited here.

persecution of dissidents, their insistence on ideological conformity, and the persistence of patriarchal patterns of life. (Jones, 1989, pp. 120)

Allende attempted to address each of these rather self-evident problems by instituting a Marxist revolution *democratically*, through the civil state, *predicating* this transformation on the enfranchisement and becoming-responsible of the socius rather than in opposition to the needs and interests of it. As Grandin (2007) summarizes this project,

> Allende's Popular Unity government rejected both Soviet-style suppression of civil liberties and American economic dominance, believing it could steer Chile down a peaceful road to socialism while maintaining political freedoms. Chile's challenge, therefore, was not that it would be turned into another Castro-style dictatorship but that it wouldn't. (Grandin, 2007, p. 60),

and the Nixon administration worried that this radical democratic model might spread first to western Europe, particularly Italy (Grandin, 2007, p. 60), where Autonomist Marxist praxis was developing along recognizably similar lines[72] (Wright, 2002; Katsiaficas, 2006). This shows Wilber's claim that the superholon evolves *toward* a regime latent within itself is valid in politics only so long as the "higher" holon is willing to enforce, by force, the imperative of that regime, to "organize the freedom" of its subordinate holons according to its own program. It also suggests that a bottom-up politics of becoming-responsible may be possible along lines suggested by Urthona's project, rather than Urizen's. Worded differently: To imagine putting a popular critical culture, mass virtuosity[73] as distinct from post-Leninist vanguardism (*pace* Jones' [1989] engaged Buddhist critique of Marxist institutional history) in charge of the totality is to imagine an integral society in place of the stratified, conflictual one that obtains under neoliberalism.[74]

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[72] Uribe (1975) confirms this: "The United States needs very much to prove that the Chilean model, in which a state attempts through democratic means to stand on its own outside the imperialist system, is not possible" (p. xi). The coup was as much about ideology and hegemony ("spreading democracy" in the interventionary patois of now-disgraced but still vocal American neoconservatism) as natural resources and labor.

[73] Here, critical culture should be understood as a historically contingent set of means for mitigating *stupidity,* where stupidity is understood much as Lukacs (1967) understands reification, as unwittingly acting against one's objective self interest by *necessary* involvement with a situation or structure one has no final control over, and where one's real interests are defined as the immediate and ultimate benefit of every being with any investment in the situation at hand (Van Boxsel, 2003; Anderson 2008).

[74] The present inquiry considers how a subordinated totality, a state or society, can begin considering how to viably democratize, destratify, and intentionally integrate itself with itself. This differs from the problem of reterritorializing the global totality analogous to the "World Federation" Wilber (2003b) proposes in his comments on Iraq. Relations among states will, of course, be contingent on resource control and allocation, and the terms of that control. This problem is much more difficult to conjecture on because the only known global order—the only total superholon this planet has known in the political-economic sense—is imperial capital, in one iteration or another. Marx, for instance, has precious little to say about global communism as an alternative. That said, while this relation is beyond the scope of this work, it is of primary importance for further development.

In Wilber's diction, one might say that Chile in 1970 was integrated into a particular holarchy, subordinated to a superholon (global capital, enforced by the hegemony of American military power) that determined the scope and terms of its development, while that regime extracted useful natural resources from Chilean soil—copper ore, saltpeter, and human labor (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*). Capital had "organized the freedom" of this particular holon's members in a particular (and predictable) way. Chilean society was stratified along class lines, expressed in a separation of those in relative control (or in alliance with those actually in control) from those in relative poverty, but also expressed in viable mass-political movements. Allende proposed instead that Chileans from all classes should take responsibility for their working conditions, the products of their labor, the redistribution of their land, their natural resources and the terms of their extraction and development, and for general welfare measures (particularly in mass education and health care) to help ensure a socius competent to take on this responsibility.[75] This quite literally made the state both fragile and vulnerable—fragile in that Allende, concerned more with democratic rights than with the centralizing power behind his agenda, refused to subordinate and reorganize Chile's military forces, which arguably alienated the military and state bureaucracies from his leadership—and vulnerable due to the disorder inherent in any transition toward a comprehensive reorganization.[76] As it happened, everyday life circumstances, such as the price and availability of foodstuffs, fluctuated uncontrollably as the state sought to reintegrate a different regime for developing the terms of everyday life circumstances such as labor, health, and education (see section *The Endgame; Or, Limiting the Indeterminacy* for plausible causes of this disarray).

Specifically, Allende proposed to integrate the Chilean socius by democratizing Chilean institutions, beginning with a mitigation of the lack-of-control over one's life habits and labor that characterized Chilean working life: in Allende's words, "[o]ur aim is the attainment of social freedom through the exercise of political freedom, and this requires the establishment of economic equality as a basis" (as quoted in Debray, 1972, pp. 182-183), the social ownership of productive means, in traditional Marxist diction. Pursued a bit further, however, economic equality can also be expressed as work democracy, where all who labor toward the fulfillment of a given project have a hand in determining the course of the project and the conditions of executing it (Schweickart, 2002). As *The Four Zoas* suggests, full and impartial enfranchisement is a condition of compassionate politics. This is distinct from the undemocratic idealism of Wilber's model (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*).

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[75] In this respect, the program that Allende led into power is analogous in its broad strokes and strategies to the Deleuze-Guattarian nomad project, insofar as Popular Unity swept a locus of power (the disenfranchised) into the legitimate State. As Wilson (1993) argues,

Deleuze and Guattari based their work *Nomadology* in part on Ibn Khaldun's thesis of nomadism as the nucleus of power (a 'war machine') against the State and by extension against any centralized or absolutized authority. They simply turn Ibn Khaldun on his head by arguing that the purpose of culture is not the glory of the State, as Ibn Khaldun says, but is rather to be found in the freedom and even the randomness of the nomad (as Ibn Khaldun at times seems to imply). Deleuze and Guattari, who may be called Nietzschean post-Marxist anarchists or 'dada epistemologists' (to quote Feyerabend), here find themselves in harmony with our Sufi historiographer (pp. 158-159).

[76] P. Anderson (1980) summarizes this: "[m]orality without strategy, a humane socialism equipped only with an ethic against a hostile world, is doomed to needless tragedy: a nobility without force leads to disaster, as the names of Dubcek and Allende remind us" (p. 206). The "embrace" from above is, here, a vulnerability to risk, a precariousness.

Further, Allende proposed democratizing (destratifying) culture and its production as it is conventionally understood ("story" in Litfin's terms) along these lines, by promoting an ambitious program of education for Chileans of all ages, classes, and geographic locales, so that all members of the social formation could have the tools, skills, and materials to do at least basic intellectual work, and by relocating cultural production from the global-hegemonic to the local-democratic.[77]

> A new culture cannot be decreed. It will spring from the struggle for fraternity as opposed to individualism, for the appreciation rather than disdain for human labor, for national values rather than cultural colonization, and from the struggle of the popular masses for access to art, literature, and the communications media and the end of their commercialization (Allende, as quoted in Cockcraft, 2000, p. 273).

Pax Cultura: this is a *critical* politics predicated on care for the well being of the totality and all its members, recalling Los and Enitharmon at their work, in contrast to the tiresome and self-imitating decrees of Urizen in his philosopher-sage costume demanding to be read and obeyed, but unwilling to teach, listen, or discuss.

Allende's strategy for reterritorializing a bourgeois regime into a fully responsible democratic one shows his program to be creative, in fact conscious. Allende's plan relied necessarily on a unified, organized, and totality-conscious polity to enact, as needed, constitutional reform. "If we put forward a bill and Congress rejects it," Allende claimed, "we invoke the plebiscite" (Debray, 1972, p. 83)—which he counted on winning, so long as his proposals were in the interests of the subaltern majority and that majority voted its interests and was not misled or deluded. This is authentically Marxist theoretically (Marcuse, 1964; Lukacs, 1967), but innovative in praxis. Majority is not consensus; some, it should be understood, stand to lose a position of material and social privilege (that of acting the role of the senior holon) as a result of lifting those below up into cultural literacy and economic parity, while the totality (and thus everyone involved in it) benefits from dissolving its constitutive conflict between those that have and those that do not, the inherent disequilibrium in arbitrarily uneven development. Following Blake, insofar as Allende's project is creative and totality-contextualized (competently working for the impersonal benefit of all), I consider it a *conscious* one.

That said, Allende and his party were arguably incompetent to the very difficult task they took responsibility for, or at least not adequately competent to it. Haslam (2005) interprets Allende's actions as a kind of pataphysics,[78] managing multiple contingencies in several parties on an *ad hoc* basis while not adequately accounting for real resistance from outside and above, rather than implementing in a disciplined and coordinated way one theoretical and practical program—very

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[77] This is, without a doubt, a risky social experiment, but insofar as it is an intentional one, those participating in it are at minimum no less prepared for its consequences than social experiments such as industrial capitalism that arose not from a plan or a dialectical process of consciousness and conditions but from causes and conditions internal to the European economy. As it happens, Chile had been home to a specifically integral experiment as well, Oscar Ichazo's community of practice at Arica; the productive lifelong inquiry of Claudio Naranjo has its roots there.

[78] See van Boxsell (2003, pp. 194-198) for a value-neutral examination of pataphysics as an intellectual practice.

unlike the rigorously planned and executed coup that forced him to suicide before surrender (p. 233). According to Haslam, Allende was not an original or rigorous theorist,[79] "no administrator and no economist;" the Soviets found the Chilean administration to exhibit "manifest […] incompetence" (p. 230). Further, Allende maintained—at least publicly—that the rule of law would protect his project from intervention from outside or above, a position that ultimately proved profoundly naive. Responding to the question of whether or not the Nixon administration would direct an intervention into Chile, military or otherwise, Allende responded:

> I believe they will not do anything of this nature; firstly, because as I say, we have acted within the laws of Chile, within the Constitution. It is for this reason […] that I have maintained that victory through the polling-booths was the way to pre-empt any such policy, because this way their hands are tied." (Allende, as quoted in Debray, 1972, p. 126)

In short, to transcribe his thinking into Wilber's diction, Allende publicly argued that the superholon is incapable of "violating the laws" of its subordinate holons (see section *Retelling the Epic of the Superholon*), which history proved false in this case—whether he knew better privately remains an open question.[80] For present purposes, this suggests that Allende's radical democratic project may be sound in the abstract, but lacking in implementation and resources—and that reflecting on Popular Unity's successes, failures, and contexts can yield some useful insights for future integral macropolitical projects as an act of cultural memory, of story-making in the form of history and virtuosity rather than make-believe (see section *Praxis According to Evolutionary Idealism*).

The Endgame; Or, Limiting the Indeterminacy

This anticipates a significant observation about Wilberian evolutionary idealism when applied to politics: the end of Popular Unity by the irresponsible intervention of the superholon on the justification of an inherent telos that might be God proves Wilber's model problematic, having more in common with Urizenic will-to-power than with responsible development or transformation in the context of macropolitics, matters of public concern.

In response to Allende's election (and upon the failure of an attempted coup to prevent him taking office), the American president Richard M. Nixon

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[79] In fairness, however, it should be recognized that Allende knew what to do with extant theory; he had what I call a *method* (Anderson, 2008). Specifically, Allende was interested in using theory in a dialectical relation to practice, claiming that "basic works like *State and Revolution* contain key ideas, but they can't be used as a Catechism" (Debray, 1972, p. 64); he was aware of Marxist theories of the imperialism of foreign capital such as Luxemburg (2000) (Debray, 1972, pp. 69-70), and as I have suggested, was capable of authentic innovation on the level of praxis and persistence over his long public life.

[80] In this context, the relationship between law and power in Wilber's holonography can be understood in terms Agamben (1998) develops for the state, law, and subject: law is produced through sovereign action, which is itself not bound by the law it enunciates; consequent to this capriciousness, there exist states of exception in which the law is defined such that it does not apply, and those placed under a state of exception have no legal or political identity apart from the enunciation of the sovereign: a position of absolute vulnerability not as a subject but as "bare life."

instructed the CIA to 'make the [Chilean] economy scream,' and over the next three years, Washington spent millions of dollars to destabilize Chile and prod its military to act. It finally did on September 11, 1973, in a coup that brought Augusto Pinochet's seventeen-year-long regime to power. (Grandin, 2007, p. 59),

just as the U.S.S.R. had brutally put down a nascent radical-democratic regime in Hungary in the fall of 1956 (Brown, 1988). I characterize this as an expression of will-to-power on the part of the superholon, seeking to "organize the freedom" of a wayward, "lower," or "junior" holon on which it depended for resources—will-to-power because the superholon had benefited from the legitimately exploitative relation that had prevailed before Allende resumed power and was put at risk by his remaining in power, not because of a competent intention to be of benefit to the totality on the part of Richard Nixon (not only Nixon personally or primarily as a synechdoche for global capital). Interestingly, according to Haslam (2005), Nixon was motivated to act in Chile in part to avoid appearing weak internationally as his own incompetence and corruption in the chain of events conventionally referred to as Watergate was becoming exposed (p. 255). The coup that ended the Allende experiment and began nearly twenty years of state-sponsored terrorism in the South American cone was in part a vanity project of a resentful neurotic, but more broadly a gesture designed to reintegrate Chilean resource management into supply chains favorable to the accumulative or developmental regimes of international corporations. This is how "indeterminacy" is "limited."

Here, Chilean history parts ways with Blake's model as well, because the Cosmos did not sympathize with Popular Unity as it did in the Universal Man with Urthona. Allende's actions did not invoke a Romantic apocalypse of spiritual renewal that allowed the subaltern to sing and reinstituted a global Golden Age of "sweet science" that was sustainable in its time. Popular Unity represents an attempt to establish a regime of new values in the face of very strong resistance from outside and above,[81] of responsibly made values; that the attempt failed is but more evidence on the nature of the transformative project and the risks of a fully engaged life:

> Life is very strange. To live: to go forward into a new country, set foot blindly on unknown ground and keep on drawing back the curtain of time. We know that somewhere is the precipice over which we shall fall. When? Will the next step be our last? We can neither stop nor draw back. (Thomasson, 1980, p. 190)

Politics in Good Faith (Reprise)

Was Allende's transformative project critical? Yes.

Was it compassionate? In that it was predicated on ameliorating the sufferings of others, yes.

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[81] Allende's advice to Chile on the day of the coup, seeing the coup coming, suggests this persistence and commitment in spite of personal difficulty and risk: "You must defend the right to construct, through your own effort, a dignified and better life" (as quoted in Cockcraft, 2000, p. 7). As it happened, Allende chose to construct for himself a dignified and pedagogic death (a "moral lesson" p. 10): a self-inflicted gunshot wound, from a carbine given as a gift by Fidel Castro on his state visit.

Was it competent or virtuosic? Arguably not as competent as it would have needed to be, given the pushes and pulls and other strains it had to resist.

Was it conscious? Insofar as creativity in response to a challenge is a measure of consciousness, then yes, revealing a remarkable departure from the clearly hopeless Stalinist model for socialist practice (bureaucratic capital), to legislate an intentional revolution. It certainly would have benefited from greater situational (class) awareness.

Returning to the problem Plato poses in *The Republic*, on justice and responsibility, one can argue that the intervention of global capital into the Chilean state on 11 September 1973 was an unjust act, as it ended an attempt to redress an injustice through instituting a hopelessly unjust regime, the Pinochet dictatorship. This is politics in bad faith (see section *Introduction - Definitions*). But insofar as it served to disengage the Chilean subholon from the superholon of global capital, Allende's project can be seen as a counterintegral embrace and envelopment, to a follower of Wilber; further, the coup that restored that order by a "higher" power can also be seen as an integral gesture expressing increased depth and complexity, an evolutionary step forward (again to a follower of Wilber) (see section *Holarchy and Macropolitical Praxis*).

Conclusion—Neither Stopping nor Drawing Back

Where Litfin and Wilber present ontological and metaphysical models, representing reality and the transformations they allow that reality, *The Four Zoas* poses a transformational model for action through an imaginative space. Where Wilber (2000b) posits, "*[t]he greater the depth of the holon, the greater its degree of consciousness*" (p. 65), *The Four Zoas* inverts this; increasing depth, or stratification, is *decreasing* consciousness in the sense of increased reductivity, mimicry, determinism, and potential for irresponsibility in the expression of power, which is implicit in Wilber's assertion that "the new and senior pattern or wholeness can to some degree *limit the indeterminacy* (organize the freedom) of its junior holons" (p. 60). Blake's apocalyptic transformation also contrasts against Wilber's position that social and personal transformations function in a top-down manner (co-evolution); in *The Four Zoas*, we see a subordinated holon (Enitharmon) transform the macroholon (Albion the Giant), bottom-up. The case of the Popular Unity period in Chile (1970-1973) shows how the dynamic is expressed under late capital—where subordinating regimes assume a kind of responsibility for those below, even if the terms of that responsibility are by any definition responsible—and how Wilber's holonography simply flickers in theological development this self-same dynamic of politics in bad faith.

I argue instead for the persistent and intentional labor of instituting a just order through the transformative practice of becoming-responsible.

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