

Thinking through Nonduality

An Exploration of the Foundations of Nonduality

Kent D. Palmer, Ph.D.

P.O. Box 1632
Orange CA 92856 USA
714-633-9508
kent@palmer.name

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David Loy wrote the book Nonduality in 1988. Much of what has gone before in this series of essays are dependent on his argument for a common denominator of nonduality across Asian spiritual traditions as well as a few instances of nondual orientation by a few important Western characters such as Blake and Meister Eckhart. For the most part the Western tradition from the Semites and the Greeks, however, were dualistic in the extreme. Thus no indigenous nondual tradition other than the nondual heresy of Islam that exists in the West. And Islam has been excluded as Other by the Orientalist tradition within the West. Loy's book however presents a very interesting argument with respect to how nonduality appears in other Asian traditions in terms of both their similarities and differences. His book is unique in as much as it pulls out Nonduality as a central concept that spans several different Asian traditions and then he considers the structural relations between these traditions in order to understand their differences as well as

their similarities. So Loy's book is central to our own argument because he lays out the key problems of defining nonduality as a general tendency in Asian philosophical and spiritual traditions while not ignoring their differences, yet in the end his work is perennialist because it takes as a basic premise that the nondual experience or thought itself is the same beyond these structural differences between traditions. But his perennialism is more sophisticated because it states that the experience is the same even if the ontological commitments are structurally arrayed in terms of difference. Most perennialism is not this sophisticated. My own feeling is that not only is the ontological commitments different but also the experiences and thoughts about nonduality are different in the various traditions, i.e. the goals are in fact different and there can be variety in nonduality, and that wisdom comes from considering this variety rather than suppressing it. Also with regard to some of these traditions, Loy does not distinguish nonduality from monism rigorously. For me nonduality means Not One! Not Two!, but something Other than oneness and plurality. Loy on the other hand is willing to consider traditions that are monistic like Sankara's Advaita Vedanta as being nondual. So in some sense he takes the term "nondual" mean either monist or Other than oneness and plurality and thus he does not in my view present a pure nonduality but a more literal nonduality in some cases in order to make his argument work better from a structural point of view. It is unfortunate that we do not have a term for the difference between the monist version of the nondual as opposed to the non-monist and non-pluralist position that I would like to advocate. In other words, there is always slippage away from pure nonduality nonmonism either in to monism or into amorphousness. And we need to carefully consider this slippage into impure states of nonduality because they can subvert the very position we would like to uphold. But what is good about Loy's presentation is that with the many quotes he gives he shows how this slippage is ever present among what he calls nondual tradition and in a way it is right to represent this slippage structurally which is

what he does when he considers difference among these traditions. Of course, his depictions of the traditions are oversimplified and each one is very complex and multifaceted and he has generalized in order to build a case for comparison and contrast. But it is worth while to make this general case because it allows him to draw out certain implications of nonduality for Western philosophy that might not be seen otherwise. In my own case I studied Oriental Philosophy first and then Western Philosophy so I always looked at the degenerate Western philosophy based on dualism from the vantage point of nondual traditions which I always saw as more sophisticated. However, I came to appreciate that the Western traditions have their own fascination in as much as they have hidden roots in nonduality that are not always recognized. Loy attempt to bridge between these Nondual Asian tradition and the Western traditions as much as he can and that is worth while because such attempts are usually not so well informed concerning both of the traditions, Western and Asian. Loy considers at first five types of nonduality:

- ?? The negation of dualistic thinking
- ?? The nonplurality of the world
- ?? The nondifference between subject and object
- ?? The nonduality of duality and nonduality
- ?? The possibility of mystical unity between God and Man

Loy concentrates on the third of these and then divides it into three parts which relate to Nonduality of Perception, Thought and Action. He also concentrates on three traditions Vedanta, Buddhism and Taoism each of which he glosses treating historically. This presentation is very interesting and is recommended as a first introduction to nonduality within the Asian traditions. I would have added Sufism to the list of nondual traditions considered and Loy mentions that Sufism is such a candidate tradition. But I

would also make the point that Buddhism is a Heresy of Hinduism in India, Taoism is a heresy of Confucianism in China, and Islam as embodied spiritually in Sufism is a heresy in the West. Advaita Vedanta is a form of Vedanta that was influenced by Buddhism. A more historical treatment is really needed to understand the interactions between these faiths and the traditions to which they are heresies. In each case there is a long structural tradition that explored every possible permutation of the central concepts of the tradition in question, and at some point each of these traditions bump into the concept of nonduality, in the strict sense which is neither monism nor pluralism. This is an earth shattering event in each of these traditions and the whole rest of the tradition is the attempt to come to terms, mostly by denial, sometimes by war and genocide, with this radical departure from the tradition itself into a pure nonduality which has profound implications for the development of the tradition from that point onwards. In this book we are trying to say what the results of this earth shattering collision will be for Western Science when it begins to recognize the possibility of nonduality emerging from within itself in a structurally determined way.

The flaw in the Loy book in my opinion is that he does not adequately explain why there are five types of nonduality, and why there are three types of nonduality within the subject/object nondual type. In other words these are projected distinctions without any thought as to their intrinsic motivation. These projected distinctions dominate the book but are left mostly unexplained as to their source. A deeper book would take on the question as to the source of these kinds of nonduality and the implicit sub-division of the subject/object type of nonduality. However, if we ignore the groundlessness of his distinctions for the moment we might consider what is really the most interesting thing in the entire book which is the diagram on page 183 and his brief explanation of it. In that diagram there is a three circle Venn diagram with nondual perception, nondual action and nondual

thought, and he posits that the interaction and interference between each of these pairs produces dualistic reifications such as Action to obtain craved object which come from nondual Action and Nondual Perception interfering, Conceptualized percept (object) coming from the interference of Nondual Perception and Nondual Thought, and finally Conceptualized Action (Intention) coming from the interference of Nondual Thought and Nondual Action. At the center of this Venn diagram is the Sense of the Self.

“This understanding allows us to account for the difference between dualistic and nondualistic experience without needing to add anything extraneous. If perception, action and thinking are in themselves nondual, then we can understand our usual sense of nonduality as due to their superimposition and interaction. As an example of such interaction, we have discussed the relations among craving, conceptualizing, and causality. The general problem seems to be that the three modes of experience interfere with each other and thus distort and obscure each other’s nondual nature.¹”

It seems to me that Loy has had a fundamental insight here. But it also calls into question the reification of nondual thought, action and perception such that they can interfere with each other in order to produce duality, and this is itself a basic problem because what gives us these three as ontologically substantial enough to interfere with each other to produce duality. In a way it is this key insight which begs the question of the source of the original categorization that Loy is using, which is drawn from his gloss of the tradition and his systematization of the traditions, but now these glosses become substantive things that can interfere with each other and be superimposed and interact to produce duality. This begging of the question along with the positing of what seems to me a brilliant insight as to how duality might arise out of nondual difference suggests that we need to think more deeply concerning the categorization of the types of nonduality and the sorts of subject/object nonduality that are here reified into somethings that can interfere with each other in order to produce the degenerate state of duality out of primordial nonduality, but if there is nonduality how did it

ever become five types or within a type three sorts. In other words how did this difference within nonduality arise? Does not nonduality also mean non-plurality. And is that not the antithesis of monism which is also denied in most cases? On the surface Loy’s text seems coherent, but actually all talk about difference or sameness within nonduality is a deep problem because it is sameness and difference that distinguish monism and plurality as duals themselves. So we can see that Loy is really just introducing us to the problems that have been mulled over for centuries in nondual traditions of sameness and difference. He is bringing us nonduality packaged in a dualistic way, even if the packaging is brilliantly conceived, for how duality arises out of nonduality is one of the perennial questions and he has an interesting take on that, unfortunately that take on it depends on the dualistic differentiation of nonduality itself. What we really need is a way that the various nondual modes arise spontaneously so that fabrication does not get in the way of our appreciation of David Loy’s concept of how duality appears out of the interaction of nonduals, without thinking that their plurality is a projection of duality, nor that they are unified and thus one with themselves as substantive matters within themselves.

Nonduality and Emergent Meta-systems

The answer to this conundrum is not easy to explain. However, it is essential to attempt to explain it, because the whole theory of nonduality stands or falls on the basis of finding a non-fabricated way to differentiate nonduality from itself, i.e. with an spontaneously arising self-differentiation that could then lead to the sort of intra-nondual interference that produces duality which Loy suggests. The unfortunate thing is that the theory of how this could possibly occur is somewhat complex. But because it takes us to the heart of Special Systems Theory and Emergent Meta-systems Theory it is worth rehearsing here as a reminder of the depth of our candidate theory for a Nondual Science.

¹ Page 183

Here the theory is not explaining phenomena but instead nonduality and its differentiation itself. So it begins to get to the point of what a Science of Nonduality might look like rather than its contrary which is a Nondual Science which considers phenomena in a nondual light. The key point that we need to consider is where Action, Perception and Thought come from as distinguishable elements that can be differentiated and can be nondual as well as dual. How you tell Perception from Action, Action from Thought and Thought from Perception is not an altogether straight forward question. Action is a prerequisite for perception. Thought is a prerequisite for Action. Perception is a prerequisite for Thought. Round and Round the Ragged Rock the Ragged Rascal Ran. How do we segment the blur that these mutually activating faculties represent in the process of living. As Plato said we want to cut through the natural joints in the phenomena not saw through the bones. In effect we want to make non-nihilistic distinctions between these faculties of the human being. How do we do that?

The answer is through the Emergent Meta-system itself. It is the Emergent Meta-system (EMS) that produces things out of nothing. It represents the spontaneous arising of difference out of nothing. If we are going to ground these differences between faculties for nonduality then we must ground them in something that produces spontaneous differences. And it turns out that the EMS produces Action and Perception as transforms naturally. Our question is how thought fits into the picture and why there is a fourfold structure and not a three fold structure, in other words the situation is more complex than Loy realizes.

The EMS is a normal system together with the three Special systems that form a cycle and together represent the Meta-system through their conjunction. The EMS has four reified moments monads in a swarm, views in a constellation, candidates in a slate and seeds in a pod. These moments are connected by four fundamental transformations from Mutual

Action, to Schematization, to Annihilation, to Creation. The unfolding of the EMS cycle is according to a relaxation of algebraic properties, so what drives the cycle is its seeking a low energy. The transformation from monad to view is by mutual action and that naturally generates action as the loss of the commutative property in algebra. The transformation from view to candidate is by schematization and that naturally generates perception as the loss of the associative property in algebra. The transformation of candidate to seed is by annihilation or cancellation and we will say that this naturally generates thought as the loss of the division property in algebra. Finally the transformation of seed to monad is by creation and we will say that this naturally generates emergence as the loss of the identity of conjugates in algebra. If we follow this template for our thinking about Loy's problem of fabricating categories we realize that at least two of Loy's faculties are given directly in the EMS structure. We need to stretch to see how thought relates to annihilation or cancellation, and we need to add another faculty that relates to emergence that Loy did not consider, and perhaps is unconsidered in the nondual traditions in general but which is central to understanding our own Western Tradition. First thought can be related to cancellation because Kant in the Critique of Pure Reason says that Reason produces antimonies that cancel each other out and cannot be resolved without combining reason with experience to produce understanding. So Thought is intrinsically related to cancellation as we can see in the application of thought to mathematics where it manipulates equations. If we consider this carefully we realize why in many nondual traditions there is the idea of no-thought, i.e. the cancellation of thoughts with each other to clear the slate of the mind to experience enlightenment directly. I have experienced this myself and you can try it as well. If you are having some incessant thought, merely confront it with the assertion of its opposite and you will find that thoughts cancel each other just the way that particles and anti-particles annihilate

in physics. Thought and Action are opposites of each other and are the opposite sides of the EMS cycle. Actions produce unintended consequences and the solution to the problem of action is nondual action (wu wei) which means completely spontaneous action. On the other hand Thoughts when they cancel produce side effects and they point on the other hand to nondual alternatives to thought which are unthinkable intrinsically. Thus there is no thought or concept associated with nonduality, but there is the possibility of nondual action (wu wei). So when the Buddha is asked about antimonies he is silent and his silence is a deliberate action. In this way there is an asymmetry between thought and action with action being more basic than thought.

On the other hand we can think of perception as a schematizing projection and the opposite of that is emergence of things hither to unheard of and unknown that change the structure of the world. Emergence is something that is unknown in the Asian traditions and something taboo as nonduality is in our tradition. So it is interesting that the EMS structure makes us juxtapose the projection of schematization in perception with the emergence of new orders and that creativity of man and nature that are not recognized in most nondual traditions. Perception on the one hand gives us the noumena, the suppression of the phenomena itself in itself, but on the other hand it gives us the true names of the things themselves which speak to us in their own voices. On the other hand Emergence gives us the difference between genuine and artificial emergence which determines how our tradition will be transformed and how we will see the things in each different era of the emergent transformation of our Western Tradition. Emergence itself is a socially generated change in the projection process and its internal ordering of things. But this is dependent on the qualities of the noumena that are hidden to us and the extent to which we intuit what lies beyond our projections onto the things and thus assign the things what Socrates calls True Names. Perception and Emergence are duals of each other. Perception is more fundamental

than Emergence in as much as we follow the dictum of Husserl and go to the things themselves and let them speak for themselves and thus allow their noumenal qualities to shine though to some extent beyond the projections. However, Nihilism and Genuine Emergence drives the structuring of the entire world in which we see the perceptions. Emergence is something that comes out more in our dualistic Western Culture and is more foreign to Asian nondual Cultures. So it is no wonder that Loy did not think of Emergence as another faculty to add to the three he concentrates upon. It is interesting that the EMS forces us in that unexpected direction.

If we accept the EMS as generating the difference between the nondual faculties and accept that emergence needs to be added as a faculty then we have to accept that the situation that Loy describes is more complicated than he suspects because there is a four way interference between these four faculties instead of the much simpler three way interference he describes. That four way interference has sixteen possible states. Besides the three that Loy posits we can also see Emergent Theory, Emergent Action, Emergent Phenomena as the added two way combinations. In addition there is the three way combinations, and the central four way combination which we can still call the sense of self, but in this case the sense of self comes from the collusion of the EMS cycle continually producing something out of nothing, and thus we are talking not about the ego as unity but the Jungian self as totality. Also we can see that below this totalization of the overlapping of the four faculties we can see that at root there is a singularity that gives rise to the various representations that appear in the EMS cycle. So the EMS fundamentally appears in the space between the symbolic and the imaginary to use the terminology of Lacan as described by Deleuze in his article on Recognizing Structuralism. Monad, View, Candidate and Seed are images of the singularities unfolded from each other in the various mirrorings within the inwardly mirrored tetrahedron. Once we realize that the four

faculties arise spontaneously as a result of the EMS cycle seeking lowest energy, and that the faculties which are kept apart in the EMS structure may interfere with each other within the space of the inwardly mirrored tetrahedron when we no longer consider them as just reflections in the mirrors, then it is possible to see how the interference might produce the various degenerate dualisms out of the nondual faculties. However for each interfering normal pair of faculties cited by Loy in his model there are also Emergent perceptions, Emergent actions, and Emergent Thoughts. The three way combinations define each faculty negative as the difference from all the others so that adds no new information. But we do see that there is a difference between the state of complete overlapping, i.e. the totality of the self, and the null state which represents none of the faculties, i.e. the emptiness of the self. Structurally as Lacan says the Ego becomes an empty mobile signifier which brings the null state into the totality of the self though the interfering series of affectations of the faculties. This is how we get the difference between each singularity and the swarm of which it is a part within the various mirror images.

What is interesting about this model is that Emergence is a fundamental part of it, and so it actually brings together the Western way of looking at things centered in emergence as a way of life with the fairly static nondual traditions which do not recognize the importance of emergence because they were for the most part not confronted by it. The fact that the EMS combines the two perspectives is quite striking and has deep implications for nondual science. Nondual Emergence is the capacity to make non-nihilistic distinctions based on supra-rationality. Supra-rationality is something that Loy does not appreciate very well because he continually uses paradox as his touch stone for understanding nonduality. This is a common misunderstanding based on Orientalism. Since our tradition cannot see supra-rationality very well we tend to think that the opposite of excluded middle must be paradox, but paradox is fusion while supra-rationality means keeping

apart but having two things true at the same time. Supra-rationality is superimposition within the probability wave in Quantum Mechanics. Paradox is entanglement in Quantum Mechanics. These are the two limits of reason and doxa. Reason ends in the supra-rational and doxa ends in paradox. Really Loy's book should be rewritten separating out these two responses that underlie nonduality. The EMS model with mirrors is supra-rational. The Venn diagram model with overlap is paradoxical. One violates non-contradiction and excluded middle giving us fusion and a big mess from a rational point of view. The other supports and validates reason in spite of simultaneity of operation but is not seen if we assume non-contradiction or excluded middle. Mahayana Buddhism is a combination of the Hindu heresies of the Jain and the Hinayana Buddhists. Jains saw everything as Supra-rational. Buddhists supported an-atman. Jains had the seven foundational statements, and the Buddhists had the tetralemma. Mahayana Buddhism combined these two approaches into a single heresy which was very powerful that said that all the Dharmas were empty not just the self. Mahayana Buddhism in this way was a kind of super heresy that combined the paradoxical limit represented by the seven statements of the Jains, and the supra-rational limit represented by their view of opposites as being simultaneously true without interfering. The Buddhists added to this mixture the emptiness of logic seen in the tetralemma brought out by Nagarjuna and the emptiness of a dharma which caused all dharmas to become empty eventually. It causes a flourishing of Mahayana Schools which tried to explain how all these elements of the two heresies fit together into a single view and solving the paradox of the selfishness of the Buddha by positing the Bodhisattva ideal. The truth of the matter is somewhere between the limit of paradox and the limit of supra-rationality, i.e. between the 2ⁿ overlappings of the Venn Diagrams or the N² ramified mirrorings of the EMS. The truth is in the deeper nondual of manifestation between emptiness and void. But allowing for Emergence in Thought, Perception

and Action changes everything when it comes to the consideration of the nondual because it introduces dynamism in which the unheard-of or unthought-of appears from out of no where to change everything as it does in the Western Tradition more than in the Traditions that spawned nondual ways of looking at things. But emergence itself is nondual if it is genuine emergence otherwise it is nihilism. And so right there we get a difference that might produce the difference between the nondual and the dualistic. Similarly there is the difference between non-action and karma, or the difference between the true names and the noumena, or the difference between the side effects and the nondual alternatives. In other words it is not the interference between the faculties that produce the dualism but an inherent difference from themselves within each faculty as a transformation of the EMS. This difference from itself within itself is what reacts with the other faculties the produce dualism in all its forms, and particularly the dualism between emergent and non-emergent or nihilistic orders which defines the unfolding of time. The addition of emergence deals with the problem of time but not as entropy but as neg-entropy. The question arises how does nonduality change in the face of emergence? The answer is that it separates artificial from genuine emergence via non-nihilistic distinctions. In time we are continually called upon to make non-nihilistic distinctions as our context changes and we are confronted by all sorts of situations that call for non-nihilistic action, non-nihilistic perception, and non-nihilistic thought. From thought we find we go on to recognize the emergence of new orders which then create new situations for non-nihilistic action. Genuine emergence clears the decks and institutes new orders that repattern our context and situation. We must always be ready for this fundamental reworking of our world, or any of the other schemas that we find ourselves projecting ourselves within. Maintaining a nondual stance in an emergent world is a much harder problem than maintaining it in a world whose order does not change as in most traditional societies where nonduality has been spawned through spiritual

traditions. Thus nonduality within the Western emergence prone world is a much more difficult concept than in the Asian traditions where there is relative stasis within culture and society. So the question becomes what is emergent nonduality and how do we distinguish emergent perception, thought and action from Action to obtain craved object, Conceptualized Percept (object) and conceptualized Action (intention). We notice that these three are dualistic modes produced by interference of the basic nondual perception, thought and action faculties. When we add emergence as a faculty then we get emergent thought, action and perception as dualistic modes because time is created by the discontinuities of emergent events that effect these faculties. We can posit that when nondual faculties act alone, i.e. they are separate as in the EMS model then there is no duality produced. But when they are allowed to intermingle in a paradoxical state then we get dualistic modes as interference patterns. Complete overlap of all the nondual states produces the ultimate mixture or fusion which gives us a sense of the self as in the Demasio conception in The Feeling of what Happens. But the overlapping of two nonduals produces an apparent duality. The overlapping of three nonduals produces the Other of any one nondual. So Otherness from self, or self-consciousness is given to us from the overlapping of three nonduals as opposed to one nondual. But the overlapping of two nonduals merely gives a chiasmic effect from the point of view of the self which is full overlapping, it is a degenerate state and a reification that appears quite naturally through the overlapping process. While in fact the non-overlapping nondual faculties return us to the EMS structure as the transforms around the EMS cycle. Those transforms move from higher energy levels to the next lower energy level. The Self as paradoxical total overlap is continually juxtaposed to the null state of no faculty which is its opposite and which defines the EMS where there are boundaries between the various faculties. Self appears as Ego unity and as Self as totality. Self as totality covers all 16 Venn diagram states as well as the EMS

ground. Self as Unity appears as the null state acting as floating signifier moving around the Venn diagram states. Self as fusion is an undifferentiated state where the various nonduals are not differentiated. If we consider the EMS to be the ground state of existence in which the faculties arise as transformations between moments of the EMS cycle such that they are a supra-rational model of independent moments within a cycle of arising and falling back into the void/emptiness then we can see the Venn diagram states as the super-structure of Being which moves toward the paradox of complete fusion of the transformations seen as faculties.

Our model of this is the four Arche of Jung mentioned in Aion as the Quadrate of Quadrates. We have found that the four arche which is a minimal system of minimal system with sixteen elements is the differentiation just prior to schematization. It is the picture of the cycle seen in the epic of Gilgamesh which validates the finding of Jung that this is the basic archetypal pattern. We see this pattern in the Four Zoas of Blake. Blake was the poet prophet of the imaginal in the West corresponding to Shaykh al-Akbar in Islam as an explorer of the what Corbin calls the Imaginal realm. Albion the universal man or Anthropos is asleep and as he dreams his self breaks up into the Zoas. The Zoas are the four life forces who are related to the many versions or faces of God seen in the Bible. Blake works out the mythology of the pre-creation time in which these Zoas along with their female emanations, specters and shadows come into conflict with each other and bind each other by performing irreversible actions that define their reification and alienation and anomie. The Zoas are Urizen, Urthona becomes Los(s), Tharmas, and Luvah becomes Orc. Urizen is Reason, Urthona is the relation to the earth (Earth Owner) which is the seat of the imagination (Los), Tharmas is the sea and emotion, and Luvah is the body that become desire (Orc). Notice that there is a relation between the four faculties and the four Zoas. Thought is Urizen. Action is Luvah since we must use the body to

act. Perception is Tharmas because it is immersion in the stream of experience and sensation. This leaves Urthona or the Imagination as Los to represent Emergence, and we know that Imagination is key to creativity. So we can see that the expanded four fold version of Loy's nonduals leads to a picture of Blake's Zoas. That means that the sixteen states of Venn diagram overlap are also related to the differentiation of the Zoas into their emanations, specters, and shadows. But this is a fundamentally different organization aligned with the separation of the arche into a minimal system (tetrahedron) of minimal systems (tetrahedrons). So suddenly we have the narrative of the precreation mythology that Blake proposes as a way of looking at the interaction between the four Zoas, or four faculties that are spontaneously created by the EMS. This is given in Vala or the Four Zoas which is an unpublished poem during the lifetime of Blake. It is a radical vision of the world that lays behind Blake's published poems as the fundamental story from which all the other mythological stories arise. It is a story of Nine Nights of which there are two Seventh Nights. On the last night Albion wakes up and renews the world. Albion who sleeps is the fusion of the four Zoas which we call the self. He is related to Vishnu in Hindu mythology and Hun Tun in Chinese mythology, as the amorphous fused self, that stands opposite the null state which represents the empty or void self. It is the one on one conflict between the Zoas that produce the hellish world that devolves from Eden through Beulah to Urlo to the realm of generation and decay. In Eden the Zoas are whole, but in Beulah they split off from their emanations and male and female arise, in Urlo the Shadows appear and in the realm of Generation and Decay the Specters appear. It is the specters that can be thought of as the elements that appear in swarms in the EMS from the point of view of the Venn diagram superstructure of Being over the infrastructure of Existence, i.e. paradox over the supra-rational.

Blake produced a work that was based on

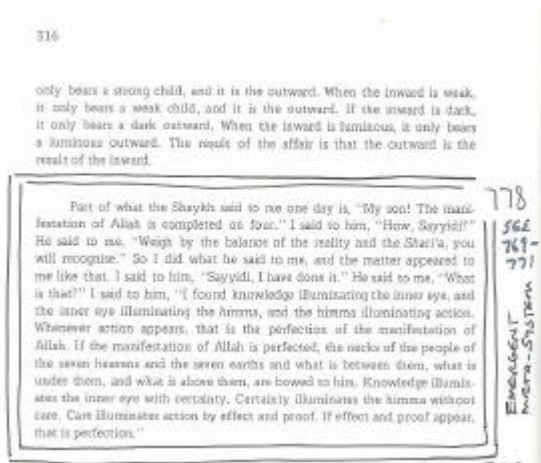
Young's Night thoughts, the most popular religious poem of the century in which Blake lived. Blake made illustrations of Young's night thoughts. It was on these illustrations that he wrote in the place of the text of Night Thoughts his own text of Vala (The Four Zoas) which he illustrated as well with pencil drawings. Those drawings were partially pornographic and thus were erased by an unknown hand. The poem itself was heavily modified over time and so it forms a palimpsest in which it is difficult to discern the intention of the author, Blake. So the text is fundamentally structuralist in as much as it presents two series of two poems and two sets of illustrations which are interposed with each other. An excellent commentary on the relations between these series in the manuscript is Blake's Critique of Transcendence² by Petter Otto. It has to be read side by side with the photographs of the manuscript³. But what we see here are two double series intertwined, one textual as a poem and the other visual in the form of figural drawings. This is the first sign of a Structural text according to Deleuze⁴. We can show point for point that the Four Zoas is a structural text. But we will not do so here. The point we want to make is that Loy's mention of Blake as an advocate of nonduality in our tradition is apropos because his Zoas are an image of the four faculties that arise out of the EMS and which are blended in the Venn diagram representation that gives us the relation between Albion the Sleeping man and the Four nondual Faculties which come into conflict with other in the nightmares of the sleeping Vishnu, and which finally are integrated again when the sleeping man Albion awakes, where agricultural metaphors are used to represent the EMS structure itself in action, as we transfer out of the illusory dreams of Being into the true reality of Existence where the EMS operates. It is important to have a model within our own

tradition of the breakdown of the Nondual into dualism and Blake supplies us with that vision. That way we can know that nonduality and the production of duality from nonduality is central to our own tradition and not just something imported from other traditions. Unfortunately we do not have more examples like this one of Blake's. But this one unique example is enough to see that what Loy is talking about can be drawn out and represented into a theory of the arising of the dual from the nondual which fits into our world picture as a critique of it from the point of view of the visionary poet who is the root of the Romantic movement within the West. Blake produced a structural text that encompassed his vision but did not reveal it to the world because of its radical nature which saw Jesus on the cross as Orc on the tree of mystery, an early radical critique of Christianity in line with the later critiques of Nietzsche. Loy's argument is fully abstract suggesting that there are three faculties that are nondual intrinsically which interfere with each other to produce dualism. But this fully abstract argument is completely fleshed out by Blake in the Four Zoas where he shows in narrative how the four Zoas conflict with each other to produce the hell on earth that dualism causes, and how when Albion awakes he puts these conflicts in order and returns to the natural agricultural metaphors that represent the EMS as Existence beyond the delusion and illusion of Being. The sleep of Albion is structural in the sense that the fusion of the Zoas is different from the totality of the states of the Venn Diagram of possible overlappings. Also we see that the symmetrical minimal system of minimal systems view is different from the Venn diagram view that has as the opposite to fusion the empty or null set state. Both produce sixteen states but these states are essentially different series, analogous to the difference between the figures and the places in Ilm al-Raml. The Venn diagram series produces the floating signifier which is null or empty. This is the difference between the Advaita Vedanta vision of Sat and the Buddhist conception of Emptiness of the Atman being the key concept. The whole question of whether you can have a

² Oxford UP 2000

³ The Four Zoas by William Blake by C. Magno and D. Erdman (Lewisberg; Buckness UP 1987)

⁴ "How do we recognize Structuralism," G. Deleuze in Desert Islands 2004 Semiotext(e).



The EMS structure also appears in Shaykh al-Akbar in the four types of human reproduction, Adam, Eve, Jesus and Normal Human Reproduction. Thus the EMS structure is recognized by some of the Sufi Masters and so this ultimate picture of the dynamic of existence is canonized in the nondual Sufic Islamic tradition as well as in other nondual traditions where representations of the EMS structure abound. However, here we have used it to give the spontaneous structuring that the argument of Loy demands. The Zoas or Nondual Faculties must arise spontaneously without fabrication in order to be merged to produce duality. They cannot be just arbitrary categorizations but must be produced by some more fundamental Imaginary structure, which then in the Four Zoas gives rise to a Symbolic Narrative that takes us from the devolution into the Zoas from Albion back to the awaking of Albion and the return to the natural EMS structures. So dualism in Being arises from the nondual and returns to the nondual at the symbolic level beyond the imaginary level of mirroring that produces the EMS structure itself out of the fundamental singularities that drive the structural unfolding at the Symbolic level. These symbolic and imaginary images underlie the abstract Real images that would see the various nondual faculties as having Being, i.e. truth, reality, identity and presence. That reality forms the basis for the superstructure of the Peirce-Fuller categories (Zeroth, First, Second, Third, Fourth) to unfold which give the basis for the recognition of

phenomena. In other words as we look into the Lacanian Real, Imaginary, Symbolic realms we are looking into the negative of the Peirce/Fuller categories that dominate phenomena and give us a basis for the recognition of phenomena. The Symbolic is about the genetic unfolding of the Imaginary realm of mirroring, i.e. the Imaginal archetypal zone described by Jung which underlies the Real. The sixteen Imaginary elements of the Arche arise as nodes in a field and the Symbolic covers that genetic unfolding of the field. They are nondual faculties at the level of the Real where Loy recognizes them in nondual traditions. But beyond that they are based on the transformations between moments in the EMS infrastructure of existence. As transformations they are imaginary, but the unfolding of that EMS structure into the realm of paradox is Symbolic. The bootstrapping of the EMS itself can be called Generative and is an even deeper level called Autogenesis. Understanding that there is some basis for the arising of the Nondual Faculties from the EMS and also comprehending that these faculties can give rise to duality by their interaction as the Zoas interact to produce the degraded world prior to the arising of Albion, is an important connection into our own Western tradition through the work of one of its most important nondual visionaries, i.e. Blake.

Deconstructing Deconstruction

The other interesting part of Loy's book is his critique of deconstruction and his positing that Nonduality must result in a deconstruction of deconstruction. What I want to point out is that deconstruction based on Differance is at the Third Meta-level of Being called Hyper Being, and that if you double it or deconstruct Deconstruction then you get to the Fourth Meta-level of Being which is Wild Being, as defined by Merleau-Ponty in The Visible and the Invisible. Deleuze has tried with Guattari to construct a Philosophy at this meta-level of Being in Anti-Oedipus and Thousand Plateaus. Thus Loy is pointing toward Wild being with his idea of deconstruction of deconstruction

which of course Deleuze calls a kind of constructionism. However, Ultra Being which distinguishes Emptiness and Void the two nonduals are at the Fifth Meta-level of being, so Loy's critique of Derrida does not really attain the level of Existence beyond Being that is needed to enter into the images of nonduality that appear in Buddhism and Taoism or even attain the level of understanding Ultra Being that appears in Advaita Vedanta. And the problem is that Loy does not go beyond Derrida to consider the work of Deleuze. Derrida is trapped inside the structuralist level while Deleuze rises above it and gives a synopsis of the entire structuralist level which opens up a way into the next deeper level which is the Generative level beyond the realms that Lacan explores.

Loy is not really aware of the meta-levels of Being and does not realize that Existence appears at the fifth meta-level of Being as a phase transition, and thus existence is embedded in and intrinsic to the meta-levels of Being. This is what puts emptiness and void, i.e. nonduality at the center of our Western Worldview and everything within it including Science. We move toward this empty core one meta-level at a time and deconstructing deconstruction only puts us at the fourth meta-level where the reversible chiasms appear just prior to the unthinkability of existence. Loy does not spend much time considering the importance of unthinkability in nondual traditions but it is this unthinkability that shuts off the possibility of thought and moves us into a nondual thought, just like nondual action is spontaneous non-intentional action, i.e. in a certain sense non-action. Similarly nondual perception is in a way a non-perception. In other words when you leave the projection then you encounter the radical failure of action, thought and perception and it is this that one must deal with directly if one is to understand existence as opposed to Being. Loy has not quite obtained this level of insight and sophistication and so his argument appears much weaker than is necessary. The nondual faculties are the failure of the ordinary

faculties. This failure throws us into another realm, the nondual realm. We approach the point of failure by steps up the ladder of meta-levels. Loy has not quite reached the requisite stage in his critique of Derrida that is necessary for a transition into nonduality as such. Thus his argument although well founded still does not make the final connection that would step from Wild Being at the fourth meta-level to the fifth meta-level. So he does not reach the pay dirt or the mother load of nonduality by his critique of postmodern philosophy. This vitiates his argument. If we were to rewrite the argument today we would transition from Derrida to Deleuze who has built a philosophy in Wild Being, and also who has played with the nature of Ultra Being in terms of Difference-in-itself in his Difference and Repetition. He describes the Symbolic Realm of Structuralism exhaustively in his Logic of Sense. Thus he gives us a very good platform to go from Hyper Being of Differance to Wild Being to Ultra Being embedded in Existence. We can now understand that there is a stair way into existence via the meta-levels of Being and Loy only made it part way up that stair way because of the time he was writing when Derrida was at the height of his popularity and Deleuze had not come along and put the philosophy of Derrida at the Hyper Being level in the wider context of Wild Being. Sartre in Critique of Dialectical Reason moves beyond Process Being by offering a Dialectic of Dialectics to get to the third meta-level. At that level Heidegger and Derrida find ~~Being~~ crossed out which I call Hyper Being following Merleau-Ponty. By considering the Difference of Difference one then discovers Wild Being beyond the Hyper Dialectic of Heidegger's Process Being and its Antinomy of Sartre's Nothingness. Once Wild Being was uncovered various philosophers attempted to build their philosophies at that level like Deleuze, Castoralias, and Hans. It is just one more step into the unthinkableness of Existence at the Ultra Being level. Deleuze starts to play with making that transition but does not actually make it clearly. It took me thirty years to figure out how Ultra Being could exist as the

externality of the projection process and the difference between emptiness and void. Now that this series of steps into existence are clear we have a gradated means of stepping into nonduality from our dualist/monist tradition. That strengthens Loy's argument quite a bit.

Types of Nonduality

We have dealt now with the differences between the nondual faculties that Loy suggests and how they might degenerate into dualistic approaches to the world. We have seen that the EMS itself provides the template for the differentiation of these faculties if we expand the list to four and use the EMS transformations as the basis for these nondual faculties. Then we noticed that there are two formulations, the Venn Diagram and the EMS diagram that correspond to paradoxical and supra-rational views of the interaction of these faculties. Finally we give the Four Zoas as a concrete vision expressed in poetry of the process of degeneration and renewal of these interacting faculties. See my work [Primal Archetypal Wholeness](#) for a more complete picture of the myths of Vishnu, Albion and Hun Tun express this ambiguous wholeness of the merged nondual faculties. In what has been said so far the main point was to find a motivation for the differences between the faculties within the Subject/Object type of Nonduality that Loy concentrates on in his book. But we must also consider the higher level categories of the types of nonduality mentioned above that Loy begins by defining before focusing in on the Subject/Object type of Nonduality.

The negation of dualistic thinking is the sort of practice that Nagarguna engages in which is skeptical and reminds us in our tradition of Sextus Empiricus in as much as it spends most of its time making negative statements about formulated doctrines that are held by others which are ultimately dualistic. So in some sense the negation of dualistic thinking is a stance toward others that support dualism by someone taking a nondual position, i.e. someone who has realized the truth and reality (Haqq) of the

nonduality of Subject and Object.

The nonplurality of the world on the other hand has to do with the ontological commitments of someone who has taken a nondual position with respect to things in the world. If the separation between subject and object becomes problematic then the ontological commitments to certain kinds of things also become problematic. In Buddhism this is expressed with the idea that emptiness means interpenetration, and the idea that all the dharmas are empty that appears in Mahayana Buddhism. Just as the negation of dualistic thinking has to do with our relations toward others so the concept of interpenetration has to do with our relations with all other things in the universe from a nondual perspective. These types of nonduality show us that all difference has not been forgotten just because the subject and object are nondual, there is still difference with other people and difference with other things that need to be accounted for which will drive us deeper than we would have to go if there were only oneself in relation to the world that had to be considered. In Buddhism the other things are the Dharmas which are taken from Shavait Tattvas which are considered the fundamental archetypal things in the world which are different and which are the object of ontological commitments, these are basically phenomenological unities within experience. But in Taoism there are the things of nature which are considered the basic things of which human beings are just one among many. What other things and other people exist and what their status is in a nondual world is an open question answered in many ways by various nondual traditions. Loy bases his analysis of the structural differences between traditions on these issues.

The nonduality of duality and nonduality is a meta-level consideration as to whether there is a deeper nonduality, which we call manifestation, beyond the dualities of emptiness (in Buddhism) and void (in Taoism). We can see this in rDzog Chen (Ati Yoga) which is a heresy of Buddhism

but also in the T'ien-T'ai tradition⁶ of Chinese Buddhism which finds a loop hole in the argument of Nargarjuna to suggest the existence of a deeper nonduality that merely the two truths, one of which is a surface nonduality. I have my own explanation why I think this deeper nonduality I call Manifestation beyond emptiness and void exists. And this is the deepest that nondual philosophy can go as it looks at the nonduality of nonduality itself and the way that nonduality is differentiated naturally into its various parts. My own explanation uses the Divided Line of Plato and asks the nature of the lines themselves, and says that the lesser lines are emptiness and void while the central line is manifestation the deeper nondual, which I assign to Sufism as the main vehicle for exploration, however other traditions have also realized that there may be a deeper nondual such as those named above and have tried to explore them even if it led to a heresy within their tradition to do so.

Finally we consider along with Loy the question of the relation between God and Man and how that is effected by Nonduality. It is my belief that Islam represents a nondual tradition of revelation and that this is developed in various interesting ways in Sufism which concentrates on Ihsan out of the series Islam, Iman, Ihsan. What is interesting is that Islam is an almost completely non-dual religion, except for a few unique singular points of absurdity, such as Kithr killing the boy, or the angels Harut and Marut bringing Magic to Babylon, and other clearly absurd moments. The Supra-rationality of Islam is little appreciated because the West has done its best to institute excluded middle as a principle set up by Aristotle as the key metaphysical principle in our tradition. This principle makes Supra-rationality which is the dual of paradox almost completely invisible to Western Orientalist scholars who think that beyond reason and doxa there is only paradox. Instead reason itself has its limit not in paradox but in supra-rationality. Paradox itself as

⁶ Swanson, Paul L., Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy, Asian Humanities Press 1989

Hellerstein in Diamond Logic has shown building on the work of G. Spencer Brown in Laws of Form that paradox is always dual, so the supra-rational is the non-dual opposite of these paradoxical duals. Where the Greek, Semite and later Christian views of the world are almost completely dualistic the nondual heresy of this tradition is Islam whose nondual implications are developed within Sufism. It is possible to understand the nature of God and the relation between God and Man based on nonduality and Islam gives us a basis for this sort of approach, but for the most part this was not developed in Islamic theology itself because that was built on an Aristotelian base. It is only in Sufism that departs from the philosophy of Islam based in Greek sources but which tries to stay perfectly true to the revelation itself that we get any development of this nondual basis for understanding the nature of God and Man and their essential non-relation. It is toward this understanding we move when we realize that beyond emptiness and void is a deeper nonduality called manifestation related to the Sifat (Secrets of the Attributes) of God, and an even deeper nondual that is non-manifest called the Dhat (Secret of Secrets) which is beyond that. We can see this clearly in the work of Shaykh al-Niffari where he distinguishes the levels, Knowledge (by which he means wisdom), Gnosis, and Staying. These last two are sometimes referred to as the difference between States and Stations where States are fleeting while Stations are permanent. The point is that we can consider Knowledge as relating to things in the world including other people. Gnosis is experience of the non-relation with God which expresses itself in spiritual states that are related to the manifestation of the Sifat (Secrets of the Attributes) of God. Stayings is the experience of the non-relation with God which expresses itself in the spiritual stations that are related to the non-manifestation of the Dhat (Secret of Secrets) of God that is the inner coherence of the Names and Attributes that is what is sometimes called by Meister Eckhart the Godhead or in Hinduism is called the Nirguna Brahman. These deeper states and stations are nondual, not transcendental, not

immanent. This nonduality changes the whole nature of the non-relation between God and Man in ways that Theology has not even begun to explore yet. In Christianity we talk about the Trinity and the Supreme Being (i.e. the Father) as a transcendental aspect of Being itself. But in Islam there is instead talk of the Necessary Existence of God, in relation to the unnecessary or accidental existence of creation. But in our view God is neither a being nor an existent among other beings or existents, but instead is rooted in the Standing of Manifestation of the Sifat and ultimately in a deeper Standing of the non-manifest Dhat. God neither has Being nor Existence. God is utterly unlike creation, or our projections on creation, and that standing of God is rooted in the deeper layers of nonduality which humans have not explored, mainly because those traditions that are nondual, like Taoism and Buddhism that developed nonduality to the highest degree have no real Theism, and those traditions with a Monotheism have been stuck in Being and have not recognized that God, if there is such an ultimate absolute, must be beyond Being, even beyond Existence. It is only in Sufic Islam that these nondual layers have been explored in any detail by adventures of the spirit who have traveled beyond emptiness and void based on revelation.

So we see that once we posit the nonduality of of subject and object and recognize that it leads to the EMS which give rise to the nondual faculties spontaneously without fabrication of categories, then we enter the realm in which there are questions posed by the nature of things, people and God which need to be answered from this nondual perspective. In Kant's philosophy things and subjects are transcendentals and God is a transcendental which coordinates the unknown aspect of the subject with the unknown aspect of the object to give us a coherent world of experience. Husserl added to these three transcendentals other people and the problem of intersubjectivity which Kant did not recognize formally. It is precisely this transcendental Self that is named the Atman and Hinduism deals

with the relation of the Atman to the Brahman. The Atman is the unity that looks through everyone's eyes. They even had a name for the being that looked through all the eyes of the animals. In this sense the Hindu way of looking at the relation between Self and God included other people, and things were seen as maya, illusions, because consciousness was considered basic. But all this consideration was based on taking Being for granted, and it was the Buddhists who departed from Being into Existence by claiming Anatman, i.e. that the self was nothing rather than a substance.

Can we say that we notice that there are four transcendentals here, i.e. gods, people, objects, and self. It is interesting that these may be related to the Fourfold that Heidegger talks about in his essay on Art which is mortals, immortals, heaven and earth. Notice that the gods are the immortals and the people are mortals. The things are of the Earth, and the self is Dasein, i.e. the openness into which things are shown forth as what they are, which is the nature of Heaven. In other words the Heaven is the clearing-in-being of being-in-the-world (dasein). If we consider the transcendentals in terms of the fourfold then we can go back and recognize that the positive fourfold associated with men is related to a hidden fourfold associated with women which is Chaos, Abyss, Night and Covering, as expounded at length in my work on The Fragmentation of Being and the Path Beyond the Void. In other words the transcendence of the positive fourfold is haunted by the negative immanence of the negative fourfold. In art the best example of the negative fourfold is Finnegan's Wake by Joyce, but it also appears as the Emanations in Blake's Four Zoas. It is from Aristophanes in the Birds that we first hear of the Negative Fourfold, and this wisdom goes back to the Cult at Memphis in Egypt and the Ogdad. The negative fourfold is an image of the reflexive special system. Out of that sea raises a small land mass on which sits a bird which is associated with the Atum (Atom) which is the image of the Autopoietic Special System. Between the Atum-Ra and the Ogdad

are four gods which represent the dissipative special system which give rise to Osiris, who together with Seth, Isis, and Horus represent the EMS. The Egyptian Gods (NTR) are an image of the Special Systems and the EMS. The positive fourfold is seen as the framework that allows the Atum to be seen above the mound of earth in the river on which the bird sets. But the positive fourfold is always haunted by the negative fourfold. Transcendence is always haunted by Immanence. Deleuze thinks that the solution is to stand up for Immanence against all transcendences. But rather Nonduality suggests that there is some other nameless unthinkable, unactionable, unperceptable, nonemergent state orthogonal to both transcendence and immanence, which must be sought. If we consider the positive fourfold as the framework of showing and hiding, i.e. presencing and absencing above the mound in the river after the flood that the first bird sits upon eating a fish from the river then we see that the positive fourfold and thus the transcendences itself is part of the whole picture of the unfolding of the special systems out of the normal system that gives rise to the emergent meta-system, it is the negative of the negative fourfold that appears in the clearing-in-being above the threshold of existence. In point of fact the river is probably the flux of existence, while the sky is the clearing in being, and the mound of earth in the river is probably a representation of Ultra Being. Be that as it may, the point is that even the transcendentials can be traced back to the differentiation of the Special Systems and the EMS and thus can be seen as having a basis in a ground of natural differentiation related to the EMS unfolding and cycling, i.e. the process of coming into existence and going out of existence which gives rise to the persistence and perduration we call Being. In this way we can support Loy's differentiation and distinguishing of the various transcendentials that lay behind his distinction of the various kinds of Nonduality. And of course besides these differentiated transcendentials there is also the relation of nonduality to itself that leads to the discovery of the layering of nonduality and its deeper levels.

Conclusion

Loy's book is a seminal contribution to the study of nonduality. Here we supplement his work by giving some basis for the distinctions he assumes in his book between faculties and between transcendentials that is presupposed by his argument. We do that only to extend his argument and give it a firmer foundation, because his insights must form the basis for future study of nonduality that might lead eventually to the understanding of not just nonduality and its relations to transcendentials and faculties but also to science, in a way similar to the sort of understanding of its relation to logic that Nagarjuna provided. We take Nagarjuna's work and build on it in this study, but it is also good to recognize with Loy that Nonduality is an idea that stretches across several Asian philosophies of very different sorts. We want to recognize both the similarities and structural differences as Loy did but also we want to go more deeply into the nature of nonduality and recognize where the differentiations that he uses to structure his argument come from, and ultimately they come from the Special Systems and Emergent Meta-system. That is to say our theory, is seminal in understanding the unfolding of nonduality itself at least in the way Loy portrays it. What are needed are close studies of various Nondual texts which look closely at the way that the Special Systems and Emergent Meta-systems theory appears in those nondual texts so we can see that they are intrinsic to the texts of various nondual traditions. In this way we might gain confidence that when we use the theory in relation to science we are indeed representing something that is connected intrinsically to the idea of nonduality by many different traditions through various images, such as the image of the infrastructure of the Egyptian gods (NTR). If we recognize that the Egyptian tradition was rooted in a recognition of nonduality then that causes us to see their tradition in a different way. Similarly if we see the Special Systems or the EMS within recognized nondual traditions then that causes us to understand how intrinsic the architectonic of the Special Systems Theory

and the Emergent Meta-systems Theory is to the wisdom of those traditions and thus to recognize its special status as a basis for exploring not just nondual science but also as we are here the science of nonduality itself and the deeper nonduals associated with the transcendentals and not just with the faculties.