

An Alphabetized Bestiary of Thoughts in Response to Universifying via Layman Pascal

A Preamble

I found this text, and the vision behind it, enjoyable, plausibly socially useful & adequately structured to constitute a legitimate integrative metatheory with some unique features. Many elements stand out to me as consonant both with my own attempts in this field and the majority of those without whom I have been in creative dialogue about these metaperspectival mandalas over the years. For example, I have often been at pains to describe what I consider to be the *singular* convergent-divergent nature of the telos of reality and thus I am quite sympathetic to the hybrid concept of “universifying” as an attempt to capture and communicate an ongoing fractal pattern of unity & diversity working together and unfolding from each other. Experimental languaging of this kind is necessary, and to some degree validates, a legitimately higher insight structure. Thus I am looking forward to following these notes with a video discussion.

So take that as the affirmative background and I will go on to present the questions, curiosities & quibbles that stood out. I'll be organizing this by particular subthemes which might initially seem quite abstract and specific but I see them as having resonances for the whole project. If you're unsure about the details or import of any of these remarks we can, I'm sure, iron that out in a live discussion.

A final general thought: it is not always clear who is the anticipated reader. The imagined receiver of this message seems to be some combination of the up-and-coming metamodernists coupled with corporate and nation-state Bureaucrats who are for some

reason interested in hearing a combination of serious developmental theory, new age speculation and extended autobiographical adventures. I personally love the inter-genre blending but I can imagine some readers being confused about the orientation and purpose of this document. Who is the ideal audience?

China

China impresses me insofar as it seems to be one of the few modern nations actually trying to grapple with algorithmic systems, oligarchic international corporations and the need for a broader quantified instantiation of the qualities of virtue and healthy citizenship. Much of the “Western” demonization of these attempts seems to be *ideological* in the sense that it preserves the dominant control structures by evading the need for other nations to challenge themselves to do a better version of these things. What worries me, though, is of course the excessively centralized, bureaucratic and top-down flavor of these attempts. This seems to reflect an imbalance toward the “Confucian” at the expense of the “Taoist.”

Considering the large role that China plays in this text, I would be interested to hear more about that tension. To what degree do you think “control” is a problematic and even anti-Chinese way to approach problems that might require much more complex, naturalistic and indirect/non-linear mode of problem-solving. Without being stupidly prejudiced against the rise of China, what would you say are the ways in which Chinese state power and their problem-solving strategies are in opposition to the principles of the Tao?

Another issue that stands out to me around China is the degree to which its difference from the United States is exaggerated. While it is laudable to raise questions about whether we should prioritize freedom over the well-being of the state or vice versa, these questions also

play into the conventional dualism which I think often obscures the nature of the dominant global system. All modern nation-states, from the US to China to the former Soviet Union, have a mixture of “capitalism” and “socialism.” There are state-regulated exchange markets & there are direct state-controlled infrastructure spending, safety nets and moral conformity norms -- all implemented through suit-wearing bureaucratic “boards” excessively populated by the relatives of a few major families involved in military, news, industry, etc. So in terms of evoking a higher level of sociological analysis, it may be important to emphasize the basic commonality of Western and Chinese control structures so as to highlight solutions from a higher level rather than inviting people to adjust their sense of the differences at the conventional level.

Collectives

Although the text does touch on evolution-oriented, self-managing organizations and the possibility of finding, creating and blending “metamodern pools” of people -- it has little to say about the skills needed. How does one locate, generate, participate in and interlink such emerging collectives? Obviously, no one has the full set of answers here (I’m engaged in that work myself). Depending on the audience for this work, it might be highly relevant to include more in this direction.

There is some mention of collective trauma histories -- which is important -- but where should we be cautious in that regard? What do we guard against in terms of people exaggerating the role of collective trauma, using it as an excuse for projection or failed individuation? And more importantly, how do we distinguish what/who are the collectives in a manner that does not simply default to the assumption that the superficial social

discourse around “nations” and “races” is accurately describing the categories/identities of the collectives when these organizing chunks are themselves nested in earlier and flawed sensibilities.

How does this text think the difference between actual social fields and “merely official groups of people”? What’s the verification approach that separates speech acts and social utility from social holons?

I often point to the way that modern science shifted the identity of whales from “fish” (they are fish-shaped & live in the sea) to mammals (their inner functions display warm blood, live young and air-breathing). There may be something similarly necessary in making a new shift in terms of revising what seems like the obvious folk categories and using other sets of variables and analysis to determine who the groups actually are in the new sense.

Although, again, if the audience for this work is meant to be people already strongly invested in some particular discourse or nation/race identity then that needs to be foregrounded for them.

You also touch on the problem of the lack of expertise in politics. I don’t disagree that competence and maturation in the task-space are ideal but we may wish to be open to the “wisdom of crowds” in a few different ways here. Currently the emerging and accelerating problems of the world seem to be sourced in the well-managed technocratic liberal-moderate, institutionally-trained sectors of the population. Is the problem of missing expertise worse or greater than the problem of systemic indoctrination and false competence? We need only look at the financial crisis of 2008 to see that “well-trained”

people crashed the economy and then were rewarded, secured and put back in charge of things based on the notion of their experience and skill. The problem here is that their actual skill set and experience is in the field of surviving and thriving and disproportionately benefitting from academic and corporate and bureaucratic contexts. The machinery of collective intelligence ceases to function well when people have no skin in the game (i.e. when supposed expertise is rewarded by increasing safety and insulation from the consequences of their own decision). And at that point -- which appears widespread in political systems around the world -- it may not be foolish for the populations to begin gambling on increasingly radical alternatives. Such alternatives are not ideal but they also do not necessarily indicate a foolishness that must be corrected by a return to the kind of officialized expertise and training status that predominated as ideal for the last century or so.

Collective distributed intelligence is also a kind of expert when it is organized to effectively upload and combine the insight of many. So this seems an important consideration: which kinds of protocols (LR) are likely to operate across individuals in ways that produce distributed intelligence at a level analogous to a higher range of developmental capacities and sensibilities? It seems like merely having expertise (or indeed wise, loving, insightful people) is not enough if the social and technological protocols for sharing and implementing intelligence are sourced at a lower structural level of competence.

The limited (of often hypocritical) modern notion of people being "represented" by their vote in a majoritarian system does not imply that there is a failure in the democratic model. Rather than the developmental pattern of increasingly competent sourcing and combining intelligence from among diversely-minded free agents points to "votes" as being

non-representational forms of participatory collaborative intelligence in non-majoritarian votes organized around more advanced principles of collective intelligence that exceed the ability of well-trained experts in many important areas. Simple rules like “secret ballot” and various “voting reform” initiatives already point toward ways that we may be able to improve our shared decision making beyond the archaic options of majority, authority and expert councils.

How would your ideas about education apply to producing better politicians who learn their craft *differently*? **Gritty enough?**

I think the general tone and aesthetic is worth considering. Although it may seem like positive, optimistic scenarios are a rebalancing of a dark mood about the near future, there are reasons to think that the dark mood is warranted, useful and itself a counter-balancing of the deep tendency in spiritual-developmental-visionary communities to want to sell ourselves and each other on ascending/uplifting possibilities.

Although the text is certainly full of critique -- and I commend the inclusion of the “Field (Contraction) Expansion” chart with its various (not)s and (don’t)s -- it may lean too heavily in the direction of an attempted positivist vision anchored in various aspirational totalizing phraseology.

It is certainly viable to challenge the Harris/Schmactenberger metaphor of the narrowing bowling lane with the more reliable and hopeful “risky passage” of the birth canal but it may be better to keep both in tandem than to switch from one to the other. Why? Three important reasons. Firstly that the apocalyptic sentiment of the currently emerging epoch may be both justified and an important form of mindfulness-mood in terms of taking signs

seriously. Secondly that our species is socially and psychologically vulnerable to marginalizing negative affects in favor of positive inspiring ideas around which we can organize but this tends to allow lingering shadow effects that undermine our attempts at creation and navigation. Thirdly that the mood and aesthetic of both younger people and developmental communities is, while leaning into the sincere irony of viable symbols and great tasks, nonetheless more skeptical of tidiness, messaging that is too clean, too carefully balanced, too ready for the boardroom or the modernist sales pitch. Hungry for a sense of the amateur, the wild, the dark, the ambiguity, the messy, which seems to have been dangerously put aside by both social and spiritual communicators over the past epoch. So with an eye toward the trends of communication, I would suggest that rougher is better. Heidegger wrote that it is the sense of the doom of the world that elicits care-for-the-world. **Insufficiently Radical?**

Although I hear a lot of very sane advocacy in this work for a balanced, inclusive and non-reactionary response to improving world metrics at all scales, I am left wondering where you place the importance of urgent and radical spirits? If we are to believe most of the data we have about the ecological substrate of civilization, we may need to take rapid action that is highly disruptive in order to prevent mass accelerating trends of various kinds. It is certain that people and power structures will not be ready for these changes and will likely not feel their necessity until it is too late. So how does the universifying model accommodate the possible need for rapid mass mobilization against seemingly normal patterns of life and mind?

Are we underestimating the degree to which business as usual, for both economies and nations, is itself hasty and radical in its effects and can only be checked by an equally urgent

revolutionary spirit that will always feel a little suspicious to more mature and well-balanced individuals as well as highly dangerous to established power structures?

Lines

The role of different simultaneously developmental trajectories seems marginal in this text and in the diagrams. This may be a tactic for simplifying communication, a result of actual conclusions of the model in question or a blind spot expressing a reluctance to move away from the notion of an individual who is at a particular generalized stage. I support Dillard's assertion that IF we envision a cluster of core lines (as Wilber does) we have to place moral development within rather than outside the cluster. However, I am equally or more attracted to the idea of no generalized central development and a much more rigorous embrace of diverse simultaneous pathways operating from different stages and interfacing with each other to create hybridized subpersonalities.

I suspect this is more in keeping with the network plurality models that will continue to arise in the bio-digital age. We need not, however, take such an extreme position, in order to feel the need to present multiple simultaneous stylistic developmental pathways of "intelligence" or "talents drawing on general cognitive capacity" in our modeling. The same issue could be approached from the theme of fostering adequate neurodivergence in communities in order to maximize collective intelligence through collaborative diversity. So in terms of uniting and diversifying in the same process, how does that apply to different developments within individuals? And where does that show up in the presentation? Worth considering why it is absent even if there are good reasons in the logic of the model or the simplification needs of the text.

Where is the role of “lines” in this whole model?

Meta-Culturalism

The text is admirable in its meta-cultural perspective however it may remain too nation-centric in how it discusses the planetary situation.

If electro-modernist combinations of capitalism-and communism predominate everywhere in the world in slightly different balances and styles then what sense does it make to be view increased inclusivity as simply exceeding the self-centered discourse of “western countries” when all the other countries are doing some variant of the same approach. What would a more inclusive cultural frame look like in which different famous countries and races are not assumed to necessarily be the standard units

of diversity?

And are there ways in which the appropriate “unit” of a higher or meta cultural perspective is no longer nation-state based? Bio-regional, networks or cities, etc? Where is the place for deconstruction of these categories in the text such that a new unification could take place on the other side of the new plurality?

Meta-ideology

There is an open debate about the sense of meta-ideological stances. It clusters, in my opinion, around four key questions

(a) where is it diplomatic/tactical to refrain from leaning too strongly into any particular provocative positions vs. where are the more complex, more integrated people subject to

a cautious, almost cowardly, pro-balance bias which loses the salience of what is most necessary in any given contingent historical moment

(b) where do we want to balance and please all sides vs. strongly favoring the largest mobilizable and most advanced partial truth in a given socio-political arena

(c) where do we take meta-ideological as a way of staying above cultural and historical identities vs. as the result of going deeply into multiple identity lenses and rendering them transparent -- such that we seek novel solutions that might satisfy the underlying structures of multiple extremes rather than tacking to a moderate middle ground

(d) to what degree are people's asserted values and positions reflective of their actual positions, incentives, needs, etc -- including whether or not balance expresses rather than provides an alternative to a certain radical ideology.

I'm not suggesting that you are blind to any of these concerns but the text, despite certain short passages critiquing the corrupt nature of certain results of capitalism, risks coming across as excessively "balanced" at the expense of understanding and throwing in with the radical urgency of system change -- which will have temperamental or ideological defenders.

Again the question of who is the audience arises. Is this a diplomatic text or is it at risk of placing the universifying project quickly out of date as accelerating global circumstances enter into various degrees of convergent world systems crisis in which the sensibility of the higher stages adaptively mobilizes in ways that might have seemed lopsided or extreme from a position flavored by the ethos of government, corporation and institutional

education processes no matter how innovative the individual attempts may have been?

Multi-Trajectory Options: An Analogy to the “States Problem”

The Wilber-Combs Matrix, which places “states” perpendicular to “stages,” represents an incomplete shift in integrative theories. The 20th-century transpersonal models tended to stack a couple of generalized notions of altered states derived from Axial Age mystics and their contemporary emulators. These models (in which Subtle Causal & Nondual are assumed to be the supra-normal developmental possibilities still remaining for contemporary adult civilization) thereby inherit the socio-emotional biases of the Axial Age -- namely a spirit of hierarchical totalizing, a hypermasculine privileging of impersonal abstract disembodiment and a blindness to the normal presence of all states in ordinary people even women and children!

Although there are ways to finesse the concept (Wilber’s “state-stages,” O’Fallon’s “states become increasingly privileged factors in higher stage development, etc), it gives a picture, on the whole, of a still-to-be-completed shift away from using these Hindu-Theosophical state-descriptors to name the emergence of postconventional stage development.

All of that is just the set-up to discuss the major problem with that Axial inheritance. The image of the “higher” states narrows the range of our thinking in ways that do not even include the full scope of Axial lore. Those same sacred cultures and classic consciousness experimenters also attested to the possibility of such things as subtle realm entities and nondual avatars -- both of whom are on developmental journeys to “attain” gross realm embodiment in various degrees.

Whether or not we take such legendary/anomalous entities seriously, we should be attentive to this move toward models in which multiple different developmental trajectories through domains can take place. Such a shift is consonant with much of the very successful work done in mathematics and physics over the last few centuries -- simultaneous solution sets to String Theory, the mapping of multiple counterfactual paths in quantum mechanics, Wolfram's multi-way computational models, Feynman's sum of histories, etc.

So if I interrogate Universifying from this angle, the question naturally arises as to whether or not the zones could be traversed in different phase sequences. Is there, for example, any special reason why "unity" or "individual" or "subjective" needs to come first or is that merely conventional? We have strong ancient biases toward certain assumptions of sequence. Modern Monetary Theory (whatever its actual economic merits might be) represents an emerging shift in how people see the order in which state-economies function but a great many people find it viscerally difficult to move from the "we pay taxes and they spend it" model to the "they print and spend it into circulation and then validate this by taxation" model. Again, I'm only probing the degree to which the obvious order of the phases is objective or deeply rooted in heuristic social instincts.

In the work of French metatheorist Alain Badiou -- who uses set theory to update philosophy -- the multiple is placed prior to the unity. "One" is considered to be the result of an act of one-ification. In such a universe, which is entirely plausible, the *absorbing* unity would be a secondary phase following an initial diversity. This is quite workable alongside models in which both "the infant" and the "first cell" are not primary but are sites at which an interacting sub-community of parts are, with varying degrees of success, learning to

cooperate to produce the emergence/side-effect of an apparent organism.

It's worth considering to what extent the model could expand to hold the full set of possible paths through the four major zones that you are describing. That said, any particular privileged sequence could be useful if it helps in particular problem zones and is viscerally acceptable to people.

Nihilism?

Universifying strikes an integrated balance between unity and diversity through increasingly "higher" fields but I wonder whether that sweet spot is undermined by terminology that undoes basic cognitive functions? Most neo-traditional integrations do this but should they? Generic aspirational terms like *boundless* and *timeless* are options for describing the phenomenology of altered states and postconventional worldspaces but they are not neutral. They tend to thwart further investigation of these conditions by tagging them as unthinkable or impossible.

Nihilism can be used very broadly to describe self-undermining tendencies such as bodies preferring food that is toxic for them, hearts treating their own feelings as dangerous, cultures attacking or suppressing their avant-garde and flourishing elements... and minds pretending to think unthinkable thoughts. There is a certain limited utility to that but does it benefit an attempt to make a truly trans-rational multidimensional developmental mandala?

Henri Bergson presented reasons why Emptiness and Nothing cannot be thought -- even as the idea of something that goes beyond ordinary ideas. Nietzsche was very critical about

the Christian-Platonic habit of placing Ultimate Value into an impossible space conceived of as above or prior to reality (and therefore unreal by definition). These forms of articulation seem to accompany the agrarian-kingdom phase of history in which people were manipulated into service by telling them that the best things about life await them only after death and require them to suppress or minimize the biological activities that allow for flourishing, peak experience and accelerated development.

Of course, it is possible to use unthinkable thoughts as maximalist signifiers pointing toward the difference between deeper experience and conventional modes of thought but it is worth considering that this conventional habit may be outdated, subtly degenerative over time & embedded in exploitive pre-modern socio-cognitive patterns.

Novelty insufficiently emphasized?

One of the tensions to balance in terms of higher/deeper fields of development is the relationship of uniqueness to universality. Historically there has been a tendency to treat the higher as relatively impersonal and generic -- as though "enlightenment" were a common goal in which everyone progressively converges toward a vague archetypal Buddha-Christ-Supermind. Yet the examples we have of people who might be presumed to have traversed some of these transpersonal ranges often demonstrate as much peculiarity, oddness, novelty and hyperpersonal traits as they do impersonal traits.

There is a famous problem in the "Gurdjieff Work" in which the majority of the teaching streams descend from the understanding, phrasing and organizing of his student P.D.Ouspensky and these traditions are haunted by a kind of dryness in which people attempt to provoke metacognition through constant self-watching and attempt to access

higher ranges of being through a marginalization or active struggle against the idiosyncratic and idiographic characteristics of their nature. Whereas Gurdjieff himself was notably odd, surprising, unique and even disturbingly and intentionally individualistic.

So while we have evolved the cultural discourse around spirituality to the point where ego is no longer demonized and where we humbly admit to insufficient knowledge and the likelihood of new emergences we still face a kind of imbalance in terms of how these things are thematically treated. I would invite Universifying to consider whether it foregrounds and emphasizes these qualities of novelty, uncanniness, deviation, weirdness, experimentalism and idiosyncrasy adequately?

And along these lines we can consider in the theory whether the higher fields are best described as consistent and well-known to the sages or whether they are accessed through and constituted by ranges of novel affects that are discovered or co-created by those who enter into these spaces? Is the kaleidoscopic, inventive and hitherto unknown character of the higher domains sufficiently presented in the model or does it risk a terminology that favors the notion of a generic, impersonal and already established “white” horizon of transcendental being?

Numeric Patterning is a Double-Edged Sword

What are the odds that simplified human socially recognizable numbers (4, 3, 8, 12, etc) are likely to be the number of fractal reiteration stages ... as opposed to irrational or nonlinear mathematics? Although human models must be to some extent smooth enough

and simple enough for human minds to use, it might be worth at least noting in the text that the normal range of sacred mathematics in the cosmos is not constrained to sequences that are readily simplified -- and that it is likely that even reiterative patterns of bio-cosmological significance will likely end up being more rhizomatic, unpredictable, etc. Given the types of sequencing now accessible through powerful computational engines why would assume that an accurate map is likely to be one that human brains recognize as orderly?

You do indicate in various places that the universifying model must be a simplification of reality but then it leans hard into that simplification and might benefit from reminding people more starkly of the edge condition at which patterning exceeds the types of simplified numerical order that our species has used for the last few thousand years.

Post-Plural Qi

I am wondering whether the mentions of “qi” in the text go far enough toward treating it as a plurality that can be re-unified at a higher level... versus the more standard tendency of people to discuss it as a nebulous, homogenous abstraction that could be interpreted in various different directions. I’m sure you know how difficult it can be to get people to stop simply saying that they “meditate” and actually start describing the specific attentional procedures tha they are deploying. Similarly, I find that people -- even in the transrational community -- are a little bit blithe in how they handle notions of subtle energetics. A whole swarm of different concepts (metaphoric truth for healthy functioning of organisms, natural bio-electromagnetism, some “additional subtle qualitative energy,” phantasmatic projections of libido, abstract energy in general, etc) often pass below this signifier. So my

sense is that a higher stage discussion has to first deconstruct and reveal the plurality and then find some more unifying but still transparent way of engaging it as a concept.

Right Brain

A number of the remarks in this text concerning higher stages and new modes/models for healthy human living have a similar flavor to the way that McGilchrist describes shifting from left-brain dominant cultural modes to more right-brain dominant modes. There is an ambiguity there which may be pertinent to this text. Namely, is this shift vertical/developmental or merely from one side to the other? Are these being casually conflated or is there something in the model itself that tells us why higher/deeper looks like more-right-brained in its mood, tone and approach to attention and pattern recognition?

Sacred Geometry

There is a certain risk of a “new age” flavor that accompanies the presence of organizing images associated with presentations of sacred geometry. Although I love many of the mandala maps, I hesitate a little in from of the metatrons, flowers of life, etc. which I associated with late 20th century occult bookshops and a kind of lightweight notion of sacred morphology. It’s not necessarily a problem but worth considering whether a kind of “theosophical”

or “neo-platonic” vibe is helpful or unhelpful alongside interesting new mandalas. Another aspect of that which comes to mind for me is the Wolfram (et al) tendency to think of the morphologies as expressions of computational algorithmic “shapes” and that what strikes the human mind and perceptual organs as “forms” are really a parochial, truncated and largely non-represented type of morphology.

Sentence-completion tests-- as a tool for empowering trained participant-evaluators within particular interpersonal contexts -- are both excellent and limited. Although I don't see better tools immediately available I am struck by the uncertain relationship between selves and knowledges-of-selves that can be verbalized as well as the ability of high-capacity cognitive automatic in the mind to hack the process by shortcutting complex articulation structures. On the other hand, neuro-electrical and biochemical and behavioral data are likely to form greater and greater shares of how stages are evaluated in the future. I'm curious where this very "O'Fallon friendly" model orients itself toward, say, an emerging capacity to bypass verbal self-description in favor of nuanced neuro-electric expression?

The Separator is the Connector

The idea that AQAL is "Cartesian" because it continues to separate self from collective and world is a bit tricky. I think both Descartes and AQAL should/could be understood through the nondual lens that *the separator is the connector*. What I mean is that higher approaches to nonduality seem to clarify the importance of problematizing the superficial distinction between separateness & nonseparateness.

It is misleading, I think, to use phrases like "the absolute has no bound" to describe deep nonduality. Such phrases place a boundary upon the boundaries and assert what I would call a casual-mystic intensity but a more accurate nondual phrasing would indicate that the absolute both is and is not bounded. What this radical insight challenges is not the fact of boundaries but the perceived limitation quality projected upon boundaries. It is precisely the separations that are to be perceived non-separating... rather than as no longer being

active as separations.

The Shamanic Turn

I appreciate the mention of Non-Human Intelligences in the text. It strikes me that the future of spirituality, philosophy and civilization has to be notably “shamanic” in its approach -- and one key feature of that is the constant recognition of the necessary role played by both known and unknown living intelligence systems outside of human culture. Alongside that, it seems the embodied flow states, improvised sacred ritual, trances, psychedelics, the subconscious, neo-tribalism, ecologically-situated developmentalism and the capacity to rapidly become “indigenous” deep inhabitants of shifting uncanny realms will be essential to the flavor and style of the epoch that universifying proposes itself to address.

So another open question is whether this text is adequately indigenous in its style or whether it leans into something that is too clean, too “traditional and modern,” too “business and nation-state,” to actually resonate with the emerging ethos?

Temporics

There are frequent references to being “in the moment” as an expression of certain later stages. I am skeptical here. Although clearly a number of people use this language (which may of course be enough to justify its inclusion) I think it is far from a universally characteristic expression of the 5ish range.

An argument could be made that there is “in the moment” at each stage but that the structure of the moment itself is increased through vertical development such that what is

being added is not *present-ness* but rather larger and more complex structures of non-present time being taken seriously -- such that 'now' is expanded along tracks generated by shifting subconscious capacity toward further ranges of past and future.

Jordan Peterson has suggested that meaning is the result of increasing the capacity to operate simultaneously along multiple time scales. As they emerge to our awareness to do the work of tracking them relative to each other and against skill. So what is sometimes blithely called "being in the moment" is actually the furthest thing from that and might be better described as a significant increase in the tracking of time. Having good timing on multiple scales simultaneously feels like it exceeds limitations imposed by previous modes of working-with-time but it may be naive and counterproductive in the long run to describe this as either exiting from time or being narrowed into what the conventional minds call the present moment.

Trauma

I agree with the idea that democracy can act as a trauma if it comes too soon for the psychosocial and economic-technological base. Although this must certainly be weighed against the idea that what is popularly called democracy is a feeble, representationalist-majoritarian concept that does not even attempt to competently upload and combine the distributed intelligence of the people.

The natural extension, in this context, of the notion that decent things are traumatic if they come too soon is the question: When is too soon for universalizing? When and for whom could this very text act as a trauma? Such a consideration might be a laudable form of self-awareness for the project.

Where are the opposites of your queries?

I think it is important to ask ourselves inspirational questions -- tied to a certain metaphysical possibility that nondual experience is expressed as the hidden perfection of unfolding -- such as: What opens for us if we accept the possibility that everything is unfolding perfectly and the metacrisis is a birth canal? However, that word "possibility" often hides a skewing, a preference or bias that needs more inspection.

If this text is meant to be anthemic and mobilizing then of course the spirit of eros and trust may need to be privileged. Yet it also seems to me that this question should be asked together with its corollary -- namely: What closes for us if we accept that possibility?

What do we tend to ignore, which might be significant, if we take that tack?

There is clearly a danger of dispirited immobilization in how we face personal and collective challenges but also there is a degree of the embrace of the deep nature of "negative"

affects necessary to face these things without having them impeded or sabotaged by our immediate animal desire to focus on the positive rather than the disconcerting. Birth canals can be problematic. From miscarriages to birth defects we need to be vigilant and proactive in ways that treat the natural as a site of ongoing danger as well as the mystery of trustworthy cycles. I touched on this in the "Gritty enough?" section earlier in this document.

And I would additionally point to Nietzsche's work in the Birth of Tragedy to elucidate the ways in which cultures coordinated around deep sacred pessimism were often the

most productive, generative and capable of exhibiting world-historical agency.

Does the text sufficiently affirm and call out to both flavors? Or does it unnecessarily skew toward the idea that negativity dominates the world and must be solved by emphasizing positive potentials?